

# TARGETED CONSUMER CAMPAIGNS REPORT

KENT PILOT REGION REPORT 2023 T4.3.1



# INTRODUCTION

The Kent Regional Best Practice Guide presents findings on the effectiveness of the delivery for off-season experiential tourism, marketing and distribution (T4.1.3) for the Interreg EXPERIENCE project.

EXPERIENCE is a €24.5m project co-funded by the Interreg France (Channel) England Programme, which committed €17m from the European Regional Development Fund. It is led by Norfolk County Council (NCC) and ran from September 2019 to June 2023. EXPERIENCE is a major project to boost visitor numbers in the off-peak season through an innovative tourism strategy. New autumn and winter experiences will attract 11,309,368 new visitors to the six project pilot areas across England and France: Norfolk, Kent, Cornwall, Pas-de-Calais, Compiègne and Brittany (Baie de Morlaix and Côtes d'Armor).

Marketing and distribution within the Kent Pilot region was delivered in the following priority areas

1. Market testing with trade and distribution channels (T4.2.1)
2. Consumer testing campaigns (T4.2.2)
3. Consumer perception study (T4.2.2)
4. Digital Lab testing (T4.2.3)
5. Targeted consumer campaigns (T4.3.1)
6. Destination and business photography (T4.3.1)
7. Online pre-visit inspirational and trip-planning platforms (T4.3.2)
8. Travel trade and B2B distribution (T4.3.3)





# LAUNCH AND PROMOTION TO TARGET AUDIENCE

TARGETED CONSUMER CAMPAIGNS  
VISIT KENT - MUST VISIT KENT

Visit Kent (PP3) delivered a comprehensive catalogue of campaign activity throughout the project including;

- Always on activity
- Must Visit Kent campaign
- MVK Publication – 10,000 copies printed
- MVK section of the Visit Kent website
- Influencer activity
- Out of Home activity across London and at WTM
- Features in Nat Geo Traveller – Article and ad (Ad value of £95,184)
- Adsmart – 433,000+ impressions
- Organic social and newsletters





# Must Visit Kent

## *Background*

In 2021, we learned that the international publication and travel company Lonely Planet had declared Kent's Heritage Coast as one of the world's best regions to visit for 2022.

Capitalising on the opportunity, we developed **Must Visit Kent** to maximise the exposure and opportunities of Lonely Planet's "Best in Travel" award. The campaign showcased our destinations across Kent as the themes highlighted by the award resonated across the county - such as the landscape, culture, sustainability and heritage.

Throughout 2022, we worked with a variety of Kent's tourism businesses on a domestic marketing campaign, dedicated travel trade promotion, PR activity, a publication, a partnership with TripAdvisor, and much more across a range of channels, including social media, video on demand and paid search.

This report provides an overview of the Must Visit Kent campaign activity





# Must Visit Kent

## *Budget*

The combined total buy-in from partners was then matched by funding from Kent County Council, together this pot of money was used as match-funding which helped to unlock additional funding which had been made available through the Interreg EXPERIENCE project.

**£38k**

Total Partner buy-in

**£28k**

Kent County Council  
contribution

**£81k**

Funding from Interreg  
EXPERIENCE

The funding awarded through the Interreg EXPERIENCE project enabled us to deliver the Must Visit Kent campaign activities across all three strands delivering greater value and reach for partners, the county and the MVK message.





# Must Visit Kent

## *Target markets*

01



### Social Contemporary Seekers

Predominantly the millennial market comprising of couples and small groups of friends pre-children or couples with very young children

**18 - 34 years**

02



### Changing Family Dynamic

Families with children of different ages, including more intergenerational members and single-parent families

**Families**

03



### Green Spacers

Older couples of different ages, interested in the outdoors, with either more traditional or cultural experiences

**Older Couples**

04



### Hyper Local

This includes local Kent residents, encouraging them to explore their local area for a day trip or short break

**Families (VFR)**





# Must Visit Kent

## Media

The primary channels used to promote the Must Visit Kent campaign within this work package were:

- Press release in October 2021 promoting the accolade
- Digital Campaign:
  - Social channels - Facebook, Instagram
  - Google Display Network
  - Google Search Network
- Organic social posts and #MustVisitKent tag in social posts
- Publication - **Must Visit Kent**
- **Must Visit Kent Sky Adsmart advert**
- National Geographic advert

The dates which activity took place digitally are viewable [here](#).

MUST VISIT  
KENT



KENT  
GARDEN of ENGLAND

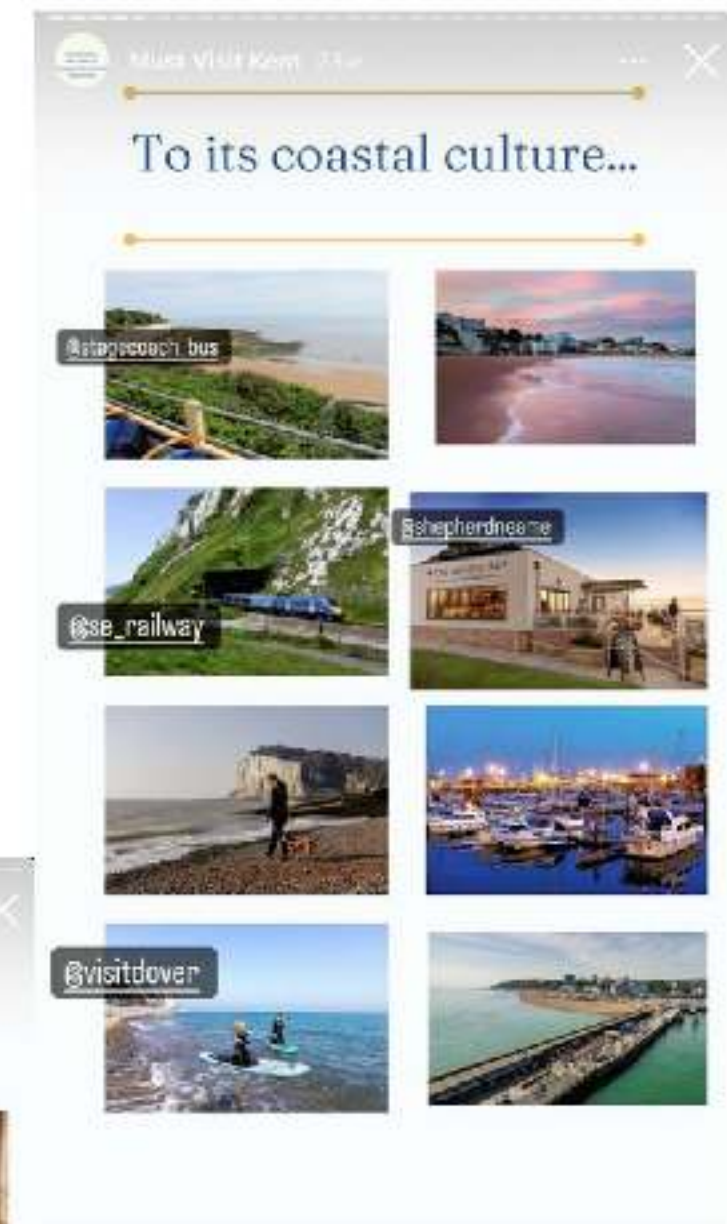




# Must Visit Kent

## *Added value buy-in partner activity*

- Throughout the year, we sent three Must Visit Kent-based newsletters to our database of 29,724 recipients, with additional emails also going out with the wider MVK message included - all of these had links to the landing page and partner content.
- Each buy-in partner was in our Must Visit Kent Instagram story posts and received a dedicated Instagram story too - these have also been living on our Highlights section since going out. These were sent to our Instagram audience of 36.5k followers and achieved 1,200 to 1,700 impressions each.
- Across our Visit Kent website we have consistently had each partner's MVK landing page in our top navigation, directing people to your content.





# Must Visit Kent

## *Additional Media*

Additional activity delivered through the other two Must Visit Kent strands, travel trade and PR, included the below. This activity helped the wider Must Visit Kent campaign messaging reach new domestic and international audiences, using the globally recognised Lonely Planet accolade.

- Roadside & WTM digital screens advertising (*right*)
- Tripadvisor (banner adverts, Kent Destination page takeover custom trips around Kent)
- National Geographic article and advert - 58,242 print calculation, with the article reaching 48,563 people, with an £ Value of £95,184
- Influencer trips
- Familiarisation trips
- Tour operator partnerships





# Must Visit Kent

*Webpage performance*

12

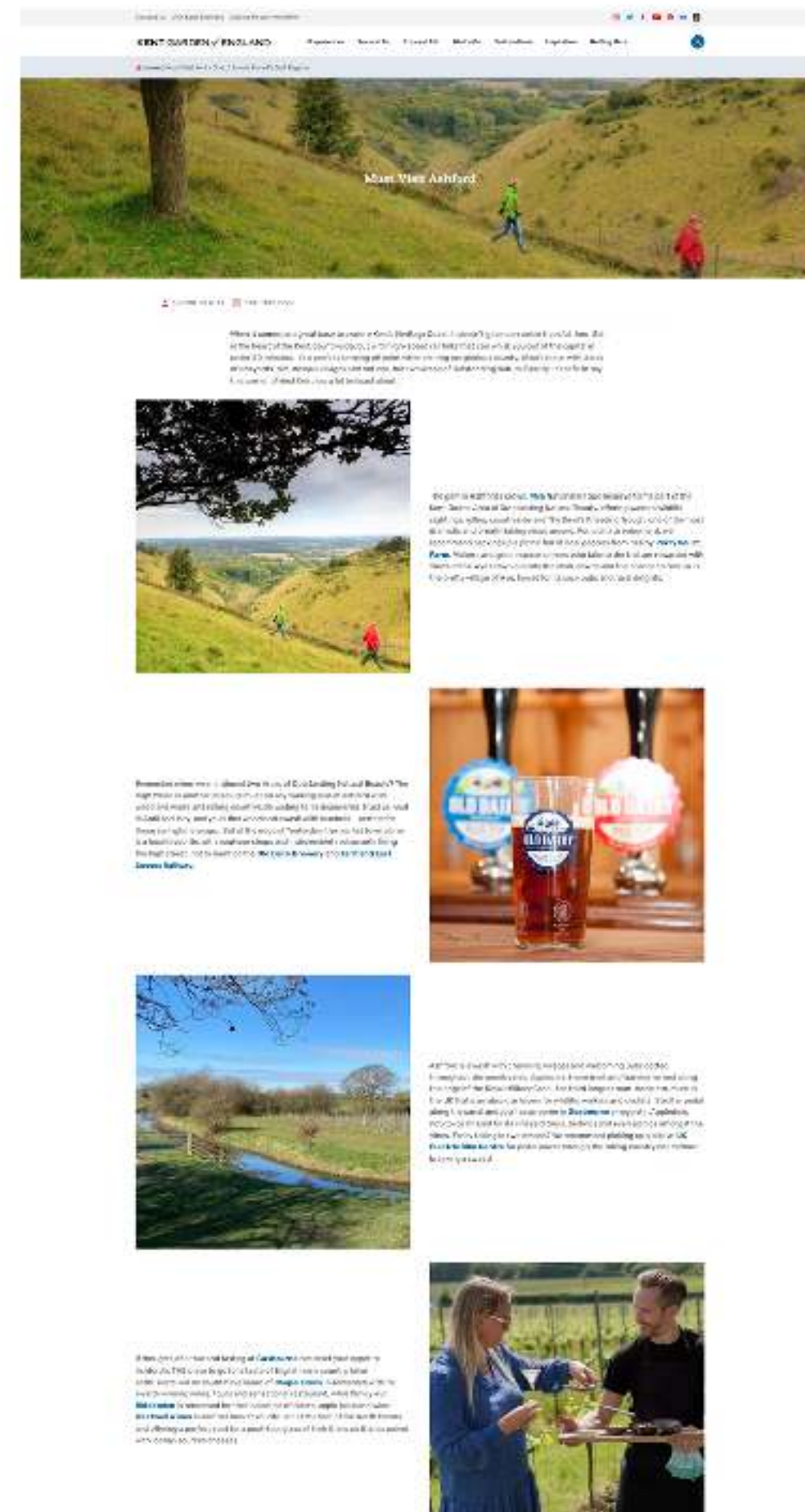
Total number of MVK content pages

Total overall MVK page views

135,358

1:13

Average time visitors spent  
on all MVK page





# Must Visit Kent

## *Publication*

- High quality print publication with over 65 pages of content
- Each partner had a dedicated advert, which led into a feature around their attraction, business or district
- The magazine was sectioned into three areas - the North, East and West of Kent
- Directory section with informative maps and key highlights in each geographical area
- Evergreen content, meaning the content inside the publication won't date quickly and will continue to be useful for visitors

MUST VISIT  
KENT



KENT  
GARDEN of ENGLAND



# Must Visit Kent

## Publication

**10,000**

Total MVK copies printed

InsideKent distributed 5,000 across Kent  
such as M&S & Ashford Designer Outlet

**5,250**

**3,750**

Allocated to partners in the campaign,  
to put in their venues, TICs and more

For Visit Kent to take to trade meetings, Networking Events  
and more. Recently, 50 copies were given to an international  
conference in West Kent for their Welcome Pack

**1,000**



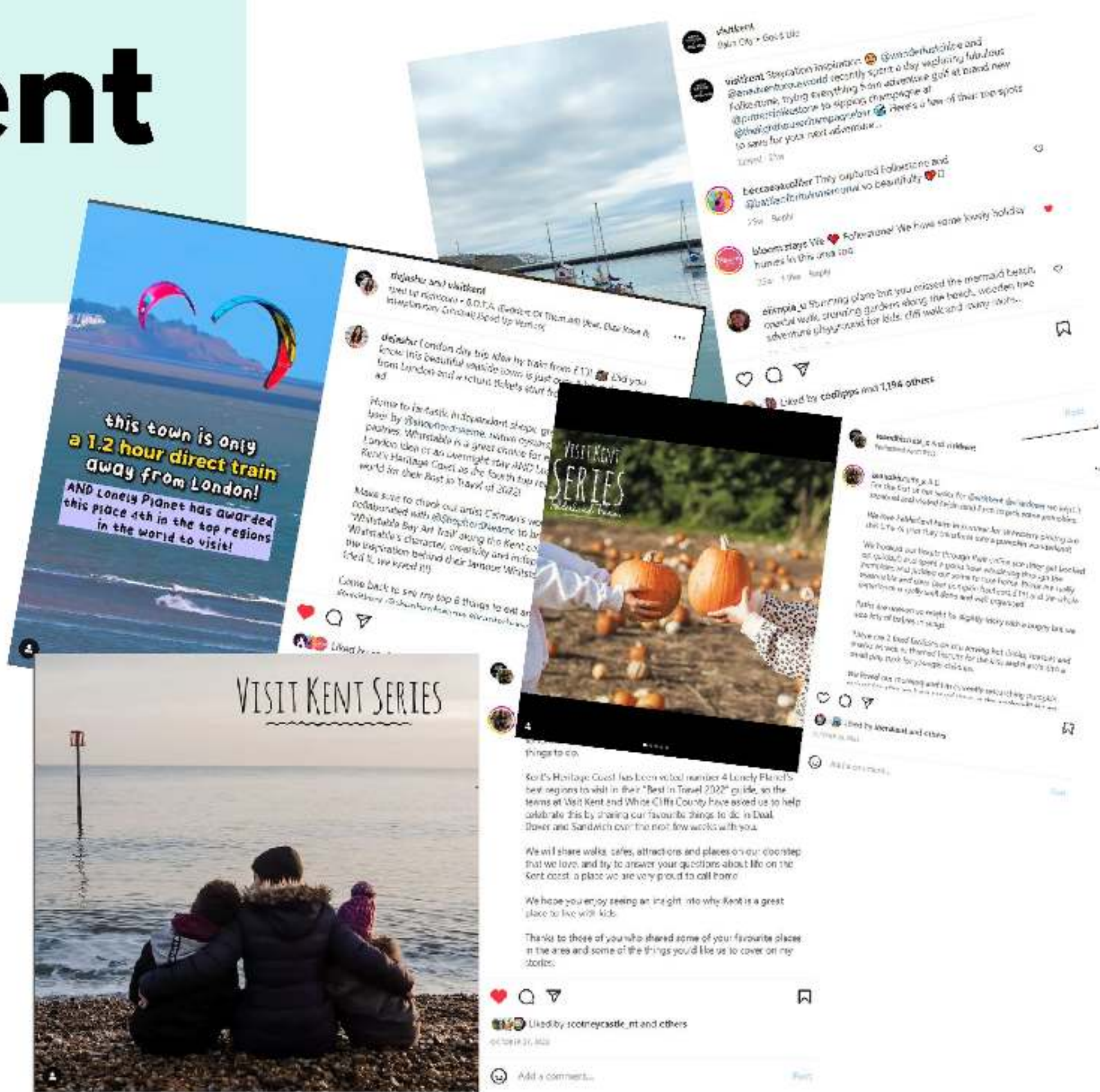
MUST VISIT  
KENT



KENT  
GARDEN of ENGLAND



# Must Visit Kent Influencers





# Must Visit Kent

## *Publication online results*

- Over 300 people have read the online publication
- 16,726 page views...
- ... Viewing an average of 53 pages

### Primary traffic sources:

- Visit Kent email
- Visit Kent websites
- Visit Ashford & Tenterden website
- Southeastern website

MUST VISIT  
KENT



KENT  
GARDEN of ENGLAND



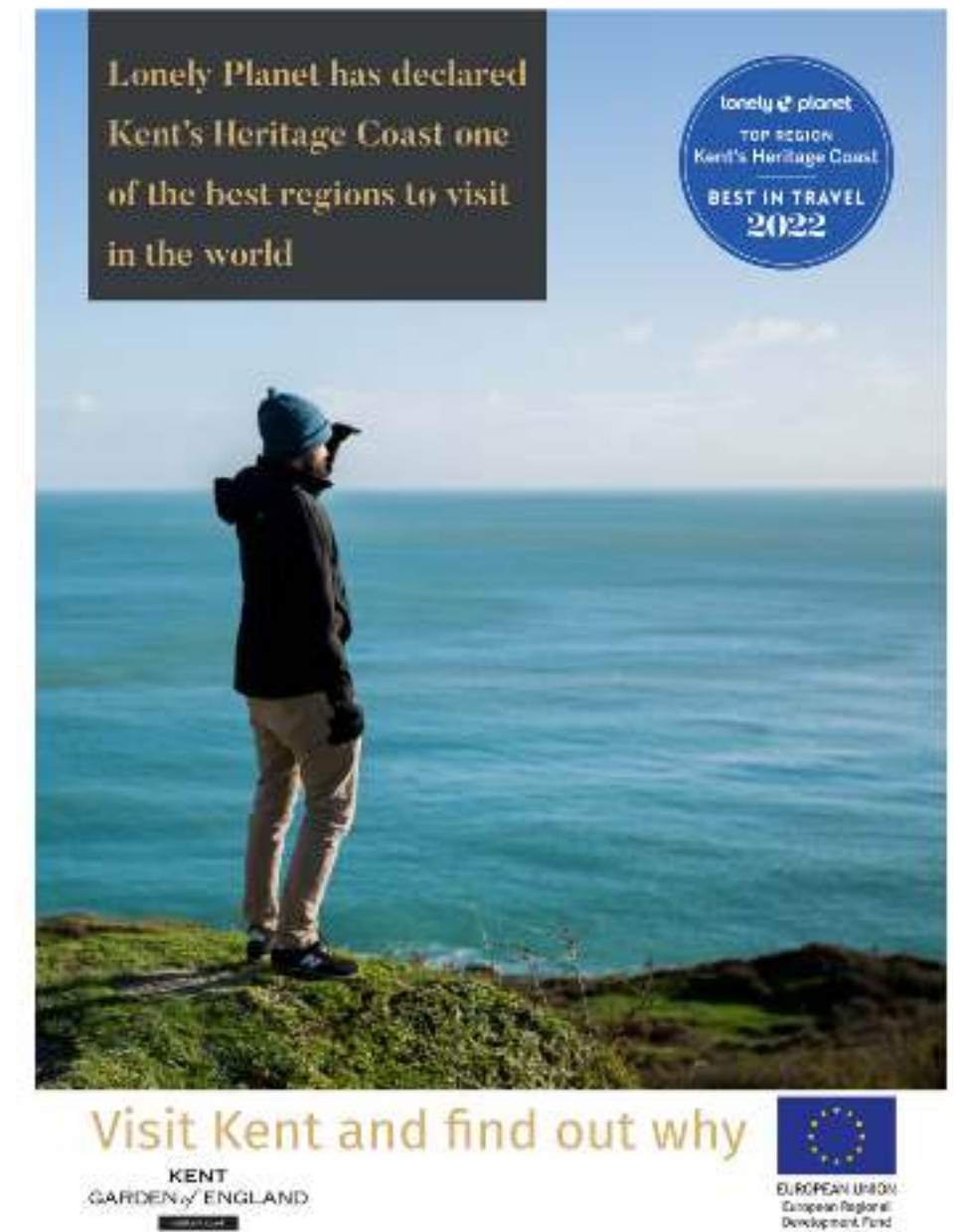
# Must Visit Kent

## *National Geographic Traveller*

In the summer of 2022, we were approached by Nat Geo Traveller regarding a general walking article on Kent. As it was the year of the Heritage Coast, we in turn suggested that they write about the area between Folkestone and Deal. They produced 10 pages of inspirational content (which featured all bought-in PR partners) on the area with accompanying beautiful imagery. This can be seen online [here](#). We also took out one full page ad at the end of the article, which is to the right.

### ***National Geographic Traveller stats***

- **58,242** print calculation, with the article reaching **48,563** people, with an £ Value of **£95,184**
- Over **25,000 print** subscribers, the publication is the most subscribed-to travel magazine in the UK
- [nationalgeographic.co.uk](https://nationalgeographic.co.uk) receives over **13 million page views a year**, with the travel section receiving nearly a quarter of the traffic





# Must Visit Kent

AdSmart advert - Sky

adsmart

from sky

## Watch it here

The opportunity arose in mid-2022 to do our first-ever TV advertising. Initially, we thought this would never be achievable, but using Sky's highly targeted AdSmart we were able to specify our four targets across the south and southeast London, including Bromley, Croydon and Dartford. We had a total budget of £20,795, and were able to achieve the results below, highlighting all eight partners in our MVK campaign. The ad was shown from 8th September to 26th October.

- 433,519 impressions were garnered throughout the running time
  - Broken down to 46,399 households being shown the ad 9.46 times each
- The primary time the ad was shown was midday to 5:25pm and late peak, 8pm to 11pm, primarily across entertainment TV



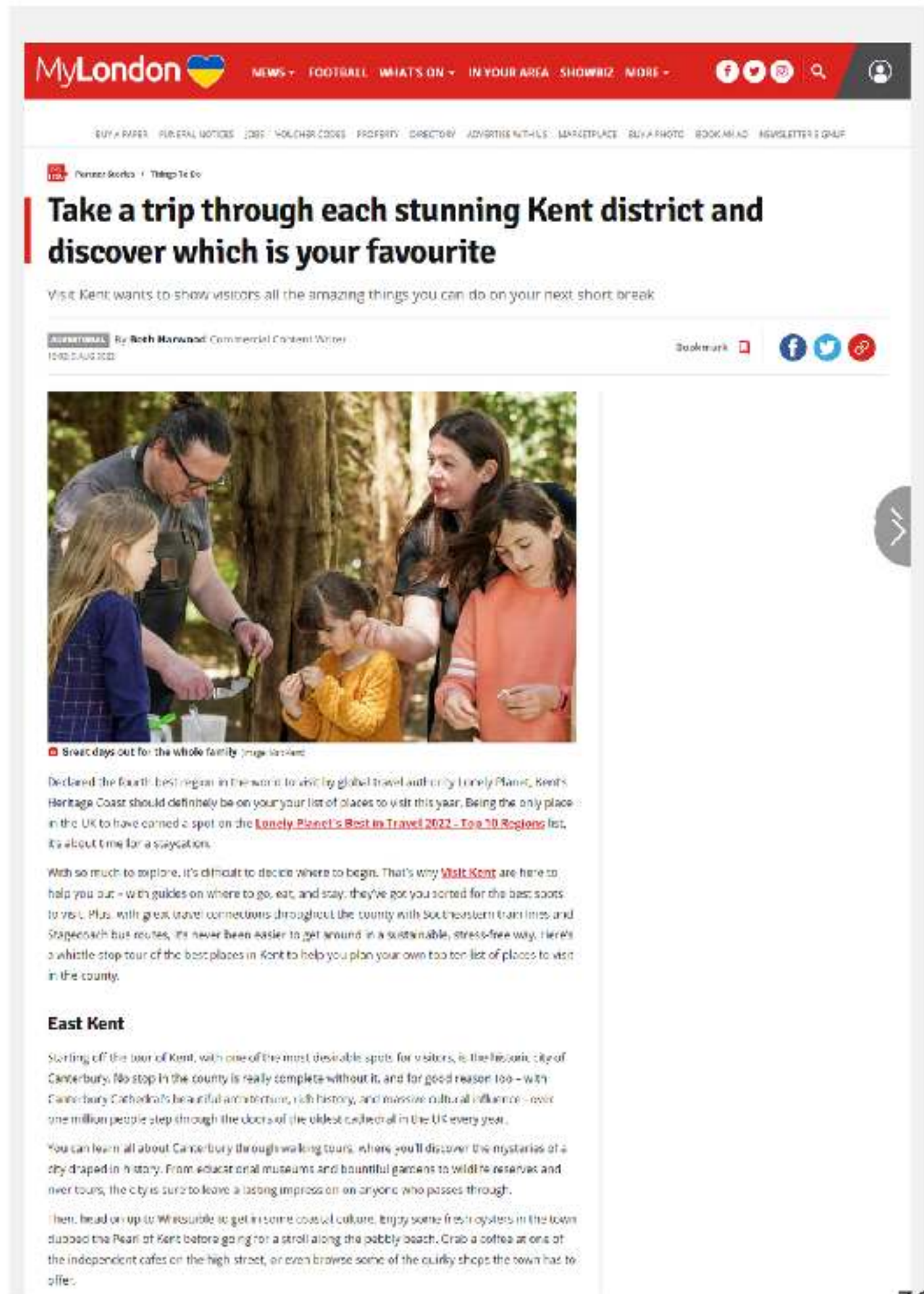


# Must Visit Kent

## *MyLondon article*

In mid-summer we placed an advertorial through Reach Plc (formerly Trinity Mirror). The article was hosted on MyLondon and supported with display ads across the Reach digital network. The feature encouraged people to visit Kent and explore the North, East, and West. Throughout the article (viewable by clicking the image to the right) there are references to MVK partners and high-quality images of partner attractions and areas.

- 599,986 impressions
- Just over 240 people read the article online



The screenshot shows a web article on the MyLondon website. The header includes the MyLondon logo and navigation links like NEWS, FOOTBALL, WHAT'S ON, IN YOUR AREA, SHOWBIZ, and MORE. Below the header, there's a sub-header 'Pinner Stories | Things To Do'. The main headline reads 'Take a trip through each stunning Kent district and discover which is your favourite'. Below the headline, it says 'Visit Kent wants to show visitors all the amazing things you can do on your next short break'. The article is by 'By Beth Marwood, Commercial Content Writer' and dated '10:02, 2 AUG 2022'. There are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The main image shows a family (a man, a woman, and three children) enjoying a picnic in a wooded area. Below the image, the text reads 'Great days out for the whole family | Image: iStock'. The article body starts with 'Declared the fourth best region in the world to visit by global travel authority Lonely Planet, Kent's Heritage Coast should definitely be on your list of places to visit this year. Being the only place in the UK to have earned a spot on the [Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022 - Top 10 Regions](#) list, it's about time for a staycation.' It then continues with 'With so much to explore, it's difficult to decide where to begin. That's why [Visit Kent](#) are here to help you out - with guides on where to go, eat, and stay, they've got you sorted for the best spots to visit. Plus, with great travel connections throughout the county with Southeastern train lines and Stagecoach bus routes, it's never been easier to get around in a sustainable, stress-free way. Here's a whistle stop tour of the best places in Kent to help you plan your own top ten list of places to visit in the county.'

### East Kent

Starting off the tour of Kent, with one of the most desirable spots for visitors, is the historic city of Canterbury. No stop in the county is really complete without it, and for good reason too - with Canterbury Cathedral's beautiful architecture, rich history, and massive cultural influence - over one million people step through the doors of the oldest cathedral in the UK every year.

You can learn all about Canterbury through walking tours, where you'll discover the mysteries of a city draped in history. From educational museums and beautiful gardens to wildlife reserves and river tours, the city is sure to leave a lasting impression on anyone who passes through.

Then, head on up to Whitstable to get in some coastal culture. Enjoy some fresh oysters in the town dubbed the Pearl of Kent before going for a stroll along the pebbly beach. Grab a coffee at one of the independent cafes on the high street, or even browse some of the quirky shops the town has to offer.



# TARGETED CONSUMER CAMPAIGNS

VISIT KENT - MUST VISIT KENT

## What went well

- The partnership with Fabbrica was very successful and have now worked with them on several other campaigns
- Our first venture into TV adverts using Adsmart went very well and we will use this method again
- Nat Geo Traveller provided free press coverage domestic reach
- MVK Partner web pages were very popular with match funding districts and provided and made use of the audience matrix to be highly targeted.

## Learnings

- Our experience using influencers has shown us that we can deliver influencer activity better than expensive agencies, this is an advantage that we are keen to maintain
- We have to work with the right people, selecting the right agencies and media partners provides efficiencies and improved outputs
- Too many strands of activity make the campaign difficult to manage
- It is important to accept that some things are out of your control (Covid/Strikes/Queens passing/ Operation Brock)
- Complex messaging reduces campaign effectiveness



# LAUNCH AND PROMOTION TO TARGET AUDIENCE

## TARGETED CONSUMER CAMPAIGNS - KENT DOWNS

### Overview

Kent Downs (PP2) delivered five marketing campaigns targeting consumers, which included the Kent Pilgrims Festival, Up The Kent Downs (flagship consumer campaign), North Downs Way Riders' Route and The Great Artdoors - North Downs Way Art Trail.

Each campaign involved the creation of a visual identity, developing new content - including dedicated web pages, organic social media, regular consumer newsletters, paid for media (online and offline) advertising, PR activity (press releases, FAM press and influencer trips, etc), new photography and video clips.

Overall consumer campaigns and communications activity reached more than 14.9 million people between July 2022 and March 2023.

### Outputs

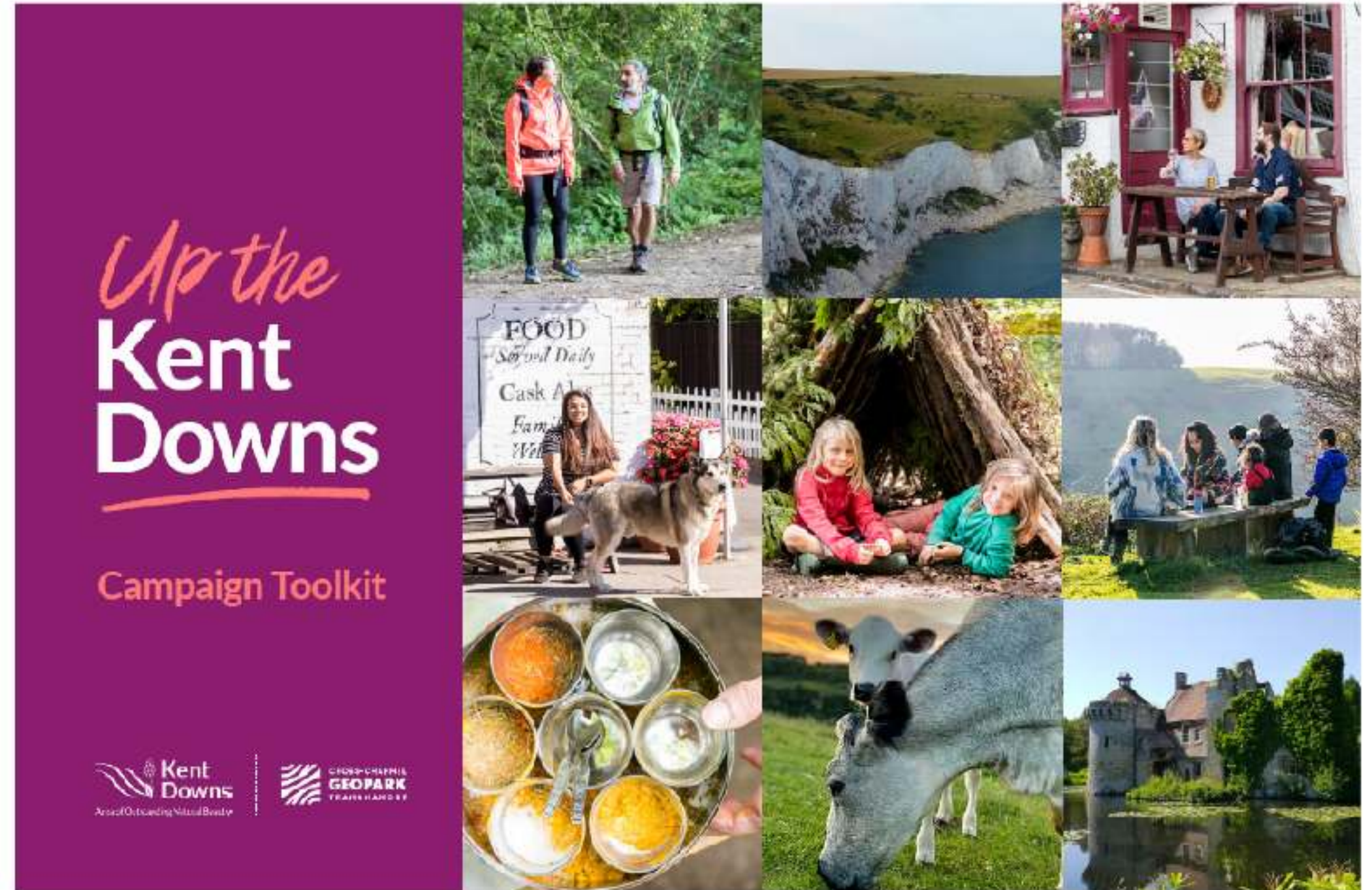
- Dedicated website pages and content that can be repurposed/refreshed for future activity
- Campaign toolkits, for example here are the live links to the Up the Kent Downs and The Great Artdoors toolkits shared with stakeholders and local businesses.
- Developed a content and events planner with monthly themes to help curate engaging content across our digital channels (social media, blogs, website, newsletter).
- Built strong relationships with Match Funders, Active Inclusion (Muslim Hikers) and key stakeholders that will continue beyond the project.
- Development of consumer mailing list and sending out monthly tourism themed newsletters
- Development of TikTok strategy targeting new audiences.
- Creation of Flickr photo library and new photos and film clips to build on our asset bank.
- Produced end of campaign reports for each campaign and commissioned two new audience research reports to understand the impact of our targeted consumer campaigns.



# Up the Kent Downs

The Key messaging for the Up the Kent Downs Campaign was to:

- Promote new autumn and winter "experiences", to extend the tourist season.
- Benefit local economies with all-year round sustainable tourism
- Target all key Kent Downs audiences.
- Show how accessible and inclusive the area is.
- Showcase authentic, unmissable, sensory and immersive experiences throughout the year.





## Introducing the Up the Kent Downs campaign:

Our Campaign messages promote Kent Downs as a 365-day destination, as well as an incredible outdoor sustainable tourism experience.

Since the start of the project in 2019, we have worked with local businesses and partners to develop experiences within the Kent Downs AONB and on the North Downs Way.

The campaign messaging brings together these unique off-season activities and events, and keeps the Kent landscape and culture alive.

Campaign Toolkit - kentdowns.org.uk



The main campaign logo features the words 'Up the' in a yellow, handwritten-style font, followed by 'Kent Downs' in a large, white, sans-serif font. A thick yellow chalk line is drawn underneath the text.

### The Overarching Campaign Logo Lockup:

Up the Kent Downs is the overarching campaign thought. It elevates our positioning into a self-contained statement that can stand on its own, functioning as a logo, and headline in one, as well as a tagline when used with one of our Key Theme Experience Headlines.

### Type style:

Taking the 'Kent Downs' type style directly from the destination brand logo and combining with the chalk font above and line below. The type style has been used to reinforce recognition from the main Kent Downs AONB.

### Chalk line:

The chalk line acts as a graphical sign-off.

### Key Theme Experience Headline messaging:

When promoting key Experiences, we use words that replace the 'Up the' to communicate an experience or attribute as our headlines, as illustrated in these examples. Always use lowercase to help maintain the informal and personal feel of the message.

All  
year-round  
**Downs**

Slow  
**Downs**

Power  
**Downs**

Track  
**Downs**



## Introducing the Up the Kent Downs Key Themes:

Our campaign toolkit has been created to help any user to maintain the integrity and harmony of our brand, whilst supporting the Up the Kent Downs campaign. Our aim is to position Kent Downs AONB as a visitor destination, the campaign will serve as a catalyst for doing this, so audiences and partners can recognise and relate to it. Creating an inspiring campaign is imperative to our success, it helps us reach our full potential as a visitor destination and attraction, achieving sustainable growth in visitor revenue and volume through our collective experiences.

### Our Toolkit will:

- Help guide all campaign and message application.
- Enable stakeholders and partners to support and amplify the messages during the campaign period
- Promote the area as an all-year-round destination
- Collate and convey all the Experiences on offer
- Allow visitors and locals to champion and adopt #UptheKentDowns
- Position Kent Downs as the place to be and give the area a sense of place, showcasing the area's best attributes through Experience led messaging:
  - The rugged chalk coastline
  - The ancient bluebell woodlands
  - Internationally rare chalk grassland
  - The ragstone villages
  - The North Downs Way
  - Kent's Heritage Coast (Ranked by The Lonely Planet as one of the world's best regions to visit in 2022)
  - The Via Francigena Arts Trail
  - 38 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
  - Aspiring Cross Channel UNESCO Global Geopark
  - Provenance through all types of food, drink and craft businesses
  - Unique Experiences delivered by local experts
  - Biodiverse habitats, home to the areas distinctive flora & fauna

If you are producing any marketing materials, please refer to our Toolkit to ensure that what is produced echoes how we collectively promote the Kent Downs AONB.

### Draw Downs

**Arts & Crafts**  
Witness an inspiring coast & countryside that will ignite your creative fire.



### Show Downs

**Culture & Heritage**  
From the ancient to the impressive we've plenty of iconic and natural attractions to leave you awestruck.



### Play Downs

**Family Fun**  
Let mother nature play host and let your wildlings roam free with our family focussed activities.



### Natural Downs

**Farming & Animals**  
Cultivate the mind with experiences that celebrate and nurture the land and local way of life.



### Chow Downs

**Food & Drink**  
Find the favourite places to go for a real taste of Kent and try the finest local produce in enchanted locations.



### Adventure Downs

**Outdoor Activity**  
With the wind in your face & fresh air in your lungs you'll find time-short thrills and epic week-long escapades right here.



### Track Downs

**Pilgrimage**  
Tread in the footsteps of Saints, Crusaders and inspirational Artists on a journey of self-discovery.



### Power Downs

**Wellbeing**  
Free the mind and body in your own 326 sq. mi. wellness retreat.



### Wild Downs

**Wildlife & Nature**  
Head out to the wilderness and meet our own wild residents on a homegrown expedition.





## Sustainable and responsible tourism:

The whole ethos of our campaign is for all outdoor visitors to respect other people; protect the environment, and enjoy responsibly. We will do this by:

- Embracing the natural habitat and attractions on offer
- Encouraging visitors to be considerate in every aspect
- Promote Slow Tourism
- Showcase creativity in natural surroundings
- Appeal for visiting out of season and during the less crowded months
- Protect and observe the very fabric of the area
- Celebrating local, championing a real taste of Kent through local produce with minimal food miles

Respect  
protect  
enjoy  
**Kent  
Downs**

Responsible tourism themes include:

*Eco*  
**Downs**

Live like a local, forage for your supper and get closer to nature just being here.

*Slow*  
**Downs**

Take your time and find the hidden corners of our region, you'll experience a gentler and more peaceful approach to travel.

*Natural*  
**Downs**

Cultivate the mind with experiences that celebrate and nurture the land and local way of life.

*All  
year-round*  
**Downs**

Escape the crowds and binge on fresh air and freedom whatever the season.

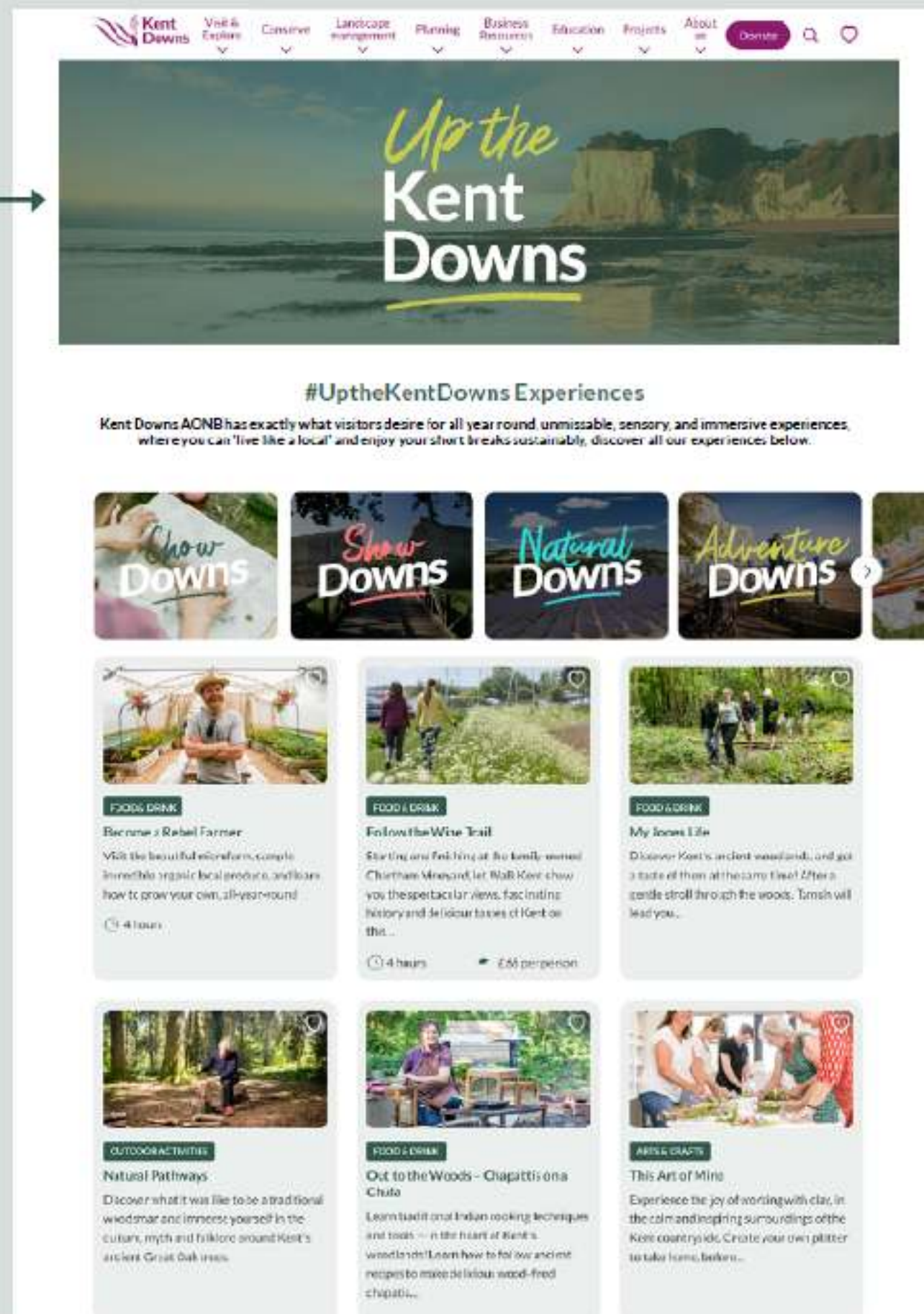
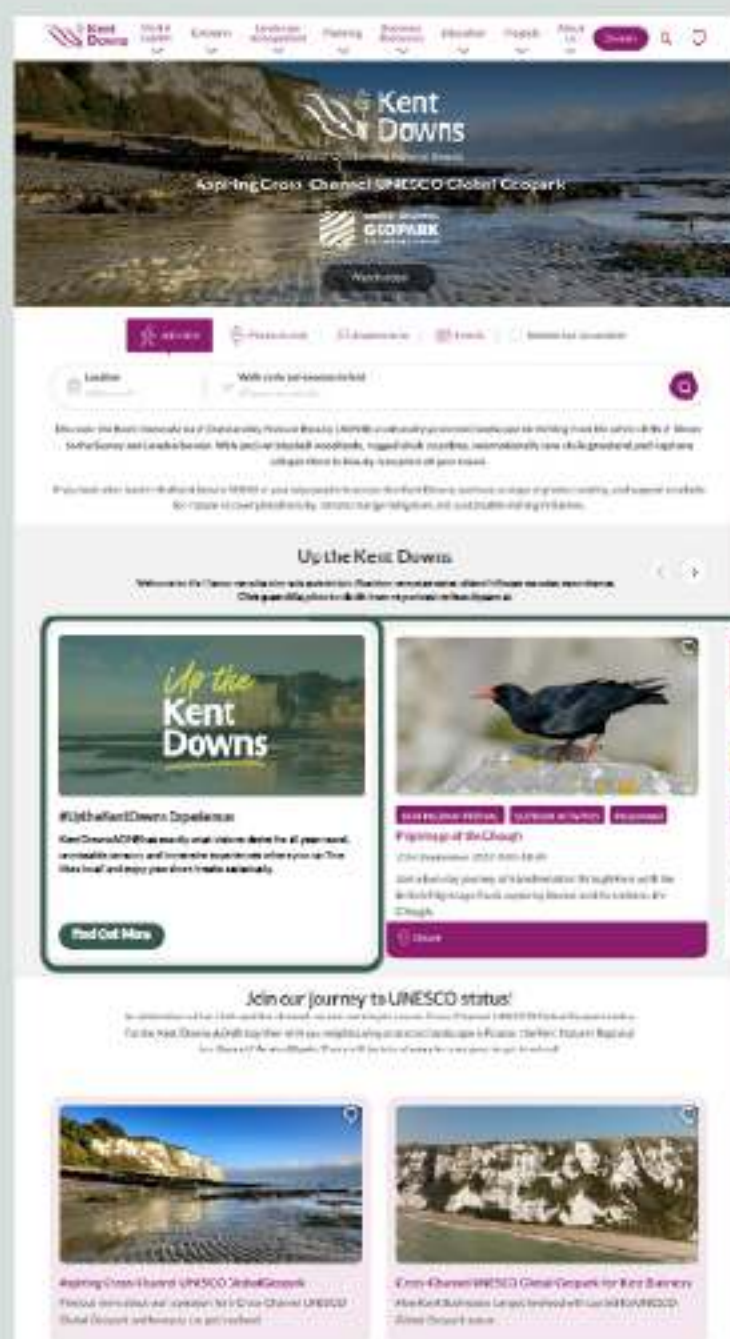
*Draw*  
**Downs**

Witness an inspiring coast & countryside that will ignite your creative fire.



## Website:

Our Campaign page will be formed with the complete campaign messaging, allowing visitors to the site to navigate with ease through all the content and choose experiences that suit their needs.





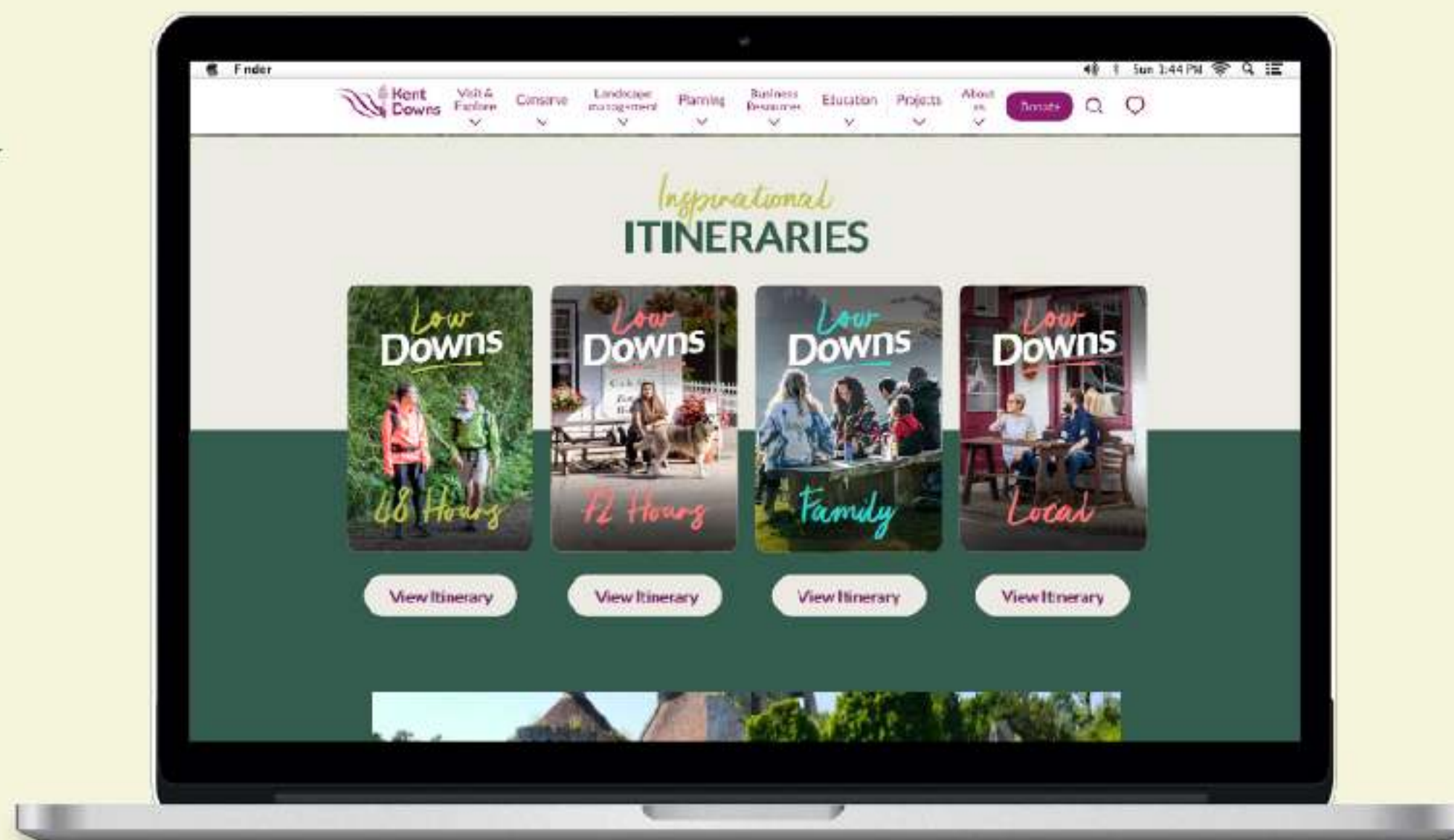
## Inspirational itineraries:

A series of inspiring blogs have been created to showcase the wealth of experiences, things to do, events, activities, and thematic itineraries and thematic itineraries for our key target audiences.

For example, for Social Contemporary Seekers we've detailed the exciting & unexpected over a long weekend and 5-7 nights, including showing how to get to Kent from London & the Southeast.

For our family audience we've included local nature & the outdoors and local culture, for our Hyper Local/ Visiting Family & Friends we will share itineraries over a 24hr / 48hr / 72hr period to drive bookings.

Another example would be packaging up wild mushroom foraging, followed by an open-fire cooking lesson, complemented by a moonlight music performance into themed itineraries (e.g. Forest Magic; Vitamin sea; Eco-Explorer) to target different interest groups and create different options for length of stay (overnight, long-weekend, 5-7 nights).



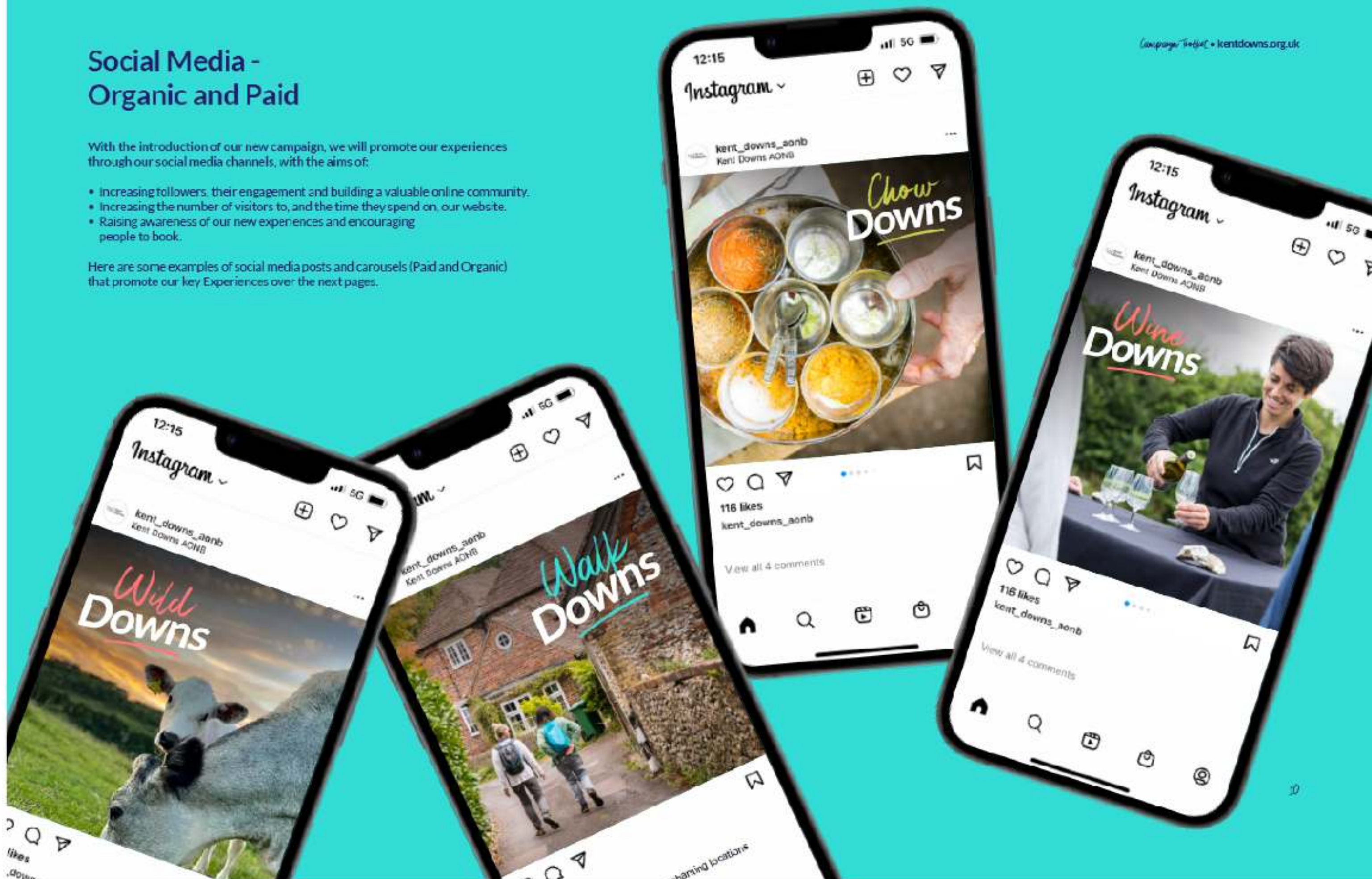


## Social Media - Organic and Paid

With the introduction of our new campaign, we will promote our experiences through our social media channels, with the aims of:

- Increasing followers, their engagement and building a valuable online community.
- Increasing the number of visitors to, and the time they spend on, our website.
- Raising awareness of our new experiences and encouraging people to book.

Here are some examples of social media posts and carousels (Paid and Organic) that promote our key Experiences over the next pages.





## Social Media - Paid Carousel ad example

Campaign Toolkit - kentdowns.org.uk





## Digital Advertising and Remarketing:

Throughout the campaign we will be using digital advertising to promote the key experiences and target our audiences, allowing us to be more agile throughout the campaign.

Campaign Toolkit - [kentdowns.org.uk](http://kentdowns.org.uk)



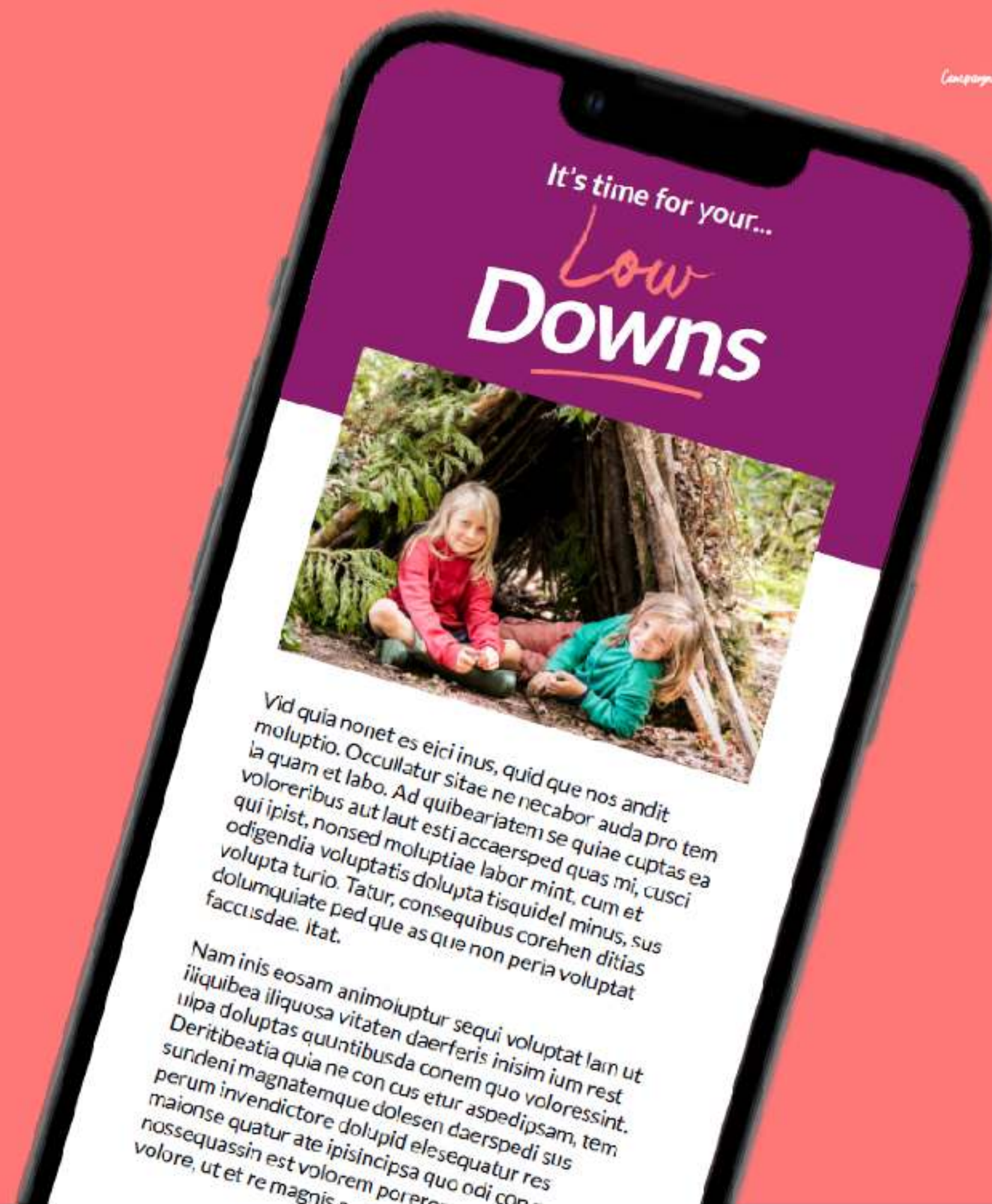


## Newsletters:

Our Low Downs e-newsletters contain seasonal and relevant content, we are also working with partners/key stakeholders to deliver on a competition to drive registrations further. Email marketing is a vibrant and powerful way to connect with people and through it we can:

- Reach the target customers on a personal level
- Introduce the campaign, how to get involved & share content through B2B specific newsletters
- Achieve a higher return on investment
- Improve the customers' understanding of the destination
- Achieve higher conversion rate (66%) for bookings and purchases (made in response to promotional messages)

Campaign Fulfillment • kentdowns.org.uk





## Social media videos:

With TikTok becoming an essential and growing channel for Destinations, we are looking at developing a Kent Downs AONB channel for the 2023 activity. With the wealth of content and footage already available to us and the opportunity to create more, this will allow us to show more spontaneous, current, and dynamic content.

Films promoting Key Experiences with the target audiences in mind can be produced, each one using current, and partner supplied footage to curate specific short content films.

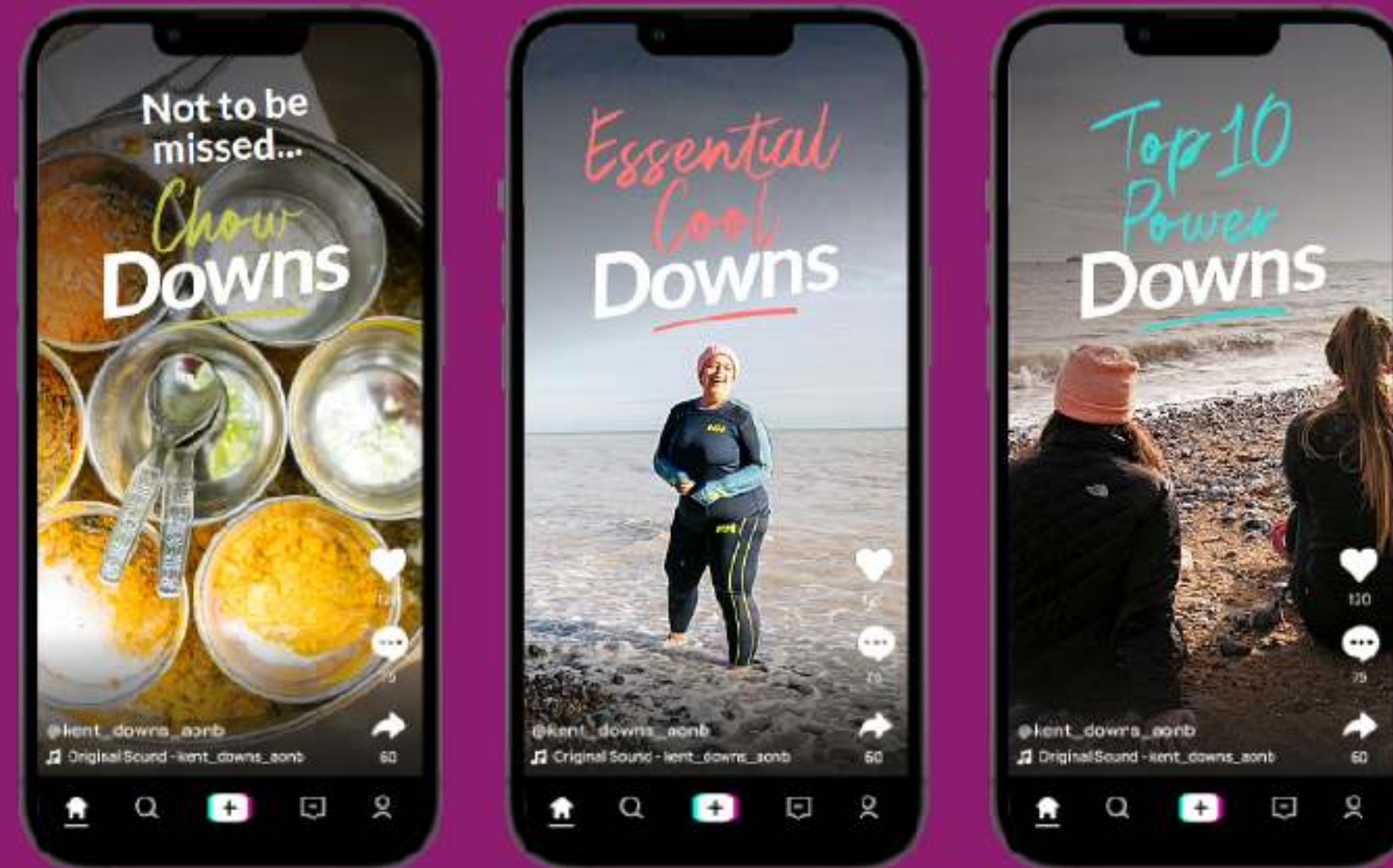
Examples being:

**Not to be missed CHOW DOWNS** – Short film with the best eating experiences, favourite places to go for a real taste of Kent and try the finest local produce in enchanted locations.

**Essential COOL DOWNS** – Targeting the Social Contemporary Seekers audiences with the hippest experiences and hidden gems

**Top 10 POWER DOWNS** – Featuring the best ways and experiences for reconnection & mindfulness within the area.

Campaign Toolkit - [kentdowns.org.uk](https://kentdowns.org.uk)





## Press advertising:

To bolster the Up the Kent Downs campaign we will be using press advertising to reach our more traditional and interest driven audiences.





# TARGETED CONSUMER CAMPAIGNS

KENT DOWNS - UP THE DOWNS, THE GREAT ARTDOORS...

## Learnings

- FAM trips played a key role across all campaigns. We will look to continue with these and manage them inhouse.
- Our work with diverse groups and influencers has helped us reach new audiences and improved engagement levels. Our Muslim Hiker event, in particular, was very successful. Tickets sold out within three hours (their fastest yet) and feedback from the day shows it was their best event yet.
- Working with press and influencers on FAM tips generated strong content and resulted in a flurry of new followers on social media, in particular our collaboration with JB Gill, Muslim Hikers and on the art trail.
- It was a challenge to secure suitable accommodation for some of the Riders' Route FAM trips. They were either no longer in business, not in the right location (i.e. on the) or not interested in partnering on FAM trips. Kent Downs (PP2) needs to develop stronger relationships with accommodation providers and create a list of approved partners prior to pitching FAM trips.
- Our campaigns predominantly focussed on using Instagram and Facebook, which favours a specific demographic. If we want to reach a younger audience, or new audiences, we should consider piloting the use of TikTok.
- The performance of paid media delivered by Fabbrica across campaigns was consistently exceeding objectives. Click through rates were 80% higher than the industry benchmarks, delivering excellent value for money and ROI.
- Packaging up and promoting all the new products and delivering one overarching campaign worked well in terms of raising awareness of the Kent Downs and experiences and being able to deliver a more effective campaign. Outsourcing to agencies who had the right resources, contacts and skills was a good decision and approach. The team is now equipped and able to continue targeting consumers in house.
- The Great Artdoors art trail and campaign is resonating well with our audiences and helped attract new consumers and followers. There is demand for art in the outdoors.



[HTTPS://WWW.TOURISMEXPERIENCE.ORG/](https://www.tourismexperience.org/)

