

# A year in view

## 2014 -2015



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 2014/15 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 **21 site based community groups** with practical help managing their land. Formed a working relationship with Love Hambrook Marshes Trust advising and carrying out management work. Provided a member of staff for Sturry Road Community Park Trust. Helped establish the Friends of Canterbury Riverside Group and obtained funding for their action plan. Helped to set up a new group to manage Bybrook Nature Reserve, Ashford. Attended numerous evening meetings supporting and guiding local groups such as the Friends of Westgate Parks. In Westgate Parks, Nick Hayes, Assistant Head teacher at Simon Langton Girls said: *"The girls thoroughly enjoyed working in the garden and were thrilled to see the project taking shape"*



Simon Langton Girls School establishing the Physic Garden in Westgate Parks.



Work on Dexter Road pond, organised with the Kennington Community Forum, Ashford.



The Great Stour at Deans Mill, Canterbury, included in a habitat restoration report.

### Advising on land and water management

Carried out **5 advisory visits to new sites** in addition to advice and support on existing sites. Produced 25 reports on possible improvements to drainage channels for KCC, ran a workshop for farmers on silt management. Successfully bid for further funds to carry out work on flood areas. We produced a report for Canterbury City Council on improvements that could be made to the riverside habitat in Canterbury. Worked with approximately 50 farmers/landowners giving advice, writing recommendations, carrying out surveys and management.

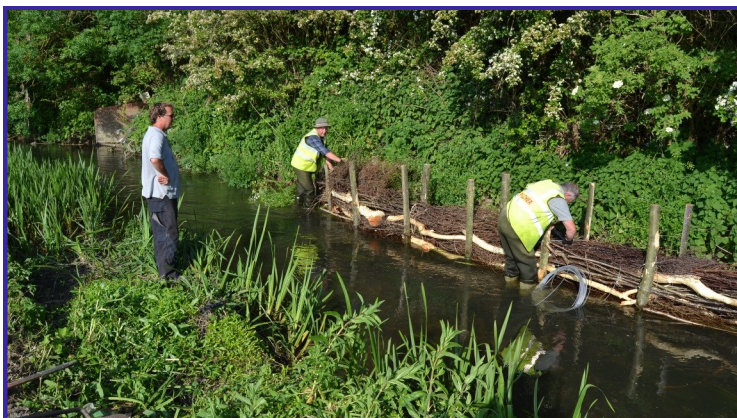
Mariners View, where management recommendations were produced leading to hurdles and hedge planting next to St Alphege church, Seasalter.





## River work

Carried out major river habitat enhancements at Civic Centre South Park, Ashford. Created or de-silted 5 water courses including one next to Singleton Lake, Ashford. Continued control of invasive Himalayan balsam.



Contractors at Civic Centre South Park, Ashford.



Hedge laid by volunteers led by Mark Hudson at Givaudan, Ashford.  
*'...everyone is commenting on how good the new hedge is, a truly excellent job'*  
Neil Vincer, Environmental & Safety Manager, Givaudan.

Volunteers working in the river at Godinton.



## Surveys, monitoring and plans

Working for the River Stour Internal Drainage Board (IDB) 28 kms of drainage channel were surveyed with the aim of improving biodiversity as part of the IDB Biodiversity Action Plan. We surveyed sites for water vole and dormice and 48 barn owl boxes were monitored. We also spent a day surveying for White-clawed crayfish.

Measuring White-clawed crayfish.



## Supporting volunteers of all ages

### 1184 work days!

We ran 122 volunteer tasks. Volunteers mowed meadows, cleared scrub, weeded hedges and cleared invasive plants from wildlife sites.

Working at Bus Company Island, Canterbury.



## Healthier lifestyles & access

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. We also reproduced the Ashford Green Corridor leaflet encouraging people to get out and about in the green spaces of Ashford. We ran a series of sporting competitions with Sturry Road Community Park Trust.

Sturry Road Community Park event.





## Prioritising 'designated' sites

Worked on four **sites in the Kent Downs AONB**, clearing scrub at Pent Farm, Stowting (below) and creating wide rides in Denge Woods. Our Wildsites Project visited sites in the AONB.



Worked on **11 Local Wildlife Sites**. Following our Good Woods work in 2013 we set up ecological surveys at Bybrook Local Wildlife Site, Ashford. At Singleton, Ashford we carried out contractor and volunteer work. *'I cycled past the lake yesterday and I have to say the work the team has done is amazing. The lake is getting a real face lift, which I am really excited about.'* Aniko Szocs, Friends of Singleton Lake Group.



Worked on **six Local Nature Reserves** including Ashford Green Corridor and Whitehall Meadows & Bingley Island. We created a new pond on Bingley Island (below) with contractors and then volunteers created a hibernaculum.



## Interpretation, education, events and guided walks

We ran an events programme in Westgate Parks which resulted in 2418 people attending 20 events. An outdoor education programme was written to implement in 2015. All work at Westgate Parks was thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Across our whole area 519 children attended 17 events. This year 113 people attended 8 Wildsites events painting, photographing and learning writing skills. We produced a Stour Valley Wildsites on Your Doorstep booklet as a conclusion to this lottery funded project.



A heritage walk at Westgate Parks.



Our Stour Valley Wildsites on your doorstep booklet using photos taken by the public.



Willesborough Junior School at Givaudan, Ashford.

## Work with local companies

We continued our good working relationship with **Brett** and we ran community events for **Givaudan**. We Chair the East Kent Catchment Improvement Partnership. We worked with all 3 water companies in our area and for the first time obtained funding from **Veolia** for a new children's play area at Loudon Wood, Ashford. We continued to work with **Viridor Credits** and helped the Friends of Prospect Field with their Stag beetle seat project (below) including funding from Viridor Credits.



## Raising our profile

The Partnership continued to maintain a high profile locally with our newsletter, various press items, our web sites, and attendance at events.

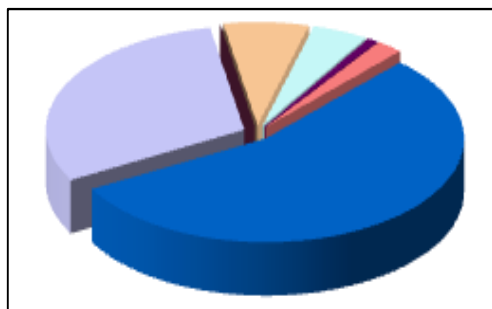
We are also on Facebook and Twitter. We organised the open day at Westgate Parks, celebrating the new play area (below).



## Partnership finances 1/4/14 to 31/3/15

### Income

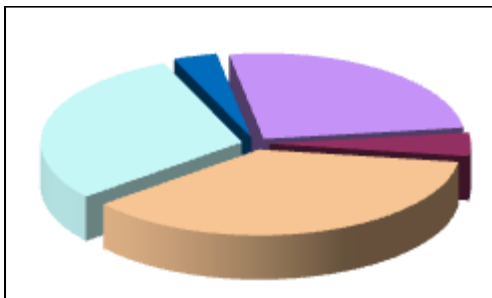
Kent County Council (inc. in kind)	31,400
Environment Agency (for sites)	20,738
Canterbury City Council (for sites)	4,000
Ashford Borough Council (for sites)	10,000
Other income	248,794
Roll over from previous year	136,992
<b>Total</b>	<b>451,924</b>



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	116,042
KCC costs	20,000
Project costs	166,008
Project cost roll forward	134,978
Replacement/contingency fund	14,896
<b>Total</b>	<b>451,924</b>



## The year ahead - ten key activities for KSCP

### River Restoration

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

### Work with Community Groups

Continue our community work with groups such as Love Hambrook Marshes, Loudon Wood, Friends of Canterbury Riverside, Sturry Road Community Park, Friends of Bybrook Nature Reserve and Friends of King's Wood.

### Ashford Green Corridor

Help Ashford Borough Council with updating the Ashford Green Corridor Action Plan; carry out projects in the Green Corridor including at Singleton and Little Burton.

### Rural Land Management

Investigate opportunities to work with farmers on the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme and work on Natural England's National Nature Reserves and with the Woodland Trust and Forestry Commission in their woods.

### Website

Launch a new KSCP website.

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

Complete the sixth 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.

### 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.

### Flood prevention on behalf of KCC and other partners

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

### Stour Valley Arts

Investigate opportunities to help Stour Valley Arts to continue their work.

### Chairman of Steering Group

George Jessel

### Staff

Jon Shelton - Partnership Manager

Debbie Reynolds - Partnership Officer, Ashford (PT)

Diane Comley - Partnership Officer (PT to Oct, now FT)

Carol Donaldson - Partnership Officer, Canterbury and Wantsum (To Oct)

Anna Williams - Westgate Parks Development Officer

Martin Thomas - Sturry Community Park Officer (PT) & Partnership Officer from Oct (PT)

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