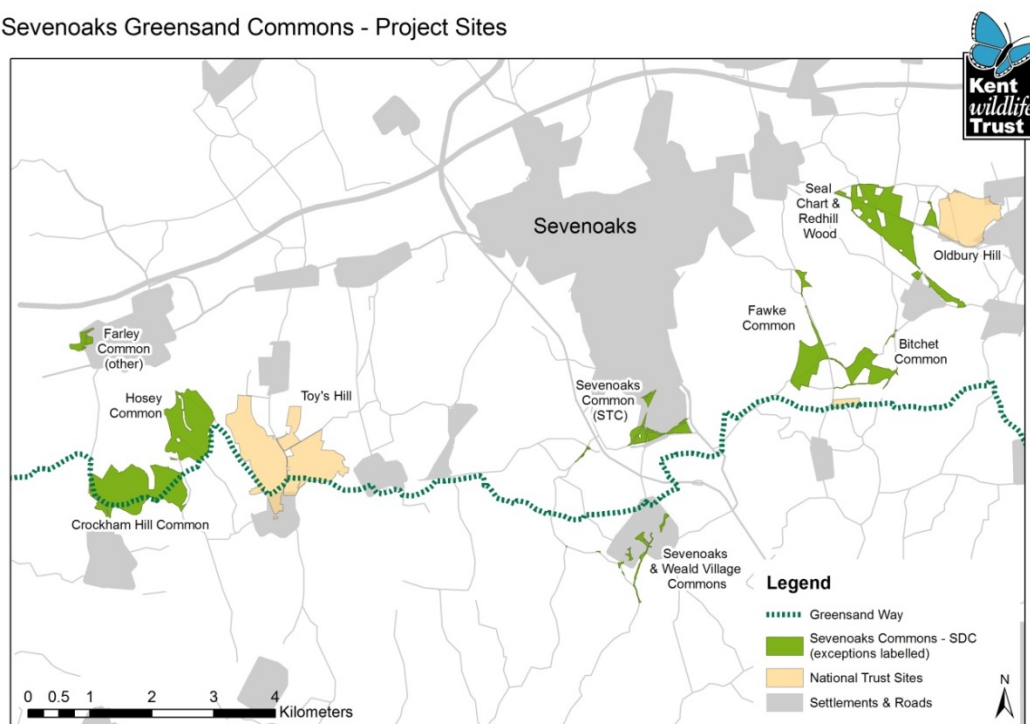


Sevenoaks Greensand Commons HLF Delivery Stage Project - Key Facts

LOCATION

- 8 project sites all on, or adjacent to, the Greensand Ridge.
- Underlying geology means that most of the sites are quite acidic, which influences the ecology of the Commons. Historically they were easy to clear, but hard to farm, many were managed as wood pasture, with heathland present.
- Steeped in natural and landscape history these jewels are a unique but currently much undervalued resource for local communities.

Sevenoaks Greensand Commons - Project Sites



HISTORY

Iron Age man, the Romans, Saxons and Normans, and people right through to the 20th Century have all benefited from the Commons' resources. Two significant Iron Age Hill Forts, (Crockhamhill and Oldbury) stand on the outside edge of the project area at the west and east ends of the Commons. Local historians believe there are Roman tracks leading from Oldbury across Seal Chart to the south.

RARE HABITATS

The Commons contain some unusual and rare habitats for Kent and while much of the area is dominated by woodland, there are significant sections of acid grassland and heath habitat which is of high biodiversity value.

A COMMON VISION

For local people to have worked together to restore the landscape, social and natural heritage of the Sevenoaks Greensand Commons and to have increased our communities' capacity to value, manage and protect this same heritage by building and sustaining skills, knowledge and resources, now and into the future.

OBJECTIVES

1. To have restored the landscape, social and natural heritage of the Commons and opened public access through 26km of improved footpaths and bridleways and clear signage throughout.
2. To have created opportunities for people (particularly under-represented groups) to engage with and use the Commons in ways they would like.
3. To have significantly increased the knowledge of people (particularly under-represented groups) have about the landscape, social and natural heritage of the Commons.
4. To have developed the capacity of local people to take a lead role in the on-going management of some 300ha of Commons, their conservation and promotion of their heritage.

PROJECT ACTIVITY THEMES

Access

Improvements to access will help address a significant barrier to usage, enjoyment and engagement with the Commons.

- Significant permissive routes will be defined, publicised and managed.
- We will build on the interest shown in the Development Stage of encouraging and supporting volunteers to undertake audits of access routes, reporting issues and undertake physical improvements to improve, enhance and maintain good access on the Commons.
- Interpretation, availability of good maps and the design of circular walking and riding routes will support this.

Landscape and Social Heritage

The historical usage of the Commons has inextricably shaped its appearance today. We need to understand fully how the Commons came into existence in terms of their relationship to the manorial estates and the people that lived and worked on the commons.

- The project will include archival research, looking at historical route ways and how they can be interpreted, and significantly understanding how people's usage and changes/lack of use of the Commons influence the landscape.
- There will also be 'mini-Time Team' type activities to ground truth historical research.

Conservation

Changes in land usage and management or lack of management as productive landscapes has led to a reduction of these habitats as succession has seen areas scrub over, tree cover increase and a net loss of these habitats.

- We will intervene and retain and where possible increase these habitats and retaining the natural heritage and diversity of these Commons.

Education and Learning

The Commons provide an opportunity for education and learning for all ages and at all entry levels, e.g. curious, leisure learning, professional and academics. The programme will include:

- School visits and the bug hunters programme encouraging children to explore and understand the natural world.
- Activities will align to key stages and developing and on-going relationship with participating schools with adjacent/nearby commons will be encouraged.
- Learning activities will also include those of an informal nature such as family fun events, to running citizen science subjects to supporting graduate and post graduate research.
- The project will also work closely with organisations such as the Kent Bat Group, Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group, local branch of the Butterfly Conservation Trust, Kent County Council Community Archaeologists and others to deliver these programs.
- We will run projects such as training and supporting volunteers in other areas, for example recognising and recording veteran trees and historical research. Networking with similar project and the provision of a Commons conference will be delivered.

Engagement with hard to reach audiences

The Commons have the potential to meet the needs of many individuals and organisations either not currently accessing, using and enjoying the sites, or only having limited usage. These include:

- youth groups; schools; air cadets, scouts and guides;
- groups and organisations working with older people; groups and organisations working with those with Alzheimer's and dementia; groups and organisations representing people with a disability or mental health issue; care homes.

- We have already identified specific groups and it is apparent that the Commons can offer so much, not just to traditional audiences/users, but a much wider demographic. We will enable this at every opportunity.

Interpretation

Areas such as the Commons geology, landscape, social, historical and natural heritage is quite unique, rich and time deep.

- There is a need to explore and share this more widely in order that the past is appreciated and the future protected.
- An increased understanding by a wider audience will lead to improved management, enjoyment, usage and protection of the Commons.

Health

The project will deliver several health benefits for local communities on the Commons:

- The Commons as much, if not more so than other green spaces, can contribute to people's health, both mental and physical.
- The project intends to capitalise on this, in part for the health benefits alone, but also as a means of introducing new audiences to the Commons, who in turn will become supports and advocates of the Commons.

Friends of Groups

An important aspect in terms of ensuring increased and sustainable management of the Commons will be the establishment of Commons Friends of Groups. These will become:

- local 'eyes and ears'
- after training they will also provide practical conservation and access work days
- provide a supporting structure for citizen science projects, help facilitate oral history projects, support Green Flag applications, apply for funding and become involved in cross-Commons support network.

Just for Fun!

Enjoyment in experience related to the Commons will be key to ensuring they become increasingly, and lastingly valued by people. This will influence everything from practical work days to the delivery of specific 'fun' events.

- A positive experience of the Commons by all ages, and were possible in groups, whether they be families or groups of like-minded people, will increase the value give to the

Commons, increase the desire to use and tell others about those experiences and help them become more valued as assets to individuals and communities.

ORGANISATION OF PROJECT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Sevenoaks District Council will provide the overall leadership, coordination and accountability for the project.

The project team consists of:

- A Project Manager with overall responsibility for project delivery and meeting outcomes.
- A Conservation and Access Project Officer to deliver these works with community engagement opportunities being sought wherever possible for the delivery of conservation and access works.
- A Community Engagement Project Officer to undertake more specialised engagement and learning activities with disabled, elderly and other harder to reach groups and under-represented groups.
- A paid apprentice on a rolling basis (i.e. one for each project year - four in total) - to support and extend the work of the above.

The Steering Group will continue to guide and direct the project and provide a forum where all interests can be represented and balanced.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE - MEETING HLF OUTCOMES

The Sevenoaks Greensand Commons Project delivers on all the HLF Outcomes for Heritage, for People and for Communities. This is detailed in the Activity Plan.

LEGACY

- Local people take ownership over the management, protection and promotion of the Commons, with our initial support.
- Closer working relationships between the land owners e.g. Knole, Squerryes, their agents and managers, Sevenoaks Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council/Kent Wildlife Trust;
- The cultural heritage of those who have lived by and used the Commons over the past 80-90 years will have been captured, interpreted and shared for future generations;
- There will be a physically improved path network for many user groups, better signposting and better and new route linkages;
- Special interest groups and schools will be regularly visiting the commons independently and have better relationships with each other;
- New health user groups will use the Commons as a resource for their members and clients;
- Those who haven't visited the commons will be regular visitors.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Support and training of volunteers, including for Friends Groups, will specifically help ensure that monitoring of access and conservation works, as well as any required management and maintenance will be sustainable after the HLF funding has finished;
- This will be enhanced by training volunteers as volunteer leaders confident in running groups to sustain access works, conservation works, survey work and landscape heritage investigations and training and supporting them to gain skills in running the groups, including publicity and fundraising.
- Sevenoaks District Council budget planning is independent of national government grants and is and follows a 10-year rolling cycle, all of which provides great certainty of a commitment to managing the Commons;
- Sevenoaks Town Council and Sevenoaks Weald Parish Council forward plan budgets for their Commons;
- Landownership is established, the estates owning the land go back generations and they too are keen to have a positive legacy from their involvement;

SHARING OUR EXPERIENCE

The Sevenoaks Greensand Commons project is committed to sharing knowledge gained through our experiences:

- We will use the website and establish knowledge hubs where archival, ecological, social history elements can be accessed and shared by all;
- The Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme HLF project is represented on the Sevenoaks Greensand Commons Steering Group and we will look for synergies in the work of the two projects;
- We will encourage a two-way learning relationship with individuals such as students undertaking academic research, through to those wanting to learn/share land management techniques and establish relationships with other training and learning organisation, such as Hadlow College;
- We will encourage networking and the sharing of knowledge, skills and resources between Friends of Commons groups across the three clusters of Westerham, Sevenoaks and Seal, and also other Commons beyond Sevenoaks;
- We will produce articles in publications which will reach an audience of tens of thousands;
- We will participate in partner and national networks working to support common land, such as those developed by Natural England and the Open Spaces Society and will host a conference on best practise in managing peri-urban commons.

DELIVERY PHASE COSTS

Delivery Phase Capital Costs

		Delivery budget				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Cost Heading	Description	Cost	Cost	Cost	Cost	Total
Repair and Conservation Work	Site documents give detailed breakdown per site and works proposed.	38,428	38,628	35,695	13,225	125,976
Total		38,428	38,628	35,695	13,225	125,976

Delivery Phase Activity Costs

		Delivery budget				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Cost Heading	Description	Cost	Cost	Cost	Cost	Total
New Staff Costs	3 posts: Project Manager .6 fte, Conservation and Access Project Officer .8 fte, and Community Engagement Project Officer .4 fte (including NI and pension) plus 2% increase year on year	63,143	62,719	67,288	65,288	258,438
Training for Staff	In Forest Schools, community engagement, practical heritage skills	1,000	500			1,500
Paid Training placements	Apprentice (12,000/yr x 4)	12,000	11,250	11,250	11,250	45,750
Training for Apprentices		2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,000
Training for Volunteers	Community Training; Training in land management and survey, techniques, community training, citizen science	1,800	800	800	800	4,200
Travel for Staff	Inc running cost for vehicle	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,000
Travel and expenses for volunteers	Volunteer groups and wildlife surveyors	500	500	500	500	2,000

Equipment and Materials	Tools for Conservation Volunteers and Ecological Survey Volunteers	3,870	1,000	1,000		5,870
	Way markers (including delivery and installation)		3,567	3,567	3,567	10,701
Other	Commons festivals, conference (including speaker costs)	4,200	4,200	4,200	8,200	20,800
Other	Forest School activities	6,575	6,575	3,475	3,475	20,100
Other	Play schemes & School support	938	938	1,988	1,988	5,852
Professional fees relating to any of the above	Co-ordination of citizen science Ecological Landscape Monitoring Programme	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	6,000
Professional fees relating to any of the above	Creative design and interpretation	7,000	3,080			10,080
Professional fees relating to any of the above	Landscape history project	7,656	7,655	7,655		22,966
Professional fees relating to any of the above	Lidar surveying	10,000				10,000
Total		124,182	108,284	107,223	100,568	440,257

Delivery Phase - Other Costs

Cost Heading	Description	Cost	Cost	Cost	Cost	Total
Recruitment	Advertising	1,000	0	0	0	1,000
Publicity and promotion	Leaflets, websites etc		11,750			11,750
Evaluation	Based on £12,000 for the final report - low cost because embedded in project	2,500	2,500	3,000	4,000	12,000
Full Cost Recovery	On same basis as development stage - KWT costs @£5000/year	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	20,000
Contingency	approx. 4% of total	3,843	4,437	4,688	1,323	14,291

Volunteer Time	Volunteer conservation groups, surveyors Steering Group etc.	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	60,000
Total		27,343	38,687	27,688	25,323	119,041

Grand total		189,953	185,599	170,606	139,116	685,274
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DELIVERY PHASE INCOME

Source of Funding	Description	Secure	Value
Local Authority	SDC	Yes	46,000
Other Public Sector	Parish and Town Councils	Yes	18,000
Central Government	CSS applications for capital works e.g. rhododendron clearance		
European Union			
Private Donation - Individual	Bitchet Legacy	Yes	10,000
Private Donation - Trusts Charities Foundations			
Private Donation - Corporate			
Commercial/business	Contributions from the Landowners/Estates	Yes	46,000
Own Reserves	SDC (underwritten) - hopefully to be covered by future funding application	Yes	21,674
Other Fundraising			
Increased management Costs (maximum five years)			
Non-cash contributions			
Volunteer Time	Volunteer conservation groups, surveyors, Steering Group Members	Yes	60,000
HLF Grant Request			483,600
Total			685,274

Delivery Phase Financial
Summary

Total Delivery Costs	685,274
Total Delivery Income	201,674
HLF delivery grant request	483,600
HLF Delivery Grant %	71%



CASH FLOW

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Expenditure	£189,952	£185,599	£170,606	£139,116	£685,273
Income					
Volunteer time	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£15,000	£60,000
Local authority	£10,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£46,000
Other public sector	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500	£18,000
Private donations - Individuals	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£10,000
Commercial/business	£10,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£46,000
Own Reserves		£10,837	£10,837		£21,674
HLF	£134,050	£130,978	£120,397	£98,175	£483,600
Total income	£176,050	£187,815	£177,234	£144,175	£685,274
Year on year (income - expenditure)	£13,902	-£2,216	-£6,628	-£5,059	£0
Balance	£13,902	£11,686	£5,058	£0	