

# Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership

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**PRESS RELEASE**

 **Conserving, enhancing and promoting the Stour Valley**

**Release date\*IMMEDIATE\***

**Every Hedge Counts**

**Along roadsides and field edges, hedges are now full of the beautiful white May blossom of the Hawthorn tree.**

**Just before Coronavirus struck, volunteers from Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership, the Environment Agency, ISG PLC, the Princes Trust and White Cliffs Countryside Partnership planted many of these spectacular trees and other native species, as hedges in the Alkham Valley. They battled wind and rain on the hillsides at Upper Standen Farm after Sam Geddes, the landowner, asked for help to plant hedges to assist in stopping water coming down her hills.**

**The hedge is part of a project led by Kent County Council to slow the flow of water which causes flooding in Kent. Alkham has a particular problem of flash floods because of the steep valley sides.**

**Historically many hedges have been removed from our hillsides, fields and gardens. This has increased the amount of water running through the land, adding to possible flooding in the valleys. The more hedges we can put back, the slower water will flow and the less water will cause problems. Hedges of native trees such as hawthorn are also essential in our need to protect many birds and animals which rely on the flowers, berries and thick leafy bushes for food and protection. Hedges can provide shelter for livestock, protect soil and are more sustainable than fencing. There are many ways to get help, advice and funding to plant and restore hedges. The Kent Countryside Partnerships can provide information on hedging. Every hedge counts. Can you do your bit for the countryside and plant a hedge? Please get in touch on the contact number below.**

For further details telephone 03000 410900/ email kentishstour@kent.gov.uk.

Ends

Attachments – See photos

Mobile Contact:

The KSCP is one of eight countryside management partnerships covering Kent, playing a vital role in the conservation of the Kent countryside and coast through engaging with local communities. [www.kentcountryside.org.uk](http://www.kentcountryside.org.uk/)

KSCP conserve, enhance and promote the countryside and urban green space of North East Kent and the Low Weald with a focus on the Stour Valley. This is achieved by working closely with local communities and landowners to promote both landscape and nature conservation and by developing opportunities for interpretation, education, community engagement and countryside access. It operates as a working partnership of sponsoring organisations, staff and local people. Kent County Council administer the Partnership.