



Press Release issued jointly  
by the Blackdown Hills and  
East Devon Areas of  
Outstanding Natural Beauty  
Partnerships.

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## **BLACKDOWN HILLS AND EAST DEVON AONBs**

### **WIN NEW FIVE YEAR FUNDING BOOST**

The South West Regional Development Agency has announced that The Blackdown Hills and East Devon Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are set to benefit from an injection of £2.4m.

***Making It Local*** was one of 15 successful bids to the Rural Development Programme for England for **Local Action** in the South West. The money, which comes from Defra and the European Union, is managed through the Regional Development Agency (RDA) and is used to fund economic, creative and social activity in the area.

The £2.4m RDA injection will stimulate investment from a wide range of other sources across both AONBs and their surrounding market towns in Devon and Somerset between 2008-2013.

Councillor Paul Diviani, Chairman of East Devon District Council, Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership and the Shadow Local Action Group that will oversee the programme, said:

"It is fantastic news we have succeeded with our bid for project funding for the next five years. Making It Local is our initiative for using our outstanding natural resources in an environmentally sensitive way for the benefit of everyone who lives and works here. I am absolutely delighted that the hard work and long hours of preparation have paid off so spectacularly for the Blackdown Hills and East Devon AONBs".

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The programme has already attracted massive interest in the area with over 80 project ideas put forward even before the funding had been announced.

The new programme is due to get underway in October 2008 with the early months focussing on establishing the delivery processes and commissioning development initiatives for local town markets and businesses.

It is anticipated that in 2009 a grant scheme will be available and assessors will be particularly interested in applications concerned with culture, tourism, recreation, using natural resources sustainably and network building/bringing people together.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the successful Making It Local bid should visit [www.blackdown-hills.net](http://www.blackdown-hills.net), [www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk](http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk) or call 01823 680626. Alternatively you can visit our stands, either the Blackdown Hills Business Association tent or B136 respectively, at the Honiton Show on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> August.

## **ENDS**

### **Notes for Editors**

- **Photo attached : Making It Local celebrations in the Blackdown Hills (Left to right- Jenny Archard (Leader + Co-ordinator), James Maben (Neroche Initiative), Heather Stellard (Blackdown Hills Business Association), Nickie Moore (Blackdown Hills AONB), Cllr Paul Diviani)**
- South West RDA announcement (01/08/08) on Local Action  
<http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/news/release.asp?ReleaseID=2648>
- The East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was designated in 1963 to protect the landscape for the nation. It is one of 40 AONBs in the UK. It covers 268 sq km of Devon's finest countryside, or one third of the East Devon district. Core funding and support is provided by Natural England, Devon County Council and East Devon District Council. The AONB Partnership brings together fifteen organisations representing environmental groups, statutory bodies, landowners, local business associations and community representatives to help ensure that the East Devon AONB remains a healthy, living landscape for future generations. For more information visit [www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk](http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk).
- The Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was designated in 1991 to protect the landscape for the nation. It is one of 40 AONBs in the UK. It covers 370 sq km of land on the Devon and Somerset border. The AONB partnership brings together local authorities, interest groups, national agencies and local communities to help ensure that the Blackdown Hills remains a healthy, living landscape for future generations. For more information visit > <http://www.blackdown-hills.net>