

# Green Pilgrimage

## A Transformational Journey



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Regional Development Fund



# WHAT IS GREEN PILGRIMAGE?



The Green Pilgrimage (GP) project focusses on the power of pilgrimage-recognised today as one of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry (UNWTO, 2015) with more than 300 million pilgrims every year.

Ancient pilgrim routes such as The Way of St James to Santiago de Compostela, Spain, report an annual 10% increase in numbers, particularly among the non-religious. GP has helped to protect natural and cultural heritage whilst developing jobs and growth along pilgrim routes by developing low impact tourism, digitalization, pilgrim accommodation and strengthening local traditions. This reconnects pilgrims with their environment, landscape and culture.

Project partners include Nidaros Cathedral in Norway, Östergötland County Council in Sweden, The National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism in Romania, Puglia Region in Italy and Norfolk and Kent County Councils in the UK. Each region has developed their pilgrimage offering and highlighted ancient routes to today's modern travellers. With links building between pilgrimage and wellbeing, local culture, food and drink, history and heritage there has never been a better time to share these opportunities.

<https://www.kentdowns.org.uk/greenpilgrimage/>

**Watch the Green Pilgrimage**

**Destination Video**



**Watch the Closing.**  
**Conference Video**



**Watch Norway's Pilgrim**

**Paths Video**





# Our Pilgrimage Partners

1

## **AUGUSTINE CAMINO, KENT, UK**

Enjoy a week long walking pilgrimage route from Rochester Cathedral to the Shrine of St Augustine in Ramsgate visiting shrines to four of England's greatest saints and the final resting place of the head of Thomas More.

2

## **WALSINGHAM, NORFOLK, UK**

Norfolk has been a popular pilgrimage destination since 1061 when Lady Richeldis de Faverches of Walsingham built a replica of the Holy House of Nazareth. Walsingham has since been voted in 2003 as Britain's 'favourite spiritual place'.

3

## **ST OLAV WAYS, NORWAY**

The pilgrim path winds through villages and towns, crosses mountains and waterfalls and winds along the ancient paths in the face of history, culture and local traditions.

4

## **CAMMINO MATERNO, ITALY**

These six roads cross different landscapes ranging from the mountains of Basilicata to the white banks of the Ionian Sea, on Roman roads, medieval streets, sheep tracks and paths all crossing the unknown inland areas of Southern Italy.

5

## **SAINT BIRGITTA WAYS, SWEDEN**

Walk in the footsteps of Saint Birgitta, a devout pilgrim herself and known as the patron saint of pilgrims. The St Birgitta Trail starts at St Laurentius Church in Söderköping, where St Birgitta's coffin rested, and runs to the Cathedral of Linköping.

6

## **VIA MARIAE, ROMANIA**

Mary's Way or Via Mariae was built by the nations of Central Europe in honor of Mary and draws a large cross upon the map of Central Europe (Austria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Poland, Croatia, and Bosnia).



# ARE MORE PEOPLE WILLING TO TRAVEL GREEN?

---

YES! 70% OF GLOBAL TRAVELLERS SAY THEY WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO BOOK AN ACCOMMODATION KNOWING IT WAS ECO-FRIENDLY ACCORDING TO THE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL REPORT BY BOOKING.COM.



# The Camino de Santiago

The Camino de Santiago (the Way of St. James) is a large network of ancient pilgrim routes stretching across Europe and coming together at the tomb of St. James (Santiago in Spanish) in Santiago de Compostela in north-west Spain.

The history of the Camino de Santiago goes back to the beginning of the 9th century (year 814) and the discovery of the tomb of the evangelical apostle of the Iberian Peninsula. Since this discovery, Santiago de Compostela has become a peregrination point of the entire European continent.

The route network is similar to a river system – small brooks join together to make streams, and the streams join together to make rivers, most of which join together to make the Camino Francés. During the middle ages, people walked out of their front doors and started off to Santiago, which was how the network grew up. Nowadays, cheap air travel has given many the opportunity to fly to their starting point, and to do different sections in successive years. Some people set out on the Camino for spiritual reasons; many others find spiritual or personal reasons along the Way as they meet other pilgrims, attend pilgrim masses in churches, monasteries and cathedrals, and see the large infrastructure of buildings provided for pilgrims over many centuries.

[Find out more](#)

# THE BRITISH PILGRIMAGE TRUST



Pilgrimage was once Britain's most popular expression of leisure and spirituality, enjoyed by Kings and serfs alike. The tradition was brought to an abrupt end in 1538, when Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell banned pilgrimage in Britain. Ever since, the tradition has been paused in Britain. Today, there is a global renaissance of pilgrimage and it's time for Britain to take part too. The British Pilgrimage Trust believes that pilgrimage in Britain today should not attempt to imitate medieval forms of religious exclusivity. Instead, the tradition can be renewed to fit with modern needs. To this end, the BPT aims to help pilgrimage become a spiritual activity that is Open to All, whatever your beliefs, background, age or physical ability.

The BPT have highlighted the rediscovered Old Way which runs from Southampton to Canterbury. They also run guided pilgrimages, which serve both as fundraising opportunities for the charity, and an opportunity to connect pilgrims together in shared ventures. Their Sanctuary Project will provide cheap accommodation for pilgrims within the heart of local communities. Beginning in village churches, with the aim of expanding into other community spaces as the project develops.

<https://britishpilgrimage.org/>

# THE MAISON DIEU

£9.1m restoration project starts  
in 2022

[Find out more](#)



## **PILGRIMAGE HERITAGE**

The Maison Dieu was founded in 1203 by Hubert de Burgh, Constable of Dover Castle and Earl of Kent. Its name translates as House of God, in both its Norman French and Latin forms. The Maison Dieu and its large grounds were built as a hospice, run by monks, to provide temporary lodgings for travelling pilgrims and for the care of wounded and destitute soldiers and old people.

---

## **REAWAKENING PROJECT**

Plans for an £9.1m reawakening of the Grade I Listed Maison Dieu in Dover town centre are set to go ahead in 2022 thanks to a £4.27m grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Once complete in 2024 the Maison Dieu will be permanently open to the public for the first time in its 800-year history and contributing to the creation of a heritage quarter in Dover town centre.

---

## **DEVELOPING PILGRIM PRODUCTS**

By 2024 and 2025 the team will have developed walking and cycling trails from Canterbury to Dover, Pilgrim sleepovers in the Stone Hall and events and activities focussed on community engagement, diversity, health and wellbeing.

---



# The Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome

The Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome (CPR) is a registered charity, that aims to inform, encourage and assist those making a pilgrimage to Rome on foot, bicycle or horseback along the Via Francigena and on other pilgrim routes. Part of the pilgrim journey is the companionship with others on the road, and the CPR wishes to actively encourage and foster a sense of community among its members, of being part of something greater than a repository of information and guidance.

## **The Via Francigena and the Confraternity**

The pinnacle of pilgrim ways in Europe, the Via Francigena crosses half a continent and four countries – from the North Downs in England to the WWI battlefields and Champagne region in France, the Juras and Lac Léman in Switzerland, over the Alps to Italy and down the Aosta Valley, through Piedmont, Lombardy, and across the Apennines and the Tuscan hills to Rome.

## **Pilgrim Festival coming soon**

Building on the success of the North Downs Way Pilgrims festival in 2019 The CPR are working with the Kent Downs AONB and a wealth of partners to create a new festival in 2022. The festival will focus on transformation and incorporate workshops, talks, walks and much more to showcase how pilgrimage links with wellbeing, local culture, history and produce.

[Find out more](#)

# Some Pilgrim's Experiences



## Victoria Field

Victoria Field is a writer and poetry therapist based in Canterbury. She is researching narratives of transformation in writing and pilgrimage for a doctorate at Canterbury Christ Church University, and has published a book-length memoir based on the Camino to Santiago, 'Baggage: A Book of Leavings' (2016, Francis Boutle). She is also a poet and playwright. She has led workshops for pilgrim festivals where participants have explored poetry and expressive writing as ways of deepening their experience of pilgrimage. Her website is [www.thepoetrypractice.co.uk](http://www.thepoetrypractice.co.uk) and she can be contacted at [victoria@thepoetrypractice.co.uk](mailto:victoria@thepoetrypractice.co.uk)



## Bethany Thomas

St Sigfrid's Way is a celebration of the shared journeys, physical and spiritual, taken by Christian communities in Britain and Sweden, dating back to the journey of St Sigfrid in the 11th century. Bethany has been working for the St Sigfrid's Trust on a consultancy basis to help raise the profile of the pilgrimage and organise its inauguration in the summer of 2021. She has been involved in several pilgrimage projects in the past, and seeks to walk through life with a pilgrim spirit in all that she does, encountering the unknown with an open heart and open mind.

# INTERREG EUROPE OVERVIEW

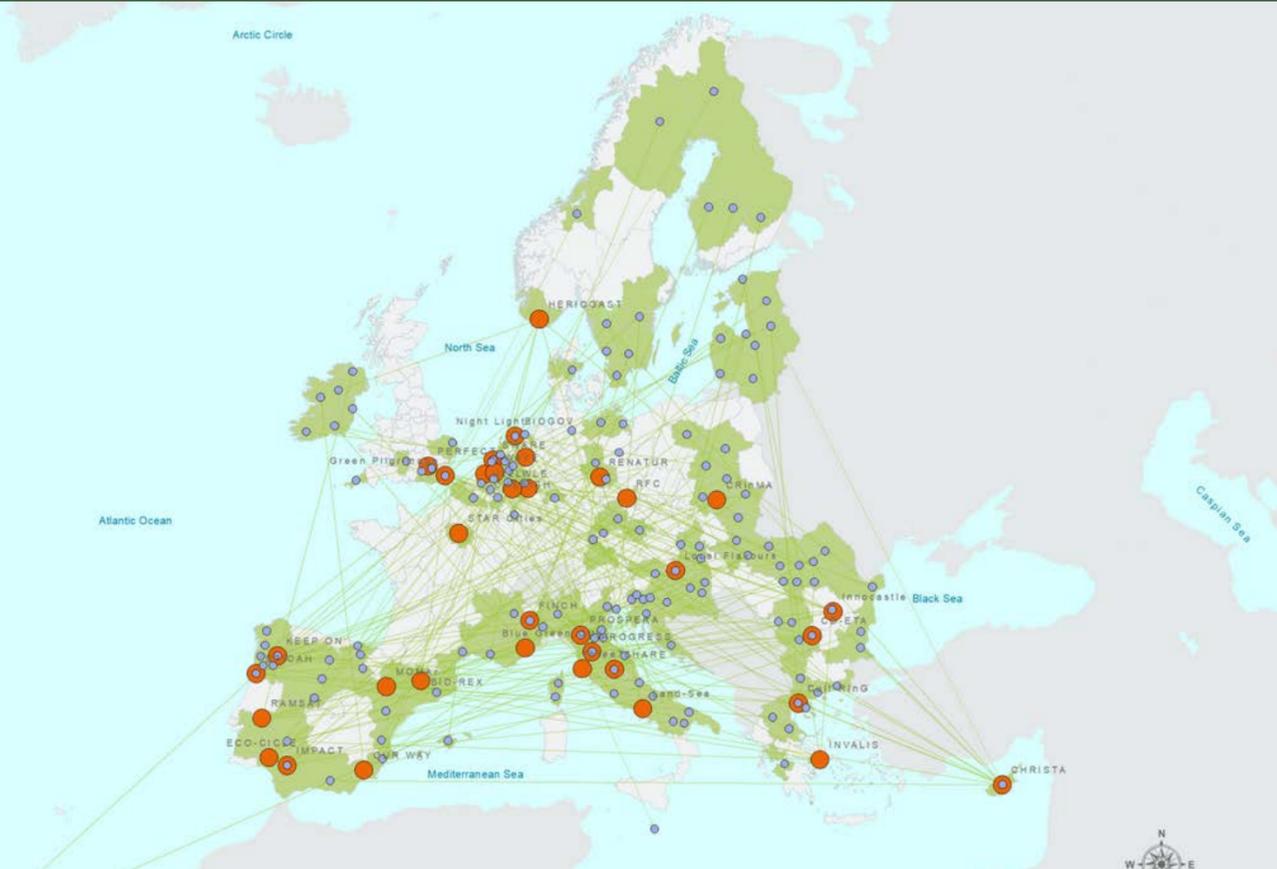
There are 36 projects cooperating within natural and cultural heritage objectives

## STRENGTHS OF GREEN PILGRIMAGE

This pilot was designed to create a pilgrim identity and improved service for pilgrims on the UK section of the route. This included the transfer and sharing of GP European pilgrim route investment best practice based on the experience of the Via Francigena in Tuscany and Puglia, St Olavs Ways in Norway and the Camino in Xunta de Galicia who have invested in pilgrim infrastructure to develop a sustainable tourism offer.

- For 5/6 policies addressed, the responsible body is involved
- 1 pilot action: Via Francigena route deep investment, UK
- Achievements so far: 6 policies improved in UK, IT
- UK: South East Local Enterprise ESIF ERDF Programme Strategy; Maidstone Destination Management Plan; North Downs Way National Trail Strategy; Rural Development Programme for England
- UK-FR: INTERREG VA France (Channel) England programme
- IT-EL: INTERREG V-A GREECE-ITALY 2014/2020 PROGRAMME

[Download full presentation](#)



# What type of pilgrim are you?



## DISCOVERY PILGRIM

A discovery pilgrimage is just as much about the traveller as it is the journey. What makes a discovery pilgrimage different is your awareness that new discoveries en-route will lead to new discoveries within.



## INTERIOR PILGRIM

Interior pilgrimage describes the inner spiritual journey of the pilgrim. These pilgrims enjoy a slower pace of life, taking time out of the day to day to enjoy long walks to discover something about themselves along the way.



## ANCESTRAL PILGRIM

Ancestral pilgrimage reveals more than a place from where ancestors came, it reveals a story in which we are participants. And yet, this story is far greater than ourselves because it not only tells us where we come from, it can also inform and inspire where we go.



## CULTURAL PILGRIM

A solidarity pilgrimage invites us into the “worlds” of others as we seek to humble ourselves, broaden our perspective, and respond with action. It's a chance to journey to a culture and environment much different than our own.



## THRESHOLD PILGRIM

A threshold is the result of a life event such as marriage (or divorce), graduation or a chance to reflect and reconnect. Here pilgrimage offers the perfect invitation to explore our goals as we seek to navigate the unknown step by step and find answers along the way.



## NATURE PILGRIM

In our world of busyness and chaos, it's good to step away from things we can control and spend time in the natural world. Trees have grown for centuries and flowers have bloomed each spring for generations. Listen closely, can you hear the wisdom they're trying to tell you?

# New Pilgrimage Itinaries

1

## KINGS LYNN TO WALSINGHAM

A 5 day pilgrimage route from the Hanseatic town of King's Lynn to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham or break your journey up into 5 separate and inspiring sections.

2

## NORFOLKS HOLY LAND

This 2 day walk passes the remains of medieval priories, historic village of Castle Acre with its bailey gate and Norman castle and along the Nar Valley Way.

3

## CASTLE WALK, NORFOLK

A 1 day walk from the ruins of Pentney Mill up into the pretty villages of Shouldham and Wormegay past the former gatehouse of Pentney Abbey and the site of Pentney Mill.

4

## CANTERBURY CITY PILGRIMS

Taking the Pilgrims Way through medieval Canterbury's less frequented streets, the walk will reveal riverside gardens, tiny chapels and ancient hospitals.

5

## FIRST STEPS TO ROME

Travel from Canterbury to Sheperdswell through timeless countryside along the North Downs Way chalk ridge and ancient Via Francigena pilgrimage road to Rome.

6

## CHALK AND CHANNEL

From Sheperdswell to Dover through beautiful countryside along the famous coastline passing art memorials towards the end of the North Downs Way National Trail.

# New Kent Pilgrimage Experiences



## Ancient Pilgrims with the British Pilgrimage Trust

From our ancient hunter-gatherer ancestors, making pilgrimage to sites of special significance has been deeply embedded into humankind across the world for thousands of years. Discover the essence of pilgrimage in our four-hour experience on the North Downs Way with one of our expert guides. Exploring ancient pilgrim rites and nature along the way.



## Secret Pilgrimage in Canterbury with Paul Claydon

This half day tour will take in the fascinating secret locations associated with the pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Thomas the Martyr before ending the day at the glorious ancient Cathedral. Hidden within the maze of medieval Canterbury we will discover hospitals, chapels, inns and monasteries that were used by the pilgrims and some that are still in use today. Concealed behind their gates we will find peaceful gardens, clear streams filled with fish and even the oldest surviving public toilets in England!

# Links from the Chat

Well you certainly were a chatty bunch and we're delighted that you were able to connect with us and each other during the event. As promised please see below some of the links and contact details that were posted. Click to find out more.

[Could Pilgrimage be the next post pandemic trend?](#)

[A review of each regions policy](#)

[A study by Swedish Digital Think Tank Kairos on internet pilgrimage trends and audience profiles.](#)

[A Swedish Study on Sustainable Tourism and Pilgrimage](#)

[An overview of good practice from the whole project.](#)

[The Camino de Santiago](#)

[The British Pilgrimage Trust](#)

[Reawakening the Maison Dieu](#)

[The Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome](#)

[The Road to Rome pilgrimage along the Via Francigena](#)

[Pilgrim Itineraries in Norway](#)

[Victoria Field's Poetry Practise](#)

[St Sigfrid's Trust](#)

[Advice for becoming Travel Trade Ready](#)

[Greece Hiking Routes](#)

[Pilgrim Center Norway](#)

[Cycling St Olavs Way in Norway](#)

[Pilgrim Personality Quiz](#)

[Kent County Council Countryside Access](#)

Kent County Council Countryside Access - contact [kate.beswick@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kate.beswick@kent.gov.uk)

**Green Pilgrimage**  
Interreg Europe



# FIND OUT MORE ...



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Regional  
Development Fund

About the Project - <https://www.interregeurope.eu/greenpilgrimage/>

[Kent Pilgrimage - https://kentdowns.org.uk/about-us/eu-funding/green-pilgrimage-interreg-europe-2/pilgrimage-in-kent/](https://kentdowns.org.uk/about-us/eu-funding/green-pilgrimage-interreg-europe-2/pilgrimage-in-kent/)

[Pilgrimage Products - https://www.kentdowns.org.uk/greenpilgrimage](https://www.kentdowns.org.uk/greenpilgrimage)

[The Augustine Camino - https://augustinecamino.co.uk/](https://augustinecamino.co.uk/)

[The Walsingham Way - https://walsinghamway.blog/](https://walsinghamway.blog/)

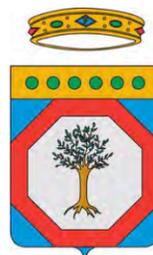
[The North Downs Way National Trail, UK - https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/north-downs-way/](https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/north-downs-way/)

[St Olavs Ways, Norway - https://pilegrimsleden.no/en/](https://pilegrimsleden.no/en/)

[The Camino Materano, Italy - https://camminomaterano.it/](https://camminomaterano.it/)

[St Birgitta Ways, Sweden - https://www.stbirgittaways.se/](https://www.stbirgittaways.se/)

[Via Mariae, Romania - https://100km.mariaut.ro/en](https://100km.mariaut.ro/en)



# COMING SOON: EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE is a €23.3 million project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through Interreg VA France (Channel) England Programme 2014-2020 Interreg VA France (Channel) England Programme 2014-2020.

It aims to bring 20m visitors to project partner regions in the UK and France including Kent over the next few years. We'll do that by reinventing the way the economy, environment, communities and brands interact - focusing on sustainable, low-impact tourism activities to secure the future resilience of our natural and cultural assets

Visit Kent and the Kent Downs AONB (with the North Downs Way National Trail) are working together to deliver this exciting investment to improve Kent for visitors and residents making Kent both a great place to live and a great place to visit. The Kent Downs AONB and surrounding areas are full of wonderful wildlife, foods, activities, history, arts and crafts that we want to share with both residents and visitors.

For example you can walk in the footsteps of ancient pilgrims, practice meditation in a Kentish vineyard or experience Kent's nature up close and personal with expert countryside guides alongside gorgeous views. Sound good? [Visit Kent Downs Website to find out more.](#)



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Regional Development Fund



# Get in Touch

Don't be shy if you have any queries about Green Pilgrimage or want to work with us as part of Experience please get in touch with the Kent Downs AONB team, we'd love to hear from you.

Businesses or product ideas

Travel Trade Partners

Marketing & Communications

Opportunities along the North Downs Way

Project updates and Information

[Rebecca.Rees@kentdowns.org.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Rees@kentdowns.org.uk)

[Makala.Thomas@kentdowns.org.uk](mailto:Makala.Thomas@kentdowns.org.uk)

[Charlie.Lewis@kentdowns.org.uk](mailto:Charlie.Lewis@kentdowns.org.uk)

[Peter.Morris@kentdowns.org.uk](mailto:Peter.Morris@kentdowns.org.uk)

[Catherine.Bradley@kentdowns.org.uk](mailto:Catherine.Bradley@kentdowns.org.uk)



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
European Regional Development Fund





**Respect - Protect - Enjoy**

**"THE DISTANCE TRAVELLED IS LESS  
IMPORTANT THAN THE EXPERIENCE  
GAINED"**

**ERNEST KURTZ**