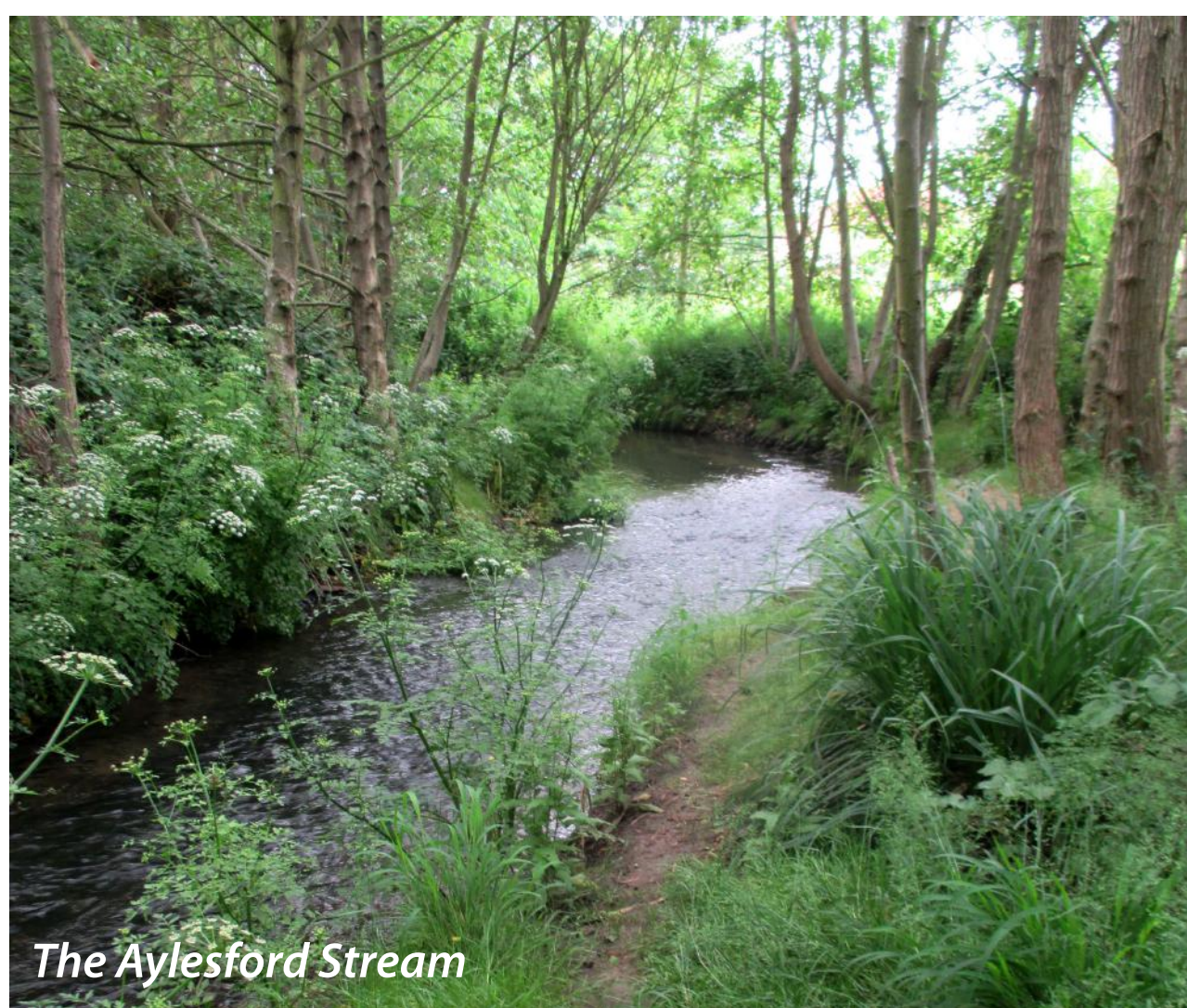




AYLESFORD GREEN

Greener than you may think

You probably know that the Great Stour flows through Ashford, but nearby you will discover Ashford's lesser known river - the Aylesford Stream. This hidden waterway is a gem. While other rivers have been straightened by man, it still meanders freely and has riverside habitats that have been lost along many other rivers.



The Aylesford Stream

The river is a habitat for water plants like yellow flag iris, for dragonflies and damselflies, and birds like heron and green sandpiper. South of the stream here is woodland,

mainly ash and sycamore with many old willows on the bank. This habitat is home to nesting birds like the jay. Cross to the north side and you are in rough grassland abuzz with insects in summer, including bumblebees and the ringlet and marbled white butterflies.

Marbled white



Photo: Luc Viatour



Jay



Viviparous lizard

A meadow area was created about ten years ago with characteristic plants like meadow vetchling. It is a great habitat for reptiles. Two piles of grass cuttings and branches called hibernacula have been left to provide places for them to hibernate over winter.

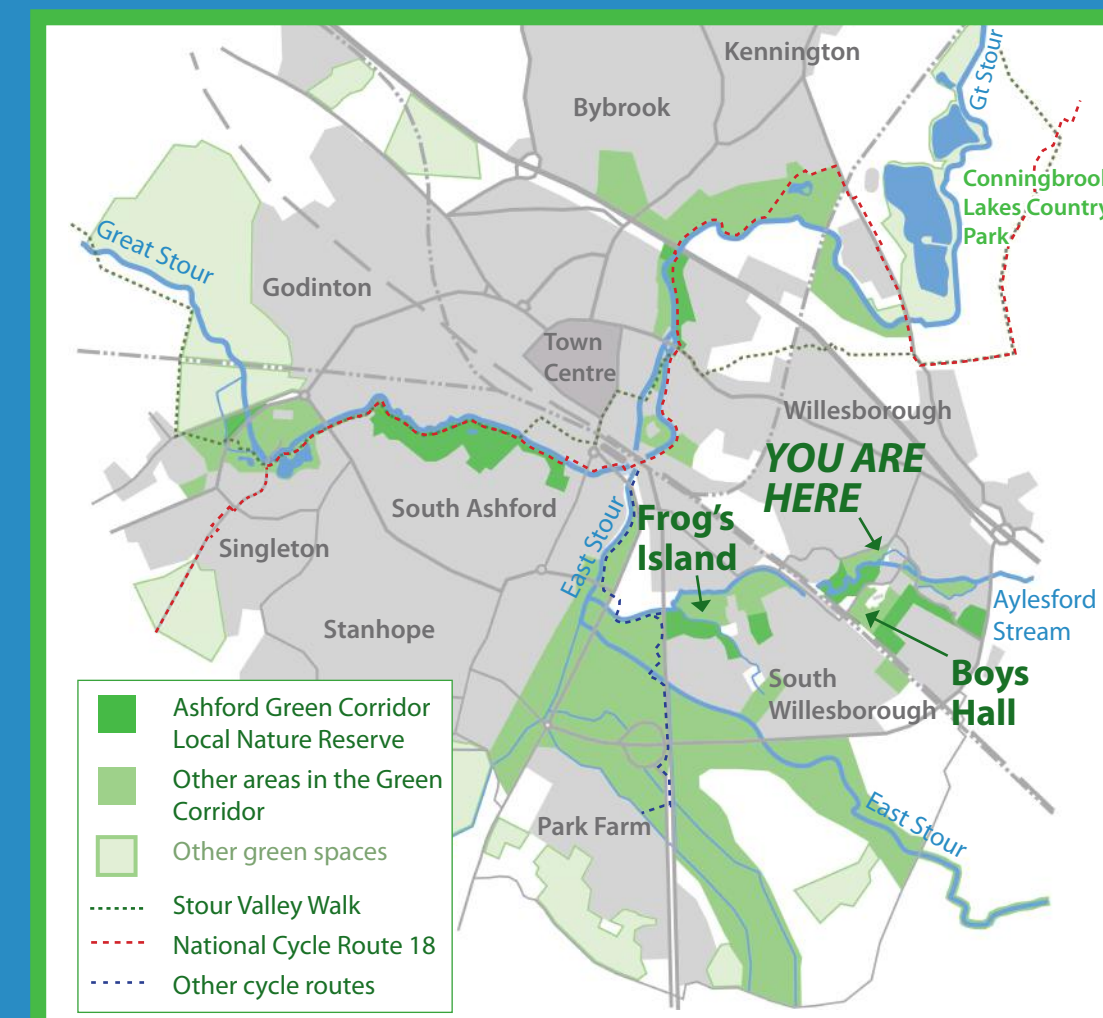
Despite being in the town, Aylesford Green feels quite rural – that's because it's a remnant of a historic landscape close to the old village centre of Willesborough. The parish church and 19th century Court Lodge (manor house) stand just to the east.

Not far to the west of here, evidence of really ancient occupation was found in the 1930s – a Neolithic axe and a small Mesolithic flint knife were unearthed in fields that are now residential gardens.

Photo: Copyright The Francis Frith Collection



*Aylesford Green
1909*



The Ashford Green Corridor

Discover one of Ashford's greatest assets!

Since the middle of the 19th century Ashford has expanded but land close to the rivers has not been built on, due to the risk of flooding and because the Borough Council has protected it as green space. Some areas are designated as Local Nature Reserves.

The resulting undeveloped 'fingers' of land, around the rivers Great Stour, East Stour and Aylesford Stream, reach right into the heart of Ashford. Collectively they connect to form the Ashford Green Corridor, which provides both people and wildlife with routes through the town and to the countryside beyond.

Boys Hall

Frog's Island & Gas House Fields

An **Ashford Green Corridor leaflet**, which includes walking maps and information on other areas of the Corridor, can be downloaded as a PDF from www.kentishstour.org.uk or by scanning the QR code.

