

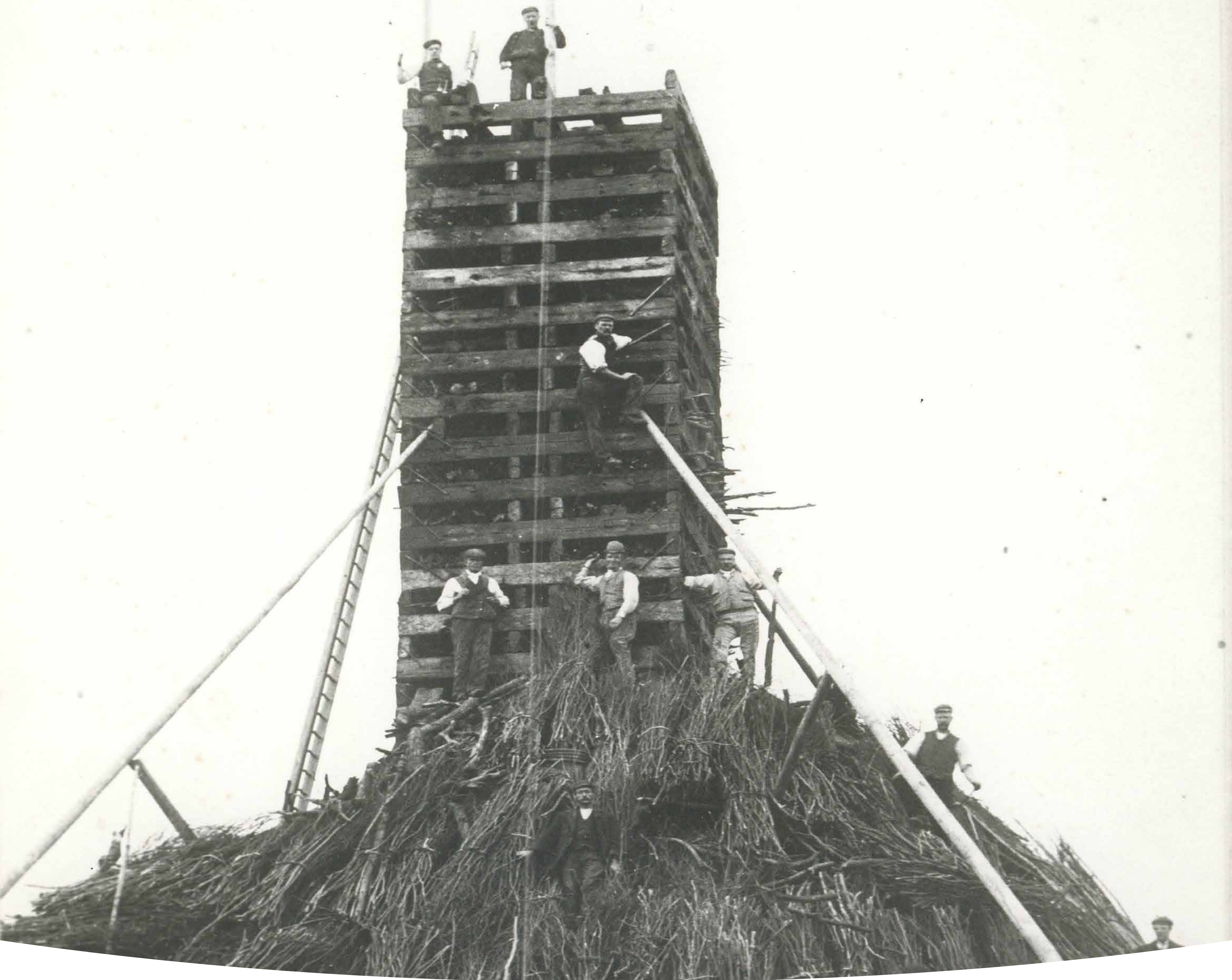


Man stands beside
Ivy Scar Rock
(no date, early 1900s)

140 years of the Malvern Hills Trust

The Malvern Hills Trust celebrates its 140th anniversary in 2024. We have been protecting and conserving much of the Malvern Hills and Commons landscape since 1884 ensuring that important green spaces in and around Malvern remain open to the public. Take a stroll through some images from our archive and hints of what may come over the next 140 years of the Trust...

140 YEARS
ANNIVERSARY 1884 - 2024



Jubilee Bonfire on
Worcestershire Beacon (1897)

Marking the occasion

The top of the Worcestershire Beacon stands prominently in the landscape and has been a location for many a celebration. This beacon from 1897 was lit to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. One of the more recent beacons was to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022.

140 YEARS
ANNIVERSARY 1884 - 2024

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Conservators. Registered charity number 515804



Malvern Hills Trust

Looking back...



View of Jubilee Drive from the Wyche Cutting (c1900)

The opening of Jubilee Drive

Members of the Ballard family of Colwall were instrumental in establishing the Malvern Hills Trust. Mr Stephen Ballard was an engineer who built the tunnels for the railway beneath the Hills, to join Colwall with Malvern. Mr Ballard also oversaw the building of Jubilee Drive on the western slopes connecting the Wyche Cutting with British Camp. The road was opened in 1887 and the footpath that runs above it in 1922.

140 YEARS
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View southwards from
Summer Hill © Philip Osbourn (2019)

Protecting green space

The Malvern Hills Trust now cares for almost 1,200 hectares including open hilltops, meadows and woodlands where you'll find fascinating local wildlife and rich cultural heritage. Over 140 years the Trust has acquired and been gifted land to ensure its protection for the future. This means greater protection for wildlife and accessible green space for the local community and visitors.

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Looking forward...

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Horses graze Link Common beside Moorlands Road (no date, early 1900s)

Grazing the commons

90% of the land the Trust cares for is registered Common Land and has been grazed by local people for centuries. Here on Link Common near Moorlands Road, horses can be seen grazing in the early 1900s. Link Common is no longer actively grazed, in part due to busy roads, more visitors and changes in farming economics and practices.

140 YEARS
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A grazier rounds up sheep and cattle (2024)

A farmed landscape

As a farmed landscape, grazing continues on the main Hills, on Castlemorton and Hollybed Commons, and at the Old Hills, Callow End. Cattle and sheep grazing is an essential part of conserving the rare open habitats that are home to ground nesting birds, butterflies and rare fungi. More than 60% of the land we care for is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest – a national recognition of their importance, predominantly for the open grassland and heathland habitats.

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Looking forward...



“Windy weather – off she goes”,
copy of a postcard (1855)

Up and away!

From a leisurely stroll and a picnic to paragliding from the summit, there are many ways to explore the Hills and Commons. Footpaths and bridleways criss-cross the landscape and in the Malvern Hills Acts, a right of access is afforded to those on foot for public recreation. Access to the green space of the Hills and Commons continues to be important for mental and physical health – as was the case in 1855!

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Malvern Hills Trust

Looking forward...



THE BRITISH CAMP HOTEL, NEAR MALVERN.

British Camp Hotel - now Malvern Hills Hotel
- and car park (1928)

Visiting the Hills

One of our core purposes is to keep the Hills and Commons open for public recreation. The loss of green space was one of the key concerns of the early proponents for the Malvern Hills Acts of Parliament. We continue to ensure access for increasing numbers of visitors, British Camp car park being the most popular place to start a walk.



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Path repair at the Gold Mine,
Beacon Road (1975)

Repair of paths

The summit of the Worcestershire Beacon, the highest point, can be reached by following a surfaced path from Beacon Road. This route has often been repaired to ensure good access and today it enables those using some types of mobility scooters to take in the fantastic views across Herefordshire and Worcestershire and beyond.

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"Coming down hill",
copy of a postcard (1853)

The Water Cure and wellbeing

The water flowing from springs on the Hills has been noted for its healing properties since the 1600s. St Ann's Well became a hugely popular visitor attraction at the height of the Water Cure (mid-1800s) when people flocked to Malvern to 'take the waters' which famously contained 'nothing at all'. Fresh air and exercise were also part of the Water Cure treatment.

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Looking back...



Donkey Boys and Girls
at Happy Valley (no date)

Donkey boys and girls

Visitors have flocked to the Malverns for centuries to take the waters, for a challenging walk, or to gaze at the views. Up until the 1940's donkeys were available to hire for those who wanted, or needed, a ride to the top! You can follow in the steps of the last donkey woman, Alice Betteridge, from the Donkey Shed at Happy Valley to her old home beside North Quarry car park (marked with a plaque).

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Restored Donkey Shed at Happy Valley (2022)

Local heritage

We care for three nationally important Scheduled Monuments and several listed buildings, but there are other parts of Malvern's heritage that are of local importance. The Donkey Shed at Happy Valley has recently been carefully restored using photographs from our archive to ensure an accurate restoration. Walk up the hill past the Unicorn Pub, take a look at the original feed troughs and say hello to one of the residents!

140 YEARS
ANNIVERSARY 1884 - 2024



Ranger collects litter © RSRE (1987)

The trouble with litter

Looking to the past or into the future, litter has featured throughout our 140-year history and its collection and disposal will always be part of our work. Back in the Edwardian period, glass bottles and crockery were some of the more common items found. Nowadays, dog poo bags, plastic drinks bottles and crisp packets are more troublesome.

140 YEARS
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View northwards from Wynds Point ©
Alfred Watkins (1924)

Rare open habitats

The landscape here has changed dramatically over the last 140 years. The decline and eventual loss of grazing livestock from the Hills in the 1990s has led to an increase in tree cover. Rare open grassland and heathland habitats have been overtaken by secondary woodland, which has negative impacts on views, birds and butterflies whilst also providing more habitat for bats.

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Controlled burning © RSRE (1987)

Managing habitats

Controlled burning was once used to manage vegetation to maintain the open grasslands. Due to an increased number of visitors and the alternative methods now available, burning is no longer carried out on the Hills. Instead, a combination of grazing, bracken rolling by tractors and remote-controlled mowers tackle the steep terrain to keep that Malvern character.

140 YEARS
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Stem injection of
Cherry Laurel at Earnslaw (2023)

Action against invasive species

As the climate warms and exotic plants continue to be traded across the globe, there is an increased risk of non-native invasive plants taking hold in the Malverns. These species can outcompete and smother local vegetation. Projects are already underway to eradicate Cherry Laurel from the hillsides and water plants such as Water Fern from ponds on the Commons.

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Looking forward...



Tree safety work,
Community Woodland (2023)

Tackling tree diseases

Tree diseases including Ash Dieback are devastating some of our woodlands. There are no cures for this disease and extensive tree safety works are needed to remove severely infected trees.

In a changing climate we expect to see more tree diseases in the future, which will have further significant impacts on local woodland ecology. We're planting a mixture of species across the estate to try to build up resilience to future changes.

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Malvern Hills Trust

Looking forward...



Volunteers at the Old Hills (2023)

Volunteering in action

Volunteers offer a huge support to the Trust both through assisting in the office and sorting archives, and out and about on the Hills and Commons. Our Wardens lead volunteer conservation tasks including scrub clearance, coppicing and pond works. We're extremely grateful to everyone who has generously given their time in the past and look forward to meeting new volunteers in the future.

140 YEARS
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Volunteers clear vegetation at Westminster Quarry (2023)

A geological story

The quarries, although originally destructive, now offer a fantastic view into the Hills' 680 million-year history. Volunteers from local geology groups clear vegetation from the rock faces to reveal the complex geological history of the Malverns for experts, students and enthusiasts to study. Discover more about the rocks and minerals of the Hills through interpretation at Tank Quarry.

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Quarry buildings and equipment
at Earnslaw Quarry (c1930)

Closure of the quarries

Quarrying for Malvern stone threatened to break the skyline of the Malvern Hills. They were important employers of local people in Malvern and many difficult discussions were had in the process of closing down the quarrying. In the 1970s the final working quarry at The Gullet closed. Earnslaw Quarry, seen here, is now a popular car park and the garage can still be seen at the roadside.

140 YEARS
ANNIVERSARY 1884 - 2024



Steam powered fair on Link Common
(no date, early 1900s)

Community events

Link Common has always been a place for the community to congregate and enjoy themselves. This photo from the early 1900s shows a steam fair on the Common opposite what is now Malvern Fire Station. The Common continues to be used for events including circuses, music festivals and sports activities.

140 YEARS
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Chase School students plant trees,
Poolbrook (2022)

Community tree planting

Encouraging younger generations to get involved and understand the importance of caring for their local environment is a part of the Trust's work. This winter, pupils from The Chase School Eco Club returned to weed seven trees they planted in the Poolbrook area. Thanks to the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge Fund for grant aid.

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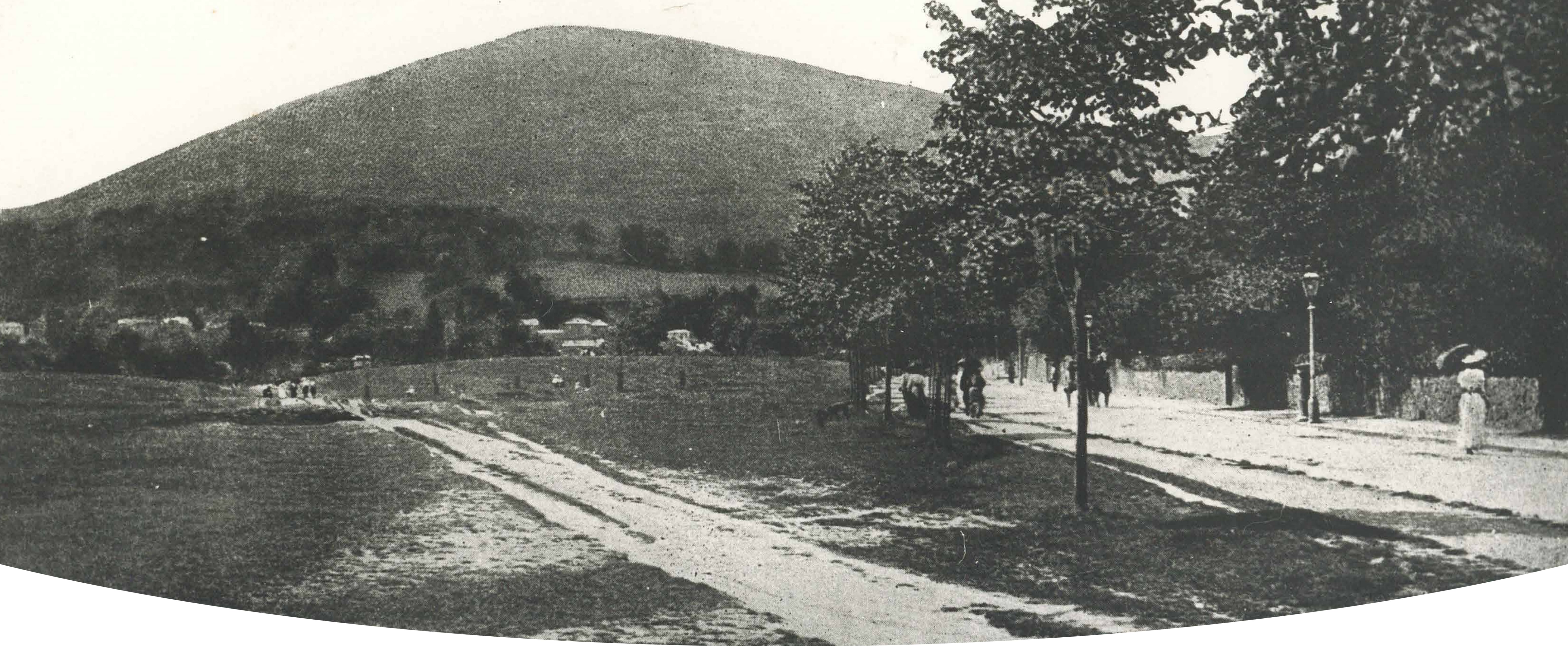
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Looking forward...



Tree planting on Link Common (1912)

Avenues of Malvern

Historic tree planting projects along roads in suburban areas, were often for aesthetic reasons and the tree avenues throughout Malvern are now characteristic of the area. Trees also offer huge benefits by providing homes for wildlife, absorbing CO₂, filtering pollutants and cooling urban areas in a warming climate. Where possible we are planting new trees next to existing avenues for the next generation.

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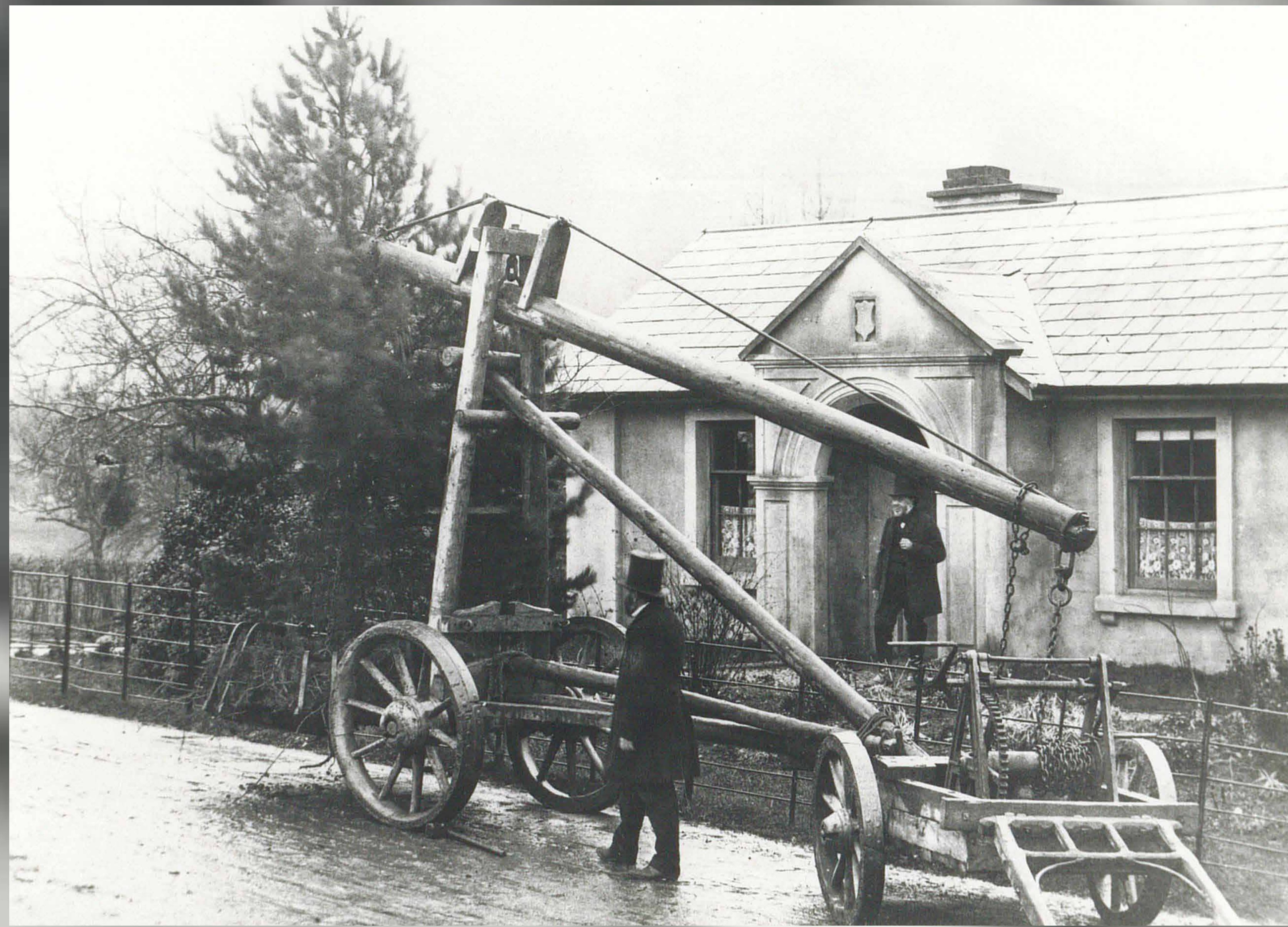


Hay cut, Guarlford Road (2023)

Hay meadows

Around 97 % of UK wildflower meadows have been lost since the 1930s. This has had a devastating impact on pollinators such as bees and butterflies, which thrive in these flower-rich, biodiverse habitats. Increasingly, more of the wide road verges and open commons are managed as hay meadows. Cut late in summer, the hay is used to feed local livestock.

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Mr Ballard's contraption (1864)

Technological improvements

The setting in which the Malverns now exist has changed dramatically from the 1880s when the organisation was established. Improved technology including machinery, photography, mapping and data collection all now contribute to our day-to-day work. As an engineer and innovator, Mr Stephen Ballard created a contraption to transport shrubs and trees, seen here in action in 1864.

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New trustees meet on Malvern Common (2023)

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees makes strategic decisions to guide the organisation. Trustees serve for terms of four years. Eleven are elected by local levy payers and a further 18 are nominated by local councils and parishes. In autumn, elections were held in the levy paying parishes and new trustees have been learning all about the complexities of the Trust and the important work we do in conserving this landscape.

140 YEARS
ANNIVERSARY 1884 - 2024

MALVERN HILLS & COMMONS Proposed Act of Parliament.

A MEETING of FREEHOLDERS, TENANTS, and COMMONERS of GREAT MALVERN, COLWALL, and MATHON, will be held at the WORKMAN'S ROOM, COLWALL STONE, on SATURDAY, 11th NOVEMBER, at 3 o'clock, for the purpose of discussing the advantages or disadvantages of the BILL which is proposed (vesting the Hills and Commons in a body of Malvern Conservators), when the attendance of PERSONS interested in the subject is invited.

**STEPHEN BALLARD,
JOHN CHEESE,
HENRY LAKIN,
R. W. RAPER.**

Dated November 4th. 1882

Poster to announce a meeting to discuss a Malvern Hills Act (1882)

How it all began

In 1882 a public meeting was called to discuss the proposal for an Act of Parliament to create an organisation to protect and conserve the Malvern Hills and Commons.

The importance of protecting this landscape is still as keen as it was then and we're looking to put forward another bill to Parliament to make changes, bringing the organisation into the 21st century.

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Looking forward...



Early Board of the
Malvern Hills Trust (c1900)

Fit for the 21st Century?



The world in which the Trust was established has changed dramatically. The provisions laid out in the first Act in 1884 and the subsequent four Acts are cumbersome and outdated. This hampers our efforts to deliver our duties to conserve and protect the Malvern Hills and Commons. It is essential that the measures in these Acts be consolidated and updated to enable the Trust to continue to look after the Hills and commons effectively. Find out more about how we want to future-proof the organisation for the next 140 years
www.malvern hills.org.uk/governance-changes

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