



# Why Local Wildlife Sites are important

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) reflect Herefordshire's local character and distinctiveness and since 1990 have played an important role in maintaining and enhancing wildlife in the county by supporting a rich diversity of habitats and providing networks and corridors across our landscape.

LWS are found on public and private land and include a vast range of semi-natural habitats from species-rich grasslands, ancient woodlands, fens and orchards to rivers and stream corridors. They complement the existing statutorily protected sites and form the core of a resilient ecological network.

## How Local Wildlife Sites benefit landowners

- \* They are an indication of the great value of the biodiversity of the land and acknowledge the landowner's excellent management over the years.
- \* Botanical survey data will be given with habitat management plans and options, as well as signposting to grants and other support.
- \* Survey information can be used as a baseline for future agri-environment schemes such as ELMS.
- \* Evidence of sward diversity can be used to gauge likely carbon sequestration and as potential soil health status.
- \* Selection can provide a route to the Priority Habitats Inventory which in turn gives access to higher agri-environment scheme payments.
- \* Provides an element of protection (a general presumption against development).
- \* Selection does not grant any rights of access.
- \* They are non-statutory sites - does not impose any legal obligations or restrictions and does not lead to SSSI designation (an entirely separate process).
- \* They are local, and reflect what is important, valuable, and distinctive in Herefordshire.