## Increasing Contractor Capacity in the Cairngorms National Park



"Restoring damaged peatland obviously has significant benefits to the environment, but I think what is important on top of that is the jobs that will be created locally."

Sean Williamson Peatland contractor

The National Park
Partnership Plan 2022-27 sets
out how all those with a
responsibility for the
National Park will
coordinate their work to
tackle the most important
issues

Objective A3 Restore and manage peatland within the National Park to reduce carbon emissions and improve biodiversity. Objective C1 Objective A4 Ensure that there is Reduce the negative sufficient affordable impacts of red deer and other herbivores across the housing stock to enable National Park to enable people to live and work within the National Park. woodlands to expand, heather loss to be reversed, peatlands to recover and wider Peatland biodiversity and landscape restoration enhancements to take place. Objective B4 Increase skills and training Objective B2 opportunities for people in the Develop a wellbeing economy National Park to meet that delivers social justice in a business needs and ensure healthy ecosystem, drawing on opportunities created by the the special natural and cultural growth in green jobs can be qualities of the Cairngorms. filled by residents and under-represented groups.

People

show how the objectives are interrelated

Illustration from the National Park Partnership Plan to

The issues:

Very few, or sometimes no submissions, were coming in for the peatland projects in the National Park when tendered

A number of local contractors had expressed a wish to enter the peatland restoration sector, but they had no restoration experience



## The solution:

Select entry-level restoration projects for inexperienced contractors, adapt the tender scoring criteria to consider factors other than restoration experience, and provide on-the-job training from the Cairngorms

Peatland ACTION Project

Officer team

Since the beginning of the New Entrants programme in the Cairngorms National Park in 2021, there have been 8 companies introduced to peatland restoration through this scheme.

Most of the restoration has been drain blocking and some projects have also included easy erosion features. One project was focussed on hand-labour work to install materials like geotextile.

Companies are shown restoration techniques, given advice on supervision, recording and reporting progress.

These projects require significant additional Project Officer time – but they are well worth it.

Many of the companies are now established in the restoration sector and successfully competing for high value projects at tender.

We will review the New Entrants programme before the 2025 season to assess current needs.

"It's great that contractors in the Cairngorms are being given the opportunity to diversify the services they offer and upskill their team. All this will have a positive impact on our economy in the Cairngorms National Park." Sean Williamson Peatland contractor

Our long-term vision:
'An outstanding National
Park, enjoyed and valued
by everyone, where nature
and people thrive together'



Mhonaidh Ruaidh