

MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

5 NOVEMBER 2021

A NATURE RECOVERY PLAN FOR THE MALVERN HILLS AONB

Recommendation

- 1. The Committee is recommended to:**
 - a) Note the draft plan; and**
 - b) Raise and discuss any issues arising.**

Background

2. At its meeting on 6th November 2020 members of the Malvern Hills AONB JAC considered a paper concerning future work to produce a Nature Recovery Plan for the AONB. The policy context for this work was established and the two phases of work required to produce a plan were set out, these being:
 - Phase 1 - data gathering to establish a spatial baseline and a series of theoretical opportunities which will promote nature recovery, followed by
 - Phase 2 - stakeholder engagement to discuss and agree a way forward, culminating in the production of the Plan itself.

Summary

3. In the spring/summer of 2021 two pieces of mapping work (Phase 1 above) were completed. The first deals with ecological opportunities (identifying the best places in which to expand or create key habitats such as woodlands or meadows) and the second highlights the ecosystem services which the area currently and potentially provides for people/society, for example, the storage of carbon and provision of clean air.
4. In May 2021 a company called Rural Focus was commissioned by the AONB Unit to produce a Nature Recovery plan for the MHAONB and a 3km buffer around it, making use of the mapping work generated in Phase 1.
5. Stakeholder engagement was a key element of the commission and so far this has taken two forms:
 - I. An online scoping survey in June 2021 to canvass initial views and to test the water on preferred approaches towards the Nature Recovery Plan – 17 responses received with lots of good comments.

II. A stakeholder engagement event that took place in Colwall Park Hotel on 9th September 2021 with c.25 attendees, some in person and some via zoom. There was a good attendance from local landowners and this doubled up as a Facilitation Fund event.

6. A draft Nature Recovery Plan has now been produced (see attached PDF). NB This is incomplete, it does not contain an Action Plan or a Monitoring and Evaluation section. However, it is shared here to help gain feedback from the JAC as part of broader stakeholder engagement.

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