

ACCESSIBILITY OUTDOORS

The high demand for more Changing Places in parks and open spaces led Kent County Council to start a new project that will ensure their parks are even more accessible in the future. Shorne Woods Country Park in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was selected as the ideal place for the council to locate their first Changing Places toilet as it's one of the most popular country parks in Kent.

The Kent County Council team are dedicated to their duty of ensuring everyone can make use of their country parks, including people with disabilities. Installing Changing Places toilets will broaden accessibility by offering people with more profound disabilities the chance to enjoy a full day out of the house with access to good facilities.

Our scope of works covered the full turnkey delivery of a new modular Changing Places toilet, with comprehensive groundworks and ongoing maintenance. The RISE team built foundations; connected existing services and upgraded existing electricity supply; and designed, built and registered a new modular Changing Places, complete with specialist equipment.

RISE



“We are proud to be able to offer such an important facility so everyone can enjoy Shorne Woods Country Park.”

Cllr Mike Hill, OBE – Kent County Council.



EUROPEAN UNION

The Project: Modular Changing Places Installation

This project was supported by the 'EXPERIENCE Project' and funded by European Regional Development Fund through Interreg VA France (Channel) England Programme and Interreg VA France (Channel) England Programme. The EXPERIENCE project aims to support sustainable rural tourism in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with a specific focus on outdoor activities such as walking and cycling and making outdoor tourism accessible to all.

RISE successfully won the tender for Shorne Woods and installed a modular Changing Places toilet that will now be available to the many people that visit the park.

The RISE team completed the project in eight weeks and provided a turnkey service, including design, build, delivery and commissioning of the Changing Places. We also provided groundworks, including foundations, and the upgrading of and connections to existing services.

A stunning custom finished look was given to the toilet with sweet chestnut cladding and black facias/soffits. This ensured the finished loo blends into its surroundings perfectly and matches existing buildings. The feature wall even shows a beautiful bluebell woodland scene which is a springtime treat for Shorne Woods visitors.

“Our new modular Changing Places looks great and sits well with buildings already located in the park,” says Cllr Mike Hill, OBE at Kent County Council. “We are proud to be able to offer such an important facility so everyone can enjoy Shorne Woods Country Park,” he adds.

Getting More People Outdoors

Cllr Mike Hill also explained about previous work at the park to make it accessible saying: “A lot of effort has gone into accessibility at Shorne Woods, with the installation of over two miles of easy access routes that are ideal for wheelchair users and pushchairs. Visitors can also hire Tramper vehicles to explore the park. The Changing Places toilet is another step towards full inclusivity, and we look forward to welcoming even more people to the park now.”

Focus groups held by Muscular Dystrophy UK and the Changing Places Consortium have highlighted a significant demand for Changing Places in parks and open spaces. Kent County Council have addressed this need with their recent toilet installation, and we look forward to further enhancing their Changing Places provision with specialist training delivered by our partners at Access For All UK.



Left & Centre: Inside the facility. Right: Loading the pod for delivery from Doncaster.