

Benefits for biodiversity and for people



Public benefit - visitors enjoying Arne reserve, Dorset

Public benefits

Creating new wildlife habitats provides public benefits; including amenity for local people, improved quality of life and enhanced health. Time spent in natural environments is known to increase people's ability to recover from stress, illness and injury, and encourages regular physical activity.²

Nature conservation can improve the local economy; through employment on the site and through local suppliers and contractors. Wildlife and natural landscapes also attract visitors, who spend money locally providing income and further employment.³

References

¹Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2002) *Survey of land for mineral workings in England 2000*. HMSO, London

²Bird W (2004) *Natural Fit: Can green space and biodiversity increase levels of physical activity?* The RSPB, Sandy

³Rayment M and Dickie I (2001) *Conservation works...for local economies in the UK*. The RSPB, Sandy

The restored area of Sandy Heath Quarry - where natural regeneration of acidic grassland has occurred.



Sources of further information

The RSPB is a leading advisor on habitat restoration on minerals sites. The RSPB book *Habitat creation handbook for the minerals industry* details the entire process of planning habitat creation, presenting the latest ideas and methodology. It is available for £24.99 per copy from:

Peter Smith, The RSPB, Unit 17, St Martins Business Centre, Cambridge Road, Bedford MK42 0LH.
Tel: 01234 211522.



The RSPB is the UK charity working to secure a healthy environment for birds and wildlife, helping to create a better world for us all.

Funding for this project is provided through the Minerals Industry Research Organisation (MIRO), as part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) Sustainable Aggregate Minerals Programme (SAMP).



For more details contact:

Alice Davies

Minerals Restoration Potential Project Officer, The RSPB, UK Headquarters, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL

Tel: 01767 680551 E-mail: alice.davies@rspb.org.uk

Website: www.rspb.org.uk

RSPB regd charity no 207076



for birds
for people
for ever

Minerals Restoration Potential



Understanding the potential contribution of the minerals industry to biodiversity in England

Minerals and the UK BAP

Huge areas of land in England are under planning permission for surface mineral working - over 113,500 hectares in 2000.¹ As a temporary land-use, these areas must eventually be restored.

The Government is committed to increasing the area of important wildlife habitats through the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP), and restoration of mineral sites can make a significant contribution.

Currently, quantitative information of the contribution that the minerals industry could make to UK BAP targets is poor; however, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (the RSPB) aims to address this problem.

Assessing the potential

Information will be collated in a Geographical Information System (GIS), including:

- The final extent and current proposed end-use of each site.
- The dominant broad soil types and hydrology in each area.
- The land-use or habitat type surrounding each site.
- The location of airfield exclusion zones and other constraints.

The GIS will then be used to model the most appropriate habitat type(s) for each site. The results will be used in two key outputs, which together aim to prioritise habitat restoration as a major end-use of mineral sites.



Bittern - a UK priority species that benefits from reedbed creation



Stone-curlew and heath tiger beetle - two UK priority species which benefit from lowland heathland creation



Lowland heathland - one of the several priority habitats that can be restored

Outputs of the Project

Advocacy Report

The model will calculate the extent of each priority UK BAP habitat at local, regional and national levels, and compare this with the current proposed end-uses, and with the UK BAP habitat and species targets.

The findings will be published in a report, together with recommendations for strategic measures to help mineral planning improve delivery of UK BAP targets. Case studies will be used to illustrate the findings, giving examples of best practice and blocks to progress in planning and implementation.

The report will be presented to an audience including minerals industry representatives, local authority planners and representatives of central government towards the end of 2006.

Interactive web-tool

A new website will be available in early 2007, which will provide mineral operators and planners with the resource to plan appropriate habitat restoration as an end-use.

This will include an interactive web-tool based on the GIS model, where selecting a specific site will display information on the appropriate habitat for restoration supported by the evidence used. The web-tool will also advise on restoration techniques and the broad costs involved, as well as case studies of successful restoration.

Photos: bittern, heath tiger beetle, lowland heathland and cover image of Sandy Heath Quarry by Andy Hay, stone-curlew by Chris Gomersall (all rspb-images.com). Sandy Heath Quarry on rear panel by Graham White (RSPB).