

**Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

A warm welcome to the  
Malvern Hills Area of  
Outstanding Natural Beauty





# Congratulations on purchasing land and/or property in one of England's finest landscapes!

You have made a good investment in an area where property traditionally holds its value. The Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership welcomes you to the area. This leaflet explains why the Malvern Hills AONB is so special and what you can do to help keep it that way.

## What is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty?

An AONB is a designation for an area of land that is of national importance. The main purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape. The AONB landscape is equal in value to those of our National Parks and has the same levels of protection.





## What makes the Malvern Hills AONB so special?

- The landscape is stunning. The Malvern Hills are a high, dramatic ridge that is a visible landmark offering spectacular views for miles around. They are the backbone of the wider landscape that forms the AONB. A varied geology gives rise to a unique range of landscapes and natural habitats including species-rich grasslands, orchards, parklands, ridgelines, ponds, quarries, hedgerows and watercourses. These are home to a wide variety of wildlife habitats and species, many of which are nationally rare.
- Our past is on display in this landscape. There are ancient unenclosed commons, designed parks and gardens, Iron Age hill forts, moated sites and Victorian architecture. You will find a distinctive local character and a 'spirit of place' in settlements throughout the AONB.
- The Malvern Hills AONB offers relaxation and well-being. People come to enjoy the hills, wells and the tranquillity of the rural landscapes. There is open access in many places over the hills and commons. There are many opportunities for walking, cycling and various other recreational activities.
- Please be aware that many features within the AONB are so important that they have their own special designation and protection. These include Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Listed Buildings and protected species (e.g. bats and dormice).

## What particular rules or regulations apply to the AONB?

Many of your rights and obligations inside the AONB are just the same as those that apply in the rest of rural England. However, there are some differences. The nation wants to keep the quality of the AONB high and all public bodies have a duty of regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area.

This is why some of the policies and regulations that apply to the AONB are a little more restrictive than elsewhere. You may need help or advice if you want to change your home or other building or the way you manage your land. You could start by consulting the AONB Management Plan ([www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/management-plan](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/management-plan)). This document underpins local authority policy for the AONB and informs your local council's decision-making, for example on planning applications.





## Do I need planning permission if I want to make changes to my property?

It depends on what you wish to do and where. Some minor building works may not require you to apply for planning permission. The Government gives a general consent called 'permitted development rights' in relation to alterations and extensions but these rights are limited in AONBs. In some cases the local council limits further what you can do, using restrictive planning conditions when planning permission is granted. In most cases, outside of the AONB, you can alter the roof of your home or add a small side or rear extension without needing planning permission. Inside the AONB you are not permitted to extend to the side of the dwelling, extensions to the rear are limited and no alterations to its roof are allowed without first obtaining planning permission. Similarly, outside the AONB, provided you comply with certain criteria, you can normally put a single satellite dish on your house or in your garden. In the AONB, you will need planning permission for this if the dish is visible from a road. If you want to make changes to your property and avoid breaching planning policies or regulations it is advisable to contact your local council planning department. Their contact details are on their websites.

- Forest of Dean District Council:  
[www.fdean.gov.uk/residents/planning-building](http://www.fdean.gov.uk/residents/planning-building)
- Herefordshire Council:  
[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200140/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200140/planning_and_building_control)
- Malvern Hills District Council:  
[www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/planning-advice](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/planning-advice)

## How can I get help?

Visit the Malvern Hills AONB website; it has a wealth of information and advice. If you click on [www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/publications](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/publications), you can get the AONB Management Plan and a range of guidance documents. These can help with activities such as building design, garden and fruit tree management, using renewable energy and keeping horses in the landscape.

Contact the AONB team (details below); they work with land managers, community groups, local authorities and government agencies. The team offers advice and support on many ways to enhance the landscape and may even have access to some funding. If they cannot help you directly they should be able to put you in touch with someone who can.

**malvern hills**  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
PARTNERSHIP

Malvern Hills AONB Partnership  
Manor House  
Grange Road Malvern  
Worcestershire  
WR14 3EY

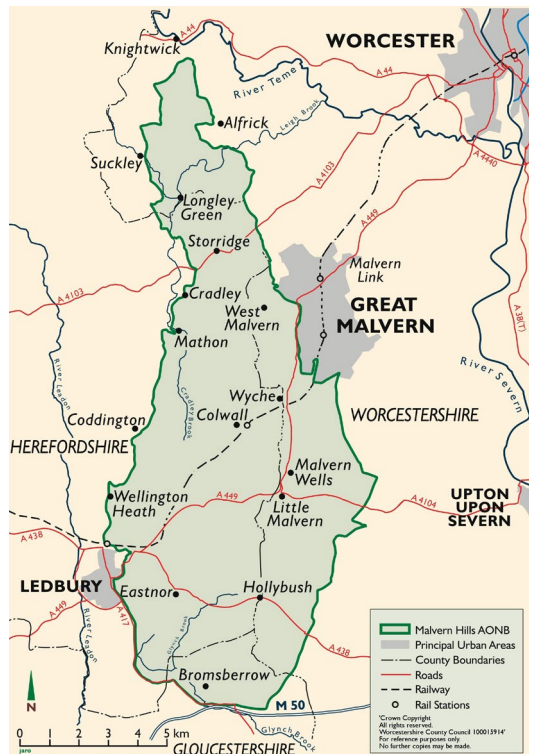
Tel: 01684 560616

Email: [aonb@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:aonb@worcestershire.gov.uk)

Web: [www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk)

 /MalvernHillsAONB

 /MHAONB



The following bodies provide core financial support to the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership: Defra, Herefordshire Council, Worcestershire County Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Gloucestershire County Council and Forest of Dean District Council.