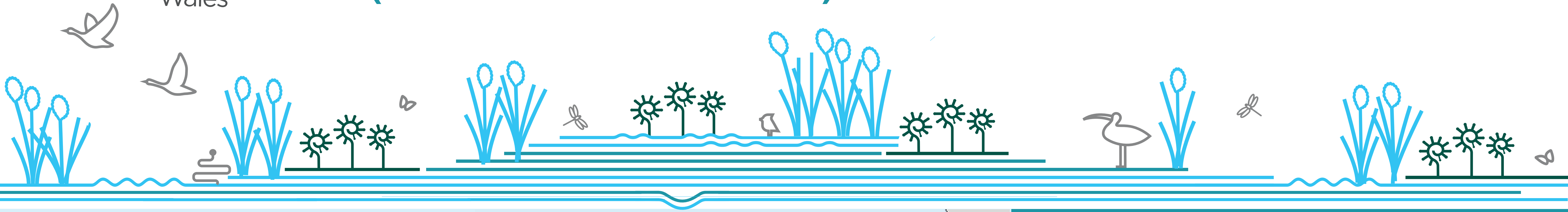


# New LIFE for Welsh Raised Bogs Project (LIFE16 NAT/UK/000646)



## About the project

The four-year LIFE Welsh Raised Bogs project aims to restore seven of the most important raised peat bogs in Wales.

All seven of the sites in the project are Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) legally protected by the European Union (EU) for their environmental interest.

The project includes Cors Caron and Cors Fochno in the county of Ceredigion, these are two of the largest actively growing raised bogs in the lowlands of Britain – with peat up to 10 and 8 metres deep respectfully.



## Why is this project important?

All active (H7110\*) and degraded (H7120) raised bog SAC features in Wales are in unfavourable condition.

Active raised bog (H7110\*) is a threatened element of the EU peatland resource. It has suffered more habitat loss than any other peatland type and remains under acute pressure.

The UK has a high proportion of the EU resource and therefore has special responsibility for its protection. Restoration of this habitat is a priority for safeguarding original Active raised bog (H7110\*) habitat in the EU.

The seven project sites support 10.1% of the UK SAC resource of Active raised bog (H7110\*) and the main concentration of this habitat in southern UK. The project sites also support the majority of the surviving Active raised bog (H7110\*) resource on intact primary peat in southern UK.

The aim of this project is to improve the conservation status of 694 hectares of Active raised bogs (H7110\*), 275.6 hectares of Degraded raised bog (H7120), and associated H7150 and H7140, within the seven raised bog SACs in Wales by implementing favourable management.

## Project Objectives

### Restoration of hydrological regimes

This will enable the recovery of active raised bog (H7110\*) and improve the long-term resilience of the peat bodies to climate change.

## How do we do this?

The project will create 64km of low level banks of peat, also known as bunds (see Image 1). These will follow the natural contours of the raised bog domes to improve water levels.

Reprofiling work will make steep gradients cut into the raised bogs shallower to mimic natural bog surface patterns.

### Removing invasive vegetation

Create suitable conditions for active raised bog (H7110\*) by tackling tree, scrub and invasive grasses encroaching and drying out the peat surfaces.

Cutting and removing some trees and rhododendron growing on and near the bog, as well as cutting purple moor-grass (Molinia) will provide more space and light to encourage more bog mosses to grow and help keep the bog wet and spongy, helping in the fight against climate change (see Image 2).



Image 2 - Wetland harvester machine cutting purple moor-grass (Molinia) ©Farming Photography Ltd.



Image 1 - Excavator creating low level banks of peat.

### Re-introducing suitable grazing

Work in partnership with local landowners and farmers to introduce livestock and improve the conditions of the peatland.

Introduction of Highland cattle (see Image 3) and other livestock to graze the sites.

Historically there has been a lack of, or poor grazing management allowing invasive species to take over and suffocate important raised bog plants.



Image 3 - Grazing with Highland cattle.

### Communicate the importance of raised bogs

Continuing perception of bogs as dangerous places means many people remain unaware of the presence of raised bogs and their importance in environmental and economic terms.

Create communication material that will highlight how great bogs are for the environment, wildlife and people. Priority messaging will say that raised bogs:

- give a home to rare plants and wildlife
- store carbon from the atmosphere
- store and purify water
- give a fascinating insight into our environmental history
- are great places to visit and enjoy nature at its best.

### Unlock the potential of local communities and other stakeholders

Strengthen local communities' sense of ownership of the sites and ensure they are aware of the special qualities of raised bog habitats.

To engage with local communities and create opportunities for them to engage with the project.

## The LIFE Welsh Raised Bog Team:

Patrick Green, LIFE Project Manager  
Rhoswen Leonard, LIFE Project & Monitoring Officer  
Jack Simpson, LIFE Project & Monitoring Officer,  
Dana Thomas, LIFE Communications & Engagement Officer  
Claudia Jones, LIFE Finance & Administration Officer

## Project timeline

Project start: September 2017  
Restoration work to begin: Autumn / Winter 2019-2020  
End of project: 31 August 2021

## Budget

Total project cost €5,875,988 / £4,700,790

Funding for the four-year project has been given to NRW from an EU LIFE programme grant, with support from Welsh Government and Snowdonia National Park Authority.



@CyforgorsyddCymruWelshRaisedBogs



@Welshraisedbog



LIFEraisedbogs@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk



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