

National Trust and Admiral announce three-year partnership focussing on natural flood prevention in England and Wales

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- Partnership will bring together nature conservation and community protection
- £600,000 will be invested in flood prevention work in three upland areas in England and Wales
- First project now underway to restore scarred areas of peat in Eryri (Snowdonia)
- Restored blanked bog will help hold water in the landscape to slow the flow of water and improve habitats for wildlife like the rare curlew

- **Volunteers planting sphagnum moss as part of the conservation effort**

The National Trust and Admiral have joined forces in a new strategic partnership that brings together nature conservation and community protection.

Over the next three years, the two organisations will work to restore vital landscapes and raise awareness of how nature-based solutions can help tackle the growing threat of flooding.

This is the first time both organisations have combined their strengths: Admiral's experience in looking after people and the things that matter most to them, and the National Trust's expertise in protecting the environment.

With flooding already affecting one in six homes in the UK, and that number expected to rise to one in four by 2050¹, the partnership will focus on natural flood management to slow water flow, store carbon, and create healthier habitats to make a real difference for people, wildlife, and the climate².

Funded by a £600,000 investment from Admiral Group's Green Fund Initiative, the project will deliver both large scale and targeted restoration work in Eryri (Snowdonia) in Wales, across the Holnicote Estate in Somerset and in the Lake District³.

The first of these projects is now underway in Wales, where the National Trust team aims to restore the Migneint blanket bog - one of the country's most precious and biodiverse upland habitats.

Working at the very peak of the vast Migneint plateau, this ambitious £180,000 project, will restore around 12 hectares, the size of three Principality stadiums⁴, of the most severely eroded peatland at Waen Fraith over the next three years⁵. The area is a rare and precious, protected landscape⁶ with the project aiming to deliver powerful benefits for biodiversity, climate resilience, and flood prevention—making it a win for both nature and communities.

Michelle Leavesley, Chief Sustainability Officer at Admiral Group, says, "We're investing in natural flood management solutions to strengthen flood resilience for people and nature. For us at Admiral, protecting people's homes means taking action beyond insurance by building understanding and resilience to the impact of changing climate and extreme weather events.

"This partnership is a perfect example of how we live our purpose, helping more people look after their future, while making a real difference for communities and the environment."

Peatland Officer at National Trust Cymru, Iago Thomas says: "Blanket bogs are unsung climate heroes. They lock away carbon, regulate water flow, and support rare wildlife. But

in this upland environment where there is no protection from more frequent and extreme rainfall or strong winds the peat is at huge risk of erosion.

“When peat dries out and erodes, it releases carbon into the atmosphere and worsens flooding downstream. The Migneint feeds tributaries that flow into the Afon Conwy, which can flood communities downstream in the Conwy Valley during heavy rain.

“By rewetting the bog, we will literally see the trickle-down impact of it all, with the land absorbing more water like a sponge, slowing water flow, reducing carbon emissions, and creating thriving habitats. The restored habitat will benefit species like curlew, a wading bird in steep decline, which requires softer ground for their young to make it easier for them to feed, as well as invertebrates like dragon flies which need areas of open water. Restoring peat really is a nature-based solution with real-world impact.”

Contractors have begun reshaping the land by reprofiling peat hags (isolated mounds of vegetated peat), building peat dams, and creating ponds to raise water levels. The aim of these interventions is to encourage the return of sphagnum moss, a water-loving plant that kickstarts the healing process and helps form new peat. As vegetation returns, surface roughness increases, further aiding water retention to help reduce flooding downstream.

To help boost this regrowth, volunteers, including young people from Gwersyll yr Urdd Glan-llyn, will join the effort, transplanting thousands of sphagnum moss plug plants sourced from elsewhere on the site, to help revegetate the site. Their hands-on involvement marks the beginning of a wider community movement to restore this vital ecosystem.

“Blanket bogs like the Migneint quietly deliver huge benefits for nature, climate and people,” continued Iago. “Thanks to Admiral Group’s generous support, we’re taking action to restore this precious habitat, reducing carbon emissions, improving water quality, and helping wildlife thrive. It’s a fantastic example of how partnerships can drive positive change for people and the environment.”

Emma Richards, Outdoor Activity Development Officer, Urdd Gobaith Cymru: “It’s inspiring to see young people actively contributing to the restoration of such a vital ecosystem on the Migneint.

“Knowing that peat forms at just 1mm a year – meaning a single metre can take up to 1,000 years to develop – puts their efforts into powerful perspective. By the time today’s volunteers are in their 60s, the peat they helped restore will have grown by around 5cm. This project is a brilliant opportunity to nurture environmental awareness, community responsibility, and pride in Wales’ natural landscapes.”

The project isn’t an isolated effort, building on years of restoration work across the Migneint through the Uwch Conwy project, and contributes to the long-term vision for the Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Together, these initiatives are piecing together a mosaic of healthy peatland, restoring the natural structure and resilience of the landscape

for generations to come. Work will pause in the spring to protect ground-nesting birds, with monitoring continuing to assess progress. While the site may look raw at first, visible signs of recovery are expected by summer as vegetation takes hold, and the bog begins to heal.

Commenting on the partnership, Ben McCarthy, Head of Nature Conservation at the National Trust said: “This partnership with Admiral is a landmark moment. It allows us to scale up our efforts and deliver real-world impact; to support biodiversity, build in resilience against extreme weather as well as helping to protect people.

“The Welsh project will see this area of the Migneint return to being a heathy and functional blanket bog – a wetland rich in wildlife.

“Here, working alongside the community, tenant farmers and others, we are demonstrating how this investment in nature will directly circle back to supporting the communities for generations to come.”

Work at the other two sites is soon to get underway with a project to create new ponds, restore rivers and planting alongside river corridors about to start in Cumbria, and the creation of new wetlands at Holnicote in Somerset starting early next year.

For further information see: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/upper-conwy-project

Ends

Editor's notes:

Additional quote:

Katie Dulake, Head of Brand at Admiral, says, “We’re proud to provide millions of customers with insurance cover for their homes. We’re really excited to work with National Trust, an organisation which shares our own values and ambition to invest in nature and empower more people to embrace our collective role in future-proofing our homes and communities.

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-assessment-of-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-in-england-2024/national-assessment-of-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-in-england-2024>

2. Admiral employees will also have the opportunity to engage with the partnership first hand, by volunteering across National Trust projects as part of their Impact Hours.

3. The second project is in the Lake District in Cumbria where the aim is to restore natural river dynamics to enhance floodplain connectivity, increase water storage capacity during heavy rainfall events and to implement a flood monitoring system in Borrowdale, providing residents with real-time data to prepare for potential flooding. This work should reduce flood peaks, enhance biodiversity, and

improve community preparedness.

The third project at Holnicote in Somerset will implement small-scale, low-tech interventions (e.g., leaky dams, swales) across the landscape to manage water flow and reduce flood risks and improve water management and landscape resilience.

4. The footprint of the Principality Stadium in Cardiff is 40,000 m² or 4 hectares.

5. There is an estimated 36,000 tons of carbon that could be 'locked' in the site with healthy peat

6. Designations include: Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).