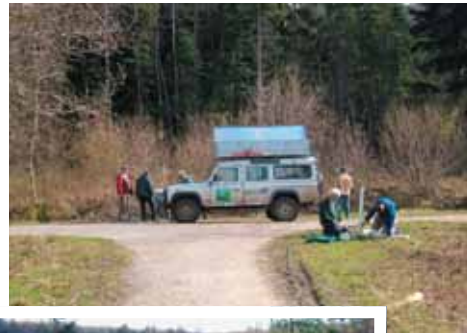


Better waymarking at Clowes Wood



Working with the Forestry Commission the KSCP implemented a number of access and biodiversity improvements at Clowes Wood from 2002-2006. This included restoring footpaths and waymarking them, restoring a number of ponds, creating 1 hectare of heath (2.5 acres), creating a new ride 2ha in size and widening 5.5 ha of rides. The result of this work was a return to the site of the heath fritillary and some wonderful new heather areas. The KSCP volunteers return to the wood a few times a year to carry out further works such as fixing waymarkers.



Right: some of the new heathland.



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

Stour View

Canterbury & Wantsum

Issue 38
Autumn 2007

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.



Blean Access & Interpretative Plan

An Access and Interpretative Plan for the Blean Initiative (a partnership of organisations managing the Blean woods) has been produced by the KSCP. The Plan lists 26 projects/areas of work, of which 5 are in progress. The KSCP & the Blean Initiative are now looking at establishing funding for some of the projects not underway including cycle paths.

Les Blongios return to Stodmarsh

The KSCP French twinning volunteers Les Blongios came over at the end of 2006 and helped with our programme of reedbed work, coppicing and on this occasion the construction of a novel willow otter holt at Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve. The Reserve had a good number of bitterns booming in the spring!



A good year for Barn Owls

The annual check of the KSCP Barn Owl boxes has been completed and the news is that it has been a good year for the species. Of the boxes that the KSCP has installed in the Canterbury and Wantsum area seven had broods of Barn Owls equalling 29 chicks in all. The boxes were also home to three broods of Kestrel and two Stock Dove chicks. Only five of the 16 boxes were empty. All the boxes have been installed by KSCP volunteers between 2001 and 2006 with financial support from the Environment Agency. The results go towards a national monitoring programme for Barn Owls.

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 & North Dover: Meet 9.15 at KSCP or 9.45 at North Lane Car Park, Canterbury.
- Sundays:** Projects in Canterbury and Lower Stour Visit website for details.

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.

Path work

KSCP volunteers have been ensuring that the Train Rides to Ramble walks are easy to follow by carrying out surveys and improvements. Surveys this year focussed on Chartham & Bekesbourne with overhanging vegetation being cleared and waymarking discs being attached as the paths were surveyed. The Canterbury part of the beautiful Elham Valley Way was also surveyed and work will be carried out in the future to improve access structures along this route. If you are interested in volunteering see the information at the back of the newsletter.



A relaxing break after completing some new steps on one of the Chartham Train Rides to Ramble Walks.

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.



Get out and about with the Canterbury Festival

The internationally renowned Canterbury Festival runs from 13th-27th October and the KSCP is offering a number of walks and one cycle ride as part of the programme. Visit www.canterburyfestival.co.uk or ring 01227 378188 to find out more. Get fit, stay healthy, learn about your surroundings or just simply enjoy your beautiful countryside.

A guided cycle ride along the Crab and Winkle Way is one event being offered by the KSCP this year as part of the Canterbury Festival.

Up to Wraik Hill and down to Foxes Cross Bottom

The KSCP volunteers have strayed outside their home this summer visiting the coast and carrying out beach cleans in Whitstable and Reculver. They have also started on a programme of fencing at Wraik Hill and Foxes Cross Bottom, just outside Whitstable, in order to improve the grazing regime so enhancing the sites wildflower interest. It is also hoped to construct a pond on the site and carry out some planting with the help of a grant from Viridor Credits. Viridor is the company that collects waste in the District and manages Sheldford landfill site at Broadoak.

KSCP volunteers on film.....again

Watch out for the KSCP volunteers in action in the autumn on a new BBC series entitled the 'Nature of Britain'. The volunteers were filmed hedgelaying near Chislet Mushroom Farm.



Find your way out of Canterbury ...alongside the river!

Canterbury City Council, Kent County Council, Sus-trans, SurCAsE and the KSCP will be seeking local opinion about a project to construct 5km of riverside path between Canterbury and Chartham. The path will be suitable for cyclists and wheelchair users and much of it is new access. The Project has been in the pipeline for many years but with most landowner permissions now in place and some funding agreed the first stage of construction should start in 2007.



KM Messenger Group

Time for a clear up at Old Park

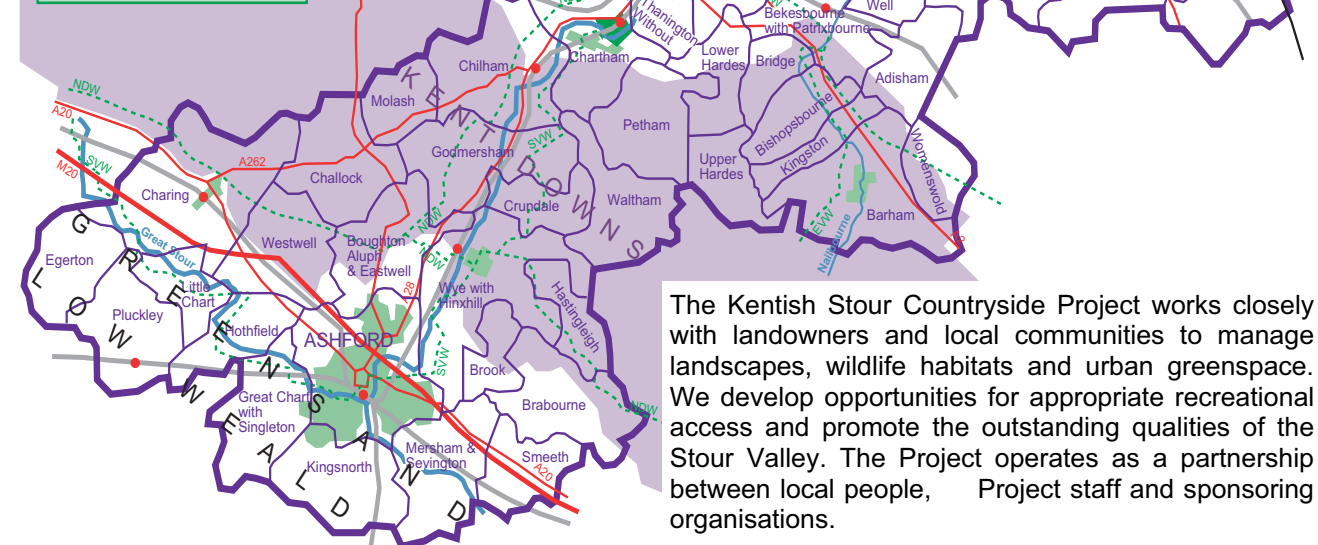
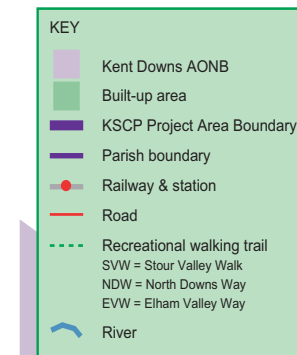
Matt Hayes from the KSCP led a community clear up day at Old Park pond in May. About 20 local volunteers helped out. The pond is part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest but suffers from irresponsible fishing, resulting in lines getting caught in trees, and illegal littering and dumping. So a big thank you to all those who helped on the day, including some of the fishermen, and to all those who litter the areaplease stop!

Volunteers with some of the 20 bags of rubbish collected.

Blean Parish Council to create new nature reserve

The KSCP has been asked by Blean Parish Council to help them with the development of a small nature reserve next to their recreation ground. The KSCP Canterbury Greenspace Project encouraged local communities to buy or improve land for nature and this is just what Blean Parish Council has done. The site will be developed with a pond, some tree and shrub planting and a wildflower area. If you would like to get involved please contact 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.

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Project Manager: Jon Shelton
Ashford Countryside Officer: Harri Goldsmith
 (covering secondment)
Canterbury & Wantsum Countryside Officer: Matt Hayes

Canterbury Greenspace Project Officer

After over four years of financial support, principally from Brett Environment Trust, European Regional Funds, and the lottery, the Canterbury Greenspace Project Officer funding has drawn to a close. Some key achievements with the help of local communities were:



A bat and moth night at Tyler Hill Meadow LNR.

- Designation of three Local Nature Reserves
- Improved management of sites, including fencing of Jumping Downs and No Man's Orchard Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)
- 36 events that involved 1620 people
- Erection of interpretative panels at four sites
- Interpretative leaflets for two LNRs
- Surveys, usually involving local communities, of amphibians, bats, dormice, invertebrates, plants, reptiles, and small mammals
- 18 young people activity days that involved 457 children
- Installation of access structures such as gates, seats, steps and stiles
- Two art projects involving schools resulting in commissioned sculptures, and
- lots of practical conservation days involving volunteers.