

AONB wins Heritage Lottery Fund support



Walkers at Beacon Batch trig point, Black Down

The Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership is celebrating after being given the green light by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to fully develop its plans to safeguard the future of the Black Down and Burrington commons.

DISCOVERING Black Down is a new Mendip Hills AONB project that will help conserve the heritage landscapes, wildlife habitats and archaeological features of this nationally important site.

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) first-round pass and development grant of £9,400 has been awarded to enable the AONB to progress with production of detailed project plans and apply for a full grant later this year. If successful this will result in a Heritage Lottery Grant of £195,995 as part of a total project valuing £250,000 to deliver a three-year programme of works.

Black Down is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its valuable wildlife habitats and a Scheduled Monument for its archaeology from the late Stone Age and Bronze Age through to the Second World War. The project will encourage greater understanding of the heritage values of the area by engaging local communities and visitors to the site through a range of learning and participation projects. It will also

develop new volunteering opportunities for people to get involved in safeguarding the commons for the future.

Alongside these works the AONB will be carrying out work to restore and repair badly eroded paths and protect wildlife habitats and archaeology on Black Down.

The legacy of the project will be to leave a sustainable structure so that local community and user group volunteers can take an active role in the care and conservation of the area's heritage.

The AONB has worked with a group comprising the landowner and conservators of Black Down, Natural England, English Heritage and local authority Rights of Way teams and involved local communities and users of the site in developing the project.

Commenting on the grant award AONB Manager Sarah Jackson said; "With its fine views, visible archaeology and wealth of wildlife Black Down is one of the finest sites in the Mendip Hills AONB. With this grant we are looking forward to bringing the meaning

of the landscape to life so people will want to care for this special place in the years to come".

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Using money raised through the national lottery, the heritage lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported over 30,000 projects allocating £4.6 billion across the UK. Website: www.hlf.org.uk



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