



## Malvern Hills Advent – Days 1 to 13!



### Advent Day 1 - Happy Advent!

Over the next 25 days we'll be posting a photo a day highlighting some of the day to day work of our staff. Throughout the advent period we hope to give you an insight into the many varied activities, duties and tasks we undertake in caring for the Malvern Hills and Commons landscape.

To kick us off on day 1 - say hello to our warden team Simon, Mike, Rich and Ange who are out and about on the Hills and Commons every day of the year (apart from Christmas Day)! You will find more about their work and other Trust staff throughout this month...



### Advent Day 2 - Andy maps out grazing compartments using GPS at the Old Hills.

The Trust has jurisdiction over almost 1,200 hectares of land including much of the iconic Malvern Hills ridgeline. We also care for many lowland commons including the Old Hills, Callow End.

A small herd of Highland Cattle graze this site to conserve the special open habitats. Andy, Conservation Officer, has been mapping new areas for cattle grazing in the spring.



### Advent Day 3 - Neil pollards willow trees on Malvern Common.

The winter is the time for tree works. With many older, mature trees on Trust land some of them need a little attention.

To extend the life of the trees and to stop them falling to pieces, Neil, Field Staff, has been pollarding willows. The trees will sprout new branches in the spring and have been managed in this way for many years. You may also see pollarded black poplar trees and horse chestnuts in the landscape.



## Advent Day 4 - Rich checks the car park meters at Earnslaw car park.

Did you know that visitors using our car parks provide around 28 % of our income each year?

Thank you to all those who pay and display or purchase parking passes and support our conservation work on the Hills. Whether we're repairing paths, undertaking woodland management for small mammals or purchasing hand tools for our volunteers, your contribution is really important in helping us care for this landscape.

Find out more about the parking passes available here:

<https://www.malvern hills.org.uk/visiting/parking/>



## Advent Day 5 - An induction event for trustees.

Today is International Volunteer Day so we'd like to introduce our Trustees! Members of the Board of trustees are volunteers and are responsible for the strategic oversight of the charity and ensuring that we are meeting our charitable objectives in the work we do.

Elections for trustees are held every 4 years and following elections this autumn we've been hosting a series of events to help trustees learn about the Trust and, in this particular outing, gain an insight into the land management undertaken across this varied landscape.

Check out our [Board member profiles](#).



## Advent Day 6 - Angela clears gorse from the slopes of British Camp.

The hillfort at British Camp is one of three Scheduled Monuments under the care of the Trust. This designation means that these archaeological features are of national importance.

Angela (warden) recently led a volunteer day here to cut and remove gorse from the monument.

It is essential that British Camp is kept free of dense and large vegetation, including scrub and trees, which can obscure the fantastic banks and ditches but the roots of these plants can also cause damage to the archaeological structure hidden underground.



## Advent Day 7 - Rich prepares to take a donkey to its new home.

Not all of the cultural heritage found on the Malvern Hills and Commons is nationally important (like British Camp) but each piece of history links back to stories of the past. From springs and spouts to 17th century boundary ditches, there's plenty to discover.

With this in mind, do you know where Rich has taken this donkey to?

Clue: It was once a popular place where you could hire a ride to the top of the Malverns!



## Advent Day 8 - Cindy prepares Board papers for an upcoming Committee meeting.

Our Board and Committees meet regularly to discuss a wide variety of topics and make strategic decisions for the organisation. Ahead of a meeting, papers are prepared by staff and consolidated and distributed by Cindy (Administrative Assistant) to provide information to trustees and the public.

Find out more about the [purposes of our different committees](#) and find links to the events calendar where papers and minutes from meetings are available to view.



## Advent Day 9 - MHT staff lead a school volunteer task.

In 2022 pupils from the Chase School planted seven large trees in their local community along Poolbrook Road. Yesterday, with guidance from Angela (Warden), and Neil and Martin (Field Staff), pupils returned to weed and mulch the trees to give them the best chance for the future.

The tree planting was funded by the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge Fund and we're delighted to have students from the local school involved in this project. A huge thank you to everyone who got stuck in on a rainy afternoon!



## Advent Day 10 - Simon fills a pothole in a car park.

Not all the jobs we do are glamorous but they are essential. The car parks offer a starting point for visitors to explore the Hills and Commons and Simon (warden) has been filling in some small potholes at West of England car park. With 20 car parks to maintain across the Trust's estate, there's always work to be done.

At this time of year, with cold, wet weather, potholes can be more of a problem so we're expecting to do more over the next few months! The wardens will also clear leaves and collect litter from car parks to make sure they're ready to receive visitors.



## Advent Day 11 - Beck examines some geology at Berrington Quarry.

The quarries, although destructive, have uncovered some incredible geological wonders.

Volunteers from the Earth Heritage Trust have been clearing vegetation from rock faces at Berrington Quarry to re-expose parts of the geology which tell a complex story. Beck (Community and Conservation Officer) visited the volunteers on site to learn more about the geology at the quarry.

You can learn more about the geology of the Malverns at Tank Quarry car park where there are information boards and rock samples to discover.



## Advent Day 12 - Simon marks trees for removal in a woodland.

Around 30% of the land we care for is woodland which provides benefits for the climate, a home for wildlife, and place for people to enjoy green space.

Historically, woodlands have been managed by people for example, for timber production and we continue to manage woodlands to benefit wildlife. Dense stands of trees compete for light and nutrients which can lead to poor tree health and lower diversity within a woodland. Selective thinning ensures healthy trees are given the space to thrive. At land near Evendine Lane, Simon (warden) has been marking trees for removal by volunteers.



## **Advent Day 13 - Jonathan installs a tree guard at Ballards Land.**

Trees aren't just found in our woodlands, but also in some of the fields we manage where they offer shade and protection from the weather for livestock.

At Ballards Land, Chase Road, there are lots of very old in-field trees which will eventually come to the end of their lives. To provide the next generation, we're going to be planting some new trees here. As cattle and sheep graze the fields we need to protect the trees from their nibbling so Jonathan (Conservation Manager) has been installing cattle-proof tree guards ready for planting later this season.

Follow the second half of our advent countdown on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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