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# Slowing the flow of water on the Malvern Hills

## A case study



## Introduction

The Malvern Hills are very steep in places meaning that water can cascade down their slopes after periods of particularly intense rain. This has been an issue at the southern end of [Swinyard Hill - Wikipedia](#) where surface drainage has been blamed for contributing to flooding onto the minor road at the foot of the hill and then below the road into buildings at Fair Oaks Farm.



*Volunteer task on Swinyard Hill*

## The work

In January 2026 a series of 11 'debris' or 'leaky' dams [Leaky dam - Wikipedia](#) were installed in the small water courses running down the eastern side of Swinyard Hill below the Gullet Quarry. 7 of these are on Malvern Hills Trust (MHT) land and were installed by volunteers working under the supervision of MHT staff and a local contractor. A further 4 leaky dams were inserted into the water course between the road and a mill pond on land belonging to Fair Oaks Farm.

Time will tell whether these dams prove effective in reducing flooding but experience elsewhere suggests that small and inexpensive interventions like these can make a real difference. Funding for this work was provided by Worcestershire County Council, see: [Natural Flood Management | Worcestershire County Council](#).



*Debris dams, Fair Oaks Farm*

The following provide support to the Malvern Hills National Landscape Partnership:



A number of Town and Parish Councils also make a financial contribution to the work of the Partnership.

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