



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Milford-on-Sea
Cliff Top Vegetation Management Plan
2016 - 2026**

Located Within & Working In Partnership with Milford-on-Sea Parish Council
FINAL v1.2 July 2016

Milford-on-Sea Cliff Top Vegetation Management Plan

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2 Introduction

This management plan continues the aims and approach established within the Vegetation Management Plan (2006-10). The clifftop area shown in the map below shows the area owned and managed by New Forest District Council (NFDC). The NFDC landholding is approximately 12.2 ha.



Figure 1 - Map showing plan area (approx. 1:8000 Scale); Red indicates NFDC area, Blue NPMC area

NFDC has an arrangement with the Needles Point Management Company Ltd. (NPMC), who are the freeholder of the land shaded blue in Figure 1, approximately 2.1 ha. NFDC manages the vegetation for Brown Tailed Moth in this area following NPMC allowing access for the coastal footpath. This helps deliver a coordinated policy and management as with no physical divisions, without control in this area it would quickly re-populate the surroundings.

A management plan was put in place November 2006 and for the Needles Point area from Oct 2007. The vegetation management plan outlined below continues the same themes established previously and enables consistent wildlife habitats and management throughout the plan area.

This management plan has been formulated to compliment the actions identified in the New Forest District Coastal Management Plan and Planning Guidance (see Sections 5, 3.1.5 and 12).

The non-native and invasive species of Brown Tailed Moth (*Euproctis chryorrhoea*) was noted within what now forms part of the plan area, becoming established by 2003. The opportunity was taken to create a program of works to improve the biodiversity value of the existing habitats for all native species, this in turn, adds to the visual qualities of this landscape setting.

2.1 Aims of the Vegetation Management Plan

This plan aims to achieve two primary purposes:

- To control Brown Tailed Moth (*Euproctis chrysorrhoea*)
- To increase the biodiversity of the cliff top environment

2.2 Local Interest

The site is a popular, high profile location attracting a high number of visitors despite being within close proximity to the New Forest National Park, Sturt Pond SSSI, Highcliffe and the pleasure beaches of Bournemouth and Christchurch.

As part of the management of this site, NFDC works closely with, and notes the aims and aspirations, from:

- Milford on Sea Parish Council (MPC)
 - Including Milford-on-Sea Village Design Statement (2002)
- Milford Conservation Volunteers
- Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Trust & Pond Conservation
- Butterfly Conservation
- Hampshire Ornithological Society

3 General Landscape Context

3.1 Description

The site area extends from the eastern end of Hordle Cliff to the rock armouring at the western end of Hurst Spit. It includes Cliff Road, Park Lane, the White House and Hurst Road, the adjoining coastal open spaces, a limited stretch of low cliffs at its western end (parts of Hordle Cliff and Rook Cliff), and a single beach. It is backed by the predominantly suburban residential development of Milford On Sea.

There are beach huts at Hordle and Rook Cliffs and east of the White House. There are two amenity car parks off Hurst Road and two other car parks situated off Cliff Road at Hordle Cliff and Rook Cliff. Kiosks and public conveniences serve both the Hurst Road and Cliff Road car parks. At the eastern end the built up area of Milford-On-Sea is set back behind Sturt Pond. An NFDC compound and a cafe lie on the coast side of the pond. To the east of Sturt Pond and to the west of Milford large caravan parks are dominant in the coastal scene.

3.1.1 Geology

The coastline of the district is formed mainly of soft, sedimentary rocks and clays, with extensive deposits of alluvial silt and peat forming marshes and mudflats

around the river estuaries. All these materials are vulnerable to erosion, and in geological terms, the coastline is still undergoing changes that began with the last Ice Age.

In addition to the active forces of wind and sea within this exposed location, erosion is exacerbated in this coastal zone by rainwater percolating through the upper gravel layers which is then halted by a layer of Barton Clays, causing the upper, saturated layers to slide along slip plains in the clays causing slumping of the cliffs.

3.1.2 Coastal Protection

At the eastern end, the concrete sea wall and associated rock revetment perform both flood defence and coast protection functions. These now dominate this stretch of beach and restrict pedestrian access. Longshore movement of the beach is largely controlled by timber groynes built in front of the wall. Further west a succession of timber groynes extend out from the beach. In spite of its popularity, the steep profile of Milford beach in combination with strong currents means that care is required when bathing. Regrading is not possible as this would exacerbate the problem of beach loss. Remains of previously unrecorded World War II defence ironwork continues to emerge and can pose a hazard, hindering bathing.

The shoreline is included in the shared Poole & Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2), which is the first revision of the original Shoreline Management Plan (SMP1) produced in 1999. The review took place between October 2008 - November 2009, the final SMP2 document was published late October 2010.

3.1.3 Access

Access to the cliff tops and beach is good and evenly spread throughout the location. There are extensive cliff top footpaths; formal and some desire lines, providing links to coastal routes to the east (Milford & Hurst) and west (Barton-on-Sea), and inland to Milford and Sturt Pond. The beach is readily accessible from the eastern end for all, while at the western end access to the beach and beach huts is restricted to steep paths and steps down the cliffs. The maintenance of the steps and beach access plans form Zone 4 within the NFDC Coastal Management Plan, first published in 1997, revised 2004 (see Section 12 References & Further Reading).

3.1.4 Environment

The majority of the sea front is public open space, with footpaths along the cliff top and direct access to the beach further east. There is a bowling green at Hurst Road. The seafront is popular with residents and visitors, offering fine views of the Solent and Isle of Wight. However, the area is very exposed to extreme weather and sea conditions, more recently experiencing high winds, rainfall, cliff-falls and increasing wave energy increasing the saline exposure conditions.

In environmental terms, parts of this space can be improved to avoid the impression of a bleak exposed location. Car parks and areas around toilet blocks and kiosk buildings could benefit from landscaping and common theming. Some footpaths are over-used and formalised footpaths not always used, resulting in avoidable plant, and subsequent soil, erosion.

NFDC retains the freehold and issues leases to beach hut owners. NFDC Planning Control oversees applications from Beach Hut owners wishing to make alternations or extensions to their huts, working closely with Natural England within the SSSI.

3.1.5 Core Strategy & Local Plan

NFDC Core Strategy (2009) outlined the policy on the provision of open spaces within Policy CS7, ensuring these are well maintained and safe, support greater biodiversity, contributing to healthier and more sustainable lifestyles. The area within this plan is designated as Green Belt and Policy CS10 refers to the spatial strategy. Policy CS3 (including DM2 for SSSI's) refers to the protection of our special environment.

The District Local Plan Part 2, Sites and Development Management includes the majority of the sea front open space in the Green Belt. The White House is included in the built up area; the land surrounding it is identified as an area of landscape feature (refer to policy DW-E12). The Local Plan identified the seafront as an area in need of environmental improvement. It also identifies the area as at risk from erosion.

4 Nature Conservation

Hordle and Rook Cliffs form the eastern end of the 9km Highcliffe-Milford Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), designated 1953 (confirmed 1991 under the 1981 act) because of the geological interest of the rock formation, fossilised birds, reptiles, plants and fruits; some not represented elsewhere in the UK or Europe. The citation mentions contemporary biological interest, in particular plant species, invertebrates, beetles and rare crane fly (*Eonomyia conoviensis*).

The clifftop area (excluding NPMC) is designated by Hampshire County Council as a SINC (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation).

Adjacent to the plan area is Sturt Pond, managed on behalf of NFDC by Hampshire County Council, which is within the Hurst Castle and Lymington River Estuary SSSI, and is important for wildlife (in particular birds) and the range of salt and freshwater habitats. This area is a Local Nature Reserve and Site of Community Importance (SCI), designated 2004. It is listed as a Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar site, designated 1998, updated 2005) and is classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Birds Directive and identified as a Special Area of Conservation in 2005.

The lineal nature of the site, between the urban area of Milford and the sea, encourages the area to become a wildlife corridor, enabling many species to move between other sites. The establishment and promotion of a range of habitats within this site assists this purpose and supports the ecology of adjacent areas, while providing an attractive area for members of the public to enjoy.

5 Landscape Character – Planning Guidance

5.1 Supplementary Planning Guidance

5.1.1 Landscape Character Area Assessment

An assessment of the landscape character of the whole district was undertaken in 2000, and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The varied coastal landscape is encompassed in 4 different district level Landscape Character Areas. The cliff top environment at Milford falls in to Barton and Milford Coastal Plain (Highcliffe to Hurst Spit), LCA 17.

The Barton and Milford Coastal Plain character overlooks Christchurch Bay, from Chewton Bunny at Highcliffe in the west to Hurst Spit at Keyhaven in the east. This character area is large scale estate landscape dominated by 20th century seaside towns, although with a less formal enclosure pattern than is found to the east of this character area. The Christchurch Bay coast is generally open and exposed in character. Strong, salt-laden winds inhibit the growth of vegetation on the cliff tops, and affect trees and hedgerows for some way inland, producing characteristic windswept forms of growth. The cliffs range from the mud falls at Naish Farm to Hordle Cliff, interrupted by the substantial coast protection works at Barton and the eroding cliffs at Taddiford. Beaches are generally shingle, divided in places by timber groynes that form part of the coast protection works. The cliffs decline in height until they disappear altogether at Milford.

Key features of this part of the coast include:

- *Dramatic exposed coastline with geographically important rapidly eroding soft unstable cliffs;*
- *Spectacular views of the Isle of Wight and the Needles, and more distantly, the Purbeck Coast;*
- *Shingle beaches west of Hurst Spit.*

Small wooded valleys such as Danes Stream, Walkford Brook, and tributaries of Avon Water which drain south into the Solent and form important structural and ecological corridors linking the enclosed inland landscape with the open coastal edge.

The appearance of built development around Christchurch Bay is for the most part undistinguished. Barton comprises mainly suburban developments of one and two story buildings with some more prominent structures in the vicinity of

Barton Court. At Milford the coast is dominated by some particularly large and obtrusive blocks of flats as well as more suburban development. Beach huts are a feature of the coastal scene in both these places. There are large areas of public open space and car parks along the cliff tops in both settlements, which although welcome and well used, leave something to be desired in terms of the quality of the environment they provide.

5.1.2 Village Design Statement

The Milford-On-Sea Village Design Statement (2002) was written by a group of stakeholders following extensive resident engagement. With relevance to this plan, this particularly highlights...

The most attractive features of the Parish's landscape setting, however, lie on the coastal side. To the south-west of the village the clifftop is a very popular open space with natural vegetation and a much used footpath that gives access to the beach and groups of beach huts, and also leads to Hurst Spit and Keyhaven. The views from this footpath over Christchurch Bay and the Needles are dramatic.

The village design statement sets out the following aspirations...

- *The clifftop, whilst retaining its natural appearance, will be improved by reducing the amount of street furniture and slightly raising the earth bunds on the southern boundaries of the car parks without impairing sea views from parked cars.*
- *Along the Clifftop the car parks are adequate, but they should be better landscaped (e.g. with mounding and ground cover around the edges) and steps should be taken to make the kiosk less intrusive in the scene.*

This Vegetation Plan includes works to help work towards achieving these aims.

6 The Site

For the purposes of this plan, the site is shown in Figure 1 and lies between Cliff Road/Park Lane and the cliff top. It extends some 1.5km from the hotel known as The Beach House to the field boundary opposite the end of West Road. It includes Hordle Cliff and Rook Cliff.

The site consists of a narrow, flat strip of land, bounded by Cliff Road on the inland side and the cliff top on the seaward side. It includes two amenity car parks, various shelters and seats. The linear coastal path is linked by numerous footpaths, both surfaced and unsurfaced, crossing the open land. Direct access to the beach is gained via slopes and steps; major routes linking to the car parks. It also includes the cliff face directly behind the double line of beach huts

Appreciation and enjoyment by locals and visitors is at risk of being reduced by the exposed aspect and, in parts, uninviting coastal zone due to coastal protection features.

The popularity of the location for walkers and absence of interpretation and wayfinding assistance has led to vegetation loss in some areas. Some walkways are paved, however many are official, forming bias lines. Some paths show signs of delating at the ends as walkers diverge towards the end of a path route, widening the impact area, increasing loss of habitat and giving potential for vehicle encroachment.

The popularity with walkers of some routes, combined with the exposed and saline conditions has led to bare earth prone to wind or water erosion.

Loss of vegetation and excessive water run-off can cause issues for habitat loss, sediment blocking drains and leading to cliff issues.



Figure 2 - Area showing pedestrian and unauthorized vehicle incursion damage



Figure 3 - Formal footpath, located <50m from picture above, with poor definition to edges and no signage



Figure 4 - Area showing vegetation loss due to informal paths despite new pathing; increasing rainfall run-off and presenting a barren area for many wildlife species

7 Existing Vegetation

The site is dominated by poor quality acid grassland with large areas of scrub, typical of the underlying soil and climatic conditions. The site shows many typical features of semi-unimproved grassland. Within the previous plan there were concerns that the blackthorn, gorse and willow could grow quickly and could dominate areas of grassland or heathland and out-compete valuable species. They are in themselves very important components of our native habitats, providing food, shelter and nest sites for birds and insects. Management by cutting and grazing this scrub maintains its balance in the habitat.

It consists mainly of Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Gorse (*Ulex europeaus*), in single species blocks. Bracken (*Pterum aquilinum*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), Sea Buckthorn (*Hippophae*), *Tamarix spp.* and Old Mans Beard (*Clemitis vitalba*) in mixed areas with isolated Holm Oak, (*Quercus ilex.*) Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) stands. Scrub growth tends to be restricted to the inland side of the site and displays the typical characteristic windswept forms of growth, produced by strong, salt laden winds. This is also a factor in limiting the rate of invasion by non-native species, and it can be seen on aerial photographs that the scrub spread changes very little on an annual basis.

The cliff face has been colonised by intermittent stands of goat Willow (*Salix caprea*), small patches of gorse and bramble and a considerable population of reed spp.

Some gorse stands have been encroached by Bramble species, reducing the biodiversity and out-competing the native species.



Figure 5 - Picture showing bramble competition and spreading habit within a gorse stand

8 Existing Biodiversity

The unimproved acid grassland was limited in its range of species. Without managed grazing or mowing, taller species can compete effectively for light and nutrients over the lower, more fragile herb species.

The scrub areas offer valuable habitat for insects, birds, rabbits at the western end and tertiary predators such as adders. Previous lack of management has seen the natural succession achieve total canopy closure at heights ranging from less than one metre to approximately 2.5m, which in turn prevents light penetration and natural regeneration, allowing large dark stands to form, hindering biodiversity. Within the previous plan several of these were opened up, though re-growth speeds were over-estimated. As a consequence the growth timings within this plan have been revised and extended to allow for the exposed environment.

Within the previous management plan arisings from annual meadow cutting have been deposited at selected locations within the site. This retains and supports the nutrients, seed-bank and wildlife. Observation during the previous management period (2006-2015) identified that these arisings have provided sheltered habitats beneficial for the following secondary and tertiary trophic level species:

- Slow worms
- Voles
- Adders, including shed skins found within these areas

8.1 Brown Tailed Moth (*Euproctis chrysorrhoea*)

The larval stage (caterpillar) of this insect feeds on the foliage of trees and shrubs, predominantly the Rosacea species. Larval feeding causes defoliation of the vegetation, resulting in reduction of growth and occasional mortality of the host plant. While feeding damage may cause some concern, the primary human impact from the brown tail moth is the result of contact with urticating hairs; they cause extreme irritation when in contact with human skin.

Contact of these hairs with human skin causes a rash similar to poison ivy, which can be severe on some individuals.

8.1.1 Description and Life History

The brown tail moth produces one generation a year. It has four life stages;

- Egg – held within larvae nests
- larval - lasting for 9 months of the year from August through June.
- pupal, and
- adult moth

In the autumn, colonies of larvae build nests in trees constructed from a single leaf wrapped tightly with large amounts of white silk. A colony consists of 25 to 400 or more larvae. The larvae overwinter within the web nests which are two to four inches long and are situated on branch tips.



Figure 6 - Brown Tailed Moth larva stage on Blackthorn (*Prunus spinose*) within western section of plan area

In the spring, as soon as the earliest leaf buds open, the larvae become active and crawl out of their nests to feed on the tender foliage. They may devour the foliage

as fast as it develops. Larvae are full grown by late June. Large larvae, about 1 1/2 inches long, are dark brown and have a broken white stripe on each side of the body and conspicuous, unpaired, reddish spots on the posterior end of the back.

In late June, the larvae spin rough, individual cocoons in which to pupate. The pupae develop into moths which emerge from the cocoons in July. The moths have a wingspread of about 1 1/2 inches. Wings and midsection are pure white. The abdomen is brown with a conspicuous tuft of brown urticating hairs at the tip.



Figure 7 - Picture of Brown Tailed Moth (By Didier Descouens - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=31362011>)

After emerging, the females lay eggs in masses on the underside of leaves and cover the eggs with brown hairs from their bodies. Each female lays 200 to 400 eggs. The eggs hatch during August or early in September and the young larvae feed for a short time on the leaves before building their winter webs.

The tents associated with the overwintering brown tailed moth caterpillars are seen commonly on the blackthorn stands, and less so in the gorse, although all the major species noted here are a food source for all stages of the insects' life.

9 Existing Management

The previous management plan (2006) represented the first known vegetation plan for this site. Prior to the implementation of the plan works were undertaken on a reactive and uncoordinated basis.

Following the previous management plan, coppicing of the blackthorn stands commenced, meadow cutting was instigated and direct removal of brown-tailed moth larval webs undertaken annually.

These works were successful in encouraging new growth, increasing biodiversity and managing populations, however it was identified that the plan period and regeneration was not as vigorous as anticipated in “textbook” conditions.

Rabbit grazing and pedestrian traffic, assisted by mowing of the footpath desire lines helps highlight walking routes, encouraging pedestrians to these areas.

These paths also facilitate operatives to monitor brown tailed moth populations and

remove larval webs. The larger stands can present (re)population breeding areas as are inaccessible.

Vegetation succession has enabled some woodland species to establish on the more sheltered landwards side of the site. These species have suffered from the attentions of unauthorised cutting causing damage to the species and leaving cuttings dumped on-site causing a visual distraction and fire hazard.

9.1 Issues

For this plan to achieve one of the key aims is monitoring and managing the Brown Tailed Moth populations. Only through implementation of a long-term strategy and continued observance can control be continued, without risk of the population becoming overwhelming. There are several reasons for controlling this species:

- The perceived health risk, to both members of the public and operatives working in the area
- The damage to vegetation, affecting the visual environment and the health of the habitat.
- To prevent a population reservoir establishing, which may be difficult to control or reduce if left unchecked.

9.2 Control Methods

9.2.1 Non-chemical:

Control of brown tail moth populations may be obtained by clipping the overwintering tents and destroying these tents by burning them. This control should be undertaken Autumn and Winter, from September to late March. The emergence from the larval tents is triggered by weather and temperature conditions and so regular monitoring is required to identify existing and new locations within the plan area.

9.2.2 Chemical:

Should populations increase to such proportions as to make hand clipping impractical, or stands of scrub grow to sizes unable to be accessed, pesticide application may be necessary. The pesticides should be applied as directed, when caterpillars are present and feeding, from early May through the end of June.

Chemical applications would be undertaken following the manufacturers recommendations on the label, using qualified operatives (or contractor).

Due to this area attracting a high number of public visitors, the exposed / windy conditions hindering application and the cost of this, chemical applications would only be considered if other control measures had failed.

10 Proposals

10.1 Design Rationale

As highlighted in the Village Design Statement (Section 5.1.2), the existing landscape character is viewed by the local community as extremely valuable, both for the habitat it provides for wildlife and for differentiating this site from similar local coastal spaces, such as Barton On Sea, which has been described as a 'barren green desert'. This plan therefore wishes to continue to maintain the existing scrubland character, whilst achieving the objectives of this revised plan.

Unchecked, the existing scrub pattern would spread, albeit very slowly due to prevailing site conditions. Natural vegetation succession would see mature scrub areas develop to woodland species unless impacted by the introduction of non-native species (such as pine or rhododendron spp.).

The proposals seek to check spread by continuing the mowing regime. The coppice blocks size and location have been carefully considered to maintain familiar vegetation patterns and habitats throughout all periods of the coppicing cycle.

Following consultation with stakeholders, there is a desire for taller vegetation along the road edge to promote the wildlife setting for visitors walking along the cliff edge path. While there are no planning or legal rights, property owners may have strong views on the encroachment of the view from their property.

Some new planting has been proposed during the plan period, focusing along the road side. The planting will enhance the existing character by increasing the diversity, provide shelter, create way marks, and define and frame views. Species have been selected for their native provenance (to enhance bio diversity) and their ability to withstand difficult growing conditions. All species are commonly found in the locality. New planting will be implemented when budgets allow, and continue the same themes established within previous vegetation plans.

The road and the vegetation alongside the road is managed by Hampshire County Council, the road verge mowing contract is currently fulfilled by NFDC. The area to the immediate edge, forming a green pavement, is mown and maintained under this contract. Mature vegetation alongside the road could hinder sighting of pedestrians, hazards and oncoming traffic, therefore if posing a safety hazard it will be removed and no additional species will be planted.

To continue to promote the biodiversity, ecology and native species, non-native plant species will be removed where these are identified, the removal is practicable and budgets allow. NFDC will undertake its duties if invasive species are identified (such as Japanese Knotweed, *Fallopia japonica*) under section 14(2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to "plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild" any plant listed in Schedule nine and undertake requirements under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

10.1.1 Informing Visitors and Residents

Educating and informing visitors, residents and users of the open space is an important step towards gaining their understanding and support to achieve the aims of the plan. This education will support several aspects of the plan:

- To inform members of the public about the brown tailed moth, to avoid contact incidences and to reduce the number of incidents.
- To inform members of the public about the measures NFDC is undertaking to manage populations, such as removing larval webs and managing vegetation.
- To inform members of the public about the biodiversity of the site; how they can play their part to help new species establish, reduce erosion, the wildlife they can see and enjoy alongside safety hazards on-site (such as cliff-edge, bathing hazards and adders).
- To highlight existing popular footpaths and walk routes, to encourage pedestrians to use these, helping reduce vegetation loss and erosion from new paths being created.

To reduce clutter and enhance the natural appearance of this open space, NFDC will work to remove redundant posts and signs and identify appropriate locations for new signage, balancing the need to select a high profile location with maintaining the natural setting and budget restrictions.

Improvements in signage will be undertaken in partnership with Coastal Teams, to assist fulfilling Coastal Management Plan objective B10.

Signage on-site will be supplemented by information within other media channels, such as NFDC website, social media and NFDC media briefing communications.

10.2 Implementation

NFDC will continue to coppice the blackthorn and other affected species on a rotational block system over a five - eight year cycle. This opens up the larger blocks to allow hand cutting of the overwintering larval tents. New plantings and the regenerated stock will be controlled with mowing to control regeneration in selected areas.

Meadow grass management will continue within the area from the main lateral coastal path towards the higher level vegetation to encourage the flora expected in such meadows area.

Continuing the coppice work could help reduce or even eradicate the moth from this area and any concern that the moth may spread further into the National Park. However in many cases due to the presence of the moth within several coastal sites, continuing vigilance is required and complete eradication may not be cost effective or without serious detriment to native species.

It is envisaged that chemical control of the moths by applying herbicides will not be necessary, unless directed otherwise. This practice would be viewed as a last resort if the proposed control method is unsuccessful for whatever reason.

Safe operating procedures and risk assessment have been written to support this work, see Chapter 11 for details.

10.3 Works Plan

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Further details, refer to:
Date	2016-7	2017-8	2018-9	2019-20	2020-1	2021-2	2022-3	2023-4	2024-5	2025-6	
Operations:											
Footpath Maintenance & Mow											10.4.1
Meadow Cut	Cut Annually										10.4.2
Coppicing											10.4.3
New Meadow Establishment	SE End			Around Paddy's Gap/Slope			As ID in Review				10.4.4
New Coppice Plantings		SE End (NPMC)							NPMC?		10.4.5
Bunding Improvements	Paddy's Gap CP		NW end		Areas along road		Paddy's Gap CP		NW end		10.4.6
Signage Improvements	Ref Seedings & Paths	Ref Plantings									10.4.7
Removal of Non-Native & Ornamental											10.4.8
Car Park, Benches & Surroundings	Work with MPC moving benches back from cliff					Move any benches following review					10.4.9
Review											10.4.10

10.4 Works Detail

10.4.1 Footpath Maintenance

Mowing of existing footpath “desire” lines to encourage pedestrians to use these areas, deter new paths being created, with the associated risk from brown tailed moth and erosion/degradation of the habitat.

Where footpaths progress between blocks of woody vegetation, the edges of these will continue to be cut to approximately 2.5m encourage pedestrians and to reduce injury from thorns/brambles encroaching onto the footpaths. Larval webs within operatives reach will be removed during the Winter/Spring (9.2.1)

10.4.2 Meadow Cut

Annual cut of the meadow areas (as shown in Figure 8), the arisings collected during this cut will continue to be composted in a sensitive and discrete manner on the site to continue to provide a wide variety of wildlife habitats, preserve the seed bank and nutrients (see Section 8 on Existing Biodiversity).

Continuing the meadow establishment and management established in the previous plan will allow new grassland species to colonise, increasing biodiversity and public enjoyment.

10.4.3 Coppicing

Coppicing will be carried out by cutting vegetation to ground level in blocks to achieve the clearance required to minimise contact with all stages of the moth's life cycle. All coppice material will be chipped on site.

Coppicing will be carried out as shown in Figure 8 to enable increased access to some larger scrub areas to enable monitoring of brown tailed moth and facilitate access to remove the laval webs (as outlined in 9.2.1).

As part of these works, invasive bramble species will be reduced and removed, to reduce competition of gorse and blackthorn, and provide richer habitats.

10.4.4 New Meadow Establishment

Areas identified in Figure 8 as suffering from erosion and suitable for re-seeding will, as resources allow, be re-seeded. Following scarify operations to prepare the ground, visitors to the area may be redirected to other areas/paths using signs and fencing following seeding of the area(s), to enable establishment of native species suitable to the location.

Where possible and without hindering visitors, footpaths will be combined and entrance/exits clearly indicated to encourage users to minimise damage.

10.4.5 New Coppice Establishment

Areas identified in Figure 8 as suitable for planting of native coppice species will, as resources allow, will be planted. Following soil preparation and planting, visitors to the area may be redirected to other areas/paths using signs and fencing, to enable establishment. Experience from the previous plan period has indicated establishment rates can be disappointing, especially in exposed locations. A trial

will be undertaken to use small (<0.5m) bunding of meadow cuttings as a weather break, providing protection from elements, nutrients and meadow seeds during the crucial first year of establishment.

Where possible and without hindering visitors, footpaths will be combined and entrance/exits clearly indicated to encourage users to minimise damage.

10.4.6 Bunding Improvements

To improve security of the site, reducing accidental and intentional unauthorised vehicle encroachment and illegal camping, the bunding will be refreshed approximately bi-annually. In some areas this may be achieved by re-digging ditch lines, moulding of excess soil material from other parts of the site or if unavailable other similar quality materials. These works will typically be undertaken in Oct/Nov to reduce disruption to wildlife and allow regeneration seeding during Spring.

These works will include re-shaping of existing bunding (such as around the overflow car park), as outlined in 5.1.2 and re-seeding these with meadow grass. Litter bins may be better positioned to act as vehicle deterrents and life expired bollards identified through routine asset inspections may be removed and replaced with bunding, adding habitat potential and in keeping with the environment.

10.4.7 Communications & Signage

To fulfil the aims of engaging and informing residents and visitors (10.1.1), signs informing about the local habitats, vegetation works undertaken and habitat management will be installed at parking and public transport locations.

10.4.8 Removal of Non-Native Species

To manage and encourage existing species and reduce competition, non-native species (including unauthorised ornamental plantings) will be removed where practical and as resources allow.

10.4.9 Car Park Surroundings & Benches

Car park areas are managed by NFDC but are not covered under this vegetation plan. It is recognised that many visitors arrive by car and these for popular starting locations for users. As practicality and funds allow, it is intended to improve the landscaping around the kiosk, possibly through plantings. Furthermore the boundary areas will be maintained and drains cleared respecting the native vegetation.

NFDC car parks and toilets are managed by Streetscene and there are regulatory and bylaw requirements with regard to signage, access and maintenance.

Benches within the plan area are maintained by MPC. Following cliff erosion and cliff falls during the previous plan period, with permission from NPMC, a section of footpath was moved inland. A number of benches require to be moved to a safer and more accessible location adjacent to the footpath.

NFDC will work in partnership with MPC to make efforts to contact families of dedicated benches, consult and arrange for the affected benches to be moved to a

safer location adjacent to the footpath. This will assist those less mobile to access and enjoy the benches and views, reduce vegetation damage, erosion and avoid benches possibly being dislodged onto the cliff or beach.

Following the trial installation of a recycled plastic bench in 2012 within the plan area this has remained in good condition. Where benches have weathered due to natural processes and the exposed location, these will be replaced with recycled plastic examples of a similar size to reduce maintenance requirements and improve safety.

10.4.10 Review

During these periods the progress will be reviewed on-site, monitoring re-growth of coppiced areas, the establishment of new meadow areas, species present and progress. Following the review and feedback from stakeholders, the follow years plan may be adjusted to allow for growth conditions, damage from humans or coastal processes, plan proposals working well, areas needing to be addressed.

[add plan here, from GIS, showing what works in what locations]

Figure 8 - Plan showing areas identified for works

11 Safe Operating Procedures & Risk Assessments

11.1 Copy & paste stuff here from Andy B

12 References & Further Reading

- New Forest District Council
- NFDC Core Strategy (2009) - <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/14183/Local-Plan-Part-1-Core-Strategy-for-New-Forest-District-outside-the-National-Park> and Development Management Policies - <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=29256&p=0>
- Coastal Management Plan (2014) <http://www.nfdc.gov.uk/article/2512/Coastal-Management-Plan>
- Open Spaces Policy (in progress)
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