What are we doing to support Rural Tourism?
Tourism is one of the most important sectors of the rural economy, worth over £29bn a year and accounting for over 12% of rural employment. But it can grow further.
The Government is investing £25m to encourage more people to enjoy England’s countryside and to improve the quality of our rural tourism attractions.

There are 5 elements to the £25m package:

1. **VisitEngland is investing £12m in promoting rural tourism nationally**, with the aim of increasing tourist numbers and overall visitor expenditure.

2. **Defra is establishing a £10m fund from within the RDPE Rural Economy Grant Scheme to support local tourism initiatives**, including projects to develop rural destinations and to strengthen rural tourism businesses.

3. **Defra will work with the 34 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England** to help them develop a new approach to supporting sustainable tourism;

4. **Defra will provide up to £2m to enable local communities to enhance their tourism offer by improving public rights of way**; and

5. **Defra is providing up to £1m for a new sustainable rural tourism initiative in the North East England, based on the Our Land approach being used across protected landscapes in the South East.**

How will this help growth?
This package will to generate at least £110m in new visitor expenditure, and create 3,000 new jobs. It will stimulate the rural tourism market by:

- encouraging more people to visit and explore the attractions of the English countryside;
- providing direct support for rural tourism businesses to help them become more competitive and sustainable;
- maximising the tourism potential of our most beautiful and iconic protected rural landscapes;
- helping communities develop their own tourism economies by improving local rights of way.

Useful Links
- VisitEngland
- National Association for AONBs
- English National Park Authorities Association
- The South East Our Land project