

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

RECORD OF OFFICER EXECUTIVE DECISION

Date Of Decision	07/09/11 Malvern Hills AONB Partnership Steering Group supports the development of the Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project. 16/01/13 Malvern Hills AONB Partnership Steering Group supports the commitment of human and financial resources to the Development Phase of the Project. 02/12/12 Malvern Hills AONB Partnership Joint Advisory Committee resolved to support the Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project.
Decision Maker	Within WCC, Andy Maginnis, Programme and Commissioning Manager. Andy is also Chairman of the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership which sponsored the application (see decision making process above). The Partnership does not have a corporate identity in its own right and WCC has historically hosted the AONB Unit and acted as "banker" for the Partnership. WCC Legal Services and Financial Services were consulted before the application was submitted.
Brief Description Of Decision	To have the Malvern Hills AONB Unit develop and lead on a project to restore traditional orchards and secure resources to assist with that.
Reason(s) For Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Orchards are a UK Biodiversity Plan priority habitat. • Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire have the highest densities of surviving traditional orchards in England. • The Malvern Hills AONB Unit operates in all three counties. • In the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan 2009-14, Strategic Objective FO2 states that orchards should be brought into favourable conservation condition. • Government policy supports a 'landscape scale' approach to biodiversity conservation.
Alternative Options Considered And Rejected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing nothing would result in further decay of this important habitat, therefore was not an option. • No other organisation has a specific cross-border remit for the three counties and the Malvern Hills AONB Unit has expertise in forging and working with partnerships. So the decision was made for the AONB Unit to lead. • It was estimated that this project would need around £300,000 - £400,000 to achieve its ends. Such a scale of funds were unlikely to be forthcoming from local government, whereas national grant giving bodies were receptive to this scale and theme of project. It was therefore decided to approach the national bodies first.
Any Conflict of Interest declared by a consulted	None

Cabinet Member/ any dispensation granted	
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March 2013
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