

# Yorkshire Peat Partnership Annual Report

April 2021 – March 2022





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## HEADLINES

This is a progress report on the peatland restoration work completed in Yorkshire since 2009. Previous annual reports have included work in Forest of Bowland; this was, strictly speaking, carried out by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust rather than Yorkshire Peat Partnership.

### Landscape-scale Action

Yorkshire Peat Partnership delivered a remarkable 41,469 ha\* of peat restoration work by the end of March 2022 which is 43% of the estimated 92,946 ha\* of peatland in our operational area.

#### Key highlights included:

✓ Securing £1,061,621 to cover core costs (e.g. staff, vehicles, equipment and office costs)

✓ Securing £1,985,343 of capital funds to carry out direct peatland restoration

✓ Completing foot surveys of 6,512 ha of the estimated 92,946 ha of peatland

✓ Carrying out Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) surveys of over 1,400 ha of peatland in Yorkshire.

✓ Completing restoration plans for 11,088 ha of peat units

We have delivered restoration works on **7,714 ha** of peat units in Yorkshire; **4,895 ha** on new restoration sites and **2,819 ha** on existing sites. To help restore these peatlands, we:

✓ Slowed the flow of water through 211 km of eroding grips and gullies with 18,004 dams and baffles

✓ Re-profiled 287 km of grips and gully edges and hags

✓ Re-vegetated 32 ha of bare peat, mineral soil and micro-erosion

✓ Planted 1 million plug plants: 258,013 cottongrass; 137,006 crowberry; 638,113 sphagnum

\*this is defined as upland management units containing peat.



# 1 YORKSHIRE PEAT PARTNERSHIP

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## 1.1 What is Yorkshire Peat Partnership?

Yorkshire Peat Partnership began in 2009, as an umbrella organisation led by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, to try to coordinate the restoration of the badly degraded blanket bog of northern Yorkshire. Since then, we have become the primary organisation coordinating the delivery of upland peatland restoration across the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the North York Moors National Park and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We work closely with landowners, agents, gamekeepers, farmers and contractors to help restore Yorkshire's internationally important blanket bog.



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## 1.2 Why are we needed?

Blanket bog is (in England) an upland peatland habitat, occurring from around 200m upwards, generally on flat or gently sloping ground where drainage is poor. Few plants are adapted to the acidic, infertile conditions found on the deepest peat, and sphagnum mosses and cottongrasses predominate.

The UK has 13% of the world's blanket bog, and we estimate Yorkshire holds around 97,000 ha - around 26% of England's total resource – storing over 45,000,000 tonnes of carbon. In addition to locking up millennia of carbon, healthy blanket bog helps to slow the flow of water from the uplands into rivers and streams, filters our drinking water and provides habitat for some amazing wildlife. Formed over thousands of years, it has taken just six decades to devastate Yorkshire's peatlands.

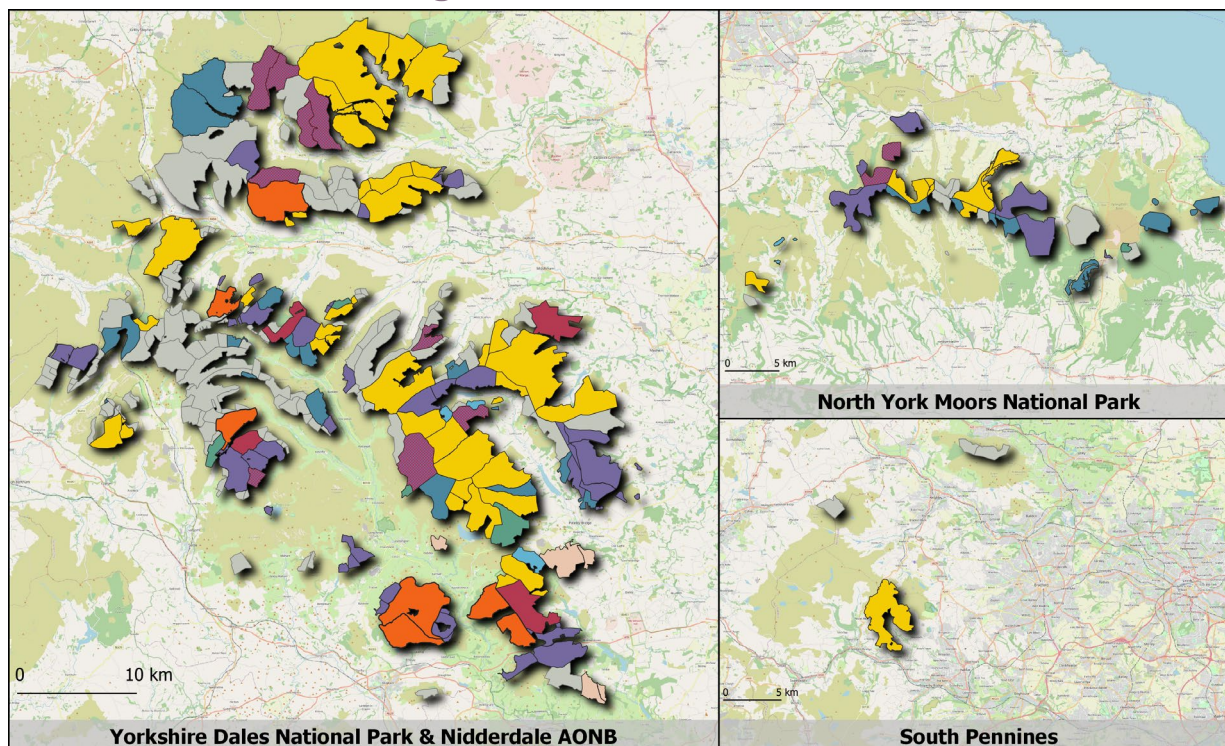
Most damage occurred between the 1950s and 1980s, when the government incentivised landowners to drain the land for “agricultural improvement”. Drainage channels – known as grips – were dug across vast tracts of blanket bog, which still criss-cross the landscape today. 80% of our blanket bog has been damaged in this way, leaving our peatlands brown and broken. We, along with our partners and funders, aim to restore this amazing habitat to fully functioning blanket bog that benefits both people and wildlife.

Yorkshire Peat Partnership is managed by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in partnership with Yorkshire Water, Natural England, North York Moors National Park Authority, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority the Environment Agency, Moorland Association, National Trust and Nidderdale AONB, and private landowners.



## 2 OUR WORK

### 2.1 Our work on the ground since 2009



Current progress as of March 2022

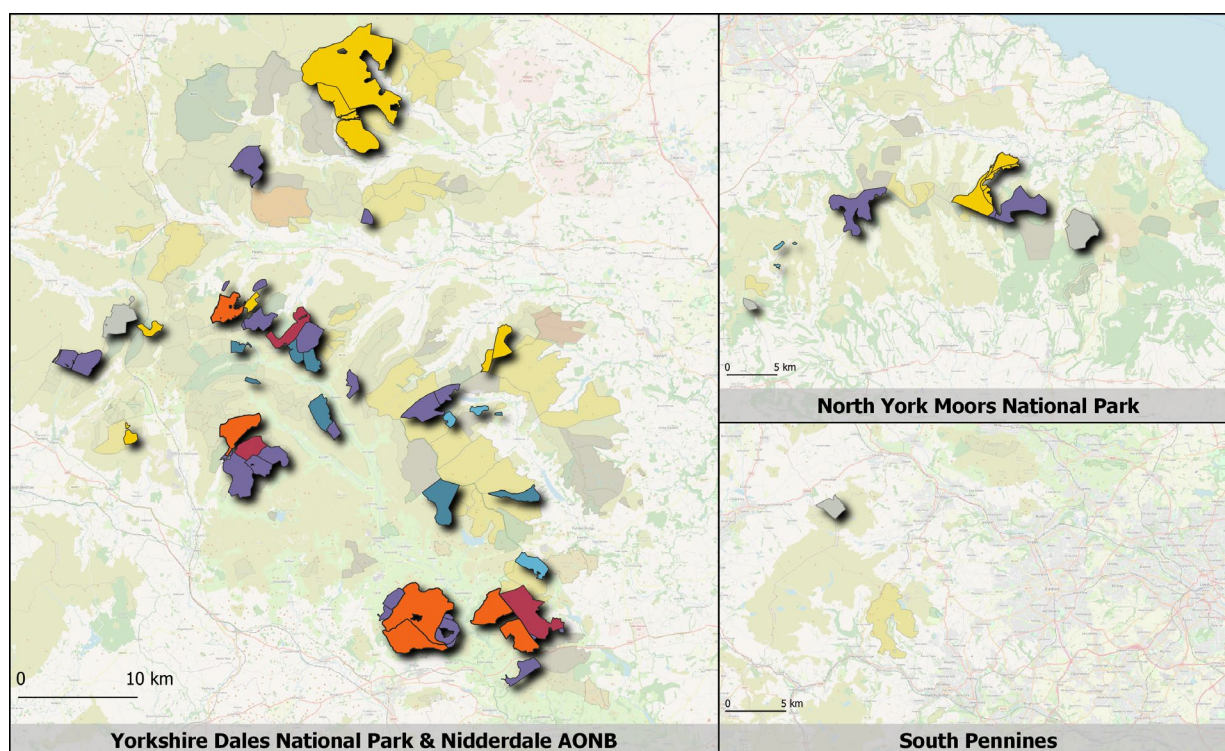


Base map from OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation. © OpenStreetMap contributors.

2021/2022



### 2.2 Our work on the ground 2021/2022



Progress changes from 2021/2022



Base map from OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation. © OpenStreetMap contributors.

2021/2022





## 2.3 Our work in numbers 2020/2021

### UAV surveys 2021/2022

Region	Total surveyed area (ha)
Nidderdale AONB	104.95
Yorkshire Dales National Park	1,353.50
<b>Total: All regions</b>	<b>1,458.45</b>

### Areas covered during walkover surveys

Region	Total surveyed area (ha)
Nidderdale AONB	104.95
Yorkshire Dales National Park	1,353.50
<b>Total: All regions</b>	<b>1,458.45</b>



Outcome	Restoration technique				Region		Total: All regions
					North York Moors National Park	Yorkshire Dales National Park	
Hydrological restoration	Obstruction	Sediment traps	All dams	All dams/baffles (km)	38	174	211
				All dams/baffles (n)	3,211	14,793	18,004
			Sediment trap	Peat dams (km)	19	64	83
				Peat dams (n)	2,573	8,047	10,620
				Timber dams (km)	2	26	28
				Timber dams (n)	71	1,604	1,675
				Stone dams (km)	6	33	39
				Stone dams (n)	157	1,859	2,016
				Heather bale dams (km)	9	9	19
				Heather bale dams (n)	410	410	820
				Coir dams (km)	n/a	37	37
				Coir dams (n)	n/a	3,146	3,146
		Flow attenuation	Baffle	Timber baffles (km)	n/a	2	2
				Timber baffles (n)	n/a	22	22
				Stone baffles (km)	n/a	12	12
				Stone baffles (n)	n/a	115	115
		Bunding	Cell bund	Peat cell bunds (n)	n/a	17	17
				Heather bale cell bunds (n)	374	n/a	374
				Coir cell bunds (n)	n/a	6,450	6,450
	Stabilisation	Reprofiling	Reprofile	All reprofiling (km)	38	248	287

Outcome	Restoration technique				Region		Total: All regions
					North York Moors National Park	Yorkshire Dales National Park	
Biodiversification	Revegetation	Revegetating	All revegetation	All revegetation (km)	n/a	61	61
				All revegetation (ha)	1	31	32
			Brash	Heather brash (ha)	1	26	28
			Seed	Dwarf-shrub seed (ha)	1	29	30
				Grass seed (ha)	1	29	30
		Conditioning	Fertiliser and lime	Lime (ha)	1	23	24
				Fertiliser (ha)	1	23	24
	Innoculation	Planting	Plugs	Eriophorum plugs (ha)	1	31	33
				Eriophorum plugs (n)	14,664	243,349	258,013
				Empetrum plugs (ha)	1	19	21
				Empetrum plugs (n)	14,664	122,342	137,006
				Sphagnum plugs (ha)	23	33	56
			Harvested clumps	Harvested sphagnum clumps (ha)	228,022	410,091	638,113
			Plugs	Sphagnum plugs (n)	n/a	4	4
			Harvested clumps	Harvested sphagnum clumps (n)	n/a	42,061	42,061



## 2.4 Funding

Yorkshire Peat Partnership is not-for-profit; all of our funding goes into covering our overheads, research and development, monitoring or capital restoration works.

Core revenue funding				
Organisation	Amount £			
	2009-19/20	20/21	21/22	TOTAL
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – legacies	84,557	-	-	84,557
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – fund-raising	107,226	89,524	18,502	196,750
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – consultancy	100,713	16,530	35,054	152,297
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – in kind overheads	135,677	-	-	135,677
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust - People's Postcode Lottery Nature Based solutions fund	-	-	188,843	188,843
Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – corporate donor to Peatfix project	-	-	24,000	24,000
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	300,100	-	-	300,100
North York Moors National Park Authority	93,146	-	-	93,146
Nidderdale AONB	1,000	-	-	1,000
North Pennines AONB	10,000	-	-	10,000
Environment Agency – direct	314,379	95,000	14,348	423,727
Environment Agency – via Pennine PeatLIFE	225,000	-	95,000	320,000
Environment Agency - Great North Bog Development	-	-	59,833	59,833
Natural England	588,845	-	-	588,845
DEFRA Peatland Fund – via YWT	66,666	33,333	13,703	113,702
DEFRA England Peat Strategy Pilot	45,083	-	-	45,083
Higher Level Scheme	248,864	-	-	248,864
Countryside Stewardship	154,231	90,977	97,227	342,435
Yorkshire Water – contracts	405,074	61,258	194,661	660,993
Yorkshire Water – via Pennine PeatLIFE	143,771	-	-	143,771
Peter de Haan Conservation Trust – via YWT	100,000	-	-	100,000
EU-LIFE – via Pennine PeatLIFE	-	121,902	119,630	241,532
Nature for Climate Fund – Restoration Grant Round 1	-	-	90,820	483,663
Esmée Fairbairn – via YWT	-	-	110,000	110,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,124,332</b>	<b>508,524</b>	<b>1,061,621</b>	<b>4,694,447</b>
Average per annum	284,030	-	-	361,114
Loans – Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	2,107,341	-	-	-
Loans – The Wildlife Trusts	1,500,000	-	-	-

## Capital funding

Organisation	Amount £			
	2009-19/20	20/21	21/22	TOTAL
Environment Agency – Water Framework Directive	643,410	-	80,652	724,062
Natural England – Water Framework Directive	166,239	-	-	166,239
Natural England Nature for Climate Fund - Restoration Grant Round 1	-	-	219,600	219,600
Higher Level Scheme (administered by Natural England through individual land manager agreements)	11,417,822	77,076	-	11,494,898
Countryside Stewardship Scheme (administered by Natural England and Rural Payments Agency through individual land manager agreements)	176,219	573,551	1,250,563	2,000,333
Yorkshire Water – contracts	2,489,508	149,709	415,585	3,054,802
Yorkshire Water – via Pennine PeatLIFE	756,229	-	-	756,229
EU-LIFE – via Pennine PeatLIFE	38,588	799,341	140,437	978,366
DEFRA Peatland Fund -via YWT	1,621,850	1,811,373	98,106	3,433,223
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17,309,865</b>	<b>3,411,050</b>	<b>1,985,343</b>	<b>22,706,258</b>
Average per annum	1,573,624	-	-	1,762,595



### 3 NEXT STEPS

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As part of the Great North Bog, we received £4.1 million from the 2nd round of Natural England's Nature for Climate fund. Combined with match funding from a consortium of partners, it will enable a £5.2 million leap forward in peatland restoration in the northern uplands. This means that, along with North Pennines AONB Partnership and University of Manchester, we can expand a major restoration and monitoring programme across a further 1,459 ha of peatland in the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks and the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These works will help to lock up 157,019 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e over 50 years.

Last year, funding from Innovate UK's Knowledge Transfer Programme and VP plc allowed us to start looking for a solution to one of our recurring issues. We struggle with sloping, bare peat facing into the prevailing wind – whatever we do to revegetate southwest facing bare peat is scoured by the wind and requires multiple interventions. Working with the University of Manchester and TerraFix Ltd, we started a year-long research project that will help us address this challenge and consolidate the integrity of our restoration work on these sites.

Thanks to funding from People's Postcode Lottery, we have started to rollout Eyes on the Bog monitoring across our operational area. This will help us to



understand how our work is affecting the health of our peatlands; by linking up with other monitoring groups through a datahub, we are building a picture not only for Yorkshire but across the UK. By October 2022, we had installed 28 plots across 7 sites and accrued over 260 volunteer hours. Involving people directly in citizen science can be powerful in generating environmental action. We plan to deepen volunteers' involvement in YPP's work further by creating supportive infrastructure to network volunteers involved in the collection of data across our operational area. Developing the mechanism to support volunteers to share their experiences will generate a sense of ownership within this community and empower them to translate the data they collect for new audiences.

Our engagement with the wider community in the Yorkshire Dales is also taking a step forward. The Give Peat a Chance exhibition opened at the Dales Countryside Museum, in Hawes, in July and moved to the Museum of North Craven Life, in Settle, in October. It represents an artistic response to these beautiful, brooding landscapes and features visual art, poetry, history, music, film and a bog in a box. In the coming year, we will look to expand our engagement programme to build understanding and support for our programme in the communities in which we work.





## 4 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The success of Yorkshire Peat Partnership is the result of the hard work of by a huge range of partners and could not have happened without them. Landowners, their agents, gamekeepers, farmers and tenants have helped YPP deliver the restoration work on their land, often helping practically but also providing advocacy support and helping to unlock funding.

None of the work could have taken place without our major funders supporting both the capital work but also the hugely important core funds that enable YPP to function. We are hugely grateful to Natural England, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, the North York Moors National Park Authority, Peter de Haan Conservation Trust & Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. Huge thanks also go to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and The Wildlife Trusts who provided the bridging loan to enable us to unlock HLS funds.

We would also like to thank our other Steering Group members (Moorland Association, National Farmers Union, National Trust and Nidderdale AONB

Partnership) for supporting and guiding our work.

A special mention goes to Yorkshire Wildlife Trust for hosting Yorkshire Peat Partnership and providing all the essential back-up services (especially Darren Tiffney and his finance team and Tracey Davison-Franks in HR) we couldn't have done without. The impact and cost of hosting YPP should not be underestimated.

Last but not least none of this could have happened without the support of our hugely dedicated, hard-working staff team (Roz Bardon, Mark Brown, Pete Christopherson, Matt Cross, Dom Hinchley, Astrid Hanlon, Les Hughes, Ceri Katz, Tessa Levens, Ollie Mackrill, Lyndon Marquis, Chris Miller, Chris Osborne, Aaron de Raat, Jenny Sharman, Lizzie Slingsby, Jackie Smith, Matt Snelling, Rosie Snowden, Elizabeth Sullivan, Tim Thom, Beth Thomas, Kay Waites, Laura Watson) who have come and gone over the years but remain the heart, soul and spirit of Yorkshire Peat Partnership.