

## Press Release

16th February 2010

### Water Friendly Farming – good practice guide

A new Water Friendly Farming good practice guide, produced by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, has been welcomed by local farmers and other landowners with rivers and streams running through their property.

The Guide offers simple solutions to address a range of issues which adversely affect watercourses. These range from neglected and over-mature riverside trees to the siting of livestock feeders and silage clamps, and poorly maintained tracks and farm yards.

Mike Kelly, River Valley's Officer for the AONB Partnership, explained "The aim of the guide is to highlight simple land management solutions which will greatly improve the condition of our local rivers and streams. For example, ensuring livestock feeders are located on hard-standing and away from the river, fencing certain areas and maintaining tracks and buildings to reduce soil erosion along the riverbank."

The Guide focuses on the Teme Catchment, but the information can be applied to any Catchment. Rivers in the Teme Catchment are home to some of our rarest plants and animals. Some including otters, white-clawed crayfish, Atlantic salmon, and fresh water pearl mussels are Biodiversity Action Plan Species. The River Teme itself is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) throughout its length.

Mike continued "Grants are available for much of this work, and the guide explains what's in it for the farm and includes information on where to get further help and advice. The feedback on the guide has been great and other areas including the North York Moors National Park, are keen to use the same approach."

For more information and a free copy of the water friendly farming good practice guide please contact Mike Kelly at the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership on 01588 674091.

**ENDS**

**Editors Notes:**

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PHOTO OPPORTUNITY – please contact Mike Kelly to arrange

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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