

Grants for Conservation Work

The KSCP has promoted their Grants Scheme since 1999 and in doing so has helped with the creation of ponds, wildflower meadows and hedges throughout the Canterbury and Wantsum area. Grants are usually less than £1,500 and cover on average 50% of costs. The scheme is not intended for gardens or works required by planning consents. The KSCP can also provide advice on management and other sources of funding. Also see the Countryside Management Projects' Land Managers Pack hosted on www.kentdowns.org.uk/land_managers_pack.htm

Wildflower meadow at Chartham, hedges in Adisham, and a pond at Petham



Update on the Canterbury-Chartham shared use path

Canterbury City Council requested more detailed information before making a decision on the proposed shared use riverside path between Canterbury and Chartham. A planning application should be made in the autumn by Kent Highway Services.

Ash Walks

Ash Walks is a pack of 5 circular walk cards around the Parish of Ash (near Canterbury). Featuring local information, maps and drawings, they are available for £2 including postage from the Clerk, Ash Parish Council, 5 Fairview Road, Elvington, CT15 4EP or e-mail clerk@ashparishcouncil.net.

Farmers' Markets in the Stour Valley

Chartham Farmers' Market - Chartham Village Hall, every Thurs. 2.30-6pm, inc. a special celebration of British Food 2nd October & Xmas Market Sat. 6th December 10 -12.30 also in the hall

Egerton Farmers' Market - Egerton Millennium Hall, access via Rockhill Road or Elm Close - every Fri. 2-4.30pm

Sandwich Farmers' Market - Guildhall Forecourt - the last Sat. of each month 9-1pm

Whitstable Farmers' Market - St Mary's Hall, Oxford St, 2nd & 4th Sat. of the month 9.30-2 pm

Wye Farmers' Market - Wye Green - first and third Sat. of the month

BTCV Tree Warden Scheme

Are you interested in trees and do you want to volunteer to help protect trees in your patch? If so, find out all about becoming a Tree Warden for your local area by attending a free introduction day. The day is led by inspirational speaker, Jon Stokes, who is director of The Tree Council and who also appears on the TV programme, "The Trees That Made Britain". You will also get the opportunity to visit some amazing hornbeam pollards. Smeeth County Junior School on Saturday 11th October 10am-3pm, to book a place 01233 666519 or M.Phillips@btcv.org.uk



Volunteering

Come along and lend a hand with a variety of enjoyable and worthwhile practical conservation projects throughout the Stour Valley!

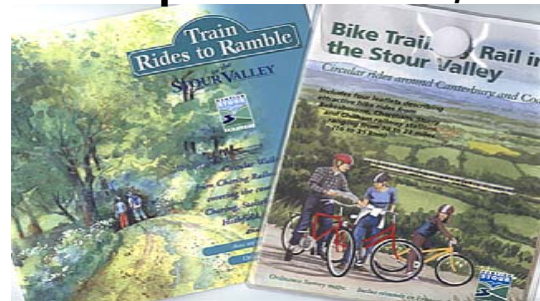
For our detailed programme phone us on 01233 813307 or go to our website and click on 'get involved'.

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 - 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.



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

The countryside & urban green space newsletter for people living in & around Canterbury & the Wantsum area

Stour View

Canterbury & Wantsum

Issue 41
Autumn/Winter

Canterbury is surrounded by special ancient woodland and protected landscapes and has the only major river in East Kent flowing through the city. The River Great Stour is a beautiful asset for the area and is designated as a Local Wildlife Site. The most important wildlife site along the river is Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve, being a premier reedbed habitat. Between Canterbury, Reculver and Sandwich is the old Wantsum Channel, reclaimed from the sea, with pretty villages lining what used to be the old shoreline.

Free Trees for the Canterbury & Thanet Districts



A magnificent old beech pollard near Waltham

Kent County Council and the KSCP are offering free trees in the Canterbury and Thanet Districts. Individuals and/or organisations can apply for up to 25 native trees. Jon Shelton from the KSCP says "The root of the problem is that trees have disappeared in recent years from both the countryside and our towns. This has been due to problems such as disease but also modern methods of farming. In towns we have seen the loss of many trees because of development, the loss of gardens to driveways, and the removal of trees to maintain views, particularly in coastal towns. Trees are important for a number of reasons including wildlife, landscape quality, and air quality as they absorb pollutants. So the Canterbury and Thanet areas really do need more trees."

There are 20 native trees and shrubs to choose from and guidance on the best trees for your locality. For an application telephone 08458 247 600. Closing date is 31 October 2008. Visit <http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment/our-environment/natural-environment/kent-free-trees-scheme.htm> for further details. All you then have to do is to collect small saplings, plant them and care for them as they grow. The Free Tree Scheme is sponsored by National Rail, Kent County Council, Tilhill, National Grid, Canterbury City Council and Thanet District Council.

Hundreds attend 60th Birthday Party

No Man's Orchard was host to a day of celebrations this summer. The orchard celebrated its 60th year in style. With a variety of stalls and activities the orchard was packed with people. Entertainment was provided by the Oyster Morris, Canterbury Brass Band, and the 'Wandering Minstrel', whilst food and refreshments included a hog roast, juices, ciders, and local ales. The day included the unveiling of a new sculpture, carved by Kent based artist Steve Portchmouth. No Man's Orchard is a local nature reserve and community orchard, and can be reached by following the North Downs way from Chartham Hatch.



Above: rides on the new serpent.

Left: Juicing it up in the orchard

Stodmarsh Extravaganza

On Saturday 11th October Natural England will be holding a day full of activities at the Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve Festival. Access will be from the Grove Ferry Picnic Site end of the Reserve 11-4pm. For further info. Contact Emma Griffiths on 01233 811205

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.

That old Chestnut

Kent is lucky to be one of the country's most wooded counties. Much of this woodland consists of traditional coppice. Coppicing involves cutting trees down close to the ground, leaving the stumps. The tree then re-grows from the stump. This is done in rotation allowing the trees in one area to regrow whilst others are cut. This technique provides a long-term sustainable supply of wood, and in allowing more light to the ground it encourages more woodland plants to flourish.

Coppicing used to provide many products, from hurdles to hop poles. This has declined in recent years, however, there are a few people making use of the coppice and continuing the traditional management. The KSCP try to use local materials and suppliers wherever possible, one such material we use is sweet chestnut fencing stakes for stock fencing. By using these materials we don't have to use heavily treated tanalised or pressure treated softwood posts, and the materials have not travelled miles to get to us. If you would like to know of a supplier of chestnut stakes near you please contact KSCP.



Fencing with chestnut



Recent coppicing

Oh deer, deer, deer



Fallow deer at Hatch Park, near Ashford

When deer are mentioned, many people will think of classic haunts such as Scotland or Exmoor. However, you can see some of Britain's biggest wild mammals on your doorstep throughout the Stour Valley and East Kent.

Of all the deer that can be found in Britain only the Red and Roe species are indigenous. It is thought Fallow deer were introduced after the Norman Conquest in 1066. They have been joined in the last 100 years by the Muntjac, Sika and Chinese Water deer following escapes and deliberate release from deer parks and private collections. In fact, in most of the country today, deer are rapidly expanding in numbers and territory, causing problems for farmers, drivers, foresters and even wildlife habitats. East Kent has yet to suffer the sort of problems being faced in other parts of the country but the problems are likely to arrive, with the deer.

Autumn is the ideal time to look for deer as it's rutting season and the old hunting forest of King's Wood is one of the best places to see wild deer in the area, but it's always worth keeping your eyes peeled when taking a walk through the countryside as you never know what you might find just around the corner! For more information on deer, visit the British Deer Society website: bds.org.uk

Autumn Activity Watch

Many people may think of the autumn as nature shutting down for the winter. Look closely and you will find a lot going on in the countryside. Perhaps the most spectacular places to visit in the autumn are the wetland reserves such as Pegwell Bay, Stodmarsh, Dungeness, Oare and Elmley. These offer fantastic views of wildfowl and wading birds arriving to spend the winter. However, even arable fields can play host to thousands of Lapwing and Golden Plover, and estuaries and coastal fields can see a thousand Brent geese and other wildfowl. Even close to towns one can see many thousands of starlings doing aerial displays. So when you're out and about this autumn keep a look out for all this activity.



Greylag geese at Stodmarsh

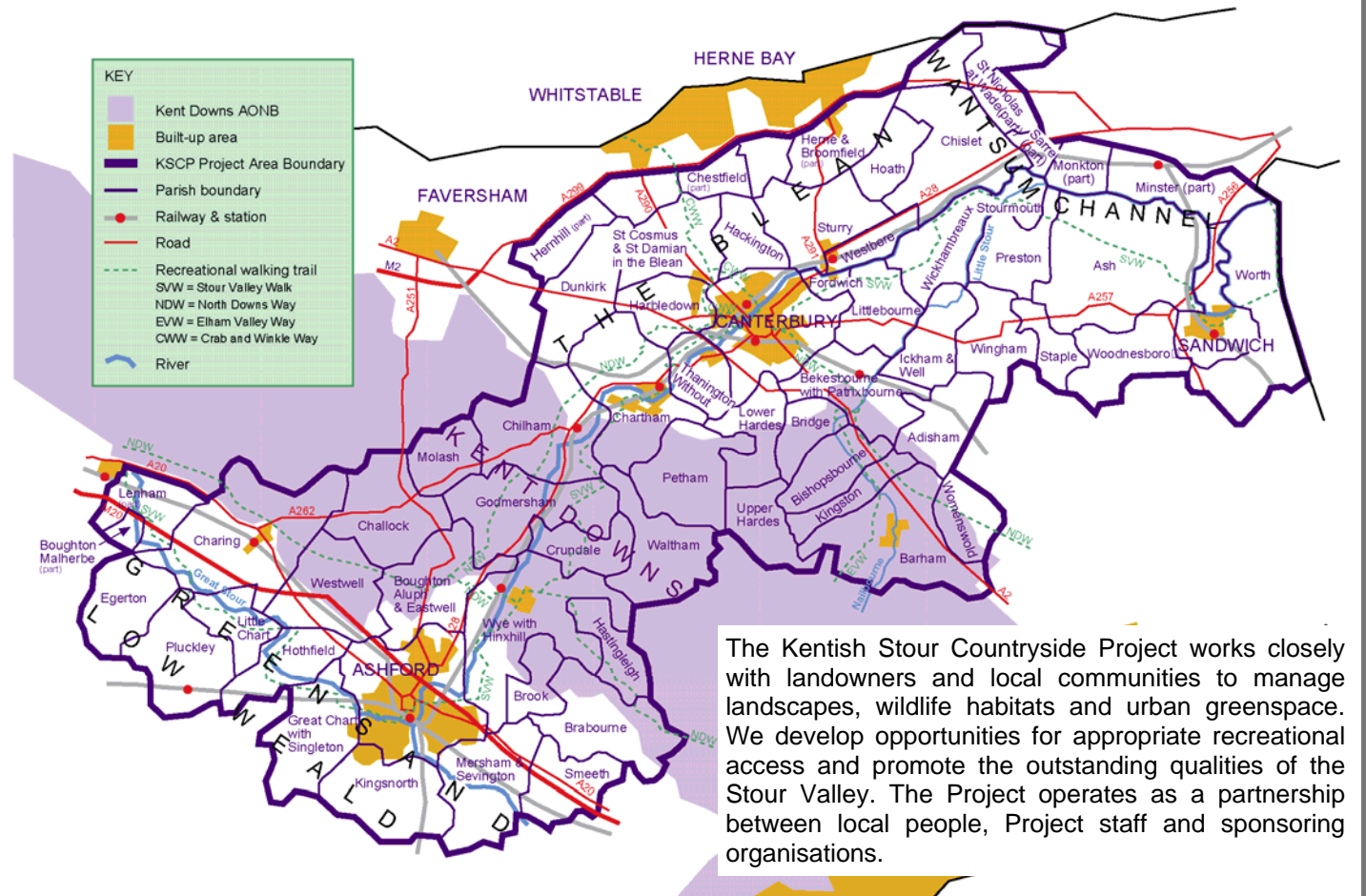
Are You Cross Compliant?



Fieldfare enjoying winter hawthorn berries

In England, farmers claiming the Single Payment and other direct payments are responsible for understanding and meeting cross compliance (CC) requirements. These requirements are met by securing Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions across the farm. Of particular note at this time of year is hedge cutting. Hedges provide essential nesting, roosting, sheltering and feeding sites for many birds. A requirement of CC is to leave hedgerows uncut through the bird nesting season 1st March – 31st July. Many farmers leave hedge cutting until deep into the winter months, ensuring wildlife is able to feed on the fruits, nuts and berries produced by the plants. In a domestic context, can we be seen to be managing our environment for wildlife? Domestic gardens are full of opportunities to support wildlife through selective pruning, mowing and provision of water. If you would like any help or advice on how to make your garden more environmentally friendly please contact us at the KSCP.

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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Grassland restoration at Wraik Hill

Over the past year, the KSCP has been helping to manage Wraik Hill and Foxes Cross Local Nature Reserve near Whitstable, with the help of a grant from Viridor credits. For many years scrub has been encroaching on the rare neutral grassland, so during September contractors cleared large amounts of this scrub, which will open up areas for wildflowers such as Pepper saxifrage and Spiny restharrow. The site will then be grazed by Kent Wildlife Trust goats, over the past year KSCP volunteers have been working hard to fence the area, so the goats can do their thing. A pond was created in August and this will benefit a wide variety of freshwater invertebrates, as well as other species, such as dragonflies.



Top: the flower-rich grassland at Wraik Hill.
Bottom: the new pond

Blean is a Breathing Place!

With help from KSCP, Blean Parish Council has gained a grant through the BBC Breathing Places scheme. Plans have been drawn up and work has begun to help create a nature area on what was arable land. A pond has been dug and the area is to be seeded with a wildflower seed mix, and hedge and tree planting will take place over the winter. There will also be a path and benches. Once completed the reserve will be a haven for wildlife, and a great place for people to visit. The KSCP volunteers will be working on the site on the 13th November. Following on from that, there will be a 'Do One Thing' event on the morning of November 15th. Please come along to see what's going on and help plant some of the hedge.