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## New nature reserve is created

**A new nature reserve is about to be created as the final stages of a multi-million-pound coastal protection scheme in Selsey are carried out.**

Works are starting to allow the sea to gently flow into a new intertidal area at Medmerry. The area has been created by flood prevention works between Selsey and Bracklesham and over time will develop into a saltmarsh habitat for wildlife such as birds, water voles, great crested newts and reptiles.

The Environment Agency's Medmerry Managed Realignment Scheme stands next to Bunn Leisure's £16.8 million coastal protection scheme, which was the first privately funded project of its kind and size in the UK. The Bunn Leisure scheme at West Sands created a fabulous new beach for holidaymakers to enjoy this summer.

The Medmerry scheme on Bunn Leisure's western boundary will allow nature-loving holiday park guests enjoy watching the wildlife and use new footpaths, viewpoints and cycleways created by the project. Bunn Leisure recently released its West Point five-star development of holiday homes in a prime location overlooking the new nature reserve.

The Medmerry site is designed to help to replace important wildlife habitats which have been lost around the Solent because of necessary flood prevention works. Depending on the weather, work to create the new habitat will begin on Wednesday as construction workers begin "breach" works to lower the level of the beach for a width of 100m.

Water will start to enter the realigned area very slowly and existing plant life is expected to die off as salt water replaces fresh water. Wildlife will begin to populate the area over the next couple of years as it matures and fully establishes itself as a natural haven.

Once the breach works have been completed, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) will lease the site from the Environment Agency and will be mainly responsible for its management.

John Bunn, Managing Director of Bunn Leisure, said: "Visitors to Bunn Leisure are already enjoying our fantastic new beach thanks to our ambitious and impressive coastal protection scheme.

“We’re watching the Medmerry site develop and we’re sure that it will give guests who are birdwatchers and nature-lovers even more reasons to come and enjoy spending time at Bunn Leisure.”

The new footpaths, bridleways and viewpoints created by the Medmerry project are expected to be complete and ready to use by November. While works are carried out there are signs to tell visitors which public rights of way are open.

**Ends**

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