

Countryside events around the Ashford & Canterbury Downs

Wye Farmers' Market - Wye Green - first and third Sat. of the month
Boughton Aluph Parish Fair - Boughton Lees, next to the A251. Sat. 14th June from 2pm
Bridge Summer Fete - Bridge Primary School on Conyngham Lane. Sat. 14th June starts at 12.00
Charing Church Fete - Clewards Meadow. Sat. 21st June 12.00 onwards
Reptile Valley - King's Wood, main car park. Sun. 22nd June 9am-12. Friends of King's Wood £2 to non members. Further details 07523 203458
Mini-beasts & Butterflies - Charing Alderbed Meadow, car park off Pett Lane. Sat. 5th July 10am-12. Booking essential and further info. 01233 813307



A Friends of King's Wood activity



No Mans Orchard

Visit the Historical Rural Life Collection - King's Wood, main car park. Sun. 6th July 10.30am-12.30. Friends of King's Wood £2 to non members. Booking Essential. Further details 07523 203458
Butterflies & Wildflowers - King's Wood, main car park. Sat. 19th July 11.00-1.00pm. Friends of King's Wood £2 to non members. Further details 01233 813307
Bats & Moths - Charing Alderbed Meadow, car park off Pett Lane. Fri. 25th July 8.30pm till late. Booking essential and further info. 01233 813307
No Mans Orchard, 60 years on - No Man's Orchard, Chartham Hatch. Sat 26th July 10.00-4.00pm. 01233 813307
Six Mile Ramble - King's Wood, main car park. Sun. 10th Aug 10.00-1.00pm. Friends of King's Wood £2 to non members. Further details 07523 203458
Woodland Art & Craft - Charing Alderbed Meadow, car park off Pett Lane. Fri. 17th Aug. 10am-12. Booking essential and further info. 01233 813307
Westwell Village Fete - Recreation Ground - 25th Aug Bank Holiday Monday 2-5pm, Westwell - A traditional village fete with lots of attractions
Small Mammal Trapping - Charing Alderbed Meadow, car park off Pett Lane. Sat. 6th Sept. 10am-12. Booking essential and further info. 01233 813307
Challock Goose Fair - 14th Sept.
Dormouse Survey - King's Wood, main car park. Sat. 20th Sept 9.30-12.30pm. Friends of King's Wood £2 to non members, Booking Essential. Further details 07523 203458

Volunteering

Come along and lend a hand with a variety of enjoyable and worthwhile practical conservation projects throughout the Stour Valley!
 For our detailed programme phone us on 01233 813307 or go to our website and click on 'get involved'.

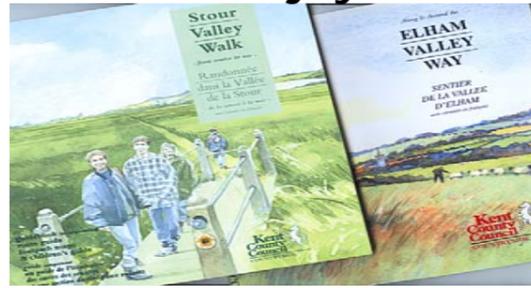
Volunteer days

Wednesdays (Ashford area): Meet 9.15 at the KSCP Offices.
Thursdays (Canterbury & Wantsum): Meet 9.15 at KSCP offices or 9.45 at North Lane Car Park, Canterbury.

KSCP publications, for those who enjoy the countryside



Train Rides to Ramble (£3.99) & Bike Trails by Train (£2.50) Circular walks and cycle rides from railway stations in the Stour Valley. Full colour, clear maps and directions, packed with information and illustrations.



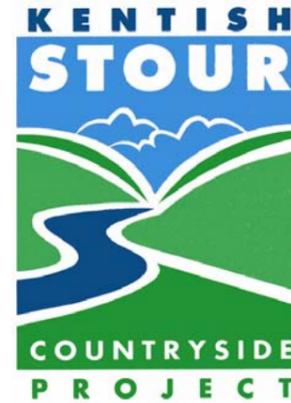
Stour Valley Walk & Elham Valley Way (£5.00) Recreational walks produced by Kent County Council with help from KSCP.



Wildsites (£1.00) A guide to 31 wildlife sites in the Stour Valley.

All available from local Tourist Information Centres, quality bookshops, KSCP, and Kent County Council (08458 247600 or env.publications@kent.gov.uk)

Stour View for Ashford & The Low Weald, Downs, Canterbury & Wantsum is produced in January, May and September. Stour View is printed on Elemental Chlorine Free paper from wood pulp from sustainable forests and includes recycled fibre.



The countryside newsletter for people living in & around the Kent Downs AONB close to Ashford & Canterbury

Stour View

Kent Downs AONB

Issue 40
Summer 2008

CONSERVING, ENHANCING AND PROMOTING THE COUNTRYSIDE AND URBAN GREEN SPACE OF THE STOUR VALLEY

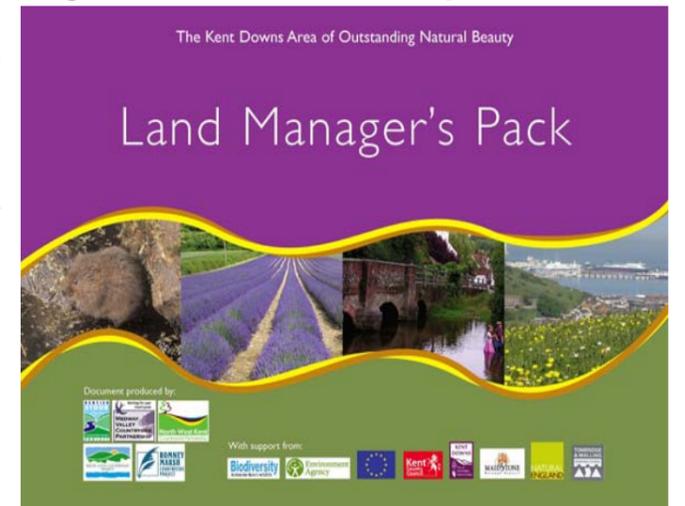
The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a nationally protected landscape. It is special for its dramatic chalk escarpments like the Devil's Kneading Trough at Wye, secluded dry valleys, networks of tiny lanes and sunken byways, historic hedgerows, ancient woodlands, oast houses, unique and precious wildlife and sites of historic and cultural interest.

If you would prefer Stour View to be emailed please provide your email address

AONB Land Manager's Pack – Looking After our Landscape

Whether it is looking after your garden, field or farm, it is never as easy as it sounds. The web based Kent Downs AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Land Manager's Pack takes you carefully through the best ways to manage many different landscape features for people and wildlife. The pack covers the following topics for all 13 landscape character areas found in the Kent Downs: chalk grassland, hedgerows, orchards, ponds & wetlands, woodlands, meadow grassland, rivers and riverside lands, heathland, and marshes.

The pack has been put together by the 6 Countryside Management Projects that cover the Kent Downs including the KSCP. It is a web based tool that is easy to use and can be downloaded in bite sized chunks. The Kent Downs Land Managers Pack is now live on www.kentdowns.org.uk



Cherry Downs – A view for everybody

KSCP conservation volunteers faced a challenge when building a new flight of steps on the Downs above Lenham. Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership, Lenham Parish Council and the Rail Link Countryside Initiative have been working together to open up access across the Downs. The new site, Cherry Downs, will link the North Downs Way and the Pilgrims Way to a number of adjacent footpaths eliminating the need to walk along the busy country lane. Views from the new site are stunning with an abundance of wildflowers in the meadow to admire as you walk through.



KSCP volunteers at work

Project Sponsors



Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate. The publishers can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions. The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Kentish Stour Countryside Project.

Grant helps improve woodland for butterflies

Work has been completed at Eggringe Wood, between Crundale and Petham, by the Forestry Commission and the KSCP, aimed at improving woodland rides for butterflies and wildflowers. The work was supported by a £14,853 grant from Viridor Credits who operate the Landfill Credits scheme from Shelford Landfill Site near Broadoak, Canterbury.

The ride widening work should allow a lot more light into the wood, which will encourage woodland flowers and warm areas, this will benefit butterflies and other invertebrates. With more open paths through the wood and opened up views it will also be a more attractive place for people to visit. 5.25 km of ride (3.3 miles) frontage has been widened or 4 hectares (10 acres). Plants such as wood anemone, primrose, bluebell and heather should disperse along the ride edges.

The work is part of a larger landscape scale project covering the Denge Wood Complex of 800 hectares (2000 acres). In time, more rides will be opened up and areas of conifer and sweet chestnut will be removed in favour of native trees and wildflowers.



Ride widening at Eggringe



Wood anemone



Seals from the Sandwich River Bus

Messing about in boats

The River Great Stour is a wonderful place to visit at all times of the year. If you're stuck for something to do this summer, why not think about seeing the Stour from a different angle. Trips along the river give you a unique experience in seeing the river at a slower pace and a chance to appreciate all the plants and wildlife that live along it. There are a number of river trips available, from historic boat trips with Canterbury River Tours (enquiries@canterburyrivertours.co.uk). Punting trips from Canterbury River Navigation (01585 318301) through the centre of Canterbury. Wildlife watching trips, including the chance to see seals in the estuary, from the Sandwich River Bus (www.sandwichriverbus.co.uk).

The Humble Bumble

They're cute and furry, defy gravity (everyone, except the bumblebee itself, knows that a bumblebee can't fly) and are possibly the most important pollinators in the countryside.



Buff-tailed bumblebee

There are about 22 different species of bumblebee found in the UK and although they do sting they will only use this as an ultimate last defence, knowing they will die soon after. A single queen starts each bumblebee nest afresh in the spring. She will have hibernated for the cold winter months in an underground hole.

Britain's native bumblebees are under serious threat. The key reason for this mass decline (over 60% in some species) is the loss of wildflower-rich hay meadows that have been ploughed up and sown with rye grass grown for silage.

Gardening for bumblebees requires providing a constant source of nectar-rich plants throughout spring, summer and autumn. Many modern hybrids flowers are sterile and lack vital pollen and nectar. The following are especially good: bluebells, bugle, rosemary, dead-nettle, geraniums, foxglove, honeysuckle and monkshood. It's also easy to provide nest sites, simply leave a few 'untidy' patches around the garden or keep areas of permanently tall grass around the bottom of a hedge. This will encourage small mammals to nest, and once abandoned, the old nest will make an ideal starter home for a bumblebee. For the more ambitious, take a tennis ball-size lump of moss or other similar dry natural material and put it at the end of a hole poked in a bank; in an up-turned flower pot with a hole in the bottom or under a piece of roofing felt in tall grass. For free bumblebee ID chart, visit the Natural History Museum's website <http://www.nhm.ac.uk> and click on research and curation.

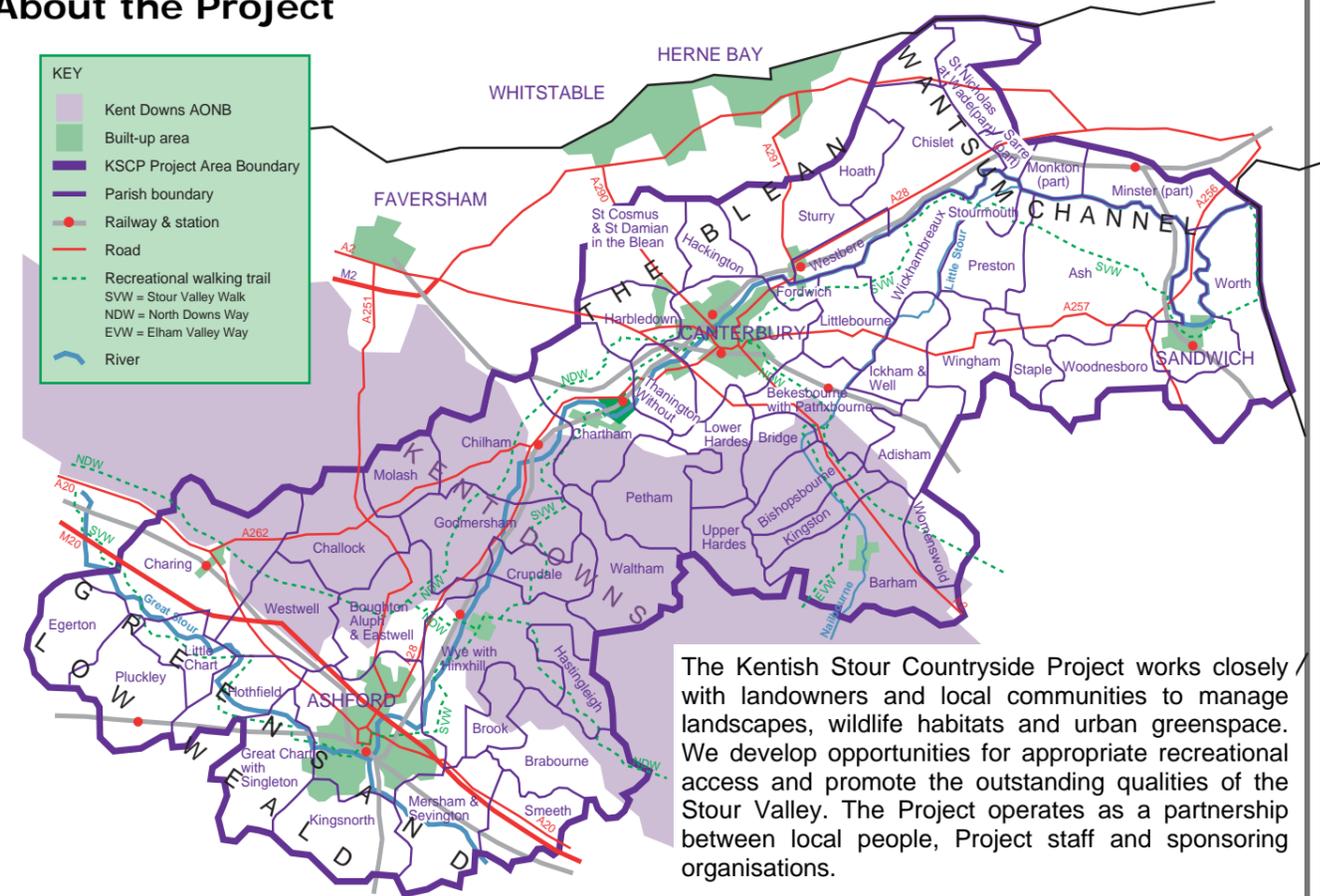
Introducing the Kent Cheese Company

Penstock Farm, nestling at the foot of the Downs in Brabourne, grazes over 80 ha (200 acres) of downland with their herd of British Friesians. The environmentally sensitive farming methods applied through Countryside Stewardship and Entry Level Stewardship, have enabled farmer and producer George Jessel to recently create a range of irresistible cheeses. Brabourne Brie, Chaucers Choice, and Kentish Crown are available from a host of local farm shops including Perry Court, Taywell, Evegate, MacKnades and Lower Hardes. George prizes his cheeses on their distinct characters and flavours. Supporting local produce will keep rural economies alive and celebrate local customs and landscapes. More information on the Kent Cheese Company is available at www.kentcheese.co.uk.

George Jessel (courtesy of www.leejorobinson.com)



About the Project



The Kentish Stour Countryside Project works closely with landowners and local communities to manage landscapes, wildlife habitats and urban greenspace. We develop opportunities for appropriate recreational access and promote the outstanding qualities of the Stour Valley. The Project operates as a partnership between local people, Project staff and sponsoring organisations.

Kentish Stour Countryside Project

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Ashford Countryside Officer: Debbie Adams
Canterbury & Wantsum Countryside Officer: Matt Hayes
Assistant Project Officer (P/T): Diane Comley

Staff changes at KSCP - bye for now to Craig and welcome Diane Comley

Craig Edwards, long time volunteer and recent member of staff, completed his short-term contract with KSCP In April and ventured north to the Farne Islands for a 3 month stint with the National Trust. He's currently trying to avoid being harmed whilst monitoring the tern population! Diane Comley joined us in April for a 6 month part-time contract working principally on projects in Ashford and the Blean. Diane recently graduated from Hadlow College and teaches photography as her other job.



Craig Edwards



Diane Comley

The North Downs Way 1978 - 2008

The popular **North Downs Way National Trail** is celebrating its 30th birthday this year. One of 15 National Trails in England and Wales, the 153 mile route has given walkers, cyclists and horse riders from around the world plenty to enjoy over the last three decades.



Celebration events are planned including a special birthday party on **September 13th** at Withersdane Hall near Wye complete with a Guinness Book of Records world record attempt and a series of guided walks. Find out more about the North Downs Way and the birthday celebrations by visiting www.nationaltrail.co.uk/northdowns Tel 01622 221525.



The North Downs Way