

Sevenoaks Greensand Commons Project - Proposed Projects and Activities

In the year since the Development phase of the Project started, we have carried out extensive consultation with local people and organisations; we have brought together the main partners in the projects, visited other similar sites, talked to regular users of the Commons and introduced many more to the Commons, and carried out ecological surveys of all the sites.

We have come up with a number of activities that will actively engage people in finding out more and learning about the Commons and physical works to enhance nature conservation and access...

Theme	Project	Cluster	Sites
1. Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recording and reporting issues. Volunteers. Training from KCC. ● Local work parties improving access to PROW, byways and bridleways to supplement KCC statutory duties. Volunteers, 2 areas Westerham cluster/Seal Cluster. ● Identifying routes and subsequent way marking within the Commons. Volunteers. ● Identify safe routes to the Commons for horse riders, cyclists and walkers. Volunteers and parish/town/district councils. ● Increase access physical or other mental/intellectual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hard to reach groups - Registered Social Landlords - Care homes - Nursing homes ● Improving linkages e.g. Oldbury Hill Fort to Squerryes Park Camp Hill Fort. ● To work with cyclists supporting legitimate responsible access. 	Westerham, Seal	Hosey Common Crockham Hill Farley Common Bitchet Common Fawke Common Seal Chart and Redhill Wood
2. Historical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Archaeology of the Commons. Plotting/ground truthing. ● Connecting the Commons - historic route ways in the Greensand Commons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – re-establish, interpret, celebrate. ● ‘Common Resources’ or ‘Working Woods’. ● Oral History Project – Cross generational – young journalist. ● LiDAR survey – furthering our understanding by analysis. ● Historical interpretation. 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	All

3. Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer workdays. Includes wood pasture/woodland and acid grassland management. Practical. • Corporate workdays. Practical. • Grazing pilot. Capital. • Volunteer lookers. • Veteran Tree recording. Volunteers • Nightjar project – establish presence/absence at 6 (suitable/possible) of the 8 sites. Also brings in local large estate owners not directly involved in the project, but keen to support this. Citizen Science. • Nightingale – Ditto. • Butterfly surveys – mix of community engagement/family events and higher level surveying. • Moth surveys – mix of community engagement/family events and higher level surveying. • Bat surveys – mix of community engagement/family events and higher level surveying with Kent Bat Group. • Reptile and amphibian surveys – mix of community engagement/family events and higher level surveying with Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group. • Flora/general – mix of community engagement/family events and higher level surveying with Kent Field Club/others. 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	Farley Common Hosey Common Crockham Hill, Bitchet Common Fawke Common Sevenoaks Common
4. Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commons Tots Play Scheme. • Bug hunters. Exploratory/contact with the natural world. • Education programme/visits. 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	All
5. Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Schools. • Arts. • Digital communications 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	Hosey Common Sevenoaks Common
6. Interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site signage. • Way marked routes. • Leaflet pack – sites/walks ecology/history. • Events to interpret historic land use e.g. wood turning, dye making • Commons resource bank • Live feeds/digital interpretation – Sevenoaks Reserve plus 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	All

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided walks and talks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geology - Ecology - Landscape History/Working Landscapes - Groups U3A etc. 		
7. Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support set up health walks on 4 commons. • Support running groups. • Work with dementia groups etc. • Commons walks for blind/visually impaired • Commons Yoga/Meditation • Links to Men in Sheds project 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	Hosey Common Sevenoaks Common Sevenoaks Weald Common
8. Friends of Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop set up of Friends Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eyes and ears. - Support citizen science projects. - Local hands on conservation and access work - Local fundraising. - Local communications. - Elicit local histories, photographic/memories. - Cross Commons support network. 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	One per cluster
9. Just for fun!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnics. • Geocaching. • Art/Photography/Digital. • Soundscapes. • Sensory. • Spoken word – Common Tales. • Theatre. • Annual commons festival day. 	Westerham, Sevenoaks, Seal	All

Table Summarising Physical Works – Conservation and Access

<i>Site</i>	<i>Works</i>
Westerham Cluster	
Farley Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearance around the veteran and specimen trees and alongside the existing paths to create a more open aspect, to help preserve the older trees. • Thin some of the encroaching sycamore on the site to the west of the road. • On the east of the road there is encroaching blackthorn and scrub that can be cut back from the open grassy area to keep the space open with good woodland edge habitat. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Hosey Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to a program clearing of invasive rhododendron and laurel. • Cutting back encroaching vegetation on access routes. • Clearance around the veteran and specimen trees. • To manage a section of previously opened up woodland area with and protect and enhance rare heathland habitat. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Crockhamhill Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to a program clearing of invasive rhododendron and laurel. • Cutting back encroaching vegetation on access routes. • Clearance around the veteran and specimen trees. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Seal Cluster	
Bitchet Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake significant clearance of invasive rhododendron. • To restore a previously cleared area of heathland restoration and, with the use of machinery to remove the bracken litter to extend this area and use it to showcase how grazing can combine with the creation of wood pasture. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Fawke Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a well-used route through with scope to showcase works that will open out the bridleway and allow it to dry out. • To reveal some of the older trees and to create a new route around a particularly badly worn bridle path. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Seal Chart/Redhill Wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To manage a section of previously opened up woodland area with and protect and enhance rare heathland habitat.

	<p>This will show what can be achieved on these types of areas with volunteer only input.</p> <p><i>Volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Sevenoaks Cluster	
Sevenoaks Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an easy access trail. • Carry out improvements to permissive bridleway in order to provide more robust surfacing, including better drainage. • Creation of wetland scrape at worst affected area of above. • Extension of existing woodland glade. • Woodland thinning and planting of understory trees. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Sevenoaks Weald Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited scope for interventions other than perhaps encouraging the relaxing of mowing regimes on the main common in places in order to encourage a greater diversity of flora and fauna.
Multiple Sites	
Improving linkages e.g. Oldbury Hill Fort to Squerryes Park Camp Hill Fort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving connectivity between project sites and other points of interest. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Improvements over and above statutory duties on public footpaths, byways and bridleways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>
Developing/enhancing permissive footpaths, byways and bridleways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving access on mutually user/landowner agreed routes. <p><i>A combination of volunteers and contractors will achieve this.</i></p>