

# GOOD NEIGHBOURS

## MALVERN HILLS AND COMMONS

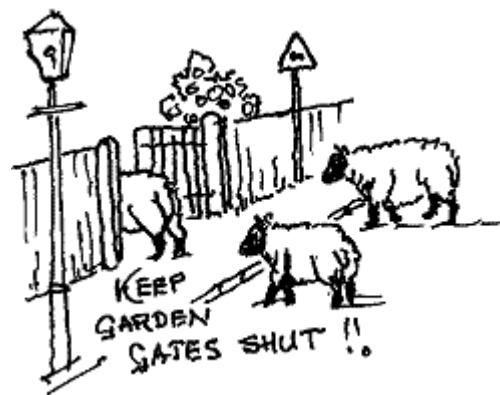
This leaflet is produced by the Malvern Hills Conservators working in partnership with John Goodwin, Philip Laney, Andrew Grant, David Prosser and Whitt Yeates & Ridley and is intended to inform you what it means to have the Malvern Hills Conservators as your neighbours.

### Who are the Conservators?

The Malvern Hills Conservators were established by Act of Parliament in 1884. They are custodians of approximately 1200 hectares of the Malvern Hills and surrounding common land that includes many of the roadside verges and green swards on the entrances to the town. As custodians it is their duty to protect the land from being encroached upon by adjoining landowners, to keep the Land open for public recreation, to look after the wildlife and, as the majority of land under their ownership is common land, to look after the interests of commoners:

### Common Land

The majority of land managed by the Conservators is registered common land and is grazed by sheep. This includes the roadside verges that were part of the manorial waste from Malvern Chase. Common land is valued for its wildlife, historical significance and increasingly because of the amenity it provides as open countryside, or in more urban settings, as open space. As adjoining property owners you are responsible for your boundary fences which adjoin the common. Please do not be tempted to plant anything beyond your own boundary. Although there may not be sheep grazing at present, commoners can use their rights at any time.



### Commoners Rights

Is the right to take something from someone else's land and commons are the pieces of land over which common rights are exercised. The rights are regulated under the Commons Registration Act 1965. You can check whether your property has common rights by looking at your local Commons Register. These registers are kept by county councils and unitary authorities.

## **Easements over the Common**

These are tracks across the common. If you live in a house where there is an established track across the Conservators' land to your property, you are entitled to drive across the common using that route, but not to park on it. The upkeep of the track is the responsibility of the owners of the property who enjoy the facility. The occupiers of many properties have entered into a Deed of Grant with the Conservators which gives the occupiers the legal right to the use of the track. If you wish to apply for an easement, there is a charge that is set following professional valuation.

## **Easements under the Common**

These are for underground services. You can apply to have additional services. At present the charge is £15 per metre with a minimum charge of £500. No charge is made for replacement supplies as long as the land is reinstated satisfactorily. Please advise the office before carrying out any work.



## **Management of the Commons**

We try to strike a balance between keeping the commons semi-natural and good for wildlife as well as pleasant for those who prefer a neat appearance. With 1200 hectares to manage we have to programme the work into a schedule.

## **Byelaws**

The Conservators have Byelaws to assist with the management. A copy of these can be obtained from the Conservators' office at the address below.

## **Funding**

The Conservators obtain the majority of their funding from a levy charged on the Council Taxpayers of Malvern, Malvern Wells, West Malvern, Colwall, Guarlford and Mathon. In recognition of the contribution you make the Conservators give levy payers free parking at all their car parks. To take advantage of this you can obtain, for a small charge, an annual sticker to place on your windscreen from either the Tourist Information Office in Church Street or from the Conservators' office in Grange Road, Malvern. When applying please bring something showing your current address. Those people living in areas that do not pay the levy can purchase

a sticker that runs for twelve months from the date of issue. These are obtainable only from the Conservators' office.

We hope that you will enjoy living in this unique area and that you will be able to use the wonderful facilities on your doorstep. Please help us to keep the pleasant outlook by -

- Not parking on the common
- Notifying us in advance of any work you intend to do which involves the common
- Being a responsible dog owner.

If you would like to find out more about the Malvern Hills Conservators please telephone on 01684 892002, or call in at Manor House, Grange Road, Malvern, WR14 3EY (opposite the Malvern Theatres)

*Illustrations kindly produced by Dudley Brook*

