

Press Release

8th September 2006

Local wood made good

Locally coppiced riverside alder, often chopped up for firewood, has been planked up to create beautiful high-quality floor boards.

The floorboards have been used as part of the renovation of a farm holiday cottage at Brynmawr organic farm, Newcastle. Farmer, Trevor Wheeler, explained “The aim of the project was to create an example of a sustainable dwelling, with as small a carbon footprint as possible. We have used local materials and workmanship where possible, and incorporated lambswool insulation, off-grid electricity supply, solar hot water and woodfuel heating.”

Mike Kelly, River Valleys Officer for the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, was delighted to see the alder utilised. He commented “Coppicing alder is important both for the health of our rivers and the trees themselves. By turning alder into a high-value product we are helping to drive the management of this important landscape feature of the Shropshire Hills. There needs to be a good economic return in order to encourage landowners to manage their river woodlands.”

Planked up, the alder is a honey coloured timber which creates extremely attractive flooring or kitchen units. Mike Kelly is keen to see much more alder used for high value products, rather than firewood. Sourcing these products locally not only benefits our river habitats, but supports local landowners, sawmills and carpenters. For more information please contact Mike on 01588 674091.

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Editors Notes:

IMAGE: alder floorboards at Brynmawr organic farm

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The Blue Remembered Hills project, developed by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, is a major 5 year Heritage Lottery project to involve people in protecting key landscape features in and around the Shropshire Hills AONB.

The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of 41 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.

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 manages the AONB Office.

