



## DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES IN HASLEMERE

### About Surrey Hills

Surrey Hills is one of the first areas in the country to be designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It covers 25% of Surrey and with a 6-mile hinterland around the AONB it covers most of Surrey except the north western parts of the County.

### About Surrey Hills Enterprises

Surrey Hills Enterprises is the Community Interest Company arm of the AONB. It was set up in 2012 to support and develop the rural economy and tourism and to promote and enhance the Surrey Hills.

Surrey Hills Enterprises core activities are focused on 'clean growth', environmental sustainability and building a strong local economy and tourism industry. It works with over 120 local business Members and has a growing reputation for its network of innovative, high quality, sustainable businesses providing local products and services. At its Rural Economy Conference in 2018, Enterprises launched their Trade Mark Surrey Hills, a mark of local provenance, quality and sustainability. In February 2020 it ran its first Sustainable Business Conference at the University of Surrey to inform and inspire businesses to become more sustainable.

### Rational

There is now even greater focus on developing the economy in a sustainable way that protects and enhances the environment. At the same time, buying local and linking to environmental impact is becoming increasingly popular and a key factor in customer choices.

Whilst the desire to become more environmentally sustainable is increasing, it can be a daunting task for many organisations, especially small businesses. However, the overwhelming evidence suggest that organisations incorporating sustainable friendly practices are also increasing their bottom line as more consumers are choosing to support those businesses with environmental values.

Following the Covid-19 crisis, we are seeing an increase in domestic tourism with a focus on sustainable tourism and a demand for local experiences and events which contribute positively to the area. This project to support Haslemere businesses ties directly into Surrey Hills Enterprises current development of a Surrey Hills Destination Management initiative. This includes a new website to promote Surrey Hills including local food, experiences, activities, artisans and accommodation.

### Sustainable business initiative

#### Aims:

The Sustainable Business initiative in Haslemere\_will:

- ❖ Inform and inspire businesses to become more environmentally sustainable by taking practical, effective and realistic actions to help them put the environment and their carbon footprint at the forefront of their business
- ❖ Encourage local people to 'buy local' thereby helping businesses to benefit from their sustainability values

- ❖ Build the visitor economy by supporting and highlighting those businesses that reflect the special nature and character of Haslemere and who offer visitor experiences, events, local food tasting and demonstrations and those offering accommodation.
- ❖ Inspire networking and collaboration between businesses to help build growth

The programme will be focused on the Trade Mark Surrey Hills, an accreditation and a Mark of local provenance, quality and sustainability. The Award promotes and celebrates those organisations of high quality and who share the values of supporting the local environment.

<https://www.surreyhills.org/enterprises/surrey-hills-trademark/>

The project will be delivered in 4 stages:

- ❖ **Stage 1 – Initial approaches**

Proactive approaches to businesses in Haslemere with the aim of awarding the accreditation to 10 businesses in Haslemere and surrounding area that meet the criteria

- ❖ **Stage 2 – supporting & promoting Haslemere businesses**

Promote those businesses who have been awarded the accreditation. This will include providing a website page for each company on the Surrey Hills website, promoting them through e-newsletters to the public, social media, magazines and press. They will also have access to the range of member workshops and webinars to build business skills and connect them with other Trade Marked businesses.

Promote and support those businesses who have been awarded the accreditation. This will include:

- ✓ providing a website page for each company on the Surrey Hills website <https://www.surreyhills.org/local-businesses/> with links through to the Haslemere Town and other websites
- ✓ Provide tools and techniques to help them to continue to build their sustainability
- ✓ Connecting them with other accredited businesses to enable information sharing, collaborations and support and to learn from fellow Members who are already overcoming the hurdles and challenges to enable them to become more sustainable.
- ✓ Promoting them and the Trade mark through e-newsletters to the public, social media, magazines and press and the use of the trade Mark logo on business publicity, packaging and websites
- ✓ Provide a range of member workshops and webinars to build business skills and support them to continue to build their sustainability

- ❖ **Stage 3 - Building**

Increasing the membership of Haslemere businesses focusing on the sustainability criteria and providing all the support as detailed in stage 2. The aim will be to build the membership to 30 Members during the 6-month programme.

#### ❖ **Stage 4 – on-gong**

Based on the 6-month programme funded by Haslemere Town Council, Surrey Hills Enterprises will continue to build the number of businesses in Haslemere who are awarded the accreditation and inspire more businesses to focus on sustainability.

#### **BUSINESS PLEDGE**

All businesses awarded the Trade Mark Surrey Hills make a pledge of support including an environmental pledge to develop and improve sustainability and reduce environmental impact.

#### **OUTCOMES**

- ❖ Supports and promotes local businesses to become more sustainable
- ❖ Inspires local people to support their local businesses
- ❖ Supports and promotes Haslemere to the wider public encouraging more visitors to the town
- ❖ Creates a strong link between Haslemere and the Surrey Hills brand

#### **ON-GOING FUNDING**

Businesses that meet the Trade Mark Surrey Hills contribute an annual Membership fee (£250 PA depending on the size of the business) that supports the Trade Mark Services including support with promotion to the public on their Surrey Hills website, e-newsletters, social media, magazines and a range of business workshops and events.

#### **SURREY HILLS ENTERPRISES - Team**

**Patron:** Michael More-Molyneux, Lord Lieutenant of Surrey

**Directors** – all voluntary

- ❖ Simon Whalley, Chairman and Chairman of Birtley House Group Ltd
- ❖ Rob Fairbanks, Director Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- ❖ Cllr. Mike Goodman, Surrey County Council, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
- ❖ Peter Martin, previous Chairman of Surrey County Council
- ❖ Ian McCulloch, Director Silent Pool Gin Distillery
- ❖ Tim Metson, Coverwood Farm and Lakes
- ❖ Sue Sturgeon, retired GBC Chief Executive
- ❖ David Taylor, non-executive Director for Exclusive Collection & Keith Prowse
- ❖ Cllr. David Wright OBE, retired Chairman Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty & Guildford Borough Councillor

**Ambassadors:**

- ❖ Chris White, Chief Executive of Denbies Wine Estate
- ❖ Mark Lebus, Chief Executive of LC Energy
- ❖ Ann Moriarty, KISS the Agency

**Executive**

- ❖ Executive Director, Wendy Varcoe MBE
- ❖ Finance & Office Manager, Karen Goodman
- ❖ Marketing & Communications Manager, Maggie Howell