

## Want to get involved?

More wildlife habitat on mineral sites will not be achieved by the partnership alone, but through the actions of our stakeholders in the mineral industry, mineral planning authorities, local biodiversity partnerships (LBAPs) and elsewhere.

Your participation is key to the success of the programme, and there are lots of ways to get involved:

- Recommend a case study – this could be a particular site or an initiative or approach
- Attend a course and learn more about new techniques and approaches for habitat creation
- Visit [www.afterminerals.com](http://www.afterminerals.com) and look at the habitat advice pages
- Use the discussion forum on the web-site to share ideas with others
- Join our mailing list to receive news of the latest developments

If you work in a mineral planning authority, for the mineral industry or for a conservation organisation, look at the mineral sites in your area and consider where opportunities might exist now or in the future to rebuild biodiversity through habitat creation. The Nature After Minerals programme can provide the tools and expertise to support your schemes and together we can do more for people and for wildlife.

If you would like to learn more about the programme, get involved, or join the mailing list, please contact the Programme Manager on 01767 693007 or at [natureafterminerals@rspb.org.uk](mailto:natureafterminerals@rspb.org.uk)

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a registered charity: England and Wales no. 207076, Scotland no. SC037654

**By working together we can do more for people and for wildlife**



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# Nature After Minerals

Working together to restore quarries for people and wildlife

[www.afterminerals.com](http://www.afterminerals.com)



**Minerals sites are often ideal for creating wildlife habitats such as wetlands, heath, grasslands and woods.**

The RSPB and Natural England are working with mineral planners and industry to help nature after minerals. Together, we will make substantial contributions to UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) targets and provide richer places for people to enjoy.

**The partnership has two primary aims:**

- 1) To help to deliver more priority BAP habitat on mineral sites, that is appropriate, high-quality and sustainable.
- 2) To promote the huge benefits that high quality restoration on mineral sites offer to people and wildlife.

Key activities will include:

- Working with planners and industry to integrate habitat creation as an end-use of mineral sites into the new Minerals Development Frameworks.
- Promoting the benefits of restoring wildlife to local communities and the general public.

- Developing a new web-based tool identifying the restoration potential of new minerals sites and preferred areas.
- Collating and disseminating best-practice advice in habitat creation on mineral sites.
- Advocating to Government the potential contribution to their own habitat creation targets, and encouraging support and investment in long-term management.
- Recognising high-quality habitat creation already achieved on mineral sites, and their outstanding contributions to best-practice knowledge.

**Background**

We know that high quality habitat can be created on mineral sites, thanks to examples across England, many of which have been led by the minerals industry.

At Needingworth quarry, Hanson are working with the RSPB to create the biggest reedbed in the UK, some 460ha, as part of the Ouse Fen nature reserve. At Sandy Heath Quarry, Lafarge and the RSPB are sharing expertise to trial new restoration techniques that are benefiting specialist invertebrates like burrowing bees and wasps.

Sites like these led the RSPB to investigate what contribution mineral sites across England could make to BAP targets. Using a Geographical Information System (GIS), the study showed that mineral sites in England had the potential to exceed nine UK BAP habitat expansion targets through their restoration<sup>1</sup>. While many sites are being restored for wildlife in accordance with planning conditions, very few are being specifically restored to appropriate priority UK BAP habitats.

The Nature After Minerals programme will encourage more habitat creation on mineral sites by bringing stakeholders together and pooling expertise and information. In doing this, we will seek to ensure that restoration schemes are appropriate to the site and not in conflict with other interests such as geodiversity, landscape or soil protection. Together we can make the most of this exciting opportunity to contribute to UK BAP targets and benefit wildlife across England.

**Places for wildlife to thrive**

Wildlife habitats, and the species they support, are determined by factors such as

geology, soils and climate. By targeting habitat creation at the right locations for the right habitats, and linking to existing patches of habitats wherever possible, mineral site restoration can benefit habitats and species far more than by creating numerous unconnected 'nature conservation' restorations.

**Places for people to enjoy wildlife**

New nature reserves can provide wonderful recreation and education opportunities for people – both local communities and visitors from further afield – as well as supporting the local economy. As sites can often be designed from scratch, the needs of both people and wildlife can usually be incorporated, for example by providing extensive footpaths whilst leaving large blocks of habitat undisturbed.

Creating important habitats is not only good for wildlife. Early discussion with local people and interested organisations will allow other benefits to be successfully incorporated into the design of a site. For example, extracting minerals often exposes interesting geological features, and careful site design allows these to be retained.

<sup>1</sup> Nature After Minerals: how mineral site restoration can benefit people and wildlife. Davies, A. 2006. The RSPB, Sandy, UK.

**Creating large blocks of habitat, rather than squeezing several habitats into a site, is best for wildlife**

**Strategic planning for habitat creation through mineral site restoration could help wildlife adapt to climate change**

**Restoring mineral sites for wildlife creates new green space for recreation**

**Restored mineral sites can be wonderful opportunities to learn about nature**



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