



C2

Stakeholder Workshop Report

DEFRA Soils Team Visit

Northern Peat Partnership

29-30th July 2019

Peninne PeatLIFE delivery partners



Peninne PeatLIFE is funded by



Date: 29-30/7/19

Location: Yorkshire Dales

Topic: Requirements for Healthy Peatlands

Attendees:

DEFRA:

Sophie Chapman, Head of Soils and Peatland

Chris Wanzala-Ryan, Head of Land-use Evidence, DEFRA

Judith Stuart, Soils & Peatland Policy Specialist, DEFRA

Natalie Roberts, Senior Policy Advisor, Soils & Peatland, DEFRA

Megan Baxter, DEFRA

Sophie Fraenkel, DEFRA

Pennine PeatLIFE (PPL)/Yorkshire Peat Partnership (YPP):

Jenny Sharman (PPL Project Officer)

Tim Thom (Peat Programme Manager, YWT)

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT):

Terry Smithson (Director of Operations, North and East, YWT)

John Lawton, (President YWT)

1. Aims

- To provide the DEFRA soils and Peatland team with an overview of the needs for peatland restoration in Yorkshire and the benefits it will bring to society.
- To showcase the work being done by Pennine PeatLIFE and the Yorkshire Peat Partnership (including the use of GIS technologies and sophisticated mapping techniques)
- To better understand DEFRA's aims and objectives, and to find synergy with the peatland programme
- To build a good, open and productive working relationship between the DEFRA team and the peatland team
- To openly discuss all the challenges facing peatland restoration and potential solutions – including changes within DEFRA's own policy
- To outline the funding needs of peatland restoration
- To bring clarity to the above through a site visit to one of Yorkshire's most degraded sites, Fleet Moss.

2. Overview

The visit started with a presentation given by Tim Thom at the YPP offices in Skipton. The presentation provided a background to the work of the Yorkshire Peat Partnership and the Pennine PeatLIFE project.

Jenny Sharman followed with a presentation on Fleet Moss, illustrating the issues the team is trying to resolve, and describing the current negative impacts of the site on surrounding catchments. The presentation further focussed on the ecosystem services the site could provide once restored.

The day was finished off with a dinner for the group where further productive discussions were carried out.

On the second day of the visit, the team were taken onto Fleet Moss and shown the different problems facing unrestored sites. Several discussions followed, most particularly an interest in working out a means to continue to support peatland restoration - potentially with funding going towards monitoring. Awareness was raised regarding the current failings of the Countryside Stewardship scheme, and the funding gap that will be left following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU.



Figure 1. Tim Thom talking to the DEFRA soils team surrounded by the coir logs recently installed on Fleet Moss by Pennine PeatLIFE

3. Press coverage

No press coverage.

4. Outcomes

The event certainly worked to increase YPP's profile and status among these important policy makers as well as within the peatland community. Furthermore it has enhanced YPP's relationship with DEFRA and helped develop a mutual respect between the organisations. Feedback from the DEFRA team was entirely positive, with several members talking about their increased understanding and appreciation for peatland restoration.

Sophie Chapman, DEFRA's Head of Soils and Peatlands followed up this event with further detailed discussions with Tim Thom on the many issues raised during their visit.

It would appear the meeting and follow ups have helped inform and develop DEFRA's England Peatland strategy.

Appendix 1.

Itinerary

Monday 29th:

11.34 Arrive at Irlam station – tea, coffee introduction by TT and presentation by LWT staff on the work on the Manchester Mosses and the DEFRA funded work followed by lunch.
13.00 Transport to Little Woollen Moss and tour the site on foot with LWT staff
16.00 Depart to Skipton
17.35 Presentation by TT on the work of YPP and the context of the DEFRA funded work plus introduction to Fleet Moss site by Jenny Sharman
18.15 Check-in to Travelodge
19.00 Informal dinner in Skipton – Bistro des amis

Tuesday 30th:

09.00 Collect from accommodation and travel to Fleet Moss
10.15 Site visit to Fleet Moss including picnic lunch (note if weather is poor as it often is or the site visit finishes earlier we will return to the Skipton office for presentations from Jenny Sharman on the Peatland Code and from Tim Thom/Chris Osborne on monitoring and technology used in peat restoration).
13.30 Depart for Skipton station
15.17 train from Skipton