



## The Moors at Arne, Coastal Management Project

### Frequently asked questions

November 2018

## Ecology

### **What about the existing butterflies, bees and flowers on the site?**

The project partners have carefully assessed the likely biodiversity gains and losses which this project will cause in the light of designations covering the area. In summary, whilst there will be some losses we can say:

1. None of the critical biodiversity (rarest habitats and species) will be lost
2. There will be an overall net gain for biodiversity
3. The integrity of all of the international designations [Wetland of International Importance (RAMSAR site), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA)] have been protected.
4. Where interest features will be lost from the nationally designated site [The Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)] appropriate arrangements have been made to provide compensation.

In considering the effects of the project on biodiversity the following should be considered;

Much of the biodiversity, including many of the plants mentioned in historic records of the site, occur around the southern and eastern fringes of the Moors in areas that would remain protected from tidal inundation by a new embankment. This includes areas supporting the rarest species and habitats.

There are small areas of good quality grassland on the Moors but most of the existing grassland on the site, where there would be tidal inundation, is not species rich. Similar areas of this type of grassland exist behind where a new embankment would be positioned and these grasslands can be expanded.

Of particular interest on The Moors are the plants and animals found in the ditches. There is sufficient space on the landward side of the new embankment for the project to create new ditches into which populations of these plants and animals can migrate or be translocated.

Some of the more special habitats on the Moors occur where there is some saline influence on the vegetation. The saline influence would of course increase significantly but this would not mean that the whole area would become mudflat. There is sufficient variation in height for there to be a corresponding variation in the degree of saline influence so that there would be an increase in the range of saltmarsh habitats (lower/mid/upper) as well as saline influenced grasslands at a slightly higher level again. This effect can be seen already on the newly flooded grasslands at Lytchett Bay where saltmarsh plants have been quick to come in. Thus birds would not be the only wildlife interest that would benefit.

Management of the existing conservation interests will become harder and harder as, with sea level rise, drainage of the freshwater habitats becomes increasingly difficult.



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Environment  
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There is already a large disparity between the height of the grasslands on the Moors and the reedbeds/saltmarsh on the Harbour side of the existing embankment, with the inland Moors side being much lower. This is because the reedbeds/saltmarsh is subject to ongoing sediment deposition which the Moors currently is not. Without implementation of the project, this problem will only get worse.

### **What is a saline lagoon? What are they for?**

Saline lagoons are pools of slightly salty water that are suitable for feeding waterbirds such as godwit and avocet. They are to support the birds for which Poole Harbour is internationally important, both those that visit in winter and those that might be encouraged to breed.

### **What will be the impact on the existing agricultural land?**

Overall the impact on existing agricultural use is minimal. The land is currently poor grade agricultural land (grade 4 and 5) and is grazed with cattle only to meet the nature conservation objectives of the site paid for under agri-environment agreements. The project partners, along with the National Trust, have substantially increased the number of cattle grazing the adjacent heaths in recent decades. This increase will more than offset any reduction in cattle numbers on The Moors.