

MH001 – Malvern Foothill Connections



Malvern Hills Trust

Overview

The Malvern Hills Trust was awarded £11,231.80 by FiPL for their application to plant new hedgerows, protect the hedgerows via fencing, restore an existing pond and planting in field trees. Part of the Malvern Hills Landscape Characteristics are small fields with thick hedgerow boundaries; this project sets out to restore part of this traditional landscape.

- **Total FiPL Grant: £11,321.80**
- **Additional funding from the MHT: £4,169.69**
- **% Of total funding awarded from FiPL: 72%**

Aim

The aim of the project was to **plant trees and hedgerows which support Carbon Sequestration, habitat connectivity, soil health and shade for livestock in the fields.** Additionally, the project has supported volunteer involvement which has enabled people to get out into the countryside connecting with their local community and environment.

Outcomes

The projected has included:

- **Replant 360m of native hedging**
- **Gaping-up 110m of existing hedging**
- **570m of FG2 fencing to protect the hedges**
- **Planting 9 native trees**
- **Restoring a silted-up pond**
- **And volunteer involvement**

Learning/Key to success

- **Tenant support and co-operation is essential**
- **Volunteer involvement is beneficial to project success**
- **Planning is key**





For more information please visit:

- <http://malvern hills.org.uk/latest-news/20211202-fi-pl-grant/>
- <https://www.malvern gazette.co.uk/news/19764205.new-hedgerows-planted-malvern-hills-protect-landscape/>



MH002 – COG Traditional Orchards for the Future Initiative

Overview

Traditional Orchards are a key and historic habitat within the Malvern Hills AONB. Due to a change in land uses and the financial costs of running a commercial orchard, many traditional orchards in the area have become derelict and fruit trees have not been replaced when they reach the end of their life cycle.



However, traditional orchards are a fantastic nature habitat for dead-wood requiring insects, hole-nesting and insectivorous birds, and bats. Additionally, fruit trees are hosts for fungi, lichens and mistletoes and can sequester significant amounts of carbon from the atmosphere.

Colwall Orchard Group is a local Volunteer Group who run the **Traditional Orchards for the Future Initiative (TOFI)** programme, replanting, restoring, and managing traditional orchards in the Colwall area within the Malvern Hills AONB.

- **Total grant: £8,520**
- **% of total funding awarded from FiPL: 100%**



Figure 1 - <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101569920>

Aim

The aim of the project was to restore and replant 5 existing and traditional orchards within the Colwall Area of the Malvern Hills AONB with traditional and heritage varieties of fruit trees. In undertaking this project, volunteers were including in the planting of the orchards, giving opportunities for people to interact with nature and their local community.

Outcomes

- **80 Fruit trees planted, with 80 guards for protection; Varieties planted included:**

- Apple - Edward VII, St Edmunds Russet, Haywood Pipin, Cambridge
- Pear – Brandy, Hendre Huffcap, Conference
- Cherry – Stella, Black Oliver, Cherokee
- Damson – Shropshire Prune, Merry Weather, Mirabelle Ruby, Onward
- Plum – Victoria, Blaisden Red
- Quince – Vranje., Krymsk
- Gage – Jefferson's Gage, Merryweather, Count Althan's
- **Volunteer involvement**

Learning/key to success

- The timing of ordering the trees was crucial to ensure good rootstock availability.
- Volunteer involvement was essential to reach the aim of the project.

For more information on Colwall Orchard Group, and the TOFI scheme, please visit: <https://colwallorchardgroup.org/tofi>



MH003 – Colwall Orchard Group – Improving equipment and facilities for people and nature



Overview

Managing Traditional Orchards and Meadows and using the fruit produced from orchards in a sustainable way requires equipment to undertake these tasks. Additionally, with all voluntary projects, facilities are essential.

This FiPL Aided project, awarded to Colwall Orchard Group, supports the **purchasing of Orchard Maintenance equipment** in the first financial year of the project, and a **disabled – compostable toilet** in the second year of the grant.

- **Total grant: £22,414.38**
 - Year one - £12,760.48 and Year two - £10,495.00
- **% of total funding awarded from FiPL: 100%**

Aim

The aim of the project is stock the **appropriate equipment to ensure successful Orchard Habitat Management** and that there is **sufficient equipment to support volunteer involvement**, Additionally the project looks to support getting people with disabilities into the Colwall Orchard Group community by building an **on-site composting-Disabled Toilet**.





Outcomes (Year 1)

- Purchase of the following items, including:
 - **Equipment for regenerative grazing**
 - **Equipment for orchard site maintenance**
 - **Cutter-collector machine**
 - **Vigo Apple Press (for juicing)**
- Year 2 outcome is to build a composting disabled toilet (FY 22/23).

Learning/Key to Success

- Volunteer involvement is beneficial and rewarding
- Everything depends on the weather!

The equipment purchased using FiPL was used on Colwall Orchard Groups Annual Apple Day – more information can be found using the following link:

<https://colwallorchardgroup.org/appledaydetail>



MH004 – Regenerative Grazing with Native Breeds (Infrastructure)

Overview

'It's not the cow, it's the how' refers to the view that it's the method of stock farming that contributes more to climate change, rather than the farming itself. Based in the north of the Malvern Hills AONB, the applicant of this project has recently established a small herd of native breed, Aberdeen Angus cattle. The cows are moved daily, and the pastures are rested for long periods in between, **helping to lock carbon in the soil, increase biodiversity and plant species, and improve water infiltration and water holding capacity**. In winter the animals are usually fed in the fields on hay from species-rich grasslands, helping the pastures to become more **species-rich** themselves as seeds are trodden in, and so better for wildlife. The AONB's Farming in Protected Landscapes programme has supported this approach to regenerative agriculture by grant-funding work to repurpose an old stable block to shelter the cattle and by funding water supply infrastructure and fencing.

- **Total grant: £15,258.83**
- **% Of total funding awarded from FiPL: 48%**



Aim

To ready the farms infrastructure to for the handling of Native Aberdeen Angus Cattle for regenerative grazing practices to improve **soil biology, carbon sequestration, biodiversity** and **water holding capacity** to produce **high welfare, nutrient dense beef**.



Outcomes

Project has included:

- Repurposing a stable block to a cattle barn
- Laying water piping for livestock drinking
- Cattle handling system
- Stock fencing
- Electric fencing for “field grazing cells”
- Soil testing to monitor soil improvement

Learning/Key to Success

- Contingency planning for inflation rates very important in current economic times
- Quoting process essential when looking at value for money
- Timing of the project is important in relation to grazing and overwintering of cattle



MH005 – Replanting a traditional Orchard in Colwall

Overview

This 2.7 Ha **traditional Orchard in Colwall**, was planted between 1889 and 1904 with approximately 160 cherry trees. Over time the trees have reached the end of their natural lifecycle and the owner was keen to replant the orchard to restore the traditional landscape feature and the wildlife value of this style of habitat.

- **Grant total: £4260**
- **% of total funding awarded from FiPL: 100%**

Aim

The aim of the project was to plant a mixture of fruit trees of varying varieties and species to restore this old orchard and enhance the traditional landscape. Replanting this orchard will create a greater area of orchard habitat improving the areas biodiversity and sequestering carbon.

Outcomes

- ***40 fruit trees were planted with 40 guards for protection. Varieties included:***
 - Cherry – Stella, Waterloo, Black Oliver
 - Pear – Moorcroft, Bearre Hardy, Beth
 - Damson – Shropshire Prune, Merryweather
 - Apple – Russet Egermant, Lord Lambourne, William Crump
 - Plum – Old Pruin, Dymock Red, Smith's Pruin
- **The project included Volunteer involvement.**

Learning/key to success

- The timing of the planting is essential
- A mixture of species gives a prolonged blossom period for pollinators



MH009 – Orchard Maintenance and Meadow creation at Alfrick

Overview

This project sits on the very edge of the Malvern Hills AONB. Containing an **orchard, fruit trees hosting the rare Chafer Beetle** and the potential for further habitat enhancement, the applicant applied to FiPL for funding to **restore and improve the biodiversity** on this small holding.



- **Total grant: £6970.90**
 - Year one - £3,625.5 and Year two - £3,345.4
- **% of total funding awarded from FiPL: 100%**

Aim

There are 3 clear aims to this project; firstly is to **improve the conservation and aesthetics of the AONB by laying the hedge that runs directly along the AONB boundary**; secondly is to **restore the traditional orchard** by using traditional pruning methods and also **adding 5 new fruit trees** of mixed species to support existing wildlife and prolong spring blossom-pollen availability; and finally, in the second year, to **create a species rich grassland** to improve both soil health and local diversity. The project will also include fencing to keep livestock off the restored meadow at crucial times of the growing season.



Outcomes

The outcomes of this project, in the first year, include:

- **Pruning of the orchard for habitat conservation**
- **Planting of 5 species of fruit trees with guard protection**
- **Hedge laying**
- **And fencing to protect the newly laid hedge and preparation for the meadow restoration in the coming summer.**
- Year 2 will include the creation of a species rich grassland, to be undertaken in the summer of 2022.



Learning/Key to success

- Selection of the right meadow species for the site and local area
- Timing is key for hedgerow management



MH013 – Brush Seed Harvester

Overview

Along with traditional orchards and fields bordered by native hedgerows, **Traditional Hay Meadows** are also a key characteristic landscape type of the Malvern Hills AONB. Having seen a 97% decline nationally, the Malvern Hills AONB is very keen to, on a local level, restore traditional hay meadows both within the Malvern Hills and with organisations outside the AONB boundary.

As wildflower seed is so expensive, coupled with the fact that using local progeny seed is so much more beneficial, the Malvern Hills AONB decided to apply for a FiPL Grant, to purchase **their own Brush Seed Harvester**.

- **Grant total: £8087.44**
- **% of total funding awarded from FiPL: 100%**

Aims

The aim of the project has been to purchase a **Brush Seed Harvester**, so the Malvern Hills AONB and other local organisations can harvest local Wildflower Meadow seed to restore traditional hay meadows, which are a valuable and important local and national habitat. The use of the Brush Seed harvester will grow year-on-year as meadows in the local area increase.

Outcomes

- **The Brush seed Harvester, along with some maintenance items, has been purchased in the 2021/22 Financial year**
 - The machine will also be used by local organisations, with summer 2022 being the first year of use.



Worcestershire
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Learning/Key to success

- Communication and co-operation with local organisations means that conservation work can grow on a local level.