

MALVERN HILLS AONB JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

8 April 2022

FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES UPDATE

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to:

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

Background

1. Defra's Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme was launched in early July 2021. The 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

2. 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>

Key points and developments regarding Farming in Protected Landscapes in the Malvern Hills AONB are as follows:

Timing

3. 31st March 2022 marked the end of the first year of the FiPL programme in the Malvern Hills AONB. This was not a complete year since the programme was not launched until early July 2021.

Funding

4. Following reprofiling of the FiPL budget in November 2021, (undertaken for all Protected Landscapes) the Year One Budget for FiPL in the Malvern Hills AONB was amended to £90,000. At the close of the 2021/22 Financial Year, this budget

has been spent, with £72,810 on projects and the remaining £17,190 on Advice & Guidance and Admin.

5. The FiPL budget for the area in 2022/23 Financial Year is £235,838, of which, £45,950 has already been allocated for “Year 2” of the “Two Year Projects”, approved in Year One.

Staffing

6. Staffing remains unchanged from that reported at the previous JAC Meeting.

Grant Assessment Panel

7. The MH AONB FiPL Local Assessment Panel has met a total of 5 times, with the final meeting of the year taking place on the 31st March 2022.

Enquiries

8. Since the previous JAC meeting there have been a further 11 enquiries into the FiPL Grant, bringing the total number for the 2021/22 year to 30. Some of the enquiries relate to projects that are not suitable for FiPL funding. These have been redirected to the Malvern Hills AONB Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancement Grant, Farming Transformation Fund, or the Forestry Commission’s Woodland Creation Grant.

Projects

9. A total of 5 projects have been completed in Year 1 with a further 3 part completed. Table 1 provides a summary.

Table 1

Project applicant	Nature of project	Year of Project	Total grant value
Malvern Hills Trust	New hedgerows, field trees and pond restoration	Yr 1	£11,231.80
Colwall Orchard Group (in conjunction with landowners)	New fruit trees in 6 old orchards	Yr 1	£8,520

Colwall Orchard Group (COG)	Equipment to manage COG land, to support advisory work and to help support participation and engagement at Colwall Village Garden	Yr 1 and 2	£22,414.38
Private Individual	Farm diversification towards regenerative agriculture on a livestock holding	Yr 1	£15,356.58
Private Individual	Restoration of an old orchard	Yr 1	£3,960
Malvern Hills AONB Unit (in conjunction with 5 land owners)	Development of a Conservation Management Plan for Hope End Park	Yr 1 and 2	£21,352
Malvern Hills Trust	Restoration of a Donkey Shed	Yr 2	£14,456
Private Individual	Restoration of an old Orchard	Yr 2	£2,556
Private Individual	Orchard Pruning, Fruit Tree planting and Species-Rich Meadow Creation	Yr 1 and 2	£6,790
Private Individual	Tree planting for shelter belt to lagoon, aesthetics to AONB and bank stabilising	Yr 2	£2,745
Malvern Hills AONB Unit	Purchase of a Brush Seed Harvester and maintenance accessories	Yr 1	£8,087.44

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Email: worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this report

Sash Warden, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer

Tel: 01905 844686

Email: swarden@worcestershire.gov.uk