A Wonderful Place for Wildlife

The Ashford Green Corridor is a wonderful place for wildlife. Ashford’s rivers are surprisingly natural considering their urban surroundings. Kingfishers, swans and the banded demoiselle damselfly can all be seen. Singleton Lake is a habitat for wildfowl, birds and Buxford Meadow is wet grassland with an impressive range of plants, insects and other species. Water voles are present in the Green Corridor but they are secretive and generally hard to spot! It is because of these habitats so close to where people live that the Green Corridor has been designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

Recreation and Access

The Ashford Green Corridor is largely open to everyone to use where practical - see marked areas on the large map. The network of paths is popular for walking, dog walking and for getting around town avoiding the busy roads. Most of the paths are surfaced providing good access to a range of sites for wheelchair and mobility vehicles, but please note that most are shared use cycle and footpaths for more access information, see contacts on back page.

Many areas in the Green Corridor are places for recreation or simply for relaxation to get away from the stresses of urban living. There are open spaces for games, sports pitches and play areas at many sites. If you are an angler you can go fishing at Singleton Lake (licence required).

Green Transport & Cycling

The Ashford Green Corridor also acts as a gateway to and from the countryside and places much farther away such as Ashford’s domestic and international railway station. For further information on cycle routes see contacts on back page.

Get Involved

Community groups, schools and individuals all play a role in the future of the Ashford Green Corridor. The Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership has worked with a number of organisations on projects that introduce new wildlife habitat such as orchards, ponds, meadows and hedges. We also support local initiatives that benefit wildlife or improve an understanding and appreciation of green spaces through educational and fun activities. Perhaps your organisation might want to get involved?

Would you like to volunteer?

We run weekly conservation tasks for volunteers every Wednesday in and around Ashford – come rain or shine! Work varies from season to season, from tree planting to hedge laying, meadow mowing and more. We have a weekly email to the point at the Stour Centre and supply all the tools. You can learn to do some practical skills and enjoy the company of a great bunch of people.

Please contact our office by phone or email if you would like to find out more:
kentstour@kent.gov.uk 01233 331111
www.ashfordgreencorridor.org.uk

Useful contacts - cycling

Useful contacts - access

Ashford Access Group 01227 639609
www.ashfordaccess.org.uk
Ashford Gateway Plus 01233 331111
www.ashford.gov.uk/parks-and-open-spaces

Useful contacts - walking

www.walksaroundkent.co.uk
www.sussexsustrans.org
www.getoutside.org
www.fromtosouth.co.uk

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History

From the mansions of Buxford in the west to Boys Hall Moat in the east, the Green Corridor is rich in heritage.

close to the town centre is Victoria Park with its commemorative trees and the Hubert Fountain. Hedges Hall, a former flour mill, stands at the confluence of the East and Great Stour. and the aptly named Watercress Fields, points to Ashford’s history as a market town dating back many centuries. Several areas were farmed relatively recently and many living links still remain.

Givasdan – Great Stour Meadow

Although not part of the Corridor, Givasdan’s wonderful Great Stour Meadow is physically connected to it and many living links still remain.

The Ashford Green Corridor

Nine out of ten people in the UK live in towns and cities, so green spaces in urban areas are very important as they provide a pleasant, relaxing environment for people as well as habitat for wildlife. Ashford is lucky to have a range of green spaces, including public parks and recreation grounds, which link together to create a green corridor through the town.

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How is the Green Corridor managed?

For example, meadows have been created through out the Green Corridor, in Watercress Fields, Queen Mothers Park, Little Burton, South Willesborough and Asford Green. The most recent addition is at Civic Centre South Park. Meadows are wild flower rich grasslands allowed to grow long then cut in late summer removing the cuttings to sustain the meadows.

They are excellent habitats for wild flowers and animals such as butterflies, birds and small mammals. However, plenty of areas are still mown regularly to provide space for picnics, games and other activities. So if you see large areas of un-mown grass, this is not neglect, but the establishment of meadows!

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Green Transport & Cycling

Do you use your car for journeys that could be made on foot or by bicycle? If traffic, exhaust fumes and busy towns put you off, why not walk or cycle through the Green Corridor.

A section of National Cycle Route 18, linking Canterbury to Royal Tunbridge Wells, runs through the town centre, along the Green Corridor from Kentington in the east to Buxford Meadow in the west. The Willesborough Dykes Greenway path, multi user route, will soon join Park Farm in the south to the Green Corridor. A number of other Ashford districts have smaller cycle routes that connect to the corridor. For example if you live in Kentington or Buxford you could walk or cycle into town through the delightful Queen Mothers Park, while residents of South Ashford can go through the wide open space of Watercress Fields and Victoria Park on their way to town.

The rivers, riverbanks, trees, orchards, wetland, meadows, park areas, playing fields, ponds and hedges of the Green Corridor demand different kinds of management, management which balances wildlife conservation with maintaining good, safe access and space for people to enjoy.

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Walks 1.2 & 3

Walk 1

Singleton Lake

WALK 2 Singleton Lake (1km / 0.6mi)

This route will take you around the lake. There is a good range of grassland and woodland nearby, where you might see mammals such as badgers and foxes. A wide variety of birds can be seen, including waders, grebes and herons, which are a common sight in spring and summer.

Walk 2

Singleton Lake (1km / 0.6mi)

WALK 3 Singleton Lake (2km / 1.2mi)

This route is further to Singleton Lake. It includes a stop at the Three Trees Inn, which is a traditional pub offering a variety of food and drinks. The route continues along the edge of the lake, offering views of the surrounding countryside.

Walk 3

Singleton Lake (2km / 1.2mi)

WALK 4 Singleton Lane

This route follows the route of the old Roman road that once connected London to Winchester. It offers beautiful views of the surrounding countryside and is an excellent opportunity to explore the ancient landscapes of Kent.

Walk 4

Singleton Lane

WALK 5

The Watercress

This walk offers a unique opportunity to explore the area's rich history and natural beauty. You will visit the village of Godinton, which was once a prehistoric settlement, and explore the ruins of Godinton House, a 17th-century manor house.

Walk 5

The Watercress

WALK 6

South Willesborough Downs

This area is known for its natural beauty and is home to a diverse range of wildlife, including birds, butterflies, and plants. The walk offers a chance to explore the area's history and learn about the local flora and fauna.

Walk 6

South Willesborough Downs

WALKS 1, 2 and 3 include part of the Stour Valley Walk and National Cycle Route 18. Discover an adventure.

Walks 6 & 7

Walk 6

South Willesborough (2.3km / 1.4mi)

This walk offers a chance to explore the area's natural beauty and is home to a diverse range of wildlife, including birds, butterflies, and plants. The walk offers a chance to explore the area's history and learn about the local flora and fauna.

Walk 7

Frog's Island

Once you've finished exploring the area, you can relax and enjoy a picnic in the park. The area is surrounded by beautiful countryside, and there are plenty of opportunities to spot wildlife along the way.

Walk 7

Frog's Island

Walk 8

South Willesborough Downs

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Walk 8

South Willesborough Downs

WALK 9

Ayliffes Green (2.4km / 1.5mi)

The 13th-century moat is one of the most important historical features in the area and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is the site of a house that was demolished in the 17th century, and the moat being the most obvious historic feature, which is well-preserved and surrounded by water in its natural state.

Walk 9

Ayliffes Green (2.4km / 1.5mi)

Bays Hall

The North End Manor house, which has its characteristic gables and tall chimneys, was built in the 17th century and is now a listed building. It was once owned by an aristocratic family and is now a wedding venue.

Walk 10

Bays Hall

Ayliffe Green

This walk starts at the village of Godinton and takes you across beautiful fields and meadows. The route follows the River Stour and offers stunning views of the surrounding countryside.

Walk 11

Ayliffe Green

Walks 2 to 5

Walk 6

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