



Press Release

Date: 23 June 2008

Subject: Biking the boundary

Phil Holden, Manager with the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, has completed a 180 mile bike ride around the Shropshire Hills to celebrate their designation 50 years ago as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Phil said "The story goes that the boundary was selected all those years ago by a group of officials travelling round in a Morris Minor. I wanted to make my own personal journey around the area to mark the anniversary, and to do it in a sustainable way. Much of the boundary is along roads so I was able to follow it exactly for a lot of the way. It's a privilege to work in such a lovely area, and it was great to spend the weekend enjoying its beauty and getting to know some of the remoter corners."

Phil's route round the AONB took him around the Wrekin and the Clee Hills, and along the Welsh border west of Clun and the Stiperstones. The quiet lanes and tracks of the Shropshire Hills offer excellent cycling to suit a variety of levels. For ideas see www.shropshirecycling.co.uk.

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Editors Notes:

2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of 40 AONBs in England & Wales. This designation is recognition of the national value of the area's landscape, and brings duties on local authorities to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. Covering 23% of the county, the Shropshire Hills AONB extends from the Wrekin to the Clun Forest and from the Stiperstones to the Clee Hills. It is a diverse and tranquil area, with rugged hills, rolling pastoral fields, woods and meadows, picturesque villages and historic buildings, hillforts and ancient monuments.

The management of the AONB is guided by a statutory Management Plan produced by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership which comprises 5 local authorities, 31 other organisations and independent community members. The AONB staff team are funded by the Countryside Agency and the local authorities, and work with others to implement the AONB Management Plan. Shropshire County Council acts as host authority for the AONB Partnership. The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership plays three main roles:

- To develop policy and strategy for the area especially through the AONB Management Plan, and influence the policies and strategies of others

- To take and co-ordinate action to conserve and enhance natural beauty, promote enjoyment and understanding, and further sustainable development
- To support the involvement of the community in the management of the AONB.

