

“Rural regeneration and community development through a network of locally owned and led tourism projects across the South East”



www.hidden-britain.co.uk



This project is supported under the England Rural Development Programme by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund.



Uncovering the secrets of the South East

What is Hidden Britain?

The Hidden Britain Project is an initiative to encourage tourists to discover lesser known areas of the countryside, and to provide a different and more meaningful experience for the visitor.

With the communities themselves drawing up the plans, implementing the projects and participating in the benefits, this locally led initiative will provide community development, regeneration opportunities and empowerment in areas where they are needed most.



Why is this needed?

Life in rural areas is changing and tourism presents a massive potential to be a catalyst for new ideas, opportunities and directions.

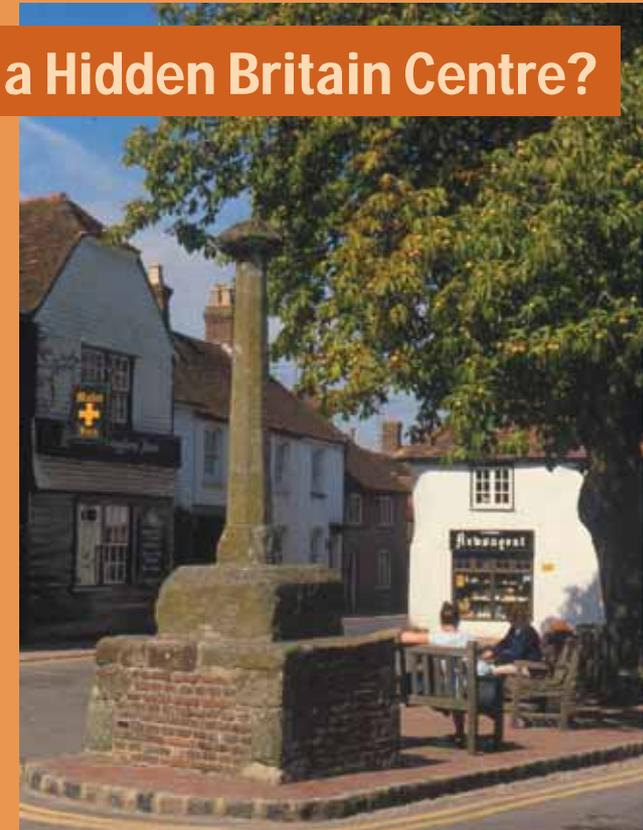
Your community could benefit directly because you know better than anyone the issues affecting you and what needs to be done about them.



How do you make a Hidden Britain Centre?

Hidden Britain is about recognising what is already there; beautiful landscape, interesting culture, colourful history, local specialities, comfortable places to stay. Your place, your people, your heritage.

It's up to you, you know where your strengths lie, you'll have ideas, you'll know how much impact you want. You can draw them together and provide an enticing, colourful incentive for a trip off the beaten track.



How can this be done?

You'll bring together a forum to interpret the views of the wider community to plan and implement your own tourism strategy.

We'll bring the advice, support and expertise to help you realise your vision.

"Community owned and led" that's the watchword, so with a little help it really can be up to you.



Cumbria: The Initial Project

The Hidden Britain Initiative was introduced as a response to the effect of Foot and Mouth Disease on Cumbria's rural economy and communities. The project began in April 2002 and has run for two years.

Ten Hidden Britain Centres have been set-up across Cumbria as a result of this project and the project itself has been rated as a "success" in an independent evaluation by the DTI.



Eskdale: A Working Example

DISCOVER ESKDALE

Exhibition Centre

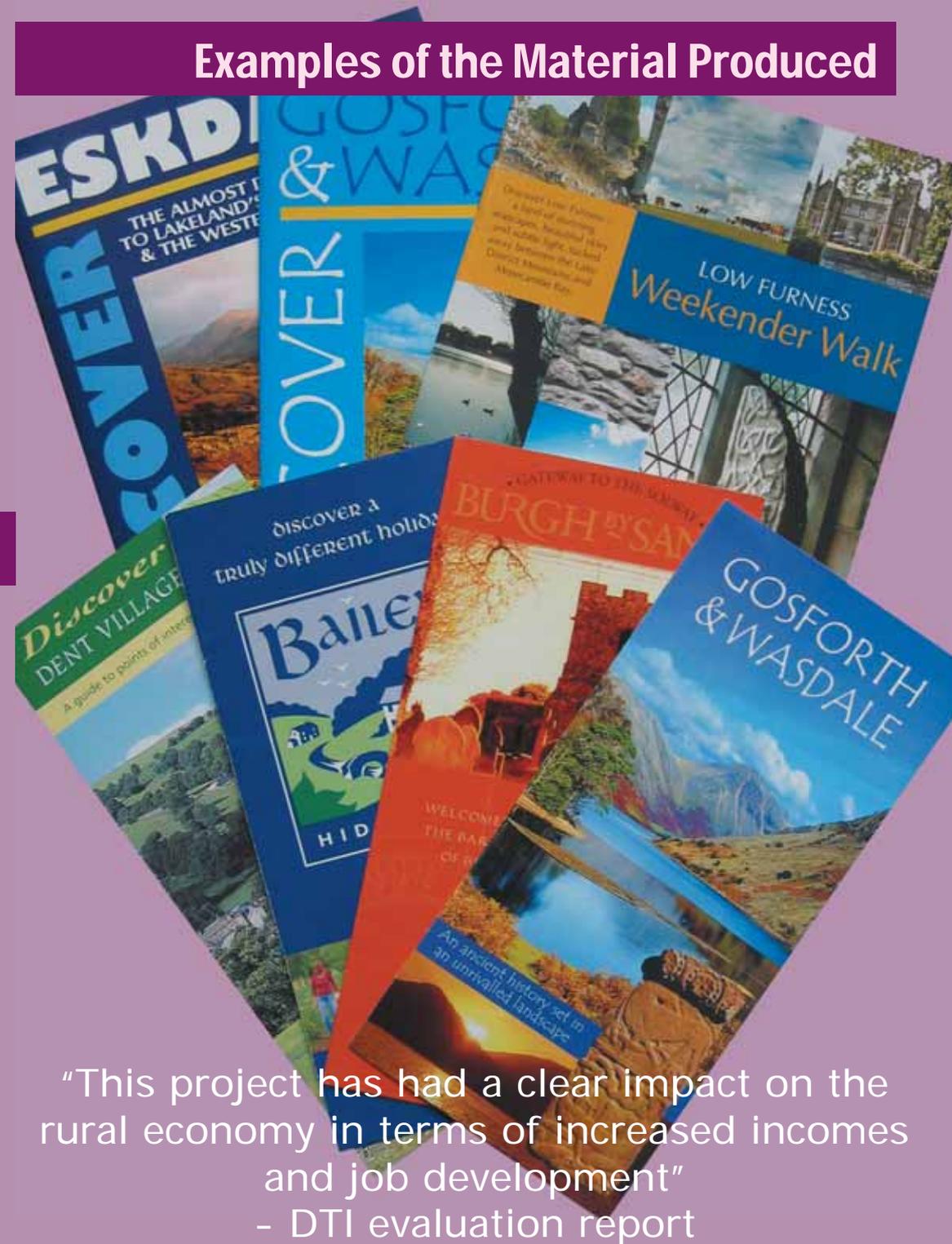
The perfect introduction to this beautiful valley - its history, heritage and landscape captured in a superb pictorial display. From the rich legacy of Eskdale's past to valley life in the 1920s. Come and discover the real Eskdale.

Open all day, at St Bega's Church, Eskdale Green.

There is also an informative series of illustrated Trail Guidebooks that give a detailed account of the people who have helped to shape this landscape and the stunning monuments that they have left behind.

The Lake District's hidden gem, in the wild countryside of the Western Lake District, has developed a range of heritage trails across its beautiful and dramatic landscape, a guide to Eskdale and the surrounding areas, a website and marketing material. One of Eskdale's two churches has been transformed into a visitor information centre, the "Discover Eskdale Centre" with exhibition space planned for local artists, craftspeople and producers who have no retail outlets to display their products.

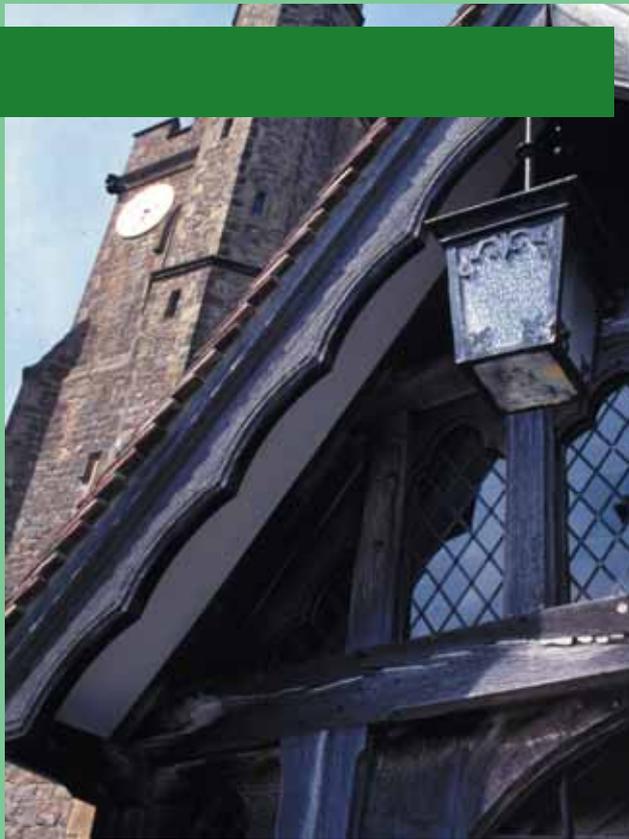
Examples of the Material Produced



"This project has had a clear impact on the rural economy in terms of increased incomes and job development"
- DTI evaluation report

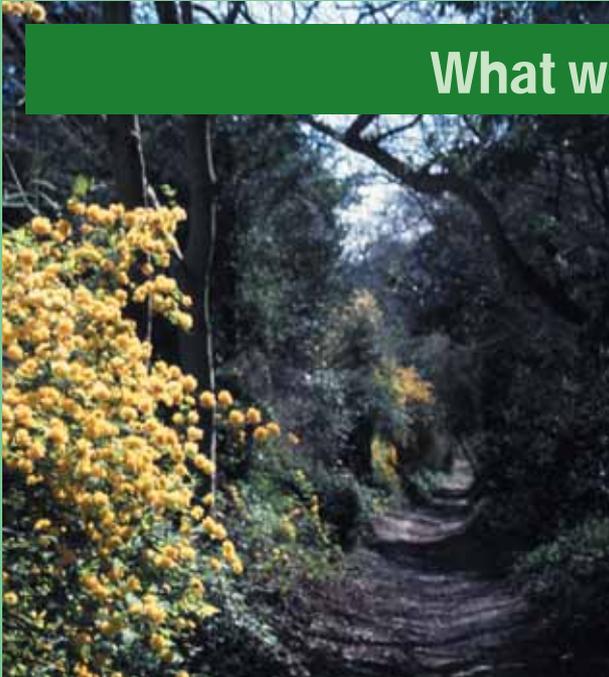
What you'll need

- Involvement of a wide range of community members.
- Existing tourism potential or potential that can be developed.
- Focused committed leadership group within the community.
- A demonstrable need for this initiative.
- Involvement of any tourism related local interests.
- Subscription to HBC concept, standards and structure.



What we provide at no cost

- The Hidden Britain Brand.
- Support of a local project officer.
- Regional and national marketing.
- National website.
- Support network.
- Quality assurance monitoring.



Further Information



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