



# May 2009 Newsletter

issue two

## Your support and membership matters

All monies received from Friends membership goes towards the Shropshire Hills Sustainable Development Fund to support projects which bring social, environmental and economic benefit to the area. Last year £72,500 was awarded to 27 projects.

The projects varied from helping Hopton Castle Preservation Trust purchase the castle and grounds and begin stabilisation and repair work, supporting the development of two log eco-cabins at Lower Bush Farm and raising awareness of the importance of the Atlantic Salmon through farm visits, events and targeting schools with 'Salmon in the Classroom' activities.



Bitterley School Outdoor Classroom project supported by SDF.

This year £53,000 has been distributed to another range of excellent projects. 'Support your beanpole' is a project promoting the importance of coppicing in terms of biodiversity and rural employment in the AONB. Corvedale and Newcastle Primary Schools have been assisted in creating outdoor classrooms to help children understand sustainability, and the Trustees of Black Mountain Chapel, Bettws Y Crwyn, have been given a grant to carry out the first phase of a feasibility study for the conservation of this beautiful Chapel, built in c.1850.

As the funding is reduced we are always looking for other sources of income to enhance the grant scheme and your membership to Friends of the Shropshire Hills is an important and valuable way of supporting new and innovative projects, so thank you very much. Further details of all the Sustainable Development Fund projects, past and present, are available on the website at <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/partnership/sdfund.htm#reports>



Nordy Bank hillfort on the slopes of Brown Clee

## Sharing experiences and excavations

In February a new group was formed for representatives of community groups undertaking archaeological and historical heritage projects in the AONB. The Historic Environment Group has now met twice to exchange information and ideas and to hear how the AONB is able to provide advice, practical support and possibly grant aid. It is hoped that the regular evening meetings will provide a means of enabling people involved in historic environment projects to network with other groups undertaking similar activities within the 300 square miles of the Shropshire Hills AONB.

To date, representatives from projects currently underway at Acton Scott, Lydbury North, Titterstone Clew Hill, Hopton Castle, Stiperstones and Rectory Wood (Church Stretton) have taken part in the meetings. If you belong to a group engaged in archaeological/historical research and would like to join in, please let us know and we will send you an invite to the next meeting, due to take place on Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> September at 7pm in the AONB Partnership office in Craven Arms. Contact Ian Dormor for more information 01588 674083.

Friends of the Shropshire Hills web pages: <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/friends.htm>

Annual Friends Event - Sunday 21 June, 1.30 – 5.30pm - Wilderhope Walk and BBQ  
See back page for details. Event for members only, to join call Cath 01588 674084.

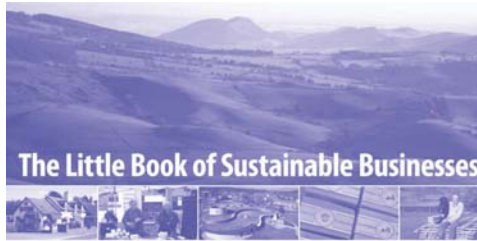
## Secrets of a Victorian Housewife's herbal

The first programme of traditional rural crafts & trade courses is already underway at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm. Day courses range from learning how to handle a pair of working horses to discovering the secrets of a Victorian Housewife's herbal. Many of the course tutors are well known at Acton Scott, all highly skilled craftsmen and women with many years experience of working in their own field. There are opportunities to learn traditional building skills, including lime washing and brick repair, animal husbandry including pigs, sheep and poultry keeping, an introduction to traditional techniques in carpentry and discovering how to work with greenwood with local singing bodger Ian Wall.


Spend time at Acton Scott learning a new skill with like minded people, enjoying a home made lunch in the newly restored school house cafe and revelling in the peace and beauty of this unique site - a perfect day! A second programme of workshops is currently under development and will include a five day introduction to harness making with local expert Terry Davis, blacksmithing, hedgelaying, smocking and straw plaiting days. And Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without spending a day at Acton Scott with Catherine Murphy gathering greenery and making Christmas garlands to decorate your home, with a taste of sloe gin to celebrate the season.



For further course details, please pick up a brochure or view online at [www.actonscottmuseum.com](http://www.actonscottmuseum.com)



**The Little Book of Sustainable Businesses**



**The Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme**  
**DIRECTORY 2009**

Look out for this 'little book' which highlights all the members in the Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme. It includes:

- Where to **Eat**
- Where to **Stay**
- What to **Buy**
- What to **Do**
- Sustainable **Services**

Support these businesses where possible as they are going the extra mile to help look after their local landscape – the Shropshire Hills. Please **email us** if you would like a copy of the directory sent to you or you can pick one from your local Visitor Information Centre. For more information visit [www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk)

### Shifting to low carbon

This is one of five key priorities in the new Management Plan for the AONB. With U.K. Government targets set at reducing CO2 emissions by 80% by 2050 we all have a part to play. The AONB website has a useful page which highlights what the Partnership has agreed to do, suggests things we can do individually and has a list of useful contacts for further information and help. We are also looking to include more case studies on this web page so if you would like to share your experiences with us please get in touch with Cath and we can add them to the web page [www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/thingstodo/energyclimatechange.htm](http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/thingstodo/energyclimatechange.htm)

### Local events with a green theme...

Some dates for your diary to help get you thinking all things good and green:

- Sat 4 July, **Church Stretton Green Fair**
- Sat 4 July, **Shrewsbury Green Festival** at the Shropshire Wildlife Trust HQ
- Sat 1 August, **Clun Show** – look for the sustainability tent!
- Sun 30 August, **Ludlow Green Festival**
- Sat 19 & Sun 20 Sept, **Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair**

Further details of all these events will be on the town websites – you can link through to each website from [www.shropshirehills.info](http://www.shropshirehills.info)

**Introducing...** Cath Landles, Community Officer for the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

It's a real privilege to live and work in the Shropshire Hills. Being a sociable, country lass makes being Community Officer my dream job! I'm responsible for the Sustainable Development Fund, I help community groups develop landscape projects and ensure local people consider the landscape and environment in the Parish Plan process.

My job is varied and I love the fact that I deal with many different people, topics and areas. The people of the Shropshire Hills are very passionate about their landscape and it's very rewarding to be able to help them develop projects that benefit the countryside and community.

I also work with various farmer groups, such as the Clun Forest Land, Life and Livelihoods community initiative, tackling some of the many issues and concerns that farmers, especially in the uplands, are faced with. Current issues include the new agricultural legislation, changes in agricultural subsidies, disease, such as TB and Blue Tongue, and the lack of young people entering agriculture.

And of course I run the new 'Friends of the Shropshire Hills' network. It's a great scheme that gives those who care about the area the opportunity to get more involved with the AONB and make a valuable contribution towards the many community projects through our Sustainable Development Fund. I'm looking forward to meeting new friends, and old, throughout the year and do hope you can join us at our annual event on June 21st at Wilderhope Manor.



The AONB Partnership has taken on the contract for running Shropshire Hills Shuttles. The Shuttles are 16-seater mini-buses, which operate every weekend and Bank Holiday Monday through the summer season, enabling people to explore the area without the need for their car. This is a valuable service which reduces the amount of traffic on the narrow lanes through the AONB and links up the market towns with the surrounding countryside.

If you haven't already, why not plan a day out using the Shuttles – the website gives you some suggestions such as walks, places to visit, pubs and cafes along the routes. The Shuttles operate at the weekends until 27th September. Visit the website for more information [www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk)

### **Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous**

This is the title for the new LEADER funding programme which focuses on social and community issues in the Shropshire Hills. The Strategy and Business Plan have now been formally approved and we await the final Funding Agreement in order to go live. The LEADER programme is aimed at local community focused groups and organisations. For more information about how to access this funding please contact: Pete Banford on 01588 674089 or email [pete.banford@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:pete.banford@shropshire.gov.uk) [www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/partnership/work.htm#leader](http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/partnership/work.htm#leader)

### **Guided walks leaders wanted**

We are keen to set up an informal network of walk leaders who would be interested in leading guided walks in the Shropshire Hills and share their local knowledge with others. The AONB team run a small number of walks each year. These are extremely popular and there is always the request for more. Expenses and any training costs would be covered. If interested please contact Steph Hayes on 01588 674087 or email [stephanie.hayes@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.hayes@shropshire.gov.uk)

**Annual Friends Event - Sunday 21 June, 1.30 – 5.30pm - Wilderhope Walk and BBQ**  
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### Where in the Shropshire Hills?



you'll need your walking boots to find this one... (answer in next newsletter)  
The picture in previous newsletter (issue one) was Church Stretton market square – you will soon be able to follow a new heritage trail around the town...  
[www.churchstretton.co.uk](http://www.churchstretton.co.uk)

### Digging the dirt

If, like me, you are not a seasoned gardener, but feel the need and love the idea of digging and doing the garden at this time of year (warmer weather essential), then here are a few suggestions for help and advice, that don't involve indepth reading on all matters organic.

Lyn and Colin invite you to Woodfield, their 6-acre smallholding in Clungunford on the following weekends; 4 - 5 July, 22 – 23 August and 17 – 18 October between 1pm & 7pm. One to one advice on offer ranging from renovating orchards, raised beds for your fruits and vegetables, herb gardens, wildlife ponds and more. There is also a woodland trail to follow, wildflowers to enjoy and children's play area. Cost is £3 per adult and all proceeds are going to the improvements at Clungunford Parish Hall. For more information call Lyn and Colin on 01588 660462.

Also, following on from the success of the courses at Hopesay Glebe Farm last year more have been organised for this year – booking is essential and you need to be quick (all courses on a Sunday);

- Organic veg production - 12 July & 16 Aug.
- Introduction to beekeeping and queen rearing - 5 July & 9 August.
- Smallholders course including chickens, sheep, veg, bees and marketing produce - 2 & 30 August.

To book follow this link:

<http://soilassociation.org/web/sa/saweb.nsf/Manuf/hopesayglebefarm.html>

### Wilderhope Walk and BBQ – Annual Friends event

We hope all 'Friends' members will be able to join us on **Sunday 21st June, 1.30 - 5.30pm at Wilderhope Manor** for a social get together, hopefully the first of many. It will be Cath's chance to say hello and explain a little about the Friends scheme, why it was set up and find out what you'd like from it as members. Peter Carty, National Trust Manager, will give us a tour of Wilderhope Manor, then take us on a farm walk to look at the conservation work being carried out at this National Trust property and point out some of the seasonal specialities such as the common spotted orchid. We will round up with a BBQ and for those of you who know Cath, the afternoon wouldn't be complete without post-it notes – we want you to tell us what sort of events, walks, talks, newsletter articles you'd like to see in the future.

This event is free and exclusively for members. We need to know numbers for catering, so please call **Cath 01588 674084 to book your place by Friday 12th June.**

Please spread the word about the Friends scheme and encourage friends and family to join. Signing up is easy, call Cath (01588 674084) or pop into our office in Craven Arms – it only takes 5 minutes and £5 for annual individual membership!



Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership  
[SHAONBO@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:SHAONBO@shropshire.gov.uk)  
01588 674080



This newsletter is published by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership which consists of the local authorities, community groups and local organisations working together to conserve and sustain the Shropshire Hills.