



COOL Tourism



A European funded initiative featuring the following partners:



What is "COOL" tourism?

The 'COOL' tourism project will use the environment as an asset to promote experiential tourism, unlocking the potential of rural destinations and helping the Transmanche region to compete effectively in the global tourism market.

Aims of the project

To create low impact, environmentally-friendly sustainable tourism solutions that cherish, not destroy and which minimise impact and builds environmental awareness.

Shared Assets

- Beautiful countryside
- Cultural and rural heritage
- Natural resources
- Proximity to major urban areas (Paris, London and Brussels)
- Influence of cross-channel traffic
- Rural accommodation
- Local produce
- Under exploited tourism potential

Facts and Figures

France

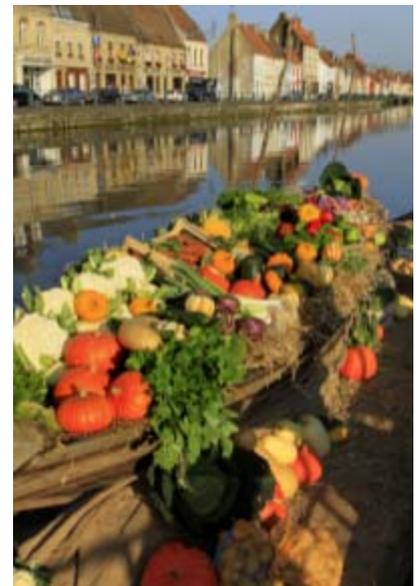
- 80% of national territory is classed as 'rural'
- 35% of the national tourism visitors have 'rural' breaks
- 50% of the national accommodation capacity is rural
- 21% of tourism consumption is rural

UK

- Rural areas account for over 80% of land area
- 20% of the UK population live in rural areas
- Visit England predicts 5% growth in rural tourism over the next three years

What will the COOL project deliver?

- A comprehensive research study to identify new opportunities for rural tourism
- Support for rural business networks
- Development of a best practice business toolkit
- Creation of an image and video library
- Themed rural marketing campaigns
- Volume and value research data
- ICT training workshops for rural businesses



What do the “COOL” tourism partners have to offer visitors?

Rural heritage

Kent	<p>Kent is the oldest county in England and has more castles and historic houses than any other county.</p> <p>Hever Castle and Gardens – www.hevercastle.co.uk Penshurst Place and Gardens – www.penshurstplace.com Leeds Castle and Gardens – www.leeds-castle.com</p>
Essex	<p>Essex is steeped in history with 10 English Heritage and 5 National Trust properties dotted throughout the county.</p> <p>Audley End House and Gardens – www.english-heritage.org.uk/audleyend Layer Marney Tower – www.layermarneytower.co.uk Hedingham Castle – www.hedinghamcastle.co.uk</p>
Somerset	<p>Somerset has a wealth of historic market towns and villages.</p> <p>Wells (smallest city in England) Glastonbury (associated with King Arthur) Castles and Stately Houses and Gardens, some featured in period dramas and films</p>
West Somerset	<p>West Somerset is home to the longest heritage steam railway in England and the smallest historic church in England at Culbone.</p> <p>Dunster Castle; The Exmoor Pony Centre Historic harbours at Watchet and Minehead; Historic villages at Dulverton and Porlock The Coleridge Way; The ruins of Cleve Abbey</p>
Sedgemoor	<p>The land of the Summer People</p> <p>‘The land of the Summer People’ reflects that much of the area was flooded in winter months. There have been many archaeological digs and a splendid museum of Rural Life in nearby Glastonbury has many artefacts.</p>
Exmoor National Park	<p>A wild landscape steeped in 8000 years of living history</p> <p>Burial mounds on high ridges, unique and ancient patterns of standing stones, cliff top Roman forts, astonishingly preserved medieval villages and incredible Victorian industrial engineering are all there to be explored.</p> <p>www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/environment/history</p>
Norfolk	<p>From captivating castles and cathedrals, to splendid stately homes, myriad museums and plenty of medieval churches</p> <p>Blickling Hall country estate - www.nationaltrust.org.uk/blickling-estate/ The Paston Way Norfolk Trail - www.norfolk.gov.uk/trails North Norfolk Railway - www.nnrailway.co.uk Horseley Windpump - www.nationaltrust.org.uk/horseley-windpump/</p>
Pas de Calais	<p>With Saint-Omer, city of Art and History and the green and vibrant 7 Valleys, Pas-de-Calais treasures its architectural heritage.</p> <p>Saint-Omer’s Cathedral; Saint Paul’s Abbey Remains of Fressin Castle Maintenay Watermill The battle field at Agincourt</p>
La Somme	<p>Somme offers a lush green countryside and diverse rural landscapes: a coast with dunes, pebble beaches, cliffs, estuary, valley, marshes and a rich local and vernacular heritage including chapels, shrines and churches.</p>



Active and outdoor

Kent	<p>Enjoy dedicated walking and cycling routes, events at country parks, or a round of golf – Kent has over 100 courses.</p> <p>Explore Kent – www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent</p> <p>Kent Greeters – www.kentgreeters.co.uk</p> <p>Cyclopark - www.cyclopark.com</p> <p>Golf – www.visitkent.co.uk/golf</p>
Essex	<p>With its flat terrain, Essex is ideal for walking and cycling or the more energetic may wish to try White Water Rafting at the Lee Valley Regional Park.</p> <p>Cycle Essex – www.visitessex.com/cycle</p> <p>Walk Essex – www.visitessex.com/walk</p> <p>White Water Centre – www.gowhitewater.co.uk</p>
Somerset	<p>Mountain biking in the Quantock Hills</p> <p>Quiet cycling across Somerset Levels</p> <p>Walking trails such as Coleridge Way; South West Coast Path</p> <p>Horse riding; Kite surfing; sailing</p>
West Somerset	<p>A National Park and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</p> <p>Much of West Somerset is a protected landscape. It is protected for its diverse and unique landscape, which lends itself perfectly to activities such as walking, riding and cycling. Long distance trails such as the South West Coast Path and Coleridge Way start in the area, while Wimbleball Lake offers excellent fishing and water sports opportunities. Wimbleball also hosts triathlons, such as Ironman, on an annual basis. In recent times new activity providers are emerging that offer activities such as sea kayaking, coasteering and climbing.</p>
Sedgemoor	<p>There is something for everyone to do in Sedgemoor, no matter what age or ability. The diverse countryside leads to a wealth of outdoor activities from hill walking, beaches, horse riding and kite surfing. The dramatic scenery of Cheddar Gorge is a caver' and potholers' paradise.</p>
Exmoor National Park	<p>Exmoor offers a natural adventure playground to discover and explore.</p> <p>World class mountain biking; Water-sports; Challenging road cycling; Some of the best horse riding in the country; Traditional country pursuits, 5 long distant footpaths and over 1000kms of Rights of Way to explore.</p> <p>Active Exmoor – www.activeexmoor.com</p> <p>Simple Pleasures – www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/must-see-and-do/simple-pleasures</p> <p>Countryside Sports – www.countrysportssouthwest.co.uk/search/?q=exmoor</p>
Norfolk	<p>Norfolk can boast coast, country, fen and forest walking, cycling and horse riding, and all set within an easy, rolling landscape, whilst the waterways of the Broads and coast offer a range of water sport activities.</p> <p>The Norfolk Trails network - www.norfolk.gov.uk/trails</p> <p>The Norfolk Broads - www.enjoythebroads/boating</p>
Pas de Calais	<p>On the water or in the trees, on foot or on a bike, for a peaceful walk or a thrilling ride, Pas-de-Calais is to be explored in whichever way makes you feel good!</p>
La Somme	<p>Outdoor activities include sand-yachting, kayaking, horse-riding, guided walks across the bay, hiking trails, bike paths and nature guides ... www.somme-nature.com</p>



Landscapes and wildlife

Kent	Kent has the largest area of semi-natural woodland of any county and in the Elham Valley around 40 different wild flower species grow per square metre. Kent Downs and the High Weald – areas of outstanding natural beauty, cover approx. one third of the county – www.kentdowns.org.uk and www.highweald.org Bedgebury National Pinetum & Forest – www.bedgeburypinetum.org.uk
Essex	Essex boasts a landmark conservation programme at Wallasea Island, the largest of its kind in Europe RSPB Nature Reserves – www.rspb.org.uk/essex Essex Wildlife Trust 8 visitor centres and 87 nature reserves – www.essexwt.org.uk
Somerset	Somerset has 3 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which are home to wild Red Deer, ancient breed ponies and many important bird species Exmoor National Park - www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk Somerset Levels and Moors www.visitsomerset.co.uk
West Somerset	Two thirds of West Somerset forms part of Exmoor National Park, which is protected for its unique and diverse landscape and wildlife - www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - www.quantockhills.com Porlock Marsh offers bird lovers a wonderful place to spot waders and birds such as Little Egrets, Spoonbill, Hen and Marsh Harrier, Osprey and Snow Buntings.
Sedgemoor	Sedgemoor is very rich in biodiversity. Parts of Sedgemoor lie within specially protected sites for birds. The Great Crane project has re-introduced these majestic birds back into the Sedgemoor landscape, under a protected reintegration scheme. Wild deer, sheep and a unique breed – Quantock Pony – roam on the Quantock Hill. In Cheddar Gorge there are many protected areas of grassland and Peregrin Falcons.
Exmoor National Park	One of the England's finest landscapes. A diverse National Park with the highest mainland cliffs in Britain, England's tallest tree and the country's longest footpath. – www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/learning/did-you-know Fantastic wildlife including Europe's oldest native horse breed, the Exmoor Pony and the largest herd of Red Deer in England - www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/environment/wildlife-and-ponies Europe's first International Dark Sky Reserve - www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/visiting/things-to-do/stargazing
Norfolk	Norfolk has a fantastic range of landscapes from its wild north coast designated an area of outstanding natural beauty, the rivers, lakes and marshes of the Broads, the sandy heaths of Breckland, and ancient heaths, fens, grassland and woods - all set under big skies. This means a wealth of biodiversity and superb opportunities to see abundant wildlife, including Blakeney Point where you can see seals, or Titchwell Marsh , one of Britain's most popular RSBP reserves.
Pas de Calais	The Marais Audomarois is one of 12 sites recently added to UNESCO's World Biosphere Reserve Network. The 7 Valleys is pure natural beauty: green and vibrant to the rhythm of the Ternoise River and home to city folk in search of the good Life. The Parc des Caps et Marais d'Opale , including the Grand Site des Caps , preserves and promotes the natural, cultural, geographic and human heritage of the area.
La Somme	Somme has many beautiful landscapes including: The Bay of Somme - a Grand site de France and one of the world's most beautiful bays The Somme Valley – central feature of the region, a green ribbon along 120-kilometres Wildlife : migrating birds, seals, Henson horses, mussels, salt marsh muttons, etc



Local produce

Kent	Kent is known as the Garden of England because of its wealth of farming and crops, including Whistable Oysters, Romney Marsh lamb, fruit and hops Brogdale, home to the National Fruit Collection - www.brogdale.org Shepherd Neame, Britain's oldest brewery - www.shepherdneame.co.uk Award winning vineyards - www.chapeldown.com , www.biddendenkent.co.uk
Essex	Essex has a multitude of culinary delights including the famous Tiptree Jam, Maldon Salt and Mersea Island Oysters. Tiptree Tea Rooms – www.tiptree.com Eating out in Essex - www.visitessex.com/where-to-eat
Somerset	Artisan Cider; Cheddar Cheese; micro breweries; Smoked Eel and other smoked foods - www.somersetfood.org
West Somerset	The area is specifically renowned for lamb, local beers, ciders, ice-creams, Somerset/Exmoor cream teas, and dairy produce in general. Trout and salmon are available in local rivers. Many local businesses offer local produce on their menus, both in accommodation and at places to eat throughout the area.
Exmoor National Park	You can literally 'eat the view' on Exmoor with much of the local produce coming direct from the moors... Succulent Exmoor horn lamb, Exmoor beef, game, fish (freshwater and coastal), and of course a cream tea! www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/food-and-drink
Norfolk	From fresh-as-it-comes seafood to craftsman-brewed beer, Norfolk offers a spread of delicious specialities using locally sourced produce. Look forward to game and foraged foods, crayfish, rare breed pork, blueberries and poultry from the Brecks; samphire, mussels, seabass, cod and the famous Cromer crab. The English Whiskey Co. - www.englishwhisky.co.uk Farmers Markets - www.visitnorfolk.co.uk/food-and-drink/FD-farmers-markets.aspx Woodeforde's Brewery, Woodbastwick - www.woodfordes.co.uk/ Norfolk Lavender Company, Heacham - www.norfolk-lavender.co.uk
Pas de Calais	Pas-de-Calais is so tasty! Beer, cheeses, chicory, cider, honey, bread, turkey, strawberries, cauliflower, potatoes and watercress are amongst the regions' traditional produce. The richness of the country is in its diversity and in the passion and dedication of the local producers.
La Somme	Discover the Somme through some of its sweet or savoury specialities : macaron d'Amiens, a speciality of the City of Amiens since the 16th century; ficelle picarde (ham and mushroom pancakes), gateaux battu (whipped cake), beers, mussels and vegetables from the Hortillons market gardens – www.visit-somme.com



Family breaks

Kent	<p>Lots of family attractions and many special offers to be had, which means a family stay doesn't have to cost the earth:</p> <p>Kent Life – www.kentlife.org.uk Rare Breeds Centre – www.rarebreeds.org.uk Kent and East Sussex Railway - www.kesr.org.uk Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway - www.rhdr.org.uk Special offers - www.visitkent.co.uk/offers</p>
Essex	<p>Essex is ideal for a family break, with attractions and accommodation to suit all budgets.</p> <p>Colne Valley Railway – www.colnevalleyrailway.co.uk Marsh Farm – www.marshfarm.co.uk Barleylands – www.barleylands.co.uk Special offers – www.visitessex.com/livelocal</p>
Somerset	<p>Coastal resorts, family parks and farm accommodation - www.visitsomerset.co.uk Wookey Hole - www.wookey.co.uk Cheddar Gorges - www.cheddargorge.co.uk West Somerset Railway - ; www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk Fleet Air Arm Museum - www.fleetairarm.com</p>
West Somerset	<p>West Somerset offers a traditional seaside offering to families, with amusements and beaches at Minehead, Dunster and Blue Anchor. There are a number of holiday parks offering good value caravan and lodge style accommodation, as well as Butlins holiday park, which can cater for 6,000 guests. There's a good range of small visitor attractions in the area and animal and farm type parks</p> <p>West Somerset Railway - www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/ Minehead Eye's skate park and soon to be climbing wall - www.mineheadeye.co.uk</p>
Exmoor National Park	<p>The whole family can have an adventure on Exmoor</p> <p>Dunster Castle - www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/dunster-castle Exmoor Pony Centre - www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/exmoor-pony-centre Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway - www.cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk Lynton and Barnstaple Railway - www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/lynton-barnstaple-railway Special offers - www.visit-exmoor.co.uk/special-offers</p>
Norfolk	<p>Norfolk offers a wide range of activities and attractions for those seeking family fun and adventure.</p> <p>BeWILDerwood - www.bewilderwood.co.uk Dinosaur Adventure, Lenwade - www.dinosauradventure.co.uk Broadland Cycle Hire, Wroxham for a family outing exploring the Norfolk Broads on two wheels (www.broadlandcyclehire.co.uk)</p>
Pas de Calais	<p>Pas-de-Calais is a child friendly destination, with loads of 'rainy day' and outdoor activities for the whole family www.visit-pas-de-calais.com -</p>
La Somme	<p>An ideal destination for families to enjoy outdoor activities, create memories, and enrich learning. Find weekends ideas for families - www.weekend-picardy.co.uk</p>



Further information:

Kent – The Garden of England



Situated in the southeast corner of England, Kent is an easy place to get to whether you're travelling by road, rail or air.

Kent overflows with country parks, special landscapes, and nature reserves. At the county's core is a classic rural landscape of undulating chalk downs. Green fields, ancient woods and swathes of big-sky marshland add extra appeal. This irresistible walking and cycling territory is traced by a tempting network of long-distance routes and day trails - there are 4200 miles of public rights of way alone.

The beautiful countryside is dotted with hidden gems, the stunning coastline filled with activities and fun, and all connected and within easy reach of one another. Kent's excellent road network and efficient local transport systems ensure you are well looked after once you've arrived.

As the closest point to mainland Europe (21 miles at the nearest point), Kent is also well placed for visitors travelling from the continent, so you too can be enjoying the Garden of England.

Website: www.visitkent.co.uk/cool

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Essex – explore, experience and enjoy...



Essex is a largely rural county with small market towns, traditional villages and tiny hamlets linked by quiet country lanes. Undulating farmland is interspersed with small woodlands, the views interrupted by mighty oaks and ashes presided over by the hurrying skies.

The Essex countryside is a walking paradise, whether you want to cross the country from south-west to north-east using the well-known Essex Way or other smaller countryside trails or coastal walks. Country parks and open spaces can be found all over Essex and they offer a great variety of activities; choose from woodland trails, old historic parkland and even a modern working farm.

So, whether your idea of the perfect day is walking along a riverbank in the heart of Constable Country or exploring our wildlife at one of the many nature reserves, you'll be able to enjoy some very memorable moments in Essex.

Website: www.visitessex.com

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Somerset - a legendary county of contrasts



A gateway county to the South West of England, the country's most popular tourism region, Somerset has a world-wide reputation as a land of legend, superb food and drink and glorious English countryside.

Glastonbury Tor stands sentinel over the Somerset Levels – an important hot spot for bird watchers, who come to see the Great Crane and the dramatic 'murmurations' of thousands of starlings which wheel and swoop over this ancient landscape.

Boasting a national park and five areas of outstanding natural beauty as well as dozens of beautiful rural and quintessentially English villages and market towns – Somerset is perfect for cyclists, walkers and lovers of nature.

This is cider country and the home of Cheddar Cheese; England's smallest city, Wells is a medieval wonder and the bustling county town of Taunton is perfect for a bit of retail therapy after a day recharging the batteries taking in stunning rural and coastal vistas.

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West Somerset



West Somerset is defined by its dramatic scenery and wildlife, the majority of which is protected as a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Exmoor and the Quantock Hills offer visitors a mix of seaside holidays, activities and relaxing rural breaks, close to the M5 and Bristol, and 2 hours from London, Cardiff and Birmingham.

Unlike other protected areas, it is possible to get away from it all in West Somerset. Glorious heather moorland, ancient oak wooded combes (valleys), dramatic sea cliffs with views across the Bristol Channel provide a perfect backdrop for a range of activities, including walking, horse riding, cycling, fishing, wildlife watching and picnics.

Dotted amongst this landscape are many historic towns, villages and attractions, such as mediaeval Dunster with its castle and West Somerset Railway. There are fantastic family friendly beaches at Minehead, Dunster and Blue Anchor. Delicious cream teas, local lamb, beers and ciders provide a wonderful finishing touch to the experience.

Website: www.visit-exmoor.co.uk

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Sedgemoor District Council



Sedgemoor lies within Somerset with its captivating, yet huge contrasts of landscapes from salt marshes to gently rolling hills, wetlands and moors as well as coast. 'The land of the Summer People' reflects that much of the area was flooded in winter months. There have been many archaeological digs and a splendid museum of Rural Life in nearby Glastonbury has many artefacts.

There is something for everyone to do in Sedgemoor, no matter what age or ability. The diverse countryside leads to a wealth of outdoor activities from hill walking, beaches, horse riding, kite surfing. The dramatic scenery of Cheddar Gorge is a caver' and potholers' paradise.

Sedgemoor is very rich in biodiversity. Parts of Sedgemoor lie within specially protected sites for birds. The Great Crane project has re-introduced these majestic birds back into the Sedgemoor landscape, under a protected reintegration scheme. Wild deer, sheep and a unique breed – Quantock Pony – roam on the Quantock Hill. In Cheddar Gorge there are many protected areas of grassland and Peregrin Falcons.

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Exmoor National Park Authority



Situated in the south west of England, Exmoor National Park contains an amazing variety of landscapes within its 267 square miles.

The highest coastal cliffs in mainland Britain give way to a unique landscape of moorland, woodland, valleys and farmland, shaped by people and nature over thousands of years.

Wildlife abounds, and you can choose the pace from adrenaline activities to leisurely days admiring the views. Cosy pubs, restaurants and tearooms offer delicious local produce direct from the moors to provide the true taste of Exmoor.

Come sunset you will appreciate why we were designated Europe's first International dark Sky reserve as you look up at our amazing night sky.

All this and we're only a short distance from mainline trains and the motorway network – freedom is closer than you think.

Website: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

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Norfolk – big skies, wide sandy beaches and open countryside



If you are expecting Norfolk to be flat and dull then you are definitely in for a surprise. There are few counties that are as diverse as Norfolk, with so many different characteristics.

At the hub of the Norfolk is a thriving modern city with a magnificent cathedral and cherished medieval heritage. However, beyond Norwich there are well-preserved market towns, picturesque villages, from Georgian splendour to thatch and flint; an ancient landscape of cultivated arable fields and farms, punctuated by the unique man-made Broads, the sandy pine forests and ancient heathlands of the Brecks and the wilderness wetlands of the Fens.

The magnificent Norfolk coast, much of which is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, is perfect for walking, bird watching or simply to rediscover the quintessential seaside holiday. The charms of surrounding seaside towns and villages offer local culinary delights, festivals and arts, and a gateway to exploring a range of activities and landscapes.

The opportunities are there for any visitor to immerse themselves in the diverse natural and cultural environment and create those perfect memorable experiences to cherish. So, whether you are looking for an action-packed family holiday, a relaxing weekend break for two, you will find a part of Norfolk which is a perfect base for you.

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Pas-de-Calais Tourism



Conveniently close, deliciously different... All the ingredients of an authentic French fix are right there on your doorstep, in Pas-de-Calais.

Forget any ideas of Northern France being flat, industrial or uninteresting, it is surprisingly rural, gorgeously undulating and overflowing with culture. Whether you are coming over for shopping, gastronomy, coastal activities, wartime history or just to relax and enjoy a taste of France.

Shoppers and foodies alike will enjoy the French atmosphere, so many of our towns have to offer. For an authentic foodie experience, Pas-de-Calais offers a variety of local produce: cheeses, traditionally brewed beers, Saint-Omer whetlands are UNESCO worldwide heritage which produces an amazing array of delicious veg and fresh fish abounds in Boulogne, France's premier fishing port.

An extensive choice of museums, including the new Louvre-lens, guided tours, wartime history sites and trails will help you to uncover the region's cultural secrets and history. Nature-lovers will be enchanted by the classified sites and nature parks. The Grand Site des Caps, one of just 10 locations awarded Grand Site de France status, is definitely not to be missed. If you're looking for thrills and excitement, the Opal Coast is the perfect playground for you: sand yachting, kite surfing, speed-sailing are just a few examples of what awaits you. Pas-de-Calais is

also great for the whole family as there are many indoor and outdoor child friendly attractions.

Website: www.pas-de-calais-tourisme.com www.visit-pas-de-calais.com

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Somme Tourisme – Undiscovered France on your doorstep



In less than two hours' from the Channel coast, along France's uncrowned motorways, you can be in the heart of the Somme.

The Somme is both nearby and accessible! It's the best of France less than 4 hours from London! Every week, you will find your perfect short-break: outdoors and active, parks and gardens, culture and heritage, well-being, golf, remembrance, French food and art de vivre, eco-friendly, with children...

To the west of the Somme region lies the Picardy Coast, stretching 60 km from the mouth of the Bresle in the south to where the Authie flows into the sea in the north, and set between them, the estuary of the Somme River or Bay of Somme.

Amiens cathedral, like a vast ocean liner carved in stone, with its Gothic tracery, the largest Gothic structure ever built, has been named as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The city of Amiens makes for a great weekend break.

The Somme battlefields reflect the battle lines of 1914-1918. Discover the history through the Remembrance Trail, with its impressive memorials, traces of battles and cemeteries.

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