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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Conserving, enhancing and promoting the Stour Valley**

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**Creating a great wildlife hedge using traditional techniques**

The Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership volunteers worked with woodsman Mark Hudson to lay a lovely stretch of hedge on the edge of Givaudan’s Great Stour Meadow. Visible from Willesborough Road the approximately 150 metre hedge, which was planted by Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership in 2003, showcases a traditional technique rarely seen these days that was once more commonly used to create dense livestock-proof barriers.

Whilst most hedges are great for wildlife, this method which sees stems ‘pleached’, snedded and laid over at an angle then pinned with hazel stakes and binders, is especially good for providing a thick and sturdy weave of branches and foliage (and an interesting vocabulary)! The laid hedge creates a secure and more weather resistant nesting site for birds and habitat and corridor for many other small animals, as well as a very attractive landscape feature

Since 2000, the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership has been working with Givaudan UK Limited, creating an area now known as the Great Stour Meadow. Named after the river along its edge, it contains wildflower meadow, different types of native hedges, trees, ponds and many other wildlife habitats. And although the site is private, the company is keen for the meadow to be used for educational purposes, and all of Year 4 at Willesborough Juniors School will shortly be visiting for 2 days of fun activities.

The KSCP are one of nine countryside management partnerships in Kent playing a vital role in the conservation and enhancement of the Kent countryside and coast. [www.kentcountryside.org.uk](http://www.kentcountryside.org.uk/)

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