

# Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee

## 1 May 2015

### 9. INFORMATION ITEMS

Management Plan ref.  
(abridged)

**BP3 – 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**

**CO2 – Develop an enhanced sense of ownership...among local communities...through opportunities for involvement in consultation activities**

**LP2 – Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded**

Project

**Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project** – work is now well underway. Preliminary visits to many of the year 1 orchards have now been undertaken and the first volunteer training session has been held. Service Level Agreements have been signed with the three 'hubs' helping to deliver the project and a Project Board has been put in place.

**Making Space for Nature** – Herefordshire Biological Records Centre has undertaken some pilot work to interrogate known habitat data sets, to determine how effectively these can be matched to species data in the area.

**Dormice Survey Work**

Dormice are an important and rare species on the Malvern Hills. In partnership with the Malvern Hills Conservators, the AONB has contributed £235 towards some dormice boxes for use in the West Malvern area. The data on species density and distribution will help inform the management of the woodlands in West Malvern.

**Neighbourhood Plans** – the AONB Unit continues to work with members of Colwall Parish Council to support the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

**Burying overhead electricity cable** – Work has been completed on 6 sites at Eastnor, Wellington Heath, Colwall and Mathon. The exact length of cable buried and costs have yet to be provided by Western Power Distribution; however they are to be congratulated on making such a difference to the views in the area.

April 2015 sees the end of this spending review period. The next period will also be looking for other suitable sites within the Malvern Hills AONB to bury cables.

If JAC members know of any lengths of overhead cable they

think might be candidates for the scheme, do contact David Armitage. They could be included in the next programme.

**Landscape Improvement Grants** - these small grants are aimed at landowners who fall outside the ambit of larger grant systems. £1,244 has been committed to hedge planting projects in the parishes of Castlemorton and Cradley.

**Three Counties Showground Landscape Enhancements** – a variety of works have been carried out in recent months, including reinstating an old hedge line, grafting Perry Pear trees and replacing gates.

#### **Giving Veteran Trees Breathing/Breeding Space**

Following work with the Woodland Trust who surveyed the area, a grant of £1500 was provided to Mathon Court to clear young trees away from veteran oaks. Following this, the owner has gone on to clear around yet more ancient tree. Any JAC members with knowledge of such swamped veteran trees or ancient woods should contact David Armitage.

#### **Knapp and Papermill: silvicultural work.**

The Knapp and Papermill is a nature reserve owned by the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. Within it lie many woodlands that need to be managed. The AONB has contributed £3,300 towards a c.£30,000 silvicultural management project that will continue there over 2015

#### **Revamping the Electronic Communications**

The website has now been migrated to a php platform which means that it can be much more easily edited, kept up to date and hopefully, more interesting.

We also continue to update our Facebook on a weekly basis.

**Members of the JAC are requested to contact the AONB Unit if they wish to be involved in any consultations or to receive further information on any of these agenda items.**

**IP5 – Raising awareness of 'being in the Malvern Hills' as a special place to encourage sustainable activity.**