

### **Appendix 3 - A summary of the special qualities of the Malvern Hills AONB (from the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan 2014-2019)**

- The Malvern Hills: a high, dramatic ridge that is visible from the Severn Vale and from the rolling hills and valleys to the west.
- A distinctive and varied geology, with a variety of different rock types including granites, diorites, volcanic lavas, limestones, sandstones, mudstones and shales. This gives rise to a unique array of landscapes and natural habitats.
- A wide variety of landscape types in a relatively small area. Assessments of the area's landscape character identify ten distinct landscape types. Woodland and grassland in varying mixes are the most prevalent.
- A distinctive combination of landscape elements that include orchards, parklands, ridgelines, ponds, quarries, hedgerows and watercourses.
- A wide variety of wildlife habitats and species, many of which are nationally rare.
- A large number of sites that have been designated for their special characteristics. These include 15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), one Local Nature Reserve and many other special and key geological and wildlife sites.
- An historic landscape of ancient unenclosed commons, varied field boundary patterns and designed parks and gardens.
- A rich and distinctive historic environment including Bronze Age burial grounds, Iron Age hill forts, moated sites and industrial architecture.
- Distinctive villagescapes, including conservation areas, listed buildings and local features that define a 'spirit of place' in the settlements.
- Thriving and active communities with a low deprivation index that reflects the area's prosperity and the availability of employment.
- A history of recreation and tourism that continues today, with people coming to enjoy the hills, spas and the tranquillity of the rural landscapes.
- Open access in many places over the hills and commons, providing opportunities for bracing walks with fine views.