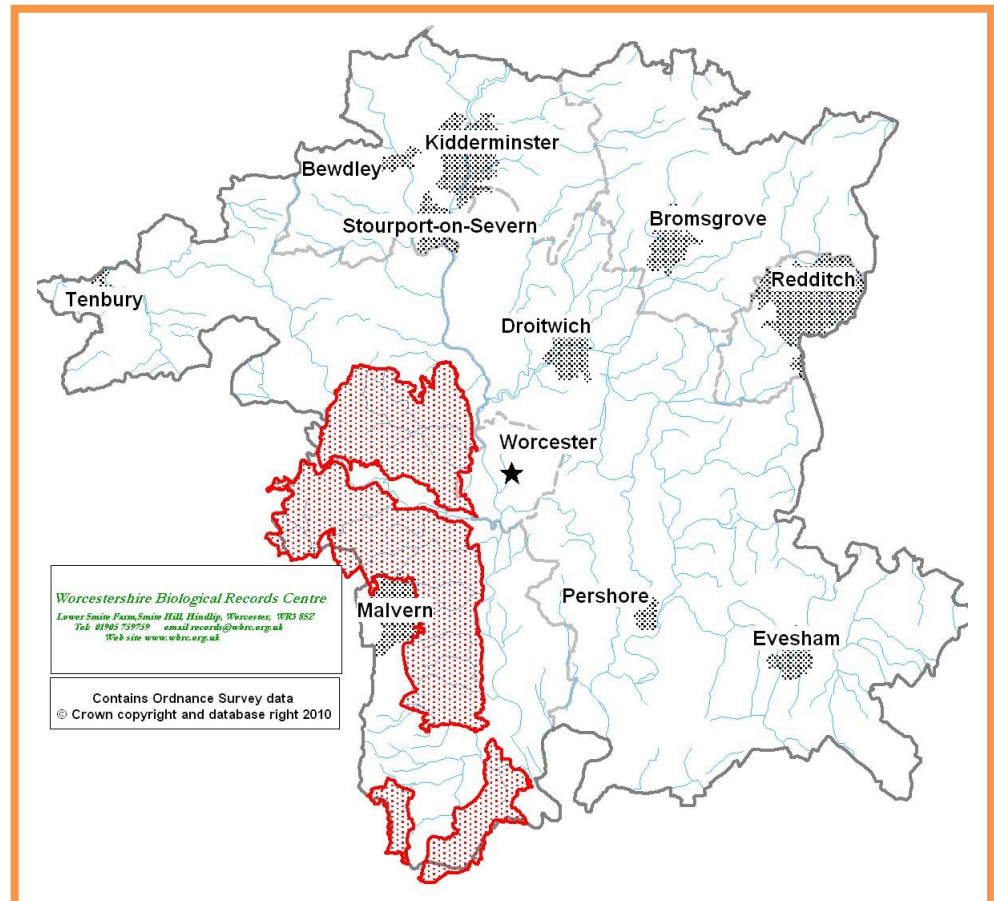
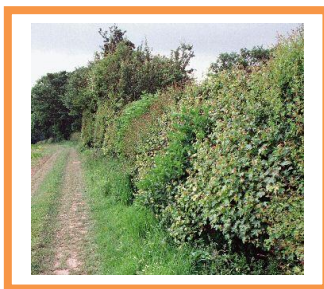


# Malvern Chase with Laugherne Valley

Updated October,  
2016

The Biodiversity Delivery Areas were agreed by the Local Nature Partnership in 2016 to indicate, spatially and strategically, where according to current knowledge and resource, priority areas for the delivery of the Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan.



## Why is the Malvern Chase with Laugherne Valley a biodiversity priority?

The Malvern Chase and the Laugherne Valley together contain a rich mosaic of acid grassland and species-rich neutral meadows, traditional orchard, wooded hills and valleys, parkland and scrub. Hedgerows and veteran oak pollards are a characteristic feature and around the commons black poplars are frequent as roadside and streamside trees. The River Teme and its floodplain bisect the northern half of the area. The landscape between Worcester and Malvern provides important opportunities for linking habitat restoration and creation to the socio-economic agenda, particularly through the development and delivery of the county Green Infrastructure framework.

## Malvern Chase with Laugharne Valley: meeting the local criteria for a Biodiversity Delivery Area

<p>Delivering Local Biodiversity Action Plan targets .. ability to deliver significantly towards achieving the targets and actions for multiple BAP habitats and species</p>	<p>Priority habitats: lowland meadows; acid grassland; traditional orchard; wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees; ancient semi-natural woodland; ancient species-rich hedgerows; ponds</p> <p>Priority species: noble chafer; dormouse; black poplar</p>
<p>Addressing socio-economic factors .. links to delivery of health, tourism, economic, rural regeneration, flood alleviation or other sector agenda</p>	<p>Growth point pressure on both sides of the project area provides an opportunity for engaging with communities and the health and well being agenda</p>
<p>Practical delivery opportunities .. landowner and community support, projects already in preparation or existence, delivery partnership identified</p>	<p>Mixed size of land-ownerships and mixed land use; links to the Malvern commons; opportunities for linking delivery of biodiversity enhancement with delivery of Green Infrastructure objectives for access and recreation</p>
<p>Availability of resources .. policy or legislative drivers, existing funding streams, commitment of time and resources from partners</p>	<p>The developing Green Infrastructure framework will provide a key driver for delivery and opportunities to access new funding streams; the Malvern Chase with Laugharne Valley is situated within the Wye, Severn and Avon Vales Integrated Biodiversity Delivery Area</p>

### What needs to be achieved within this Biodiversity Delivery Area?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovation in the use of new or alternative funding sources through the delivery of multi-sector objectives, linking especially to supporting development and delivery of a Worcestershire Green Infrastructure framework (and emerging strategy) that protects and enhances priority habitats</li> </ul>	<p>Meeting objectives for:</p> <p>Biodiversity ✓ Green infrastructure ✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successfully address the challenges of restoring a highly ecologically diverse landscape with both rural and urban fringe influences by forming strong partnerships to enable delivery that addresses multi-sector objectives</li> </ul>	<p>Biodiversity ✓ Partnership working ✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect, enhance and restore connectivity of habitats, securing funding for creation, restoration and management of the hedgerows and hedgerow tree network, pond networks and connections between blocks of ancient woodland</li> </ul>	<p>Biodiversity ✓ Climate change adaptation ✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate, encourage and enable economically viable management of small lowland meadow, acid grassland and traditional orchard sites with those sites ineligible for agri-environment schemes and listed Local Sites a priority</li> </ul>	<p>Biodiversity ✓ Economy ✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage and promote key nature reserves or appropriate Local Sites as 'flagships' to demonstrate best practice to other landowners and encourage recreation and volunteering</li> </ul>	<p>Access &amp; recreation ✓ Biodiversity ✓ Health ✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding for wood pasture and parkland restoration and management and the protection and restoration of veteran trees</li> </ul>	<p>Biodiversity ✓</p>

BAP Targets for key habitats within the Malvern Chase with Laugherne Valley Biodiversity Delivery Area		Target Type	Worcestershire Habitat Targets 2017	West Mids Habitat Targets 2015	Proportion of West Mids target to be delivered in Worcs
Ancient/species-rich hedgerows	Hedgerow networks contribute to the wooded character, provide connectivity between woodland blocks and habitat for dormice and other fauna.	Maintain extent	1543km	No Net Loss	n/a
		Restore	20km	49km	29%
		Create	5km	99km	3%
Neutral grassland (lowland meadow)	Found throughout the area as small, scattered and isolated fragments. A number of sites are in conservation ownership.	Maintain extent	1225ha	2926ha	41%
		Restore	300ha	469ha	45%
		Create	66ha	202ha	23%
Traditional orchards	Orchards are found throughout the area, with a concentration in the north. Many are small, remnant sites with aging trees. Many orchards here support populations of noble chafer.	Maintain extent	2300ha	8224ha	27%
		Restore	87ha	157ha	39%
		Create	120ha	232ha	37%
Veteran trees with lowland wood pasture and parkland	The area contains a high number of hedgerow pollards and several significant wood pasture and parkland sites.	Maintain extent	25 sites	Unknown	n/a
		Restore	4 sites	25 sites	15%
		Create	1 site	15 sites	6%
Woodland	The ridgeline of the Abberley and Suckley Hills is heavily wooded. Elsewhere, small ancient woodlands are frequent.	Maintain extent	4293ha	44186ha	9%
		Restore	1000ha	3679ha	19%
		Create	430ha	3653ha	8%
Ponds	Ponds are an important component of the farmed landscape, providing habitat for a range of species including great crested newt.	Maintain extent	n/a	No Net Loss	n/a
		Restore	36 sites	177 sites	20%
		Create	18 sites	168 sites	10%
Acid grassland	Occasional fragments of acid grassland are found here associated with the various Commons.	Maintain extent	890ha	956ha	93%
		Restore	100ha	63ha	158%
		Create	2ha	41ha	5%

## Contributing Projects

The northern tip of the Malvern Hills AONB and the delivery area for the AONB Partnership Management Plan extends into the Biodiversity Delivery Area.

The Malvern Hills Conservators manage 1200 hectares of the Malvern Hills and Commons

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust are promoting the monitoring and management of Local Geological Sites through the Champions Project

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust Living Landscapes project includes the Malvern Chase.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's Flagship Reserves project where key sites will be used to develop, apply and demonstrate best practice conservation methods and promote community involvement and access includes the Knapp and Papermill reserve.

The Malvern Hills Higher Level Stewardship target area extends into the western edge of the Malvern Chase and into the southern part of the Laugherne Valley.

The Malvern Community Forest group has recently been established with a remit to increase woodland cover and woodland management within the historic area of the Malvern Chase.

The 1250 square kilometres of the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark was created to celebrate and promote the geological, landscape and associated heritage between Gloucester and Bridgenorth.

Malvern Chase and Laugherne Valley forms part of the Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project; restoring and managing traditional orchards.

## Taking a multi-sector approach: linking biodiversity to other agendas

Access and recreation	Huge potential for promoting and increasing access to the countryside and recreational activities linked to, for example, delivery of the emerging county Green Infrastructure strategy and in partnership with delivery of the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan.
Biodiversity	The landscape of this area is hugely varied and ecologically very diverse, which does present logistical challenges. There is significant potential to deliver county Biodiversity Action Plan targets for traditional orchard, lowland meadow, acid grassland, woodland and veteran trees.
Climate change adaptation	The broad mosaic of habitats present in this area present an important opportunity for delivering projects that together can create and restore a functioning network of connected sites to achieve a bio-diverse, climate-resilient countryside.

Community	The large number of nature reserves and commons in conservation management already give opportunities for community involvement through volunteering and other activities. There is great potential for building on this and promoting participation from new audiences. Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Worcestershire County Council, Malvern Hills Conservators and Wychavon District Council all offer a range of volunteering opportunities on their sites, including habitat management, walks and talks to raise awareness of the importance of this habitat.
Economy	The management of small sites must be made economically viable to engage landowners in delivering biodiversity gain. Training, advice and the trialling of new economic models will be necessary.
Green Infrastructure	The landscape between Worcester and Malvern has been identified as being predominantly of High GI value. In particular, those sites identified for future housing growth provide important opportunities for targeting access, recreation and participation in biodiversity activity to help delivery of the county Green Infrastructure strategy.
Health	Strong links to access, recreation, community involvement and delivery of the county Green Infrastructure strategy provide an opportunity to work in partnership to address the health and well being agenda.
Partnership working	Partnership working with other sectors will be crucial and a major driver for delivery within this project area will be the ability to integrate biodiversity objectives with those of the socio-economic agenda. Effective engagement with landowners will also be hugely important. The development of the county Green Infrastructure framework will enable new partnerships and new funding sources to be explored.

### Integrating habitat and species needs

Key Worcestershire LBAP species whose needs must be integrated into habitat management and conservation within the Malvern Chase with Laugharne Valley Biodiversity Delivery Area are:

- Noble chafer: decaying fruit trees provide larval habitat so this species is dependent on traditional orchard. Increasing levels of survey work over the last 2-3 years is resulting in the discovery of new populations across the county. Orchards around the Abberley and Suckley Hills support important populations.
- Dormouse: found in woodland along the western edge of the county extending up into the Wyre Forest. Although numbers and population distribution are unclear there are good opportunities within this project area to increase the amount of habitat under suitable management for the species.

Supporting information for the Malvern Chase with Laugherne Valley Biodiversity Delivery Area.  
Statement produced October 2016 by the Worcestershire Local Nature Partnership.

- Black poplar: important, often veteran, specimens of black poplar are found throughout the southern part of the Malvern Chase along streams, roadsides and on the commons. Many of the veteran trees require restorative management and the propagation and establishment of female trees is also a priority.

### Further sources of information that should inform project development

Earth Heritage Trust [www.earthheritagetrust.org](http://www.earthheritagetrust.org)

Malvern Hills Conservators [www.malvernhills.org.uk](http://www.malvernhills.org.uk)

Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/biodiversity](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/biodiversity)

Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/landscape](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/landscape)

Malvern Hills AONB Partnership [www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk)

Worcestershire Biological Records Centre [www.wbrc.org.uk](http://www.wbrc.org.uk)

Worcestershire Habitat Inventory - see Worcestershire Biological Records Centre

Worcestershire Historic Environment Record [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/archaeology](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/archaeology)

National Character Area objectives for the Teme Valley and the Severn and Avon Vales  
[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)