

South Milton Parish Council

Annual Update National Trust

The beach was very busy throughout 2021 due to the ongoing restrictions in travel from the coronavirus pandemic. The Visitor Welcome team did a fantastic job managing the vehicles and visitors throughout the season, working hard alongside the Ranger team and volunteers to keep the site tidy and well presented. The car park team have had their roles changed following the pandemic and no longer carry out membership recruitment on site, the role is now focused on welcoming visitors and ensuring the sites are well presented. This has meant a quicker flow of vehicles to park, especially now no cash is taken, vehicles now park up and then use the P&D machines.

The damaged outfall pipe which drains the South Huish bird reserve was patched up before Covid and we have been working with contractors to cost up a permanent repair. This project has been affected by the huge increases in material prices over the last year, and we have had to revisit the design of the replacement in an effort to reduce the cost. In the meantime local contractor RS Plant Hire has been clearing the blockages on a regular basis.

We have been installing further chestnut paling around the dunes to protect them from erosion by visitors, we are currently encasing the southern end of the dune system where people cut across to the beach from the car park. This has been very effective in other areas of the site, and previously eroded areas have been regrowing with marram grass.

The boardwalk opposite the café was partly removed where it had become rotten and unfit for purpose. We are going to replace this and have been obtaining several quotes. We also looked at access to the site for people with limited mobility and are planning improvements to the main boardwalk access to make it DDA compliant.

Over the last year we have also undertaken the usual maintenance on the trackway, removing potholes and dealing with drainage issues. We have replaced the damaged bollards on the slipway, and we will be locating the P&D machines together to improve visitor safety when cars are queuing into the site in the main season.

The Visitor Welcome team are ready for the season ahead and we will be fencing off the overflow field for the main summer season later in June.