

Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) E-Bulletin May 2009 – Issue 5

Welcome to Issue 5 of the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) E-Bulletin. Please find below some brief information on latest projects and initiatives in and around the Malvern Hills AONB – any comments would be gratefully received. Please forward this email on to anyone who might be interested.

New AONB management plan - a new AONB management plan for the period 2009-2014 was formally launched on Friday 24 April 2009 at Cradley Church. Copies of the full plan and chapter summaries are available for download from

http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/pages/management_plan.asp

Some hard copies are also available from the AONB Office.

The State of the AONB – a new State of the AONB report for 2009 has been produced, to coincide with the publication of the new AONB management plan. The report provides up-to-date information on the condition of a range of key attributes in the area. This report can also be downloaded from

<http://malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/pages/documents/WebsiteversionMHAONBStateofAONB.pdf>

Malverns Heritage Project – recent restoration work and the creation of an education room at Holywell mark the end of this four year project, funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund. In total, 17 water features in the area have been restored or repaired, cattle grids and gates have been installed to support grazing efforts on the Hills and a variety of educational and interpretative material has been produced. Great thanks go to many project partners including Worcestershire County Council, the Malvern Hills Conservators and the Malvern Spa Association.

Supporting farmers– an AONB supported project with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) has recently ended. The Malvern Hills AONB is a target area for Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements and FWAG advisors working with farmers and landowners have helped to generate seven new HLS applications along with eight new Entry Level Stewardship applications in the area.

Promoting Sustainable Development - grants totalling almost £55,000 were awarded to 14 local projects between April 2008 and March 2009. As usual, a great variety of projects were supported, including wood fuel feasibility assessments, a project to reduce plastic bag use and the purchase of specialised equipment to help remove scrub from the slopes of the Malvern Hills. Funding to the Colwall Orchard Group has helped it in its work to survey local orchards, produce management plans, carry out practical tree management work and organise community events. The group now has over 50 volunteers. Sustainable Development Funding is now available for 2009/2010. If you have a project in mind please call Jo Barrow on 01905 766491 or email jbarrow@worcestershire.gov.uk

What's in a view? - a study identifying 50 of the most important views towards and from the Malvern Hills AONB has just been completed. The study, which was undertaken by a practice of landscape architects, also proposes a methodology for assessing the significance of any view. It is hoped that the report will be used to inform decision-making across the area and that other agencies and authorities will also utilise the findings to inform their own assessment of the importance of views.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) – Worcestershire County Council's Historic Environment and Archaeology Service has recently completed a detailed assessment of the Historic Landscape Character (HLC) of the AONB in Worcestershire. This is one of the first parts of the county to be analysed using the HLC technique and the results illustrate the diverse nature and complex evolution of the AONB. It is hoped that the HLC will be used to inform decision making in the area.

If you do not wish to be on the mailing list for future E-bulletins please feel free to contact the Malvern Hills AONB Office by email on aonb@worcestershire.gov.uk and we will remove you from the list. Further information on the AONB and the work of the AONB Partnership can be found at <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/>