



2024-25

Business Plan

April 2024

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INTRODUCTION

This Business Plan covers the period April 2024 to March 2025. After three years of significant volatility across the partnership's funding, there is now greater clarity in the funding landscape although this is tempered by a degree of uncertainty on how Defra's Peatland Restoration Grant (Nature for Climate) funding will be replaced. What is clear, is that the Private Sector (PS) will have a much greater role in funding future landscape scale projects over the period covered by this Business Plan.

Nature based Solutions (NbS) and Natural Capital (NC) markets will continue to be catalyst vehicles used to stimulate PS interest in financing future projects in return for NbS credits / tokens.

There is also growing evidence to suggest that the PS is beginning to recognise the value in Environmental & Social Governance (ESG) as part of their Sustainability Strategy. Being seen to be part of the peatland restoration story has tangible positive effect on the ability to attract and retain talent and may also influence share value.

2024-25 DELIVERY FORECAST

Global and UK Context

The Blanket Bogs of the South Pennine Moors remain some of the most degraded in Europe. The urgency to restore blanket bog function across this landscape is a race against climate change. We cannot afford to lose this with the increasing threat of wildfires and degrading drinking water quality, to pick just two important examples amongst many. The IPCC have stated that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C by the end of this century to avoid irreversible and catastrophic impacts.

At a UK level, peatlands occupy approximately 12% of the UK's land area and store 5.5bn tonnes of carbon, over half of the UK's current carbon storage. Peatlands also provide over a quarter of the UK's drinking water. The UK Natural Capital Peatlands report estimated that fully restoring the UK's peatlands could cost between £8bn and £22bn over the next 100 years but predicted savings of £109bn in terms of reduced carbon emissions.

The Partnership is now working at scale, managing up to forty projects at a time, including multi-million pound schemes. The core working area is the Dark Peak and the South Pennines Park, with a focus on the South Pennines Special area of Conservation (SAC).

Work includes supporting the delivery of the Peak District National Park Management Plan, delivering major government initiatives such as the Nature for Climate fund with Natural England and the Environment Programme and Flood Defence Grant in Aid with the Environment Agency, and delivering AMP7 & 8 work with the three water companies operating within this area.

2024 -25 CaLM Delivery Plan

Anticipated capital spending in 24/25 financial year: £2,800,000 – 3,000,000

2023/24 was the largest annual capital spend undertaken by MFFP in our 20 years of peatland restoration. This was as a result of planning which saw multiple funding routes and projects coming together and culminating in a high achieving year. This was the sixth successive year since 2018 that MFFP has intentionally grown its conservation programme capacity with a view to increasing the

pace and scale of restoration. This also allowed us to continue to stimulate growth and capacity in the contractor community in readiness to meet our anticipated future needs.

In 2024/25 the programme will deliver up to £3m of restoration. This will be intentionally held at a lower level than in 23/24. This amount of restoration still represents a very high degree of delivery but is lower than the record spending in 2024 in order to maintain sufficient Conservation Officer capacity to undertake vital survey and planning work in tandem with our capital delivery. The planning work is essential to develop our forward restoration plans to begin delivery on AMP8 (2025-30) works starting in 2025. Following a planned £3m capital delivery in 24/25, the AMP8 period is anticipated to be delivering circa £4m+ of peatland restoration every year until 2030, with the potential for also being able to respond in an agile way to further funding opportunities from partners as capacity within MFFP and the sector allows. This will be continually reviewed in MFFPs business planning.

Funding for capital works in 24/5 continues to come from a range of sources including: water company partners' AMP7 commitments (STW / YW), Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme (with contributions from a range of partners providing Match funds), Environment Agency's Accelerated Flood Funding (Natural Flood Management), Green Financing Pilot, Bradford Metropolitan District Council/Rebel Restoration (Ilkley), Agri-Environment (Countryside Stewardship). Many of the projects currently in delivery will draw to a planned close by the end of the 24/5 financial year ensuring MFFP has capacity and plans in place for the start of the AMP8 delivery period (2025-30)

Capital delivery will be across 11+ projects working across circa 30+ different sites in the Dark Peak and South Pennines Moors.

2024-25 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Business development processes continue to mature. We have developed an efficient and effective system for capturing leads and developing them into a pipeline of opportunities (see Business strategy 2024 – 31).

We currently have an underspend in our business development funding and our development pipeline potentially justifies further recruitment to the team, this is being investigated.

We have split our business development activities into three categories.

1. Traditional DEFRA family, grant funded project opportunities
2. Blended project funding (Public, Private and Third sector)
3. "Unrestricted" core vision funding (Philanthropic, Charity, CSR).

Partnership & Grant funded projects - Total - £1,406,050

- AMP 7 – Moor Water projects for STW and YW – **£406,000**
- Moor for Climate (Defra Nature for Climate). Restoration Grant Bidding - **£1,000,050.**

Blended Funding – Total - £1,453,000

- Eastern Moors – Severn Trent Great Big Nature Boost 2024/5 –**£550,000**
- Nature for Climate match funding from private **£350,000**
- Coombs Moss – Privately owned land, STW, Nestlé and EA funded – all stakeholders sharing the Ecosystem services benefits – Carbon, water neutrality, NFM, Biodiversity - **£253,000**
- Rebel Restoration – Sphagnum lab, Ilkley, Drawn to the Moors - **£300,000**.

Core Vision income– Total - £193,600

Donations from funders, to support the MFFP vision rather than allocated specific projects.

- Golden Bottle Trust - £50,000
- BMC / ACT- £70,000 -
- Private donation - £25,000
- Private donation - £40,000
- Intelligent Solutions - £8,600

2024-25 SCIENCE DELIVERY PLAN

Compliance monitoring will continue to provide supporting evidence for the works undertaken under the Moor Water and Moor Climate Action projects.

We will secure funding to continue the Wildfire Log and our yearly dipwell and vegetation monitoring campaigns. A corporate donor has already generously expressed interest in funding two of these.

We will also carry out, or continue, our innovative trials on:

- Bamford Catchment (non-Asulox bracken control)
- Combs Moss (bunds, NFM) – including co-operative trials led by the University of Derby
- Close Moss (bunds in molinia-dominated sward) – including co-operative trials led by the Universities of Manchester and Durham
- Ilkley Moor (sphagnum in shallow peat)
- Snake Summit (dense sphagnum planting configurations, NFM benefits and demo site) – in collaboration with Nottingham Trent University

We thank the funders who have made these trials possible. We will continue to build ties with universities and corporations, press the case for the development of the Moorland Centre as a research resource, and engage with partners over the Partnership's science priorities for AMP8.

2024-25 COMMUNICATIONS DELIVERY PLAN

In 2024–25, under the Moor Climate Action, Moor Water (Severn Trent) and Great Big Nature Boost projects, the Communications team plan to:

- Deliver an ambitious programme of public engagement visits with the Bogtastic van

- Deliver volunteer sphagnum planting opportunities. We will continue to build our volunteer pool to create further opportunities going forward
- Deliver talks and guided walks communicating with groups
- Hold youth engagement events introducing young people to the importance of moorland and site visits to our science sites for university students
- Host a conference on the subject of natural capital
- Hold land manager events on subjects that connect with their work and stakeholder visits for our project funders
- Create videos covering different aspects of our work, including as part of an online Be Fire Aware campaign
- Install an interpretation board and fixed-point photography posts
- Publish a book on 'Green Sketching' to help connect the public to the moorland landscape
- Deliver regular social media content, press releases and e-newsletters