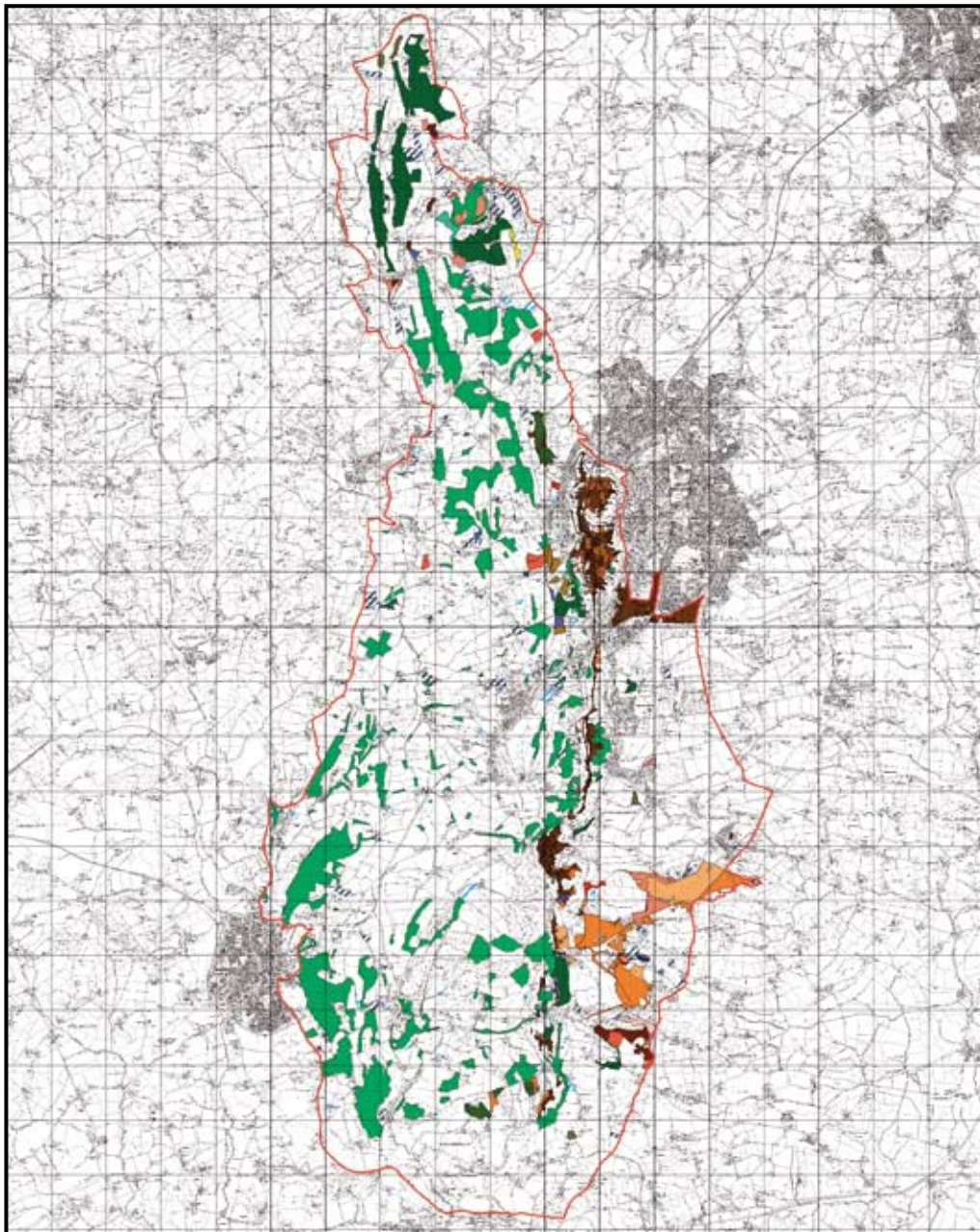


# Malvern Hills

## Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



# Annual Report

## 2007/08



*Dr. Bryan G. Smith*

**Chairman of the Joint Advisory Committee**

**A multi-agency partnership which, like ours, is involved in the care of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) needs to be seen to add value if it is to convince others that it is worthwhile.**

So just how much value did the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership actually add in 2007/08? Although this has not been calculated nor measured directly, (and maybe never will nor can be), there are nevertheless some useful indirect indicators. In my experience people soon lose interest in unproductive or unprofitable partnerships so the number and range of partners who judged that it was worth being involved with us is perhaps one useful indicator. In the Malvern Hills AONB we can point to some 40 partners – from voluntary groups through public bodies to landowners – who worked with us in 2007/08. They clearly believe that working co-operatively to achieve mutual objectives with people who they otherwise would not have talked to stimulates new ideas and activities and thereby adds value. This annual report provides examples of just some of that work.

At the strategic end of AONB business the year was also marked by an increase in the number of organisations represented on our Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) – the body which helps to set the agenda for the work of the AONB Partnership. JAC members were also asked to provide a short report at meetings on the various initiatives and actions their organisations are involved in. This has helped to improve communication, understanding and opportunities for joint working between partners.

In common with most other AONBs in 2007/08 we also put a lot of time and energy into a review of the current AONB Management Plan, with a view to producing a new Management Plan for the period 2009-14. This process of engaging with others to understand the challenges and to jointly assess the priorities for the area is a profoundly important one. I am sure it will help to ensure that the AONB Partnership continues to add value in the future.



Front cover: The distribution of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats within the Malvern Hills AONB

**Size:** 105 sq. kms

**Administrative area:**

% AONB in:  
Herefordshire Council: 58.52%  
Worcestershire County Council: 35.83%  
Gloucestershire County Council: 5.72%

**Population:** 12,259

% of population over 59 yrs of age: 28.07%

**Building numbers:**

Grade I listed buildings in AONB: 5  
Grade II\* listed buildings in AONB: 25  
Grade II listed buildings in AONB: 309

**Land cover and land use:**

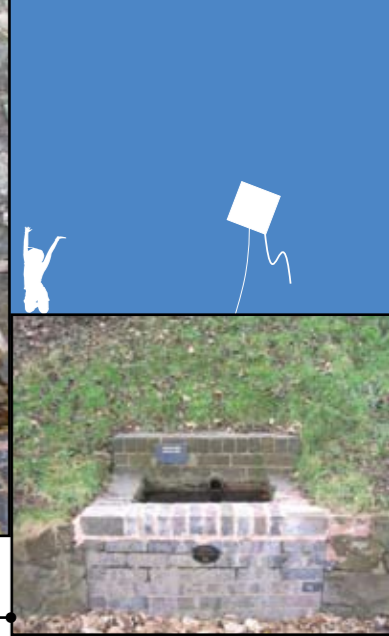
% AONB in:  
Grade 1 Agricultural Land: 0.35%  
Grade 3 Agricultural land: 64.65%  
Agricultural area as crops and fallow: 23%  
Farms devoted wholly to livestock: 55%  
Agricultural area as permanent grass: 54%  
Urban land: 2.84%  
Woodland: around 20%  
Ancient semi-natural woodland: 6.19%

**No. of SSSIs:** 15



*All figures taken from 'The Malvern Hills Statistical Digest', 2003, or 'An Evidence Base', 2007, both produced by the Centre for Rural Research at the University of Worcester.*

# Malverns Heritage Project



**The Malverns Heritage Project aims to restore two elements of Malvern's famous heritage: its grazed hills and the water features from which the spring water flows.**

The project is largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund with further contributions from Natural England, the Malvern Hills Conservators and Worcestershire County Council. The project has involved many organisations such as the Malvern Spa Association, Malvern Town Council, Eastnor, Bromesberrow, Madresfield and Cadbury Estates, several Parish Councils, and Severn Trent Water to name but a few. Over £750,000 in national funds has been brought to the area through the project.



## Hills and Commons

A key objective this year has been working with the Malvern Hills Conservators and local people to assist with the management of the commons around Castlemorton and Birtsmorton. Highlights include:

- The establishment of a Castlemorton Commons Co-ordinating Committee (4Cs). This has the aim of engaging local interests and facilitating discussion about the future management of the commons.
- The creation of a website for the Castlemorton Commons Co-ordinating Committee. This promotes better communication around the many issues surrounding commons management. The website can be found at: [www.malvernhills.org.uk/castlemorton/pages/index.php](http://www.malvernhills.org.uk/castlemorton/pages/index.php)

## Public Inquiry

A great deal of time was spent preparing for a public inquiry into the installation of cattle grids on the highway at Chase End Hill (the southern most of the Malvern Hills). The grids were supported by Natural England, the landowners and the AONB Partnership as a way of helping to re-establish grazing activity on the hill, a practice which will help to conserve a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Inquiry lasted for 5 days with the planning inspector considering a range of landscape and wildlife conservation arguments as well as technical points, such as the noise generated by vehicles crossing the grids. After a period of deliberation the Secretary of State for Transport agreed with the case presented by the AONB Partnership and gave consent for the grids to be installed. The AONB Unit is indebted to legal officers of Worcestershire County Council who guided the team through the inquiry.



Sound monitoring for the public inquiry

## Wells and Spouts

Ten minor spouts have been restored this year:

- **Hayslad** – a bifurcating spout was fitted to this popular spring enabling water to be collected by two people at once
- **Weavers Well** - bricks were repointed and the drainage was repaired
- **Wynds Point** - railings were replaced and the stonework was repaired
- **Jubilee Fountain** - replumbed with spring water thanks to Severn Trent
- **Willows Spring** - new cobbles were laid in front of the trough and the willow tree was replaced
- **Lower Wyche Spout** - the flow of water was restored and the surrounding wall was cleared and repointed. The associated trough was also repaired
- **Ellerslie** - the stone plaques were re-cut and the stonework re-set
- **Barnards Green Trough** - non-original ironwork was removed and the existing old engravings were re-cut
- **Westminster Bank** - fencing was erected around the area where the spring water is collected to keep livestock out. Lost and damaged railings were replaced
- **Lord Sandys Spout** - new pillars were erected and a stone path was laid. Glazed bricks were laid around the spout.



# Sustainable Development



**The Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) is a grant scheme to assist projects that promote sustainable development in the AONB.** The money for the fund comes from DEFRA via Natural England. A wide range of projects were supported this year, with funding going to businesses, organisations and groups in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

In total almost £69,000 of SDF funding was utilised. This in turn helped to lever in just over £65,400 in match-funding contributions.

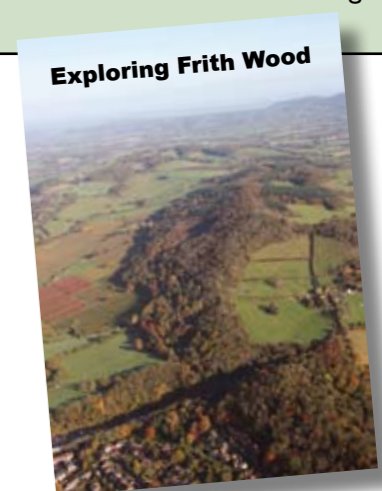


## Grants to public sector bodies:

Grant Recipient	Key project outputs	Expected project outcomes
Youth Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of skills and knowledge base amongst young people who want to work in rural industries</li> <li>Exploration of opportunities for young people to work in the rural/ environmental economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More young people to apply for rural employment</li> <li>More local businesses aware of potential for employing young people</li> </ul>
The Cotswolds & Malverns Transport Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new guide promoting the AONB to users of the Oxford-Hereford rail line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More visitors to the AONB arriving by sustainable transport</li> </ul>
Colwall Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13 members of local community trained in orchard survey techniques</li> <li>41 local orchards surveyed for wildlife interest</li> <li>Community orchard identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater awareness of value of local orchards</li> <li>More community engagement in management of key AONB habitats</li> </ul>
Worcestershire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stock-proof fencing installed at St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable management (through grazing) of local grassland</li> </ul>
Worcestershire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Widespread promotion of a community transport service (Sphere Taxis)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater social mobility for young and old</li> <li>Fewer private cars on the road</li> </ul>

## Grants to private sector businesses:

Grant Recipient	Key project outputs	Expected project outcomes
Caves Folly Nurseries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase of a tractor and wood processor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in sale of local logs as fuel to domestic and retail outlets</li> <li>Reduced carbon footprints</li> </ul>



## Grants to voluntary/charitable groups:

Grant Recipient	Key project outputs	Expected project outcomes
Malvern Hills Coppice Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase of coppicing equipment for use by volunteers</li> <li>Training and insurance for volunteers</li> <li>Production of promotional materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More people involved in AONB management</li> <li>Better management of local woodlands</li> </ul>
Worcestershire Wildlife Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stock fencing and gates installed at Knapp and Papermill Nature Reserve to replace fencing damaged during the floods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable management (through grazing) of high value grasslands</li> </ul>
England's Past for Everyone (working with Forestry Commission, Herefordshire Council and Earth Heritage Trust)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geological and archaeological survey of Frith Wood (near Ledbury)</li> <li>Production of a new trail guide</li> <li>Installation of 2 interpretation panels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater use of Frith Wood as a recreational resource</li> <li>Greater understanding of the importance and past uses of Frith Wood</li> </ul>
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of conservation management advice to 12 land managers</li> <li>450 ha of land entered into Entry Level Stewardship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved stewardship of AONB land</li> </ul>
Bulmer Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bursary support to enable students to complete a Masters Level programme in Sustainable Development Advocacy</li> <li>Students working with businesses and organisations in the AONB to improve sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved sustainability in organisational practices</li> </ul>
Malvern Hills Coppice Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of a full time trainee coppice worker based in the Malvern Hills area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better management of local woodlands</li> <li>Increase in local skills and knowledge base</li> </ul>

Funding for Sustainable Development Projects is available in 2008/09. For further information visit [www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk)



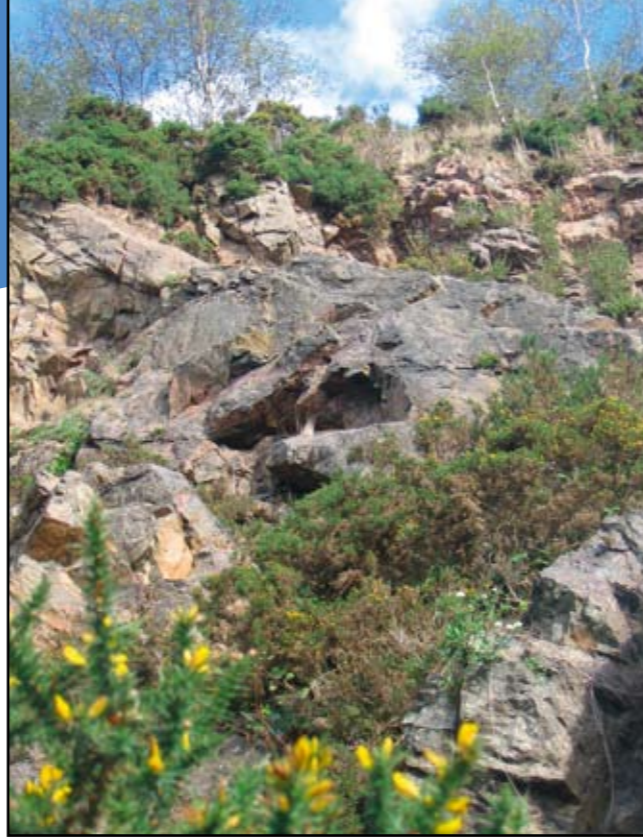
The AONB forms a key part of the Abberley and Malvern Hills European Geopark. The Geopark is a non-statutory, European designation which denotes that the geology of the area is of international importance.

### Education

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust organised a number of visits through the year to the Whitman's Hill Quarry Geology Reserve. Visitors included trainee teachers, the Malvern Hills Outdoor Education Centre, Malvern U3A (University of the Third Age) and the Black Country Geological Society. The Earth Heritage Trust also promoted the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark at a month long exhibition at the Worcester Museum.

### Tank Quarry Transfer

During the year the ownership of Tank Quarry - a disused quarry at the northern tip of the Malvern Hills - was transferred from Worcestershire County Council to the Malvern Hills Conservators. Since this acquisition the Malvern Hills Conservators have improved conditions at the quarry and facilitated its use for activities such as abseiling. Work has included resurfacing the track into the quarry, renewing the fencing around the top of the quarry and securing the rock face where the Malvern Hills Outdoor Centre staff and students abseil.



© Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust

### Geodiversity Action Plans

Geodiversity Action Plans (GAPs) will provide the framework for the conservation and enhancement of geology throughout the country in the years ahead. The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust completed audits of geology throughout the two counties in 2007/08. The audits are the first stage in the GAP process and will form the basis for the preparation of the action plans themselves. These action plans should be completed by 2010.



© Malvern Hills Outdoor Centre



### Survey and research

The AONB Unit worked closely with Conservation Officers in Herefordshire Council, Malvern Hills District Council and Forest of Dean District Council to secure up-to-date information on the built heritage of the AONB. Two main projects were supported:

1. A survey of the condition of all Listed Structures within the area - 344 Listed Buildings within the AONB were identified. The majority of these were visited and briefly assessed for condition by Nick Joyce Architects. The results were extremely pleasing with 55% of buildings classed as being in good condition and 31% in fair condition. This was the first full survey of listed buildings ever undertaken throughout the AONB and the results provide an excellent baseline for monitoring any changes in building condition in the future.
2. A survey of buildings of local heritage importance - there are many buildings within the AONB which receive no statutory protection under law but which nevertheless contribute significantly to the distinctive character and heritage of the area. Information on the whereabouts and particular historical interest of many of these structures was recorded and passed to Local Authority Conservation Officers.

### Historic Farmsteads

Baseline mapping of all historic farmsteads within the AONB was carried out as part of a wider regional initiative to identify the state of this resource throughout the West Midlands. The initial phase of this work, led by local authorities and funded by English Heritage, included an assessment of survival and loss through comparison of the present-day data with the first edition Ordnance Survey maps produced in the 1890s. Follow on phases will seek to characterise the farmsteads and identify priorities for conservation and protection.

### Gibbs Monument



Cradley Parish Hall



St Mary's Church Bromesberrow



# Landscape & Biodiversity



## Stewardship of the land

Natural England and the Malvern Hills Conservators signed a 10 year Higher Level Stewardship agreement over approximately 450 hectares of the northern and central Malvern Hills. Natural England will provide approximately £700,000 in exchange for a management regime which will improve the wildlife, landscape and historic value of this key part of the AONB. One key outcome will be the continuation of grazing on the hills, a project previously supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

During the year Natural England also advised the Malvern Hills Conservators that it could apply for Higher Level Stewardship funding for the management of the southern Malvern Hills and the Castlemorton and Birtsmorton Commons. These applications will be submitted and determined in 2008/09.



## Advice and support

As part of a Sustainable Development Fund Project (see page 7) the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Groups in Herefordshire and Worcestershire provided environmental and conservation advice to 12 land managers in the AONB. This advice was targeted at those who have influence over some of the key habitats and species within the area. As a consequence of the visits 450 ha of land is being entered into Entry Level Stewardship schemes.



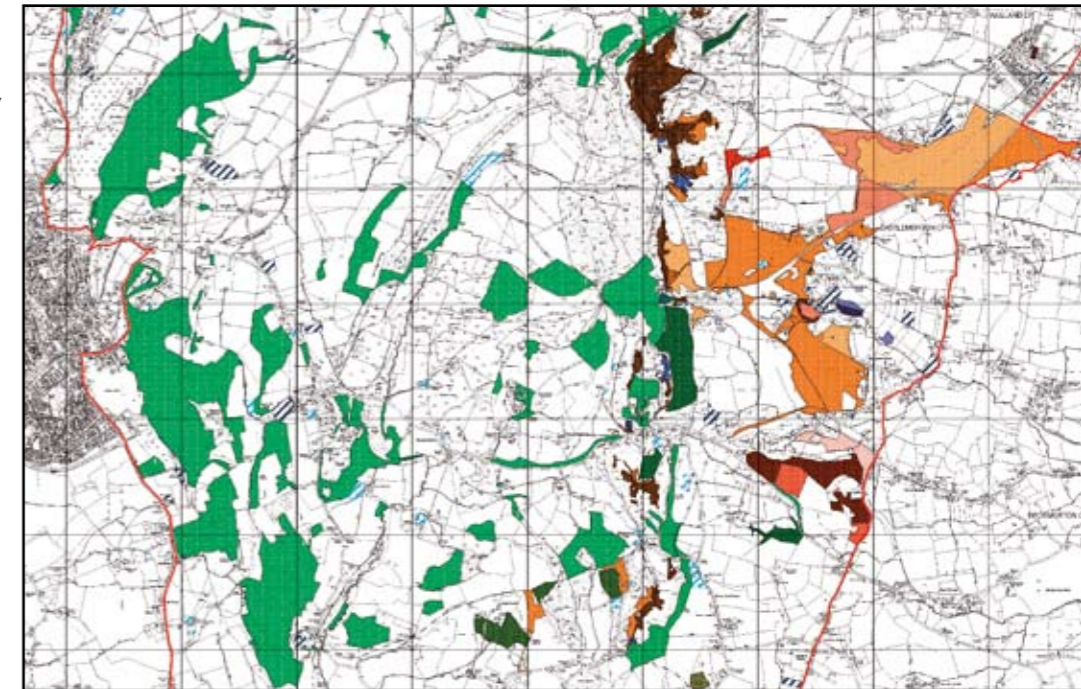
## Landscape and Biodiversity Grants

Landowners, schools and small businesses around the AONB were once again beneficiaries of the Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancement Grants Scheme which was administered by Herefordshire Council. The scheme is a non-statutory cash grant scheme with the aim of providing small-scale financial support for practical measures which help to improve/maintain the landscape, biodiversity and countryside character within the area. Additional funding provided by Natural England enabled grants to be made available throughout the Malvern Hills AONB at a higher maximum grant rate. In total £5,773 of grant was distributed between 8 projects to support orchard planting, hedgelaying and the maintenance of veteran trees. Evaluation work carried out this year suggests that this small grant scheme has helped to create 1500 metres of hedgerow and to plant at least 1800 trees in the AONB over the last 7 years.



## Burying overhead electricity cables

The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM) have agreed that electricity companies can bury some low voltage overhead powerlines in AONBs and then reclaim this expenditure at a later date. The aim is to improve the landscape and visual amenity in these nationally important areas. For two years now the AONB Unit has supplied details of potential schemes within the area to Central Networks who have been scoping and assessing these proposals. It is hoped that overhead powerlines at St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve will be the first to be undergrounded in the AONB as part of this scheme (expected late in 2008). Central Networks has also made progress in assessing schemes on Bromesberrow and Eastnor Estates and it is hoped that these will also soon come to fruition. During 2007/08 the AONB Unit submitted schemes for a further 3.5 km of overhead line to be assessed for undergrounding.



## Biodiversity mapping

Understanding the special qualities of the AONB is a prerequisite to being able to conserve and enhance them. The Biological Record Centres in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire collaborated this year on the production of maps showing the distribution of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats within the AONB. The map provides an excellent starting point for discussing the future of habitat conservation with key partners.

## Maintaining Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Natural England plays a pivotal role in maintaining the health of nationally important wildlife sites throughout the country. Assessments were carried out at various sites within the AONB this year. Working jointly with the Forestry Commission a grant aid package was also provided to assist the recovery of woodland at Leigh Brook Valley which is currently in unfavourable declining condition.

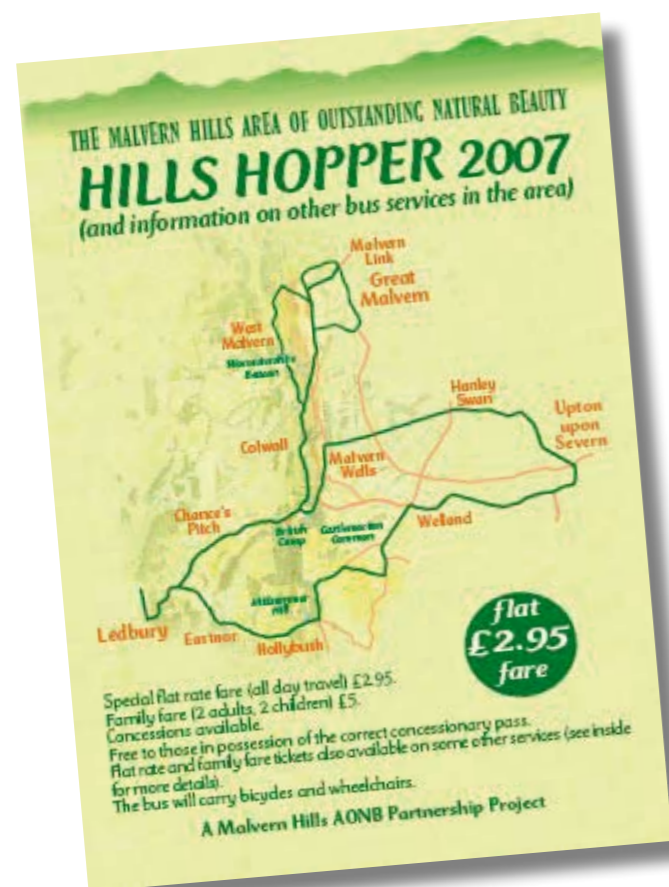


## Hills Hopper

The Hills Hopper is a local bus service funded by the Malvern Hills Rural Transport Partnership. The bus runs on weekends and bank holidays between April and October. The aim of the service is to provide an alternative to the use of private cars for those who wish to access the countryside.

Despite the very wet summer in 2007/08, there was still a very small increase in the number of people using the service this year (24 extra passengers).

- The bus carried 2365 passengers throughout the season
- The subsidy per passenger (excluding marketing) was £2.50
- 12,000 timetables were distributed to Tourist Information Centres, schools, local accommodation providers, train stations etc.



The current management plan for the AONB is due to expire in April 2009. A major piece of work this year has been the review of this document – a legal requirement under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Key milestones in the review process this year were as follows:

- Consultants were contracted to help undertake the review, working closely with staff in the AONB Unit.
- An initial phase of consultation (lasting 3 months) sought views on the current management plan. Articles promoting the consultation appeared in most Parish newsletters. Elected members, local landowners, local schools and Parish Councils were amongst those notified. Approximately 550 management plan review leaflets were distributed.
- A web-based consultation template was established and made available through the AONB website.
- 42 colleagues from key partner bodies attended three theme-based workshops to discuss issues in more detail (a total of 126 people were invited to attend these workshops).
- Follow up meetings to discuss issues more closely were held with a range of colleagues in key partner bodies.
- A Scoping Report and an Environmental Report (part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations) were produced.
- A draft revised management plan was prepared.
- The AONB Steering Group acted to oversee and guide the review process.

Further consultation work is taking place in 2008/09. Please see the AONB website: [www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk) for more information.

A revised 5 year management plan for the AONB will be available in April 2009.

In May 2007 the Malvern Hills AONB Unit contracted The Planning Company (based in Worcestershire) to provide advice on strategy and development issues relating to the AONB. The principal outputs from this contract were as follows:

- 15 responses to strategic level consultations (at national, regional and local level) on planning and associated areas of policy and strategy;
- 15 responses to specific applications for development within and immediately adjacent to the AONBs.

The advisory service provided by The Planning Company has enabled the AONB Unit to improve the quantity and quality of the input it makes to key partners when they develop strategy and, in the case of Local Planning Authorities, when they consult on planning applications.

For the first time this year a full report on planning activities throughout the AONB was also compiled. This has enabled the AONB Partnership to better understand the nature of planning activity in the area and to begin to identify trends in the type and location of development. Some key features of planning activity in 2007/08 were as follows:

Total no. of applications registered in the AONB	187
No. of applications for new dwellings in gardens	5
Total no. of new dwellings applied for	56
No. of applications for household extensions/alterations	107
No. of applications for barn/agricultural building conversions	5
No. of applications for equestrian uses/developments	7
No. of applications for renewable energy installations (domestic)	1



# Communication, Education & Awareness



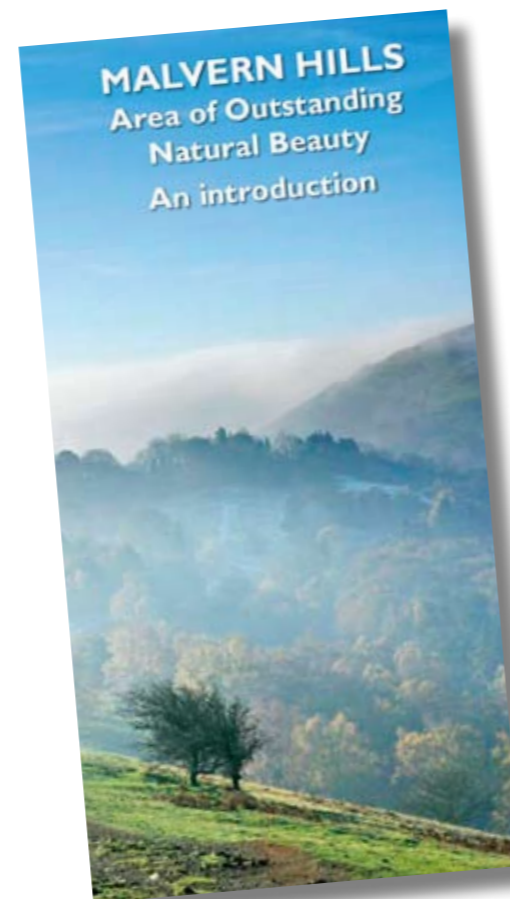
## Forest Schools

The Forest Schools initiative encourages children to appreciate the benefits of the natural environment while learning social and physical skills. The aim of the Forest Schools Organisation is to give children aged 3-18 the chance to enjoy positive outdoor experiences. A set area of forest/woodland becomes an outdoor classroom where children attend lessons every week, all year round. Lessons can be linked with the National Curriculum making the scheme ideal for use within schools. Forest Schools are very active within the AONB. Over 200 Forest Schools have been set up in Worcestershire, with the help of the Bishops Wood Centre, run by Worcestershire County Council. As many as 13 schools within or near to the AONB designation participated in the scheme in 2007.



## New introductory leaflets

Understandably, people who live in and visit the area can get confused by the number of bodies who make use of the words 'Malvern Hills' in their titles: the Malvern Hills Conservators, the Malvern Hills District Council and the Malvern Hills AONB to mention just three! To improve understanding both the AONB Partnership and the Malvern Hills Conservators produced introductory leaflets this year. The leaflets provide information about the separate roles and purposes of the two bodies and the relationship between them.



## Memorandum of Understanding

In order to promote further clarity in working relationships the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership and the Malvern Hills Conservators signed a Memorandum of Understanding. This describes the roles, responsibilities and actions of both bodies in a range of practical situations.

## Working together

This year has seen a further increase in collaborative working between the Malvern Hills AONB and other protected areas. This practice helps to ensure value for money as well as providing a louder voice for the AONBs at a regional and sub-regional level. Some key areas of joint working for the year were as follows.



Project	AONB Partners
Employment of a planning/strategy consultant to provide specialist advice	Wye Valley AONB
Feasibility study into the need for regional level advocacy and coordination for protected areas	AONBs and National Parks in the West Midlands and East of England
Mapping of UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats	Wye Valley AONB

## Website

Since the AONB website was revamped in September 2006 there has been a marked increase in visits to the site. For example, between October 2006 and October 2007 the number of visits increased by 181% (source: Kc3.net). Data suggests that many people visit the website for information about Discovery Walks and cycle routes in the area. Website use will continue to be monitored.

## JAC study Tour

This year the Joint Advisory Committee study tour focussed on the Suckley Hills in the northern part of the AONB. Staff from the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust did a superb job in interpreting the special geology of the area and in explaining it's links to landscape, biodiversity and the built heritage of the AONB. Highlights included a fossil hunt at Whitmans Hill Quarry and an inspection of the geofluvial heritage at the Knapp and Papermill Nature Reserve.







## Miles Without Stiles

'Miles Without Stiles' are promoted footpaths and tracks which are suitable for those who may find walking a challenge and who don't want to clamber over barriers and obstacles when out in the countryside. Herefordshire Council removed a number of stiles from footpaths around Colwall, Cradley and Mathon this year and created its first ever Miles Without Stiles routes, including the production of two new trail guides. The guides provide information about distances, surfaces and path gradients so people can make informed choices about whether the routes will be suitable for them. Guides can be downloaded from [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/circularwalks](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/circularwalks) Financial support to this project was provided by the AONB Partnership.



## Malvern Access Guide

The Malvern Access Group produced a new guide highlighting the accessibility of a range of shops and businesses within the town of Malvern. Thanks to a small contribution from the AONB Partnership this guide was expanded to include information on easy access trails within the adjoining AONB. The publication thus provides a single source of information on accessibility in the town and surrounding countryside.

## Public Rights of Way Parish Improvement Programme

Worcestershire County Council's Countryside Service Access Team carried out a range of practical improvements in the parishes of Castlemorton and West Malvern. Works included replacing stiles, installing ditch crossings and fitting sign posts and waymark posts in order to provide an easier and more enjoyable experience for walkers. Improvements totalling £1300 were also made to the Worcestershire Way.



## Guided walks

Many members of the AONB Partnership have been involved in promoting voluntary work and guided talks and walks around the AONB. The Malvern Hills Conservators alone delivered 29 talks and 10 guided walks on protecting the Malvern Hills. The Earth Heritage Trust also gave multiple talks, including to Friends of the Malvern Hills, Malvern Naturalists and Malvern Probus. At the national level Malvern Hills geology also featured on BBC Radio 4's Open Country.



## Finances

### 1. Unit Income

Natural England	121,980	
Herefordshire Council	16,173	
Worcestershire County Council	12,690	
Malvern Hills District Council	14,000	
Gloucestershire County Council	1,030	
Forest of Dean District Council	834	
<b>Total</b>	<b>166,707</b>	

### 2. Unit Expenditure

Staff costs (inc, travel & training)	103,364	
Accommodation and office costs	8,397	
Partnership Budget	42,000	
Partnership Running costs	8,879	
<b>Total</b>	<b>162,640</b>	

### 3. Project income & expenditure

Natural England contribution	9,660.25	
Partner contributions (estimated)	12,985.25	
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,645.50</b>	

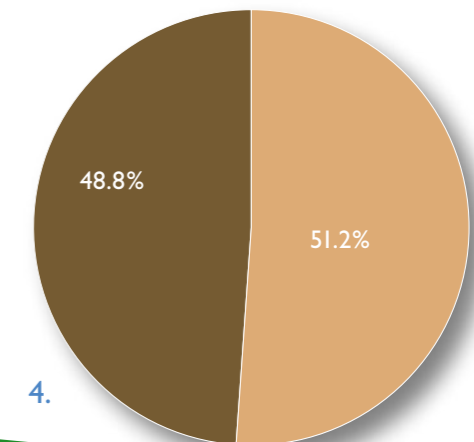
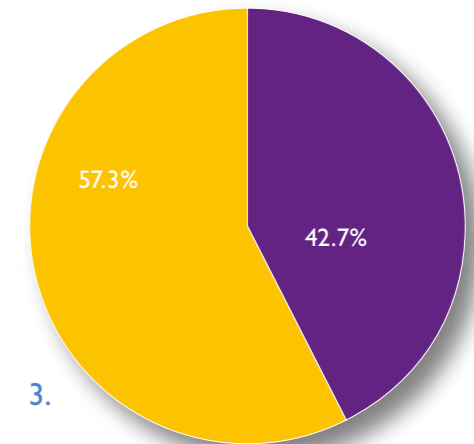
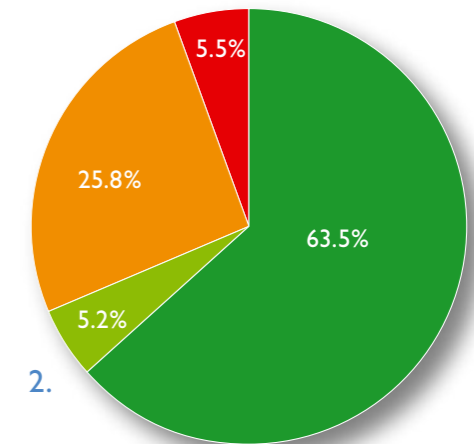
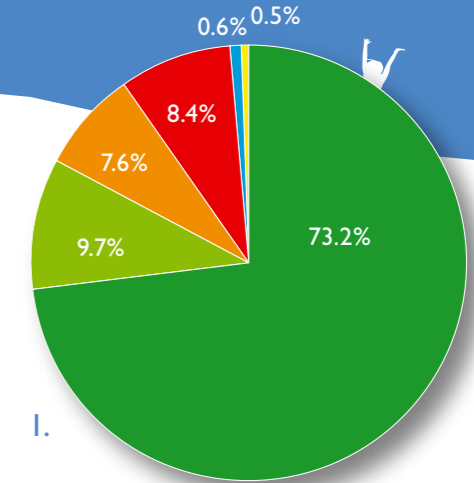
### 4. Sustainable Development Fund Income & expenditure

Natural England grant	68,714	
Partner contributions	65,408	
<b>Total</b>	<b>134,122</b>	

## Staff

The staff structure for the year was as follows.

AONB Unit Manager	Paul Esrich
AONB Unit Assistant Manager	David Armitage
Heritage Lottery Fund Project Officer	Victoria Oaten
Team Support Officer	Emma Conquest





## The Purpose of AONB Designation

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape. Pursuing this should take into account the requirements of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries as well as social and economic needs of local communities.



## The AONB Management Plan

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 places a statutory duty on relevant local authorities to produce an AONB Management Plan. A five year Management Plan for the Malvern Hills was produced in 2004 and this provides the framework for maintaining the special character of the area.

The Management Plan describes the following vision for the AONB:

“The vision is one of a landscape in perfect balance with its communities, economies and visitors, where the special qualities – the landscape, wildlife, cultural heritage and tranquillity – are cherished and which in return deliver a sustained high quality of life for its residents, wonderful opportunities for visitors to sample local food and picturesque scenery, a skilled labour market and diverse economy of agriculture and high tech industries.”

## The AONB Partnership

The Partnership is governed by a Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) and guided by a Steering Group. The JAC consists of members from the local authorities as well as public and private bodies. After consulting the committee, it was decided that an overhaul of membership should take place so as to keep the JAC dynamic and progressive. We therefore welcome new members from Visit Herefordshire/Destination Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust and Herefordshire Local Access Forum.

A full list of members can be found on page 19. The governance structure of the AONB Partnership is as follows.

## Governance structure and AONB Partnership

Title	Purpose	Participants
Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)	To coordinate the management of the AONB and the implementation of the AONB Management Plan.	Representatives from a variety of public, private and voluntary sector bodies.
Steering Group	To provide guidance, advice and support to the Joint Advisory Committee and Staff Unit.	Officers from local authorities and the Malvern Hills Conservators.
Staff Unit	To assist the Joint Advisory Committee in fulfilling its duties.	AONB Unit Manager and staff.

## Joint Advisory Committee 2007-08

### Elected Members:

Dr B Smith (*Chairman*)  
 Mr J Raine (*Vice-Chairman*)  
 Ms J Bowden  
 Mrs N Carless  
 Miss M Cooper  
 Mr R Mills  
 Mr R Farmer  
 Mrs D Rayner  
 Mr R Hall-Jones  
 Dr R Long

### Non-Elected Members:

Mr M R Allfrey  
 Mr A Fleming  
 Mr P Hands\*  
 Mr J Hervey-Bathurst  
 Mr G Jones  
 Mr J Payne\*  
 Mr D Ward/Mr F Hill  
 Ms K White

### Co-opted Members:

Mr A Lee\*

Malvern Hills Conservators  
 Malvern Hills District Council  
 Worcestershire Association of Local Councils  
 Herefordshire Association of Local Councils  
 Herefordshire Council  
 Herefordshire Council  
 Worcestershire County Council  
 Worcestershire County Council  
 Malvern Hills District Council  
 Forest of Dean District Council  
 (*also representing Gloucestershire County Council*)

National Farmers Union  
 English Heritage  
 Visit Herefordshire/Destination Worcestershire  
 Country Landowners and Business Association  
 Forestry Commission  
 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust  
 Campaign to Protect Rural England  
 Natural England

Herefordshire Local Access Forum

\* New members from January 2008

## Steering Group 2007-08

Kelda White (*Chairman*)  
 Andy Maginnis  
 Heather Royle  
 James Bisset  
 Angela Newey  
 Bill Cronin  
 Ian Rowat

Natural England  
 Worcestershire County Council  
 Malvern Hills District Council  
 Herefordshire Council  
 Gloucestershire County Council  
 Forest of Dean District Council  
 Malvern Hills Conservators



# Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England & Wales



**The Malvern Hills AONB is a member of the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**

The Association is an independent organisation, which seeks to promote the interests of the 40 AONBs in England and Wales through communication, parliamentary liaison, technical support and training and by contributing to policy development.

## **The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

The Old Police Station  
Cotswold Heritage Centre  
Northleach  
Gloucestershire GL54 3JH  
Tel: 01451 862007  
Fax: 01451 862001  
[www.aonb.org.uk](http://www.aonb.org.uk)

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