

## **Worcestershire Wildlife Trust Malvern Group 4th May 2017**

Beck Baker: Community and Conservation Officer of the Malvern Hills Trust

### The Management of the Malvern Hills – Looking Ahead

Beck Baker gave us a comprehensive and illuminating presentation about the Malvern Hills Trust and we had 20 minutes of lively questions and answers at the end. The Trust (recently rebranded) was established in 1884 and is now a registered charity managing 1200 hectares of our beautiful local landscape. Over the years there have been various Acts of Parliament defining what they can and can't do: they aim to preserve the natural aspect of the Hills, protect and manage the various habitats, prevent digging and quarrying, conserve and enhance biodiversity, SSSIs and Scheduled Ancient Monuments and keep the Hills and commons open for recreation.

The Land Management Plan 2016-2021 is available on the Trust's website and sets out various aims, including making improvements to help commoners continue grazing, selective felling in Thirds Wood with replanting of some species, and management of the 37 ponds which are situated on their land. Some rare species are being encouraged with careful habitat management, for example reptiles and the grayling butterfly. Sites of archaeological interest are being repaired and monitored; St Ann's Well is having internal and external repairs. There are various visitor management campaigns involving more information boards, and much work has gone into the encouragement of responsible mountain biking on waymarked trails. Dog owners are always being encouraged to pick up poo and use bins, control their dogs near livestock, and not allow them to run through areas where there are likely to be ground-nesting birds. Management of the Hills is a constantly changing challenge, with new activities being invented all the time like E-biking and drone-flying, and these require their own rules and codes of conduct.

