

# The Malvern Hills and their Conservators



*VIEW LOOKING NORTHWARDS FROM PINNACLE HILL*

# THE MALVERN HILLS AND THEIR CONSERVATORS

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Malvern Hills. The purpose of this booklet is to give you a brief introduction to the Hills themselves and also to the Malvern Hills Conservators who have been responsible for their care and management since 1884.

To those travelling south from Birmingham or north from Bristol along the M5, the Malvern Hills are a familiar landmark and a welcome sight for those returning home to the Malvern area.

The highest point is the Worcestershire Beacon at 1397 feet (426 metres). The length of the range is approximately 9 miles (14 kilometres) containing a network of footpaths measuring over 100 miles (160 kilometres).

"Malvern Hills" is a term which includes all the land owned or controlled by the Conservators and covers much more than the Hills themselves. They encompass large areas of common land from the semi-urban Link Common to the more traditionally managed Castlemorton Common. A diverse mixture of more detached land which also comes under the Conservators' jurisdiction includes the Old Hills at Callow End near Worcester, Wood Street and roadside verges such as those along the Guarlford Road. The Hills form an important part of the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Hills have been an inspiration for hundreds of years to many artists, writers and composers, including Sir Edward Elgar. The Vision of Piers Plowman is set on the Hills as is verse written by W H Auden from his time working in Colwall. Sir Barry Jackson, together with George Bernard Shaw, made the Malvern Festival a focus for Shaw's plays a number of which were first performed here. It is also probable that one of the hillside gas lamps was the inspiration for the one in C S Lewis's book "Narnia".

Elizabeth Barrett Browning visited a tutor in Malvern Wells and W W Gibson (one of the Dymock poets) spent some years in Malvern. Other well known poets and writers who have visited the Hills include Byron, Dickens, Longfellow, Walter de la Mare, Masfield, Roget, Swinburne and Wordsworth. Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale", lived for some years at Wynds Point, just north east of the British Camp.

It is hoped that this booklet will answer some of the questions which are most frequently asked. In referring very briefly to many aspects of the land itself and its conservation it is realised that many readers will want to know more about their particular areas of interest and a bibliography is included for this purpose.

## GEOLOGY

Visitors walking on the ridge of the Malverns are intrigued by the sharp contrast between the high ridge running roughly north-south, the Severn Vale to the east and the rolling wooded Herefordshire landscape to the west. The appearance of the countryside, its hills and valleys, is primarily derived from its underlying rocks which differ from place to place. The landscape itself has been produced by erosion of these rocks to assume its present form. The more resistant rocks stand out as high ground whilst softer ones are worn away to form valleys.

The rocks found in the main ridge of the Hills were formed in a geological period called the Pre-Cambrian which includes all the very long period of time before there were many forms of life preserved as fossils. The age of the Malvern rocks is thought to be between 800 and 1000 million years. The rock types are varied and many have been altered since their formation. The oldest of them are probably sediments laid down in a sea but these have had large volumes of molten rock squeezed into them under pressure. This has changed the sediments into rocks called schists and gneisses whilst much of the molten matter has solidified into coarse grained rocks like granite. In the Warren House area east of the Herefordshire Beacon, there are lavas possibly of similar age which were erupted onto the sea floor. One of the best places to see them is around Clutter's Cave.

After their formation the ancient rocks were planed down to a flatish surface partly by the action of waves on an ancient shore and were covered by later sediments now hardened into rocks. These can be seen at the Gullet quarry. They were formed 400 million years ago in the Silurian age. The contact between these and the pre-Cambrian rocks is visible at the north-west corner of the quarry where the oldest local Silurian beds are seen. Now tilted at a very steep angle they originated as near horizontal layers of silt, mud and some thin limestone beds all now consolidated into hard rocks. In the area between the Malverns and Ledbury to the west of the Hills beds of clay/muds, hardened into shale, alternate with limestones. The limestones form the wooded ridges whilst the shales have been worn away to form lower ground. The limestones contain fossil corals and other shelly creatures indicative of their origin in warm, shallow tropical seas.

Great geological upheavals affected this area just under 300 million years ago as a result of which earlier rocks were vigorously folded and broken by faults. Some faults affecting the pre-Cambrian rocks correspond with the gaps at the Wyche Cutting, the British Camp, the Gullet and Hollybush, while a long and very spectacular fault system running north-south marks the abrupt eastern side of the Hills.

At the end of the Ice Age frozen ground on the steep eastern slopes thawed out and slid as muddy flows onto lower ground. Such material underlies Castlemorton Common.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

### British Camp or the Herefordshire Beacon

In an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty it may seem strange that the most visible landmark within the region, and that which attracts the greatest number of visitors, is the least natural.

British Camp has not been excavated in modern times and knowledge of its function and use can only be surmised from excavations which have taken place on similar sites in the locality such as the hill forts of Croft Ambrey (Herefordshire) and the nearby Midsummer Hill. (This is the one hill in the range not owned by the Conservators, having been in the ownership of the National Trust since 1923.) Extensive excavation work was undertaken on the site in 1965 - 1970 under the direction of Dr. S. C. Stanford.

British Camp Hill fort shows evidence of three periods of major construction works; the first two during the Iron Age, the third, and much smaller one, known as the Citadel, probably being Norman. The term "camp" is somewhat misleading as the earlier 7 acre (3 hectare) enclosure could have been the permanent home of 500 -700 people, while the subsequent 32 acre (13 hectare) one could have housed up to three times as many. It is these Iron Age ramparts which form the landmark we see today, the later construction being no more than a simple motte. At first this may seem very unlikely as one very important necessity is missing - the camp has no internal water supply, but then neither did Croft Ambrey. This would present no great problem if the main purpose of the camp was to provide a relatively secure place to live. The only difficulty would have arisen if the inhabitants needed to withstand a prolonged siege.

## **The Shire Ditch or Red Earl's Dyke**

From north of the Wyche Cutting to south of Midsummer Hill the Shire Ditch is in part clearly defined as a man-made ditch and bank, and in other places it is less clear. It is an ancient property boundary and still divides the counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire for much of its length.

Disputes between neighbours are nothing new, but seldom does the evidence remain over 700 years after the event.

Gilbert de Clare (Earl of Gloucester) had extensive ownership and hunting rights on the eastern side of the Hills. In trying to extend these to the West he was thwarted by Thomas de Cantiloupe, Bishop of Hereford and in that capacity owner of much of the western side. In 1287, Gilbert de Clare finally acknowledged defeat, having the dyke constructed to prevent his loss of deer becoming the bishop's gain.

A further ditch, to the North of the Wyche Cutting, almost certainly dates from the same period, following a dispute between Gilbert de Clare and William le Poer, lord of the manor of Farley.

## **Pillow Mound**

To the South East of British Camp, near Broad Down and Clutters Cave, lies a much more humble Scheduled Ancient Monument whose origin and purpose is unknown, although it was possibly a rabbit warren dating from the medieval period. It is described by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments as being approximately 28 yards by 8 yards, with traces of a ditch at the ends and on the lower side. It has an average height of 3.5 feet above the soil on the lower side.

## **HISTORY**

Soon after the death of his wife Matilda in 1083, William I (the Conqueror) decided to designate his land as a Royal Forest including not only his land at Hanley lying to the east of the Hills, but also much of the surrounding area. This has nothing to do with planting trees, 'forest' being a legal term where special laws applied giving protection to game for hunting. It did not necessarily imply ownership, and much of what became the Malvern Chase was never owned by the king. However it did mean that those having rights of Common which included the right to graze certain animals and collect

firewood could exercise them throughout the Chase rather than just in the manor of which they were tenants.

It was nearly 600 years before further recorded changes took place. Charles I, looking for ways to raise money had a survey made of the Malvern Chase in 1628. A charter of disafforestation was signed at Westminster in March 1632. The charter included an agreement that the king would give up all crown rights over the Chase in exchange for one third of the common land (the King's Third) which he promptly sold. Gradually (with the interruption of the Civil War) this became enclosed, apart from some 'poor' hill land. The name "Thirds Wood" planted to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee on the west side of the Hills above Jubilee Drive between the Wyche Cutting and Gardiners Common is a reminder of these events. The other two-thirds were to remain open and free for the lords, freeholders and commoners. This was confirmed by Act of Parliament in 1664.

During the 200 years which followed the remaining area of open space and commonable land was increasingly eroded by enclosure and encroachment. Enclosure was carried out by major land owners such as the Hornyolds.

Encroachments were far more invidious, nibbling away at the commons a little at a time. The Foley family, as lords of the manor of Malvern, was quite happy for such trespass to be made upon its land, upon 'discovery' of which the occupier would be given the option of paying an annual rent or having his property destroyed.

Concern at this loss of common land led a number of local people, including Stephen Ballard and Robert Raper of Colwall, to form the Malvern Hills Preservation Association in 1876. This was followed in 1884 by the passing of the first Malvern Hills Act and with it the formation of the Malvern Hills Conservators.

## **THE ACTS OF PARLIAMENT**

The 1884 Malvern Hills Act was an early triumph for conservationists. Although its powers were extended over subsequent years, this was a major achievement, and established the important principles which have guided the Conservators for over a hundred years. The Preamble to the Act summarised the history of the Malvern Chase and recognised the threat posed by enclosures and encroachments and the need for their prevention. It provided for a body of Conservators to be appointed by local parishes and landowners. It required the first Conservators to keep the land placed under their jurisdiction, some 500 acres at that time, free from enclosures and to protect the rights of Commoners. It established the important principle of public access and gave the Conservators power to regulate the use of the Hills through byelaws. It enabled the Conservators to fund their work by raising a precept on local parishes and gave them power to buy other land within nine miles of Great Malvern Priory which they considered should be preserved as an open space as part of the Malvern Hills. Additional powers were given to the Conservators by the Act of 1909 and by 1924 the need for further legislation had become apparent. The 1924 Act recognised two vital facts. Firstly, it stated that the Hills had become "widely known and admired for their natural beauties and have formed a centre of attraction to the inhabitants of the counties of Worcester and Hereford and to visitors coming from all parts of the country

for purposes of health, recreation and enjoyment". Secondly, it stated "in recent years the amenities of the Malvern Hills have been seriously interfered with by quarrying operations and by the erection of buildings, sheds, machinery and plant, and those operations are being extended in such manner as to threaten to destroy the value of the Malvern Hills as objects of public interest as well as to impede the user and enjoyment thereof for purposes of public recreation and wholly to alter the state of the Hills as they existed in 1884".

It was acknowledged that additional powers should be given to the Conservators and their constitution altered. The Board of Conservators was reconstituted by the 1924 Act and provision made for the appointment of a new Board to which some members were appointed by local authorities and the remainder elected by the inhabitants of local wards and parishes. It confirmed that the Hills should continue to be managed in accordance with the terms of the two previous Acts and gave the Conservators additional financial powers. Perhaps most importantly it gave the Conservators the power to regulate and subsequently prevent quarrying on the Hills. The enormous demand at this time for stone, principally for the construction of roads for which the stone of the Hills was particularly suitable, had led to substantial quarrying which at the north end of the Hills threatened to break into the distinctive skyline. In subsequent years the rights of the quarry companies were acquired for considerable sums, the loans for which have only recently been repaid. Today all the quarries on the Hills are owned by the Conservators except for the Tank Quarry at the north end, owned by Worcestershire County Council, and the Hollybush Quarry at the south end, owned by Eastnor Estates Company Limited. Whilst it is easy to recognise the need to prevent quarrying in this conservation-minded era, the issue in the years following the 1924 Act was not so clear cut as the quarries provided an important source of local employment. Nevertheless over the ensuing years the quarries were eventually closed, the final one being the Gullet Quarry where quarrying continued until 1977.

The Act of 1930 recognised that there was a "largely increasing number of visitors" coming to the Hills and "many persons resort to the Hills on holidays and during the summer months for the purpose of recreation and enjoyment" and gave the Conservators power to cater for the tourist trade "by providing lavatories, refreshment stalls and other facilities".

The final Act, that of 1995, acknowledged that "the area of land under the Conservators' jurisdiction had increased as has the number of visitors resorting to the Malvern Hills" and granted the Conservators further powers necessary for the up-to-date management of land under their control. One of the powers sought was to rebuild the café built on the Worcestershire Beacon by a member of the Hornyold family in 1874 for the sale of refreshments. Its successor, the Beacon Café, was destroyed by fire in 1989.

This was however refused by the House of Lords at the committee stage. Since the 1884 Act the area of land under the Conservators' control, originally some 500 acres, has been increased, mainly by purchase, to almost 3000 acres.

## THE CONSERVATORS TODAY

### Board Members

The present Board of the Malvern Hills Conservators now consists of 29 members eleven directly elected to represent wards and parishes in the area and the remainder appointed by local authorities, except for one appointed by the Church Commissioners. It exercises its powers through committees whose reports are considered at regular Board meetings held at the District Council offices in Malvern. All Board and Committee meetings are open to the public.

### Manor House, Office and Staff

The name of these offices reflects the fact that the Conservators have acquired the Manor of Malvern. It is open to the public and houses the Board's minutes and records and is manned by a small administrative staff, ready and able to give advice and information to members of the public. Full time wardens are employed to control car parking, enforce the byelaws, liaise with commoners to provide help and guidance. They are assisted in their duties by a small body of voluntary assistant wardens, most of whom are responsible for monitoring specific areas or activities on the Hills. The practical side of the Conservators' work is supervised at present by a full-time Director who manages the Board's land. Other officers deal with legal, financial and administrative matters.

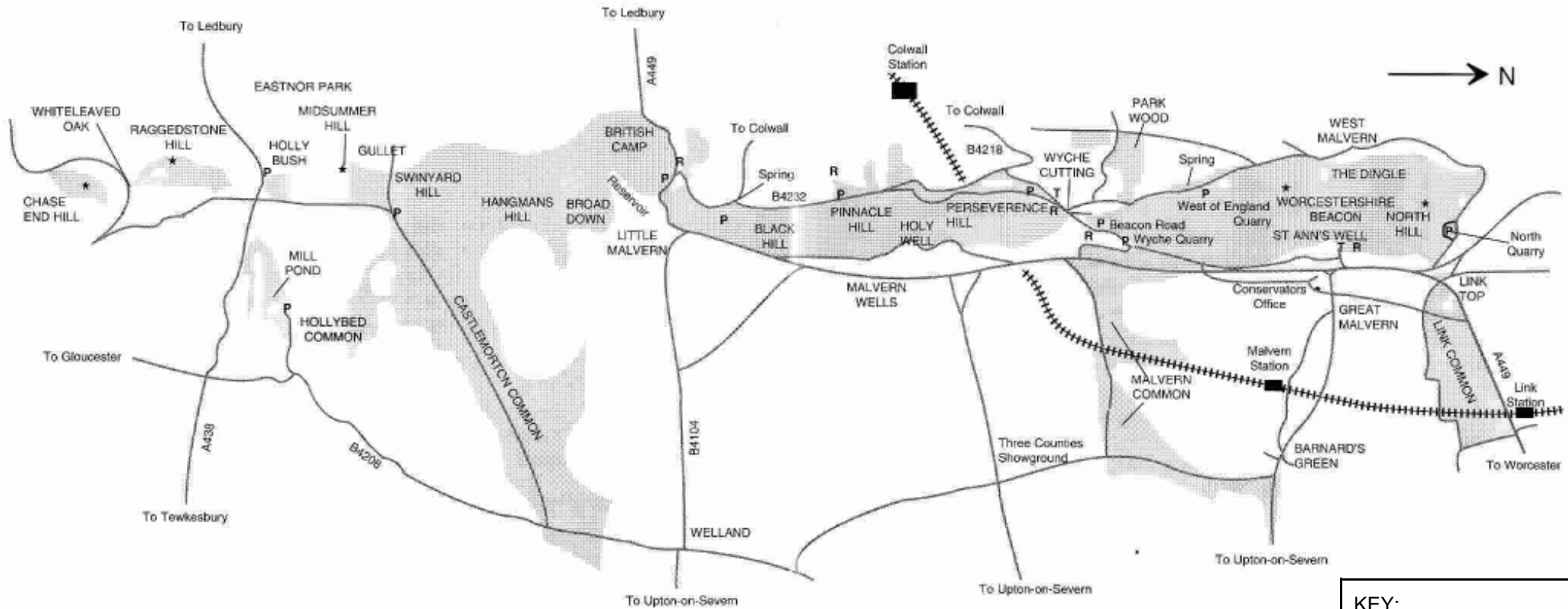
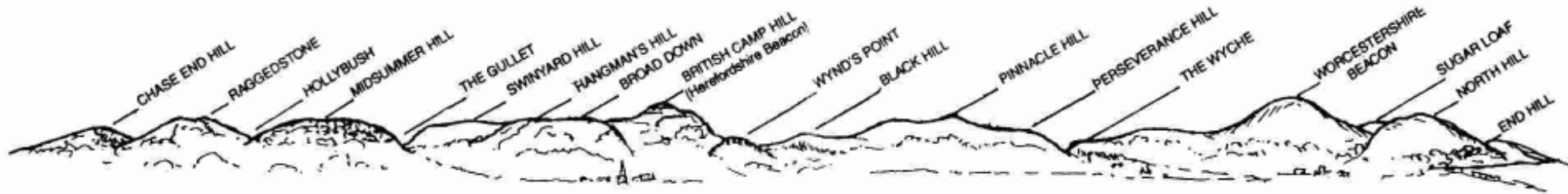
### Finance

The employment of the Conservators' staff and the management of the Malvern Hills involves substantial expenditure, approximately 67% of which falls on the local Council Tax payer. This "levy" (formerly a precept on the rates and imposed by the Malvern Hills Acts) is collected by the local authority on the Conservators' behalf. The amount of the levy is fixed annually within the limits imposed by the Acts. Approximately 20% of the Conservators' income is received from car parking fees, and the balance is made up from wayleave charges, rents and other incidental income, and grants from the Countryside Commission, English Nature and Worcestershire County Council. It follows, therefore, that the Conservators are essentially funded locally, with the only significant non-local contribution coming from visitors who pay parking fees.

### Powers, obligations, duties and responsibilities

Being created by statute, the Conservators not only have powers under their Acts, but also statutory obligations. These can be summarised as follows:

1. *To preserve the natural aspect of the Malvern Hills and Commons and protect the trees, bushes and turf from damage.*
2. *To keep the Hills and Commons as open spaces for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.*
3. *To prevent any buildings, enclosures and encroachments upon the Hills and Commons or any part thereof under their jurisdiction other than specifically allowed under the Malvern Hills Acts.*
4. *Not to do any thing or act which will take away or adversely affect the right of any commoner.*



KEY:	
P	= Car Park
T	= Toilets
R	= Refreshments
■	= Conservators Land

*This map is representative, but is not drawn to scale*

Only the eastern slopes of Midsummer Hill, Raggedstone Hill and Chase End Hill belong to the Conservators. There is easy access across the four passes which intersect the ridge of the hills, Wyche Cutting, British Camp, Hollybush and Whiteleaved Oak. The Conservators also own land at Old Hills, Callow End.

There is perhaps today a wider concept of the meaning of 'conservation' and 'recreation' than existed a hundred years ago, and in addition to the four statutory obligations referred to above, there are a number of secondary duties now accepted by the Conservators which can be described as follows:

1. *To provide opportunities for informal outdoor recreation by the public, both visitor and resident*
2. *To improve the public's knowledge, understanding and respect for the Malvern Hills*
3. *To have regard for the well-being of the people living in the area in a manner compatible with the Conservators' other purposes*
4. *To seek to influence planning control and development in the area to ensure that this is not inconsistent with the objectives of the Conservators.*
5. *To conserve and enhance the existing wildlife of the Hills and Commons.*

Additional responsibilities are placed on the Conservators by the fact that the main ridge of the Hills and a large portion of Castlemorton Common are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and close liaison is required with English Nature, the body responsible for the designation and overseeing of such sites.

### **Public use of The Malvern Hills**

These duties inevitably lead to some conflict not least from the fact that almost all the Board's land is open grazing land and subject to rights of common now registered under the 1965 Commons Registration Act. In addition to preserving and protecting these rights the Conservators have to cater not only for local residents, many of whom walk regularly on the Hills and Commons, but also for well over one million visitors who come to the Hills each year. Whilst the most common form of recreation on the Hills is walking, the Conservators also permit and, where necessary, facilitate a large number of other recreational pursuits. These include sponsored walks, riding, cycling, football and other ball games, athletic events, fishing, hang gliding, model glider flying, limited water sports, and the holding of fairs, circuses, local fetes etc. In addition, the Hills are extensively used for outside studies by schools and Education Centres, and many students make use of them for projects in connection with examinations at all levels including degree courses. Limited military training takes place, and facilities are also made available for outside broadcasts by the BBC, and trials by the local research establishment.

### **Maintenance of the Malvern Hills**

A substantial reduction in the number of stock grazing the Hills has seen a general increase in the vegetation which needs to be controlled artificially. The increased use of the Hills by residents and visitors brings problems of erosion not only to the maintained paths but also to the spine of the Hills and other popular areas. Positive management is therefore required. This is carried out by the Board's small workforce which has two depots, one in the Wells Road and one in the Upper Wyche Quarry off the Wyche Road. The Conservators own a wide range of machinery and equipment to carry out their management tasks. Apart from specific projects, routine management and maintenance continues throughout the year. Whilst the tasks undertaken by the Conservators' workforce are too numerous to list exhaustively, the main ones are:-

### **Mowing**

So as to maintain the open aspect of the Hills and Commons the Board has an annual programme of mowing and has adopted the basic principle that urban commons and grassed areas adjacent to car parks which are heavily used should be kept fairly short by being mown several times each year. These are the areas that are used for a variety of recreational purposes including ball games. Other commons and roadside verges are usually mown once a year, some of the grass being taken for hay by the commoners.

### **Control of Scrub**

There are large areas of the Hills and to a lesser extent of the Commons where the vegetation is now no longer kept in check by grazing and where it is not possible to mow using conventional methods. To try and keep some of the growth in check and to reduce potential fire risks, much of this is cleared by adopting a policy of rotational scrub clearance. This is designed to remove much of the older material which is usually the most inflammable. Fire is a risk in the dry summer months and the prevention of the build-up of large quantities of dry material together with the cutting of a planned system of fire breaks, has done much to contain fires in recent years. In dealing with this aspect of the Conservators' work, and generally, the Conservators have to have regard to the ecological effect of this work.

### **Trees and Woodland**

There is little scope for commercial forestry on the Hills and the existing trees and woodlands are managed for their amenity value. Some areas of woodland, particularly towards the south of the Hills, are relics of ancient woodlands and have a substantial ecological value and in these areas trees are permitted to mature and die to retain their value as hosts for a wide variety of wildlife. The Conservators undertake a certain amount of planting both to create screens for such places as disused quarries and car parks and also to maintain areas such as the various approaches to Malvern which are marked by avenues of trees, some of which are approaching maturity and now need to be replaced. Other areas such as Malvern Link Common and parts of the Old Hills are managed to give a parkland effect. The Conservators receive donations from time to time specifically for the planting and maintenance of trees on their land.

### **Car Parks**

A number of formal car parks, which are serviced by parking meters, have been created by the Conservators around the Hills mainly in disused quarries. During busy periods and where conditions permit many more cars can be accommodated on grass areas adjoining car parks and on various other unpaved areas on the Conservators' land. Parking fees for these areas are collected by assistant wardens. Season tickets may be bought at Manor House and all local residents who contribute to the Conservators' levy are entitled to a concessionary parking sticker for a nominal fee. Whilst there are some small car parks and informal parking areas on the Commons, the main car parks are sited around the Hills. The largest, the British Camp Car Park, joins the A449 just to the north of the Herefordshire Beacon, and running north on the west side of the Hills there are car parks, all of which are signed, at Blackhill, Gardiners Common, Beacon Road and West of England. On the east side of the Hills,

car parks can be found at the North Quarry, Earnslaw and the Wyche quarries.

## **Water**

There are no large expanses of water under the Conservators' management, but there are several interesting pools, including the Mill Pond at Castlemorton, the Moat Pool at Sherrards Green, and two natural pools which are formed in the disused quarries at Earnslaw and the Gullet. Considerable work has been done by the Board's workforce in the maintenance and improvement of these pools over the years. They are now all well stocked with fish, and there are many other smaller pools and water courses which receive attention, and which are monitored from time to time. These form a valuable habitat for a variety of plants, birds and animals, including all three species of newt.

Fishing is only permitted by the public at large in the Mill Pond and the Moat Pool. This is controlled not only by Environment Agency Byelaws but also by the Conservators' Code of Practice for Fishermen.

The purity of Malvern water was of course of vital importance to local people long before fortunes were made from the Water Cure. The saying "All along the Malvern Hill, a man may live as long as he will" was a reference to the longevity of the population for which the area was noted, and this was certainly due in large measure to the purity of the local springs. Springs were often noted boundary marks, and an early Chairman of the Conservators noted that people in West Malvern "fought more about water than others about whisky. " At a time when taking water at spa towns was fashionable, it was the purity of Malvern water, as opposed to the mineral elements found elsewhere, which was its strongest selling point. "Malvern water," said Dr. Wall, one of the Water Cure doctors, "is famed for containing just nothing at all."

Schweppes, now situated in Colwall, began its bottling enterprise in 1851 and Malvern Water can be bought around the country and in many places overseas. Many, however, prefer to collect their own, and come long distances to do so. The main collection points are at Hayslad and Evendine. Other notable springs feature at the Holy Well in Malvern Wells which whilst not in the Board's ownership is adjacent to its land and in the Well Room at St Ann's Well which is owned by the Conservators. All springs are regularly monitored for purity by Malvern Hills District Council on behalf of the Environment Agency.

By the early 19th century St Ann's Well had become one of the most popular places for "taking the waters". The octagonal tea room was added to this building in the middle of the last century as the number of visitors increased. It is still a very popular place with visitors being on the lower slopes of the Hills and relatively easily accessible from the town.

## **CONSERVATION OF WILDLIFE**

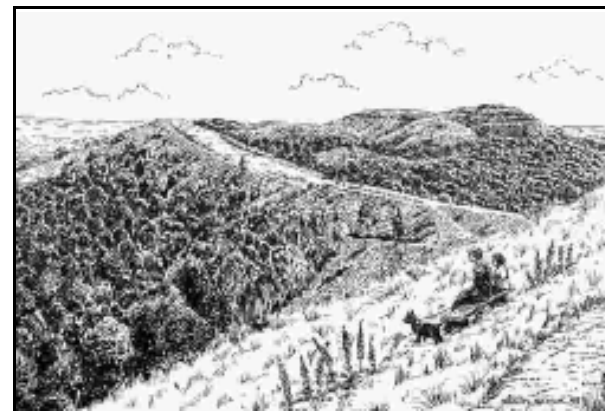
A number of rare animals, plants, birds and butterflies are to be found throughout the Board's land. In an increasingly conservation minded era, more and more time is given to the management of these areas to ensure the continued existence and well-being of a number of species. There is a Natural History Advisory Group whose membership comprises people eminent in specific fields of natural history who advise the Conservators. Apart from the more common species of mammal, rarer species such

as the lesser horseshoe bat, the dormouse and the polecat are found on the Hills, and some 130 species of bird have been recorded, 70 as breeding species. Over 30 species of butterflies have also been recorded, including the high brown fritillary, and parts of the Hills are carefully managed to protect these. A variety of rare plants is also found and the management of the Hills has to take into account the need for their conservation. Detailed reference to the wildlife on the Hills is made in the 1998 review of the Conservators management plan.

## **VISITOR FACILITIES**

Apart from the car parks and the many formal and informal paths which are maintained by the Conservators, there are signs and noticeboards sited at strategic points, together with byelaw notices. Over the years, a large number of seats has been donated, many of them memorial seats, and these together with less formal benches are maintained on a regular basis.

There are three lavatories on the Board's land which are maintained in conjunction with the local authorities at British Camp, the Wyche, and the Dingle in West Malvern. The Conservators do not provide any direct facilities for refreshment, but these are



available at S1. Ann's Well, the cafe, as already stated, owned by the Conservators but leased to tenants, and at other sites adjacent to the Board's land, principally the British Camp, The Kettle Sings, and the Wyche. The Board grants an annual licence for the sale of ice cream from a number of vehicles which operate around the Hills.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS AND INFORMATION**

Since the acquisition of Manor House, in Grange Road, Malvern, in 1995 the Conservators have been able to offer a more comprehensive information service to members of the public who call. An expanding library of information has been set up, of value to students of all ages and members of the public alike, and it is usually possible, during office hours, to obtain direct information and assistance from a member of the Conservators' staff. A number of individual Conservators have specific expertise and arrangements can be made for meetings with them. Members of the

Conservators, and their staff, frequently give talks to local organisations and groups on the work of the Conservators, and these can be arranged without charge, by contacting the Office. The Board recognises the need for public relations, and the role of the current Public Relations Committee is to communicate the work of the Board to the general public. Members of the Board and Staff are frequently asked to contribute to articles in the Press and talks on local radio, and press releases are issued to local papers whenever matters of interest arise.

The Conservators have protected the Hills for over one hundred years, not as a monument to past history or as a nature reserve, but as a place where the public can come for recreation and peaceful enjoyment and where local farmers can still exercise centuries old rights of common. At the same time the Conservators recognise the importance of this invaluable natural resource entrusted to their care. They welcome the public and their enjoyment of all that the Hills have to offer, but rely on them to respect other users following their many and diverse activities, the natural amenities and the wealth of wildlife of all descriptions.

**The Conservators encourage members of the public to observe the following codes:-**

### Country Code

Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work.  
Guard against all risk of fire.  
Fasten all Gates.  
Keep your dogs under close control.  
Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone.  
Take your litter home.  
Help to keep all water clean.  
Protect wildlife, plants and trees.  
Take special care on country roads.  
Make no unnecessary noise.

### Code of Conduct for Horse Riders

Ride with courtesy, care and consideration.  
Remember that walkers, cyclists and other riders may be elderly, disabled or simply frightened of or unaccustomed to horses.  
Avoid narrow paths where pedestrians may be inconvenienced.  
Watch out for animals, particularly at lambing time, and ride slowly past all stock.  
Remember that horses' hooves can damage the turf.  
Avoid riding on wet ground or in conditions where harm is likely to be caused. Remember that if it is too wet to ride on your own ground it will also be too wet to ride on the Conservators' ground.  
Please do not ride on the earthwork banks and ditches of the ancient monuments, specially the Shire Ditch along the crest of the Hills and hillforts at Midsummer Hill and the Herefordshire Beacon.  
Obey all temporary and permanent signs.  
Remember that the racing or professional training of horses on the Conservators' land is not allowed.

### Code of Conduct for Fishermen

Members of the public are normally permitted to fish at the Mill Pond, Castlemorton and the Moat Pool, Sherrards Green, Malvern, subject to the following conditions:  
That a current Environment Agency licence is held and the Byelaws of the Environment Agency are complied with.  
That vehicles are parked in accordance with MHC regulations and all parking charges are paid. That **NO FISHING** takes place between 15 March and 15 June inclusive.  
That fishing takes place only in the permitted areas and from 6 a.m. until one hour after sunset only.  
That the fishing rules are complied with. i.e.

- only two rods per angler.
- barb-free hooks only.
- no keep nets.
- no cereal ground baits or floating baits.
- no wading or boat fishing.
- no discarded tackle is left on the bank or in the water.
- no match fishing.

That **NO LITTER** is left and no damage is caused to reeds or other vegetation.  
That disturbance to wildlife is kept to a minimum.

### Code of Conduct for Cyclists

Keep to bridleways.  
Do not cycle on the ridge of the Hills or on other open hill land or commons.  
Give way to horse riders and walkers and dismount if necessary.

Slow down at corners; walkers may not hear you coming.  
Do not damage ground by cycling in wet or muddy conditions or by harsh braking.  
Obey the instructions of the Conservators' Wardens at all times.

### Code of Conduct for Dog Walkers

Keep your dog under close control at all times and do not allow it to chase livestock or disturb other wildlife.  
Do not allow it to foul playing or picnic areas, paths

or other popular places.  
If you lose your dog, see a stray dog or a dog worrying stock please report it immediately to the Conservators, the District Council Dog Warden or the Police.  
Please remember that the worrying of stock is an offence for which the destruction of the dog can be ordered.  
Worrying livestock means either attacking it or chasing it in such a way as may be reasonably expected to cause injury or suffering or in the case of females abortion.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READING

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