Wales, United Kingdom

## Lock in carbon and reinvigorate vital habitats **National Peatland Action Programme**





The National Peatland Action Programme (NPAP) marks a significant advancement in peatland restoration efforts in Wales, representing both a major milestone and a substantial investment by the Welsh Government. The programme provides the essential resources. strategic direction, and coordination necessary to meet the ambitious objectives outlined in the Welsh Government's Peatland Policy. This policy aims to manage





Figyn Blaen Brefi, SSSI, WGW

and restore at least 30,000 hectares of semi-natural peatlands and 5,000 hectares of highly modified peatlands, reflecting a bold commitment to enhancing Wales' peatland ecosystems.

NPAP focuses on six priority action themes that address key areas of peatland degradation: peat erosion, peat drainage, and the sustainable management of both upland and lowland degraded peatlands. Additionally, the programme targets afforested and hyper-modified peatlands. These themes guide the programme's restoration

Summary of NPAP's approach to monitoring the outcomes of peatland restoration. Only elements marked with a red star are current areas of work

activities across various land uses, encompassing both private and public lands managed by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and partner organizations.

To ensure effective restoration, NPAP integrates a comprehensive monitoring strategy. One key innovation is the development of condition mapping, which establishes baseline conditions of selected NPAP sites before restoration begins. The NPAP also focuses on monitoring hydrological responses to restoration. Complementing this, the Welsh Peatlands Data Portal represents a major innovation, consolidating peatland data into an accessible, interactive platform, supporting engagement, planning, and reporting.

The NPAP also emphasizes communicating the value of Welsh peatlands and collaborates with diverse projects and partners.

#### **NbS in depth**



#### **Environmental benefits**



The NPAP demonstrates that widespread peatland restoration and local communities' livelihoods can coexist, while keeping carbon locked away. The Programme targets peatland bodies most in need of restoration as well as safeguarding those in good condition and recovering degraded ecosystems. The aim is to deliver 600-800ha of restoration per year across a range of land uses on both private and public land by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and partner organizations. Initial estimates for year four (2023-2024) provide a conservative figure of >600ha under restoration activity, and this this figure builds upon the success of year three (2022-2023) delivering 630ha, year two (2021-2022) delivering 1,000ha, and year one (2020/21), delivering 650 ha of restoration activities which were delivered across over 20 sites spanning the full ecological range of semi-natural peatland habitats in Wales.

#### **Social benefits**

By raising awareness of the importance of peatland restoration, NPAP has connected diverse communities, landowners, farmers, and the general public, promoting collaboration and participation in environmental conservation.

In 2023/24 alone, NPAP organized over 120 engagement meetings and events, including presentations at major public forums like the Royal Welsh Agricultural Show and the National Eisteddfod. These initiatives reached a broad audience, including landowners, farmers, and local communities, fostering increased awareness and collaboration on peatland restoration. Additionally, the duallanguage webinars produced for grant information have facilitated broader participation and understanding among diverse groups.

Community-led projects and training sessions have empowered local stakeholders, fostering a sense of collective responsibility for environmental stewardship and enhancing social cohesion around shared ecological goals.

### NPAP - National Peatland Action Programme, for Nature and Climate Data and Mapping Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Natural Resources Wales **Peat Portal launched** 48 Spatial data layers relating to Welsh peatlands all in one place and available to the public in an accessible format. Water

# **Data and Mapping** Activity reporting Detailed information on restoration interventions is now spatially available to the public via the Peat Potal.

#### **Economic benefits**

**Competitive (Restoration Delivery)** £170,420

Economically, NPAP's peatland restoration efforts have created job opportunities and strengthened local economies, particularly in rural areas.

The programme has provided grants to landowners, organizations, and individuals. incentivizing peatland restoration projects that not only contribute to environmental goals but also support local businesses and industries involved in land management, conservation, and agricultural improvement.

grant mechanisms. The Strategic Allocated Funding (SAF) alone distributed £700,000, with £545,295 actually spent on restoration activities. Additionally, the Development Grant offered between £10,000 and £30,000 to support planning for shovelready projects, while the newly

Map layer showing the location of restoration activity in 2023/24, and the main priority theme addressed at each, overlain on the Wales Peatland Map.



Pie chart showing total value awarded under each of the three separate grants

The grant system, including the Strategic Allocated Funding and competitive Development Grants, ensures that both individuals and organizations can contribute to these environmental and economic benefits, building longterm financial resilience in Welsh communities.

In 2023/24, NPAP allocated £898,097 in grants across 18

established Delivery Grant aims to fund the implementation of restoration activities.

These grants not only support the local economy by funding restoration projects but also contribute to long-term cost savings through improved flood prevention, reduced carbon emissions, and enhanced biodiversity.

The investment in peatland restoration is thus a strategic approach to fostering economic resilience and sustainability in Welsh communities.

recipients through three separate

Network **Selected** Nature case studies

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