

KENT GARDEN *of* ENGLAND

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PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 7th March 2018

Visit Kent joins EU project to boost local markets in UK and France

Visit Kent is one of 16 partners launching a new 5.6million euro project to help revitalise local markets in the South of England and Northern France.

GoTrade (Growth of the Visitor Economy through Traditional Markets, Employment and Skills) is an Interreg (France) Channel project, supported by the European Regional Development Fund, and aims to create a unique network of high quality markets in the UK and France and collectively attract more than 300,000 new visitors over three years.

Nine markets across France and the UK – including Gravesend market in Kent - will join under one brand and high quality 'mark' that will identify them as having diverse and good quality products sold by certified traders, and a good level of customer service for both local and international visitors.



The Interreg VA France (Channel) England Programme is financed by European Regional Development Funds

The project will also support traders and offer guidance and training in modern methods of communication and marketing – such as ‘click and collect’ – to help them innovate. Certified traders will also be able to travel and trade at any of the GoTrade markets in France and the UK.

GoTrade will also aim to heighten the appeal of market places as tourist destinations by hosting themed events, and highlighting the associated tourism offer to increase the length of stays in the market towns.

Visit Kent will work closely with Gravesham Borough Council to learn best practice from their market, and will work further with other project partners to establish a past, present and future ‘identity’ for the main markets, which will eventually be shared with the international travel trade in 2019/2020.



Chief executive of Visit Kent Sandra Matthews-Marsh MBE said: “Markets are an integral part of any district’s identity – our ‘market towns’ retain a unique charm and attraction for visitors, championing local trade and the people behind it. Yet many towns in England and Northern France are suffering a decline in market footfall, as more shoppers switch to online and high street stores for day to day needs, and national companies overtake local businesses.

“This is why we are delighted to be part of this international project to support these wonderful enterprises. Our markets bring us face to face with producers, artists, investors and innovators, and connect us with our surroundings and our districts’ heritage.

“The cross-border expertise we can draw on through the partnership will bring more support to traders, more opportunities and guidance for innovation, and more visitors to our markets - and deliver real changes to independent businesses in our wonderful market towns.”

The total fund for the project is 5.6million euros, shared across the 16 project partners over three years.



The France (Channel) England Programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).



Simon Hookway from Gravesham Borough Council briefing Jonathan Neame, Chairman of Visit Kent and Chief Executive Officer at Shepherd Neame Ltd about GoTrade

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Notes to Editors

For further media information on Visit Kent, please contact Head of Content & Communications Sinead Hanna at sinead.hanna@visitkent.co.uk, or call 01227 812910.

About Visit Kent

Visit Kent Ltd is the Destination Management Organisation for Kent (the Garden of England), welcoming 60million visitors a year, championing the county's £3.6 billion tourism industry and supporting more than 72,000 jobs.

It is recognised as one of the country's leading DMOs, targeting UK and overseas markets to raise Kent's profile as a premier destination, improving quality and skills within the industry, and growing investment in tourism. Visit Kent is a public/private sector partnership supported by Kent County Council, Medway Council, district and borough councils, and the leading sector tourism businesses in Kent. Visit Kent is delivered by destination management specialists Go To Places Ltd.

For further information visit www.visitkent.co.uk (consumer) or www.visitkentbusiness.co.uk (business), or tweet @visitkent.

Event pull ups



REVIVING OUR LOCAL MARKETS THROUGH GO TRADE 2017-2020



Natural and Cultural Assets

LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

REGIONAL FOOD AND DRINK

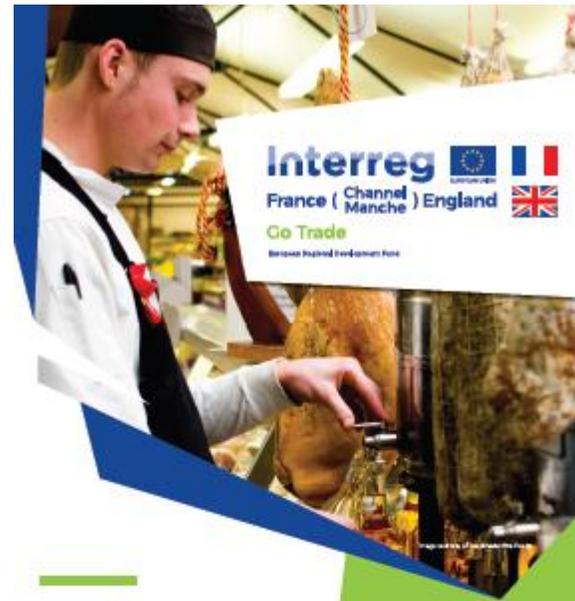
QUALITY SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

SPECIALITIES

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

DAY TRIPS

OUR PARTNERS
 Great Yarmouth Borough Council
 Great Yarmouth Town Center Partnership
 Basildon Borough Council
 Castle Point Borough Council
 University of Greenwich
 Gravesham Borough Council
 Visit Kent Ltd
 NMTF Ltd
 Agence d'urbanisme et de développement - Pays de Saint Omer Flandre Intérieure
 Communauté de Communes du Pays de Lumbres
 Pas de Calais Tourisme
 Chambre de l'Agriculture Nord-Pas de Calais
 Ville d'Amiens
 Ville de Caen
 Office de tourisme de Caen la Mer
 Ville de Louvigné du Désert



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