

SHROPSHIRE HILLS LEADER PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose and Remit

- 1.1. The Panel will be a sub-group of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, which is formally the LEADER Action Group as well as the body formed by the local authorities to fulfil their legal duty to co-ordinate management of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The primary role of the Panel will be to make decisions on the allocation of LEADER grants.

2. In particular the Panel will:

- 2.1. Approve, reject and advise on applications for funding submitted in accordance with an approved process in an open and transparent manner.
- 2.2. Play a steering role to guide the operation of LEADER in the Shropshire Hills, and the development of working procedures.
- 2.3. Champion the LEADER programme, its aims and objectives, and encourage good partnership working between public, community and voluntary organisations/ groups to ensure co-ordination/ collaboration of efforts within the programme area.
- 2.4. Act as advocate for the Shropshire Hills AONB and ensure integration of the purposes of the AONB and LEADER objectives where possible.
- 2.5. Ensure integration with other funding streams managed by the AONB and other organisations.
- 2.6. Be part of a network of LEADER Local Action Groups to share best practice and help contribute to the delivery of the LEADER approach within the Rural Development Programme for England.

3. Membership

- 3.1. The membership of the Panel will be determined from an application process overseen by the AONB Partnership as the LEADER Action Group.
- 3.2. The Panel will have 8 members comprising:
 - a representative of Advantage West Midlands
 - the AONB Manager
 - two public sector representatives
 - four non-public sector representatives appropriate to the social and community priorities of LEADER
- 3.3. The membership of the Panel will be reviewed every two years or as determined by the AONB Partnership or Management Board.

4. Operation

- 4.1. The Panel will meet as necessary to determine grant applications, and meet jointly with the Appraisal Panel for steering purposes. Around six meetings per year are expected.
- 4.2. A Chairman will be elected annually or as necessary by the Panel.
- 4.3. The Shropshire Hills AONB Team will provide administrative support. In the event of dispute, guidance from the AONB Partnership or its Chair may be sought. Agendas and any papers will be circulated by the Shropshire Hills AONB Team at least a week before meetings.

- 4.4. Updates on activity of the Panel will be given periodically to the AONB Partnership as the LEADER Action Group. Minutes of the Panel will be made available on the Shropshire Hills AONB website.

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