

# Newsletter

## CONGRATULATIONS

### SEVERN VALLEY COUNTRY PARK

Countryside officer Ed Andrews has passed his masters in Biological Recording with merits.

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### MYSTERY SHOPPER

Bridgnorth Visitor Information Centre was very pleased with their results in the recent Mystery Shopper survey. Final placings are yet to be finalised but it looks as though the VIC will be amongst the top 8 in the Heart of England region. The staff were particularly pleased with high marks in some areas which they have worked hard to improve on as a result of comments made in last year's survey. Two emails are sent to the centre, two phone calls and one visit was made. The emails scored 85% and 94%, the telephone calls, 88% and 91% and the visit 82%, so well done to all concerned.

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### EVERGREEN COTTAGE

Congratulations to Dave Roberts who recently was awarded 4 stars by Quality in Tourism for his self catering cottage in Brockton.

The quality of the accommodation in the district is constantly improving. 52% of our B&B members and 57% of the self catering members have now achieved 4 stars or above.

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## NEWS FROM MEMBERS



### CONSERVATION CENTRE OPEN WEEK

The Michael Beetham Conservation Centre (MBCC) at Royal Air Force Museum Cosford will be opening its doors in November to visitors for one special week.

The MBCC is one of the finest aircraft conservation centres in the world. To enable greater public access and an understanding of the centre's work, it will be opening its doors from Monday 24<sup>th</sup> to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

Visitors to the Museum will gain exclusive behind-the-scenes access to aircraft conservation-work and have a rare opportunity to view current projects, including work being undertaken on the Handley Page Hampden Bomber, Maurice Farman Bi-plane and the Sopwith Dolphin.

Manager of the Conservation Centre, Tim Wallis says:

*"The conservation team at the MBCC are justifiably proud of the work they do towards preserving our aviation heritage. We welcome this opportunity to allow the public a degree of access towards finding out more about the painstaking and skilled work that aircraft conservation entails. The MBCC is a very busy place however and it will remain a working domain throughout. Come along and experience this fascinating work with us, I'm sure you'll not be disappointed."*

The Conservation Centre opening hours will be from 10.15am to 1.00pm, 24 – 28 November 2008

The main Museum is open daily from 10am – 6pm (last admission 5pm). Admission and parking are both free of charge.

For further information, please contact the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford on 01902 376200 or visit [www.rafmuseum.org](http://www.rafmuseum.org).

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### **DANIELS MILL**

'Now that the recent restoration work is complete and the mill is working again, Daniels Mill plans to be open for longer hours from now on.

Although it is the close of the main tourist season and things have quietened down, many opportunities exist for volunteering at the mill as we build a team of helpers for the future. No formal qualifications are needed - just an enthusiasm and willingness to be part of ensuring Shropshire's last working watermill remains open to the public.

A variety of activities exist, ranging from: grass cutting, maintaining flower beds, running the small shop / tea room, taking visitors around the mill, and anyone interested in becoming an apprentice miller is also welcome!

The Trustees welcome regular help, and ideas new and old - anyone interested in taking part can call in at the mill and speak to miller Alan George and/or contact Trustees Ian George 07970 019 306 or Heather Walters on 01746 762713.

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## **EVENTS**

### **DUDMASTON HALL**

Autumn Colour! Gardens Open - 26th October  
Experience the beauty of Dudmaston's gardens in their Autumn colour and get arty by participating in The Big Draw 2008!  
12pm - 4pm

Christmas Fair - 14 December  
Get some last minute festive inspiration with our annual arts and crafts fair, alongside seasonal entertainment and food.  
12pm - 4pm

Snowdrop Walks - 7,8,14, & 15 February 2009  
Witness the first signs of new growth after the long winter at Dudmaston with a walk around the Dingle to spot banks of snowdrops.  
12pm - 4pm



## **SEVERN VALLEY COUNTRY PARK**

October - December 08 Events

Most events involve some walking; please wear suitable clothing and outdoor shoes. Some paths may not be suitable for pushchairs or wheelchairs. Please call 01746-781192 for advice/information.

### **RANGER RAMBLES RETURNS**

Due to Popular demand !!

- Make some new friends.
- See some wildlife.
- Keep fit.
- Learn about the countryside.

Come along and experience all that walking in Shropshire has to offer. The walks will vary in length and will show the varied nature and history of this green and pleasant county. All walks will have some stiles and possibly some uphill sections. Wear appropriate all-weather clothing and footwear and bring refreshments.

### **VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION DAYS**

Are you interested in the countryside?  
Would you like to make a difference to the natural wildlife in the area?

If so then volunteer conservation task days may be just what you are looking for. Predominantly woodland orientated, tasks include crafts such as fencing, charcoal making and pole lathe turning

### **VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION DAY 1**

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 10am-3pm  
Meet at Severn Valley Country Park Visitor Centre  
NO CHARGE

### **APPLE DAY FARE**

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 1pm-4pm  
An Event for all the family with activities and games for children and the young at heart. Scrump apples and pears from our orchard then press them to make refreshing apple juice. Sample over 30 traditional varieties of apple at the tasting table, including Alveley Cottage seedling. Try your hand at traditional crafts on display  
Held in the riverside orchard at Severn Valley Country Park  
NO CHARGE

## **SPOOKY TALES AND GHOSTLY GOINGS ON**

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October 6pm-8pm  
Shropshire storyteller Amy Douglas will be here in a spooky setting to tell Ghost Tales from around the area. Sample some "Frightening Food" and enter the fancy dress competition. Come along for an evening of frights for all ages and make a scary mask,  
Meet at The Visitor Centre, Severn Valley Country Park  
£2.50 everyone

### **STANMORE COUNTRY PARK- CONSERVATION DAY 2**

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November 10am-3pm  
Between 1939 and 1963 Stanmore Country Park was an RAF camp. In 1992 the site was developed into a Country Park by planting many thousands of trees and the seeding of an open area with wild lowers. The success of the park is dependant on volunteers and people using the park. Would you like to make a difference to the park and improve it for its natural wildlife? If so then join us for a day of woodland management. All tools and materials provided.  
Meet at Stanmore Country Park Car Park just off A454  
NO CHARGE

### **ROPEWALK DINGLE WOODLAND CONSERVATION DAY**

Saturday 15 November 11am-1pm  
Come along and help with tree thinning and scrub clearance. We will be thinning out a small area of self seeded sycamores to improve the woodland structure and create a better wildlife habitat. All tools and training provided. Wear old clothes and strong shoes. Barbecue lunch and hot drinks provided.  
NO CHARGE

### **BIRDS OF THE NIGHT**

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Nov 10am-4pm  
With the dark nights drawing closer its the time of year when we begin to think of owls. Come and see two local owl fanatics! Take a close look, Gill Hales will be bringing a selection of her rescue owls. Also Adam Galloway who will be busy crafting samples of chainsaw art many of which are owls, Adam will be chiselling the finishing touches to his masterpieces and selling his woodcarvings on the day.  
NO ENTRY CHARGE

### **COPPICE FOR DORMICE**

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 10am-3pm  
Help us coppice an area of woodland to encourage a healthy environment for the endangered dormice. All tools provided. Don't forget a packed lunch  
Meet at Severn Valley Country Park Visitor Centre.  
£2.50

### **GEOGRAPHIC WALK**

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November 10am-2pm  
A 5 mile guided walk taking in a section of the Geopark Way and some beautiful riverside and woodland scenery. Expert knowledge from Andrew Jenkinson of the Shropshire Geological Society.  
Meet at Severn Valley Country Park Visitor Centre  
Adults £2.50 Children £1.50

### **PLANT A TREE AT ROPEWALK DINGLE**

Sunday 7 December 2pm-3pm  
Come along and plant a tree in this Bridgnorth beauty spot. Trees and tools provided. All ages welcome.  
Meet at St Leonard's Church, Bridgnorth.  
NO CHARGE

### **VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION DAY 3**

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December 10am-3pm  
Meet at Severn Valley Country Park Visitor Centre  
NO CHARGE

### **FAMILY CHRISTMAS RAMBLE**

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December 11am -2pm  
Join a Ranger-led 4 mile Festive Ramble, looking for winter wildlife. Finish at the Visitor Centre for a mulled drink and a warm mince pie  
BOOKING ESSENTIAL (max 30 people)  
Meet at Severn Valley Country Park Visitor Centre  
£5 including drink and mince pie

### **A Traditional Christmas at Rays Farm**



During the month of December 2009, from the 1<sup>st</sup> to Christmas Eve (inclusive) Father Christmas will be both living and working at Rays Farm. Full details at [WWW.RAYSFARM.COM](http://WWW.RAYSFARM.COM)



#### **BOOKING YOUR VISIT**

Pre-booking is essential by telephoning **01299 841255** preferably early evening.  
NB:- it is important that you arrive at Rays Farm at least 30 minutes before your agreed booking time. Field and woodland paths closed during December. Farm and shops close at 5.00pm

#### **ADMISSION**

Adults: £5.50  
Children: £7.50 including a present up to 2nd Birthday £4.50

Special rates for schools & groups  
For further details phone 01299 841255

## **SHROPSHIRE TOURISM**

### **PRESS AND PR**

As a result of Shropshire Tourism's press and pr activities last year, press coverage for Shropshire was worth over £1.7 million demonstrating just how important this activity is in promoting the county.

So far this year, Shropshire has hosted 5 press visits including journalists from the Sunday Times and The Express.

Coverage for Shropshire continues to be generated both domestically and internationally and as ever we are always on the lookout for 'hooks' to use to generate coverage for both Shropshire and member businesses.

If you have a story, please let us know by emailing Sarah at [swhittall@shropshiretourism.co.uk](mailto:swhittall@shropshiretourism.co.uk)

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### **DMP NETWORKING DAYS**

Late last year and early this year Shropshire Tourism held a number of networking days to support the restaurant, golf and attractions sectors in Shropshire. The meetings were held on behalf of the Shropshire & Telford Destination Management Partnership (the DMP), with funding support from Advantage West Midlands.

The meetings were very interesting with a range of speakers offering advice and support to each sector.

The attendees at the meetings were eligible for a free entry for a year on the bespoke websites which are also produced by Shropshire Tourism on behalf of the DMP. You can view

the websites at:

[www.shropshireattractions.com](http://www.shropshireattractions.com),  
[www.shropshirefoodanddrink.com](http://www.shropshirefoodanddrink.com) and  
[www.shropshiregolf.com](http://www.shropshiregolf.com) .

As a result of the golf networking meeting, a Shropshire golf committee has been set up which hopes to meet regularly and encourage dialogue between all the golf courses in the county. The courses which were represented at the meetings were also eligible to a free entry in the new Shropshire Golf Guide which has also been produced on behalf of the DMP.

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## **PRACTICAL MATTERS**

### **NEW GUIDE FOR ACCOMMODATION AND VISITOR ATTRACTIONS**

VisitBritain has launched a new brochure to help tourism businesses meet their guests' expectations. Entitled 'Easy does it', the 12 page brochure breaks down the visitor journey into six stages, from attracting the visitor to book to once they have returned home.

'Easy does it' is packed full of ideas that are simple and low-cost, from suggestions for what to include in brochures and on websites, to the provision of easy to find information such as contact details for the local Shopmobility scheme or accessible taxi firm.

Improved accessibility benefits a wide range of the population from dad with a bad back, to gran with a hearing aid, a new mum with a pram or a teenager with a broken leg! Implementing just a few of the ideas suggested in the brochure will help to enhance the quality of experience for many and in turn not only meet, but exceed guest expectations.

Go to [www.visitbritain.com/quality](http://www.visitbritain.com/quality) to view the brochure, or you can request a free hard copy by emailing [gad@visitbritain.org](mailto:gad@visitbritain.org)

## **CANCELLED BOOKINGS**

A clear and current cancellation policy will act as a defence for your business if guests' arrangements don't quite go according to plan.

In some cases, it may be you who needs to cancel. So how can you minimise the risks and develop an up-to-date policy that helps manage your bookings without upsetting your customers?

The latest issue of Quality Edge (from Visit Britain) features an article with clear and simple guidelines to help you formulate your own Cancellation Policy.

If you would like a copy please contact Jytte or Sue – see details below. Advice is also available on [www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk](http://www.accommodationknowhow.co.uk)

Editor : Jytte Spouncer, Bridgnorth VIC

If you would like to contribute to the next newsletter please contact me on:  
01746-763257, e-mail:  
[bridgnorth.tourism@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:bridgnorth.tourism@shropshire.gov.uk)

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## **WEBSITE NEWS**

### **WEBSITE STATS**

Unique first time visits:

June 2008 - 2446

July 2008 - 3795

August 2008 - 3804

Figures and graphs are also available for length of session, bounce rate and a session graph for the month of August. If you would like a copy, or if you would like any other data about the website, please just contact Jytte.