

Managing Resources Sustainably in the Black Mountains

Lead organisation: Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

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Grant Award: £1,004,155

Location: Black Mountains, Brecon Beacons National Park

A collaborative project from the Black Mountains Land Use Partnership, engaging local landowners, graziers and regulatory bodies. The project aims to bring about positive social, economic and environmental change through sustainable land management across the Black Mountains Landscape. Project activities will include bracken management, heather regeneration and the protection of peat resources. Planned improvements to livestock access will help with stock management and provide a better visitor experience to the area.

The focus will be on peatland and bracken management in tandem with improving the visitor experience in the area and engaging local communities who will be involved through developing a rural skills programme, engagement with schools and the creation of employment opportunities.

The partnership aims to improve the resilience of ecosystems in the project area, alongside sustainably managing for grazing livestock, to look at the protection of natural capital such as water and soil, wildlife and biodiversity, and the wellbeing and economic health of those who live and work in this iconic area. Phil Stocker, BMLUP Chair, “Achieving a balance that meets the needs of graziers, tourism providers and landowners, while at the same time protecting the landscape for future generations can only be done through collaboration.



The project covers an area of 24,600ha and engages with land owners, graziers, Brecon Beacons National Park and the local community. The outputs from the project have delivered significant outcomes for the sustainable management of our natural resources, such as over 200 people have visited the Black mountains through scheduled educational visits, giving the local communities access to the landscape while learning about their environment, its management and its diversity. Jobs have been created to carry out the extensive landscape management such as peatland restoration, heather & bracken management to restore the quality of habitats. Extensive works to control erosion and grip blocking on strategic sites to stabilise peat resources within the National Park. A range of materials will be used for restoration works in eroded peat/mineral soil areas to improve bog condition in erosion scar revegetation trials.

The partnership have developed a successful ambassador programme, positively engaging with local businesses through the ambassador programme helping the partnership to develop a deeper understanding of the communities, the environment and the economies that underpin these types of landscapes. The project has a long term sustainability plan to continue the work this initiative has started enabling future generations to manage, work and enjoy the environment that is the Black Mountains.



Building collaborations & partnerships: Convening over 50 farmers and graziers

Habitat restoration: Bracken management programme has covered 490 ha so far

Habitat restoration: Heather habitat and regeneration management

Peatland Restoration: 66 ha of peatland restored and 105 ha of peat rewetted

Educational Programmes: Told the story of the black mountains to 2810 school children

Rural Skills and Heritage: Developing a rural skills programme with 13 qualifications awarded so far

Community engagement: Implementing a Black Mountains ambassador scheme 50 ambassadors

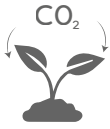
Increased Access to Outdoor Spaces: Increased access and an enhanced visitor experience signage and education boards put up across the landscape

Training & job creation: 3 full time jobs created

Community engagement: 951 people involved in community engagement

Peatland Restoration: 32 peatland plots identified through revegetation trials

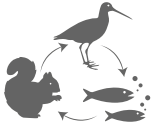
Increased Access to Outdoor Space: 3.2km of access paths restored & opened



Carbon Sequestration - supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, restoring peatland, rewetting peat and revegetation trials.



Climate Change Adaptation - supported by restoring peatland, rewetting peat and revegetation trials.



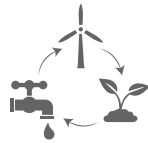
Enhanced Biodiversity - supported by a bracken management programme, heather habitat and regeneration management and restoration of access paths.



Ecosystem Resilience - supported by a bracken management programme, heather habitat and regeneration management, peat rewetting and revegetation trials.



Reduced Flood Risk - supported by peatland restoration to slow the flow.



Soil, Air & Water Quality - supported by peatland restoration and peat rewetting.



Health & Wellbeing - supported by engaging with schools, a rural skills programme, increased access to nature and restoration of access paths.



Community Cohesion - supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, engaging with schools, a rural skills programme, the BM ambassador scheme, increased access to nature, job creation, community engagement and restoration of access paths.



Rural Skills & Heritage - supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, a rural skills programme, the BM ambassador scheme and job creation.



Development of Skills Capacity & Expertise - supported by farmer collaboration and partnership working farmers, a rural skills programme, the BM ambassador scheme, job creation and revegetation trials.

Get Involved – Brecon Beacons NPA have a long history of working with volunteers, who enjoy a varied mix of activities, from taking part in site surveys to organising ecological data. If you are interested in volunteering with the national park, please phone the Volunteer Development Officer on 01874 624437.