

# BOARD MEETING MINUTES

8 March 2007

The Committee Room, Council House, Malvern

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Present:- Mrs S Adeney, Mr M Cordey, Mr R F Hall-Jones, Mr A Macmillan, Mr A Myatt, Mr B Pilcher, Mrs P Raven, Mr R Roberts, Mr C Rouse, Dr B Smith, Mr R Stockton, Mrs S Thetford, Mr R Thomas, Mr J Tretheway (Chairman), Mr W Watts, Mr J Webb, Mr B Wilcock, Mrs J Wildin, Mr R Witcomb.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer and Conservation Officer.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** Mr P Harling, Mr D Masters, Mr J Mills, Mr A Phillips, Mr J Plant, Mr P Rumney, Mr S Try.

**2. COMMONS ACT 2006.** Members received a presentation by Andrew Dalglish, Deputy Head of Environmental Land Management Division of DEFRA on the implications of the Commons Act 2006. He advised that a consultation document had been circulated inviting the views of organisations on proposed amendments to the consenting regimes which apply to common land in England, these proposals being the first steps towards implementing the Commons Act which received Royal Assent in July 2006. He stated that the philosophy behind the Act was to take a pragmatic approach to prolonging the life of commons which were crucial from an archaeological, historical, environmental and cultural point of view by using and managing them as had been the custom since the Middle Ages. He complimented the Malvern Hills Conservators and like organisations, which the Secretary of State saw as a model for commons management, and stressed that the Act was in place to streamline processes rather than hindering, as well as clarifying how the Secretary of State came to decisions.

Following a question and answer session the Chairman on behalf of members thanked Mr. Dalglish for his most enlightening presentation.

**3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Members were advised that Bernadette Noake's 9 month placement under the Lemur Project had come to an end. Ian Butler had been appointed her successor and would be starting on the 10 April. It was **AGREED** that the Board's best wishes should be conveyed to Bernadette.

**4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS.** None.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** None.

**6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES.** On the proposal of Mr. Hall-Jones, seconded by Mr. Wilcock, it was **AGREED** that subject to the addition of Mr. Stockton's name in the list of attendances the Minutes of the meeting held on the 11 January 2007 should be **CONFIRMED** and **SIGNED** as a true and correct record.

**7. MATTERS ARISING.** None.

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

8.1 LAND MANAGEMENT. Mrs. Thetford presented the following report of the meeting held on the 1 February 2007 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Pilcher.

## LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 1 February 2007 Manor House, Malvern 4 p.m.

Present:- Mrs. S. Adeney, Mr. A. J. Phillips, Mr. B. J. Pilcher, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. C. Rouse, Mrs. S. Theftord (Chairman), Mr. R. Thomas, Mr. J. A. Tretheway, Mr. R. Witcomb.

In attendance:- Director, Administrative Officer, Conservation Officer, Assistant Conservation Officer Trainee (Bernadette Noake) Mr. D. Masters, six members of the public.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** Mr. J. Plant, Mr. J. Webb.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** None.

3. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS.** None.

### 4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 30 NOVEMBER 2006.**

4.1 11. Restoring the Views. The Conservation Officer showed members photographs of the work currently being undertaken by the Field Staff above Foley Terrace, together with views of the new barn recently constructed at Brockhill Road.

5. **UPDATE ON WATER FEATURES.** David Armitage the Assistant AONB Manager ran through the details of the work to be undertaken to the water features on Conservators' land and advised that the work was due to go out to tender shortly. Once tenders had been received decisions would be made on what work could be carried out within the budget. In answer to a question, Mr. Armitage advised that there were plans to have an education centre within the Holywell building. Concern was expressed that the Beauchamp Spout had not been included in the restoration programme and members were advised that in order to qualify for grant aid it was necessary to establish ownership. This was noted and it was **AGREED** to make enquiries of Worcestershire County Council's Legal Services to find out the current situation.

6. **REQUEST FOR EASEMENT TO 107 GUARLFORD ROAD.** Members were advised that early in 1983 an easement was granted to 107 across an existing agricultural easement. Later that year the barn was converted for residential use and the Conservators granted the developer a residential easement to the barn over the same track. At that time it appears that the land adjoining the common was open aspect. However the occupier of Rose Farm Barn rebuilt a wall on his boundary and erected a gate across the easement to both properties. Members were shown photographs of the present situation. The neighbour at Rose Farm Barn had been contacted under the Conservators' policy of notifying those neighbours affected by an application. The occupier, Dr. Crisp replied that he considered the present arrangements to be unsatisfactory as it was almost impossible to ensure that access to one house was unobstructed when deliveries were in progress and that the shape of the entrance to 107 made it impossible for many vehicles to gain access to the property which resulted in large vehicles parking on the Conservators' land, causing damage. The Chairman then suspended Standing Orders to give the occupier of 107 and of Rose Farm Barn to speak who advised of the problems with the existing arrangements. On resumption of the meeting it was pointed out that whilst the problem had been exacerbated by the actions of the property owners, the common was being damaged and it was therefore proposed by Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Witcomb, to recommend to the Board that permission was granted for a spur off the existing access into the front garden of 107 as per the plan previously circulated. This would be subject to the usual conditions that the applicant enters into a Deed of Grant and that the charge for the facility was set by professional valuation. This was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**. It was further **AGREED** that the stones placed on the grass adjacent to the easement should be removed.

7. **PARKING ON THE ROAD AT THE WYCHE AND BRITISH CAMP.** The Director presented his report which was noted and on the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Roberts, the recommendation to write to Herefordshire Council requesting officers to look into the provision of double yellow lines at problem areas around British Camp and the Wyche was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**8. MALVERN COMMON – EVALUATION OF MANAGEMENT.** The Conservation Officer presented his report which had been produced following enquiries of a member regarding the cost of removing the grass waste from Malvern Common. He reminded members that the majority of the area was in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and managed under the “Hay Meadow” management option and was part of the overall scheme that covered the Central and Northern Hills supporting the grazing, scrub and bracken management on the Hills and Commons. The Conservation Officer had therefore set out the two management options:-

1. To take the areas that were cut for hay out of Stewardship and mow them annually later in the year, leaving the cut grass on the ground; or
2. To continue with the current management regime of cutting and collecting the grass that is not taken for hay by a local farmer.

In answer to a question with regard to the breakdown of costs, he advised that the work had taken 15 days of Field Staff time at a cost of £83.00 per day. This was noted and on the proposal of Mr. Tretheway, seconded by Mr. Thomas, it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to adopt Option 2.

**9. JUBILEE DRIVE – REQUEST FOR ELECTRICITY SUB-STATION.** On the proposal of Mr. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Phillips, it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to refuse Central Networks’ request to site a sub-station on Jubilee Drive as this would be a visual impact on the scenic drive and prominence in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**10. GEOLOGY ON THE MALVERN HILLS.** The Director advised that following a recent confusing article in the press he had produced the report explaining the role of the organisations involved with our geological heritage. This was **NOTED**.

**11. REPORT OF WILDLIFE PANEL MEETING.** In presenting his report of the meeting held on the 18 October 2006, the Conservation Officer stated that Keith Barnett, Peter Holmes and Anthony Muller had also attended the meeting. The report was **NOTED**.

**12. REPORT OF GRAZING MONITORING GROUP MEETING.** The Conservation Officer presented the report of the meeting held on the 7 November 2006 and advised that sheep would be grazing with the cattle within the compartment on the east side of Worcestershire Beacon within the next couple of weeks. He also reported that the new shed would be ready for lambing. This was **NOTED**.

### **13. INFORMATION.**

13.1 Old Hills Car Park. The Director advised that although it had been agreed at the last meeting of the Board to plant shrubs on the mounds, he had since obtained the views of the Field Staff who felt that these would present management problems. In the circumstances it was **AGREED** to include this area in the programme of evening walks.

13.2 Fun Fair. The usual fun fair would be held on Malvern Link Common from the 28 May until the 3 June 2007. This was **NOTED**.

The Director advised that this would be the last meeting Bernadette Noake would be attending in her capacity as Assistant Conservation Officer Trainee under the Lemur Project. On behalf of members the Chairman thanked Bernadette for the excellent job she had done and wished her well in the future.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** that the remainder of the meeting would be taken in committee as the matter to be discussed was confidential.

The meeting closed at 5.50 p.m.

### Arising.

8.1.1 5. Update on Water Features. The Director advised that he had received a reply from Peter Law of Worcestershire County Council’s Legal Services who understood that in the past Madresfield Estate had given the fountain to the Town. It may therefore be that either the Estate or the Town Council has a Deed or document defining what was given but he regretted he was unable to help further. This was **NOTED**.

8.1.2 7. Parking on the road at The Wyche and British Camp. Mr. Stockton reported that he had had a communication from a resident at The Wyche who lived in a house which was converted into flats and did not have sufficient parking within the property with a request that the proposal for double yellow lines be dismissed. He had passed this to Colwall Parish Council which had backed the request and were sending a letter to Herefordshire Council. In response the Director said that whilst appreciating the problems of residents, he had to look at the issue from the organisation's point of view and emergency vehicles would be unable to get through both these areas at busy times. However, he hoped that working with Herefordshire Council a solution to the problem would be found. This was **NOTED**.

8.1.3 9. Jubilee Drive – Request for Electricity Sub-Station. The Director drew members' attention to an area off Lodge Drive, North Malvern where some years ago a lease had been entered into for the construction of an electricity sub-station on Conservators' land. Recently the Electricity Company had placed steps illegally on the common for the health and safety of their employees. He was pleased to report that following negotiating the use of an alternative route the Company had agreed to remove them. This was **NOTED**.

The report, including item 14 taken in committee, was **CARRIED**.

8.2 ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES. Mr. Wilcock presented the following report of the meeting held on the 15 February 2007 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Roberts.

**ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday 15 February 2007 Manor House 7.30 p.m.**

Present:- Mr. R. Hall-Jones, Mr. A. Myatt, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. P. Rumney, Mr. J. Tretheway, Mr. B. Wilcock (Chairman).

In attendance:- Director, Administrative Officer, Financial Consultant, Financial Assistant, Mr. B. Pilcher, Mr. R. Rouse, Mrs. S. Thetford.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** Mr. M. Cordey, Mr. J. Mills, Mr. A. Macmillan, Mr. B. Smith, Mr. W. Watts.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** None.

**3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS.** None.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 13 DECEMBER 2006.**

4.1 9. Review of Investment Policy. It was **NOTED** that the Working Party had met and another meeting was being arranged with a view to producing a report for the April meeting of the Committee.

**5. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THE 9 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2006.** The Financial Consultant presented the accounts and her accompanying explanatory report which were **NOTED**.

The Director advised that there had been tree damage following the recent snow storms which would result in extra expenditure in the next quarter but it was too soon to have costings. He also pointed out that in view of new waste regulations there had been an increase in fly tipping. This was noted and it was agreed to monitor the situation and to perhaps look into including information with next year's Council Tax demands drawing attention to the problem and asking the public to report any incidents they witness.

**6. COSTINGS FOR THE STORAGE BAYS AT WYCHE ROAD SHED.** Taken in committee

**7. NEW TECHNOLOGY.** The report was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** that in view of the potential for increasing the information on the Web Site, the Director would bring a paper to a future meeting giving a vision of how this could be achieved, together with costings.

**8. EDUCATION AND VOLUNTEERS.** The Director presented his report and recommended that the Committee supported the endeavours of Julie Muller, a secondary trained science teacher with a lot of experience in primary and environmental education, in approaching local schools to act as a guide and to give talks and that the staff give her the information and guidance to enable her to carry out this service. On the proposal of Mr. Hall-Jones, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, this was **AGREED** with one abstention.

**9. INFORMATION.**

9.1 Baxhill Nursery. The Director advised that as there would be no environmental effect he was minded to approve a request from Baxhill Nursery for permission to paint a red nose on Malvern Link Common on Red Nose Day. The paint would be water based and the Fire Service had agreed to erase it at the end of the day. Members thanked the Director for bringing this to their attention and could see no problem in approving it.

The Director advised that he would be bringing a paper to the next meeting of the Land Management Committee in view of the requests he was receiving for exhibiting art on the Hills. This was noted.

It was **AGREED** that the remainder of the meeting should be taken in committee as the matter to be discussed was confidential.

The meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.

Arising.

8.2.1 5. Management Accounts for the 9 Months to 31 December 2006. In answer to a question, the Director advised that he thought the cost of tree work following the recent snow storms would be in the region of £2,000.00. The exact amount would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee. This was **NOTED**.

The report, including item 6 taken in committee, was **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

**9. URGENT BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE.** The Chairman presented the following report of the meeting held on the 15 February 2007 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Wilcock and **CARRIED**.

**URGENT BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**Manor House Thursday 15 February 2007 7.15 p.m.**

Present:- Mr. J. Mills, Mr. R. G. Roberts, Mr. C. Rouse, Mrs. S. Thetford, Mr. J. A. Tretheway (Chairman), Mr. J. Webb, Mr. B. A. Wilcock.

In attendance:- Director and Administrative Officer.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** Mr. M. Cordey, Mr. W. Watts.

**2. LAND AT THE JUNCTION OF WEST MALVERN ROAD/PURLIEU.** The Director reported that the Conservators had expressed interest in acquiring this land (see attached plan) for some time and although they had recently been unsuccessful in their bid for the adjacent land to the north, an opportunity had now arisen to purchase this plot which comprised approximately 0.27 acres of amenity woodland, adjacent to existing land under the Conservators' jurisdiction at The Purlieu.

The owner, Mr. Pedlingham, had approached the Conservation Officer with an offer to sell the land and in view of the Conservators' previous interest, Humberts had been instructed to carry out a valuation and negotiate a sum with Mr. Pedlingham. Their recommendation was that the

Conservators should proceed with the purchase in view of its importance to their overall land holding for a sum of £10,000.00, together with Mr. Pedlingham's legal fees.

Members noted that this land was within the Land Acquisition Policy and on the proposal of Mrs. Theftford, seconded by Mr. Mills, the recommendation was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.

## **10. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES.**

10.1 Malvern Spa Association. Mr. Roberts reported on two open events held by the Association recently on dowsing and a talk on Colwall's Water. Dates of events planned for the next few months were:-

- o Well Dressing 28 April/1 May
- o Picnic on 29 April at The Clock Tower 2 p.m. to celebrate the work carried out
- o Guided tour of Coca Cola Bottling Works on the 26 June
- o Mr. James Ferguson was guiding two walks, the north loop walk on the 5 May and south loop walk on the 7 July. Both start at 10 a.m. from Gardiners Quarry.

With regard to the Heritage Lottery work on springs and spouts, he was able to report that the work outstanding at the Clock Tower, North Malvern was completed, subject to the design for the gate being approved. He drew attention to the good work of the Field Staff of clearing around the structure. Mr. Roberts was also able to report that subject to obtaining the necessary legal agreements on several of the wells, the work on the remaining features was now ready to be sent out to tender for completion by the end of the year. This was **NOTED**.

10.2 Great Malvern Town Centre Partnership. Mr. Roberts reported on a meeting of the Partnership on the 23 February when as well as Malvern High Street UK, members discussed The Library forecourt and Rose Bank Gardens; plans of both schemes were circulated to members. This was **NOTED**.

10.3 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. Dr. Smith reported on a meeting of the JAC held on the 26 January, when reports were received on the revision of the 2004/09 Management Plan, core funding for the unit, the Sustainable Development Fund and the Castlemorton Commons Plan and open day arranged for the 28 March 2007. This was **NOTED**.

**11. URGENT BUSINESS.** None.

## **12. INFORMATION.**

12.1 Management Report. The Director presented his following report which was **NOTED** and agreed to pass on the thanks of the Board for the good work carried out by the Field Staff in restoring the views.

### **MANAGEMENT REPORT**

**DATE: 8 MARCH 2007**

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#### **CHAIRMAN**

- Attended a photo call at Clock Tower, North Malvern
- Attended with Director and other Conservators open meeting re High Street UK in Gt. Malvern in connection with Town Centre Regeneration
- Presided over Tank Quarry transfer

#### **DIRECTOR**

- o With Conservation Officer attended Outdoor Recreation and Nature Conservation Seminar
- o Met with Editor of the Malvern Gazette
- o Met with parents of Wyche Primary pupils to look at safe routes to school across the common

- Talk to 60+ at the University of the Third Age in Hereford
- Talk to the Geology Section of the University of the Third Age in Evesham
- Began induction for volunteer to lead school groups and conduct talks
- Met with representative of the Civic Society
- Met with MHDC to discuss Alcohol Free Zones – not proposing to include MHC land, waiting to see how town progresses
- Met with Land Agent and WCC to see if better control of utility companies can be achieved.
- Attended Vision 21 meeting
- Attended Herefordshire Biodiversity meeting
- Attended LANTRA (Agricultural Training Board) meeting
- Talk to Malvern Rotary Club

#### **CONSERVATION OFFICER**

- LEMUR Project recruiting, selection and interviews
- Meeting with Herefordshire Action for Mammals about management for Dormice
- 3 meetings with Natural England looking at the Environmental Stewardship Scheme application
- Visit to Cleeve Common Conservators to advise on the appointment of a Conservation Officer

#### **FIELD STAFF**

- Clearing fallen trees and debris from buildings and roads following the snow
- Work continued with restoring the views from St. Ann's Well to Wyche Road
- Planted new Oak tree on Link Common inside the ring seat off Cockshot Road
- Selective clearing of trees and scrub around North Malvern Clock Tower
- Cleared back hedgerows along roadside at Ballards Land and St. Clouds, Old Hills
- Investigated drainage system off Longridge Road
- Moved cattle to east side of Worcestershire Beacon and added sheep
- **Sheep Numbers at 1.3.07**
  - 147 ewes
  - 50 lambs
  - 6 rams

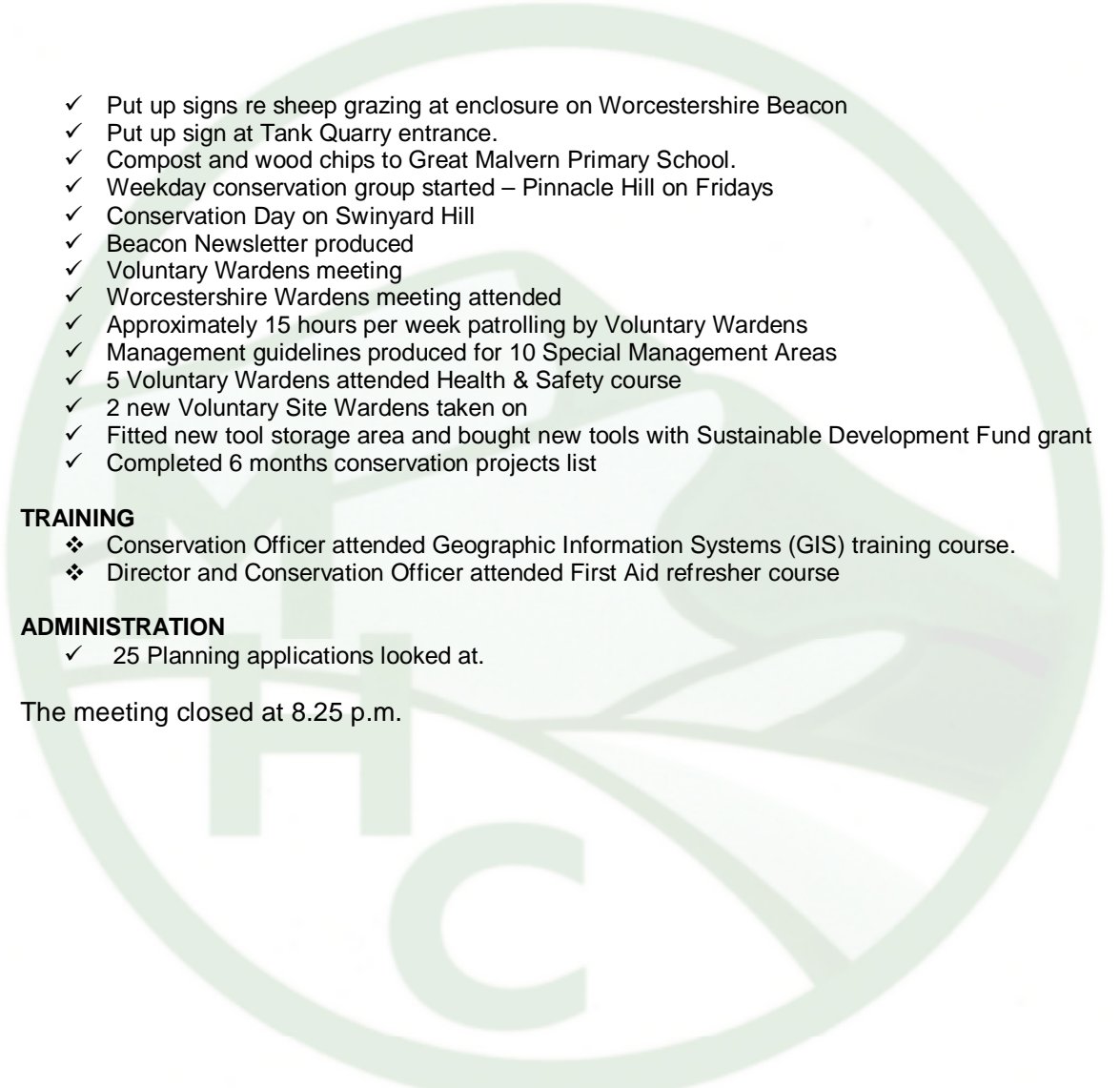
#### **CONTRACTORS**

Adrian Hope Tree Services employed with a crane to clear a fallen Ash tree hung up across the highway at Foley Terrace and to make safe a storm damaged Plain tree outside Perrins House, Link Common.

#### **WARDENS**

- ✓ Byelaw Incidents:
 

Abandoned Vehicles	1
(Jackpits Lane, reported to Police but they were unable to contact the owner. Seven day notice put on Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> . The owner phoned us on Saturday and moved the vehicle later that day (it had broken down).	
Fly tipping	5
Motorbikes	4
Mini Motorbike	1
Quad bike	1
Illegal fishing	4
Camping (camper van)	1
Burnt out vehicles	2
Metal detecting	1
Unauthorised parking	1
Mountain bikes not on bridleways	12
Encroachments	3
Utilities	4
- ✓ Replaced WI plaque at Old Hills
- ✓ Cleared numerous fallen trees at Old Hills and Hollybush Roughs.
- ✓ Meetings with BT and Severn Trent.

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- ✓ Put up signs re sheep grazing at enclosure on Worcestershire Beacon
  - ✓ Put up sign at Tank Quarry entrance.
  - ✓ Compost and wood chips to Great Malvern Primary School.
  - ✓ Weekday conservation group started – Pinnacle Hill on Fridays
  - ✓ Conservation Day on Swinyard Hill
  - ✓ Beacon Newsletter produced
  - ✓ Voluntary Wardens meeting
  - ✓ Worcestershire Wardens meeting attended
  - ✓ Approximately 15 hours per week patrolling by Voluntary Wardens
  - ✓ Management guidelines produced for 10 Special Management Areas
  - ✓ 5 Voluntary Wardens attended Health & Safety course
  - ✓ 2 new Voluntary Site Wardens taken on
  - ✓ Fitted new tool storage area and bought new tools with Sustainable Development Fund grant
  - ✓ Completed 6 months conservation projects list

#### **TRAINING**

- ❖ Conservation Officer attended Geographic Information Systems (GIS) training course.
- ❖ Director and Conservation Officer attended First Aid refresher course

#### **ADMINISTRATION**

- ✓ 25 Planning applications looked at.

The meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

