

Painted cow sculpture trail arrives at Woolacombe Dunes for the summer

On June 25th, to celebrate the first World Sand Dune Day, ten bright and bold, community-painted cow sculptures will form a fun and educational ‘Cows on Dunes’ visitor trail through the dunes

The trail has been created by North Devon National Trust and Dynamic Dunescapes, and is designed to showcase the importance of sand dunes to wildlife, people and the community. Each cow was allocated a theme, and has been painted by a different school or community group in North Devon.

The community have been involved in the Cows on Dunes Community Art Project from the very beginning. The cow's themes were chosen after National Trust ran a survey exploring the local public's views, thoughts and feelings towards sand dunes in North Devon, and include: threats to sand dunes; memories of the coast, the military; dune plants and animals; dogs on the dunes.

Bev Phillips, Dynamic Dunescapes Engagement Officer at North Devon National Trust, says *‘The community arts project has already inspired and empowered so many different people and groups who have contributed, and I’ve been so impressed by how much passion, hard work, idea-sharing and creativity has been involved. It’s brilliant to see the sculptures painted and to know that they’ll be a thought-provoking addition to the dunes, and that the community has been involved in our dune conservation and education work.’*

With the trail's launch coinciding with a whole host of exciting events planned for World Sand Dune Day, including yoga and photography workshops in the dunes, from June 25th visitors to Woolacombe will be able to follow the trail and learn more about each cow sculpture, the team who painted it, and about the role of cows (real ones!) in sand dune conservation.

In Devon, and across the UK, our sand dunes are in poor condition for wildlife. Cows can manage the land effectively, and in a more natural and beneficial way than with heavy machinery. By grazing and trampling they break up areas of dense vegetation, maintain areas of short grassland, promote new plant and wildflower growth, scrape small areas of bare sand and create the right kind of habitats for rare dune wildlife to thrive.

For the last few years, a small herd of cows have grazed Woolacombe Dunes, helping to keep overgrowing vegetation under control. They will be back later this year to enjoy their scenic winter grazing grounds and support our sand dune conservation work again. The cows are calm and relaxed in nature, and have been hand-picked for their comfort around people. Please keep dogs on leads around the cows for their safety and for yours. It is also vitally important that visitors pick up all dog poo left in the dunes, as it can cause serious health problems for our cows and other wildlife.

The trail will start at Woolacombe Tourist Information Centre. The sculptures have been painted by: Wave Rangers; Georgie's Youth Centre; Georgeham Primary School; Dene Lodge Nursing Home; Local artist Felicity Cowley; Hatherleigh Primary School; Trinity Arts Group; Space Youth Centre; North Devon National Trust Rangers and Volunteers.

The Cows on Dunes trail and the introduction of the new dune grazing herd have been established by National Trust North Devon as part of Dynamic Dunescapes, an ambitious

partnership project restoring 7,000 hectares of sand dune habitat in the UK. The project is funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund and EU LIFE Programme.

Find out more about World Sand Dune Day and book your place on the exciting events planned at Woolacombe on the Dynamic Dunescapes website: [Yoga, Wood Carving, Wildlife Photography; Woolacombe World Sand Dune Day - Dynamic Dunescapes](#)

NOTES FOR EDITORS

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Images [Single-use only]:



Image 1: 'Goofy'. The theme for Goofy is 'Dogs on Dunes'. Goofy was painted by The Wave Rangers



Image 2: Cows on Woolacombe Dunes. Credit Josh Day.



Image 3: 'Quirky Colonel Cow' decorated by The Wave Rangers. The theme for Quirky is Military on Dunes.



Image 4: 'Daisy May'. The theme for Daisy is 'Threats to Sand Dunes'. Daisy was decorated by members of the community during community painting sessions and by Georgham Primary School. Here's Spencer and Bec's kick starting the sessions off at Baggy Point, Crojde.

Additional Notes for Editors:

About Dynamic Dunescapes

[Dynamic Dunescapes](#) is a partnership project restoring sand dunes across England and Wales for the benefit of wildlife, people and communities, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the EU LIFE Programme. Project partners are Natural England, Plantlife, National Trust, Natural Resources Wales, Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Cumbria Wildlife Trust.

The coastal dunes of England and Wales are internationally important habitats for wildlife, listed as one of the most threatened environments in Europe for biodiversity loss. These dunes are a sanctuary to rare species like the fen orchid, natterjack toad and sand lizard. But, dune management messaging supporting dune stabilisation over many decades has meant that dunes have become overgrown with vegetation. We now realise that this is putting protected wildlife at risk. Healthy sand dunes need to be free to move and be dynamic. Many species need areas of open sand to thrive, so this project will bring life back to the dunes by creating areas of open sand. Other specialised creatures need us to improve the dune slacks, as these often water-filled dips behind the dunes are important habitats for amphibians and birds. Invasive species will also be removed from the dunes and dune grasslands, to improve conditions for rare native plants to flourish. We will work with skilled

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local and national experts, and involve schools and local groups, volunteers and visitors of all ages and abilities to help rejuvenate our dunes.

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