

MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

8 NOVEMBER 2019

INFORMATION ITEMS

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.

Management Plan ref. (abridged)	Project
LP2 Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded	<u>60 trees for 60 years</u> The AONB Unit is working with a range of landowners to plant a variety of trees in a number of different locations around the AONB. This includes hedgerow, field, orchard and parkland trees. The aim is to help raise awareness of the AONB as part of the 60 th anniversary celebrations but also to shine a light on the different habitats of the AONB and the role which tree planting has in supporting the wildlife and special character of these areas.
BP4 Improve knowledge and understanding of the AONB's biodiversity...	<u>Finding Rare Species in the Malverns</u> The second and final survey season under this project has now been completed. Much new species data has been collected and survey records which had hitherto been hidden have come to light. Data collected is currently being entered onto the Worcestershire Biological Records Centre database and is expected to be used as part of nature recovery maps for the AONB. This has been a successful project, engaging many local people in looking for rare species and mapping their whereabouts with a view to achieving more informed and beneficial management in the future.
BP1 – 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	<u>Highways Verges Management Pilot Project.</u> A successful bid was made to the Natural Networks programme (a grants project funded by the European Structural Investment Fund and managed by Worcestershire County Council). Work has commenced to enhance three grassland areas in the east of the AONB: part of the recreational playing field in Malvern Wells, a highway verge in Castlemorton parish and a highway verge underneath Little Malvern Priory (Little Malvern and Welland parish). This is

FP1 – Encourage the take-up of grant options and management practices that benefit the distinctive natural and historic environment of the AONB

experimental work, supported by Worcestershire Highways, and helps to demonstrate WCC's commitment to making Worcestershire a pollinator friendly county.

Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund

The AONB Unit successfully bid to the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund for an area of land west of the Malvern Hills. The Facilitation Fund is a government supported fund to help people and organisations that bring farmers, foresters, and other land managers together to improve the natural environment at a landscape scale. Good data on habitats and wildlife is essential, and to that end, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust has produced a series of maps showing where to concentrate our efforts in providing bridges for wildlife.

Hope End Park

This is on Historic England's Heritage Assets Register. There are 6 owners of it. Attempts are being made by Historic England and the AONB Unit to get a consensus to produce a plan for the park to conserve its 'Gardenesque' style and these are bearing fruit. Experts on gardens, landscape history, and parks have visited the park and provided opinions on the best way to treat this landscape. A simple map-based plan is being produced.

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

New guidance documents

The AONB Unit has now published two new guidance documents: 'Guidance on how development can respect landscape in views' and 'Guidance on lighting'.

IP1 Raise awareness of being in the Malvern Hills AONB and the significance of the designation

Images of the AONB

The AONB Unit is working with well-known local photographer Jan Sedlacek to put together a series of postcards and cards depicting different images of the AONB. The aim is to mark the 60th anniversary of the designation of the Malvern Hills AONB (the cards will carry some limited information about the AONB). Jan's images will also be shown in Exhibition Walk – outside Waitrose in Malvern – in December.

Discovering Dark Skies

Celebrity astronomer Will Gater is presenting at Castlemorton Village Hall on the evening of 29th November at an event to celebrate the designation of the first two Dark Sky Discovery Sites in the Malvern Hills AONB. Tickets are available at Eventbrite and are selling fast.

Explore & Read

The AONB Unit's Explore & Read initiative involves us gathering second-hand books about the area or with an area connection and leaving them in public places for people to read and return. JAC members are asked to fish out any such books that fit this description and which are no longer wanted and to make them available to the AONB team. Please contact Sarah Jones if you have any: sjones18@worcestershire.gov.uk

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