



Augustine
Camino

Pilgrimage and the Private Sector

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Andrew and Paula Kelly



- Couple living in Ramsgate with two kids
- Keen walkers
- Parishioners at St Augustine's Ramsgate
- Walked Offa's Dyke on Honeymoon
- Pictured walking in Austria

The Plan

- To create a walking pilgrimage route to the Shrine of St Augustine
- For it to be at least 100 km long (the shortest distance for which you can receive a Compostela)
- For it to be an amble rather than a ramble
- A good pub for lunch every day
- Beautiful countryside, off road with good transport links
- Visits to living communities not just empty churches
- A Christian pilgrimage – a chance to discuss religion and to pray

The Over-Arching Themes of the Augustine Camino

- St Augustine and the conversion of England
 - Thanet – Ebbsfleet, Ramsgate
 - Canterbury – St Martin's, St Augustine's, The Cathedral
 - Rochester – The Cathedral, Baptism of Ethelbert
- The Gothic Revival
 - The Pugins and Gilbert Scotts
- The Reformation
 - Rochester - John Fisher
 - Boxley Abbey
 - Canterbury - Thomas More, the Cathedral





Developing a Camino for England

- Pilgrimage is now firmly back in the spotlight with media coverage and increasing numbers of routes
- However, most pilgrims travel by modern transport – relatively few walk – and those that do are normally on a special organised event
- The Camino de Santiago remains the one route walked by thousands of pilgrims each year.
- The Augustine Camino is an attempt to create something similar in the UK

Obstacles to creating a Camino in England

- Accommodation (the main cost) is expensive compared to other European countries
- It is necessary to book ahead as there is no network of hostels equivalent to those on the Camino de Santiago
- Permission is required to attach signage
- Services are undeveloped

The Positives

- Our network of footpaths is unrivalled
- The countryside is easy on the eye and the feet
- We have wonderful country pubs and beautiful churches
- The whole route is well served by public transport (including high speed trains to London at five points)
- There is so much to see in a very small distance
- The Christian Heritage in Kent is of international significance

Inspiration – Latest figures from the Camino de Santiago Website

Nacion

País	Nº Peregrinos
España	124230 (44,71%)
Italia	23944 (8,62%)
Alemania	21220 (7,64%)
Estados Unidos	15236 (5,48%)
Portugal	13245 (4,77%)
Francia	8868 (3,19%)
Irlanda	6537 (2,35%)
Reino Unido	6050 (2,18%)
Corea	4534 (1,63%)
Australia	4441 (1,60%)
Brasil	4265 (1,52%)

- Thousands of Brits walk it every year
- 327,378 pilgrims received their compostela in 2018

Inspiration - The Renovation of St Augustine's



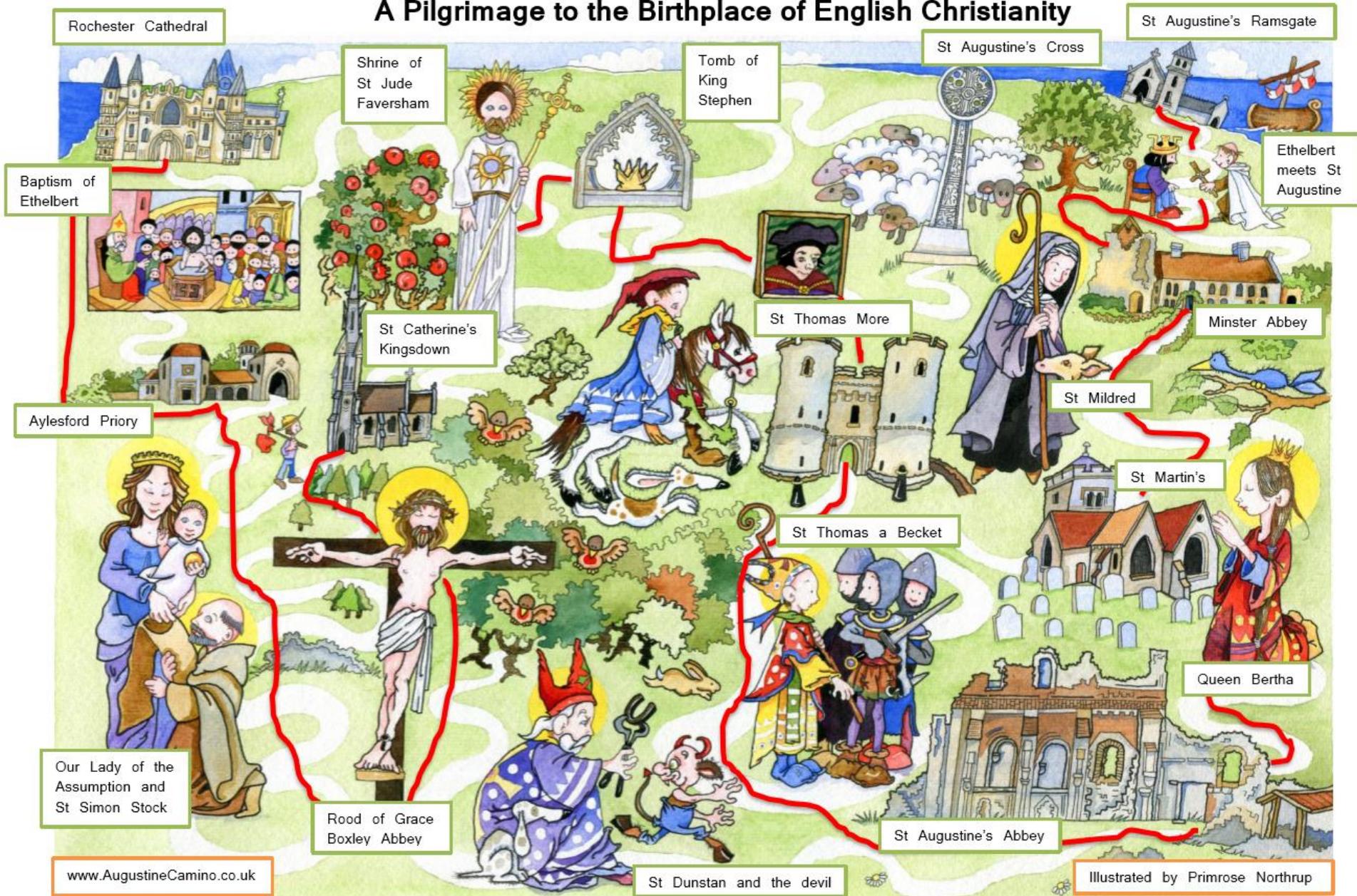
- £1 million Heritage Lottery Grant
- Shrine of St Augustine – Apostle to the English
- The “ideal church” of Augustus Pugin, leader of the Gothic revival (and architect of the original Southwark Cathedral, Big Ben etc)
- A building of international importance

Progress so far – The Route

- Medieval pilgrims visited monasteries and shrines along the route
- In Kent it is possible to recreate this experience
- The route has been chosen to include religious communities, active parishes and two cathedrals – to provide a true Christian pilgrimage
- St Augustine and the conversion of the English provides the main theme
- “Reformation and Renewal” is a distinctively English secondary theme – the Gothic revival unexpectedly providing the glue

Augustine Camino

A Pilgrimage to the Birthplace of English Christianity



Progress so far – Services – Accommodation Booking, Baggage transfer and Guidebook

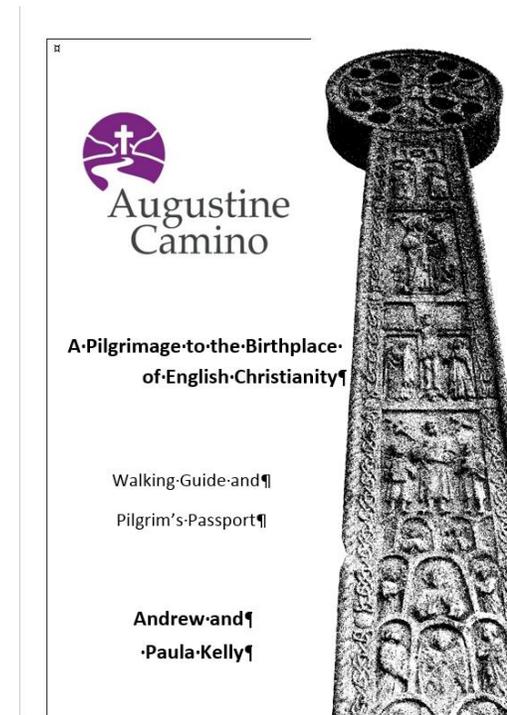
Accommodation deals – with main hotels and guest houses

Links with churches along the route

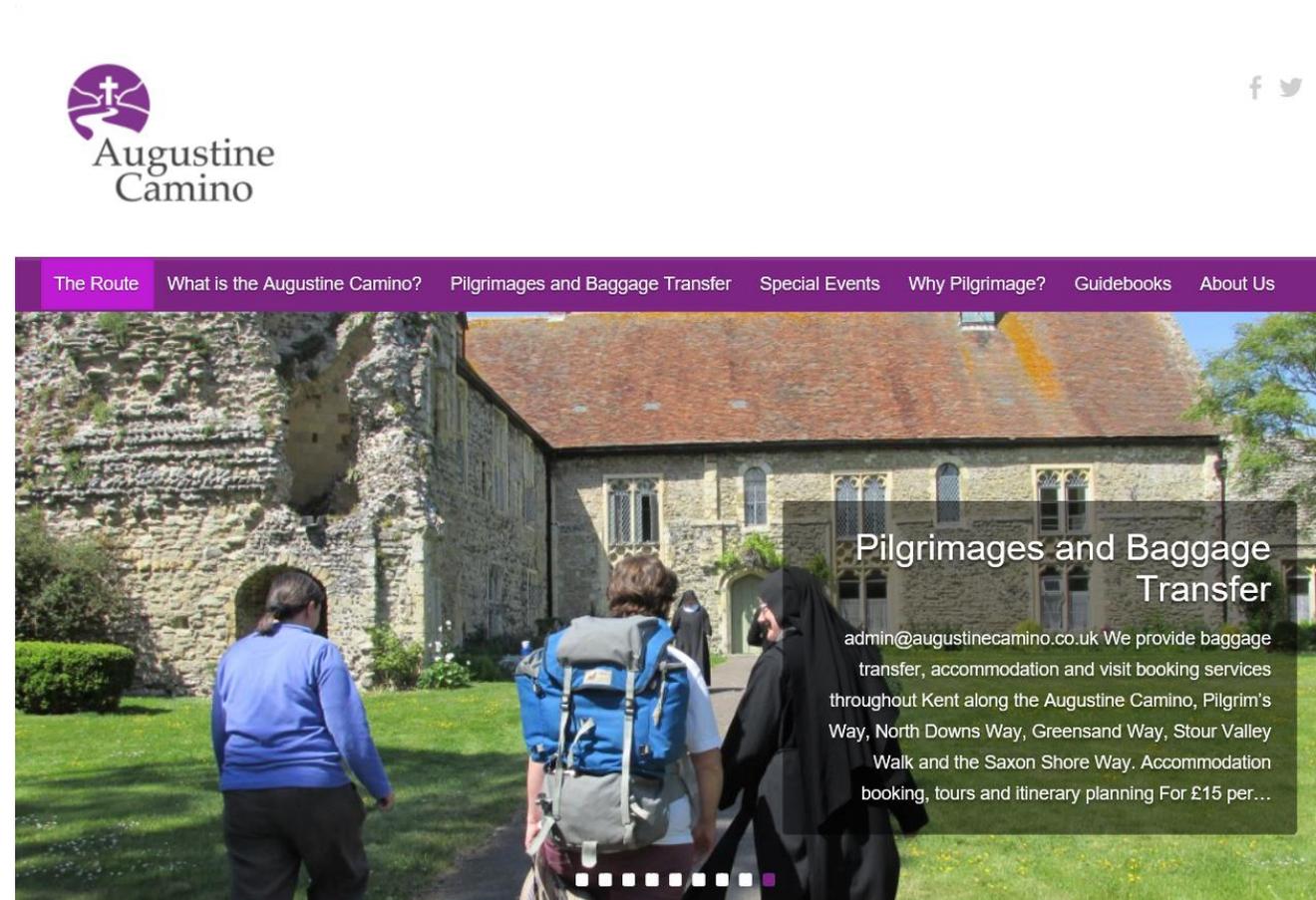
Itineraries, guidebooks, welcomes, tours

Baggage transfer and support

Over 200 guidebooks sold in last 9 months



Progress so far – Website with maps and information



The Response

- Number of pilgrims walking route – In excess of 100 in 2018
- The biggest demographic is women in their 50s
- Enthusiastic response from Rochester Cathedral and Anglican parishes along the route
- Co-operation with Kent Downs AONB and North Downs Way
- Also British Pilgrimage Trust, Long Distance Walkers Association and Via Francigena

Next Steps

- Sign-posting – requires proof of significant usage of the route
- Developing the website – more images and mobile friendly
- Encouraging groups – leaders' days arranged for May and June
- Working with foreign tour companies
- Digital and offline promotion
- Producing a compostela

Reservations about Involving the Private Sector

- Ethical considerations – perhaps profit is not compatible with pilgrimage
- Too many routes, hard to maintain
- Duplication of effort
- The public and voluntary sectors have this covered
- On whose authority?
- Doesn't tick all the diversity boxes

Benefits of involving the private sector

- Enthusiasm
- Expertise
- Additional resources
- Adding to the buzz
- Testing business models
- Broadening the appeal
- Permission to fail