



Spring 2025
Member Update

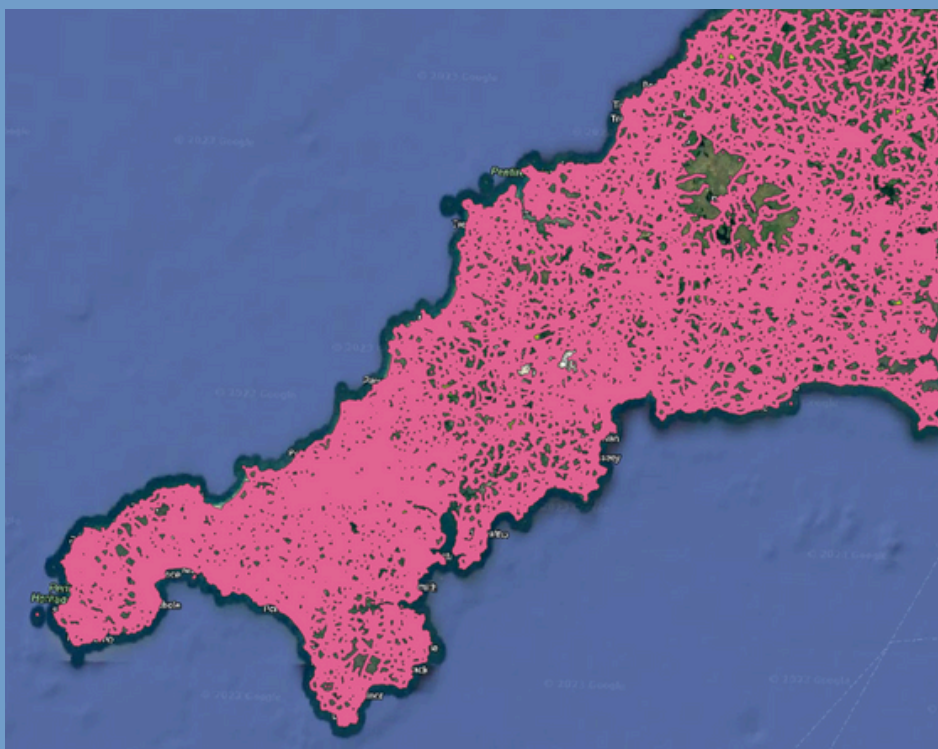
Ospreys in Cornwall

Ospreys haven't nested in Cornwall for hundreds of years. Habitat loss and persecution by humans led to them being wiped out entirely in the UK by the end of the 19th century. And the latest record of anything alluding to them nesting here in Cornwall is from the early 17th century.

However, with the aid of conservation efforts, osprey populations have been recovering since the first pair naturally returned to Scotland in 1927. In Cornwall, ospreys pass through on their winter migrations to and from Africa each spring and autumn.

Artificial nest platforms have been shown to work elsewhere in attracting ospreys to nest. We planned to install a network of them in Cornwall, but we had one problem...

Ospreys will only nest in places more than 200m from a road or footpath. In Cornwall, that looks like this:



Unshaded areas are 200m from a road or footpath.

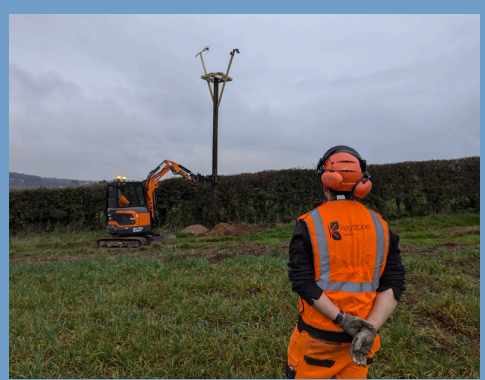
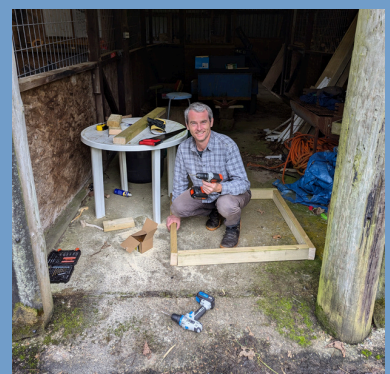
What we've done

After many hours of poring over maps and data, we identified several potentially suitable locations to install our osprey nest platforms.

But identifying these locations was just the beginning. Through desk work, leg work and good old-fashioned door knocking and cold calling, we contacted a group of generous landowners who were sympathetic to our cause.

We then conducted site visits and waded through estuary mud, got soaked through on Bodmin Moor, and were driven to some pretty remote locations by helpful land managers in their 4x4s.

The next stage was to procure telegraph poles, build the platforms by hand, and enlist helpful contractors to partner with us in their installation.



Our Nest Platform Network

In September 2024, we installed our first osprey nest platform at a location close to the Tamar River.

Moving further west in the autumn, and working in partnership with Keystone Environmental, we installed four more platforms at remote locations closer to the Fal region.

In January 2025, after a landowner contacted us to offer more potential locations that were within our identified zones of remoteness, we installed two more platforms.

We now have a network of seven osprey platforms in place.



What's next?

With our first seven nest platforms in place, we must now play a waiting game. Ospreys pass through Cornwall in growing numbers each autumn and spring as they make their migrations between their regular nests further north and their overwintering areas in sub-Saharan Africa.

Although we are confident that our planning and preparation have put these platforms in the types of locations that ospreys would prefer to nest in, we, of course, have no guarantee when or if they will take them to nest in.

In the meantime, our platforms are equipped with remote 4G cameras, and we'll be keeping an eye on what birds visit them, particularly in those crucial months during the spring and Autumn migration. While we believe it's unlikely that any ospreys will take these nests this year, birds may visit while passing, and once aware of potential nesting sites, they could return next year to take up residence.

Now that we have our first network in place, we need funding to continue installing more platforms and are actively seeking sponsors for this project. So, please get in touch if you would like to discuss sponsoring an osprey nest platform:
hello@kernowconservation.org



With thanks to our Wild Kernow Platinum, Gold and Silver Business Members for supporting this update.



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