

Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

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Your Ref:
Our Ref: ph_210208_G La Touche, RES Delivery
21 February 2008

Dear Mr La Touche

West Midlands Economic Strategy, Launch and Consultation on Draft Delivery Framework

Thank you for the letter of 7 December 2007 from your Chairman. The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership welcomes the new Economic Strategy, and would like to acknowledge and applaud the higher profile of environmental and sustainability issues in the final published strategy.

The attached consultation response form indicates actions we are undertaking related to the Economic Strategy which we feel are of regional significance. Unsurprisingly these relate principally to the 'natural assets' priorities of the Strategy. We also however have activities which relate to sustainable business and climate change, and through LEADER to training and skills priorities.

We look forward to developing our partnership with Advantage West Midlands in implementing these actions. We are also keen to work together to further understanding and good practice in linking high quality environments and environmental practice to economic prosperity.

Yours sincerely

Phil Holden
AONB Manager

West Midlands Economic Strategy
Delivery Framework: Consultation draft
Consultation response form

Name and contact details for responding organisation/partnership/individual:
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Is this your organisation/partnership's official response to the consultation? (yes/no): Yes
Question 1 – Have we identified the right set of actions, and associated roles for organisations/partnerships, to deliver the priorities set out in the Strategy? If not, please state how they need to change and why? <i>(This question relates to the second and third columns of the tables in the draft Delivery Framework - those labelled How? and Who?)</i>
Comments are restricted to our areas of expertise rather than the whole Delivery Framework. Generally the actions and roles identified are appropriate. Some roles which we are fulfilling which are not mentioned in the consultation draft are identified below in Q3. The wording of Action 1.4.1 “Create effective linkage between low-carbon economic and climate impact opportunities for regional business...” is not clear. An alternative such as “Support businesses to develop and benefit from approaches which lower carbon emissions and adapt to climate change” may be clearer.
Question 2 – What additional actions do you think are necessary to deliver the priorities set out in the Strategy? Which organisations/ partnerships should be involved in leading/supporting/delivering them (see question 3, below, for actions in which you think your organisation/partnership should be involved)? <i>(This question relates to the second and third columns of the tables in the draft Delivery Framework - those labelled How? and Who?)</i>
No specific new actions are suggested.
Question 3 – What activity does your organisation/partnership have in progress or planned that will help to deliver the priorities and actions set out in the draft Delivery Framework during the 2008-11 period? Please describe what you regard as the most significant activities in this respect, using a table of the type set out on the following page.

Draft Delivery Framework priority/priorities and action/actions against which this activity will deliver:					
2.3 Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets					
2.3.2 Safeguard and manage our natural and agricultural assets effectively while continuing to support the innovative use and management of our land in response to the region's challenges, needs and aspirations.					
2.7 Maximising our cultural offer and natural assets					
2.7.1 Attract and retain residents, businesses, and visitors by providing an improved quality of life and offer, by:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalising on the region's natural assets, particularly where they coincide with public interest and economic opportunity. 					
Specific objective(s) of this activity:					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the character and special qualities of the Shropshire Hills landscape, and the influences on it. To maintain the character of the Shropshire Hills landscape through the positive management of change. To conserve and enhance the special qualities, features and character of the Shropshire Hills AONB. To support farming, forestry, other rural businesses and community activities which conserve and enhance the Shropshire Hills landscape. To ensure that public enjoyment of the Shropshire Hills supports the local economy and contributes to people's quality of life whilst conserving the special qualities of the AONB. To raise awareness, understanding and appreciation of the Shropshire Hills AONB. To deliver the Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan effectively and efficiently. 					
Activity	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Spatial focus	Measure(s) of progress/success
Implementation of the Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan (encompasses a wide variety of actions, but co-ordinates delivery of AONB purposes to conserve and enhance natural beauty, take account of needs of rural business and communities and promote sustainable development).	Ongoing. Current Plan 2004-9 under review	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, and partners including local authorities, conservation bodies, landowners, community and voluntary groups	Wide ranging resources from wide variety of partners - not accurately quantified, but at least £3m pa.	Shropshire Hills AONB	% of land under an environmental scheme % of SSSIs in favourable condition % of rivers of good quality % of Scheduled Ancient Monuments 'at risk'

Draft Delivery Framework priority/priorities and action/actions against which this activity will deliver:					
3.4 Skills for employment and enterprise					
3.4.1 It is essential that people are better informed about the opportunities for work and progression.					
Specific objective(s) of this activity:					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To improve wellbeing, through better access to services, support, places, transport and facilities throughout the Shropshire Hills. 2. To strengthen community capacity and cohesion by broadening participation in community activity. 3. To develop sense of place and community pride around the Shropshire Hills as a basis for sustainable regeneration. 4. To improve local learning and networking opportunities for businesses and improve the necessary infrastructure to enable them to grow. 5. To develop the Shropshire Hills LAG as an effective partnership to deliver a strategically focussed, locally appropriate LDS, sharing ideas and good practice. 					
Activity	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Spatial focus	Measure(s) of progress/success
Delivery of Shropshire Hills LEADER programme (subject to formal approval of Local Development Strategy) LEADER is focussed on social and community priorities, but measure 331 'Training and information for economic actors in the fields covered by Axis 3' relates to RES skills priorities.	2008-13	Shropshire Hills LEADER Action Group, linked to Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and Shropshire County Council	Potentially c£50k pa for measure 331	Shropshire Hills LEADER area	By 2013 achieve measurable increases in the take-up of training within the area

Draft Delivery Framework priority/priorities and action/actions against which this activity will deliver:					
1.4 Capitalising on sustainability and low-carbon opportunities					
1.4.1 Create effective linkage between low-carbon economic and climate impact opportunities for regional business to realise their wealth-generating potential and manage their risk, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping identify low-carbon economic and climate impact opportunities for regional businesses. • Encouraging local markets and local sourcing to minimise carbon footprint. 					
Specific objective(s) of this activity:					
<p>To encourage businesses and consumers towards becoming more sustainable.</p> <p>To develop a local business network to share ideas and good practice on sustainability.</p> <p>To help consumers to source local products and to use businesses which are committed to improving their sustainability.</p> <p>To link sustainable practice with the Shropshire Hills by allowing accredited businesses controlled use of a logo.</p>					
Activity	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Spatial focus	Measure(s) of progress/success
Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme (linked to Shropshire Hills Buy Local website directory)	Starting March 2008	Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership	Mostly staff time. AONB Sustainable Development Fund (£70k pa) includes grants to businesses.	Shropshire Hills AONB and surrounding area	Number of businesses signed up Number of network events Reduced carbon emissions % of goods sourced locally