



Malvern Hills Trust – the need for a new Act of Parliament

Malvern Hills Trust (working name of the Malvern Hills Conservators) was established in 1884 by Act of Parliament. The core duties, as set out in the Acts are to preserve the natural aspect of the Hills and Commons and to keep them unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the enjoyment of the public. Over the succeeding 139 years the organisation has ensured that this iconic landscape has been safeguarded for the nation.

Since 1884 there have been four subsequent Acts of Parliament, and in addition some of the Trust's administrative arrangements are set out in other legislation in part dating back to 1847. The Trust believes the five Acts are very out of date, difficult to follow and often inconsistent and if the Trust is to continue to operate it is vital that the Acts are updated.

Because the Trust is governed by statute, such changes have to be made by Parliament by way of a Private Bill. This was confirmed by the Charity Commission and the Department of Culture Media and Sport in 2020 and the view was endorsed by a Government Minister in the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities earlier this year.

The Charity Commission have now given consent for the Trust to proceed with this course of action.

A new Act will put in place much needed reforms but certain core principles will remain the same:

- protecting and preserving the Hills as a public open space
- keeping all decision making meetings open to the public
- the right of those who pay the levy to elect trustees to the Board.

Over the next few months the Trust will be working on:

- Establishing the options for change
- Discussing these options with stakeholders and Government Departments
- Timetabling a further consultation to give members of the public the opportunity to make constructive input into the proposed changes.