

## Press Release

4th March 2008

### Making your business more sustainable

Join us on Monday 17th March at the Long Mynd Hotel, 2 – 5pm to find out how your business might benefit from joining the new Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme.

Clare Fildes, Development Officer for the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, explained “The scheme is about supporting local businesses and encouraging them to think and act in a more sustainable way. This means improving their impact on the environment and the local economy to the benefit of people who live and work in the Shropshire Hills. Signing up to the scheme will enable businesses to form a network to gain competitive advantage, get easy to follow advice on sustainability issues and share ideas with other like minded businesses. The scheme will also ensure businesses become better informed about sustainability and the Shropshire Hills, and get ahead of the game in terms of legislation which is likely to enforce a more sustainable approach in the future.”

By completing a sustainability appraisal and making a public pledge businesses will also be able to use the Shropshire Hills identity in their promotion and will be listed on the new website [www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk).

The programme for the afternoon will include an introduction about the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), an explanation about the business scheme and a demonstration of the “Buy Local” website. This will include details on what the sustainability appraisal means in practice and how developing a sustainable brand would benefit businesses of all shapes and sizes.

There will also be a series of workshops led by other business schemes which are already out there such as the Green Tourism Business Scheme, Environmental Stewardship Schemes, Sustainable Tourism Advice Network and Heart of England Fine Foods.

To book you place at this event or for more information please contact the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership on 01588 674080.

**ENDS**

#### **Editors Notes:**

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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.
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