

The Fylde Sand Dunes Project

The Fylde Sand Dunes Project is a partnership project between Fylde Council, Blackpool Council and The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside. Funded by the Environment Agency, it was established in 2013 to conserve the dune system and to increase awareness of their significance.

The main aims for management of the Fylde sand dunes are to:

- Enhance the nature conservation interest of the coastal habitats
- Improve the efficiency of the dunes and saltmarsh as soft sea-defence
- Enhance public appreciation and enjoyment of the dunes.

Good Neighbours

The housing development is in close proximity to an area of sand dunes that has been nationally protected and designated by Natural England as a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI) which gives legal protection to the best sites for wildlife and geology. It also adjoins the Ribble Estuary which is designated as a 'Special Protection Area' (SPA) for its international importance for birds. For this reason, please could we ask that you keep dogs on a lead or under close control in winter, when internationally important birds are on the beach and may be especially vulnerable to disturbance.

As our new neighbours, please enjoy the surrounding dunes but help us to protect them by:

- Sticking to waymarked paths
- Picking up any litter
- Cleaning up after your dog
- Not tipping any garden waste in the dunes
- Respecting the ever changing nature of the dunes and their nationally important wildlife
- Joining some of our events to learn more about the dunes or perhaps even volunteer with us!



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Information for New Residents

Introduction: The Dunes & How They Affect You

The Fylde sand dunes are an important feature of our coastline, covering approximately 80 hectares between Starr Gate in the north and Lytham in the south.

They are important in protecting residents from storms. Wind-blown sand, however, can be a problem and the project is reducing that.

Our dunes are some of the last in Lancashire, nearly 90% of which have been lost to development since 1845.

The dunes support a surprisingly rich variety of plants and wildlife. The dunes are popular with walkers, horse riders, dog walkers, bird watchers and picnickers.



The dunes are not only important for wildlife and recreation, they are also crucial for flood defence. They act as a natural barrier to the sea at high tide, and release sand during storm conditions to reduce wave action and protect residents' homes. While much depleted, the remaining dunes still form the most significant part of the borough's coastal defence. Due to their importance for habitats, biodiversity, sea defence and recreation it is vital that a management plan is implemented to conserve our dunes.

Coastal Access

Vegetation is vital to the stability of the dunes as it traps and anchors sand blown in from the beach, helping to build the sand dunes. Damage of the vegetation on dunes, often caused by human use, can lead to erosion and potentially reduce the dunes effectiveness in protecting from storm conditions.



Fencing and pathways are designed to create obvious access points in order to concentrate pedestrian footfall to defined areas - protecting vegetation and reducing erosion. Not all beaches will require formalised access routes, but with increasing development and recreation, our dunes are inevitably becoming eroded.

Uncontrolled access is one of the major contributors towards erosion on our dunes: the creation and maintenance of formalised access routes plays a crucial role in their protection.

Blow-Outs & Wind-Blown Sand

Blow-outs are 'holes' in a sand-dune system caused by wind removing the sand. If designated access routes are ignored, trampling can cause vegetation cover to be worn away and expose the bare sand beneath. Strong winds on the bare sand can cause loss of sand and create a blow-out. Blow-outs funnel onshore winds which cause further sand to be lost and this may blow on to neighbouring roads or houses.



Wind-blown sand has been a long-term issue in Fylde. Unfortunately, due to the proximity of Lytham and St Anne's to the dynamic dune system, some wind-blown sand is inevitable. Fylde Council is working hard to keep this to a minimum.

Due to the volumes involved the removal of this sand is an ongoing and resource-intensive operation. As much as possible, the sand removed from the roadside is recycled back into the system. However, as the sand could potentially be contaminated, it is only recycled to less sensitive areas.

