

Press Release

24th June 2009

Walking the Shropshire Way with the help of the Shropshire Hills Shuttles

Walking is one of the best ways to explore the hills and valleys, villages and heritage of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Shropshire Hills Shuttles are an excellent way to access the AONB for walking, sightseeing, pub lunches, picnics and more.

Stephanie Hayes, Promotions Officer for the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, commented "The Shuttles are a popular way to access the hills for walking at the weekends. Lots of people use the Shuttles to walk on the Long Mynd or Stiperstones but the service between Craven Arms and Clun is quieter and there are some beautiful walks in this area too, including walking the recently upgraded 'Shropshire Way' between Craven Arms and Clun."

The Secret Hills Shuttle departs from the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre in Craven Arms at 10.35am, travelling through the Clun Valley and dropping off in Clun twenty minutes later for the start of the 11 mile walk along the Shropshire Way back to Craven Arms.

Jump off the Shuttle at the Clun Castle bus stop; walk through the grounds of this ruined medieval castle and you will see fingerposts signing the Shropshire Way to Craven Arms. The walk climbs up through woodland to Bury Ditches, one of the best preserved Iron Age hillforts in the country. It then guides you through Walcot Wood and down into Kempton, before climbing again to Hopesay Common, then it is downhill all the way to Craven Arms and the Discovery Centre.

You can of course do this walk in reverse, taking the Shuttle from Clun at 1216, lunch at the Discovery Centre or pack a picnic before setting off on your journey along the Shropshire Way to Clun. Details of this walk can be found on the Shuttle website under 'things to do'.

The Shropshire Hills Shuttles are 16-seater mini-buses which operate every weekend and Bank Holiday Monday until the end of September 2009. All the Shuttles connect at Bridges giving you the chance to explore more of this designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The timetable leaflet is available from local Visitor Information Centres, libraries and other outlets or visit the Shuttles website for more information www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk.

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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 two local authorities, 31 other organisations and independent community members. The AONB staff team are funded by Natural England and the local authorities, and work with others to implement the AONB Management Plan. Shropshire 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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