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1 Introduction

This is the annual Operational Plan produced by the Moors for the Future Partnership (MFFP). It is the Partnership's strategic approach to our programme of work for the 2021/22 financial year. It covers:

- The contractual commitments of work which we will deliver in 2021/22- these are projects which already have funding and approval.
- The pipeline of expected new work which:
 - we anticipate will come forward for approval, or
 - have in principle approval but contracts are not yet in place, during this Operational Plan period.
- Future business development – projects that we are developing for partners during this Operational Plan period or in subsequent years.

This document is a look forward; it sits alongside “A year in review” which is the look back at the previous year's activities.

This Plan for 2021/22 also sits alongside a Business Plan, currently in development following the Moor Business project, this is likely to require reviewing on an annual basis due to the rapidly changing work landscape through COVID-19, post-Brexit changes and a funding landscape which is also subject to rapid change. The Operational Plan, Business plan and the “year in review” are our public facing documents supported by the Programme Delivery Financial Forecast, the Programme Progress Log (the work on the books which is monitored by the Operational Management Group) and the Strategic Business Route Plan (the document giving a future steer for the Partnerships activity overseen by the Strategic Management Board).

Each project mentioned in this plan has separate project governance and steering arrangements which are appropriate to the requirements of the funder and complexity of the project and within PDNPA Standing Orders.

The longer term vision which guides the work of the Partnership is available through the planning documents of our partners such as the National Park Management Plan, Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan and Peat Strategy for England. The Price Review process, which will guide the investment of our Utility Company partners to 2025 and beyond.

What is the Moors for the Future Partnership?

Moors for the Future is a partnership of organisations that since 2003 has been working together across the Dark Peak, South and West Pennine Moors to restore and conserve the most degraded upland landscape in Europe.

The Moors for the Future staff team, employed by the Peak District National Park Authority - which also acts as the lead and accountable body - delivers the work of the Partnership.

The current core funding partners include the Environment Agency, National Trust, RSPB, Severn Trent Water, United Utilities, Yorkshire Water, Pennine Prospects and the Peak District National Park Authority. In addition, Natural England and representatives of the moorland owner and farming community advise the Partnership.

Executive Highlights of 2021/22 Activities

The Partnership is now entering its 18th year of activity and continues to successfully deliver a range of technical solutions that address our mission - “to restore the quality of the South Pennine Moors, to improve its benefits as a water quality catchment area, a diverse ecological, recreational and agricultural resource which will be managed to ensure the enduring legacy of these benefits.” This mission is delivered through the three objectives in the next section.

The contractual commitments make up the bulk of the delivery items in this plan and the resources to deliver these are in place. If the most confident expectations on future bids are also included, the current pipeline of items in the Strategic Business Route Plan, project spend this year is anticipated to be £4.7m.

As well as continuing to deliver existing projects, the continuing challenge for this year will be to identify and develop new funding and projects which will continue the vitally important restoration programme, particularly beyond 2022 when the MoorLIFE 2020 project comes to a close.

The near horizon for the Partnership appears to be significantly volatile, some careful planning is needed this year led by our newly formed Strategic Management Board. There are significant opportunities on the horizon offered by new funding from, for instance, the Nature for Climate fund and the building interest in natural capital payment schemes. There are also significant issues to overcome from the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the approaching end date of major projects and an expected reduction in the availability of public funding. Working through the delivery aspirations of the new Peak District National Park Management Plan, the plans of all our partners and in particular Defra’s 25 Year Environment Plan and the next Asset Management Plans of the utility companies (AMP7 which started in 2020). Combined with opportunities to continue the work of the Partnership to protect the upland landscape of the South Pennine Moorland Special Area of Conservation, work will continue to provide advisory, communications and science delivery in a wider area to meet the requirements of the Partnership. The Partnership will continue to influence strategic planning such as responding to future government consultations particularly considering the need to recover from COVID-19 and support new UK conservation legislation post-Brexit. Continuing to influence resources and policy supporting the moorland landscape.

A key priority will be to seek funding to focus on the business of the Partnership:

- to put large structural projects together continuing the restoration priorities;
- to continually evaluate and refine our business model;
- to develop a future funding strategy to support business development;
- to increase the effectiveness of our processes; and
- to enhance the Partnership’s standing as a leader in this field.

Our key means of delivering this through 2021/22 will be to action under the advice of our newly formed Strategic Management Board.

2 The Purpose of the Operational Plan

The purpose of the Operational Plan is to bring all of the Partnership's projects together in one document to give easy visibility of the whole programme, as well as explaining how, why and when we will develop business development opportunities in the coming year. The progress of delivering this plan is monitored by a Programme Progress Log (PPL) on a quarterly basis reporting to the Partnership's Operational Management Group (OMG). During this year the new Strategic Management Board will be in place and will give a forward direction and set the future business aspirations of the Partnership. The progress of this will be monitored through a new governing document, The Future Business Route Plan. Items coming to fruition through this Route Plan will then be put forward to be accepted for delivery onto the books of the PDNPA or another partner's financial facilitation.

This Operational Plan forms the public facing "shop front" for both the Strategic Business Route Plan and the Programme Progress Log. Together they give partners a means of monitoring progress against the outcomes required.

MFFP's strategic objectives are:

- **Objective One – Awareness Raising**

"To raise awareness and promote positive action for the conservation of the moorland landscape"

- **Objective Two – Conservation Management**

"To develop and deliver sustainable land management for these important upland resources, ensuring appropriate consideration of all of their benefits"

- **Objective Three - Science**

"To develop expertise for the sustainable management of moorlands ensuring that the programme is properly resourced with the capacity and capability to achieve this"

3 The Policy and Funding Landscape Surrounding the Partnership in 2021/22

A new funding and policy landscape

The success of the Partnership to date has been shaped by the support of longstanding partners and their commitment to restoration of the uplands, facilitated by significant funding from the European Union and shaped by its regulatory guidance. The UK's exit from the EU and its existing environmental legislative framework may pose significant risks to the environment, if current drivers for environmental protection and improvements are weakened, e.g. the Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive and the Birds Directive. The citation dedicating the South Pennine Moorlands as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has been a major driver for the recent conservation efforts. During this year the new Environment Act will come into being and the future for previous EU drivers and designations will become clearer. The staff team will be alert for opportunities to influence this by the Partnership.

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan is a major delivery aspiration and is being underpinned by policy and legislation such as Defra's Peatland Strategy for England, the new Environment Bill (making its way through parliament as this is being written), future farming support and the outcome of the review of protected landscapes. The new Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy has now been released and considering the increasing flood risk to the communities surrounding the Partnerships working area this is also a major driver for us. This brings opportunities for the Partnership on a much bigger stage playing a leading role in initiatives which deliver on these big new areas of policy and interest in the environment, especially the upland environment. A good example of this is the creation of the Great North Bog initiative. The plans of our partners such as the work Pennine Prospects are doing to create the South Pennine Park, the delivery of the Peak District National Park Management Plan, and the Asset Management Plans of the utility company partners, all give a solid driver for the work of the Partnership.

The strategic importance of our upland landscape

Blanket bog, a key peatland habitat, is a priority habitat in the EU's Species and Habitats Directive, supporting a nationally and internationally important assemblage of wildlife. It seems likely that this priority view will be transferred into UK policy. With many of these populations in decline, Peatland is a priority for action under the UN Convention on Peatlands and the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands.

The hydrological function of blanket bogs have critical impacts on the UK's inhabitants as they are vital habitats for supplying clean water throughout the year, sequestering carbon to reduce climate change and reducing flood risk. The policies protecting these public benefits are at risk as the UK leaves the EU and Common Agricultural Policy. The cost of inaction in terms of climate change impacts alone could reach billions of pounds). The Partnership will continue to use its influence to impact on future environmental policy in the UK and on the UK's wild habitats.

The Partnership (led by the Peak District National Park Authority) has a unique and important view of this environmental policy area, because it has implemented a high proportion of the landscape-scale conservation work across the English uplands. The programme team will continue to represent the Partnership and will stay alert and responsive to new opportunities which will benefit the Partnership. We will contribute to debates and initiatives, supporting Defra and partners in discussions and development of new instruments to support the upland landscape as we leave the EU.

Natural capital and civic resilience opportunities

The interest in climate change has seen a dramatic increase throughout the past 2 years and this has brought about an urgency in maximising the benefits, which the upland landscape can offer to society. The Government's stated wish in both the 25 Year Environment Plan and through farming support is to focus subsidies on paying for environmental benefits. This could have a big and positive impact in the uplands. In addition, the continuing high risk of moorland fires and drought conditions have shown how the upland landscape needs to be in the best ecological condition to withstand the shocks and stresses of a changing climate in order to deliver positive benefits for the downhill, downstream and downwind communities in local communities such as Manchester.

COP26 (United Nations Climate Change Summit) will be held in Glasgow in November 2021 and this will provide a national focus from which the Partnership will be able to gain more traction for continuing the restoration of this landscape.

4 This Year's Activity – 2021/22

Ongoing projects

MoorLIFE 2020

The MoorLIFE 2020 project successfully applied for a 12 month extension of the project to February 2022, with the approval coming through from the EU LIFE Programme in October 2019. The project is in a very healthy condition and is on track to deliver the full scope, to time and to budget.

With the extension in place, the early part of the 2021-22 work season will see the project continue to over deliver in a number areas including more bare peat treatment, additional cutting and gully blocking as well as additional sphagnum planting across our working area.

The extension has allowed an additional year for data collection across all of the science areas of the project, including field data collection and earth observation data collection, alongside the carbon audit for the project. Final data collection will occur in August ahead of the final analysis and completion of the MoorLIFE 2020 Report in December 2021.

The project will continue delivering the Bogtastic Experience, continuing to raise awareness within the general public of the risk and impact of wildfire and how to avoid increasing these risks throughout the summer and early autumn. The Wildfire Risk Map will be used to focus the Bogtastic Experience on specific audiences and areas ahead of periods of high fire risk. The Wildfire Log that was launched in October 2020 will be promoted ahead of the wildfire season and a second release of the Wildfire Log is being planned for October 2021. We will continue to build on the excellent relationships that we have developed with land managers and owners at a time of significant change in the business environment in which they operate.

Building Blocks – next steps in gully blocking

The Water Environment Grant funded 'Building Blocks' project received approval for an extension into a third year of delivery in restoration works in the South Pennine Moors, entering its third (and final) year in 2021/22. The project aims to improve biodiversity, through re-wetting and improving the condition of the blanket bogs.

The project established the next generation in gully blocking; working with hydrological consultants at the first stage of the project, producing a prioritised list of the next 100,000 gully blocking locations across the Special Area of Conservation that would restore the hydrological regime towards that of an active blanket bog, with a view to moving the vegetative community towards favourable condition.

The project had an initial KPI to install 7,800 gully blocks and plant 210,000 sphagnum plug plants in the South Pennine Moors, guided by the prioritised list of gully blocking locations. The project in 2020/21 achieved a huge amount of restoration with over 7,000 gully blocks installed and over 150,000 sphagnum plants installed; these KPIs have now been extended to achieve an additional 3,500 gully blocks and an additional 210,000 sphagnum plugs to be planted.

The project will achieve much more peatland restoration than it originally set out to do.

Private Lands Portfolio (PLP)

Overview

The Partnership's delivery of Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) funded capital works had functionally come to completion by autumn 2019. There are two HLS projects remaining in the programme that have outstanding capital items, which are both currently on hold. This includes one HLS site where hydrological restoration (gully blocking) and sphagnum planting is planned, and a second site, which includes bare peat restoration. Both projects are in the process of having extensions confirmed by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) before further work can progress. No work will be planned on these projects until the RPA can guarantee the funds/extensions and all necessary permissions are granted. We will baseline these for delivery as soon as they are able to proceed. They will remain hibernated projects until that time.

Cost Recovery

The only other remaining activity on this project is to complete the cost and income recovery for the portfolio. In 2019/20 a number of long term outstanding debts with HLS agreement holders linked to PLP capital works delivery were re-baselined and cost recovery plans have been formalised through the PDNPA Legal Services. Outstanding cost repayment have been ongoing throughout the 2020/21 financial year and we are now on track to recover all outstanding debits.

A specific point of note is that a proportion of the debts are as a result of delayed RPA payments to HLS agreement holders and delays in the RPA processing claims for MFFP's costs. Both have served to create significant cash flow issues for HLS agreement holders in paying MFFP invoices. Following a period of focused engagement with the RPA, MFFP secured the necessary commitment from RPA to assist with the prompt payment of claims for MFFP and HLS agreement holders. Since this engagement, all MFFPs outstanding capital claims have been successfully paid and agreement holders claims are being paid promptly, allowing the successful recovery of MFFP's costs. It is vital, looking to the future and ELMS, that the RPA continue to ensure that the financial administration of agreements is effective and timely, so that future opportunities for partnership working at a landscape scale can be taken.

Future Agri-Environment funded capital works

With Higher-Level Stewardship now an outgoing scheme, no new HLS projects are anticipated to be added into this portfolio in 2021/22. MFFP has however engaged in writing Countryside Stewardship (CS) feasibility studies (PA2s) for a number of sites which, if developed into live schemes between NE and agreement holders, could represent future capital works opportunities to achieve further peatland restoration through Agri-Environment funding streams before ELMS. At this time we are aware that discussion over potential CS agreements is ongoing, and MFFP have been approached by a number of sites to scope out opportunities for potential collaboration. At the time of writing there are no immediate prospects for future capital delivery through CS, as uptake on this scheme by landowners appear to be slow.

In tandem with this, is the ongoing development work for the incoming ELMS scheme which will replace CS. In 2020/21 MFFP contributed to the ELMS discussion paper consultation in which we shared our experience of partnership working through HLS and CS, feeding back key points relating to the financial underpinning and administration which we have recommended are factored into plans for the future ELMS scheme. We were also specifically invited to contribute to a Defra funded research project as part of the

ELMS development, into how to make partnership working successful under Agri-Env. This was led by Exeter University, and in addition to our own contribution MFFP also facilitated a number of the private landowners we work with to input into this research from their perspectives.

Working with MoorLIFE 2020 partners and private landowners

Papers were approved by the PDNPA Audit Resources & Performance Committee in January 2017 and Resource Management Team, allowing us to work with MoorLIFE 2020 partner organisations and private land managers respectively, to deliver works outside MoorLIFE 2020, within certain financial constraints. These works ideally will be delivered with existing projects from the MFFP programme of works, maximising our efficiencies. Approval for these has been delegated to the Director of Conservation and Planning (now delegated to our Head of Programme Delivery) together with the Chief Finance Officer. We will continue to offer our skills and services to all MoorLIFE 2020 partners and private landowners to improve the condition of the upland habitats of the Peak District and South Pennines (including PDNPA), if requested and properly supported.

PROTECT-NFM: Optimising Natural Flood Management in Headwater Catchments Project

A NERC funded research project led by the University of Manchester, investigating the impact and optimisation of management of upland headwater catchments on downstream Natural Flood Management (NFM) benefit, which is working in tandem with ongoing restoration works on Stalybridge.

In 2021/22 MFFP will continue as a key delivery partner on the PROTECT-NFM project. This is a collaborative project between University of Manchester, MFFP and EA. While the capital works element of the project is now completed, data continues to be collected into 2021 and is due to be concluded during the year. These experiments are evidencing the NFM benefits of the suite of gully blocking techniques in common usage by MFFP and other peatland restoration initiatives, in addition to testing NFM optimised versions. The output of this will be robust evidence for the NFM benefits of these techniques, leading to a greater evidence base with which to attract further investment into healthy peatlands/uplands from funding streams linked to flood risk mitigation. Following baseline monitoring being set up in 2019/20, post-intervention monitoring will be ongoing throughout 2021/22. It is anticipated that there will be a number of academic papers to be produced from the work of the PROTECT-NFM project in 2021 and into the future.

The PROTECT-NFM project has also taken on monitoring of the upland woodland monitoring sites, listed in previous operational plans as “Upland Woodland Monitoring”.

Etherow Monitoring

Our monitoring of the River Etherow’s water quality will continue on its fortnightly sampling period, contributing to a long term data set of water quality from the site. This is subject to continuing partner funding.

Natural Capital Investment Readiness (Moor Green Investment Project)

As identified through the Moor Business project, there is a business need to develop opportunities to unlock sustainable sources of funding for conservation work, which move beyond traditional grant funding.

Faced with the challenge of shrinking funding streams, and the UK exit from the European Union, MFFP are bidding to win a development project to enable an opportunity to establish a Natural Capital based investment scheme for degraded peatland. If successful, this funding will allow MFFP to develop a Natural Capital Investment Pilot proposal to put to potential investors, and in the process develop our skills in stakeholder management, financial structuring and commercial acumen.

This project will contribute towards the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23, specifically Area of Impact 3.3: Maintain existing landscape scale delivery. By developing opportunities to grow our sources of project funding through the Natural Capital agenda, which is completely in line with the Defra 25 Year Environment Plan, we can contribute towards developing a clear long term strategy to secure funding for the conservation of the Dark Peak and South Pennines to 2050.

After a successful project bid to The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Defra and the Environment Agency, the project was launched in October 2020 and Triodos Bank were appointed as the project financial consultants. Early workshops have been held with Triodos Bank and the project is on target to refine the site selection criteria ahead of stakeholder engagement with potential land owners. The project will look at the potential to create a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) and engage with potential funders as part of the site selection process. After initial discussions with Triodos Bank, they have recommended that the project seek an extension to April 2022 for the delivery date for Phase 2 of the project.

Moor Water: Water Company Asset Management Plan 7 (AMP7): Development of conservation proposals with Water Company partners

At the start of the 2020/21 financial year MFFP will have completed its work with the water companies delivering actions through the AMP6 period as part of the MoorLIFE 2020 project. In May 2020 PDNPA ARP committee gave MFFP the authority to establish a new AMP7 based project for working with our water company partners, called Moor Water. This project will run between 2020/21 and 2024/25 and will continue MFFPs delivery of water company outcomes. The project will include capital works with a biodiversity focus including (where applicable) integrated science and communications. Due to the partnership decision not to bid to the EU for further LIFE funding, any contracts for conservation works in AMP7 will be direct with MFFP rather than as match funding.

Severn Trent Water

A partnering agreement is in place with Severn Trent Water that will enable us to work together on STW AMP7 programme until 2024/25. The project will include capital works including integrated science and communications activities within the Bamford Water Treatment Works Catchment.

Yorkshire Water

Work with Yorkshire Water on their AMP7 programme has progressed under a two stage approach, due to Yorkshire Water's procurement procedures. Purchase orders are in place for MFFP to deliver the first stage, the production of detailed peatland restoration plans for Yorkshire Water's owned SSSI sites. These plans will identify restoration works for the sites to be delivered under the AMP7 programme. The second stage (as outlined under the pipeline section) will see Yorkshire Water and MFFP working collaboratively to deliver their AMP7 outcomes.

Natural Flood Management – Phase 1 Opportunity Mapping

MFFP project team are working with the Environment Agency (EA) to identify Natural Flood Management opportunities in the EA's East Midlands Region. The project will be working with EA Communities at Risk and pluvial Flow GIS data sets to identify areas for future NFM projects. The project will start in April and complete by the end of September 2021. The project team are also discussing extending the scope of the project to include the EA's Yorkshire and Greater Manchester Regions. The addition of these areas to the scope will be fully impacted for feasibility, and if agreed will be integrated within the project. The output of this work across the three EA areas offers the opportunity to highlight areas of peatland restoration that have significant NFM potential for consideration by the EA for future funding under the Accelerated Flood Funding Route.

Moor Resilience

This initiative provides the hosting for multiple projects up to 2025 to deliver projects in the region working collaboratively with Local Authority Partners to improve the resilience of the peatland landscape in their areas to Climate Change and its varied impacts.

Calderdale Peatland Condition Assessment

Working with Calderdale Council (and in time the aspiration is to also work with others), this project will develop an assessment methodology allowing for MFFP to undertake a detailed assessment of peatland resilience to the impacts of climate change from a range of perspectives including resilience to wildfires.

This is the first project on its kind, and it is planned to be a stepping off point in allowing for the peatland resource across the Peak District and South Pennines to be assessed for resilience to the impacts of climate change. This assessment will then lead onto the development of site-specific restoration and practical proposals that will enable greater habitat resilience to climate change to be achieved at a landscape scale. This initial project is a desk and field study activity with the potential for the development and delivery of future capital works.

Ilkley Moor Natural Flood Management

This project is working with Bradford City Council through their NFM funding to undertake peatland restoration on Ilkley Moor to deliver ecosystem service benefits including NFM.

This project commenced restoration works in 2020/21 and will have completed bare peat restoration, gully blocking and sphagnum interventions by the end of March 2021. In 2021/22 MFFP will continue to work with Bradford City Council to advise on further works to address the remaining degradation on the site, including further NFM focused interventions.

The Great North Bog: Phase 1

The Great North Bog is an ambitious, landscape-scale, peatland restoration project that will be delivered in partnership with Moors for the Future Partnership (acting as lead partner for North Pennines AONB Partnership, the Yorkshire Peat Partnership). The Great North Bog initiative will target peatland restoration and conservation across nearly 7,000 km² of peatland soils across the uplands of the North of England, currently storing an estimated 400 million tons of carbon. The Protected Landscapes of the Great North Bog represent around 92% of the upland peat in England. The Great North Bog includes four National Parks and three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the proposed South Pennines Park. The Great North Bog aspiration would be to also overflow benefits into the surrounding unprotected areas through follow-on projects.

With multiple partnerships having worked independently on the peatlands of the Pennines for nearly two decades, the drive of the Great North Bog is not to create another partnership body, but to engage in high level support and advocacy across the landscape of the northern uplands, supporting the existing partnerships, to achieve a more joined up approach to conservation and management.

The Great North Bog aspiration is to bring together organisations, to promote collaboration and reduce competition, for more efficient and effective restoration of peatlands across the north of England. With the UK's peatlands largely falling into protected areas (SSSI/SAC/SPA), a united approach is the best solution to deliver restoration works, monitoring, and communications, working with local and regional organisations for synergistic national benefit. Restoring the Great North Bog will increase local contractors' skills and capacity, benefitting rural economies.

As peatlands form the headwaters of most of our catchments, restoration of degraded peat has the potential to significantly contribute to flood risk reduction to OM1 and OM2 EA targets, as well as offering contributions to carbon restoration plans and OM4 targets. The Project will also offer an opportunity to utilise blended finance initiatives to deliver benefits through a mix of public and private funding and will be heavily linked to the Environment Agency, Defra, Triodos Bank, Esme Fairburn 'Investment Readiness' project to develop new models in financing.

The Great North Bog has received funding from DEFRA for £62,484 and £90,000 from the Environment Agency. During 2021/22 MFFP will be seeking additional funding for the next phase of the project.

This 18 month development phase delivered between November 2020 - March 2022 aims to establish a collaboration to deliver a 20-year funding, restoration and conservation plan to make a significant contribution to; the UK's climate carbon sequestration targets, flood risk reduction, and delivering other multiple benefits. This initial phase of the project will work to set up and establish strategic governance and advocacy to bring about joined up landscape scale outcomes; including setting up the GNB governance structure, stakeholder engagement with other peatland organisations, an ecosystem services metric review, peatland mapping, a funding strategy and a communications plan.

Pipeline and Business Development

Moor Water: Yorkshire Water AMP7 Works

As of January 2021 MFFP have entered into a framework agreement to provide expert support to Yorkshire Water for their AMP 7 Delivery. This will underpin the collaboration between YW and MFFP on the project. With this now in place, the project design and staff resources requirements are in the process of being agreed, after which this project will commence delivery.

BMC Climate Project

The BMC launched a fundraising campaign in March 2020 to provide a means of collecting donations from members and outdoor industry. The funds raised so far amount to approx. £70,000. This funding will be used to work collaboratively with the BMC to deliver a project that includes volunteer sphagnum planting and awareness raising of the importance of blanket bog. By working with the BMC we will be able to reach a key target audience of moorland users. It is likely that the donations will be used as match funding for a larger engagement project.

Peak District Foundation

A positive relationship is also being developed with the Peak District Foundation. Donations from the Peak District Foundation will be used as above, as matched funding to deliver a public engagement project that will include sphagnum planting alongside other ways of raising awareness of the importance of protecting blanket bog.

Programme Management

Continued monitoring across our programme of monitoring sites

Trials for Diversifying Molinia Swards with Sphagnum Plugs

Following five years of monitoring, funded by Natural England, Yorkshire Water, and National Trust, data is currently showing excellent growth of Sphagnum plugs in Molinia dominated habitat, but not the reduction in Molinia cover which was expected. We are currently writing up a paper for publication on the outcomes of the project, with the aspiration of publishing this during 2021.

Research Facilitation

Student Placements

The Partnership is currently hosting our fourth student placement from Manchester Metropolitan University. Despite COVID-19 limitations impacting the delivery of the placement (which would normally

involve a lot of fieldwork experience) this has been successful in supporting the Partnership's research work, and providing varied experience in the placement. Pending further COVID-19 lockdowns, there will be a review of whether the Partnership can support another placement student in the 2021/22 year.

We were investigating the opportunity for supporting a short term PhD placement in 2020/21, but unfortunately COVID-19 restrictions prevented this from going ahead.

Student Projects

In 2021/22 we continue to support student projects at Universities across the country. Following an increased interest in existing datasets for students to analyse (with COVID-19 restrictions causing fieldwork difficulties), our science team are currently looking at producing a "pack" of data which could be distributed to academic supervisors to facilitate analysis based projects.

Student Projects supported

We will continue to support two PhD studies in 2020/21:

- Joe Glentworth, University of Manchester: Socio-economic impact of rewilding the English uplands. Joe is currently seeking an extension as COVID has heavily impacted delivery of this project.
- Taco Regensburg, University of Leeds: The treatment of peat pipes in blanket peat: effectiveness and impact. Taco is due to complete his PhD in 2021.

New PhD opportunities will be identified, developed and acted on as appropriate to the needs, resources and capacity within MFFP.

Research Collaborations

Through 2021/22 we will continue to support external research proposals which advance and develop the knowledge base around moorland restoration and protection. These are particularly valuable to produce supporting theoretical and conceptually aligned work, which is often difficult to fund through the Partnership's main funding sources.

Advice and project delivery

We are keen to use the expertise that we have developed over the last 18 years, in project delivery, communications and working at a landscape-scale in the uplands, (particularly on peatlands and woodlands), to help other organisations and protected landscapes achieve improvements in biodiversity and ecosystem function.

Recording and reporting

We will produce reports and make claims during the year for the MoorLIFE 2020 project, Moor Carbon project, Building Blocks project, Mend our Mountains project, River Etherow Monitoring, GMC-NFM Project (Stalybridge), and the Private Lands Portfolio. We will also produce quarterly reports for the Environment Agency, PDNPA and other partners according to commitments.

Communications

The Communications Strategy will be used to inform a Communications Plan for 2021/22 which will be developed and implemented to pull together project communications into a unified programme. This approach allows us to target efforts and maximise the effect of our resources.

The team will continue to identify opportunities to work with partners on aligned issues and we will be seeking further opportunities to work with partner communications teams to promote the importance of the Peak District National Park and South Pennine Park.

Advocacy and events

The team will continue to represent the Moors for the Future Partnership and its interests at a wide range of relevant regional, national and international meetings and initiatives and disseminate the results of our work and share best practice. Findings from our research and monitoring programme will be used evidence future land management initiatives and best practice. Innovation in conservation techniques and new communication tools will be showcased wherever we can.

Training and Development

The Moors for the Future Partnership is a learning organisation which is pioneering innovation in the science of moorland remediation and management. We will continue to develop the skills and capability of our staff as identified in the annual learning and development plans. A robust training and development plan has been developed following the Moor Business project and we will continue pursue this during the year. Our aim is for all our project managers to hold a professional qualification (e.g. Prince 2) which will continue our consistent project management and is a strong advocacy for continued business development.

Programme Management - 2021/22

Table 1: Core Funding 2021/22

Contracted/approved	Core funding £	Core funding from projects £	Total core funding £
Operational Partners			
PDNPA	100,000		100,000
Environment Agency	20,000		20,000
BMC	35,000		35,000
Sub total	155,000	0	155,000
Project Partners			
Multiple partners		69,820	69,820
Sub total	0	69,820	69,820
Total	155,00	69,820	224,820

Pipeline			
Project Partners			
EA		3,000	3,000
Yorkshire Water		20,000	20,000
Pipeline total	0	23,000	23,000
Total		23,000	247,820

The 'multiple partners' figure above is income from multiple projects where we are able to cost in programme management input. Our basic establishment costs are c.£303,000 - to support the current core team of 5 permanent staff with additional technical, and administration staff assistance (approximately 0.5 wte) where required. This amount includes a small amount for costs not directly funded by projects (e.g. business development, partnership visits, and advocacy). Currently (February 2021) we are £55,180 away from balancing our core funding for 2021/22. This is in common with the start of previous financial years.

Exploring additional projects with partners is one of the programme managers' core activities, responding to calls for potential work and proactively seeking financial resources with current and future partners. We monitor core funding and adjust our budget and actual spend accordingly.

The Core team:

Head of Programme Delivery - Chris Dean

Communication Programme Manager – Debra Wilson

Programme Manager – Conservation and Land Management - Matt Scott-Campbell

Programme Office Manager – Kate Morley

Science Programme Manager – David Chandler

With additional support from Programme Administrator and Administration Officers and GIS Officers.

The core team is responsible for leading on:

- Business development and leadership
- Advocacy and opportunity creation
- Financial monitoring and management
- Providing expert advice, techniques and methodologies on topic areas which MFFP has developed
- Programme management – resourcing and logistics
- Performance management and reporting
- Communications and branding
- Staff management, recruitment and induction
- Trouble shooting and emergency cover
- Setting and monitoring protocols

Table 2: Project Funding 2021/22

Projects contracted/approved	ARP/P&R Committee Minute Reference	Anticipated gross expenditure of project work 2021/22 £	Funders
Private Lands Portfolio	48/13, 38/14	562,041	NE
MoorLIFE 2020	38/15	1,150,000	PDNPA, EU LIFE, STW, UU, YWS, NT, PP, RSPB
River Etherow Monitoring	RMT 46/16	10,052	STW, UU, YWS
Working with Partners (note this is max per annum) details below:	05/17, 50/18	[2,500,000]	STW, UU, YWS, NT, PP, RSPB
• Building Blocks		551,780	NE
• Natural Flood Management Opportunity Mapping		19,331	EA
Moor Resilience (note this max between 2020-25) details below:	P&R 17/20	[1,000,000]	Various
• Calderdale Blanket Bog Condition Assessment		33,772	Calderdale Council
• Ilkley Moor NFM Works		43,000	Bradford City Council
Moor Green Investment	RMM 12/19	59,584	Esmée Fairbairn, Triodos Bank, Defra, EA
Moor Water: AMP7 Works Delivery 2020-24 (note this max between 2020-24) details below:	P&R 16/20	[3,000,000]	STW, YWS, UU
• STW AMP7		325,143	STW
• YWS AMP7 Surveys		170,817	YWS
The Great North Bog (note this max between 2021 – 2025) details below:	65/20	[1,200,000]	
• The Great North Bog Phase 1		50,000	EA
Sub Total		2,979,520	
Pipeline – all approved, subject to contract			
Moor Water: AMP7 Works delivery 2020-24 (note this	P&R 16/20	[3,000,000]	STW, YWS, UU

max between 2020-24) details below:			
• YWS AMP7 Surveys		153,290	YWS
• YWS AMP7 capital works delivery		1,500,000	YWS
Peak District Foundation		28,000	Donations
BMC Climate Project		35,000	Donations
Sub Total		1,716,290	
Total		4,695,810	

Partners (abbreviations where used):

PDNPA	Peak District National Park Authority
BMC	British Mountaineering Council
EOCA	European Outdoor Conservation Association
EA	Environment Agency
EPIP	East Peak Innovation Partnership
EU LIFE	European Commission - Environment - LIFE Programme
GMC	Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire
NE	Natural England
NT	National Trust
PP	Pennine Prospects
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
STW	Severn Trent Water
UU	United Utilities
YWS	Yorkshire Water Services

Project Teams

Further recruitment will take place as appropriate for project delivery in accordance with programme planning and approval.

5 Risk Management

The Moors for the Future Partnership's risk register for 2021/22 is attached as an annex to this plan. Programme Management risks are monitored on a quarterly basis. Any changes in risk will be identified to PDNPA (as lead partner) and significant risks highlighted on the Programme and/or Corporate Risk Register. Strategic Management Board will be advised. In addition, individual project issues are identified on the Programme Progress Log and reviewed at our monthly project management meetings. Project managers constantly monitor their individual Risks, Issues and Dependencies (RID) logs and report to a weekly programme status update.

The shortage in core funding (projected £303k, current secured £225k with an additional £23k pipeline) is the highest priority for the programme team and partnership manager. We will be working to our funding strategy to new partners and develop our business development during 2021/22.

6 Look forward - Business Development

We will continue to work with existing partners alongside developing relationships with new partners and will use the Future Business Route plan as guided by the new Strategic Management Board to set the bidding and business development work.

Core Funding

Most of the partner Statements of Intent are currently coming to an end. We are engaging with current partners to establish new Memoranda of Understanding and negotiate core funds / membership fees into the future. We will also look to bring on board new funding partners who either manage land or can benefit from our work and support our mission. Significant work has also been carried out in better extracting an appropriate level of costs on future projects, establishing a route to funding through natural capital payments and engaging with the charitable trust sector.

The funding of the core support is essential to service business development requirements into the future, and to fully capitalise on the projects currently being delivered. This is without doubt the most difficult area to fund but without this resource, it is not possible to continue to develop the programme of work.

Experience has shown that opportunities to develop new projects and bid for new funds arise during the year, requiring constant vigilance and a quick response to deliver our vision, aims and objectives.

The team will continue to keep funding opportunities under constant review through the Future Business Route Plan and will explore all of those, which have strong possibilities for funding the Partnership's objectives.

7 Monitoring This Operational Plan

We produce a Programme Progress Log four times a year which identifies approvals and financial values of projects - with issues identified through a Red/Amber/Green assessment - and includes brief summaries of progress highlights. Income and Expenditure of the programme team are also monitored by the Partnership's Operational Management Group at its quarterly meetings. The Future Business Route Plan will also be reviewed on a quarterly basis dependant on the meeting cycle of the Strategic Management Board which is yet to be confirmed.

We update our funding approval records on a monthly basis to take account of the need of probity of the approvals processes of our accountable body, the Peak District National Park Authority.

Reports on individual projects are presented to those individual project steering groups/boards and an overview of the programme finances is undertaken by the Peak District National Park Authority.

Moors for the Future Partnership Core Working Area

