

A year in view

2013 -2014



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 2013/14 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 **26 site based community groups** with practical help managing their land. Worked with a new group in Canterbury, the Friends of Canterbury Riverside and other resident groups with an interest in the river to develop projects. Supported the Friends of Westgate Parks at numerous meetings and established a new Saturday morning volunteer group for the Parks. Helped the Heath Countryside Corridor (HCC) Group west of Ashford.



Residents from around Loudon Wood, Ashford come together to carry out conservation work.



Work on landscaping around the Ice House at Chilston, Lenham for the HCC group.



We advised on dormouse mitigation resulting in the planting of 3800 trees by volunteers for the Park Farm to Ashford cycleway.

Advising on land and water management

Carried out **15 advisory visits to new sites** in addition to advice and support on existing sites. We became the advisory body in our area for the B&Q sponsored south-east focussed **Good Woods Project** co-ordinated by Sylva and the Kent Downs AONB, carrying out nine advisory visits with reports. Produced three river restoration reports for the Environment Agency and two reports for smaller drainage channels for KCC. We successfully bid for funds to research flood areas, run training courses for land managers related to flooding and carry out work to prevent flooding. Worked with approximately 50 farmers/landowners giving advice, writing recommendations, carrying out surveys and management.

Buxford Meadow where a report was done on improving fish passage by creating a new channel avoiding structures in the river.



River work

Carried out river habitat enhancements at Godinton and on drainage channels in Smeeth, South Poulders near Sandwich, Whitehall Meadows (Canterbury) and Loudon Wood (Ashford).



Work at South Poulders, Sandwich.



Tree planting alongside the river at Godinton.

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 surveyed sites for water vole and dormice and 46 barn owl boxes were monitored.

Surveying IDB drainage channels.



Cyclists on the Crab and Winkle Way, a shared use path that KSCP lead the development of in the late 1990s.

Supporting volunteers of all ages

1008 work days!

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



Healthier lifestyles & access

We removed eight cattle grids from the Great Stour Way, gates which were not now needed and one motor cycle inhibitor which made passage for certain bikes difficult. We installed gates and carried out other access work for the Heath Countryside Corridors and Loudon Wood residents. Our volunteering programme helped people keep fit as did the shared use paths we have helped to create.



Prioritising 'designated' sites

Worked on nine **sites in the Kent Downs AONB**, planting a hedge at Charing Alderbed Meadow, cutting scrub at Jumping Downs, Barham, and coppicing a hedge for a landowner at Anvil Green, Crundale. Our Wildsites Project (see below) visited sites in the AONB.



A Wildsites photography project.

Worked on **16 Local Wildlife Sites** including four site reports through the Good Woods Project. Worked on **six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**, including glade work at Charing Beech Hangers, and produced text for a new interpretive panel at Long Rock, Whitstable, aimed at protecting water voles on the SSSI.



Worked on **ten Local Nature Reserves** including Bus Company Island in Canterbury where pond work was carried out, the newly designated Ashford Community Woodland where meadows were mown and litter was picked at Reculver Country Park LNR.



Interpretation, events and guided walks

With our help Canterbury City Council were successful with an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a £770,000 grant for a five year project in Westgate Parks improving infrastructure, planting and community engagement. Through KSCP a Westgate Park Community Development Officer started in November and has amongst other things established an events programme for 2014/15. Our Wildsites on Your Doorstep Project has involved over 400 people on 20 sites across the Stour Valley. Working with the Crab and Winkle Line Trust we produced 50,000 copies of the fifth Crab and Winkle Way leaflet.



A painting workshop, part of Wildsites events.



A picture taken at Hambrook Marshes by Alan Britton, part of Wildsites.



Westgate Gardens, part of Westgate Parks.

Work with local companies



Givaudan held a 50th year celebratory event at which KSCP attended.

We continued our good working relationship with **Brett** and we ran community events for **Givaudan**. We took on the Chair of the East Kent Catchment Improvement Partnership with representation of all **three water companies** in the area. We continued to work with **Viridor Credits** promoting their scheme locally.

Raising our profile

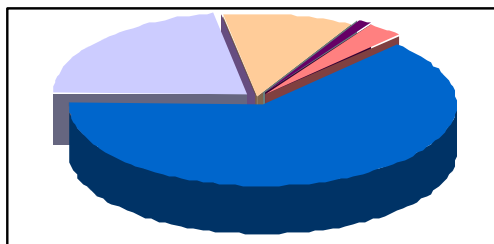
The Partnership continued to maintain a high profile locally with our quarterly newsletter, various press items, our web sites, and attendance at events. We organised the opening of the Watercress Community Orchard in Ashford (below).



Partnership finances 1/4/13 to 31/3/14

Income

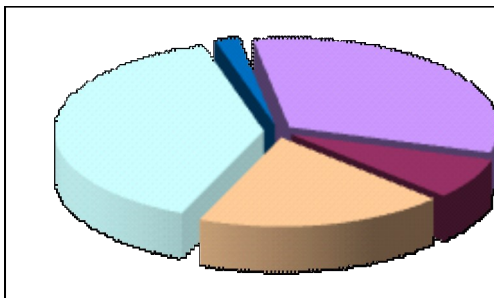
Kent County Council (inc. in kind)	31,500
Environment Agency	0
Canterbury City Council (for sites)	4,000
Ashford Borough Council (for sites)	10,000
Other income	211,812
Roll over from previous year	73,229
Total	330,541



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	108,687
KCC costs	20,000
Project costs	64,862
Project cost roll forward	130,707
Replacement/contingency fund	6,284
Total	330,541



The year ahead - ten key activities for KSCP

River Restoration

Working with the Environment Agency, the East Kent Catchment Improvement Partnership and other partners deliver habitat improvements to the River Stour.

Work with Community Groups

Continue the excellent community group work in Ashford and develop projects from the Friends of Canterbury Riverside and Riverside Strategy meetings. Work with community groups to update the Blean Access and Interpretation Plan.

Hambrook Marshes, Canterbury

Continue to manage the area by working with the new trust to benefit people and wildlife.

Ashford Green Corridor

Help Ashford Borough Council with updating the Ashford Green Corridor Action Plan; carry out projects in the Green Corridor; and produce a new Green Corridor leaflet.

Wildsites

Complete the successful 'WildSites on Your Doorstep' project by running more events, updating the website, and producing a booklet about sites to explore in the Stour Valley.

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

Complete the fifth 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

Run an events programme, a programme for volunteering and programmes for schools and community groups. Work with the Friends of Westgate Parks and the City Council to deliver a superb Park for Canterbury and a gateway to the Stour Valley.

Sturry Community Park

Set up a new post with funding recovered from criminals through KCC Trading Standards for community based activities in this Park. Work closely with Sturry Community Park Trust and the Local Authorities.

Flood prevention on behalf of KCC and other partners

Identify work to prevent flooding in east Kent focussed on small watercourses.

Chairman of Steering Group

George Jessel from October 2013

Stuart Gibbons to October 2013

Staff

Jon Shelton – Partnership Manager

Debbie Adams - Countryside Officer, Ashford (PT)

Diane Comley - Ashford Officer (PT)

Carol Donaldson - Countryside Officer, Canterbury and Wantsum

Anna Williams - Westgate Parks Development Officer

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