

# Annual Review 2021



**Malvern Hills Trust**

Registered charity no. 515804

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# Chair's introduction

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We have aimed this year to publish our review a little earlier so that you get a rather more timely picture of the work we are doing on your behalf. Like almost everyone, our staff have been impeded by the restrictions and consequences of Covid-19 but they have learned, adapted and pressed on with getting the job done, looking after our cherished Hills and Commons so that we all can enjoy them now and long into the future.

Many more people than ever have enjoyed our open spaces and we have had to adapt to some new pressures while benefitting from the positive impacts of visitor numbers. The overwhelming message we get from people who visit the Hills is of thanks for the outstanding experience and the sense of wellbeing that comes from being in a stunning landscape surrounded by a rich and stimulating environment. We are here to keep those experiences coming.

The band of dedicated outside volunteers has started to re-engage with all the work that they so enjoy; making a visible and lasting difference to the landscape is the icing on the cake of the recreational and social pleasures of working on the land in the fresh air with friends who also love the Hills.

Back in the office there have been fewer opportunities for our administrative volunteers but we are working to get back to business as usual there too.

The work to modernise the Trust's governance has made slower progress than anticipated but the reasons for continuing are strengthening year by year as financial and resource pressures make efficiency a priority for the Trust and as environmental and visitor pressures demand more of our land management. The difficulties brought about by Covid-19, the challenges of tree disease and uncertainties over agri-environment grant schemes have brought those pressures into even sharper focus as we look to secure a sustainable, long term future. Meanwhile, the new Land Management Plan, the blueprint for our principal work, has been adopted and published and stands us in good stead for the next 5 years.

In this report you can read how we go about caring for the Hills and Commons, about the pressures and difficulties and about the notable successes in our mission to conserve and manage this rich landscape for the benefit of the public.



**Mick Davies, Chair**

# CEO's report

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Few could deny that 2020 was a year beyond the normal – a time that took everyone outside the realms of most people's previous experiences.

On occasion walking across parts of the Hills at different times during the last 12 months has been a surreal experience – from witnessing a landscape almost devoid of people during the first full Covid-19 lockdown period in April and May, to the opposite extreme in June and July of 2020 when car parks were crowded with throngs of family groups and individuals all seeking fresh air and respite from the close confines that the national Covid-19 restrictions imposed.

The volume and extent of the extra work brought on by such high visitor numbers is covered elsewhere in this review, but one of the key impacts is the need over the past 12 months to react and adapt to often fast-moving circumstances. It has required rapid changes and temporary arrangements for staffing, for the continued governance of the organisation, and for practical tasks, while elsewhere we have had to put in place measures to ensure the financial wellbeing of the Trust. While we greatly benefitted from the security of having the income from the levy, for several months our second key income stream, the car parks, was in serious doubt and measures were implemented to restrict expenditure and guard our reserves. Unlike many other charities and similar organisations, the Trust was not eligible to benefit from any of the big grant schemes that were introduced by both the Government and others to help relieve the financial pressures on organisations like ours.

While dealing with all the Covid-19 related measures was a major challenge, other work was still undertaken – from continually dealing with the litter and parking, guarding against fires or other damaging activities, maintaining paths and infrastructure, and simply dealing with the high numbers of visitors and users of the landscape. Alongside the day-to-day functions, other works areas that were undertaken included consultation on and production of the new Land Management Plan – the keystone for the next 5 years of land management. Another important task undertaken was the evaluation of the scale and likely impacts of Ash Dieback Disease to the Trusts landholding. This disease will have dramatic consequences for many parts of our landscape in the coming years and dealing with that physically and financially is something we have to plan for.

My thanks to all of those who have continued to support and maintain the work of the Trust throughout this period – staff, trustees and volunteers alike. It has tested our resilience and capacity, but I am pleased to report that it has not stopped us from delivering the core functions of the charity – the protection of the landscape and its maintenance as an open space for public access.



**Duncan Bridges, CEO**

# Trustees and committees during the period

(1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021)

Elected Trustees	
Priory Ward:	John Watts <i>FAR</i> (resigned 13th October)
Chase Ward:	Graeme Crisp <i>LM</i>
Wells Ward:	Richard Fowler <i>LM</i>
West Ward:	Charles Penn <i>FAR and GC</i>
Dyson Perrins Ward:	Trevor Parsons <i>LM</i>
Malvern Link Ward:	Richard Bartholomew <i>LM, SC, CCC and GC</i>
Pickersleigh Ward:	David Core <i>FAR and GC</i>
Colwall Parish:	Helen Stace <i>LM</i> Stephen Braim <i>LM, CCC and GC</i>
Guarlford Parish:	David Fellows <i>FAR</i>
Mathon Parish:	Christopher Rouse <i>LM</i>
Nominated Trustees	
Malvern Hills District Council:	Mick Davies <i>FAR, CCC and SC</i> (Board Chair) Mark Dyde <i>LM</i> John Michael <i>FAR</i> Cynthia Palmer <i>LM, GC, CCC and SC</i> Sarah Rouse <i>FAR and CCC</i> (Board Vice Chair)
Colwall Parish Council:	Gwyneth Rees <i>LM, CCC and SC</i>
Mathon Parish Council:	David Baldwin <i>LM and SC</i>
Church Commissioners:	David Bryer <i>LM and GC</i> (resigned 31st July)
Herefordshire Council:	Helen I'Anson <i>LM and SC</i> Tony Johnson (resigned 24th September) Ellie Chowns (from 19th November)
Worcestershire County Council:	John Raine <i>FAR, SC, CCC and GC</i> Lucy Hodgson <i>FAR</i>
Worcestershire County Council on behalf of the following parishes:	
Castlemorton:	Chris Atkins <i>LM</i>
Newland:	Tom Yapp <i>LM</i>
Powick:	Martin Cordey <i>FAR and CCC</i> (resigned 19th August) Michelle Alexander <i>LM</i> (from 2nd October)

## Notes:

*FAR* sat on Finance, Administration and Resources Committee

*LM* sat on Land Management Committee

*CCC* sat on Covid Contingency Committee

*GC* sat on Governance Committee

*SC* sat on Staffing Committee

# Staff

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Chief Executive Officer:	Duncan Bridges
Secretary to the Board:	Susan Satchell
Conservation Manager:	Jonathan Bills
Operations Manager:	Paul Saunder
Finance and Administration Manager:	Cheryl Gentry
Conservation Officer:	Andy Pearce
Community and Conservation Officer:	Beck Baker
Finance Assistant:	Lisa Curtis
Administrative Assistant:	Cindy Parish
Wardens:	Robin Hill (retired June 2020), Simon Roberts, Tracy Sutton (from August 2020), Richard Vale
Estate Supervisor:	George Banner (from March 2021)
Field Staff:	George Banner (until March 2021), Martin Cottrell, Nick Cowling, Simon Davies, Duncan Patterson, Neil Tilley



Malvern Hills Trust staff tree planting

# About us

Malvern Hills Trust was established by an Act of Parliament in 1884 and four subsequent Acts (1909, 1924, 1930 and 1995). It is an unincorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, number 515804. Malvern Hills Trust is the registered working name of the Malvern Hills Conservators.



Malvern Hills Ridge

Malvern Hills Trust was set up to protect the hills and commons under its jurisdiction, in particular to:

- preserve the natural aspect of the hills,
- protect and manage trees, shrubs, turf and other vegetation,
- prevent unlawful digging and quarrying,
- keep the hills open, unenclosed and unbuilt on as open spaces for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.

Malvern Hills Trust is also obliged under other legislation to:

- conserve and enhance biodiversity, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Scheduled Monuments on its land.

The Trust owns and manages 3,000 acres of the iconic Malvern Hills landscape from the open hilltops, wooded slopes, to the wide, tree-lined verges and the lowland commons.

In order to meet its purposes and to conserve this special landscape, the Malvern Hills Trust carries out a programme of conservation and access work as guided by a Land Management Plan. The Land Management Plan 2016-2021 expired at the end of March 2021. The writing and consultation on the new management plan took place over the course of this year with the new plan going live on 1 April 2021 covering the next 5 year period (read more on page 12).

The Hills and Commons are visited more than 1 million times per year and the Trust keeps the land as open space for the public. We maintain a large network of paths, benches, car parks and information boards to help people enjoy their visit and to help them care for the Hills and Commons too.

Our conservation work is vital in looking after this nationally important landscape and includes maintaining and restoring a variety of diverse habitats, preserving geological heritage, woodland management, implementing several conservation grazing schemes, archaeological repairs, and much more.

**This Annual Review highlights some of the key projects undertaken in the financial year 2020/21.**

# Impacts of Covid-19

No review of the past 12 months would be complete without consideration of the trials and challenges that fell on the Trust as a result of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

We began this financial year under strict national restrictions put in place to limit the spread of Covid-19. Over the following 12 months the various Covid-19 control measures and the changes in public use of the Hills and Commons impacted on every part of the Trust's work - with both negative and positive consequences.

## Public access and impacts

Throughout the pandemic, the Trust has striven to continue its work to conserve the Hills and Commons and provide access to the public. These are the core charitable objectives of the Trust and despite other difficulties, these purposes remained our primary focus.

On the announcement of the first national lockdown in early 2020, the decision was made to close the car parks around the Hills and Commons as part of national restrictions aimed at reducing the spread of the virus. While the car parks closed on 27th March, all of the Trust's land remained open to the public for exercise and recreation (when permitted under Covid-19 guidance), and that access was maintained throughout the year, through every subsequent lock down period.



Covid-19 car park closure, West of England Car Park

Seven weeks later, with government restrictions on travel and social distancing having been phased in, we were able to reopen the car parks with appropriate Covid-19 safeguards in place.

With most leisure activities still closed by the government restrictions, and open spaces being identified as safe places for the public, visitor numbers to the Hills and Commons saw a rapid and dramatic increase over the following weeks and months. On many days numbers exceeded twice the normal levels for that time of year, and over the summer months and into the autumn visitor numbers consistently exceeded all previous records.

Such high volumes of visitors brought with it increased pressures on the Trust staff and resources – from managing the extensive littering problems and vehicles parking outside the designated car parks, dealing with BBQ's and fires during a dry summer period with particularly high fire risk, camping and many other byelaw issues.

The patterns of visitor use also changed, with many people looking for quieter or less frequented spots away from the popular access sites. This in turn necessitated a change in demand on staff to undertake increased numbers of patrols and access management works.



Sunset at Old hills

## Our work programme

Following the announcement of the 23rd March 2020 lockdown, rapid and dramatic re-prioritisation of the planned work programme was undertaken – with many projects planned for spring and summer being postponed whilst efforts were refocussed elsewhere. Initially changes to the work programme were made both to allow for uncertainty over income streams from car park closures, and to fit within the changing government rules for the safety of staff and contractors working during the Covid-19 restrictions.

As government guidance relating to work in the pandemic became clearer, many projects were reprioritised to those most benefitting public access and the landscape, whilst some low priority items were put back to the following year. This situation has subsequently improved with many projects being brought back into the programme for 2021, although there still remains some uncertainty over their timing in the face of any future restrictions that might be brought in.

The additional income from car parking brought essential funds to the Trust during a time of great uncertainty (see page 18). In response to the car park closures and the increase in demand for access to open spaces, previously issued Levy Payer car park passes were extended by 2 months.

### **Staffing resources**

On the announcement of the national lockdown, wherever possible, staff adjusted to working from home and resources were put in place to allow this to happen. A skeleton staff team was maintained at the office to respond to urgent enquiries, while the wardens and field staff, whose work predominantly involved working outdoors, continued patrolling and providing information to visitors and undertaking essential maintenance and conservation tasks.

This pattern of working continued throughout most of the period of this Review.

Whilst full lockdown measures meant a few staff were furloughed as workloads diminished in the first few weeks, subsequent increased demand on the Hills and Commons meant all staff (other than those who were shielding), were back at work and additional wardening resources were put in place from August onwards.

### **Governance and Trustees**

With a large Board and urgent decisions to be made in response to the coronavirus situation, a Covid Contingency Committee was quickly established and held their first meeting on 27th March 2020. The members of the committee were chairs of the standing Committees of Staffing, Governance, Land Management and Finance. This small number made it possible to call meetings at short notice, and at times weekly, to deal with the impacts of rapidly changing rules and guidelines being issued by the Government.

Those meetings, which were held virtually, continued throughout the summer until 6th August 2020, when the first full virtual Board meeting was held. From this point, the regular committee and board meetings were scheduled and held online. All meetings were streamed online to allow for public engagement.

### **Volunteers**

For the safety of staff and volunteers, almost all the conservation work parties and volunteer tasks were cancelled from March 2020. Only our volunteer reporting wardens continued operating during the summer of 2020, providing much needed eyes and ears on the ground to support the wardens and field staff in responding to issues arising from the high visitor numbers.

Individual tasks, for example litter picking, were restarted when and where social distancing could be maintained while group volunteer conservation tasks were restarted with limited numbers in October 2020, before stricter lockdown measures were subsequently reintroduced. These were recommenced in spring 2021, with a limited number of attendees but a higher frequency of tasks.

Elsewhere many of our regular office and archive volunteers had to suspend their normal attendance at the office, and at the time of writing there is still limited scope for a return to the pre-Covid levels of volunteering.

Despite all the challenges, the Trust has continued to strive to meet its objectives and our focus has been to conserve the landscape for both people and wildlife.

## Wardens' report

With over 3,000 acres to patrol the wardens' job is never a dull one. Daily tasks can include litter picking and emptying bins, clearing fly-tipping, clearing paths, repairing signs, checking car parks and advising the public, enforcing byelaws, dealing with illegal camping, clearing fires and BBQs, liaising with utility companies and local residents, to name but a few. Here's some of their work in numbers:



More than **30** incidents of **campervans parking overnight** on Trust land



Attended **37 BBQs** and **fires**

**14** incidents of **vandalism including graffiti and damage** to benches



**18** reports of **sheep being chased by dogs** resulting in **6 injuries** and **3 sheep deaths**



Armchairs, asbestos and building waste were just some of the items collected from **38 fly tipping incidents**

The three wardens employed by the Trust are supported by a team of volunteer reporting wardens dotted around the Hills keeping an eye on their 'own patch'. This involves regularly patrolling an area, litter picking and reporting any issues. Along with our regular volunteer wardens this is a valuable part of caring for the Hills and Commons.

In response to increased visitor numbers and pressures over the last 12 months, recruitment took place during the time of this Review for a fourth warden position.



Builders waste flytipped at Gardiner's Quarry Car Park

# Land Management Plan

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The Land Management Plan provides a framework for conservation and access projects across the Hills and Commons under our care. Covering a period of 5 years, the current Land Management Plan expired on the 31st March 2021 and over the last 12 months the plan for 2021-2026 has been written and adopted by the Board.

The Trust's work focusses on its legal duties relating to public access and conservation of the landscape. Particular achievements during the life of the previous Land Management Plan 2016-2021 included:

## Public access

- Ensured 1200ha (3000 acres) remained open to the public and maintained an array of access infrastructure (steps, benches, signs, car parks etc),
- Created and waymarked several permissive routes for cyclists to improve the cycling network. Produced a 'cycling and walking guide' to ensure everyone knows where to go,
- Improved access for families and less-able visitors by upgrading sections of northern hill paths (>2km) to make them more buggy and tramper-friendly.

## Landscape, natural and cultural heritage

- Maintained a fantastic range of 14 priority habitats including ponds, lowland mixed woodlands and species-rich pastures through a range of land management, such as livestock grazing and coppicing,
- Gained nationally important 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' status for our hay meadow on Malvern Common,
- Increased the number of geological sites in good condition from 9 to 16 helping scientists and students study part of Earth's history,
- Restored 10 hectares of secondary woodland to open habitats creating views, revealing archaeology and supporting rare wildlife,
- Repaired damage to the archaeology of British Camp – one of the finest hillforts in the country,
- Increased land under our care by 11 hectares including some strategic in-bye land purchases that will aid the management of key sites including Castlemorton Common.

To gather views from the public and stakeholders about key priorities for future conservation and access projects a public consultation was held from 14th July to the 7th September 2020.

The new [Land Management Plan 2021-2026](#) was adopted by the Board and is now available to view. Key projects for the next five years include the restoration of the last remaining Donkey Shed, removal of invasive, non-native species, planting of new hedgerows and further research into the patterns and numbers of visitors to inform future management.

## Traditional skills on show

The importance of hedgerows within a landscape can sometimes be overlooked but healthy, thick and diverse hedges provide a wealth of food for insects, small mammals and birds throughout the seasons. You may find bees on flowers in the spring and redwings eating berries in the winter months. They also provide shelter for wildlife and somewhere to nest all year round.

Hedges also play a key role in the wider countryside landscape by providing links and connectivity for different habitats, for example, between separate patches of woodland. Wildlife such as bats travel along these corridors to forage.

They also have other practical roles by keeping livestock within fields, providing shelter for livestock and reducing water erosion and run-off.

To conserve wildlife-rich hedgerows they need to be maintained and hedgelaying is a traditional, sensitive way of doing this. Hedgelaying closes gaps in the lower parts of the hedge and encourages new growth to thicken it.

Along Chase Road and near Malvern Common we have recently used a professional hedgelayer to manage hedgerows which will develop into an ideal habitat for local wildlife. We are looking forward to watching the hedgerows bloom over spring and summer and seeing some of the creatures making this their home.

Thank you to those members of the public who have donated money to the Trust's Gift Fund to support works such as this.



Newly laid hedge, Chase Road

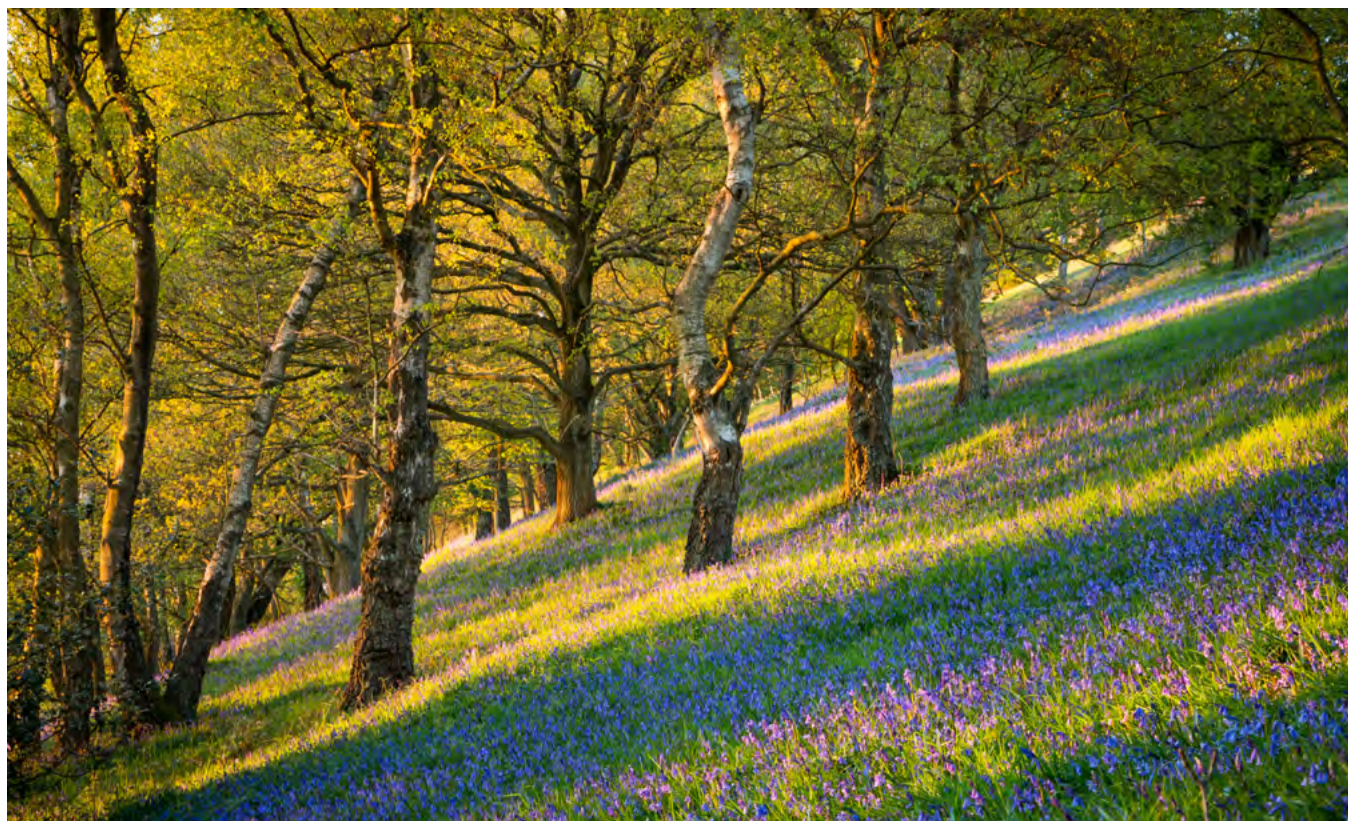
## Improving woodland diversity

Approximately 30 % of land under the Trust's care is woodland and these wooded areas come in all shapes and sizes. Although many provide a rich and diverse habitat, others require some intervention and management to increase their wildlife value. On the mid-slopes of the Malvern Hills, many of the younger woodlands are dominated by sycamore and lack diversity in their structure, have low light levels and limited ground flora.

With the support of Severn Trent and Herefordshire Amphibian and Reptile Team, open glades have been created amongst the dense, wooded slopes. Providing sunny, open areas within dense woodland is important for many local species including insects, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals and birds.

Woodland management also includes the removal of invasive non-native species such as laurel. Dense stands of evergreen laurel out-shade native ground flora such as the delicate wood anemone and bluebells. It also suppresses the natural process of regeneration by not allowing young saplings to grow beneath the canopy.

The eradication of laurel in woodlands near St Ann's Well and North Hill will provide space for a more diverse range of ground flora.



Bluebells beneath woodland canopy

## Responding to ash dieback disease

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Ash dieback is a disease caused by a fungus which results in the death of new growth. One key symptom of the disease is the 'dieback' of branches in the crown of the tree. The disease first arrived in the UK in 2012 and has spread by windblown fungal spores across the country.

Unfortunately, all ash trees on the Trust's estate will now have ash dieback disease (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*). Each tree's response to the disease can be hindered by other stresses and the extremes of a very wet winter in 2019/20 combined with a very warm and dry summer in 2020 accelerated the decline in a large number of ash trees.

In response to the disease, in addition to our regular annual tree safety inspection, ash trees alongside roads or near properties were surveyed during the year. As a result a small number of ash trees which displayed more severe signs of infection had to be felled in the winter of 2020/21.

Sadly, it is expected that around 60% - 80% of ash trees will be lost on our estate due to the disease. The cost of work to safely remove seriously infected trees near to properties and highways will be substantial and we've set up a new tree disease fund. Please support us by making a donation to help us deal with the huge impact of ash dieback on the landscape at [www.justgiving.com/campaign/MalvernHillsAshDieback](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/MalvernHillsAshDieback).

## New trees planted

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The tree-lined avenues within Great Malvern and along the approaches into town are an important part of the character of the urban commons landscape.

To conserve and maintain these valuable and recognisable spaces, lime and oak saplings at Newland and Poolbrook were planted this winter to fill in gaps and provide a new generation of trees.

Roadside trees and avenues such as those at the edges of Link Common, Newland Common, and along Townsend Way offer many benefits to the local community and environment including absorbing greenhouse gases, reducing air pollution and having a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing. Trees also provide nesting and foraging opportunities for many creatures including birds, bats and support a wealth of insects.

In addition a collection of native British tree species have also been planted on the Wells Common to support natural regeneration of woodland and to increase tree cover.

## Access improved at Community Woodland

Public access through a local woodland on the edge of Malvern has been greatly improved thanks to grant funding.

The Trust was pleased to have received £40,955 from Malvern Hills District Council to improve access in the Community Woodland at Townsend Way. The funding is from Section 106 money, which is paid by developers as part of legal agreements linked to planning applications.



Visitors walk on path through Community Woodland

The grant supported the installation of a new bridge and the surfacing of paths through the woodland to improve access year-round. Interpretation to help people find out more about access and wildlife within the woodland are due to be installed shortly.

Benches have been kindly donated by the public to provide resting places for people wishing to take time to relax in nature.

The Community Woodland came under the Trust's jurisdiction in the mid-1990's after the construction of Townsend Way and the development of the nearby residential area and industrial and retail parks. Trees were planted throughout the site on the edge of Malvern which have now grown up to provide over a kilometre of green space for the public. A copse of ancient woodland, an orchard and hay meadows can also be found here for people to explore.

# Gardiner's Quarry interpretation

A new information board has brought to life some of the characters who shaped the history of the Malvern Hills landscape.

The new interpretation at Gardiner's Quarry features the Ballard family who were instrumental in setting up the Malvern Hills Conservators (now Trust) in 1884. Visitors can also find out more about the history of the Gardiner family, after who the quarry is named.

A special note of thanks has also been included to all those who donated saplings to secure the future of the nearby Thirds Wood.

With over 1 million visits to the Malvern Hills and Commons each year the Trust is improving the information provision across the Hills and Commons to help visitors find out what's so special about this landscape.

The new interpretation also includes a map of the local area to help walkers and cyclists find their way around the footpaths and bridleways of the Hills.

More improvements to interpretation facilities will be made at other car parks around the Hills and Commons over the next year.



New interpretation board, Gardiner's Quarry

# Review of the financial year 2020/21

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The most recent audited accounts covered the year ended 31st March 2021. The accounts received an unqualified audit report. Significant events (and their financial impact) during that period were:

- A dispute with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) (see below) resulting in the exclusion from the accounts of accrued income totalling £151,470, which MHT believe is due to the charity,
- Very high visitor numbers led to much increased takings from the car parks,
- The annual tree safety survey identified essential work to a large number of trees, resulting in the Board needing to approve an additional £24,000 over and above the original budget of £16,120 for tree work,
- The Board maintained its policy of updating vehicles, plant and machinery, spending £21,713,
- Future replacement costs for a failing drainage field serving the public lavatories at British Camp were estimated at £40,000 to £50,000. Work continues to be delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic,
- Sales of the 'Nature in Malvern' book covered the Trust's share of its cost and raised a further £889 this year towards conservation work, making a total of £2,733 raised from this source.

## Environmental grants

For many years, the Trust has joined several Environmental Stewardship schemes which provide financial contributions towards positive land management activities on the Hills and Commons. These schemes are run by the Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra).

At 31st March 2021, a significant proportion of the charity's land (around 57 %) was under a Stewardship agreement. A further application for land at Castlemorton (approximately 21 % of the landholding) is underway.

The schemes provide funding for certain land management activities including the grazing, which is the most effective way to maintain significant parts of the Hills and Commons. The grazing programme is complemented by management work carried out by staff, contractors and a dedicated team of volunteers.

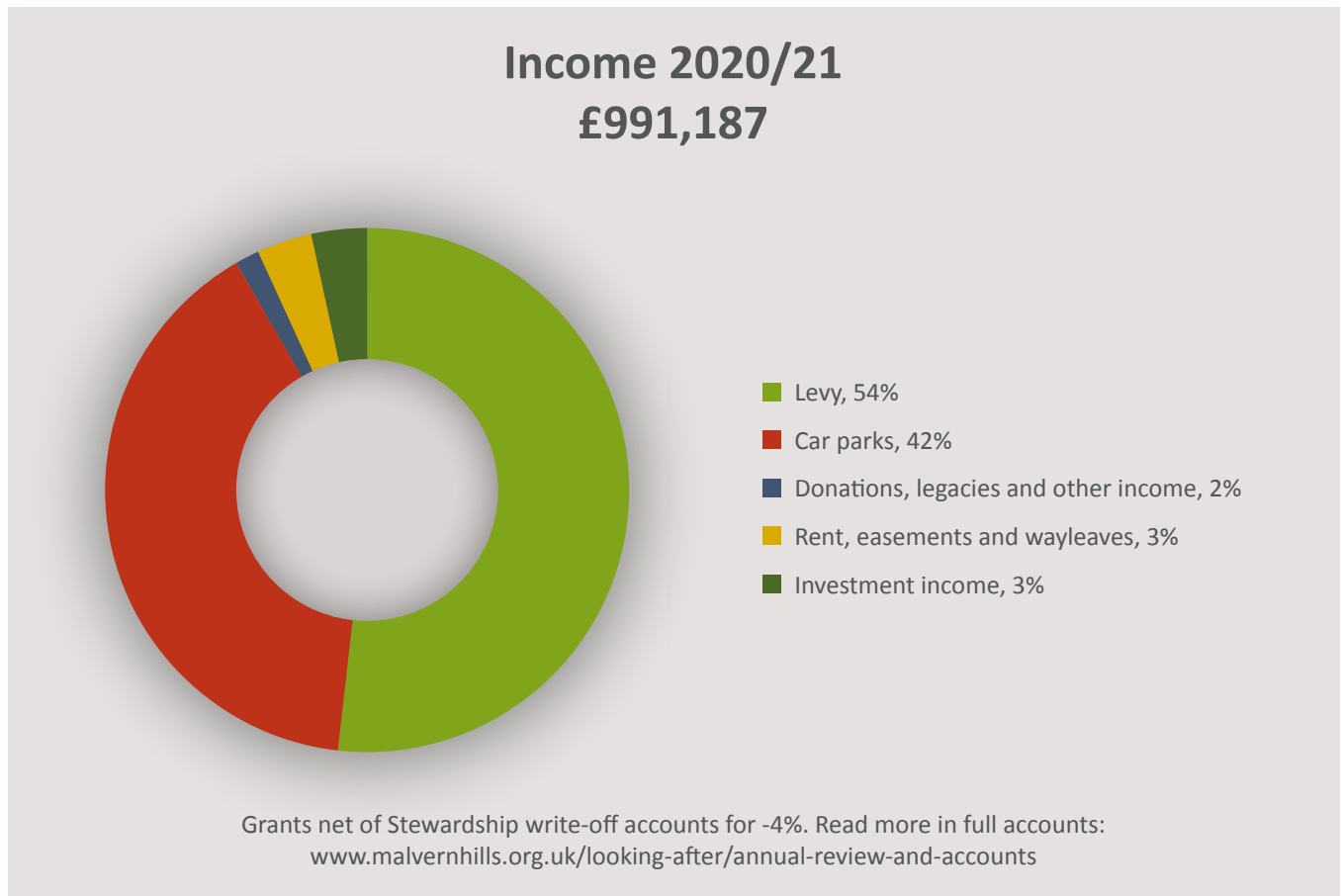
For over 15 years MHT has delivered these agreements and received the appropriate grants without a problem. However, it has come to light that the government body responsible for administering the schemes, the Rural Payment Agency, made several changes to the Trust's largest Stewardship agreement without consultation. These changes have led to a large reduction in payments over several years.

The Trust is actively contesting these changes and demanding a full investigation by the RPA.

A resolution on the matter was not reached before the accounts were signed. As a prudent measure, the charity has excluded the accrued grant income from its accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021 and will not account for any further payments under this agreement until the dispute has been settled. The total amount excluded is £151,470. This calculation of this amount had been based on the signed grant agreement.

## Principal funding sources

The total income to the Trust for the period 2020/21 (after the exclusion of accrued income under the Countryside Stewardship agreement for the North & Central Hills, explained on page 18) was £991,187, down compared to £1,415,355 the previous year which included a large legacy. The split of this figure across the five main income sources is shown below.



Under powers in the Malvern Hills Acts, Malvern Hills Trust charges a levy to Council Tax payers in Malvern Town and the parishes of West Malvern, Malvern Wells, Guarlford, Colwall and Mathon. The average band D levy payable in 2020/21 was £38.13. The total levy received by the charity was £534,850.

Revenue from car parks is the second principal funding source. The total received in 2020/21 was £412,659, this figure being boosted by very high visitor numbers during the year. Car park takings are used to fund the charity's work including maintaining the car parks for public use.

## Donations and legacies

Donations and legacies are an important part of our income and help to fund special projects in addition to the ongoing work on the Hills and Commons. The trustees and staff are very grateful for all donations and legacies made to support our work.

Donations and legacies received in 2020/21 totalled £5,244 (£299,020 in the previous year thanks to a generous legacy from the late Mr Stubbs). Donations received in 2020/21 have been adversely affected by the pandemic, with opportunities for engagement with the public through events being restricted.

In late 2018 we launched a legacy campaign, producing a new legacies leaflet which was widely distributed and joining the 'Remember a Charity' organisation. A copy of our legacy leaflet can be found on our website.

A fundraising working group has been set up to investigate opportunities for developing this aspect of the charity's income.

If you would like to support our work, please contact us on [info@malvernhills.org.uk](mailto:info@malvernhills.org.uk) or you can donate via our Just Giving page: [www.justgiving.com/malvernhillstrust](https://www.justgiving.com/malvernhillstrust).

### Ash dieback campaign

We're facing a huge challenge as the effects of ash dieback disease take hold across the Hills and Commons (read more page 15).

As the disease progresses and the condition of ash deteriorates, more ash will need to be removed for public safety.

This comes at a huge financial cost and it is estimated that £60,000 per year will be required for at least the next 5 years to tackle this crisis.

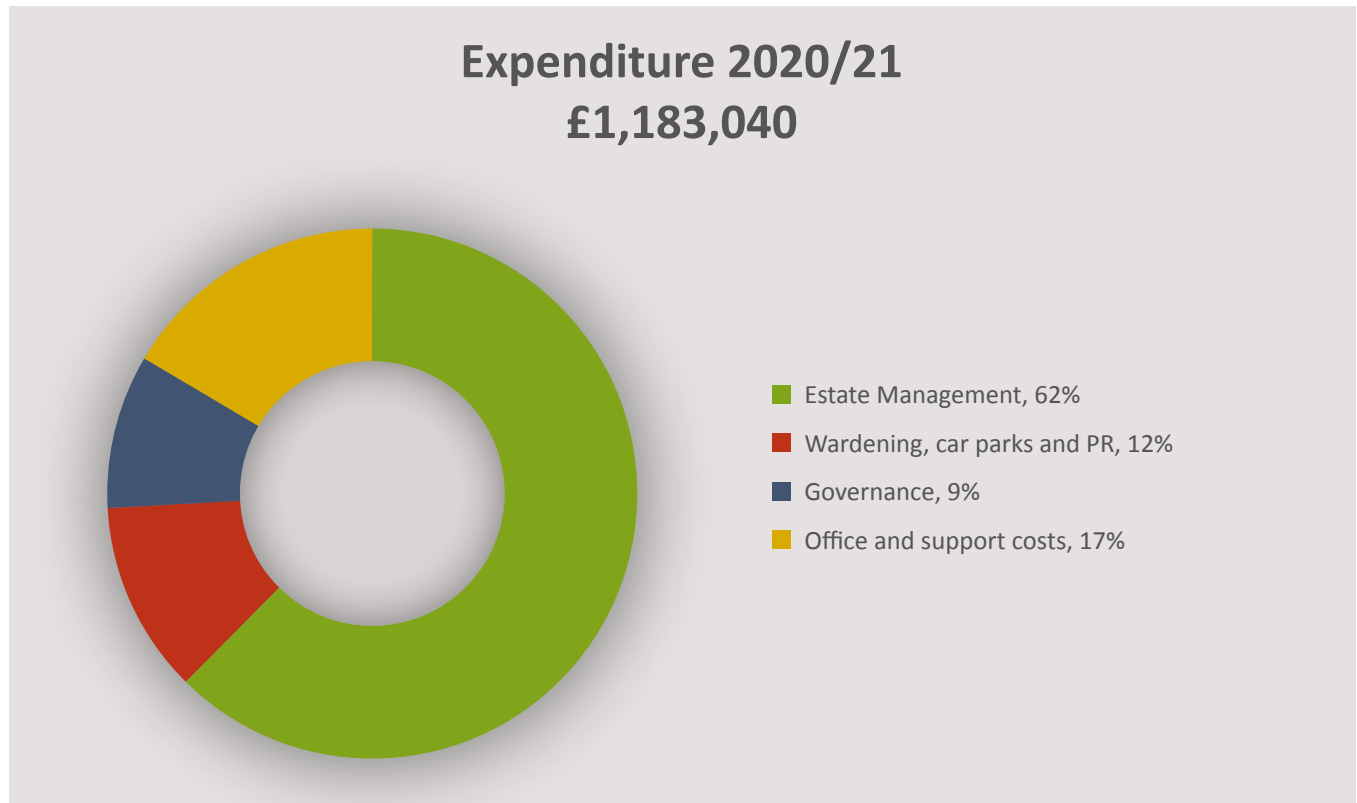
We've launched a fundraising campaign to help cover the huge costs of this work. Read more and please donate: [www.justgiving.com/campaign/MalvernHillsAshDieback](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/MalvernHillsAshDieback).



Work to remove an ash tree at British Camp

# How the charity's money is used

The Trust spent £1,183,040 during the period, slightly up from £1,182,153 in 2019/20. This expenditure is shown on a percentage basis across the five main areas of costs below.



62 % of the total expenditure was on estate maintenance, which includes:

- Salaries of the Field Staff and Conservation team,
- Grazing costs,
- Direct land management costs such as tree work, contractors and equipment hire,
- Depreciation charges on land management equipment purchased by the charity,
- Legal fees relating to land management issues,
- Insurance.

In addition, a further 12 % of the total expenditure was spent on wardening services, repair and maintenance of the car parks, visitor information, interpretation and public relations.

As a result, a total of 74 % was spent in the management and maintenance of the land under the Trust's jurisdiction. Governance costs accounted for 9 % of total expenditure. Office and support costs accounted for 17 % of the year's costs. This included

- Salaries of the office staff,
- IT costs, office equipment and maintenance,
- Office rates and services (power, water, telephones and broadband),
- Printing, postage and stationery,
- Bank charges.

# Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31st March 2021

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2021
	£	£	£
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>			
Donations and legacies	4,594	650	5,244
Charitable activities:			
Management of the hills and commons	489,350	3,729	493,079
Car parks	412,659	0	412,659
Other trading activities	35,039	889	35,928
Investments:			
Bank deposits	1,302	0	1,302
Investment portfolio	0	33,865	33,865
Other	9,110	0	9,110
<b>Total income</b>	<b>952,054</b>	<b>39,133</b>	<b>991,187</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Charitable activities	1,057,324	110,555	1,167,879
Other expenditures	6,144	9,017	15,161
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>1,063,468</b>	<b>119,572</b>	<b>1,183,040</b>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	0	333,269	333,269
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	<b>(111,414)</b>	<b>252,830</b>	<b>141,416</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	15,223	(15,223)	0
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses)</b>			
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	(405,000)	0	(405,000)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(501,191)</b>	<b>237,607</b>	<b>(263,584)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>			
Total funds brought forward	(735,337)	2,895,030	2,159,693
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>(1,236,528)</b>	<b>3,132,637</b>	<b>1,896,109</b>

This table is extracted from the audited Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021, which received an unqualified audit report. Copies of the full report are available to download from [our website](http://www.malvern hills.org.uk) [www.malvern hills.org.uk](http://www.malvern hills.org.uk).

# Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021

		2021
		£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible fixed assets		437,893
Heritage assets		1,060,261
Investments		1,694,759
	<b>Total fixed assets</b>	<b>3,192,913</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Livestock		25,320
Debtors		58,299
Short term deposits		992,628
Cash at bank and in hand		200
	<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>1,076,447</b>
<b>Creditors:</b> Amounts falling due within one year		(117,251)
<b>Net Current Assets excluding pension liability</b>		<b>959,196</b>
	<b>Net assets</b>	<b>4,152,109</b>
Pension Fund liability		(2,256,000)
<b>Net Assets including pension liability</b>		<b>1,896,109</b>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>		
Unrestricted - General Fund		439,722
Unrestricted - Designated Funds		579,750
Unrestricted - Pension Fund		(2,256,000)
Restricted Funds		3,132,637
	<b>Total charity funds</b>	<b>1,896,109</b>

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If you'd like to keep up to date with the work of the Trust, view our [Latest News](#) on our website or [sign up to our e-newsletter](#).

Malvern Hills Trust is the registered working name of the Malvern Hills Conservators. Registered charity number 515804.

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# Malvern Hills Trust