

MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

5 NOVEMBER 2021

FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

Recommendation

1. The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note the report; and**
- b) Raise and discuss any issues arising.**

Background

2. At its meeting on 23 April 2021 members of the JAC considered a paper on advising and supporting landowners and managers in protected landscapes. This included reference to a new programme of Defra grant funding called Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL). This programme forms part of the Agricultural Transition Plan (published on 30 November 2020), with funding available for all English National Parks and AONBs across 3 financial years, from 2021 – 2024.

Summary

- Information on the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/funding-for-farmers-in-protected-landscapes>
 - Guidance for applicants, tailored to the Malvern Hills AONB, can be found at: <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Annex-F-Guidance-for-Applicants-211011.pdf>
3. Key points and developments regarding Farming in Protected Landscapes in the Malvern Hills AONB are as follows:
- **Timing** – the programme was launched by Government at the start of July 2021
 - **Funding** – a total budget of £216,309 was offered to the Malvern Hills AONB in 2021/22 with a provisional £153,738 indicated for 2022/23 and 2023/24. NB All Protected Landscapes have recently been given an opportunity to reprofile their budgets across the 3 years.
 - **Staffing** – the total budget includes funding for staff to provide advice and support to applicants and to help administer the programme. A Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer – Sarah Warden – has been

employed for 4 days a week in the Malvern Hills AONB, since 4 October 2021.

- **Grant assessment** – a local grant panel has been established to assess all grant applications. Its membership can be viewed in Table 1. The panel has met twice, once for induction and once to consider applications.

Table 1 – Local Grant Assessment Panel members

Name	Role and organisation	Expertise/reason for involvement
Paul Esrich	MHAONB Partnership Manager	Knowledge of AONB, local landowners, AONB Management Plan. Defra requires a local Protected Landscape rep on the panel.
Danny Newman (Chair)	Land Management Adviser, Natural England	Knowledge of the local patch and local owners and managers. Knowledge and experience of implementing agri-environment schemes. Defra requires a Natural England Officer on the panel.
Ian Horsley	Farmer, Suckley	Practises regenerative agriculture. One of a group/cluster of 10 landowners operating in the north of the AONB.
Janet Lomas	Recently retired farmer and land management advisor (edge of Malvern Wells, southern part of AONB)	Long experience of managing a large mixed farm on the edge of the AONB as well as providing land management advice to others as part of FWAG and in a freelance capacity.
Nick Packham,	Senior Engagement Officer, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust	Experience of working with/managing people and access in the countryside as well the interactions between people and nature.
Sarah Faulkner (or a named other)	Environment and Rural Affairs Adviser, National Farmers Union	Understanding of challenges and issues facing farmers, latest developments, opportunities, policies etc. Represents farming interest on the Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee.
Sarah Tunnicliffe	Senior National Rural and Landscape Adviser, Historic England	Extensive knowledge of the historic environment. Runs grant programmes for HE. Represents HE on all FiPL grant assessment panels.

- **Inquiries** – discussions about potential FiPL applications have taken place with approximately 20 landowners in and on the edge of the AONB.

- **Applications** – 6 applications have been submitted and approved (subject to conditions/modifications) by the grant assessment panel. This includes one application from the Malvern Hills AONB Unit itself. The total grant value of these applications is approximately £106,000. A summary of the applications can be viewed at Table 2.

Table 2 – FiPI projects (thus far) in 2021/22

Project applicant	Nature of project	Grant value
Malvern Hills Trust	New hedgerows, field trees and pond restoration	£11,231.80
Colwall Orchard Group (in conjunction with landowners)	New fruit trees in 6 old orchards	£8,520
Colwall Orchard Group	Equipment to manage COG land, to support advisory work and to help support participation and engagement at Colwall Village Garden	£22,414.38
Private individual	Farm diversification towards regenerative agriculture on a livestock holding	£30,000 (approx.)
Private individual	Restoration of an old orchard	£4260
Malvern Hills AONB Unit (in conjunction with 5 land owners)	Development of a Conservation Management Plan for Hope End Park	£30,000 (estimated)

County Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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