



Elham

“ Nestling in the heart of the inspiring Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the historic village of Elham is truly one of the most picturesque in East Kent. ”



Need for the Project

Elham was initially identified through work conducted by the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit. Elham had obtained funding to support the running of the now defunct “Elham in Business” group as well as advice and support to set up and establish the Elham Farmers Market, which is still going strong.

Elham also participated in the pilot of the Rural Area Tourism Healthcheck initiative developed by Tourism South East, but it was through the KDAONB Interegg IIIA Transmanche sustainable tourism project, that a deliverable tourism project was looked at. At that point consultation was held with all the businesses which identified:

- A lack of visitor information on the village and its attractions
- No real marketing channels for promoting the area.

Key Facts

County:	Kent
District:	Shepway
Population:	1465
Project Started:	2008



The Process

The initial work of contacting businesses and getting a group together was undertaken by the then KDAONB sustainable tourism officer, encouraging businesses and community members to work more closely together and promote Elham as a destination. Research was gathered for a tourism product audit to identify the businesses and key features of the area for visitors.

The Audit threw up some interesting things, most notably the lack of almost any accredited accommodation in the village and its immediate surroundings, but also the huge amount of sites of historical interest

and walking routes around such a small village.

In order to get things moving, the Interegg project funded the publication of the Elham Leaflet as a quick win. But in a slightly different vein to the leaflet produced for Chilham and St.Margaret’s, this made the most of the historical sites, providing not only business listings but an interpretive trail around the village. The leaflet was completed in August 2008 and has since been distributed widely in both English and French.

What is Hidden Britain South East?

Hidden Britain South East offers support to rural communities to help them uncover the fascinating wealth of landscape, history and culture within Britain's countryside. What's really special is that the local communities themselves, develop truly unique and distinctive experiences for people who visit their towns and villages.

Hidden Britain has been working in the South East since 2004 to encourage tourism at a locally managed level. The project aims to facilitate rural regeneration and community development where it is needed most. The project is funded by SEEDA through the Rural Development Programme for England.



Hidden Britain

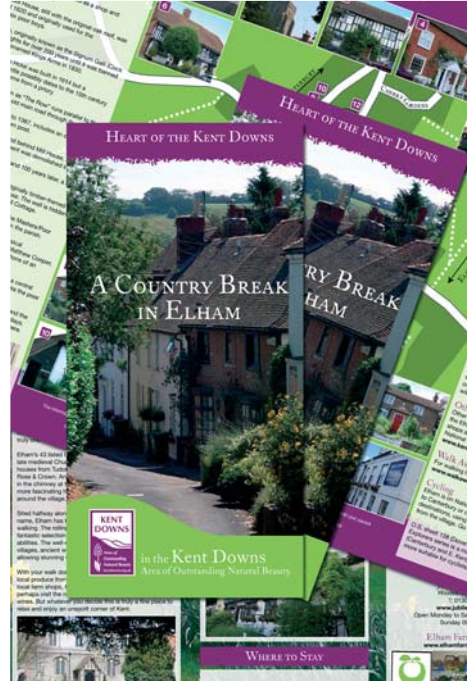
Progress to date

Who is Involved?

The Elham project was pushed forward by a small group of key volunteers who enlisted wider support as needed from the businesses and the community.

The Key members of the group were; Briony Williamson, Anne Leva and John Buss, with photography supplied by Derek Boughton, Anna Clayton and Dan Hobbs.

Throughout the project the group were supported by the KDAONB Sustainable Tourism officer and Hidden Britain South East.



Project Outputs

► The group have produced the “Country Break in Elham” leaflet, an A3 folded to DL publication detailing the businesses and countryside activities available in and around the village, as well as historical trail.

The leaflet has been issued in both English and French.

Status of Funding

£2,000 was originally sourced through the Interegge IIIa Transmanche Sustainable tourism project to develop the 2008 Elham Leaflet.





Project Achievements

► Businesses engaged (12)

Elham is a relatively small village, and although part of the wider Elham valley, for this project the group elected to keep the focus just on the village and parish of Elham. Several of the group members run local businesses and are involved with the Elham Farmers Market.



► No. of volunteers involved (6)

The majority of group members have volunteered their time and efforts at some point in the process, whether by involvement in proofing publications, supplying copy and images, undertaking research, distribution, representation at events or hosting meetings.

► Skills & training accessed

Whilst no formal training has been arranged as part of the project, volunteers have gained skills and experience in various areas, most particularly in; project management, destination management, commissioning and working with designers and printers and research.

► Marketing support provided

HBSE has assisted Elham in development of content for Ruralways and several other destination websites, both regionally and nationally, as well as arranging a presence at the Bleriot event in July 2009.



Hidden Britain Input

Hidden Britain became involved via a recommendation from the KDAONB sustainable tourism officer based on the success achieved in Chilham and St.Margaret's and was asked to support the group to deliver the leaflet project.

Hidden Britain South East assisted the group in writing copy, taking images and co-ordinating content for the new leaflet. HBSE, using the Ordnance Survey license provided via the KDAONB, also created all the maps for the publication.

Hidden Britain also assisted with the planning and implementation of distribution of the leaflet, as well as arranging marketing opportunities both online and at the Bleriot event on Dover Seafont.



Hidden Britain SE Case Study

Elham

Going Forward

- ▶ The group is currently distributing the new leaflet widely across Kent and the South East, they have divided up the task amongst the members to spread the load.
- ▶ The Elham group have been working with Visit Kent as part of the wider Elham Valley, developing a fuller product audit and sample itineraries to better promote the wealth of attractions and activities available in the area. This wider area group is potentially looking to work further with Hidden Britain in the near future.
- ▶ The Elham Valley is also involved in one of the bookable products in the Kent Downs portion of the South East Protected Landscapes Project



Lessons Learned

- ▶ You don't need to take on vast projects to have an impact, it's much better to undertake something manageable that really meets the local need.
- ▶ It can be difficult to sustain a group if the defined area is very small, looking wider and incorporating others is often a more sustainable approach.
- ▶ You can achieve plenty with only a small volunteer base, providing those involved are

happy to shoulder the extra workload.

“

Thanks so much for all the help you've given us on the leaflets – it is all very much appreciated in helping our little village to keep ticking over!

Briony Williamson,
Elham Farmer's Market

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This case study forms part of a series evaluating the impacts and benefits of the Hidden Britain South East Project across the region. The Project is managed by the South East Rural Community Councils (SERCC) in partnership with Tourism South East. The Hidden Britain South East Project is funded by SEEDA through the Rural Development Programme for England



Further Information
www.elham.co.uk
www.hiddenbritainse.org.uk
www.sercc.org.uk
www.tourismse.com
www.seeda.co.uk/rdpe

