

POLICY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the PROW network, the countryside, coast, and publically accessible green space is recognised in many national and local strategies and is afforded strong protection in law. An estimated 4000 individual statutes, regulations and judgements have a direct relevance to its protection, usage and development.

High quality, legally protected and well-promoted access for recreation, walking, cycling and horse riding is also essential in meeting many public policy objectives. Good management of PROW and other public access help deliver the objectives for tackling health inequality and disadvantage in our communities, providing low cost sustainable transport and generally improving Kent's resident's quality of life.

DELIVERING KENT'S PRIORITIES

Due to the wide reaching work of the PROW and Access Service, the ROWIP directly contributes to the delivery of many Kent policies and strategies, some of these are Kent County Council's and others are those of partner organisations.

The diagram below shows the policies and strategies that share common objectives to the ROWIP. A detailed overview 'Strategy and Policy Review' forms part of the evidence base, available on request.

Overall the PROW network has a wide range of functions and public benefits which include:

- Use as a leisure resource
- Providing access to places of work, education and facilities
- Supporting better health and wellbeing
- Improving Kent's environment
- Supporting the local economy
- Providing routes for more sustainable and less polluting transport
- Contributing to reducing congestion
- Contributing to improving air quality.



PUBLIC BENEFIT

Evidence around the benefits provided by access to the countryside and coast has increased in recent years and the PROW network is a key component of the overall access resource, providing important social and economic benefits for Kent's people and communities.

Increasingly, methods are being developed to evaluate the benefits achieved in these areas in economic terms. However, some benefits provided by PROW, such as enjoying a view or finding solitude, are more difficult to attach a monetary value to. Nonetheless, these are important needs which the PROW provides for. In this ROWIP, these are summarised under these broad categories:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Supporting Economic Growth

The need of supporting sustainable development and improving the environment is an overarching theme, to which the above categories contribute. Many of the needs and benefits are

inter-related: for example, increasing active travel also has environmental and health benefits such as reducing air pollution and increasing levels of physical activity, which in turn have economic benefits through, for example, increased productivity.

Looking in more detail at each of the key needs that the PROW network provides for we can start to develop an understanding of how these link with the key themes, objectives and outcomes of the ROWIP.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Poor health, as well as being detrimental to the individuals themselves, also incurs a cost to society. Not only through the direct costs of health care provision but also resulting in reduced economic outputs due to, for example, lower employee productivity, higher absence rates and early mortality.

A national review of inactivity estimated that physical inactivity costs Kent £306 million and 300 premature deaths each year.¹

Over recent years evidence has been building on just how important being physically active is. There is an established causal link between physical activity and at least 20 different chronic health conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes and mental health problems.²

The UK faces an epidemic of physical inactivity. Over the last half century, we have simply stopped moving—in our schools, our work places, our towns and cities—and how we travel between them. In all human history, we have never been so inactive. But the human body was designed to move, and this slowdown in activity has seen significant consequences to our health and economy.³

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Although being physically active has been evidenced to provide several benefits mentioned above, where the activity is undertaken also influences the benefits gained. The natural environment not only supports increased physical activity but when compared with exercising indoors, exercising in natural environments was associated with greater feelings of revitalization,

¹ (UK Active, 2014)

² (Department of Health/Chief Medical Officers, 2011)

³ (All-Party Parliamentary Commission on Physical Activity, 2014)

increased energy and decreases in tension, confusion, anger, and depression. Participants reported greater enjoyment and satisfaction with outdoor activity and declared a greater intent to repeat the activity at a later date.⁴

The levels of physical activity that people can achieve are directly influenced by several factors including the following:

- Distance to a green space;
- Ease of access;
- Size of the green space in terms of levels of population use;
- Connectivity to residential and commercial areas;
- Attractiveness, including biodiverse habitats and absence of graffiti and litter;
- Range of amenity - the wider the range of facilities the more likely the space is to be used by different kinds of people.⁵

Access to and physical activity in the natural environment also has a greater impact on improved mental health than physical activity alone.⁶ Viewing nature can also help recovery from an acute stressor.⁷ Often the activity takes place with family, friends or in a group, increasing the mental health benefits gained through social interaction.

The benefits of green exercise happen almost immediately. Only 5 minute of exposure improves self-esteem and mood, irrespective of gender, age and health status.⁸

ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Increased walking and cycling for journeys (termed 'active travel'), allows people to be physically active as part of their daily lives, bringing a range of health and wellbeing benefits and reducing traffic congestion, air pollution and outputs of climate change gases.

Road transport is responsible for around 30% of Kent's greenhouse gas emissions.⁹

The UK All Party Commission on Physical Activity recommends measures to design physical activity back into our everyday lives, stressing the importance of active travel as regular daily

⁴ (Thompson Coon, et al., 2011)

⁵ (Grant, Bird, & Marno, 2012)

⁶ (Pretty J. e., 2005), (Thompson Coon, et al., 2011)

⁷ (Brown, Barton, & Gladwell, 2013)

⁸ (Barton & Pretty, What is the best dose of nature and green exercise for improving mental health? A multi-study analysis, 2010)

⁹ Kent Environment Strategy (2016).

transport and planning developments and infrastructure to be ‘health-checked’ to ensure prioritisation of walking, cycling and physical exercise. Vision for Kent’s prioritises tackling physical and mental health disadvantage through physical activities, including walking and cycling and better and more accessible walking and cycling infrastructure, especially to help regenerate deprived areas.

Active children do better. Physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development, it increases cognitive outcomes and school attainment and improves social interaction and confidence.¹⁰

LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

The Marmot Review¹¹ highlighted that the fair distribution of health, wellbeing and sustainability are important social goals and that health and wellbeing is influenced by a wide range of factors. These include community resilience, the built environment and the local economy as well as the wider environment. Sustainable places and communities are one of the Marmot Review’s policy objectives, recognising the importance of good quality open and greenspace in tackling health inequality. However, availability and quality of access to greenspace is not evenly distributed, with those in deprived urban areas often having less access to health-improving greenspace; perhaps five times fewer public parks or green space.¹²

Health and wellbeing outcomes have historically been poorly integrated with spatial planning, an issue recognised in Kent’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JNSA) (Sustainability Chapter) leading to the creation of places which do not support people in improving their health through regular activity through walking or cycling or which contribute to poor health through high levels of road pollution, for example.¹³

In 2015, Public Health England published analysis of Kent’s performance on health inequalities against Marmot Review¹⁴ objectives. Overall, Kent scored significantly worse than the England average for ‘Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise/health reasons’.¹⁵ There is also great inequality between different areas of Kent. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation combine data drawn from seven domains¹⁶ producing an overall deprivation score for geographic areas. The

¹⁰ (All-Party Parliamentary Commission on Physical Activity, 2014)

¹¹ Fair Society, Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review) (2010)

¹² (Jarrett, et al., 2012)

¹³ (Barton H. , 2009), (Building Health Foundation, 2009)

¹⁴ Fair Society, Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review) (2010)

¹⁵ 2013/14 figures. (Kent Public Health Observatory, August 2016)

¹⁶ Income, employment, education, skills, health, crime, housing and the environment,

Kent JSNA recommends focusing efforts on these areas as this will have greatest impact on reducing health inequalities.

Transport related air pollution impacts most on the disadvantaged with increased risk of respiratory diseases and other illness. People in the 10% most deprived areas in England experience worst air quality, suffering for example 41% higher concentrations of nitrogen dioxide than the average.¹⁷

Kent overall is performing worse than the England average for two public health indicators, however, the Kent average hides local disparities, all but two of the districts are performing worse than the national average for at least one of these indicators, further details included in a detailed overview 'Strategy and Policy Review' which forms part of the evidence base, available on request. The ROWIP can contribute to improving these figures; reducing excess weight in adults and those killed and seriously injured on roads.¹⁸

The number of people who cycle to work in Kent is decreasing, contrary to this decline in Kent cycling to work has increased in Ashford, Canterbury Dartford, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells. Cycling to work is lowest in Gravesham and Sevenoaks, at less than 1%, and highest in Canterbury at 2.7%. However, all Kent districts are below the South east average of 2.9% and Kent is 1.7%.¹⁹ Concerted action is required to reverse this trend.

There are 36 areas in Kent where air pollution exceeds the Government's objectives. Public Health England estimates that in 2010 this led to a mortality burden of 745 premature deaths and 7436 life years lost for Kent as a whole. The highest mortality burdens were in Thanet and Canterbury, followed by Maidstone.²⁰ Active Travel not only has a positive impact on health and wellbeing but can contribute towards reducing traffic congestion and road traffic air pollution.

A lack of routes, poor availability of information about routes, concerns over safety and the speed and convenience of motorised transport can all act as barriers to people choosing active travel.²¹ People cycle more when there is cycle infrastructure and separation from traffic. Furthermore, findings from the 'Walk this Way' project also recognising the importance of

¹⁷ (Walker, Fairburn, Smith, & Mitchell, 2003)

¹⁸ (Public Health England, Kent Profile, 4th July 2017)

¹⁹ (Kent County Council, 2013, Cycling to Work Census 2011)

²⁰ (Public Health England, 2014) Thanet 90 premature deaths, Canterbury 81 and Maidstone 75.

²¹ (Lee & Moudon, 2004), (Kent County Council, 2017, Active Travel Strategy (draft))

information provision, signage and good quality paths especially in areas of need.²² The ROWIP will seek to address barriers, to better promote the existing network and work in partnership with planning authorities and developers to create well-designed, accessible environments to encourage people to walk or cycle.

Supporting cycling to work leads to lower staff turnover (greater staff retention).²³

KEY FINDINGS – PRIORITIES AND NEEDS

The ROWIP has a significant role in delivering the health and wellbeing priorities and needs and can contribute to redressing some the spatial planning deficiencies and health inequalities throughout Kent in the following ways:

Identified Need	Policy and Literature Review Evidence	Potential ROWIP Objectives
<p>Support measures to tackle health issues through increasing physical activity</p>	<p>UK is becoming less active and in human history we have never been so inactive, this has seen significant consequences in our health and economy.</p> <p>Physical inactivity causes chronic health conditions, including heart disease, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes & mental health problems.</p> <p>Improved physical and mental health benefits being physically active in green space.</p> <p>Participants reported greater enjoyment and satisfaction with outdoor activity and declared a greater intent to repeat the activity in the future.</p> <p>Levels of physical activity in green space are improved by close proximity, better access, connectivity and an attractive environment.</p>	<p>Prioritise encouraging physical activity especially in those districts where uptake of this is lower than the England average (Dover, Gravesham and Thanet) and where diabetes and cardiovascular conditions are higher than the England average (Shepway, Swale, Thanet, Gravesham, Dartford).</p> <p>Providing a basic resource for community-based activities, such as walking for health and local walking groups, thereby not only improving health, but also fostering social cohesion.</p> <p>Within these districts, but also in pockets of poorer health within less health deprived districts, deliver improvements in priority areas to increase active travel, to improve green access networks and connectivity and to encourage recreational activity.</p> <p>Support promotion activities to increase active travel and recreation activities in areas of poorer health.</p> <p>Providing a basic resource for community-based activities, such as walking for health and local walking groups, thereby not only improving health, but also fostering social cohesion.</p> <p>Improve network links to access areas of green space including Country Parks and other Honey Pot</p>

²² (Heron & Bradshaw, 2010)

²³ (Raje & Saffrey, 2016)

		sites to provide gateway to wider network to increase leisure recreational activity.
Active Travel	<p>The UK All Party Commission on Physical Activity recommends measures to design physical activity back into our everyday lives, stressing the importance of active travel.</p> <p>Active Travel, cycling and walking contribute towards reducing traffic congestion and road traffic air pollution.</p> <p>Increased walking and cycling for journeys (termed 'active travel'), allows people to be physically active as part of their daily lives, bringing a range of health and wellbeing benefits and reducing traffic congestion, air pollution and outputs of climate change gases.</p> <p>Active children do better. Physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development, it increases cognitive outcomes and school attainment and improves social interaction and confidence.</p> <p>The number of people who cycle to work in Kent is decreasing.</p>	<p>Integrate active travel into planning, support district councils and to influence partner authorities.</p> <p>Work with developers to ensure active travel routes are incorporated, link to networks and hubs and ensure routes and greenspaces are attractive.</p> <p>PROW provide a motorised traffic-free network which improves safety and encourages active travel uptake.</p> <p>Increasing sustainable and 'active travel' through PROW providing safe walking and cycling routes for short journeys, creating links through towns and urban areas and to the wider countryside.</p> <p>Develop and promote recreational routes to introduce people to active travel.</p>
Support measures to address health inequalities	<p>Kent overall is performing worse than the England average for two public health indicators.</p> <p>There are 36 areas in Kent where air pollution exceeds the Government's objectives. Public Health England estimates that in 2010 this led to a mortality burden of 745 premature deaths and 7436 life years lost for Kent as a whole.</p>	<p>Support measures to address health inequalities, prioritising those areas of greatest inequality.</p> <p>Improve access to the natural environment and greenspaces particularly in those areas where existing access to greenspace is low and where there is poor health, using the rights of way as alternative green areas for active travel and recreation;</p> <p>Support reduction of air pollution, particularly in those area where levels are high, and measures of deprivation and health is poor (see also Active Travel section);</p>

<p>Modal shift to cycling and walking to reduce road air pollution</p>	<p>36 areas in Kent where air pollution exceeds the Government's objectives.</p> <p>The number of people who cycle to work in Kent is decreasing.</p>	<p>Modal shift to cycling and walking, especially for short journeys, to help keep towns moving at peak flow times. PROW can provide traffic-free alternatives to on-road routes, which can encourage people to travel by cycle or foot.</p> <p>Providing traffic-free walking and cycling routes to schools, to improve health and wellbeing, reduce congestion and air pollution.</p> <p>Improving and upgrading rights of way to increase cycling, especially in urban areas to support modal shift for short journeys.</p>
<p>Safe Travel</p>	<p>The ROWIP can contribute to reducing England Public Health figures for those killed and seriously injured on roads.</p>	<p>Maintain the PROW network to support safe and easy travel.</p> <p>Work in partnership to provide new and upgraded routes in areas of evidenced need and to improve safety.</p>
<p>Better Environment</p>		<p>Increased cycling and walking and reduced congestion improves air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Green corridors also actively ameliorate air pollution and provide important habitat connections for wildlife.</p>
<p>Tackling Deprivation & Disadvantage</p>	<p>Availability and quality of access to greenspace is not evenly distributed, with those in deprived urban areas often having less access to health-improving greenspace; perhaps five times <u>fewer</u> public parks or green space.</p>	<p>Improving health disadvantage by providing access resources in areas of high health inequality, in areas of deprivation, where access to greenspace may be limited, increasing walking can be a particularly effective and low-cost way of increasing physical activity.</p> <p>Encourage active travel to schools, through promotion and route creation, particularly where there is a high level of childhood obesity or deprivation affecting children.</p> <p>Enabling access beyond the urban areas (where there are generally the highest levels of health deprivation) to the wider countryside and coast, providing connectivity to nature and cultural landscapes.</p> <p>Providing free-at-the-point-of-use resource facilities for exercise, thereby removing barriers for economically disadvantaged communities.</p>
<p>Delivering Kent's Joint</p>	<p>Poor special planning leads to the creation of places which do</p>	<p>Remove barriers to active travel and recreation and promote routes and opportunities.</p>

Strategic Needs Assessment sustainability themes	not support people in improving their health through regular activity through walking or cycling or which contribute to poor health through high levels of road pollution.	Work with partners to support implementation of health improvement initiatives, such as Walking for Health and GP referrals, for example through route accessibility improvements. Support volunteering in greenspace to support health and well-being. Promote access to natural heritage, biodiversity and heritage.
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SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH

The development of Kent’s transport network is a vital element in the facilitation of economic growth and to support the demands of a rising population. In order to attract new people to live and work in Kent we must ensure that the right infrastructure is in place to enable safe and efficient travel throughout the county.

It is essential that the development of this infrastructure is not at the cost of the natural and historic landscapes that make Kent a desirable place to live. A well planned green infrastructure which promotes and encourages sustainable and active travel is required and the PROW network is an important element of this. Working with the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF) to identify growth areas and the infrastructure needed to accommodate this growth until 2031, we can work towards more sustainable travel patterns in Kent.

In Bedfordshire, respondents showed a strong preference and a clear willingness to pay the current cost of provision of rights of way (at that time £6/household/year). There was willingness to pay more for public rights of way if this resulted in ‘significant’ improvements in the services provided, including improvements in physical condition, signage and facilities.²⁴

VISITOR ECONOMY AND LEISURE

²⁴ (Angus, Brawn, Morris, Parsons, & Stacey, 2006)

Tourism is an important industry for Kent, with the total tourism value estimated at £3.6 billion in 2015, supporting just under 52k full time equivalent jobs.²⁵ Tourism is significant to the local economies of several local authority areas, bringing income and supporting employment. Those districts in which tourism jobs, as a percentage of all employment, are above the Kent average of 10% are the east Kent authorities of Thanet (17%), Dover (16%), Canterbury (15%) and Shepway (13%).

The landscape, countryside and coast of Kent is a key attractor. Kent has one of the longest coastlines in the UK that hosts the English Coast Path, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the North Downs Way national trail which follows ancient route ways through the Kent Downs, ending at the White Cliffs of Dover. The Kent and Medway Tourism Development Framework recognises Kent's countryside as one of the county's strongest assets as a destination and the South East LEP also notes the importance of visitor economy, particularly in rural and coastal areas.²⁶ This is echoed in many of the local authority Destination Management Plans, which highlight the importance of countryside access, further details of which are included in a detailed overview 'Strategy and Policy Review' which forms part of the evidence base, available on request.

Sustainable rural leisure and tourism is a key way to support the socio-economic well-being of rural areas, providing jobs and supporting community services and the PROW network has a critical role in this. The ROWIP supports the aims of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership Rural Strategy and the development of sustainable rural tourism to safeguard our natural assets, heritage and quality of life. The overall network itself is also important, as is the 'packaging' of PROW into promoted routes and itineraries which can raise the status of Kent to visitors from outside the county.

The total spend in England attributable to walking from overseas visitors was £286m in 2015, while £99m was attributable to cycling.²⁷

Ideally, to ensure true positive economic impact for Kent, new spend is required and not displacement of existing activity from elsewhere in the county. Access to the countryside and coast can help to support this when allied with the promotion of other tourist attractions and activities to lengthen stays and promote awareness of what Kent has to offer. The quality of routes, the provision of types of access which can support new markets, e.g. off-road cycling,

²⁵ Visit Kent (2016), *Economic Impact of Tourism – Kent – 2015 Results*.

²⁶ South East LEP, Growth Deal and Strategic Economic Plan, para 2.22.

²⁷ (BDRC Continental for Visit England, 2016)

the creation, linking and upgrading of routes and the marketing of these need to be in place to fully support tourism.

The health impacts of tourism and leisure cycling can be assigned economic values. An example of estimated cost savings for particular provision is that, as a result of the participation of Near and Far Residents and Near Day Trippers, the Viking Trail in Thanet in Kent generates, at 2010 prices, an annual health care cost saving to the Kent economy of £114,111, and a saving to the local economy of Thanet of £75,486.²⁸

LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

Over the last 5 years Kent has fallen in national ranking compared to other authorities in the following seven indicators:

- Unemployment
- Resident and workplace earnings
- Employment rate
- 5 year change in employees
- Net change in business stock
- 3 year business survival rates
- Productivity, measured in Gross Value Added (GVA), is below both the national and South East level.²⁹

The east-west divide is also clear in economic performance, with GVA lowest for the east Kent local authorities. Thanet has the lowest GVA in Kent, with Dover third lowest³⁰; Dartford, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling are the top three.

Robust infrastructure can enable development and encourage sustainable economic growth leading to regeneration and attraction of new businesses. The ROWIP directly contributes to transport, green infrastructure and open spaces, three areas identified in 'Kent's Growth and Infrastructure' as critical to support growth in the period to 2031.

Kent's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - Sustainability Chapter also considers wider social, environmental and economic factors that impact on health and wellbeing – such as access to green space, the impact of climate change, air quality, housing, community safety, transport, economic circumstances and employment. In recognising the past shortcomings of spatial

²⁸ (SPEAR, Canterbury Christ Church University, 2011)

²⁹ (Kent County Council, April 2017, Gross Value Added Bulletin)

³⁰ Gravesham is second lowest.

planning in creating places where people are impeded in taking physical activity, accessing nature, or with high air pollution levels, several cross-cutting themes are set out. The ROWIP can particularly contribute to delivery of these themes as detailed in the table below.

Transport capacity issues will arise, however commuting in the county will predominantly take place intra-district,³¹ which also presents opportunities for increasing local, short-distance active travel commuting to reduce congestion and air pollution. The ROWIP can also contribute to green infrastructure and planning, supporting the development of strategic access routes as well as more local connections.

KEY FINDINGS – PRIORITIES AND NEEDS

The ROWIP has a significant role in supporting economic growth in the following ways:

Identified Need	Policy and Literature Review Evidence	Potential ROWIP Objectives
Green Infrastructure	A well planned green infrastructure which promotes and encourages sustainable and active travel is a vital element in the facilitation of economic growth and to support the demands of a rising population, the PROW network is an important element of this.	<p>Work with planners and developers to obtain a planned green infrastructure which incorporates the PROW network to promote and encourage sustainable and active travel.</p> <p>Working towards spatial planning which create places where people are not impeded in taking physical activity, accessing nature and have low air pollution levels.</p>
Delivering Kent’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment sustainability themes	The ROWIP can contribute to delivery of the JSNA sustainability themes	<p>Strategic and green infrastructure planning.</p> <p>Contribute to cross-cutting approach to planning, particularly to air quality, sustainable transport, access to green space and opportunities for sense of place</p> <p>Support improved communication with planning officers to ensure access is integrated into developments and best practice is applied.</p>
Increasing length of stay	Tourism is an important industry for Kent, with the total tourism value estimated at £3.6 billion in 2015, supporting just under 52k full time equivalent	<p>Turning day visits to short break and converting short breaks to holidays through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging and linking products to increase attractiveness;

³¹ (Kent County Council, 2015, Growth and Infrastructure Framework)

	<p>jobs.</p> <p>Kent landscape, countryside and coast of Kent is a key attractor to boost visitor economy and leisure.</p> <p>Increasing length of stay may potentially increase money spent during stay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new products (e.g. new routes or new promoted routes); • Promoting the resource widely to target short break audiences.
Grow new markets	<p>Tourism is significant to the local economies of several local authority areas, bringing income and supporting employment</p> <p>The quality of routes, the provision of types of access which can support new markets, e.g. off-road cycling, the creation, linking and upgrading of routes and the marketing of these need to be in place to fully support tourism.</p> <p>Increasing the market will potentially bring further income to Kent.</p>	<p>Support development of new, higher spending markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving priority routes which facilitate horse riding, cycling and walking for more targeted tourist leisure and recreational use • Support development of growing sectors such as adventure sports and active leisure; • Support marketing to short break market interested in the countryside, e.g. country-loving empty nesters;
A strong brand for Kent	<p>Tourism is an important industry for Kent, with the total tourism value estimated at £3.6 billion in 2015, supporting just under 52k full time equivalent jobs.</p> <p>Kent landscape, countryside and coast of Kent is a key attractor to boost visitor economy and leisure.</p> <p>The overall PROW network itself important, as is the 'packaging' of PROW into promoted routes and itineraries which can raise the status of Kent to visitors from outside</p>	<p>The unifying brand for Kent is 'Kent – The Garden of England'. PROW and Access can strengthen the brand of Kent as a whole and in local areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all parts of Kent fully utilise their countryside resource as a tourism asset; • Maintain primary promoted routes to a high standard to safeguard Kent's high-quality reputation; • Developing new products (e.g. new routes or new promoted routes) taking a strategic view of Kent's needs and markets.

	the county.	
Sustainable rural tourism	<p>Sustainable rural leisure and tourism is a key way to support the socio-economic well-being of rural areas, providing jobs and supporting community services and the PROW network has a critical role in this.</p> <p>The Kent and Medway Tourism Development Framework recognises Kent's countryside as one of the county's strongest assets as a destination and the South East LEP also notes the importance of visitor economy, particularly in rural areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help to keep spend by visitors (e.g. walkers and cyclists) in the local and rural areas through linkages with local businesses, thereby supporting Kent's small business sector; • Develop access which does not conflict with nature conservation interest and support mitigation measures which may require recreational pressure to be diverted from sensitive sites; <p>Provide information to help support community led tourism.</p>

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