

Action for Sustainability

The Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre at Craven Arms is a council-run visitor centre which was opened in 2001. Inside the unique, grass-roofed building which takes its inspiration from the local hill forts, is the perfect place to begin exploring, or rediscovering, the Shropshire Hills - an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The permanent Secret Hills exhibition tells some of the stories of this varied landscape, its people, its places, and its history and heritage. Outside, 30 acres of beautiful wildflower meadows, ponds, riverbank and woodland can be explored and is enhanced by a sculpture and orienteering trails.

Since its opening, the centre has provided a varied programme of on-site educational sessions for schools. All activities are led by experienced staff, closely linked to the national curriculum and serve to support and enhance classroom teaching through enjoyable, hands-on learning opportunities for a wide range of ages and abilities. In schools, outreach and extended schools sessions are also offered by the centre.

Our small Education Team also provide family workshops during school holidays which enable families to share experiences which are both fun and educational at the same time.

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It is essential for the future 'health' of the planet that our children, the future decision makers, are made aware of the threats posed by climate change and what humans can do to help combat this.

Through this new session developed for KS2 and 3, children are given opportunities to:

- acquire the skills necessary to assess the present situation in terms of sustainability
- deepen their understanding of renewable technologies through hands-on, practical experiments
- examine their own lifestyles and what actions they themselves can take.

Therefore, the immediate outcome of the project will be to raise awareness of sustainability issues and equip our children with a basic knowledge of actions they can take and existing technologies that address the situation.

It is hoped that the long-term effect will be far reaching by encouraging the children to take what they have discovered from the session and use it to assess how sustainable their

school and its practices are along with their own homes, thereby involving other students, teachers and families. The session is complemented and reinforced by a pack of suggested classroom activities, posters and teaching notes for use back at school.

The project will also fund free family workshops each weekday during February half term 2013 delivered by the Discovery Centre Education Team. Families attending our holiday workshops will also be encouraged to achieve positive change in their own lives.

Renewable Energy Kits

The Naturesave Trust has very kindly agreed to support the project by funding the purchase of some renewable energy kits which will enable the children to have first-hand experience of this technology and thereby reach some understand of the advantages and disadvantages associated with its use. By making such a purchase, the project offers schools the opportunity to engage in an activity at a level of which most schools will not have the capital to commit to themselves on an individual basis.