

The document links to guidance on practical peatland restoration methods that SNH and other organisations have used successfully. Some of these are 'tried and tested', e.g. ditch blocking with peat dams, others, such as bare peat restoration and gully blocking are more experimental. We welcome suggestions for new techniques and ways to improve on 'tried and tested' methods.

This [note](#) lists some of the health and safety considerations that are particularly relevant to peatlands. You may find it helpful to refer to the Health and Safety Executive guidance on [risk management](#)

[Guidance on measuring peat depths](#)

If you are unsure which techniques are suitable for your site, please contact the project team via our mailbox: PEATLANDACTION@snh.gov.uk

Blocking ditches or moor grips with peat dams

On a fairly flat site, we recommend making peat dams using an excavator. The length of the ditches that need blocking can usually be estimated from aerial photos, but a site visit to look at condition of the ditches will also be required. Please contact the project team for advice if the ditches are:

- Sloping (>1:12 gradient)
- More than 1.5 metres wide
- Eroded down to the mineral soil/rocky substrate

[Blocking ditches with peat dams](#)

[A case study on peat dams from Blawhorn Moss](#)

Blocking ditches or moor grips with plastic piling

Plastic piling is a good option where only a few dams are required. They are also useful on larger or more steeply sloping ditches where peat dams cannot be used. Plastic piling dams will need reinforcement on steeper slopes and where ditches are wider than 1.5m. Reinforcement plastic piling dams can be installed at the end of long runs of peat dams where the water pressure is greatest.

[Blocking ditches of less than 1.5m width with plastic piling](#)

[Blocking ditches of more than 1.5m width with reinforced plastic piling](#)

Use of softwood trunks and brash

If neither plastic piling nor peat dams are feasible, ditch blocking with timber trunks and brash can be effective. This is a low cost option on forest to bog sites where the raw materials are provided by felling. Timber trunks and brash do not provide as good a seal as plastic piling or peat, but this is a useful technique where erosion is a problem, water flows need amelioration and/or the peat is shallow. By placing peat turfs and compressed peat on the upstream side of the dam, a reasonable seal can be created. When sourcing timber, ask for red grade trunks which are the cheapest.

Methods for blocking eroding gullies

Techniques for blocking gullies are still under development, especially where the gullies are on steeper ground. Here are some [techniques for gully blocking](#) from the Yorkshire Peat Partnership.

Scrub management and grazing

[Clearing scrub](#)

[Grazing on peatlands](#)

Restoration from plantation forestry

In the past commercial forestry plantations have sometimes been located on deep peat, often resulting in poor productivity. These sites may not be appropriate for re-planting and can usually be restored to bog. Large areas of former plantation are being restored to bog in the Flow Country, Sutherland. Forestry Commission Scotland will be able to advise on the best option for your site.

[Forestry commission research note on restoring afforested peat bogs](#)

Specific advice for fen peatlands

[Case study and guidance – reed control management](#)

[Fen management handbook](#)

Methods for stabilising and re-vegetating bare peat

The causes of bare peat need to be considered before restoration techniques are used. The Moors for the Future project [considers this issue](#) in detail. Historical acid deposition is not thought to be a major cause of bare peat in Scotland, as it is in the Moors for the Future project area.

The following methods are only suitable where stock and deer have been excluded or reduced to very low densities:

[Protecting and re-vegetating bare peat with heather brash](#)

[Protecting bare peat with geojute](#)

[Bare peat restoration ideas from the Yorkshire Peat Partnership Project](#)

Heather baling

This technique can be used to manage heather cover and to make bales for gully blocking and bare peat re-vegetation projects

[Heather baling advice](#) from Yorkshire Peat Partnership

[Case study on heather baling](#)