

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Malvern Group 6.2.14

Rob Allen, South Worcestershire Reserves Manager

South Worcestershire Reserves including Hollybed Farm Meadows

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust (WWT) has 70 reserves making it one of the largest landowners in the county and enabling it to have considerable influence on land management in Worcestershire. Nationally, the Wildlife Trust has 800,000 members; one of its principal objectives is to engage people with wildlife.

Rob Allen manages a number of reserves with a wide diversity of habitats in the south of the county. Tiddesley Wood was purchased in 1980 and has some areas of ancient woodland while in other areas conifers are being felled and coppicing carried out to encourage a wider variety of wild flowers. Windmill Hill and Tunnel Hill comprise limestone grasslands, locally rare in Worcestershire and difficult to manage because of their steep slopes. Hill Court was purchased in 2001 and is WWT's largest reserve at 120 ha. It comprises an area of seasonal wetland and a drier area which has the potential to become outstanding wildflower meadows. Hollybed Farm is a recently acquired grassland site. This county is fortunate in having 20% of England's remaining hay meadows. Work is in hand to bring all the meadows at Hollybed Farm up to the standard of Starling Bank which is Worcestershire's Coronation Meadow.

WWT's policy is to continue to purchase land which has ecological and rarity value, the potential for restoration, social and amenity value and connectivity allowing species to move through the landscape. Wildlife has to co-exist with the modern world.

The next meeting is on Thursday March 6th at 7.30 pm at the Lyttleton Rooms, when Peter Garner will give a talk: *Notable Trees of the Malvern Hills*.