



To Whom it may concern,

The RSPB fully supports United Utilities' ambition to build on their past and current landscape scale catchment restoration works, delivered through SCaMP and through innovative partnership working with organisations like the RSPB and Moors for the Future. And fully supports United Utilities' future ambitions for joined up delivery of catchment management through CaST.

The RSPB considers the proposed Green Recovery works vital to the recovery and wellbeing of the upland landscapes managed by United Utilities, to the delivery of public goods and ecosystem services to the wider public, and to the value of their land holdings for recreation and public health and wellbeing.

The RSPB and United Utilities have been working in partnership at Dove Stone, Haweswater and Bowland for over a decade. At Dove Stone the partnership has very effectively developed, pioneered and delivered industry-leading peatland restoration works across 4000Ha of United Utilities' upland estate. The RSPB/United Utilities partnership is an award winning one, winning both the 2016 international Natura 2000 award for landscape restoration, and the 2018 CIEEM award for partnership conservation. The RSPB delivers on policy and advocacy, and the RSPB/United Utilities partnership at Dove Stone has a long history of successful advocacy work, hosting politicians (including Andy Burnham, Ruth George, Holly Lynch, Robert Lagan and Sean Fielding), nationally viewed media such as Springwatch, and attendance at national political events such as the 2019 Parliamentary Reception at Westminster.

Water table on United Utilities catchment is being restored by the partnership through gully blocking, erosion of bare peat is being addressed through revegetation, essential peatland vegetation communities for carbon sequestration are being recreated through sphagnum moss reintroduction, and fire risk is being reduced and vegetation communities being diversified through heather and Molinia cutting.

The RSPB has delivered these works in partnership with and on behalf of United Utilities since 2010, including over 11,000 dams for water table restoration (holding c 30,000 tonnes of water every time it rains) and 700 hectares of sphagnum moss inoculation. The RSPB welcomes the prospect of continuing this work with United Utilities, and further restoring a precious upland habitat to a functioning and ecosystem service delivering landscape.

The RSPB delivers not only through local contractors (supporting local businesses and employment), but through our dedicated and skilled team of volunteers - engaging the local community, providing training in upland restoration techniques to those looking to enter the land management industry, and enhancing the health and wellbeing of people who live locally to United Utilities' catchments. Volunteers come from all walks of life: retired people wanting to give back to a loved landscape, students looking for training and mentoring, school groups, local businesses and people looking to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing. To date, the RSPB has been given an astonishing 45,000 hours of community investment through our truly wonderful team of volunteers, equivalent to c 20 years of a full time member of staff.

Within the Green Recovery plans for the Longdendale catchment, the RSPB propose to deliver 1,500 peat dams, 17,500 stems of living willow used to stabilise eroding peat edges in an innovative technique, 380,000 handfuls/plugs of sphagnum moss and 30 hectares within which heather will be cut.

The RSPB has delivered peatland restoration works under multiple grant streams in the past including SITA, Grantscapes, NIA, WREN and Environmental Stewardship Schemes, and is currently working under the MoorLife2020 EU Life funding with a diverse array of partners. The RSPB has recently secured an additional £150,000 of funding for peatland restoration works at Dove Stone under a Wildlife Trust led Green Recovery bid.

The RSPB considers the partnership excellently placed and extremely experienced to deliver the works proposed by United Utilities under the Green Recovery plans, and considers the plans well able to deliver on habitat restoration, ecosystem service delivery to the wider public, health and wellbeing benefits to the local community, and vitally will support Green job retention. Barring further covid related or similar delays, the RSPB is confident in our ability to deliver within the required timescale. All costs have been based on recent delivery of similar capital works, including contractor tender returns.

Many Thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Randall', written in a cursive style.

Martin Randall
Area Manager (East Midlands)
RSPB