

BUXFORD MEADOW

Small in size but rich in wildlife

For a small area, Buxford Meadow packs in a lot of wildlife! It's the combination of wet grassland, wet woodland, the millstream and pond that makes it special. It is habitat for many species of dragonflies, damselflies, butterflies and moths, as well as different plants and birds. The insects here include an uncommon bush-cricket called the long-winged conehead!



Migrant hawk

In the meadow are lots of 'ecological niches' where particular plants thrive - meadow vetchling prefers the drier areas, while fleabane and water mint take over on damp ground. Purple loosestrife and water forget-me-not grow in the shallow pond margins, while yellow water-lily is fully aquatic, floating in the water. The pond is brimming with aquatic insects, and amphibians. Grass snakes hunt around the pond and may even be seen swimming across the water. However, humans should keep their distance, as there are invasive plants here that can easily be transported on boots to other sites!



Common blue on fleabane



Long-winged conehead

The wet woodland is a habitat now seldom found in the Stour Valley. A relatively new watercourse cascades through it, coming down from a 'perched' section of the Great Stour, designed over a century ago to drive the water wheel at Buxford Mill. Work on this channel, funded by the Environment Agency, will allow fish to swim upstream to spawn.

This is also an historic place – once part of a medieval manor, first recorded in 1278. Buxford Mill would have been attached to the manor. The name Buxford is very old. It refers to the presence of bucks (male deer) at a ford (a crossing point on the river) and could indicate that the estate had a deer park.

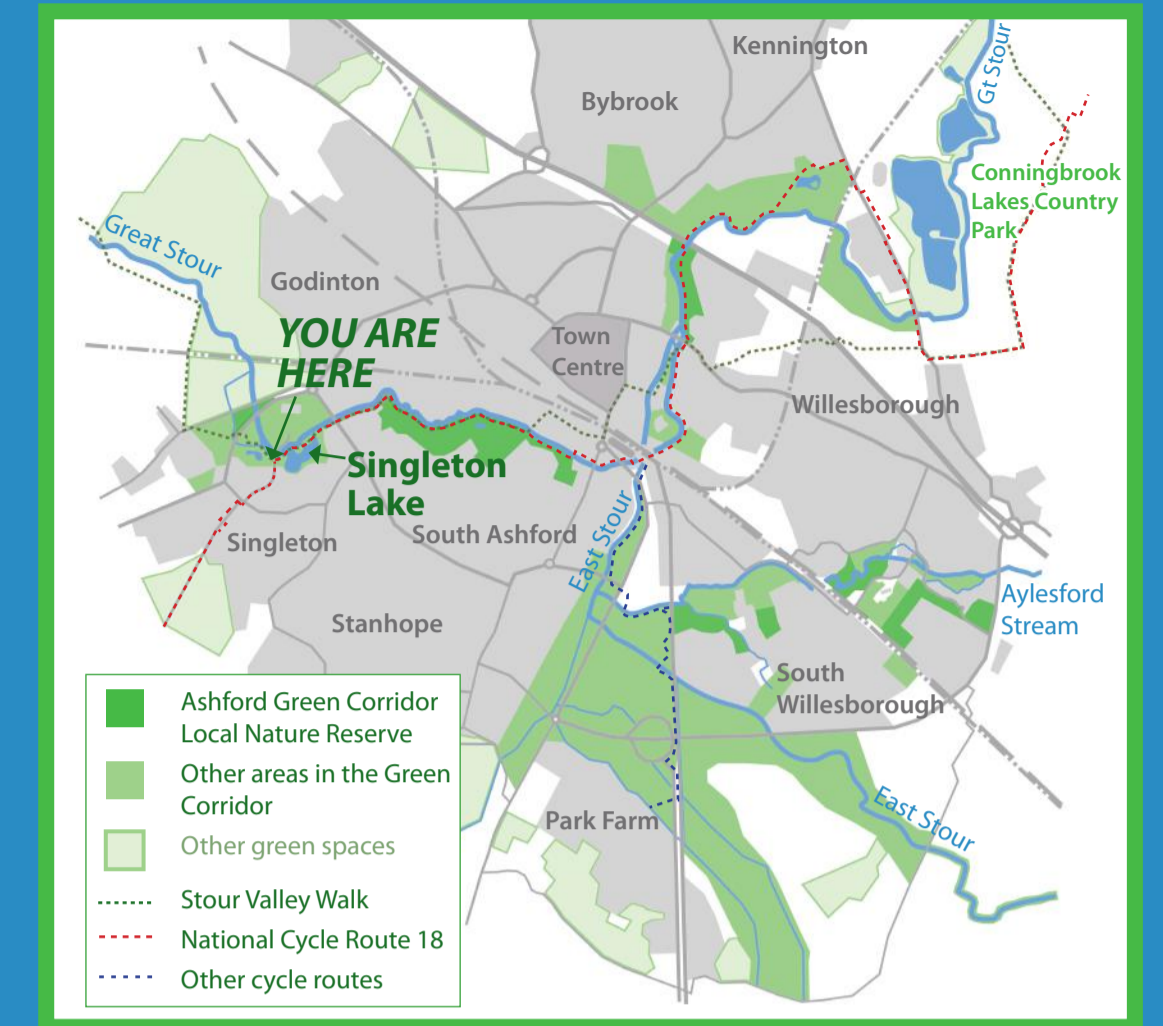


Photo: K. Clama

Grey wagtail



The channel in the wet woodland



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.



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.

