

# A year in view 2012 -2013 and a celebration of 20 years



The KSCP is the principal organisation conserving, enhancing and promoting the countryside and urban green space of the Stour Valley. It is one of nine countryside/coastal partnerships in Kent and covers the largest area. In 2012/13 the Partnership carried out hundreds of projects from Lenham in the west, to Sandwich in the east, to Whitstable in the north, and Aldington to the south. The Partnership aligns its objectives with those of its key partners - Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, the Environment Agency and Kent County Council, without whose support it could not operate. The KSCP would like to **thank** all those involved with the Partnership, and especially the volunteers, for making a real difference to the landscape, wildlife and communities of this part of Kent.

## Work with local communities

Supported **27 site based community groups** with practical help managing their land. Worked with Hang Ten Youth Group and Oak Tree Primary School in Ashford to plant a new community orchard in Watercress Fields. Assisted the Heaths Countryside Corridor (HCC) at their sites in Lenham and Charing carrying out fencing, clearing invasive ragwort and planting new parkland trees. Provided advice and support to the Friends of Westgate Parks.



Oak Tree Primary School from Ashford on a visit to No Man's Orchard, near Chartham Hatch, to learn about the importance of old orchards.



Tree guards constructed at Chilston for HCC.

## Advising on land management

Carried out **15 advisory visits to new sites** in addition to advice and support on existing sites. Produced four River Restoration reports for the Environment Agency that helped to deliver river restoration work. Assisted Canterbury City Council in the preparation of three reports for the Heritage Lottery application for Westgate Parks. Provided Ashford Borough Council with ideas and advice on a potential Country Park at Conningbrook. Worked with approximately 50 farmers/landowners giving advice, writing recommendations, carrying out surveys and management.



In river work around Bingley Island following production of a River Restoration Report.



Conningbrook wildlife lake



## River work

Carried out in river habitat enhancements in Canterbury at Westgate Gardens, around Bingley Island, Toddlers Cove, and Hambrook Marshes. In Ashford work included pollarding at Buxford Meadow.



Work at Westgate Gardens.



Birch removal at Hothfield Heathlands.

Pollards at Buxford Meadow.

## Supporting volunteers of all ages

**984 work days!**

We ran 100 volunteer mid week tasks. Volunteers mowed meadows, cleared scrub, weeded hedges and cleared invasive plants from wildlife sites.



Weeding a recently planted hedge at Givaudan, Ashford.



## Healthier lifestyles & access

The Great Stour Way continued to be very well used and Canterbury City Council created an improved link to Whitehall Road along the riverside. Leaflet dispensers were provided to Parish Councils in the Blean to distribute the Big Blean Walk leaflet. Sculptured seats were installed in Ashford Civic Centre North Park with funding from Ashford Borough Council. Volunteers cleared some of our promoted routes and built steps at the winding pond in Clowes Wood.

## Surveys, monitoring and plans

Working for the River Stour Internal Drainage Board (IDB) 25 kms of drainage channel were surveyed with the aim of improving them for biodiversity as part of the IDB Biodiversity Action Plan. We produced four reports for the Environment Agency and ecological reports for Ashford Borough Council and Canterbury City Council. We surveyed sites for water vole and dormice and 46 barn owl boxes were monitored.

Surveying IDB drainage channels.



One of five sculptured seats commissioned at North Park, Ashford.



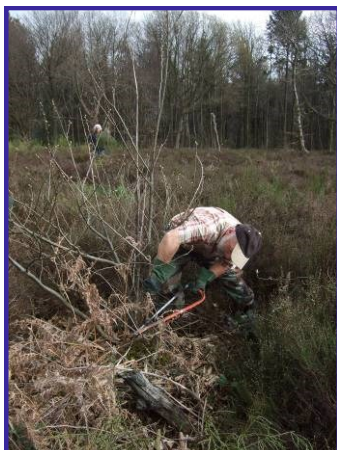
Clowes Wood Winding Pond steps being built.





## Prioritising 'designated' sites

Worked on nine **sites in the Kent Downs AONB**, helping the Jumping Downs Trust at Barham with fencing and scrub control, weeding planted hedgerows at Soakham Downs and maintaining heath areas at Covert Wood.



Maintaining the heath at Covert Wood by cutting birch.

Worked on **18 Local Wildlife Sites** and **four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**, including the writing of text for an interpretive panel at Long Rock, Whitstable, for Canterbury City Council, promoting the need to look after its wildlife.



Worked on **seven Local Nature Reserves** including Whitehall Meadows near Canterbury, where two scrapes (shallow areas of water, good for wading birds) were created close to the river.



Whitehall Meadows.

## Interpretation, events and guided walks

We ran events for a wide range of groups that directly involved **626** adults and young people including a programme of events for Westgate Parks. Five interpretive panels were produced for the Great Stour Way and five for the Givaudan Wildlife Trail. We were successful with an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for our Wild Sites on Your Doorstep Project which will get underway in April 2013.



One of the Great Stour Way Panels.



Small mammal trapping at Westgate Parks.



Photography will be a feature of Wild Sites.

## Work with local companies

We continued our good working relationship with **Brett** and we produced five interpretive panels and ran community events for **Givaudan. Southern Water** provided the funding for the panel at Long Rock, Whitstable. We worked with **Chartham Paper Mill** to produce one of the panels for the Great Stour Way.



Beavers at Givaudan.

## Raising our profile

The Partnership continued to maintain a high profile locally with our quarterly newsletter, various press items, our web sites, and attendance at events. We organised the opening of the Big Blean Walk, which featured in local papers.

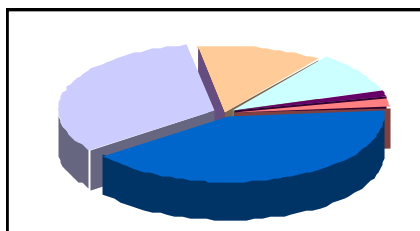
The opening of the Big Blean Walk.



## Partnership finances 1/4/12 to 31/3/13

### Income

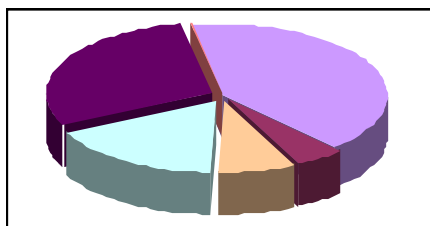
Kent County Council (inc. in kind)	34,774
Environment Agency	27,200
Canterbury City Council	4,000
Ashford Borough Council	5,689
Other income	87,730
Roll over from previous year	109,642
<b>Total</b>	<b>269,035</b>



The KSCP is **highly cost effective** multiplying the contribution from Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council and the Environment Agency many times over.

### Expenditure

Running costs	110,206
KCC costs	20,000
Interreg costs	13,210
Project costs	46,212
Project cost roll forward	78,416
Replacement/contingency fund	991
<b>Total</b>	<b>269,035</b>



## The year ahead - ten key activities for KSCP

### River Restoration

Working with the Environment Agency and other partners, and using the Water Framework Directive to provide priorities, deliver habitat improvements to the River Stour.

### Blean Access and Interpretative Plan

Update the Blean Access and Interpretation Plan. Produce a new Crab and Winkle Way leaflet.

### Conningbrook

Assist Ashford Borough Council with the development of Conningbrook as a key public open space for the town.

### Ashford Green Corridor

Launch the community orchard project in Watercress Field; carry out project proposals for Boys Hall; produce a new Ashford Green Corridor leaflet.

### Wildsites

Following a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund launch the 'Wild Sites on Your Doorstep' project in May.

### River Stour Internal Drainage Board (IDB) Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

Complete the fourth year of surveys of drainage channels with biodiversity recommendations for improvements.

### Cycling/shared use paths projects

Look to replace the bridge at Tonford to make it suitable for disabled people to join the Great Stour Way. Continue to work on cycle routes in the Blean and help with extending the Great Stour Way to Ashford.

### Westgate Parks

Employ a new officer, if Canterbury City Council's Heritage Lottery application for Westgate Parks is successful, to deliver community engagement projects, interpretation and biodiversity management in partnership with local bodies.

### Good Woods

Provide advice to Woodland owners through the Good Woods B&Q sponsored initiative in partnership with the AONB unit, Lantern and Sylva.

### Chairman of Steering Group

Stuart Gibbons

### Staff

Jon Shelton - Partnership Manager

Debbie Adams - Countryside Officer, Ashford (PT)

Diane Comley - Ashford Officer (PT)

Carol Donaldson - Countryside Officer, Canterbury and Wantsum

Thomas Newton - CO Ashford (covering maternity leave) (PT)



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