

Airds Moss

Location	Airds Moss
EcoCo Management Zone	East Ayrshire Coalfields
Lead Partner	East Ayrshire Coalfields Environmental Initiative



Site Description

Airds Moss is the largest unafforested blanket bog in the South Strathclyde region and is situated within the Muirkirk Uplands between the towns of Cumnock and Muirkirk in East Ayrshire. The entire site is 8km in length and 2.5 km wide. The bog forms part of a wider area of upland moorland within the catchment of the River Ayr. It hosts a wide variety of species dependant on its specialised habitat type.

What are we going to do?

The bog has been degraded through past attempts to drain it. The project is restoring the site by carrying out extensive ditch blocking to bring the bog back into good condition. This is being supported by in-depth monitoring to assess the success of the restoration on the rare habitats and species that depend on good quality bog habitat to survive.

What will this achieve?

Restoring the site will contribute to the wider restoration of ecological coherence across the area. Airds Moss is a key component of a wide-ranging series of bogs in varying states of condition. Its restoration will ensure that this network of sites is more resilient, with a secure long-term future.

Links

www.ea-cei.org.uk/airds-moss
www.ecocolife.org.uk

What is ecological coherence?

The project has adopted an adapted version of a definition proposed by R. Catchpole (2013).

At the scale of the whole network, coherence is achieved when: the full range of variation in valued features is represented; replication of specific features occurs at different sites over a wide geographic area; dispersal, migration and genetic exchange of individuals is possible between relevant sites; all critical areas for rare, highly threatened and endemic species are included; and the network is resilient to disturbance or damage caused by natural and anthropogenic factors.

In order to determine ecological coherence for the project sites the main measurable parameters being considered are; patch size, biological diversity, habitat structural and functional connectivity, ecological functionality and presence of endangered, rare or endemic species.

In essence this can be summarised for habitats as **'more, bigger, better, and better connected'**.

Learn more at "Ecological Coherence Definitions in Policy and Practice - Final Report". R. Catchpole, Aspen International. Contract report to Scottish Natural Heritage, No. 41102

