

## Involve local people and visitors

### Involve the community and/ or provide them with improved facilities

- Be a Farmers Market stall holder
- Lead farm walks, business tours and school visits
- Become a member of a community group, civic society, local history or conservation group
- Give talks to community groups or get involved in Parish Councils
- Sponsor community facilities or events and encourage the use of village halls
- Allow use of your facilities for community events/ fetes

### Increase awareness of sustainability issues

- Talk to customers and other businesses about the steps you are taking to become more sustainable
- Talk to community groups
- Promote the increased sustainability of your business
- Promote walking and cycling routes, with access by public transport & use of the Shropshire Hills Shuttles

### Encourage sustainable enjoyment of the Shropshire Hills & involvement in historic or cultural heritage

- Make information about how to sustainably enjoy the Shropshire Hills available to visitors
- Promote events in the Shropshire Hills Events Calendar
- Develop some suggested sustainable days out for visitors to enjoy.
- Have a discount or bonus for customers that don't use their car for the day
- Have locally sourced food and drink available by pre-order
- Talk about the history of the business/ process you use
- Have visitor information about local heritage available & learn about local heritage yourself
- Research the history of your building/ site and make available for customers

## Support the local economy

### Using locally sourced goods and services and/ or promoting other local businesses in the area

- Get better at marketing your use of local products
- Have information about the area available for customers
- Send regular press releases to newspapers and magazines highlighting the 'specialness' of the area
- Talk to other businesses in the supply chain about local sourcing

### Developing new products or services

- Develop new products that are connected to the local landscape or sustainability
- Develop new products that raise money for the AONB Sustainable Development Fund
- Improve access
- Run a new course

### Supporting paid or voluntary jobs for local people

- Employ local people & increase opportunities for local self employed people
- Develop a volunteers scheme

## Participate in a network of like minded businesses

### Membership of local business groups

- Join a new networking group e.g. WIRE, Chamber of Commerce etc

### Workshops/ seminars attended and involvement in business events

- Get along to a "Buy Local- Be Sustainable" event
- Attend a marketing or business skills workshop
- "Meet the Buyer" events



### Terms and Conditions

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership is committed to encouraging more sustainable businesses and will make every effort to ensure that businesses included in this Scheme are genuinely committed to this cause.

- 1) Membership of the Scheme does not act as a recommendation, approval or endorsement of the goods or services offered by Members of the Scheme and it shall be a condition of the Scheme that Members shall not hold themselves out as having their goods or services recommended, approved or endorsed by Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership or Shropshire County Council.
- 2) The Scheme is administered by Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and Shropshire County Council acts as accountable body for Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership. Any dispute regarding the Scheme will be dealt with by the AONB Partnership and any complaints will be dealt with under Shropshire County Council's complaints procedure.
- 3) Members participating in the Scheme agree that neither Shropshire County Council nor any of its employees are responsible or liable for any claim, loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of membership or involvement in the Scheme.
- 4) The 'Buy Local- Be Sustainable' logo and the Shropshire Hills logos are copyright © Shropshire County Council.
- 5) It is a condition of membership of the Scheme that the proposed member enters into a Licence Agreement with Shropshire County Council for the use of the 'buy local- be sustainable' logo and at all times complies with the terms of that Licence Agreement.
- 6) It is a condition of membership of the Scheme that the member complies at all times with the sustainability pledge. If you discover any members that are carrying out activities or promoting goods or services that are not in the spirit of the scheme, please notify the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership.

### Contact Details:

Please contact **Clare Fildes**  
Email: **besustainable@shropshire.gov.uk**  
Tel: **01588 674094**  
Address: **The Old Post Office, Shrewsbury Road, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 9NZ**



**Shropshire Hills**  
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



**NATURAL ENGLAND**

**Working together to conserve and sustain the landscape** supported by Natural England

*The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a legal designation, with the principal purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Natural beauty is not just scenery and wildlife, but includes geology, air, soil and water, cultural heritage and tranquillity. AONBs also have a purpose to promote sustainable development – activities achieving economic, social and environmental benefits in combination.*

*The Shropshire Hills is a living, working area. Keeping vibrant communities goes hand in hand with maintaining the landscape. Like other areas, the Shropshire Hills faces real sustainability challenges such as energy, transport, food, employment and the landscape.*

*This new Sustainable Business Scheme is one of the ways that the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, businesses and the community can work together to tackle these issues.*

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# Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme

## A guide for businesses



**The Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme aims to encourage businesses and their customers to become more sustainable.**

It is for businesses who are committed to:

**Reduce our impact on the environment**  
**Benefit wildlife and landscape**  
**Involve local people and visitors**  
**Support the local economy**  
**Participate in a network of like minded businesses**

The scheme is run by the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and is open to all eligible businesses in and around the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

### WHY GET INVOLVED?

By becoming a member of the Shropshire Hills "Buy Local; Be Sustainable" Scheme you will;

#### Save money

- By reducing energy costs through carbon footprinting and advice
- Joint marketing, including a new website listing and directory
- Free use of a meeting room at the AONB Partnership Office
- Discounted products and services
- Getting together with other businesses to bulk buy

#### Get more custom

- By having more avenues to market
- Improved marketing; PR articles and promotion locally, regionally and eventually nationally through case studies of sustainable businesses
- Events and networking with other businesses and the public
- Appealing to eco-conscious consumers and those that want to support local businesses

#### Improve your profitability

- By potentially increasing margins as you become recognised for being more sustainable
- Getting more customers
- Reducing costs

## What does 'sustainability' mean?

Sustainability is a process in which we all try continuously to "do better" in relation to:

- Creating a strong local economy
- Building healthy and happy communities
- Managing natural resources to ensure we do not deplete them
- Conserving and enhancing wildlife and the landscape

**This is important to the future prosperity and vitality of the Shropshire Hills and we can all do something towards the process.**

## Is my business eligible?

Please look at the eligibility criteria below to ensure your business can join. If you are uncertain or have any questions, please call us.

Criteria	Tourism	Producers	Other	Comments
Membership of Visit Britain's/ AA star rating system	✓			Necessary for linking to regional and national websites and directories
Farm holdings registered in an agri-environment scheme		✓		Providing farm holdings are able to qualify
High standards of animal welfare		✓		Intensive, indoor reared livestock or poultry enterprises will not be eligible
Utilising local supply chains	✓	✓	✓	

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership reserves the right to refuse entry to any business that they deem does not complement the ethos of the scheme.

## What area is covered?

Businesses both within and near to the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are all eligible, including surrounding market towns and countryside.

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership reserves the right to refuse inclusion in the scheme if they feel a business is too far away to have a real connection to the AONB.



## For your £25 you will receive:

An annual fee of £25 is required to become a member. We will not be making money from your membership; all funds will be used to help run the scheme. You will get:

- Free listing on our website; [www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk)\*
- 'Spotlight on' advertising on the website and listing in a directory
- A Sustainable Business Toolkit- a folder of information on how to make your business more sustainable
- A free carbon footprint assessment of your business
- PR opportunities
- Customer leaflets and leaflet dispensers
- A printed copy of the pledge and appraisal
- Window stickers
- Poster showing map of the AONB and market towns
- Signage for retail outlets including farmers market stalls
- Free use of AONB Partnership meeting room
- Business discussion groups, visits and trade meetings
- Discounts with local retailers

*\*Businesses that produce or market local products that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment can be listed on the website without being a member of the scheme but will not receive the other benefits outlined above.*



## How do I get involved?

To become a member of the Shropshire Hills Sustainable Business Scheme you need to:

1. Email the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership on [besustainable@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:besustainable@shropshire.gov.uk) to receive the appraisal and the licence agreement
2. Complete the appraisal. This should be done by the proprietor or manager of the business. We can help you with this if you wish.
3. Sign the licence agreement.
4. Send this back to us with your annual fee of £25\* and the completed appraisal.
5. We will then print off the pledge and return it to you, along with a signed copy of the licence. The date will be the end of the month we receive the pledge and membership will be valid for 12 months from that date. We will also send you the poster, window sticker, sign, leaflets and email a pdf file of the "buy local- be sustainable" stamp.
6. Display the pledge where your customers can see it.
7. Attend the events, workshops and visits recommended by the scheme every year.
8. Be committed to becoming more sustainable in the future- appraisals will be compared with the previous years to ensure businesses are progressing.
9. We will remind you when your membership is due for renewal.

**The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership will not renew membership if these criteria are not met and may revoke membership where necessary.**

*\* Cheques made payable to Shropshire County Council*

## Examples of sustainable activities

### Reduce our impact on the environment

#### Reduce carbon emissions and energy use;

- Use low energy light bulbs
- Switch off power to all appliances overnight
- Install wood fuel boiler
- Insulation/ draught proofing
- Air drying of washing where possible
- Calculate your carbon footprint
- Change to a green electricity supplier
- Encourage visitors to walk, cycle or use public transport rather than drive
- Use biodiesel or LPG in vehicles
- Drive less and more carefully, use public transport/ walk more
- Change to more fuel efficient or hybrid replacement vehicles

#### Reduce inputs to the business and waste;

- Recycle, reduce and reuse packaging and carrier bags/no plastic bags policy
- Use compostable doggy bags
- Change to a biodigester
- Put a new waste monitoring system in place and consider where savings can be made.
- Use email newsletters and confirmation of bookings/ invoicing
- Have environmental information on your website

#### Conserve water;

- Put water butts in the garden
- Request guests to ask for a towel or sheet change
- Wash with Ecoballs to eliminate the need for rinse cycles
- Install a water meter and monitor use
- Reuse water and install dirty water treatment system
- Fit dual flush toilet cisterns or water hippos
- Build a reed bed treatment system

### Benefit wildlife and landscape

#### Involvement in wildlife/ countryside schemes:

- Join our new Friends of the Shropshire Hills scheme
- Get involved in Environmental Stewardship schemes
- Sponsor a tree planting scheme
- Join the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, National Trust, RSPB or similar.

#### Encourage wildlife to prosper

- Develop a wildlife area on your site or in your garden and increase the number of bird, bat and insect boxes
- Encourage donations to the AONB Sustainable Development Fund

#### Follow advanced animal welfare guidelines

- Become a member of the Freedom Food scheme, Soil Association or begin organic conversion
- Grow free range poultry or grass fed livestock

