

# Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership

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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Hurdles and hedge at St. Alphege Churchyard, Seasalter**

St Alphege (old) Church has a newly planted hedge and willow hurdle fence thanks to the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (KSCP) volunteers and city council funding.

The hedge borders Mariners View Open Space, which is managed by the city council and Mariners View Residents Association. Mariners View was originally farmland overlooking Seasalter Levels and the Swale Estuary. Now it is one of Whitstable’s newest public open spaces.

Partnership Manager at the KSCP, Jon Shelton, said “Last week KSCP volunteers coppiced the existing ‘gappy’ hedgerow and in the process litter picked and cleared barbed wire. Willow hurdles were then erected and a mixed native hedge planted. Coppicing will allow light to the 60m of new native hedge plants including hawthorn, spindle, holly and hazel. Passers-by seemed really appreciative of the hard work of the volunteers.”

Annie Thurgarland, one of the 14 volunteers, said “it was a very rewarding and energetic two days. The 60m willow hurdle fence will provide an elegant rural border feature until both the coppiced older trees and new plants become an established hedge. Willow hurdles are not only very attractive but they are also made from a sustainable wood source in a very traditional manner, the first hurdles being made thousands of years ago. This new hedge will provide refuge and food for numerous insects, small mammals and birds.”

Heather Boorman, a member of the Old Church Development Group, said "We are absolutely delighted with the work that has been done and are very grateful to everyone involved.”

Continued

Alongside the volunteers’ work, the city council has created a new drainage ditch and cleared existing ditches. This has been successful in preventing water flowing to the churchyard. Alongside the hedge the footpath is currently being upgraded to provide a better surface for pushchairs and pedestrians.

If you are interested in volunteering contact KSCP on 03000 410900 or [kentishstour@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentishstour@kent.gov.uk)

Images attached to Press release

Img 0005 Annie Thurgarland and Carol Donaldson planting the hedge

Img 0009 Brian Sandell from Whitstable

Img 0014 Simon Houstoun and Chris Bailes putting in the stakes.