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Paths for Communities - Project summary sheet:

# Godmersham to Chiham

Project Title:	Kent
Right of Way Created:	Bridleway 1.5 km
	Footpath
Improved existing rights:	n/a

Supporting local businesses:	1
Volunteer hours contributed:	n/a
Cost of project:	£126,553
Grant rate:	83%

Communities in Kent used their £105,000 P4C funding to complete a strategic recreational route along the Stour Valley between Ashford and Canterbury. The completed route is now available for walkers, cyclists, equestrians, and the less able. Originally proposed by the Kent Local Access Forum, the project partnership

included: Spokes (East Kent Cycling Safety Charity), The Kent Downs AONB, the Kentish Stour Countryside Management Project, Godmersham Parish Council, Chilham Parish Council, and Kent County Council. Using a Section 25 agreement, almost 1.5 km of public footpath were upgraded to bridleway status.





Landowners were critical to the success of the project, both in terms of agreeing to the upgrade – and preparing the way for contactors by relocating fences, removing scrub and carrying out other preparatory work. The new route now enables users to avoid the very

“I just wanted to let you know that the new path to Godmersham is fabulous! My partner is able to cycle to Ashford safely and legally ie not using either the A28 or a footpath. I can take the 3 children on it with their bikes – even with training wheels and I will be able to follow soon with a pushchair (4th baby imminent!). I have noticed lots of other people using it as well”.

dangerous A28 and to travel between Ashford and Canterbury using a network of bridleways and quiet lanes. As well as completing this strategic link, the new stretch of bridleway also links up the bridleway network between the outlying villages of Chartham, Chilham, Godmersham and Wye. As an indicator of the need for this route, equestrians were seen on the new bridleway even before the surfacing had been laid.

The route was officially launched via a cycle ride – organised by SPOKES - on

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the 31st May 2013. Although early days in terms of measuring increased usage the route will undoubtedly benefit both residents of the villages and visitors to Ashford, Canterbury and the wider area. Tourism in the area has always been largely car orientated but, with a direct train line and the new bridleway link, more sustainable tourism can be encouraged. The railway line running adjacent to the route allows users to join or leave the trail at several points between Ashford and Canterbury. By bringing more people to the area a whole range of village shops and services are likely to benefit.



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