

New sculpture at Crymlyn Burrows will celebrate the beauty and biodiversity of the area

This week, a new sculpture will be installed at Crymlyn Burrows to celebrate the wildlife and diversity of the protected coastal site and its importance to the local community.

The sculpture has been designed by a Welsh Artist Blacksmith to incorporate key elements of the landscape, whilst also reflecting the commitment to improve the habitat for people and wildlife, long into the future.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held on Sunday 16th July for visitors of the Burrows and the wider community. [The event](#) will be attended by high-profile guests from Swansea University, Natural Resources Wales, Plantlife and other partner organisations and will have many family-friendly nature activities to encourage visitors to explore the dunes.

Coastal sand dunes are listed as the habitat type most at risk of biodiversity loss in Europe [1], and Crymlyn Burrows is a vital refuge in an area of high development. The dunes and salt marsh here are home to rare and specialist wildlife, including dune tiger beetles, orchids, and brown-banded carder bees. The area also provides a space to connect with nature for both the students at Swansea University Bay Campus and local residents.

Swansea University, working together with Dynamic DunesCAPES and Buglife, have been carrying out habitat restoration works to improve the condition of Crymlyn Burrows. One of the major threats to sand dunes is uncontrolled vegetation and invasive species growth which smothers the dunes and has a devastating effect on the specialist plants and invertebrates which live there, many of which are adapted to live in bare or moving sand. To help restore the habitat, the excess vegetation has been removed mechanically with volunteers helping to remove any regrowth. It is hoped that these works will allow the Burrows to flourish again and secure the site's future as an important place for people and wildlife.

Ben Sampson, Swansea University Sustainability officer and Crymlyn Burrows Warden, said: *“Crymlyn Burrows is one of the last remaining pockets of wilderness around the Swansea Bay coast, its dunes and marshes home to an amazing range of plants and animals. Having such an important area for wildlife so close to the city and free for all to explore makes it a wonderful place for people to experience nature on their doorstep, and all the more special”.*

Created by Welsh Blacksmith James Eifion Thomas the sculpture has been designed as a gateway for people entering the site. Its ornate arches will welcome people as they begin their journey and provide a glimpse of the landscape in store. In time, a second sculpture will

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be installed at the other entrance to the Burrows – designed as a pair, this second sculpture will reflect some of the larger landscape features and influences of nearby Baglan Burrows.

Hannah Lee, Wales Engagement Officer for Dynamic Dunescapes, said:

“This sculpture will really help to create a sense of arrival for people visiting Crymlyn. We’ve designed it to include elements of the site that local residents connect with the most and you’ll see it has butterflies, birds, dragonflies and more intertwined in it. We want it to represent not only the now, but also the past and future of the site”

Local residents, students and the wider community are encouraged to attend the unveiling event where there will be free refreshments, along with a Bioblitz, guided nature walks and a scavenger hunt.

The event is free to attend and is co-hosted by Dynamic Dunescapes, in partnership with Plantlife, Natural Resources Wales, Swansea University, Neath Port Talbot Local Nature Partnership, Buglife, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation trust, Sands of LIFE and the South East Wales Biological Recording Centre (SEWBReC). Dynamic Dunescapes is a project working to restore coastal sand dune habitats for people, communities and wildlife across England and Wales, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the EU LIFE Programme. Project partners are Natural England, Plantlife, Natural Resources Wales, National Trust and Wildlife Trusts. Plantlife and Natural Resources Wales are leading on the engagement works taking place in Wales. The Dynamic Dunescapes project, Swansea University, Natural Resources Wales and Plantlife are grateful for the support for this work from the landowners of Crymlyn Burrows, St Modwen.

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Images (Single-use)

A range of images and a video are available for download from this Google Drive folder, including:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AZtd_kq6_WXltBdtMdzUJdsJ28nVOc9Y?usp=drive_1ink

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The location of the archway at Crymlyn Burrows CREDIT Swansea University/Ben Sampson



A Bioblitz carried out at Crymlyn Burrows CREDIT Dynamic DunesCAPES/ Hannah Lee

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The creation of the archway sculpture CREDIT James Eifion Thomas.

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Notes to editors

[1] Article 17 Habitats Directive Report 2019

Find out more about Dynamic DunesCAPES on the project website:
<https://dynamicdunesCAPES.co.uk> and about the project actions in South Wales:
<https://dynamicdunesCAPES.co.uk/project/swansea-neath-port-talbot/>

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.



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

Follow @dynamicdunes on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

About Plantlife

Plantlife is the global voice for wild plants and fungi, with 17,000 members and supporters and 23 nature reserves covering nearly 4,500 acres across England, Scotland and Wales. Plantlife enhances, restores, protects and celebrates our natural heritage through working with landowners, other conservation organisations, public and private bodies and the wider public to secure a world rich in wild plants and fungi. A registered charity, Plantlife is funded by individual donations, through grants and charitable trusts and through its pioneering land management advice and projects.

About Swansea University

Founded in 1920, Swansea University is a research-led, dual campus university located along Swansea Bay in south Wales, UK. Its stunning beachfront campuses and friendly welcome make Swansea University a desirable destination for more than 22,000 students from across the globe. There are three academic faculties, delivering around 450 undergraduate and 350 postgraduate degree programmes.

Swansea is a UK top 30 institution, ranked 26th in the 2023 Guardian University Guide. In the 2021 Research Excellence Framework, 86% of Swansea University's overall research and 91% of its research environment were classed as world-leading and internationally excellent, with 86% of its research impact rated outstanding and very considerable.

[Swansea University](#) is a registered charity. No. 1138342.

About SEWBRc

[South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre \(SEWBRc\)](#) is the Local Environmental Records Centre for the collation, management and dissemination of biodiversity data for Gwent and Glamorgan. Our aim is to make appropriate local biodiversity information available to all those who need it, to help ensure that decisions which affect local biodiversity are made using the best available data.

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We achieve this aim by:

- Supporting the local biological recording community and helping them to manage and mobilise the wealth of information they gather;
- Working with a wide range of organisations to collate and computerise the data they hold;
- Collating and managing these diverse data sets in a central location; and
- Delivering a range of innovative and tailored biodiversity information products and services to meet the needs of our users.

SEWBRc covers the vice-counties of Gwent (VC35, aka Monmouthshire) and Glamorgan (VC41). Our Unitary Authorities are: Blaenau-Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea, Torfaen and Vale of Glamorgan*.

[Click here](#) for links to SEWBRc's social platforms

About Buglife

Buglife is the only organisation in Europe devoted to the conservation of all invertebrates. We're actively working to save our rarest little animals, everything from bees to beetles, worms to woodlice and jumping spiders to jellyfish. Buglife has a wealth of practical conservation work predominantly within the UK. With so many species to choose from Buglife has to prioritise work areas meaning that the current focus is predominantly on pollinators and freshwater habitats, however as the only custodian of so many invertebrates action is also taken to save species at risk of UK extinction and sites of major importance that are under threat. Much of this work is leading by example developing best possible interactions to nurture species and then sharing with others to ensure the greatest impact for invertebrates,

Many of these best practice projects have subsequently been adopted by national and local governments thus gaining in status and effect. For instance the flagship B-Lines pollinator connectivity project has been funded by all UK governments and seen as integral to local pollinator strategies.

About Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust (ARC) is a national wildlife charity committed to conserving the UK's amphibians and reptiles, and saving the disappearing habitats on which they depend. In south Wales, we're currently delivering a large-scale, four-year project called Connecting the Dragons. Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the project aims to restore and raise awareness of declining and fragmented amphibian and reptile populations. We have a broad remit, from practical habitat management, creation, and restoration, to training volunteers and the public, and helping to advance public understanding of our target species of frogs and toads, newts, lizards and snakes.



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About [Sands of LIFE](#)



Sands of LIFE is a major conservation project to rejuvenate sand dunes across Wales which runs to June 2024. It is recreating natural movement in the dunes and revitalising habitats which are home to some of our rarest wildlife.

This major project, led by Natural Resources Wales, is restoring over 2400 hectares of sand dunes, across four Special Areas of Conservation, on 10 separate Welsh sites.