2023 Shropshire Hills Hay Meadow Festival Report

A grant of £500 from the Shropshire Hills Conservation Fund was offered to support the Shropshire Hills Hay Meadow Festival on Saturday 15th July 2023.

The Festival is a collaborative event between the following local organisations; Discovery Centre, Shropshire Hills National Landscape, Natural England, Butterfly Conservation, Marches Meadow Group, Restoring Shropshire’s Verges Project, CPRE Shropshire and Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

The aim of the Festival is to showcase the value of traditional hay meadows and raise awareness of the wider issue of habitat management to a broad cross section of visitors.

The Festival has a range of activities for visitors to get involved in; guided wildlife walks, talks, children’s meadow crafts, have a go scything and competitions, including hay-bale lobbing and a group hay-stack race.

There are also information and craft stalls, alongside live music and refreshments including a BBQ and bar. See Festival flyer for full programme of activities.

Feedback following the event:

* The event was deemed a success, showcasing hay meadows and the wider issue of habitat management to a broad cross section of visitors.
* Visitor numbers were down due to the weather, but the event made tiny surplus nonetheless.
* Traders didn’t have a great day but were generally happy with how things panned out and would like to come back.
* Visitor feedback was generally very good.
* It was agreed that the event should continue at the Discovery Centre biannually possible with a smaller, more low-key event in the interceding years.
* For the event to continue to thrive, it was felt that ALL the partner organisations need to work together to promote, plan and shape the event and to help with set up and take down.

Thank you again to all the people who helped make this happen- here’s to HMF 2025!

Grant Wilson, Centre Manager

Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre – the home of Grow Cook Learn

Registered charity number: 1158795