

**Conservation works happening on Eskmeals dunes:**

Dynamic Dunescapes is a multi-partnership project working to restore some of the most important sand dune systems across England and Wales for the benefit of wildlife, people and communities. The project is working across Cumbria, including Drigg and Eskmeals dunes.

Sand dunes are now the habitat most at risk in Europe for biodiversity loss. Overtime sand dunes have become over-grown with vegetation and have stabilised, putting specialist wildlife that relies on open sandy habitat to thrive at risk. This is due loss of rabbit populations from disease, climate change, change in land use, grazing regimes and increase in nitrogen deposition, leading to increased growth of scrub and coarser grasses.

Work as part of the project is currently being undertaken by contractors at Eskmeals dunes to remove areas of sea buckthorn.

This species was once planted to help stabilise sand dunes and is not native to the west coast. However, the sea buckthorn has overgrown and now covers a very large area of the dune system, reducing areas of sparsely vegetated habitat vital for natterjack toads, rare orchids, insects and other specialist rare species. Sea buckthorn is currently being cut by contractors. This will be left to dry and will be burnt in small controlled fires on site to remove in the next couple of months. If Covid restrictions ease, we will be looking for local volunteers to help on site too.

Dynamic Dunescapes will also be doing some work to restore the pools at Eskmeals. Fencing will be installed to help protect the pools from disturbance by cattle. These pools are important breeding sites for the rare and protected natterjack toad. Furthermore, some work will be undertaken on Drigg dunes to remove areas of *Rosa rugosa*, an invasive species, over the course of the project.

To find out more, please visit [www.dynamicdunescapes.co.uk](http://www.dynamicdunescapes.co.uk)

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