

Morgan Sindall Group Invests in Peatland Restoration to Help Tackle Climate Change

3 years ago



A leading UK construction and regeneration group has signed a two-year agreement to fund peatland conservation and restoration in the uplands of the North of England.

Morgan Sindall Property Services Group's parent group is investing in a peatland restoration programme which will be delivered by the North Pennines AONB Partnership and Yorkshire Peat Partnership. The funding enables the two conservation partners to undertake capital works to restore over 300 hectares of blanket bog in the North Pennines AONB and UNESCO Global Geopark; the Yorkshire Dales National Park and in the surrounding upland areas. It is the first large-scale, private sector green financing project under the umbrella of the Great North Bog coalition, an ambitious peatland conservation collaboration across the protected landscapes of the North of England.

The funding represents a significant contribution to the UK's efforts to tackle climate change. It is estimated 80% of the UK's peatlands are damaged and have become a significant source of greenhouse gases, as a whole emitting over 20 million tonnes of carbon each year. Restoration of the Great North Bog will in time avoid annual carbon losses estimated at 3.7 million tonnes per year, and by doing so reduce UK peatland emissions by almost 20%. As revegetation takes hold, the blanket bog will safeguard the carbon stored in the peatland and will begin to take in and store additional carbon from the atmosphere. The restoration of the Great North Bog will leave a living, national legacy of a functioning ecosystem providing vital services for future generations, including:

- Slowing the flow of water on peatlands, helping to mitigate flooding in towns and cities downstream.
- Reducing sediment load in rivers and the costs of water treatment to provide clean drinking water for millions.
- Storing millions of tonnes of carbon.

- Supporting a range of wildlife.

"We recognise that healthy peatlands provide many benefits to society and are vital in helping tackle the climate and biodiversity crises. The peatland restoration programmes of northern England have developed a vision to match the scale of this ecological challenge," said Morgan Sindall Group Chief Executive, John Morgan. "This is a really exciting partnership for us because their vision aligns with one of our strategic aims to not only become net zero ourselves, but also to help others do the same."

Commenting on the new partnership, Paul Leadbitter, AONB Partnership Peatland Programme Manager said: "The benefits for people, nature and climate are enormous and will have a lasting impact. This is the first large-scale private sector green financing project within the scope of the Great North Bog, allowing us to continue restoration on a large scale and contributes to the UK's environmental targets. This financial support will form part of the match funding for a significant grant of £4.8 million from the UK Government through the Nature for Climate Fund. This type of blended finance with the conservation sector and private sector working together is a new and very positive model for funding peatland restoration and we hope that this is the beginning of a long-term relationship with Morgan Sindall Group and others."

"This dynamic partnership has hit the ground running," said Graham Edgell, Director of Procurement and Sustainability at Morgan Sindall Group plc. "The rewetting of the first 11 sites is already underway, accelerating the joint ambition to deliver natural vibrant habitats full of life and betterment for everyone. This exciting project is a tangible demonstration of our commitment to enhancing communities and delivering a lasting legacy."