

Appendix 2 Sector Support Fund (SSF) Application Template

1. Project Title	
Gourmet Garden Trails	
2. Project Location	
Kent, Essex (Inc Thurrock, Medway, Hertfordshire, Cheshire, Peak District National Park & Derbyshire.	
3. Lead point of contact for Project	
Name	Steve Law
Organisation	Go To Places
Job Title	Project Manager
Telephone	01227 812900
Email	Steve.law@gotoplaces.co.uk
4. Lead contact in County Council/ Unitary Authority (if different from above)	
Name	In discussions with Dave Hughes (KCC)
Organisation	
Job Title	
Telephone	
Email	
5. Description of Project (No more than 300 words)	
<p><i>This narrative should include evidence of impact in at least three of the four SELEP Federated areas and links to sector based working groups</i></p> <p>Gourmet Garden Trails is a Discover England Fund funded project to launch a series of tourist trails showcasing England's beautiful gardens and unique food and drink.</p> <p>The project will target visitors from Germany and The Netherlands and take them on a sensory journey around different parts of the country as they explore new tourist trails through both famous and little-known gardens and gourmet sites across rural England.</p> <p>Locations and organisations currently involved in the project include Kent, Essex, Hertfordshire, Cheshire and The Peak District and Derbyshire. The project will also be supported by leading tourism and travel partners including Eurotunnel, P&O Ferries, The Camping and Caravanning Club and Southeastern.</p> <p>The Gourmet Garden Trails product will be a leisure travel planning resource allowing visitors to plan and book accommodation, courses, wine and brewery tours and visits to English gardens, individually or via the Gardens & Gourmet visitor Pass. Gourmet Garden Trails will enable visitors easy access to stunning scenery, immersive experiences and opportunities to sample the rich, authentic tastes of England's produce and local dining.</p> <p>Working with a wide range of destination, transport and commercial partners, and, by refining existing content management platforms, we will produce specially curated itineraries - themed around gardens, food and drink, and stunning sights across either one or more counties - that international visitors can book. It will also be possible for visitors to create their own personalised itineraries.</p> <p>The itineraries will be complemented by detailed transport and accommodation advice and tips, with booking widgets, destination information and live transport updates, so international visitors have all the</p>	

information they need to travel across the country hassle-free.

6. Project links to SELEP Strategic Economic Plan

Please identify which objectives within the current SEP that this project will assist in delivering

Promoting innovation is a key part of the SELEP strategy and section 2.44 of the “Growth Deal and Economic Plan” states that this will be driven by businesses themselves. The visitor economy is recognised in the strategy as an area where the region has (or could have) strong competitive advantage, something which we recognise as applying to Kent. The Gourmet Gardens Trails project will develop an innovative tourism platform covering the SELEP areas of Kent, Essex and Medway with the aim of boosting the visitor economy.

A substantial proportion of the region’s tourism assets are located in rural areas and the Gourmet Gardens Trails will, by definition, mainly benefit rural tourism (although not excluding urban destinations). We note from section 2.46 of the SELEP Plan that tourism is recognised as a sector which presents new growth and business opportunities. In addition, regeneration projects linked to the creative sector such as those in Folkestone described on page 158 of the SELEP Plan have been proven to increase visitors and grow the local economy. As noted on page 155, in addition to the Creative Quarter in Folkestone, Turner Contemporary in Margate is a further example as is the success of the programme of growth at The Historic Dockyard Chatham which demonstrates the value of continued investment in the heritage sector, over a period of years. Regeneration projects and programmes which focus on higher value attract inward investment evidenced in Kent in recent years by the opening of “boutique” hotels, gastropubs and investment in higher quality accommodation in some pubs. This assists in the revival of ‘traditional’ resorts which were allowed to decline due to lack of investment, changing trends in tourism and a spiral of decline. We are seeing this being reversed in key places – many Kent resorts are now “on trend” and attracting a new generation of visitors.

In addition to the Gourmet Gardens Trails initial phase we intend to expand the project into additional counties including East and West Sussex (with whom we currently work on other projects) and Surrey.

Through developing itineraries which entice consumers with the high-profile, ‘honeypot’ destinations we will also take customers off the beaten track into more rural areas of the regions involved where we will seek to increase both visitors and income to these rural areas. Providing SME tourism businesses with the ability to put themselves in the same marketplace as more established ‘attractions’.

There will be a minimum of 15 curated itineraries within the SELEP area, working with a minimum of 80 business in Kent, Essex and the regional unitary authority areas.

The Gourmet Garden platform is being developed in such a way as to cater our longer-term aspiration to include a limitless number of tourism related businesses in the platform, to package them up for the travel trade and wider online distributors.

Uptake of this new technology platform will have the effect of connecting SELEP area rural tourism businesses of all sizes particularly SME’s with international distributors, helping them reach a wider audience and boosting their productivity.

Within our range of itineraries, we are looking to develop coastal Gourmet Garden themed itineraries, highlighting the south east’s great seafood heritage and bringing international tourist to our coastal towns having a positive impact on the coastal communities of the SELEP area.

Gourmet Garden trails will be supporting the diversification of SELEP area businesses through the inclusion of new experiential tourism offers such as foraging courses and behind the scenes tours such as

cheese making and gin distillery.

Training will be delivered to a minimum of 80 rural businesses and within each region of the SELEP area on how to work with and attract the travel trade, thus attracting more inward travel and associated income and how to welcome overseas independent visitors. Training will be in the form of face-to-face workshops or online workshops with a supplementary toolkit.

With a focus on gourmet cuisine and particularly locally produced food we will look to work with businesses who are 'traditionally' in food production but have perhaps diversified into tours and experiences, such as cheese, wine and pick your own. The aim of the project is to increase the volume and value of overseas tourism into the destinations allowing these businesses to become more sustainable in the long term and increasing the tourism offer within the project area, in turn this will also create additional jobs – both directly in the visitor economy of the region and indirectly through suppliers and supporting sectors.

Our strategy is to increase the value of the visitor economy and not just a continual drive on volume. This fits well with the SELEP strategy as tourism is seen as low value in terms of output. Focusing on programmes and campaigns that promote quality and encourage increased spend per visit is a key goal.

Our investment partners include key travel organisations covering domestic rail, and cross channel ferry and rail organisations to encourage travel through these SELEP area gateways, capitalising on previous investment in these areas and supporting collaboration between these organisations and our tourism businesses, thus supporting future growth within the SELEP regions.

Leisure and tourism are recognised as an important sector for growth. Tourism is seen as generating 64,000 jobs in Kent (page 173) - our own research based on the Cambridge Economic Impact model suggests this was 72,000 in 2015 so it is clearly a major employer albeit quite fragmented. In West Kent it is recognised as “strong and growing” in the SELEP Plan (page 166) with cultural led investment in Tunbridge Wells identified as a key driver. Leisure and tourism are “important parts of the East Kent economy” (page 47); tourism accounts for 14.5% of all industry in Wealden, the highest percentage in East Sussex (page 106) and tourism is one of the “important contributors towards the employment growth” of East Sussex (page 90) – where we intend to expand the Gourmet Gardens Trails programme in the near future.

The visitor economy has a significant effect on attracting people to live and work in the region. A vibrant tourism industry supports place making and a region which has a wide range of leisure, cultural and heritage assets has a strong appeal and greatly assists in encouraging businesses to locate or relocate. The development of Ebbsfleet Garden City will benefit from its position as a gateway to Kent and Medway and proximity to Kent’s tourism assets.

We note from page 90 that there is a need to establish an intervention fund to upgrade and expand tourist accommodation and facilities to better exploit the growth potential of the tourism sector. We believe that this application falls within the scope of a requirement to assist tourism businesses in the region to improve the quality of their product and the way in which they market their offer.

7. Total value (£s) of SSF sought (net of VAT)

£60,000

8. Total value (£s) of project (net of VAT)

£1,270,000

9. Total value (£) of match funding (net of VAT)

£1,210,000

10. Funding breakdown (£s)				
Source	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Total
SSF	60,000			
Other sources of funding (<i>please list below, add additional rows if necessary</i>)				
Visit England (DEF)	237,000	763,000		
Herts LEP		25,000		
Go Trade – Interreg	20,000	20,000		
Project Partners	40,000	40,000		
Private Investors	32,500	32,500		
Total Project Cost	389,500	880,500		
Details of match funding				
<p><i>Insert details of match funding, including who is providing match, at what value, on what terms and what assurances are there that the match will be provided</i></p> <p>Visit England (DEF) – Funding is secured through a Grant Offer Letter; 17/18 allocation has been received and spent</p> <p>Herts LEP – Funding is awaiting approval for 18/19</p> <p>Go Trade – Go To Places is a project partner in Go Trade, this funding represents match funding for joint marketing work at the end of 18/19 and will be received when work is complete.</p> <p>Project Partners – Visit Kent, Visit Essex, Visit Hertfordshire, Marketing Cheshire Funding is secured through Letters of Commitment and a Project Partner Agreement. 17/18 allocations have been received and spent. 18/19 funding is being processed</p> <p>Private Investors – P&O, Camping & Caravanning Club, Eurotunnel, Southeastern Funding is agreed through letters of commitment; 17/18 allocations have been received and have been spent. 18/19 allocations are currently being processed.</p> <p>We are currently in advanced discussions with further Project partners and investors with the intention to increase our match funding.</p>				
11. Expected project start and completion dates				
The project runs from November 2017 to March 2019				
Key Milestones				
12.				
Key Milestones	Description		Indicative Date	
Garden & Gourmet Pass on sale	All gardens and food providers will be signed up to the offer and the Gardens and Gourmet Pass will be available to purchase by the Travel Trade and direct by consumers.		June 2018	
GGT Businesses onboarded & trained	Gardens and Gourmet businesses will be ‘on-boarded’ into the GGT offer and trained		August/Sept 2018	

	to use all required systems and travel trade requirements	
Itinerary's developed	Min 6 itineraries per region will be developed to showcase themes within Gardens and Gourmet and pair 'honeypot' attractions with the 'hidden gems' – Cheese & wine itinerary, gin and so forth	September 2018
Gourmet Garden Trails Platform Launched	Travel planning platform launched to public and travel trade. Enabling TT and consumers to purchase bespoke trips including Kent's off the beaten track attractions in one place.	Jan 2019
Benefits created by 2021 (list benefits with number/amount and cash value if applicable)		

13.

Type of Benefit	Number of benefits created	Cash value of benefit (£)
Please refer to table below		
14. Value for Money – Benefit/Cost Ratio		

Please insert your Benefit/Cost Ratio (i.e. total value of benefits divided by total costs). Please indicate how you have quantified your benefits and over what period those benefits are expected to be realised

Work package	Outputs	Outcomes by end 2020	Longer Term Outputs by 2024	Impacts
Product development, content and tech	x6 off the shelf bookable itineraries x6 itinerary ideas Itinerary building tool 12 signature gardens included in itinerary	5,525 consumers planned and booked a Gourmet Garden Trail trip independently through booking	16,575 consumers planned and booked a Gourmet Garden Trail trip independently or via the trade Gourmet Garden	Increased visitor spends in 9 counties/1 national park, average increase per destination per year



	<p>24 alternative gardens included in itinerary</p> <p>24 artisan food businesses/ eateries included in itinerary</p> <p>x new images</p> <p>x5 360-degree videos</p> <p>x5 insider videos</p> <p>1 trade workshop (testing)</p>	<p>channel</p> <p>6 trade operators selling Gourmet Garden Trails of England (2 per market)</p> <p>Consumers recommending Gourmet Garden Trails via user generated content (itineraries)</p>	<p>Trails concept extended by trade to 2 new areas of England</p> <p>Gourmet Garden Trails established as a core brand for rural England among French/German/Dutch trade</p>	<p>£.5m</p> <p>Reputation of English food offer improved in three North European markets</p> <p>England is in the top 10 countries in the world for a special interest trip on the theme of gardens and /or food</p>
Consumer marketing	<p>4 press visits</p> <p>1 press toolkit</p> <p>1 social media influencer trip</p> <p>2 consumer facing tactical campaigns (e.g. with P&O Ferries)</p> <p>3 in market awareness campaigns</p> <p>1 media partnership</p> <p>3 videos for social media</p>	<p>Awareness of the Garden product of England increased among target segments</p>		
Trade Engagement	<p>1 trade tool kit</p> <p>6 f2f trade training events</p> <p>10 online trade training sessions</p> <p>3 trade familiarisation visits</p> <p>1 UK in bound event</p>	<p>Awareness of good English food product increased among target segments</p> <p>100 overseas agents trained to sell Gourmet Garden Trails</p>		

	2 trade exhibitions	of England		
	6 trade events on territory	Front-line staff in 60 garden/food businesses more aware of international visitor expectations/needs		
Product development, people	120 front line people trained 10 training events 10 web-based training sessions 3 new business networks			

Please note: The above table are based on initial analysis and expectation of outcomes/impacts. Through the development of the project more insight into the target market and potential limitations of technology will be gained and these metrics will be reviewed accordingly.
Metrics will be agreed with the independent agency SQW.

To calculate a target of an additional 5,525 visits from the three target markets by 2020 and additional 16,575 visits by 2024, we have made the following calculations.

The total number of visits from the three target markets to the target countries for the purpose of a holiday or for a miscellaneous visit using 2016 IPS data is 850,000.

A target of 5,525 additional visits by 2020 is roughly 0.5% increase on 2016. Based on the Visit Kent Cambridge model spend figures which give an average spend per trip of £182, this would translate into an additional spend of £1,005,550 based on 3.5 nights by 2020 (2 years).

After 6 years we expect this to move to 3:1 at £3,016,650 additional income.

Based on data from the Visit Kent Cambridge model & 2016 IPS data, excluding inflation

15. Value for Money – Other Considerations

Please detail benefits that cannot be quantified or cannot be quantified without lengthy or expensive analysis. This narrative should include details on why the benefit can't be quantified. If your BCR does not meet the standard 2:1 – please use this section to set out why the investment should be considered

This project will deliver various long term benefits, including but not limited to the development of an itinerary booking platform, whilst it will be developed for the themes of Gourmet & Gardens there is the long term aim that it can be white labelled and used for any chosen theme by organisations within the tourism sector and therefore incorporating all forms of tourism ‘attractions’ and presenting them to the international market.

The project will also include training to tourism businesses of all sizes on how best to engage and maximise the benefits of working with the travel trade.
Both benefits will have long term effects, whilst we intend to measure any uplift in knowledge and confidence of businesses to engage with the travel trade, it is not within the scope or budget of the project to monitor the long term financial benefits.

16. Dependencies and Risks					
<i>Please detail any scheme dependencies, risks and delivery constraints which may impact on the delivery of the project and or the benefits achieved through SSF investment in the Project</i>					
Risk	What is the Likelihood? High (H)/ Medium (M)/ Low (L)	How serious would the effect be? (H/M/L)	Consequence	Action you will take to help reduce the risk	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
RK1- Recruiting Project Partners Delays in securing commitments from core partners	H	H	Bid submission amended to reflect partner changes, revise content	Secure signed partner agreements at an early stage, extend potential partner dialogues to secure possible substitutes	GTP Bid Development Team
RK2- DEF2 14 potential Projects competing for the same potential Partners	M	M	Creates confusion for possible partners who may have limited staff resources/ funds to provide the required match. Loss of a key project partner that has been targeted by GTP	Communicate regularly with possible partners. Consider farming work packages out to partners for a financial participation.	GTP Bid Development Team
RK3- Delays in approving project	H	H	Original programme delivery period of 2 years reduced to 17 months, potential adverse impact on the delivery timeline/project team recruitment /inability to meet Year1 travel trade product launches	Work closely with Visit England & Visit Britain to assist in meeting the approval timetable	Visit England/GTP
RK4- Recruiting the project team Inability to recruit key personnel - Possible skills	M	H	Slowing of the project progress	Build in a contingency period into the delivery plan. Possible staff	GTP



shortage if all the 12 VE approved projects are seeking similar staff at the same time for short term project support				secondments from GTP and project partners. Short term backfilling by consultants. Keep client regularly appraised		
RK5-Project Management: Project actions are not completed by 31 March 2019	L	H	Reputational risk to GTP and partners; project is not complete and future funding is put at risk.	Project manager, Director and compliance team to oversee delivery of the project with regular reports on progress to partners, highlighting issues as they arise for partners' resolution.	All Partners and Project manager, Project Director, GTP and all partners.	
RK6-Suppliers to create a digital platform: Delay with appointing delivery suppliers	H	M	Due to lengthy procurement process - potential of delays to project of approximately 4-5 weeks.	Work with appointed suppliers to ensure they are aware of the delivery dates and short timeframe. Start the procurement brief as soon as the funds are granted.	GTP	
RK7-: Curated content Managing multiple partners content.	H	M	Potential of multiple entries for individual Gardens/ food producers/signature restaurants which is not user friendly. Links to partner sites not in place	Ensure key project staff in post to gather & curate content Robust and secure data feeds from third party systems that refresh data on a pre-set frequency Pre-launch check: user tests on the final interface	GTP and all partners Visit England	

RK8: DEF2 State Aid compliance	H	H	Project bid submission is rejected	Ensure early legal opinion is sought on the scope of the project and the emerging bid draft to ensure state aid issues are addressed and mitigated	GTP and partners	
RK9- Live product launch delayed	M	H	Unable to launch at trade events and set up bookable product with Tour Operators/Carriers/ partners	Work closely with the supplier to ensure all key targets and delivery dates are met. Maintain close dialogue with VE	GTP and partners	
RK10-Digital Guides: New video and imagery will look 'very wintry'	H	L	Out of season (for Gardens) digital guides won't inspire visitors	Utilise existing video and imagery to showcase other seasons. Shoot from April 2018	GTP and partners	
RK11-Digital Guides: Live guides delayed	M	M	Unable to launch at trade events	Work closely with the supplier to ensure all key targets and delivery dates are met. Allocate extra funding for writing and collation resources to ensure we meet deadlines.	GTP and Partners	
RK12-Trade events: Product not ready in time	M	M	Unable to launch at trade events	As above – work closely with suppliers to ensure we have a product to showcase using in house resources	GTP	
RK13-Marketing & PR: Product not reaching target sectors	L	L	Project will not provide increase in visitor numbers from key markets	Develop a robust marketing and PR plan – with a review of the budget and resource to deliver.	GTP and partners	



<p>RK14 – Key Partner Withdraws during the project</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>Reputational risk to GTP and partners. Loss of elements of the bookable Product, costs for redesigning the platform and any supporting collateral Match funding reduced.</p>	<p>Work closely with the project partners, ensuring all understand what is required and by when. Clarity at the start of the project and partner agreement Secure signed partner agreements at an early stage. Dependent on the resulting impact, seek redress from the exiting partner, Possible legal action /compensation. Discuss the option of securing a replacement partner with VE/VB</p>	<p>Partnership Governance</p>	
<p>RK15-Resource: The project has insufficient resources to deliver the outputs and outcomes</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>In extreme circumstances, termination of the contract due to major default. Loss of reputation for GTP.</p>	<p>Ensure the budget forecast is accurate and that all partners understand and sign up to their delivery obligations, including management of project overspend in specific work packages (embedded in partnership agreement and all project docs</p>	<p>GTP and all partners</p>	

<p>RK16-Loss of key workers during the lifetime of the project.</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Possible contract termination. Reputational loss for GTP, loss of contract payments</p>	<p>Sufficient notice periods on contracts to enable the lead partner to recruit replacements. All partners to identify key workers whose departure might put the project at risk. Ensure docs & correspondence is saved in shared drive.</p>	<p>All partners</p>
<p>RK17-Accountable Body Confusion of who is the sole Accountable Body for overseeing the contract and the lead organisation to which GTP reports.</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>Unnecessary staff and budget resources in managing multi reporting Processes, conflicting strategic guidance “too many cooks”</p>	<p>GTP to be the lead partner and accountable body, and to provide single point of contact details.</p>	<p>GTP</p>
<p>RK18-Project Management: DEF reports are not submitted</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Reputational risk to GTP and partners; project spend is not reclaimed causing impact on cash flow to GTP. May also put future DEF projects at risk.</p>	<p>Compliance and finance team to manage DEF reports – with PM, PD and teams providing updates for reports</p>	<p>GTP and all partners</p>
<p>RK19-Partners: Partnership working breaks down, one of more partner(s) leave the project.</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>Product not delivered for some partners. Match funding reduced.</p>	<p>Work closely with the project partners, ensuring all understand what is required and by when. Set up partnership agreements. Invoice partners for match funding no later</p>	<p>GTP & Partnership Board</p>

				than November 2017. (following project approval)	
RK20 – Project Dissemination: No central event provided	M	M	Unable to share learnings and showcase the project partnership led by GTP.	Continue dialog with VE/VB to help drive an event. Work with other DEF2 project leads to explore options to jointly create a dissemination event	GTP
RK21 –Poor management of organisational capacity leads to reduced efficiency, adversely impacting on delivering a successful project	H	M	Inability to effectively deliver cost efficiencies across multiple managed projects by not identifying the opportunities of common outputs requirements to produce cost efficiencies across all work programmes	Review GTP/VK/VH projections of known work strands /activity over next 2 years. Ensure staff time allocation system is enacted Prioritise work streams. Revise Marketing strategy for the whole organisation. Align work programmes to ensure connectivity /complementarity with DEF2 planned activity	GTP

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17. State Aid Implications

Please indicate how your project complies with State Aid Regulations

The DEF2 Gourmet Gardens Trail project has been notified by the UK Government in February 2018 to the European Commission under Article 53 (Aid for culture and heritage conservation) of the General Block Exemption ([651/2014 OJ L187/1 of 26th June 2014](#)).

NB: A declaration of compliance with EU or other State Aid Regulations will be required prior to any SSF being provided. If your project is awarded SSF it will be subject to a condition requiring the repayment of funding in the

event that the European Commission or UK Government determines that the funding constitutes unlawful State Aid

18. Contracting Body

Please provide the name of the organisation to act as contracting body and give details of a contact with the organisation, including phone number and email.

*If the contracting body is **not** one of the SELEP County or Unitary Councils, please detail the organisation that has been chosen, why the organisation has been selected and the benefits this arrangement will bring to the project. Any known risks of this organisation acting as contracting party should be identified here. Essex County Council as Accountable Body will make the final decision on whether any organisation is a suitable contracting partner.*

Go To Places Ltd (GTP) is a destination management specialist, delivering destination management organisation (DMO) services and national campaigns to help the visitor economy grow.

GTP is the parent company of Visit Kent and Visit Herts (Hertfordshire), founder of the Big Weekend campaign, and is lead partner in several international tourism projects driving more visitors to the UK and is part funded by the local authorities in these areas.

Go To Places Ltd is a limited company,
It is registered for VAT (VAT Registration Number: 250 9858 77)

Declaration

19. Declaration - I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and correct

Signature (Lead applicant)	
Print Name	
Organisation	GO TO PLACES
Date	

A version of this document will be made available on www.southeastlep.com