



Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) E-Bulletin August 2010 – Issue 8

Welcome to Issue 8 of the Malvern Hills AONB e-Bulletin. Below is a summary of some key projects and initiatives that have taken place in and around the Malvern Hills AONB. Please forward this email on to anyone else who may be interested.

AONB Partnership annual report now available

Find out about the many interesting projects and activities that took place within the AONB last year in our latest annual report available at:
<http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/documents/MHAONBAnnRep09-10Final.pdf>

Partners join forces to manage Ancient Monument

A nationally important moated site in the south of the AONB has recently been removed from the 'at risk' list thanks to a collaboration between the landowner, English Heritage, Natural England and Gloucestershire County Council. Scrub has been removed from the site, coir matting has been introduced to prevent further bank erosion and a maintenance agreement has been established to cover future works.

Environmental Stewardship on Castlemorton Common and the Southern Hills

The Malvern Hills Conservators and Natural England have recently signed agreements to bring 423 hectares of land in the southern Malvern Hills and around Castlemorton Common into Higher Level Stewardship. The Stewardship payments will support significant environmental management over the next 10 years and will help to join management with the northern and central Malvern Hills which were entered into Higher Level Stewardship in 2007. The Stewardship package for the southern Malvern Hills is a joint agreement between the Malvern Hills Conservators, Eastnor Estate and The National Trust. Please contact rob@malvern hills.org.uk for more information.

Supporting Sustainable Development

Over £53,000 from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund has been committed to 13 local projects in 2010/11. As usual, projects are very varied and include the purchase of two electric bikes for community use in Colwall and the purchase of a refrigerated trailer which will support sustainable stock management on the Malvern Hills and Commons. Grant recipients include a Parish Council, community groups and private businesses.

Horses, Highways and Views

Public consultation on three new guidance documents – identifying and assessing key views, highways design and keeping horses – has been completed. Comments received as part of these consultations can be viewed in the Latest News section at <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/>. The guidance documents are currently being revised and will be available shortly. It is hoped that they will be used by planners, residents and partner bodies to help conserve and enhance the AONB.

Survey of Orchards in Suckley and Alfrick

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust has recently completed a survey of 25 traditional orchard sites in the north of the AONB. The project has yielded valuable information about the condition and importance of these orchards and has also helped in the development of criteria for identifying orchard Local Wildlife Sites. Follow-up visits will be offered to orchard owners to advise on management and to help with Environmental Stewardship applications.

A Landscape Strategy for the Malvern Hills AONB

The development of a set of landscape character guidelines for the AONB is in full swing following the successful completion of some pilot work. The project aims to bring together information from a number of existing sources (including landscape character work, biodiversity and the historic environment) into a single place to inform future management of the area. The aspiration is to produce a joined-up and user-friendly guide which will be forward-looking and accessible to all. The guidelines should be available at the end of this calendar year.

Website revamp

The AONB website has been redesigned. It contains a new interactive map which allows visitors to view aerial images of the AONB and to identify whether a certain location is inside or outside of the AONB. A new section on local services and 'green' accommodation has also been created. Statistics show that the most popular parts of the website are the walking guides which can be downloaded and which enable people to explore many different parts of the AONB. Take a look at the website – <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/>

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/>

Photo supplied by Helen Stace, Colwall Orchard Group.