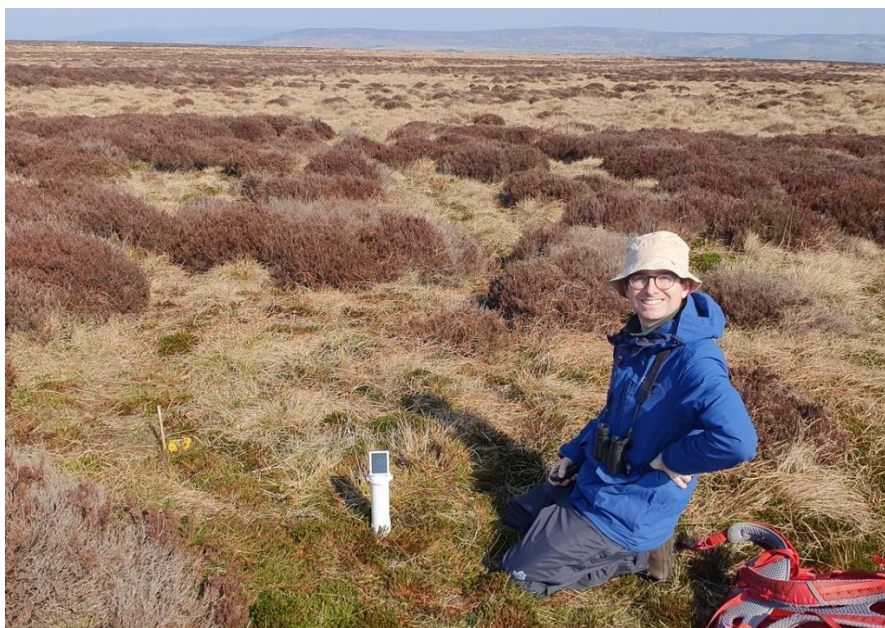


The Moorland Resilience Programme for Ilkley Moor nearing completion.

With funding from Bradford Council, Rebel Restoration and Friends of Ilkley Moor (FoIM) the Moors for the Future Partnership has installed 354 leaky stone and timber dams, alongside 61 pond forming heather bale dams on the western side of the Moor.



Joe Margetts (Above) from Moors for the Future Partnership checks on one of the soil moisture probes funded by Friends of Ilkley Moor

Areas of old heather have been cut to limit fire risk and provide new, young shoots which is the main food source for red grouse. Targeted areas of bracken have also been cut and 200 trees planted to help shade out regrowth of bracken. The leaky dams should slow the flow of water running off the moor and help raise groundwater levels. On some of these areas, thousands of sphagnum moss plugs have been planted with the help of FoIM volunteers. It is hoped that these will thrive, expand and help create new blanket bog, although the recent dry weather will not help their survival.

The sphagnum development in some of these areas will be monitored over the next ten years. Forty small monitoring plots have been set out on the moor over a range of peat depths and vegetation types. The aim is to study how well the sphagnum moss plugs survive and grow in these different conditions. Soil moisture probes have been installed at four of these plots. Paid for by Friends

of Ilkley Moor these solar-powered probes constantly record the soil moisture at different depths and transmit the reading via satellite communication to the monitoring centre. These monitoring sites are now part of a network spread across the southern Pennine moors. This will help in our understanding how sphagnum moss develops in different moorland situations so that future planting is carried out in the most effective way.