

## Marsh huts project destined for success - August 2021

Exciting plans for Romney Marsh could see the area become even more of a holiday hotspot.



More than 100 beach chalets, toilets (including a fully-accessible Changing Place toilet), café, concession kiosk and upgraded car parking are to be built at the Coast Drive Car Park by Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

Members at the most recent full council meeting approved £518,000 extra funding for the Romney Marsh Coastal Destination project. The site will link with The Green, an open space, play park and beach huts owned and operated by New Romney Town Council.

The 108 chalets (owned by F&HDC) are expected to be as popular as the 115 renovated and new huts at Marine Walk, Folkestone, which have 100 per cent occupancy and a waiting list of more than 800 people.

Cabinet Member for Property Management and Grounds Maintenance Cllr John Collier said: "The Marsh project will create a 'true visitor destination', which will boost tourism and business there, while providing an important revenue stream for the council."

Cllr Collier said the Marsh coastal areas are much-loved throughout the summer and welcome large numbers of tourists, as well as providing recreational space for residents: "Like all areas of the district, numbers have increased year on year and increasingly during the Pandemic. Managing these numbers, whilst actively promoting and supporting the areas moving forward is important.

"The Marsh and its coastal frontage are hugely important to the district and offer huge opportunity for growth. However its complex needs in relation to balancing the tourism offering and its Natura 2000 sites are important to consider."

"All work will have to have the support of Natural England and F&HDC officers have been working on understanding the implications through its partnership with the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership."

In order to reduce the impact upon the Site of Special Scientific Interest, a boardwalk and signage are proposed. This will keep users off the sensitive shingle area and also offer equal access for all to the beach and the chalets.

It is hoped the beach chalet scheme will be finished by next April 2020, in time for the summer season.

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