

2011
2012

malvern hills
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Annual Review 2011/12



Chairman's foreword



Dr Bryan G Smith,
Chairman of the
Joint Advisory
Committee

Welcome to the annual review for the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership, covering the period 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012. I hope that you will once again be impressed by what can be achieved when a partnership of interests works together with a common purpose. My own favourite activities this year include the removal of yet more overhead electricity cable (page 4) and efforts by local landowners to safeguard the future of hedgerow trees which are such a cherished feature of our landscape (page 11).

The period covered by this annual review saw the publication of the first Natural Environment White Paper for twenty years. I have been impressed at how quickly the AONB Partnership has worked to try and meet the challenges which it lays down. Ours is not a large AONB and to my mind this means that we should be working in partnership with those inside and outside of the protected area boundary if we are to address the need for larger scale habitat restoration and re-creation which is central to the 'landscape scale' approach contained within the White Paper. The application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a three counties traditional orchard conservation project (page 6) is an excellent example of this.

Funding for the work of the AONB Partnership is currently declining significantly, year on year. It would be remiss of me not to mention that this is having a clear impact on the scale and scope of partnership activity. Nevertheless, in reading through this annual review I am heartened by just how many different individuals, groups and organisations continue to work together in a positive and productive manner. These efforts are a further vindication of the AONB Partnership model which allows for local collaboration to conserve and enhance a nationally cherished landscape.

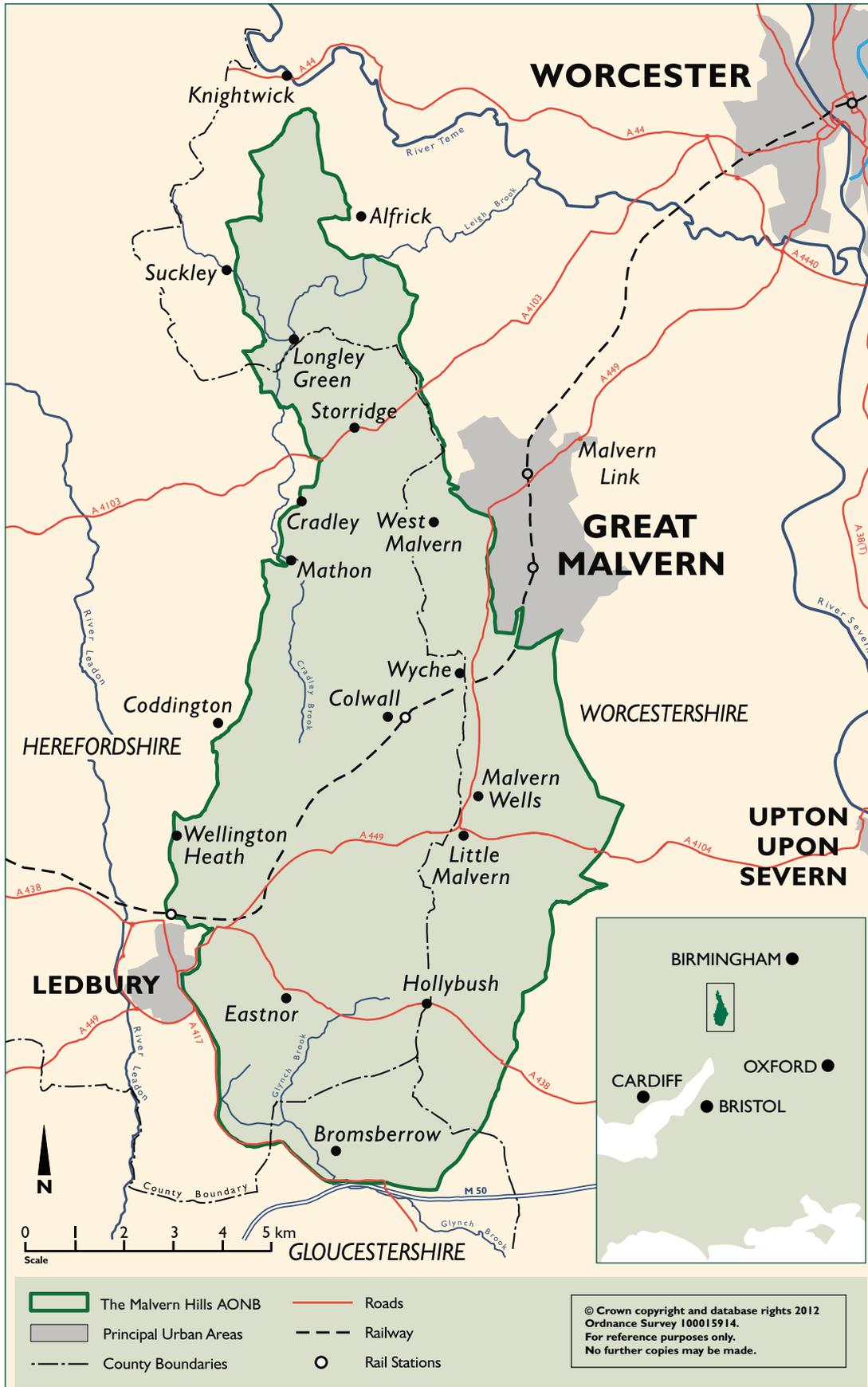
Finally, on a personal note, after a tenure of four years my time as Chair of the AONB Joint Advisory Committee has come to an end. I have greatly enjoyed my time in the hot seat, helping to steer the Partnership through waters which have been both rough and calm. I am handing over the reins of leadership to an eminently capable man in the form of Professor John Raine. John combines a deep love of the area with political acuity and good old fashioned common sense. I wish him the very best of luck but know that the AONB Partnership will be safe in his hands.

Dr Bryan G Smith, Chairman of the Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee

Reference Numbers

A reference number (given in brackets) is provided alongside each item of work mentioned in this annual review. This refers to a specific Guiding Principle or Strategic Objective contained within the AONB Management Plan. In this way the annual review demonstrates how the AONB Partnership is implementing the AONB Management Plan.

Location of the Malvern Hills AONB



Outline map of the Malvern Hills AONB

Landscape



Hedge restoration by Midsummer Cottage

Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancement Grants (LO5)

The AONB Partnership provided a total of £3,757 in grants to support small-scale landscape and biodiversity improvements in 2011/12. Five landowners shared this funding to help deliver a range of outputs including:

- Planting 620 metres of new hedgerow, including 300 metres at Batchcombe Lane, Storridge.
- Coppicing and replanting a section of ancient hedgerow bank on Midsummer Hill.
- Restoring a traditional orchard at Woodruff Bank, Suckley.
- Thinning and extracting large oak standards within a hazel wood at Tor Coppice.

AONB enhancement grants are aimed at smaller landowners who are not in receipt of agri-environment support. Unfortunately this grant stream has been reduced in size because of budget cuts.

Burying Overhead Electricity Cables (LO2)

The AONB Partnership has continued to work with Western Power Distribution on a national scheme, established by the Office of the Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM), to selectively bury a small number of overhead electricity lines in beauty spots or iconic sites. The aim of the scheme is to improve the beauty of National Parks and AONBs. The scheme has benefited two sites in the Malvern Hills AONB this year, with 310 metres of overhead cable removed at Raycombe Lane, Coddington, and 400 metres in Upper Colwall. With replacement cables being buried underground and out of sight, the views to and from these areas within the AONB have been greatly improved.



Upper Colwall with overhead lines



Upper Colwall without overhead lines



Canopy opening at Tor Coppice



Landscape Strategy

In brief

- The AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines document can now be used interactively thanks to a web-based map and search facility provided by Worcestershire County Council. Why not have a look at: <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/landscapestrategymap.html> (LO3 and LO6).
- A section of hedge has been laid and planted up by a local woodworker at St. James' Church, West Malvern, financed by the Friends of St. James' Church (LO2).

Hedge laying at St James' Church



Management Plan references

L02 – Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features

L03 – Identify and promote opportunities for positive landscape change

L05 – Seek resources to promote landscape management and improvements

L06 – Promote greater awareness of the landscape character and attributes of the AONB

Biodiversity

Conservation on a Landscape Scale (B01)

The new environmental framework emerging from Government puts great emphasis on landscape scale conservation which involves large-scale habitat restoration and recreation for the benefit of people and wildlife. The AONB Partnership made two significant attempts to help to deliver this approach in 2011/12.

- An application was made for part of the AONB and its surrounding area to become recognised as a 'Nature Improvement Area' under a Government initiative to help deliver the Natural Environment White Paper published in 2011. Unfortunately this application was unsuccessful.
- In conjunction with a range of partners, an application was made to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support a three year project to conserve traditional orchards across the three counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. A decision on this funding application is expected in September 2012.

Orchard Management Advice (B01)

Traditional orchards are a priority habitat for conservation in the UK and are of particular importance to the heritage of the three counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire. A grant from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund this year has again allowed the expertise contained within the Colwall Orchard Group to benefit traditional orchards in other parts of the AONB. Members of the Colwall Group provided management advice to nine orchard owners outside the Colwall Parish Boundary. As a result, two new traditional orchards have been established and new fruit trees have been planted in a range of existing orchards. Much has been learnt about the local fruit varieties during the orchard visits and this has added to the collective knowledge of local orchard heritage in the AONB.

First trees planted in a new traditional orchard



Malvern Hills Conservators (B01)

The Malvern Hills Conservators continued with their programme of management work to support biodiversity on numerous sites within the AONB this year. Birch clearance on Pinnacle Hill has helped to provide a more suitable grassland habitat for nesting skylarks whilst stock grazing on the hills continues to minimise scrub encroachment and preserve a habitat for butterflies and wildflowers.



Malvern Hills Conservators volunteers



Apple tree with protective fencing

Conservation at the Knapp and Papermill Nature Reserve (B01)

The Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's Knapp and Papermill Nature Reserve is one of the finest in the AONB. The Trust has undertaken a range of conservation work on the site this year including the installation of dormouse and bat boxes and the clearance of woodland glades for butterflies and woodland ground flora. The old fruit trees on the reserve have been pruned by an orchard specialist to help prolong their lives. The fruit trees have also been fenced off to protect them from cattle which have now been set to graze within the orchard.

In brief

- Worcestershire County Council ran a Heritage Fruit Tree Scheme, promoting the planting of local tree varieties in the area. A total of 161 fruit trees were purchased through the scheme during the year (B07).
- St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve in Malvern Wells continues to be managed by Worcestershire County Council to support local wildlife and to benefit local residents and visitors (B01).
- Sheep grazing on parts of the Eastnor Estate SSSI helped to control scrub species and encourage a range of grassland flora and fauna (B01).

Management Plan references

- B01 – Conserve, enhance and expand key habitats and populations of key species
- B05 – Undertake survey and research on the AONB's biodiversity resources
- B07 – Promote greater understanding and enjoyment of the biodiversity resources of the AONB

Geodiversity



Field surveying

New Geodiversity Records Database (G03)

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust houses and manages an independent Geological Records Centre (GRC) for Herefordshire & Worcestershire. Funding through the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (administered by Natural England) from 2009 to 2011 allowed Trust consultants and volunteers to undertake an audit of 250 site records held in the GRC. Work included field surveying, cataloguing specimens and 'cleaning' the old geological records database. This work was completed during 2011/12 and the entire dataset has been transferred over to a new bespoke geodiversity records database.

Management Plan references

G02 – Promote greater understanding of the geology of the AONB

D01 – Encourage the recycling of small quantities of locally distinctive building materials

A Thousand Years of Building with Stone (G02 and D01)

During 2011/12 the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust successfully applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop a project focusing on the stones used to build houses, grand buildings and other structures. The project aims to identify the quarry sites which provided the local building stones, the history of how it was quarried, transported and prepared, and the social history which goes with this. It is hoped that local people will be involved in this project and training will be provided on identifying local stone, building archaeology and the changing face of building architecture.



Condition monitoring at Swinyard Hill

Volunteer Training (G02 and G03)

Two training days were put on for six Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust volunteers in order to equip them with the basic knowledge and confidence to fill in a standard condition monitoring form for Local Geological Sites (LGS). The training comprised of a morning session at the Trust offices and an afternoon field session at two Local Geological Sites within the AONB where the volunteers were supervised in completing the form. Feedback from the day was very positive.

Management Plan references

G03 – Undertake survey, research and monitoring to secure complete information on the state of the AONB's geodiversity resource

In brief

- Funding for the Geodiversity Champions project has come to an end but the trained Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust volunteers continue to monitor and manage important geological sites within the AONB (G01 and G02).

Historic Environment

Midsummer Hill Iron Age Hillfort (H01)

The Iron Age Hillfort at Midsummer Hill dates back over 2000 years. It is one of the jewels in the crown of the Malvern Hills being designated both a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Scheduled Monument. A local partnership of the Malvern Hills Conservators, National Trust, English Heritage and Natural England came together this year to protect the site's nationally important archaeology for future generations.

Following consultation with ornithological experts and the Forestry Commission a first stage of work to remove trees and scrub patches from the site was completed. As a consequence the site has become more visible to visitors and the risk of further tree root damage to the monument has been greatly reduced. It is hoped that the work will also help to increase the area of nationally rare species-rich grassland on the Hills.

For more information see: <http://www.malvern hills.org.uk/Content/Midsummerwebsite.pdf>



Midsummer Hill following tree and scrub clearance

Repairs to the Obelisk at Eastnor (H01)

The obelisk at Eastnor is one of the most recognisable features of the AONB and can be viewed across the Eastnor Estate and from the ridge of the Hills. During 2011/12 scaffolding was erected around the monument and the obelisk underwent major repairs to its stone work which had been damaged and dislodged by recent cold winters. The work was part funded by English Heritage and the Country Houses Foundation. The next stage of work will be to replace the engraved stonework around the lower section of the monument.



Eastnor Obelisk

Historic Management Advice (H01 and H02)

During 2011/12 English Heritage continued its long-standing work with landowners to preserve historic features within the AONB. A number of sites across the area benefited including:

- Bronsil Castle – ongoing support to help repair the castle ruins and moated site and advice to guide future maintenance.
- British Camp – advice on rabbit damage, earthwork repairs and how best to prevent repaired erosion scars opening up after treatment (the latter in conjunction with Natural England and Herefordshire Council).
- Shire Ditch – English Heritage provided a grant to the Malvern Hills Conservators to trial repair work on a section of the Shire Ditch, south of British Camp. The hope is that this will provide a basis for future work, methods, materials and costs.

Management Plan references

H01 – Preserve, conserve and enhance... Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, and features of historic interest...

H02 – Undertake surveys and research to secure and document information on the historic environment

Farming and Forestry

Environmental Stewardship (F01, F02 and F03)

The Environmental Stewardship programme provides grants to landowners to practice good environmental management. Within this programme the Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) scheme provides some environmental benefits, whilst the Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme provides grants to support the maximum environmental outcomes. Six Entry Level Stewardship applications were drawn up on sites within the AONB this year whilst three landowners commenced new Higher Level Stewardship Schemes across a total of over 65 hectares of land. Key elements within these agreements included:

- Creation and restoration of traditional orchards.
- Management of species-rich calcareous grassland adjacent to a SSSI.
- Hedgerow restoration and management to improve the habitat and provide corridors for dormice.



Newly planted hedgerow, Storridge

New traditional orchard, Upper Colwall



Hedgerow Trees (FO2)

The future of hedgerow trees in many areas of countryside is uncertain. Today's mechanised approach to hedgerow maintenance often means that few young trees have a chance to establish and to replace those that mature and die. The AONB Partnership worked with two local landowners this year to understand better the practical problems and difficulties around hedgerow tree management and to explore how these could be addressed. As part of a pilot venture the two landowners also planted 12 new hedgerow trees in the AONB (a combination of oaks and disease-resistant elms) which will be nurtured and managed for the future. It is hoped that many more new hedgerow trees will be planted by other landowners to support the future of this highly distinctive element of the local landscape.



Timber pile, Suckley



Newly planted oaks in hedgerow, Woodfields Farm

Forestry Agreements (FO1)

The Forestry Commission continued its regulatory and grant provisioning work to encourage good woodland management in the AONB, particularly in supporting activities which may help to reverse the decline in the numbers of woodland birds. Highlights included:

- Two hectares of new woodland planted in Lower Kingshill (supported by a Woodland Improvement Grants).
- Management work such as coppicing, thinning and ride-widening in woods at Suckley, at Park Wood and on the Little Malvern Estate (supported by Woodland Improvement Grants).
- Tree replacement at Coddington (supported by a Woodland Regeneration Grant).
- Thinning seven hectares in Gullet Wood, to improve light levels to encourage woodland ground flora, for the benefit of butterflies and birds.

In brief

- Coppice work has continued this year in Park Wood, owned by the Malvern Hills Conservators (FO2).
- Malvern Hills Conservators' Higher Level Stewardship Grazing Project has continued over the last year to try and make grazing the hills and commons more economically viable (FO2).

Management Plan references

FO1 – Promote the maximum uptake of agri-environment and woodland grant schemes

FO2 – Bring characteristic habitats into favourable conservation condition

FO3 – Ensure that 90% of all new woodland planting is of broad-leaved, semi-natural stock

Community-Living and Working

Woodland Management Skills (C03)

Providing training in traditional woodland skills is important because there is a shortage of local people with such skills in the area. During the year a programme of coppice training was successfully completed by three Malvern Coppicing employees who carried out practical work in eight woodlands across the AONB. Grant from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund supported this training and funded the development of three woodland management plans in the area.



Coppice work at Ravenshill nature reserve



The opening of the Knapp and Papermill Education Centre

Nature Reserve Volunteer and Education Centre (C02)

The Knapp and Papermill Nature Reserve is a key wildlife site in the AONB, highly regarded for its diversity of habitats and species. The owners of the site - Worcestershire Wildlife Trust - have long used the reserve as a place of learning for both adults and children. A new Volunteer and Education Centre was built at 'The Knapp' this year, with funding support from LEADER, and a financial contribution from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund. The centre is of sustainable design, with features including rainwater harvesting, high-level insulation, air-to-air heating/cooling system and wood cladding. The centre, which was officially opened by Harriet Baldwin MP, will function as a classroom for courses, and as a workshop and storage area for volunteers working on the reserve.

Colwall Village Garden and Orchard (CO2)

A new village garden and community orchard has been established in Colwall thanks to the efforts of the Colwall Orchard Group. Following the Group's purchase of the land, volunteers quickly set to work to clear out the old apple packing shed on site and to install a secure storage box for orchard tools and other village garden equipment. Part of the site was split into allotment plots to enable local people to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Plots designated for 60 households were quickly snapped up and six potential new allotment tenants have been placed on a waiting list. A small number of new fruit trees have been planted to help establish the community orchard and plans are in place to add to this next year.

Bee-keeping in Colwall (CO2 and CO3)

Honey bees are important as pollinating insects for crops but are declining in Britain. Colwall Orchard Group was given funding this year, through the AONB Sustainable Development Fund, to purchase four bee hives and swarms to pollinate the community orchard and adjoining allotments owned by the group (see above). The honey produced by the bees will be distributed to volunteers and sold. The group was supported by the Malvern and Upton Beekeepers Association through summer apiary visits and winter theory classes. As well as the hives, bee-keeping suits were also purchased and this allowed 10 dedicated volunteers to become involved in caring for and monitoring the swarms.

Management Plan references

CO2 – Develop an enhanced sense of ownership for, and appreciation of, the AONB amongst local communities

CO3 – Foster opportunities for training in conservation and agriculture

Bee-keeping, Colwall



Built Development



**The SWDP
consultation
document**

Building Design Guide (D04)

The AONB Partnership produces topic-based guidance to help ensure that management and development activities taking place in the AONB help to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. This year the AONB Partnership commissioned a company called Countryside to produce a Building Design Guide for the area. Pilot work has now been completed and, following a period of public consultation, the full Design Guide will be available in 2012/13.

South Worcestershire Development Plan (DP1)

The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) is a document being produced jointly by the Malvern Hills District, Wychavon and Worcester City Councils. It seeks to ensure that future development is appropriate and sustainable by setting out a long-term vision and objectives and strategy for development in the area in the period to 2030, together with a range of policies relating to these objectives. During the year, the Councils consulted on a Preferred Option for development in the area. The AONB Partnership's response to this consultation included the following points:

- The draft Vision should be amended to recognise the national importance of the natural beauty of the Cotswolds and Malvern Hills AONBs in South Worcestershire, including a reference to the significance of these areas in attracting economic development.
- It is essential that views towards and from the Malvern Hills are fully taken into account in the design and siting of any new development around the area.
- The proposed development sites at Welland Road and Green Lane/Hanley Road in Malvern Wells should not proceed since they are on Greenfield land located within the AONB.



Proposed development site in Malvern Wells

Management Plan references

DP1 – Reflect distinctive character and natural beauty in statutory land use planning policy and guidance

DP3 – Development should be subject to high standards of design and sustainability. Energy conservation should be supported wherever possible

DP8 – The development of smaller scale energy schemes should be encouraged



Castlemorton Village Hall

Solar Panels on Castlemorton Village Hall (DP8)

Finding ways to lower energy costs and reduce CO₂ emissions are attractive incentives for the addition of green technologies on buildings. In July 2011 a project to install solar panels to Castlemorton Village Hall was completed. A total of 22 solar photo-voltaic panels were attached to the south facing roof of the building. The system will allow the village hall to generate its own power and to sell off any excess electricity to the National Grid. The £36,000 scheme was funded by LEADER and the Big Lottery Fund. It is estimated that the panels will generate approximately 4,000kWh per year, which will reduce CO₂ emissions by 2.2 tonnes a year. In addition, by selling any surplus power to the National Grid, an additional yearly income of up to £1,600 could be generated. Other sustainable renovations to the building this year included installing double glazing and improving its insulation.

In brief

- Colwall Parish Council has started working with Herefordshire Association of Local Councils and the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership to develop a Neighbourhood Plan which will allow local residents to influence future development in the area (DO2).
- The Colwall Orchard Group received a grant from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund to install a rainwater catchment system to their apple packing shed and to connect a mains water supply to the site (DP3).
- The AONB Sustainable Development Fund continued to support the development of LED gas lamps in the AONB. A production design was produced for the new style of lamp (DP3 and HO1).
- 24 houses underwent an energy inspection as part of the Colwall Greener project to improve energy efficiency in local homes, funded by the AONB Sustainable Development Fund (DP3).



Gas lamp

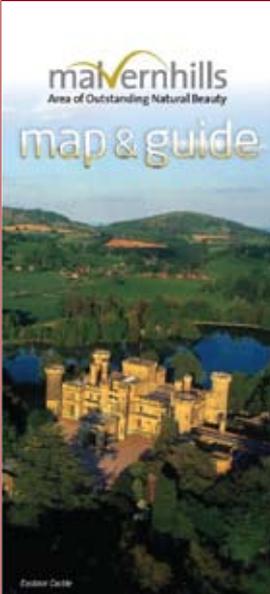
Management Plan references

DO2 – Support the production of community-led plans, strategies and statements that seek to guide appropriate development and conserve local distinctiveness

DO4 – Develop a programme of guidance on key planning and design issues appropriate to the AONB

HO1 – Preserve, conserve and enhance... features of local architectural or historic interest

Tourism, Recreation and Access



AONB map and guide

Visitor Map and Guide (T01)

A new visitor map and guide, the first to cover the whole of the AONB, has been produced. The guide highlights some of the interesting things to see and do in the AONB, including walks and cycle routes, nature reserves and buildings of heritage and cultural interest. A list of some of the local refreshment venues is also provided. The map provided helps the user to navigate and to plan their activities and days out in the area. Tourism representatives from the counties of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and from Malvern Hills District Council worked in partnership with the AONB Unit to produce the leaflet. The new map and guide is available, free of charge, to members of the public from local refreshment venues and Tourist Information Centres and on the Malvern Hills AONB website. It can also be downloaded at: www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/documents

Quick Response Codes (T01)

In the last few years an increase in the number and use of 'smartphones' has led to changes in the way in which many people receive information. Quick Response (QR) codes are a two-dimensional barcode of black squares on a white background which can be scanned by a smartphone and which then directly sends a phone user to internet pages containing information or pictures. The AONB Sustainable Development Fund has been used to support a company called Key IQ Ltd to develop QR codes relevant to the AONB. Codes have been placed on notice boards in a number of tourism spots, including British Camp, and provide location specific information on flora and fauna, historic information, archaeological features, local amenities, nearby attractions and even walking directions. Market research suggests that the number of people accessing information through this type of media is set to increase. As a result of these advancements in technology the AONB Partnership is able to provide information to a wider range of visitors.

QR code and phone image



Management Plan references

T01 – Encourage and stimulate sustainable tourism and recreational use of the AONB

T02 – provide enhanced sustainable access and accessibility to recreation and tourist facilities and the public rights of way network

Tourism Think Piece (TP1)

A number of recent developments such as the Government's Rural Economy Growth Review have highlighted the need for a more considered and coordinated approach to tourism management in and adjoining the Malvern Hills AONB. A tourism 'think piece' paper was produced this year to inform the AONB Partnership's consideration of this matter and specifically to:

- Consider some of the main issues related to tourism in the area and the desirability/necessity of working with partners inside and outside the AONB.
- Identify opportunities and mechanisms for moving forward with a sustainable tourism agenda for the area.
- Signpost recent/current work in other protected areas.

In brief

- Herefordshire Council and AMEY Herefordshire, with the permission of local landowners, replaced six stiles with gates to improve access arrangements in the AONB (TO2).
- Worcestershire County Council's Public Rights of Way team worked in partnership with AMEY to construct a new footbridge at Storridge on the Worcestershire Way (TO2).

Management Plan references

TP1 – Development and management of tourism should take place within a framework of sustainability



New footbridge, Storridge

Transport



Sustrans
feasibility report

National Cycle Network - Local Feasibility Study (TR05 and TR06)

The National Cycle Network comprises over 13,400 miles of walking and cycling routes across the UK. However, it still contains some gaps. Working jointly with Worcestershire County Council, the organisation Sustrans received a grant from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund to complete a feasibility study on a network extension between Worcester and Malvern. Two different options were identified and put forward for public consultation in February 2012. Sustrans is now in the process of securing the necessary funding for development work in the area. It is hoped that future work will also explore options for the route of the National Cycle Network to the South of Malvern.

Management of Roadside Verges (TR02)

Roadside verges are an important habitat, often providing linear links between wildlife rich areas which might otherwise become isolated. In the summer of 2011 a botanical survey of 36 roadside verges across the AONB was completed. The presence and abundance of all species present was recorded and these data have informed the development of a brief management plan for each of the verges surveyed. Using this information, Herefordshire Council and AMEY have agreed that a new 'pro-conservation' management scheme will be introduced to four roadside verges on a pilot basis. In turn, the results of this pilot work will inform the future management of verges within the AONB.



Roadside verges

Ledbury Cycle Hire (TRP1 and TR06)

Following the establishment of Ledbury Cycle Hire at a site adjacent to Ledbury train station in 2010/11, the business has been growing well. Bicycles were hired out over 106 times between May and December 2011. A number of additional large group hires were also made by visitors from London on Stag and Hen Weekend parties and by those looking for a day's quiet cycle in the countryside.



Ledbury Cycle Hire

In brief

- One electric bicycle was added to the Colwall Car Club vehicle pool, thanks to funding from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund. The club continues to be successful with electric vehicles having leased these to a number of organisations including the local police and Malvern Hills District Council (TR06).
- A paddock has been provided at Bromesberrow Estate to allow an employee to ride their horse to work (TRP1).
- Eastnor Castle Estate has continued to promote the use of sustainable transport to visitors to Eastnor Castle (TRP1).

Management Plan references

TRP1 – Local people and visitors should be able to access their desired destination by sustainable alternatives to the private car

TR02 – Ensure that all road and infrastructure improvements are designed and implemented to have minimum impact on the special character of the AONB

TR05 – Investigate the development of dedicated routes for cyclists within the AONB

TR06 – Develop, support and promote sustainable transport options

Summary and Budget

AONB Unit Performance Indicators

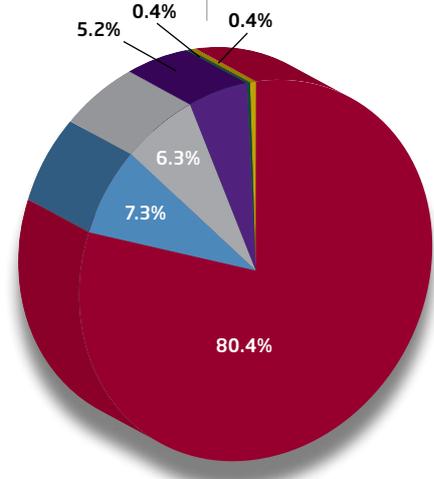
A framework for monitoring AONB Partnership performance is in place. The performance of the Malvern Hills AONB Unit in 2011-12 is summarised in the following table.

Theme	Measure for the indicator	Definition	Performance
AONB Management Plan	The AONB Partnership has a current Management Plan which meets the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.	The Plan has been reviewed within five years of the last one; it conforms to the guidance for AONB Management Plans provided by Natural England; it has been formally adopted and published by all the relevant local authorities.	Yes
AONB Partnership	The AONB has an active and effective governance structure.	Record of regular Joint Advisory Committee and Steering Group meetings.	4 meetings
		AONB has undertaken a formal review of its governance structures within the last five years and had an adopted current set of terms of reference.	Yes
AONB Staff Unit	The AONB Unit has staff resources to undertake its work.	The total number of AONB staff, in full-time equivalents, that were directly managed and hosted by the AONB Unit, at the financial year end.	2.6
	AONB Unit staff invest in continuous professional development.	Of the total in the measure above, list the number who undertook and recorded a minimum of 30 hours of training, personal development or similar during the year.	2
Financial resources	The AONB Unit secures direct income to fund its work.	Total income received into the AONB unit's own account from all sources during the financial year.	Total £219,922
		The percentage of the figure above which was received from Defra and Local Authorities	97%
		The amount received from Defra and Local Authorities	Total £211,422
Leverage and "added value"	Additional resources mobilised by AONB unit through its partnership work	Total direct funding received plus the total funding for projects and partnership programmes including matching income for SDF funded projects, total funds for HLF Project etc	Total £341,908
		The percentage of the figure above which was received from Defra	49.7%
Financial management and reporting	Agreed timetable and requirements for financial management and reporting with Natural England met by the AONB unit.	The Unit submitted its final grant claim to Defra by the required date.	Yes
		Published its annual report for the preceding year within six months of the financial year end.	Yes
		Submitted its business plan and grant application for the succeeding financial year by the required date.	Yes
Partnership working with management communities	The AONB Unit is an active partner in the work of the National Association of AONBs.	The AONB Unit (through its host authority or partnership organisation) was a full member of the National Association of AONBs.	Yes
		Was represented by attendance at the Annual Conference of the Association.	Yes
		All AONB Unit core staff attended at least one other national or regional NAAONB sponsored event.	Yes
	The AONB Unit was actively involved in partnership working at a local level.	Total number of project steering groups, research initiatives, working groups and partnerships where the AONB Unit played an active and key role.	6
	The AONB Management Plan is formally endorsed and supported by partner organisations.	List the number of organisations who formally endorsed the plan when written and at the last review.	7
Business Plan targets	Achievement of the targets set out by the AONB Unit in its annual business plan or equivalent.	Include all actions set out in the annual business plan/core bid document agreed with Natural England.	Yes (77% of bid actions met)

AONB Unit Financial Summary

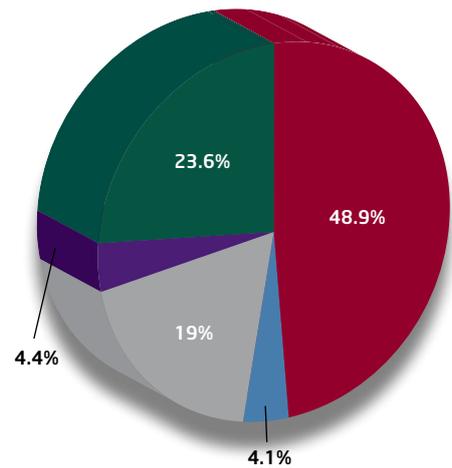
CORE INCOME

Defra	170,098
Herefordshire Council	15,418
Worcestershire County Council	13,268
Malvern Hills District Council	11,000
Gloucestershire County Council	766
Forest of Dean District Council	872
Total	£211,422



CORE EXPENDITURE

Staff costs (inc travel and training)	103,288
Accommodation and office costs	8,689
Partnership budget	40,208
Partnership running costs	9,237
Sustainable Development Fund	50,000
Total	£211,422



ADDITIONAL PROJECT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Natural England	£6,500
Herefordshire Council	£2,000
Total	£8,500

STAFF

The Unit structure for the year was as follows:

AONB Partnership Manager	Paul Esrich
AONB Partnership Assistant Manager	David Armitage
AONB Partnership Support Officer	Emma Hiller/Rebecca Baker

AONB Governance

Joint Advisory Committee 2011-12

Elected Members:

Dr B Smith (Chairman)	Malvern Hills Conservators
Prof J Raine (Vice-Chairman)	Malvern Hills District Council
Mr J Black ¹	Worcestershire Association of Local Councils
Mrs N Carless	Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
Mr C Smith	Worcestershire County Council
Dr K Pollock	Worcestershire County Council
Miss M Cooper ²	Herefordshire Council
Mr T Johnson	Herefordshire Council
Mr C Cheeseman	Malvern Hills District Council
Dr R Long ³	Forest of Dean District Council (also representing Gloucestershire County Council)

Non-Elected Members:

Mr M R Allfrey	National Farmers Union
Mr A Fleming	English Heritage
Ms J Lewis	Visit Herefordshire/Destination Worcestershire
Mr J Hervey-Bathurst	Country Landowners and Business Association
Mr W Barnes	Forestry Commission
Prof R Bryant	Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust
Mr Mr F Hill	Campaign to Protect Rural England
Ms H McDowall ⁴	Natural England

Co-opted Members:

Mr A Lee	Herefordshire Local Access Forum
----------	----------------------------------

Steering Group 2011-12

Andy Maginnis (Chairman)	Worcestershire County Council
Ian Rowat	Malvern Hills Conservators
Rebecca Mayman ⁵	Malvern Hills District Council
James Bisset/Rob Hemblade	Herefordshire Council
Robert Niblett	Gloucestershire County Council
Nigel Gibbons	Forest of Dean District Council

¹ Replaced by Mr J Fryman

² Replaced by Mr P Bettington

³ Replaced by Mr R Yeates

⁴ Replaced by Ms D Griffiths

⁵ Replaced by Ismail Mohammed

Photography credits

All photographs copyright Malvern Hills AONB Unit except:

Canopy opening at Tor Coppice - *Tania Smith*

Malvern Hills Conservators volunteers - *Malvern Hills Conservators*

Field surveying - *Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust*

Condition monitoring at Swinyard Hill - *Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust*

Midsummer Hill following tree and shrub clearance - *Malvern Hills Conservators*

Obelisk at Eastnor - *Eastnor Castle Estates*

Bee-keeping, Colwall - *Helen Stace/Susan Black*

Castlemorton Village Hall - *Jerry Fryman*

New footbridge, Storridge - *Worcestershire County Council*

The following bodies provide financial support to the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership



Supported by



Malvern Hills AONB Partnership
Manor House, Grange Road
Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 3EY

Tel: 01684 560616

Fax: 01684 577457

Email: aonb@worcestershire.gov.uk

Web: www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk