



A SUSTAINABLE VISION FOR HOYLAKE BEACH

UPDATE: JULY 2019

We hope you have by now read our conversation starter **A Sustainable Vision for Hoylake Beach**, and that you found it informative.

Here's some more information for you to consider: an aerial view of the foreshore from (right to left) the old toilet block to just beyond Courtenay Road, off Stanley Road (figure 1).



A high resolution zoomable version of this image can be downloaded at https://hoylakevillage.org.uk/images/pdfs/Foreshore_no_labels.pdf

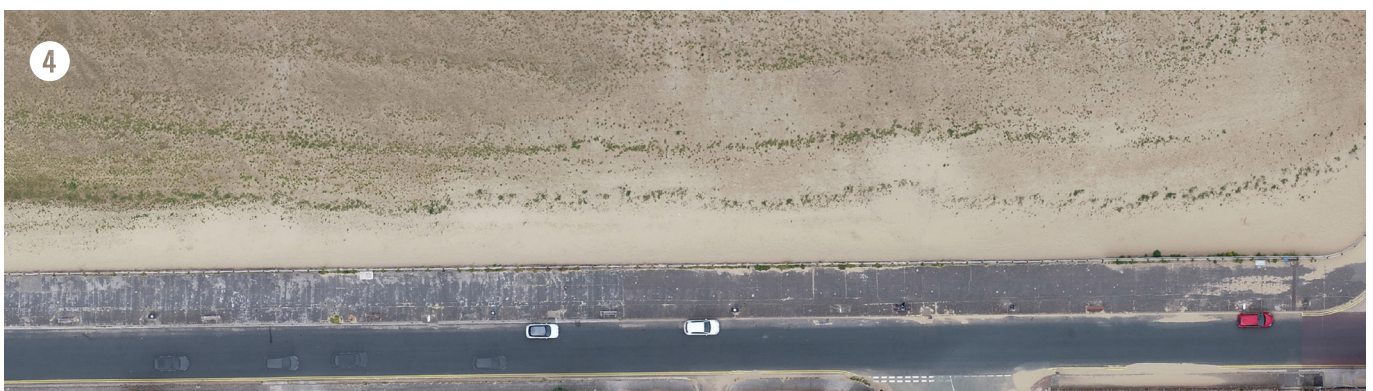
Firstly, this clearly shows the impact of broken drains to the right of the old toilet block (figure 2). Thick, marshy growth extends out onto the beach, fed by nutrients from effluent and from additional seepage through the promenade wall. Naturally, flies and mosquitoes congregate here. This is nothing whatsoever to do with Spartina; it is about broken drains. Until that is fixed, no amount of spraying, digging or any other treatment will work. Unsightly, unpleasant, and undoubtedly a public health hazard.



Secondly, it clearly shows the impact of broken drains near the Kings Gap corner (figure 3). Remember the sinkhole that appeared on the Kings Gap some years ago? Drains do crack and seep. Here, meadow grass is loving the rich nutrients being provided. Again, nothing whatsoever to do with Spartina. Until that is fixed, no amount of spraying, digging or any other treatment will work. Someone has attempted to dig up the grass here and has left the vegetation in piles to compost, attracting even more flies and dogs to pee on it. Of course within days the grass began to grow again in the same area. It is very fertile sand.



Third, extending the full length of the image (figure 4), thin lines of embryo dune succession are clearly visible. This natural consequence of beach level rise, referred to in our conversation starter, may not last; it might be washed away by strong high tides and winds later this year, if so it will probably be back next year and the year after as the beach level continues to rise. Dunes are protected habitats. They are also natural filters for the sea, trapping waste from the roads and removing flotsam. They also reduce the amount of sand blowing on to roads and blocking drains! Could a community group form to periodically clean a more established dune system?



CONCLUSION:

1. Get the drains fixed, the marshy growth around the old toilet block will then die or can be manually removed; the meadow grass at the Kings Gap corner will find it much harder to establish and survive without that constant supply of moisture and fertiliser, and can be removed or will naturally be covered by wind blown sand.
2. Let's monitor and manage dune succession. Let's get some science. Let's get evidence and data.
3. Let's look at just how much Spartina there is. This year, there's very little. Why? If Natural England do authorise WMBC to use herbicides on it, then that process should be monitored for impact on invertebrates, which are a food source for the birds.