



Agenda

Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Friday, 29 April 2016, 10.00 am

Elgar Room, Malvern Hills District Council

**Council House
Avenue Road
Malvern
WR14 3AF**

Please note the meeting is being held in an alternative room which is within the main Council House.

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Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee
Friday, 29 April 2016, 10.00 am,

Members

Elected Members:

Prof J W Raine (Chairman)	Malvern Hills District Council
Mr S Bosley	Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
Mr J Fryman	Worcestershire Association of Local Councils
Ms E Holton	Herefordshire Council
Mr A Johnson	Herefordshire County Council
Mrs C O'Donnell	Malvern Hills District Council
Dr K A Pollock	Worcestershire County Council
Mrs G Rees (Vice Chairman)	Malvern Hills Conservators
Mr P A Tuthill	Worcestershire County Council
Mr C Williams	Forest of Dean District Council

**Non-Elected
members:**

Mike Ashton	Visit Herefordshire/Destination Worcestershire
Wayne Barnes	Forestry Commission
Prof R Bryant	Hereford & Worcester Earth Heritage Trust
Ms S Faulkner	NFU West Midlands
Mr I George	Historic England
Ms D Griffiths	Natural England
Mr J Hervey-Bathurst	County Land & Business Association
Dr Richard Williams	Campaign to Protect Rural England

Co-Opted Members:

Mr A Lee	Herefordshire Local Access Forum
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Item No	Subject	Page No
1	Apologies and Substitutes	
2	Declaration of Interests	
3	Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting	

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All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website.

Date of Issue: Thursday, 14 April 2016

Item No	Subject	Page No
4	Film of the Malvern Hills AONB To watch a recently completed film showing the landscapes of the AONB.	
5	Colour Study of the AONB To receive a presentation from Jeremy Waygood, of Waygood Colour on new colour guidance for the Malvern Hills AONB.	
6	AONB Budget and Work Programme 2016/17 To receive a report from Paul Esrich, AONB Partnership Manager.	1 - 16
7	Malvern Hills Car Clubs To receive a report from David Armitage, AONB Partnership Assistant Manager.	17 - 18
8	The Future of Castlemorton Commons To receive a report from David Armitage, AONB Partnership Assistant Manager.	19 - 20
9	Sustainable Development Fund To receive a report from David Armitage, AONB Partnership Assistant Manager.	21 - 22
10	Information Items To note the items for information.	23 - 26
11	Verbal Reports from Partners	
12	Dates of Future Meetings The next meeting will be held on 18 November 2016	

MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

29 April 2016

AONB BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAMME

Background

1. A grant application to support the core work of the AONB Partnership in 2016/17 was considered by members of the Steering Group before being submitted to Defra in January 2016. Defra has now issued a grant offer letter. NB flexibility needs to be employed when delivering the AONB budget to ensure that it best supports the AONB Partnership. Therefore, details of the budget/work programme may change through the year and money may be moved from one head to another to reflect this.

Summary

2. A summary of the core budget and expected key work tasks is provided in Appendix 1 and 3 respectively. Anticipated budget figures from previous years are provided in brackets for comparison. The main points to note are as follows.

3. **Budget:** The total budget for 2016/17 is expected to be £181,436 (£179,039). This represents an increase of just over 1% from 2015/16. The increase is the result of a real terms protection in funding to AONB Partnerships from Central Government. This protection was signalled in the 2015 Spending Review and subsequently confirmed by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Environment and Rural Affairs in February 2016. It has also been confirmed that the real terms protection will extend throughout this Spending Review period, until 2019/20.

4. Of the total, £155,934 can be identified as 'core' funding with £25,502 (£24,000) allocated to the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF). Central government is providing all of the funding for the SDF and a maximum of 75% of the total core budget, a combined total of £141,781 (£139,384). Local authorities in the area are expected to provide the match funding to core costs (a total of £38,983).

5. **Voluntary contributions:** At its meeting on 26/04/13, JAC members agreed that there was merit in inviting Parish and Town Councils to make voluntary contributions to the work of the AONB Partnership. An initial request was made to a small number of Councils and, following some success, a small number of additional Councils were contacted. Appendix 2 summarises contributions received in 2014/15 and 2015/16. We are waiting to hear about contributions for 2016/17. Whilst some individual contributions may be small they can add up to very decent totals which are useful when added to the overall budget for delivering the Partnership's work programme. Financial contributions can be seen as a tangible expression of how local councils value the work of the AONB Partnership.

6. **Staff:** Salaries look set to rise by 1% for staff of Worcestershire County Council.

7. **Work priorities:** As ever, the Unit's work programme for 2016/17 continues to be centred around the implementation of the AONB Management Plan.

8. **Project funding:** Outwith Core and SDF it is expected that c. £100,000 will be spent on the Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project during 2016.

Recommendation

9. **The Committee is recommended to:**

- a) **Note the budget for 2016/17;**
- b) **Comment on the overall direction and work priorities for the year ahead.**

Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Budget for Malvern Hills AONB Partnership in 2015/16
- Appendix 2 – Voluntary Contributions from Parish/Town Councils
- Appendix 3 – Unit Work Programme 2016/17

Appendix 1 –Budget for Malvern Hills AONB Partnership in 2015/16

Element	Budget						
	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Staff (costs inc. salary, NI, super, training, travel, NI etc)							
AONB Manager	£52,405	£51,910	£50,400	£50,500	£49,780	£49,560	£48,510
AONB Assistant Manager	£39,500	£39,300	£38,220	£38,320	£37,770	£37,600	£37,690
AONB Technical Support Officer	£15,770	£15,570	£15,160	£14,960	£15,488	£15,486	£25,670
Strategy Officer/Planning Advice	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£8,000	£9,928
Project Officer			£3,669				
<i>Sub total</i>	<i>£115,675</i>	<i>£114,780</i>	<i>£115,449</i>	<i>£111,780</i>	<i>£111,038</i>	<i>£110,646</i>	<i>£121,798</i>
Accommodation/office equipment	£8,742	£8,742	£8,242	£8,242	£8,242	£8,242	£10,000
Partnership budget for PR, events etc.							
NAAONB membership	£2,400						
Annual review	£400						
Small grants scheme for landscape and biodiversity improvements	£3,600						
Landscape scale project development	£3,500						
External advice	£3,000						
Neighbourhood Planning	£3,000						
Large projects	£4,380						
Communications	£2,000						
<i>Sub total</i>	<i>£22,280</i>	<i>£22,280</i>	<i>£22,111</i>	<i>£27,236</i>	<i>£27,300</i>	<i>£31,887</i>	<i>£29,941</i>
Partnership running costs (Council support, IT, personnel, finance etc.)	£9,237	£9,237	£9,237	£9,237	£9,237	£9,237	£9,237
Sustainable Development Fund	£25,502	£24,000	£24,000	£34,807	£45,140	£50,089	£63,539
Total Budget	<u>£181,436</u>	<u>£179,039</u>	<u>£179,039</u>	<u>£191,302</u>	<u>£200,957</u>	<u>£210,101</u>	<u>£234,515</u>

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Appendix 2 – Voluntary contributions from Parish/Town Councils

Organisation	Contribution	
	2015/16	2014/15
Colwall PC		£1,000
Cradley PC	£200	£100
Ledbury PC		£350
Malvern Wells PC	£800	£800
Little Malvern & Welland PC	£250	
West Malvern PC	£300	£300
Wellington Heath PC	£500	
Total	£2,050	£2,550

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Appendix 3 – Unit Work Programme for 2016/17

Management Plan Policy	Task
Landscape	
LP1 Manage the landscape of the AONB in accordance with key documents such as the AONB Landscape Strategy, LCA and HLCs.	Ensure that comments on planning responses incorporate wider landscape issues.
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.	Press for development of an updated topo map for the 3 Counties Showground.
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.	Revise the Landscape Management Plan for the 3 Counties Showground.
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.	Work with the Three Counties Agricultural Society to enhance 3 landscape elements at the showground.
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.	Supervise completion of an Environmental Colour Assessment for the 3 Counties Showground.
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.	Ensure that proposals for biodiversity enhancements under BP3 are landscape 'proofed'.
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.	Work with landowner and government agencies to improve landscape management at Mathon Court.
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.	Liaise with WPD and landowners to ensure the completion of x undergrounding schemes.
LP3 Identify and promote opportunities for positive landscape change to landowners, managers, government and all those with an influence over land.	Promote AONB guidance to all interested parties, including new colour guidance.
LP3 Identify and promote opportunities for positive landscape change to landowners, managers, government and all those with an influence over land.	Work with MHC and interests at Coombe Green to secure long-term management of the Commons by grazing.

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LP4 Promote greater awareness and appreciation of the landscape character of the AONB among residents and visitors, providing opportunities for them to be involved in identifying and conserving locally distinctive features, views and landscapes.	Work with Welland Parish Council to develop ideas for local landscape enhancements using S106 monies.
LP5 Undertake surveys and research to better understand and monitor the condition, and rate of change, of landscape character.	Complete a programme of fixed point photographic monitoring in Landscape Description Units.
LP5 Undertake surveys and research to better understand and monitor the condition, and rate of change, of landscape character.	Produce a '10 years of landscape change' document in the AONB.
LP6 Ensure that climate change adaptation and mitigation proposals are consistent with the special qualities of the AONB and minimise any adverse effects on the area.	Input to County Waste and Minerals Plans to ensure that the quest for sustainability does not adversely impact on landscape character.
LP6 Ensure that climate change adaptation and mitigation proposals are consistent with the special qualities of the AONB and minimise any adverse effects on the area.	Propose appropriate sustainable energy policies into NDPs.
LP7 Identify and support appropriate climate change mitigation works, such as new habitat creation, within and adjacent to the AONB.	As required.
LP8 Increase understanding and awareness of possible landscape effects of, and responses to, climate change.	
Geodiversity	
GP1 Conserve the geodiversity resource in line with Geodiversity Action Plans.	
GP2 Secure best practice in geodiversity management within and adjacent to designated sites.	Support and resource H&WEHT volunteers in managing 4 Local Geological Sites (LGS)
GP3 Undertake survey, research and monitoring to secure complete information on the state of the AONB's	Support the 1000 Years of Building with Stone HLF project in the AONB.

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geodiversity resource.	
GP4 Promote greater understanding of the geological value of the AONB, its links with the historic environment and the need for its protection and management.	
Biodiversity	
BP1 Conserve, enhance and expand key habitats and populations of key species in line with local biodiversity priorities and the England Biodiversity Strategy 2020.	Manage and support a TCTOP Project Officer Deliver year 2 of the TCTOP.
BP1 Conserve, enhance and expand key habitats and populations of key species in line with local biodiversity priorities and the England Biodiversity Strategy 2020.	Review known condition status of Local Wildlife Sites in AONB
BP1 Conserve, enhance and expand key habitats and populations of key species in line with local biodiversity priorities and the England Biodiversity Strategy 2020.	Work with local landowners and appropriate bodies to implement a sustainable approach to managing 2 Local Wildlife Sites
BP2 Restore the condition of degraded habitats in line with local and national biodiversity priorities.	X traditional orchards managed within TCTOP
BP3 Enhance the wildlife value of the countryside and achieve greater buffering and connectivity between key habitats within the AONB and between the AONB and the countryside beyond.	Implement 2 improvements as part of the 'landscape scale' biodiversity project East of the Malvern Hills project
BP3 Enhance the wildlife value of the countryside and achieve greater buffering and connectivity between key habitats within the AONB and between the AONB and the countryside beyond.	Develop a landscape scale project in the north of the AONB.
BP4 In exercising development control decisions, secure developer contributions to enhance the natural environment.	Work with local communities (in particular Welland and Malvern Wells Parish Councils) in securing relevant developer contributions (as and when development proposals arise)
BP5 Undertake survey and research to	

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provide decision-makers with accurate and appropriate data.	Review current data and (if appropriate) commission new data collection to inform a landscape scale project bid for the north of the AONB.
BP6 Improve knowledge and understanding of the AONB's biodiversity, to enable evaluation of the effectiveness of policies and actions.	
BP7 Safeguard biodiversity from potential damaging impacts arising from development or other activities.	
Historic Environment	
HP1 Conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment of the AONB in accordance with key documents such as Historic Landscape Characterisations, Conservation Area Appraisals and English Heritage advice and guidance.	Work with HE, MHDC and others to secure a progressive solution to redevelopment at Hawthorn's Farmyard. This to form a good practice case study on farmstead redevelopment in accordance with county and national guidance.
HP1 Conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment of the AONB in accordance with key documents such as Historic Landscape Characterisations, Conservation Area Appraisals and English Heritage advice and guidance.	Begin to use HLC data to inform responses to key planning applications.
HP2 Identify and improve the evidence base of locally important heritage assets of the AONB in order to understand better the significance and condition of the historic environment, which will underpin future policy.	Support Malvern Wells Parish Council to submit proposals for listing of locally important heritage assets.
HP2 Identify and improve the evidence base of locally important heritage assets of the AONB in order to understand better the significance and condition of the historic environment, which will underpin future policy.	Undertake x HER searches on TCTOP orchards.
HP3 Prepare and review appropriate management documents for key heritage assets to improve future conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.	
HP4 Promote greater public	Complete x traditional orchard walk over surveys as part of the TCTOP.

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understanding of, and engagement with, the historic environment of the AONB.	
HP5 Encourage the sustainable use of historic buildings, particularly those identified as being at risk.	Liaise with owners and LA buildings conservation officers to help restore the condition of 2 listed structures.
Farming and Forestry	
FP1 Encourage the take-up of grant options and management practices that benefit the distinctive natural and historic environment of the AONB.	Work with FC, NE, WWT and others to organise an event to promote woodland management options in the AONB.
FP1 Encourage the take-up of grant options and management practices that benefit the distinctive natural and historic environment of the AONB.	Work with x owners to support uptake of new CS grants in the AONB.
FP2 Bring woodlands, orchards and other characteristic habitats into favourable conservation condition through management regimes that provide an economic return; for example, through the production of timber, wood fuel and other sustainable uses.	Liaise with owners of ASNW and PAWS woodlands and develop management plans for 2 AONB woodlands.
FP2 Bring woodlands, orchards and other characteristic habitats into favourable conservation condition through management regimes that provide an economic return; for example, through the production of timber, wood fuel and other sustainable uses.	X orchards managed through the TCTOP.
FP3 Ensure that all new woodland planting in the AONB is largely of native species; no more than 20% being non-native species.	
FP4 Promote targeted native woodland creation in appropriate locations.	Work with FC and others to identify opportunities to create new woodland within the AONB.
FP5 Support appropriate measures to monitor and control pests, diseases and invasive non-native plant and animal species that damage biodiversity resources.	Support pheasant trapping on MHC land to explore its effect in protecting native wildlife.
FP6 Promote local and seasonal	

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produce and support the development of local services and markets.	
<p>FP7 Identify and promote good agricultural practices that encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustainable utilisation of soil, minimising erosion • effective water catchment management • avoidance of direct pollution and measures to reduce diffuse pollution • farm waste minimisation and recycling 	Work with WWT and EA to identify improvements in land (and water) management, with a focus on the Teme Catchment, as part of the Springs of Rivers HLF Landscape Partnership Bid.
FP8 Maintain and develop the skills required to manage the landscape and its special qualities.	Provide training in traditional orchard management skills for x volunteers as part of TCTOP
Living and Working	
LWP1 Support the production of community-led plans, strategies and statements (such as Neighbourhood Development Plans) that satisfy the requirements of Section 85 of the CRoW Act 2000, and encourage and maintain the vitality and diversity of rural community life.	Work with local groups to complete landscape-led NDPs in Wellington Heath, Colwall, Cradley and Little Malvern and Welland.
LWP2 Support community initiatives that promote the management of key habitats, appropriate renewable energy schemes, energy efficiency, recycling and community transport.	Work with Welland Parish Council and members of the local community to identify habitat enhancements (see BP4 above)
LWP3 Seek new, inventive and sensitive solutions to the retention of local shops and provision of viable local services, for example, through the integration of local service delivery and through the delivery of universal high-speed broadband.	Work with local interests in Cradley to establish a local shop/community facility which minimises impact on the special qualities of the AONB.
LWP4 Support the provision of a variety of housing that is appropriate to the character of the area and meets local community needs.	Ensure that, if necessary, the AONB helps to play its part in meeting local housing need.
Built Development	
BDP1 Development in the AONB and its	

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setting should be in accordance with approved local design and capacity studies, including the AONB Guidance on Building Design.	Promote AONB Guidance on Building Design and Environmental Colour Assessment, including organising bespoke training for planning authorities.
BDP2 Development proposals should be informed by the need to protect or enhance key views to and from the AONB, using AONB guidance in relevant cases.	Promote the AONB views guidance and ensure that key views are recognised in relevant planning responses.
BDP 3 Lighting schemes, particularly in the rural areas of the AONB, should be kept to a minimum and only installed where absolutely necessary. All lighting should accord with good practice in minimising light pollution.	Review current good practice on minimising light pollution and consider how best to promote it.
BDP 3 Lighting schemes, particularly in the rural areas of the AONB, should be kept to a minimum and only installed where absolutely necessary. All lighting should accord with good practice in minimising light pollution.	Explore dark sky status for the AONB.
BPD 4 There should be a presumption against the loss of traditional orchards to development, or changes to other uses.	Promote incorporation of policies to protect traditional orchards within NDPs in the AONB.
BDP5 Equestrian development should proceed in accordance with best practice guidelines, including the AONB guidance on keeping horses in the landscape.	Promote good practice guidance on keeping horses, in general and in relation to specific development proposals
BDP5 Equestrian development should proceed in accordance with best practice guidelines, including the AONB guidance on keeping horses in the landscape.	Identify a site where good practice can be secured and promote it to others.
BDP6 Appropriate scale renewable energy schemes should be encouraged where these support the management of core elements of the AONB landscape and/or where they do not negatively affect the distinctive attributes or special qualities of the AONB.	Support such schemes where they arise.
BDP8 Support the recycling, re-use and limited extraction of small quantities of	Develop proposals and work with industry and local authorities to

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locally distinctive building materials, such as Malvern stone, where this is needed to help retain local distinctiveness in the built environment.	implement them.
BDP9 Maintain and promote a programme of guidance on key planning and design issues appropriate to the AONB, aimed at planning authorities, developers and other interested parties, that takes account of the special distinctiveness of the area.	Produce guidance on Environmental Colour Assessment and promote this to planning authorities and local architects.
BDP10 Monitor the cumulative impact of small-scale development within the AONB and use data to inform the development or revision of relevant policy.	See LP5.
Tourism	
TP1 Stimulate and support sustainable tourism practices in the AONB	Find 2 new AONB businesses to include within the 'Our Land' offer (if still solvent!)
TP2 Promote the AONB and adjoining areas as a sustainable destination in its own right.	Find a sustainable way of reprinting the AONB Map and Guide.
TP3 Provide a quality public realm with good access and accessibility to facilities and features that attract tourists.	Work with MHDC in the delivery of the Route to the Hills project.
TP4 Ensure that the tourism sector recognises the benefits of conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the AONB and reflects this in policy and practice.	
TP5 Develop more collaborative and joined-up working between public, private and voluntary sector tourism organisations across the AONB, enabling greater overall efficiency and use of resources.	
TP6 Work in partnership to develop the Malverns as an area for showcasing new tourism technologies.	Develop the interactive pilot map for the AONB.
TP6 Work in partnership to develop the	Make a film of the AONB using aerial

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Malverns as an area for showcasing new tourism technologies.	drone footage and make available to TICs, DMPs etc.
Transport and Accessibility	
TRP1 Highway management and design should be in accordance with the AONB Guidance on Highway Design.	Ensure that highways works in the AONB are in accordance with the design guidance.
TRP1 Highway management and design should be in accordance with the AONB Guidance on Highway Design.	Promote incorporation of policies within NDPs that promote good practice in highways management.
TRP2 Restore and maintain tranquillity in the AONB through protection and traffic mitigation and reduction measures.	Incorporate tranquillity issues in responses on planning applications.
TRP2 Restore and maintain tranquillity in the AONB through protection and traffic mitigation and reduction measures.	Review traffic data and data collection in the AONB.
TRP3 Encourage the reuse and refurbishment of appropriate highway furniture and fittings to strengthen the special character of the AONB.	
TRP4 Promote the coordinated planning of integrated passenger transport to, from and within the AONB.	
TRP5 Introduce and maintain measures to reduce car movements in the AONB, particularly during major events and at peak times.	
TRP6 Develop dedicated routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders within the AONB and between the AONB and surrounding areas.	
TRP6 Develop dedicated routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders within the AONB and between the AONB and surrounding areas.	Work with Wellington heath parish Council to develop proposals for a footpath connecting the village with Ledbury.
TRP7 Develop and promote sustainable transport options to meet local accessibility requirements.	Support the Colwall Car Club.
Recreation and Access	
RP1 Pursue appropriate opportunities to	

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spread recreational use to those areas which can sustain it and which will benefit from it, ensuring the provision of suitable infrastructure.	
RP2 Increase the range of organised activities through which people can learn about the AONB.	
RP3 Ensure a consistent approach to the development and delivery of access through Rights of Way management and Improvement Plans	
RP4 Ensure that the rights of way network and associated infrastructure (signs, gates, etc) do not detract unnecessarily from the special qualities of the landscape.	Establish an up-to-date position on use of signage across the 3 council areas in the AONB
RP5 Promote a simple and clear message to recreational users about access rights and responsibilities	Cycle leaflet?
RP6 Establish a strategy and programme of action to realise the health benefits of the Malvern Hills AONB with the National Health Foundation Trusts and local surgeries.	Develop a programme of potential activities to improve the health of local residents. Implement one activity.
Information and Interpretation	
IP1 Develop a co-ordinated approach to information, interpretation and marketing activity to promote the special qualities of the Malvern Hills area and appropriate behaviour within it.	Develop a Comms Strategy. Telephone box information points.
IP2 Form partnerships with the technology and science sectors to develop innovative ways of accessing and using information.	Continue to form part of the Malvern based Tourism and Technology Group
IP3 Promote and provide clear and simple information on alternative transport modes to the private car for accessing the countryside	Review and update the transport section of the AONB website, providing details of transport options to arrive at and to move around the AONB.
IP4 Promote products and services that support the special qualities of the Malvern Hills	

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IP5 Raise awareness of 'being in the Malvern Hills' as a special place to encourage sustainable activity	See TP6 and TP2.
IP6 Enhance local distinctiveness through the maintenance and restoration of appropriate signs and through sign removal where appropriate	
IP7 Develop a Malverns area education resource in conjunction with local schools and/or other interested parties.	
Volunteering	
VP1 Support effective voluntary activity, in all its shapes and forms, that helps deliver the AONB Management Plan.	
VP2 Explore the potential to develop and support a coordinated volunteer network for the whole of the AONB.	Review current volunteer resources in the area and develop an issues and options paper for moving forward.
VP3 Develop and support networks of volunteers able to assist in specialist data collection.	
VP4 Encourage Parish Councils to achieve high standards in working closely with voluntary and community groups and meeting local needs and aspirations.	



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MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

29 April 2016

MALVERN HILLS CAR CLUBS

Management Plan Policies

1. The AONB Management Plan policies relevant to this work are as follows:
 - a) LWP2 - Support community initiatives that promote the management of key habitats, appropriate renewable energy schemes, energy efficiency, recycling, community transport etc.
 - b) TRP5 - Introduce and maintain measures to reduce car movements in the AONB, particularly during major events and at peak times.
 - c) TRP7 - Develop and promote sustainable transport options to meet local accessibility requirements.
 - d) VP1 - Support effective voluntary activity, in all its shapes and forms, that helps deliver the AONB Management Plan.

Background

2. In 2009 the Sustainable Development Fund provided funding to help set up a car club in Colwall. This has since expanded to cover the wider area of the Malvern Hills and, more recently, Ledbury. During that period the Sustainable Development Fund has contributed towards the purchase of three vehicles and three electric bikes. The club now has 12 vehicles based in Colwall, West Malvern, Malvern Wells and Ledbury. There are a variety of vehicles: small urban runarounds, people carriers and a pick-up. There are now 72 members of the club, all of whom are entitled to drive any of these vehicles according to their need at the time. Grants from Awards for All, Worcestershire Community Transport Consortium, and the Pickersleigh Project are used to bring cars to new areas. The vehicles themselves are self-financing, once bought.

3. Car clubs are well established in towns and work well with their denser populations. However there are few examples of them working in more rural areas, and this is one that does. It works, partly because of the time and dedication put in by club members into looking after the cars; using their skills such as with IT to build slick and labour-free booking systems; and marketing the club effectively. The principles pioneered in this club have been exported to help set up clubs elsewhere, such as in Hereford City.

4. The Club is aimed at reducing the number of cars on the road through sharing vehicles – a principle anyone who has travelled the West Malvern Road could only support. It is aimed financially at those who might otherwise have a second car, who would like access to a second car but can't afford the costs involved and who do under 6,000 miles a year. The average mileage over the fleet of 12 vehicles is around 5000 miles. The one dark cloud on the horizon is insurance costs which

have risen this year by 50% and now represent half the base running costs of the vehicles.

5. The electric bikes came along as an adjunct to the Car Club, with the same idea of reducing the number of cars on the local roads. Cycling in Malvern does pose a challenge to the lungs; the addition of variable electric assistance from the bike allows for just enough exercise to make the experience enjoyable. Indeed one of the markets for the bikes has been patients recovering from hip and knee replacements looking for a low impact form of exercise to build up their muscles again. Another market has been those who wanted to try out an electric bike in Malvern before buying them.

6. This is a project the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership can be proud to be associated with. It has made a contribution to social justice as well as reducing the number of cars clogging the roads; produced a sense of common purpose through the shared use of mutual asset; helped the injured to health; and produced a fine example of what dedicated people can do to improve the area they live in.

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note and comment on the report, and**
- b) Consider joining the Car Club!**

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

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Email: worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this report

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MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

29 April 2016

THE FUTURE OF CASTLEMORTON COMMONS

Management Plan Policies

1. The following AONB Management Plan policies are relevant to this work:
 - a) LP2 – Restore distinctive landscapes that have been significantly degraded.
 - b) LP3 – Identify and promote opportunities for positive landscape change to landowners.....
 - c) BP2 – Restore the condition of degraded habitats in line with local and national biodiversity priorities.
 - d) HP1 – Conserve and enhance the historic and cultural environment of the AONB in accordance with key documents.

Background

2. It was reported to the JAC on 20 November 2015 that the AONB staff unit had been contracted, together with Footprint Ecology, to take a look at the options for reversing the decline in grazing over the Castlemorton Commons. That report has now been completed and is under consideration by the Malvern Hills Conservators.
3. One anomaly in the process of improving grazing, where the AONB unit can play a useful part, is at Coombgreen Common. Part of the same common land unit as the rest of the Castlemorton Commons, it is owned by Birtsmorton Court; the rest of the common is owned by the Conservators. Restricted to work on their own land, staff at the Conservators are not free to help the residents, parish council and owner to join in, what must be a collective effort, to benefit the whole common.
4. So AONB unit staff have been to negotiate with the owner and the Parish Council, about the future of the common. Turning to the parishioners, for their opinions was the next obvious step. A public meeting was arranged and carefully formatted so as to allow the softer, and often more supportive voices, to be heard. This meant avoiding a public 'question and answer session' and instead, after a short introduction, allowing issues to be raised with a series of 'listeners' around the room. Those 'listeners' included staff from the Malvern Hills Conservators, and Janet Lomas who had written the draft management plan for the common.
5. The draft management plan has within it, ideas about how to contain livestock on the common by using roadside fences and off-highway cattlegrids. These ideas came from addressing concerns of graziers about roadkill, and the time taken to recover stock that had wandered off the common. These ideas were introduced to the public at the meeting.
6. From the meeting's gathered comments will come a list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' about the common, which will aim to make sure that everybody has the

same basic level of knowledge about the natural processes, and management of the Common. It's hoped that once armed with this knowledge, some obvious conclusions will emerge. What is clear is that no conclusion will be completely right for everyone, and there is great deal of uncertainty in the air with the possible change to agricultural grants following a Brexit, and the future of a current principle grazier. Any coherent plan for Coombegreen Common will also have to involve the neighbouring and linked commons, and that too depends upon the neighbouring landowners.

7. This year it is hoped to help bring everyone up to speed on the management of the common and its natural processes by holding some public events themed upon such things.

Recommendation

8. **The Committee is recommended to:**

- a) **Note and comment on the report,**
- b) **Support continued attempts to secure a sustainable approach to the management of the Castlemorton Commons, and**
- c) **Support attempts to engage with the Highway Authority to find a solution to livestock containment on all the commons.**

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MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
29 April 2016
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND 2015/16 – UPDATE REPORT

Background

1. The table below shows the Sustainable Development Fund's grants for the financial year 2015/16. The expenditure was £23,471. Taking out of that a 10% administration charge, £21,338 was distributed in grants as outlined below. NB The final grant claim to Defra has not yet been submitted so these figures are not finalised.

Summary

Applicant	Project	Grant
Colwall Orchard Group	'Your Heritage' Apple Packing shed renovation	£2000
Malvern Hills District Council	Malvern Munch – Local Food Walk around the Malverns.	£500
Colwall Car Club	Car for Ledbury	£2,000
Malvern Hills Conservators	Tank Quarry Interpretation	£6,500
Monty Funk	Aerial film and podcast	£2,300
Malvern Hills District Council	Teme Valley Walk	£500
Jamboree Preserves Ltd	Beacon Tramper	£1804
Sight Designs	Dog poo digester – a new look at how to deal with dog fouling on the hills by generating gas from fermenting it.	£1,997.44
Key IQ	Geocentre Walks	£1,526
H&W Earth Heritage Trust	Conservation by volunteers of geosites within the AONB.	£1,210.77
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust	Building with Stones Project	£1,000
Total		£21,338.21

Recommendation

1. **The Committee is requested to:**
 - a) **Note and comment on the report.**
 - b) **Contact David Armitage with any projects that might be suitable for this fund.**

Contact PointsCounty Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

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MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
29 April 2016**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Management Plan ref.
(abridged)**

**LP2 Restore distinctive
landscapes and
landscape features that
have been significantly
degraded.**

ProjectOrchard planting

The first batch of fruit trees has been planted as part of a two year plan to restock the traditional orchard at the Three Counties Showground.

Mathon Court Woodlands

Surveys of the woodlands at Mathon Court have been completed and these will be used to inform the drafting of a Management Plan. The draft plan will be considered by the Forestry Commission, landowner, and AONB Unit to inform decisions about how best to manage this area for game and landscape objectives.

Landscape Grants

Small-scale support has been provided to three landowners in the AONB to create/gap-up new native hedgerows in both Worcestershire and Herefordshire. The AONB Unit has also commissioned some expert advice on the management of a 'famous' walnut orchard in the area. This will be used to help address some of the problems on the site.

Making Space for Nature

Data collection for this project is now almost complete. The AONB Unit has met with staff from Natural England, Forestry Commission, Environment Agency and the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust to discuss how to take forward joint working at the landscape scale within the AONB. A working group has been established to progress this.

Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project

Significant progress has been made. As this Heritage Lottery supported project approaches its half-way point we have already engaged over 250 volunteers (double our target for the three year project). Notable recent achievements include:

- ABC training course (Entry level 2) in development for less able students being drawn up and first students about to commence work
- Contract let to Garden Organic to develop a Master Orchardist course. Course commences in May 2016.

- Grant secured for purchase of c. 200 trees to plant in project orchards.
- Successful bid made to HLF for use of contingency monies for tree guards for c. 500 trees to plant in project orchards.
- Grafting workshop held and 30 trees produced by volunteers – 50% for TCTOP.

More information is available at: www.tctop.org.uk

LP5 Undertake surveys and research to better understand and monitor the condition, and rate of change, of landscape character

Landscape condition monitoring

The suite of fixed photographic points which was established across the AONB in 2006 to help monitor landscape change has been revisited and new photographic images have been recorded. A report documenting 10 years of landscape change is now being assembled. Guidance on how to monitor environmental change in the AONB in the future is also being prepared. This is partnership work with the University of Worcester.

BP3 – Enhance the wildlife value of the countryside and achieve greater connectivity between key habitats within the AONB and between the AONB and the countryside beyond

Management of roadside verges

The AONB Unit has had early discussions with Worcestershire County Council about the possibility of piloting an approach to roadside verge management in part of the AONB which will benefit wild flowers. The County Council designated Worcestershire a pollinator friendly county in 2015.

HP2 Identify and improve the evidence base of locally important heritage assets of the AONB in order to understand better the significance and condition of the historic environment, which will underpin future policy.

Local List

An initial list of buildings and structures in Malvern Wells which may be eligible for local listing has been prepared. This will be developed and discussed with the Parish Council before some buildings are nominated to the Local List held by Malvern Hills District Council.

FP4 Promote targeted native woodland creation in appropriate locations.

Countryside Stewardship

The AONB Unit has collaborated with field staff in Natural England and Forestry Commission over advice to a landowner to create a new area of woodland east of the Malvern Hills. This has been done in the spirit of joint working but also to ensure that plans for this scale of change are landscape 'proofed'.

CO2 – Develop an enhanced sense of ownership...among local

Neighbourhood Development Plans

Progress has been made with the development of a number of NDPs in the area. Draft plans for Colwall, Cradley and Little Malvern and Welland have been out to consultation. The AONB

communities...through opportunities for involvement in consultation activities

Unit has responded to these consultations and has continued to work closely with the working groups leading the development of these plans. The Unit has also drafted NDP policies for consideration by the Wellington Heath NDP working group.

BDO1 The distinctive character and natural beauty of the AONB will be fully reflected in planning policy and guidance.

Development Management

The AONB Unit continues to play a significant role in commenting on planning applications. A report on our planning work in 2015/16 is currently being compiled but a number of applications for significant development in the AONB have either been withdrawn or refused permission over this period. The Unit has also been working with applicants such as Malvern Hills Conservators, Three Counties Agricultural Society and private individuals to try and support appropriate development in the area. A review of our planning work is likely to take place in 2016.

BDP8 Support the recycling, re-use and limited extraction of small quantities of locally distinctive building materials, such as Malvern stone, where this is needed to help retain local distinctiveness in the built environment.

Stone bank

Some years ago the AONB Unit arranged the lease on a site outside Colwall where Malvern stone which might otherwise have been sent to landfill could be stored and reused. The lease on this site has now lapsed. The AONB Unit has been working with partners to find and secure a new site to serve the same purpose, but closer to Malvern where most of the stone is likely to be used.

TRP6 Develop dedicated routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders within the AONB and between the AONB and surrounding areas.

Shared use route

One of the owners of a dismantled railway line between Malvern and the Three Counties Showground has withdrawn interest /support for the proposal to convert this to a shared use route. Consequently, this project is no longer being progressed

IP5 Raise awareness of being in the Malvern Hills as a special place to encourage sustainable activity

Photo competition

The AONB unit has launched a photo competition to help raise awareness of the area and to help replenish the stock of images we can use in our work. For further information see: <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/photography-competition-2016/>

Recommendation

Members of the JAC are requested to note this information report and contact the AONB unit if they wish to be involved in any consultations or to receive further information on any of these agenda items.

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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