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Welcome to the E-bulletin of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership. We hope you will find this a useful update of things going on in the AONB. Please feel free to forward it to anyone you think may be interested. To subscribe or unsubscribe to the circulation list, please contact the SHAONBO mailbox.

Take your celebration photos

2008 is the 50th anniversary of the Shropshire Hills AONB, and there will be a variety of celebrations. As part of this we are launching a photographic competition themed to the natural beauty of the Shropshire Hills. Entries won't be required until the end of June next year, but we wanted to give you lots of time to get snapping! Categories will be age 10 and under, 11-15, 16-20, general, and professional. Photos must show something within the Shropshire Hills AONB, and winners will feature in an exhibition as well as receiving prizes. Further details will appear on our website in due course.

Opportunity to get involved in the running of the AONB

As part of a membership review, seats are available on the AONB Partnership for individuals and for non-statutory and voluntary organisations. The Partnership is the joint advisory committee formed by five local authorities to oversee the work of the AONB. The Partnership meets three times a year, has a number of sub-groups, and members also receive other information and consultations. We would particularly welcome applications from organisations with business or land management interests. The closing date for applications is 21 September 2007. Further details are available at <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk>.

Key new post in the AONB staff team

We are currently advertising for a full time permanent Development Officer. The postholder will lead the development and implementation of projects across all aspects of our remit, and deputise for the AONB Manager. We are looking for someone with skills in partnership working and communication, experience of project development and management and broad knowledge of conservation and sustainable development. The closing date is 5 September 2007. See the full advert at <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/documents/DevelopmentOfficeradvert.pdf> and application information at <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/jobs>.

New Shropshire Hills exhibition

A new interactive exhibition has been launched at the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, and you can add to it! The multimedia exhibition can include photographs, video clips and text – different views on what makes the Shropshire Hills special. Many people involved in the Blue Remembered Hills Project have already contributed things. The installation will go to Ludlow Museum and Resource Centre in November, then to other venues before becoming permanent in the new exhibition area at the Discovery Centre next year.

Leader

The AONB Partnership is considering bidding to Advantage West Midlands to become a Local Action Group for delivering the 'Leader' element of the Rural Development Programme for England 2007-13. Leader is a Europe-wide scheme supporting community-led and innovative approaches to rural development. Grants and support are made available for projects through the Local Action Groups. We are looking at the criteria and priorities, but would hope to focus on involvement, capacity building and training in relation to landscape, heritage and sustainability. To discuss this please contact Phil Holden.

Case Studies

We have recently put together some case study sheets describing some of the work we have done and supported. The case studies particularly aim to show how projects have generated environmental, economic and social benefits. Coppicing of riverside alders, the Shropshire Hills Farmers Markets and the Clun Forest 'Land, Life & Livelihoods' project are featured. The case studies are two sides of A4 with colour photographs and are in a compact pdf form.

See <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/publications/pubs.htm>.

AONB Podcasts

Sit back and hear more about our work! We now have two podcasts, based on radio interviews with members of the Team. Phil Holden talks about what the AONB is and what it means to Church Stretton (Radio Shropshire, April 2007), and Mike Kelly talks about the importance of alder to our rivers, the effects of *Phytophthora* disease and how coppicing is helping (Radio 4, Oct 2005).

Have a listen at <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/publications/pubs.htm#audiopodcasts>.

Your comments or thoughts on these issues or any others to do with the AONB are always welcome.

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