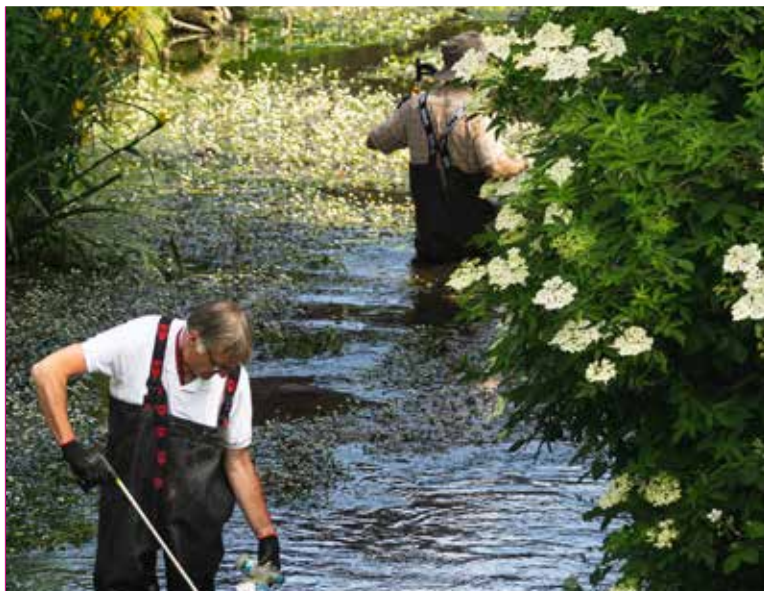


Canterbury in Bloom 2021

because we **love** our city
Judges Portfolio



Canterbury in Bloom

Contents

03 Introduction

04 Our history

04 Our journey

05 How is Canterbury in Bloom organised?

06 Horticulture and Sites

1. Abbot's Mill
2. Beverly Meadow
3. Brymore Nature Group
4. Canterbury Cathedral
5. Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU)
6. Dane John Gardens
7. Franciscan Way
8. Franciscan Gardens
9. Hambrook Marshes
10. Kingsmead Field
11. The King's School
12. Miller's Field
13. Oaten Hill Area
14. Pound Lane Car Park
15. St Augustine's Abbey
16. St Martin's Churchyard
17. St Martin's Priory
18. St Mary de Castro
19. Solly's Orchard
20. The Butterfly Garden
21. The Kent Oasis Community Garden (KENTCog)
22. Vauxhall Field
23. Webb's Garden at St Martin's Hospital
24. Westgate Parks
25. Whitefriars Shopping Centre

36 Environment

1. Local Identity and Pride of Place
2. Natural Environment
3. Environmental Quality and Resources

29 Community

1. Year-round Activity and Future Commitment
2. Communication, Education and Awareness
3. Funding and Support

35 Conclusion

Appendix 1: Press Clippings/Social Media

Cover photos credits: St Augustine's Abbey, Ralph Lombart, Canterbury BID, Canterbury Society, Friends of Kingsmead Field, Kent COG

Canterbury in Bloom

Introduction

Canterbury is an ancient city at the heart of the Garden of England and home to a UNESCO World Heritage site comprising Canterbury Cathedral, with its stunning mixture of Romanesque and Perpendicular Gothic architecture, the modest Church of St Martin (the oldest church in continuous use in the English-speaking world) and the ruins of St Augustine's Abbey, once a burial place for the Anglo-Saxon kings of Kent.

Canterbury has three river tour companies operating on 3km of river, over 30 bridges and you are never more than five minutes from a park or garden. With its three universities, arts and culture scene, Canterbury is a cosmopolitan city with a countryside vibe.

The city itself has a population of 55,240 (with the wider district population, including Whitstable and Herne Bay, of 164,553) and, in normal times we welcome 30,000 university students every September and over 7.8 million visitors annually from the near continent, the region and further afield.

However, these are still not normal times and the COVID-19 crisis has impacted the city since March 2020. Despite lockdowns and interruptions, the businesses, organisations and community groups who contribute to Bloom have been busy, doing everything possible to keep Canterbury green and blooming. In addition, Canterbury City Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and appointed a Climate Change Officer in April 2020. The community has also set up the Canterbury Climate Action Partnership, on which many of the Bloom partners, including Canterbury Business Improvement District (BID) sit.

That said, it has been a challenge to keep in touch with some partners throughout the COVID-19 crisis for understandable reasons. We will keep in touch with all partners as we emerge from the crisis and plan to keep progressing plans for Bloom in Canterbury.

Canterbury in Bloom

Our history

Canterbury participated in the regional Bloom campaign for the first time in 2011. Indeed, the city centre was largely 'flower free' and the only group that promoted flowers, gardens and all things horticultural was the original Canterbury Community in Bloom group that ran a front garden competition for residents, a schools' competition for local primary schools and a competition for local businesses. With limited resources the group did an amazing job, sustaining interest and commitment to all things Bloom related.

In 2011, Canterbury City Partnership CIC (CCP), a membership group representing local businesses in the city centre, developed a range of programmes to prepare the city for a potential Business Improvement District (BID) campaign. As part of this, CCP brought together a group of partners to look at whether it would be feasible to enter the South & South East in Bloom campaign in 2012. The purpose was to build relationships across the city, build capacity for future partnership projects and to enhance the city centre, which was singularly lacking in floral displays.

Our journey

2012 **Silver**

2013 **Silver Gilt**

2014 No city centre entry, due to BID campaign.
Whitefriars Shopping Centre entered their category: **Gold**

2015 **Gold** and Finalist in Britain in Bloom

2016 **Gold** in both South & South East in Bloom and Britain in Bloom

2017 **Gold** in both South & South East in Bloom and Britain in Bloom.
RHS Community Champion awarded to BID CEO Bob Jones

2018 No city entry, due to focus on Green Heritage, incl the country's first Green Heritage Conference, an Upcycling Competition with local schools and an environmental education project aimed at the local community called "Lost Words"

2019 **Gold** in South and South East in Bloom.

2020 **Gold** in South & South East in Bloom and a certificate of recognition from Britain in Bloom

How is Canterbury in Bloom organised?

Partnership has been at the heart of what we do and is intrinsic to how we organise our campaign.

The campaign is a grouping of autonomous organisations each with their own objectives and ambitions for the development of their area. Canterbury Business Improvement District undertakes to coordinate the partnership and submit the annual Bloom entry and meets with partners to enable knowledge sharing and joint working on projects throughout the year, such as cleaning and graffiti removal with the local authority and community groups.

Bloom partners:

Volunteer hours: We have not been able to estimate volunteer hours during the COVID-19 crisis, especially given that many group community activities needed to be cancelled or postponed.

- Brymore Nature Group
- Canterbury BID
- Canterbury Cathedral
- Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU)
- Canterbury City Council and their parks and gardens contractor, Serco
- Canterbury College
- Friends of Beverly Meadow
- Friends of Dane John and St. Mary de Castro
- Friends of Kingsmead Field
- Friends of Westgate Parks
- Hambrook Marshes
- Oaten Hill and South Canterbury Assoc.
- Rough Old Wife Cider (partnership with CCC to manage public orchards)
- St Martin's Church
- St Mildred's Area Community Society
- St Peter's Resident Association
- The Abbots Mill Project
- The Canterbury Society (civic society)
- The Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (Our Stour)
- University of Kent (KentCOG)
- Westgate Parks team (KCC and CCC)
- Whitefriars Shopping Centre



Tulips on the riverside walk

Horticulture and Sites

Canterbury City Council (CCC) and their contractor Serco

The maintenance of the Council's main parks, gardens and open spaces is undertaken by its contractor, Serco. The areas covered include: Dane John Gardens, Greyfriars Garden, Kingsmead Field, Lady Wootton's Green, Miller's Field, St Mary de Castro, Solly's Orchard, The Butterfly Garden, Westgate Parks and the City Walls. Serco is responsible for grass cutting, sign cleaning, inspection of play equipment, litter collection, responding to vandalism and fly tipping, inspections and general open space maintenance, as well as the formal planting. This work is further supported by volunteer and community groups.

The maintenance and planting programme for the parks is as follows: One of the methods used to enhance biodiversity within Canterbury's parks and open spaces is to have a varied mowing regime. Ornamental grass within formal garden areas in the parks are cut every 5 working days. Paths used to direct visitors through nature reserves, such as Bingley Island, are only mown every two weeks, leaving the adjoining areas to become a natural habitat. Marginal borders and areas of wildflowers are used in other parks and open spaces, such as Miller's Field and Kingsmead Field, to encourage bee populations to thrive. (A2, B2)

Extended year-round interest and pollinator-friendly planting: Following 2020's pause on bedding plants, this year all the ornamental beds have been planted again and will be tidied every 10 days, this includes the Dane John and the Westgate Park. The oval bed in the Westgate Gardens which was previously an ornamental bed has now become a new space for pollinator friendly plants. This is newly planted this spring and expected it to take up to 3 years to fully establish. (A3)

Environmentally friendly waste management: 100% of grounds maintenance waste is recycled from Westgate Gardens, Dane John and Toddlers' Cove. Any trees that have been felled due to high winds or disease are reused within the parks or sent to the saw-mill to create new park benches. (B3)

Volunteer work: Over the last year we haven't been able to carry out any volunteer work that would usually take place due to the COVID-19 crisis and lockdown.



Café du Soleil's tulip display



Daffodils surrounding the city walls

1. Abbot's Mill

The Abbot's Mill Project was incorporated in 2010 and is a social enterprise and Community Interest Company. The mission of the Abbot's Mill Project is to develop an urban hub of environmental and social justice, powered solely by non-centralised, renewable energy. The hub will include an education/research centre about sustainable and compassionate living, renewable energy and the importance of the River Stour in Canterbury's past, present and future. abbotsmillproject.co.uk

Horticulture

Since January 2021 several trees and ivy have been removed to reduce shading of the riverbank and promote emergent vegetation. The next phase of work will be to remove artificial material (bricks and concrete) from riverbank to soften the banks and create habitat diversity. Coir matting, willow faggots and spiling will be installed to support the banks. In addition native plants will be planted to create and improve nesting, breeding and foraging habitats for wildlife, including otter, water vole and fish. This is all part of our management plan as agreed with Canterbury City Council and the Environment Agency and is being funded by the latter. (A2, B2)

Community

Pre-COVID-19, the project hosted talks, workshops and volunteer action days, both on and off-site, including monthly Volunteer Action Mornings. In addition, on the first Saturday of every month they undertook maintenance tasks, keeping the site tidy, continuing the habitat restoration programme, adding and checking wildlife nesting and feeding boxes, and generally improving the biodiversity of the site. Activities have inevitably been limited by the outbreak. However, progress through a community engagement, outreach and education work continues, with a core volunteer network of around 50 people and an overall supporters list of over 650. (C1, C2)

2. Beverley Meadow

Beverley Meadow is a much loved local, large multifunctional open space in the heart of the St Stephens community, on the edge of the City. It is popular with dog walkers, and visitors of all ages, and has an interesting history and some unique heritage features such as an old railway bridge. Facebook/Friends of Beverley Meadow .

Horticulture

In 2020/21 enhancements included the planting a row of 21 trees along the main pedestrian footpath - a mix of Quercus Robur (Common or English Oak) and Liquidambar styraciflua 'Worplesdon' (Sweet Gum); installation of 5-a-side goals in the active zone of the open space and the creation of amenity picnic areas on the quieter side of the meadow.

Community

Although the City Council owns and manages this space, over the lockdown local residents came together to form The Friends of Beverley Meadow to look after and care for the meadows. They have been meeting online, and have agreed a constitution to be formalised at the first AGM in September. There have been issues of antisocial behaviour in the periphery of the field and The Friends aim to work with the Council to find ways to combat this. They intend to continue on from the survey completed by residents and use some of the ideas for the meadows as a starting point. The Friends group aims to meet every 4-6 weeks and also plan activities / projects on the meadows. (C1)

3. Brymore Nature Group

Brymore Nature Group is a newly formed group that aims to improve the local environment for people and wildlife on the Brymore Estate which is located to the east of the city. Facebook/Brymore Nature Group

Environment

So far the group has been working on clearing various beds in the area, including nettles. They have created a bug hotel, put up bird boxes, re-planted a hedge to create a wildlife corridor and sown wildflower seeds. All Saints' Church, which is on the Estate, is also transforming its garden into a wildlife area.(B1)

Community

The group is made up of local residents who are working together to keep the area tidy, improve open spaces, create wildlife-friendly habitats and generally make the estate a nicer place to live. As many as 13 volunteers have joined the sessions at one time. Monthly community gardening afternoons and weekly work parties are organised by the group with the aim is to get more local residents involved and to make a positive difference to the local neighbourhood.



Brymore Nature Group - Bug Hotel



Brymore Nature Group - Weeding

4. Canterbury Cathedral



Canterbury Cathedral Precincts are open to both local residents (free admission) and paying visitors. The Cathedral is nearing the end of a multi-million pound programme of restoration and redevelopment which was partially funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). New garden areas have been created in the western area of the Cathedral Precincts as a result of the project. canterbury-cathedral.org

Horticulture

The Cathedral is committed to a green revolution in its gardens, which will take many different forms in the coming years. The Cathedral Precinct beds have recently been planted with a sustainable design, which has a three-pronged approach: water conservation, wildlife interest for pollinating insects, and an aesthetic planting palette of colour and form to echo the Cathedral. (A3, B2, B3)

A large, long border of dahlias has been planted by the Cathedral's South Door for 2021. The Cathedral Gardening team took colour inspiration from the Great South Window, and the border will reflect a kaleidoscope of colours and attract pollinating insects due to many of the dahlias being single-flowering types. (A3)

Other planting includes drought tolerant plants in the Infirmary ruins, and perennials, shrubs and bulbs - a good source of nectar for pollinators - around the Buffs statue. (A2, A3)

The roses in the Deanery Garden are from David Austin Roses, who have also assisted with the development of a new Thomas Becket rose. Other roses with a local identity are Christopher Marlowe and Brother Cadfael. (A3)

Environment

Canterbury Cathedral's special feature is the Herb Garden. Interactive labels using Near Field Communication are enabling visitors to use their smartphone to see the image of a particular herb in the 1597 Gerarde's Herbal Directory (held in the Cathedral library). This volume is only available to study by appointment so this system opens it up to a much wider audience. (B1)

The team continue to create a woodland area within the grounds, leaving log piles to encourage insect life, including stag beetles, which are now being found regularly. The area also has bird feeders and a native hedge. Canterbury Cathedral has bumblebee hives located within a wildflower area in the Dean's garden to introduce more queens to the city and increase the bumble bee population.

The Cathedral was also approached by a local young beekeeper who asked for space for a few hives. He now has two honeybee hives in the Precincts, increasing pollinators in the city, and giving a young, new beekeeper (these are his first ever hives) a chance to practice his hobby (B2, C2).

Organic lawn feed is being trialled in the Memorial Garden and plant pests and diseases are treated with organic products such as SB Invigorator and Horticultural soap. The Cathedral gardeners are using peat-free coconut coir for potting up and new starch based, non-plastic pots have been introduced to decrease the use of plastic. Rain-water collection has been increased, meaning the use of drinking water for plant watering has decreased. (B3)

Composting is prioritised – compost from leaf mould, perennial plants and grass cuttings are used to add more organic matter to the borders. With the completion of cold frames and new compost beds, more plants can be grown for planting in the precincts, and apprentices will have more of a professional base from where they can learn their propagation skills. (B3)

Community

As part of the NLHF-funded 'Canterbury Journey', the Precincts have been refurbished and a temporary exhibition about the history of the gardens will feature in the future, with exhibits from the archives. Explorer back-packs will be available for children to focus on key aspects, which will include activities relating to the gardens and wildlife in the Cathedral Precincts. (C1, C2). The Cathedral has also launched a new series of guided tours including the chance to explore the Precinct's gardens in depth. (C2)

5. Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU)

Christ Church's main North Holmes campus falls within the outer precinct of UNESCO site, St Augustine's Abbey. Its green spaces and the species that live there are nurtured for their own sake, but also provide resources for learning, for community engagement, and for health and well-being.

The university celebrates a unique sense of place through a 'Bioversity' initiative with their physic garden, heritage orchard and nuttree, hop garden, wildflower areas and green walls. Good stewardship of the World Heritage Site reflects their own wider concerns for the environment and helps them to make direct links with other day-to-day issues of environmental concern (e.g. waste management, carbon emissions, sustainable use of resources). Canterbury.ac.uk/about-us/sustainability

Horticulture

New planting has been focused on the landscaped areas around the new Verena Holmes Building, which occupies part of the old Canterbury Prison site. Wildflower banks are the dominant feature, mixed with new grass areas and some native Silver Birch, currently in their infancy, will provide a boost to the biodiversity of



Cathedral



Cathedral



Cathedral

the campus. (A3)

To further enhance the views out from the Verena Holmes Building, a section of the Anselm Lawn has been turned over to make a new flower bed, doubling the area of the existing beds. This will make this area even more attractive to pollinators and birds. Wagtails (voracious insect eaters) are already a common sight here. (B2)

Two other features have also been added, in collaboration with the Sustainability Team. The first is a new hop garden, which will eventually replace the old one to allow the continued production of Green Hop Ale. One of the few elements of remaining medieval architecture on the campus is the end wall of the monastic brewery and bakehouse. The new hop garden has a superb location next to the Verena Holmes Building, and runs parallel to the planned Abbey Walk path which will run from St Martin's Church towards the Cathedral. The second is a small vineyard which will be planted very soon and ties in with the Roman and Medieval heritage of the location. (B1)

Total new planting by Grounds and Gardens this year comes to 2000m² of wildflowers, 6 trees, 1500 bulbs, 300 herbaceous and 32 shrubs. To this total can be added 36 hops, a mixture of 4 heritage varieties, some of which are unique to the site, and 8 grape vines, when planted.

Environment

The 2020 entry included mention of the introduction of beehives. This project has since ended, with the emphasis shifting away from the keeping of honeybees to the gentle nurturing of native pollinators in general. It is felt that this is a more sustainable approach, promoting diversity amongst the bee and pollinator population instead of encouraging honeybees to dominate. (B2)

Additional work has been carried out in the Johnson Wellbeing Garden which is being kept as nature friendly as possible and weekly sessions of weeding, tidying and planting. One new feature of the garden is a bee bank which has been generally cleared but with wildflowers and other flowering plants placed nearby to attract these and other pollinators. This garden continues to attract a range of wildlife, including newts, squirrels, and ducks, as well as a variety of other birds. (B2)

Community

The essence of Christ Church is its community of learning to which all staff and students contribute. Sadly, COVID-19 has restricted access to the University campus this spring and summer, but the Grounds and Gardens staff plus a limited number of volunteers have continued their magnificent work.

6. Dane John Gardens

Dane John Gardens is one of Canterbury's most prized city parks. Visited widely by local people and visitors alike, it is a multi-functional formally laid-out park providing a place for people to walk, rest, picnic, and play. As well as a beautiful setting for leisure and low-key recreation, the gardens host events throughout the year. The gardens have a long, interesting history dating as far back as 1st/2nd Century AD. Dane John Gardens is a Grade II listed Historic Park and Garden and a Scheduled monument.



Horticulture and Environment

It has been a very challenging year as COVID-19 has limited the amount of work that could be carried out by the Council and its partner groups at Dane John. However, two beds have been revitalised and reimagined this year. Annuals were bought for the beds and 4 volunteers planted a number of perennials and sowed wildflowers and sunflowers as a temporary measure. 120 bulbs including two varieties of tulip and some narcissus were purchased and interspersed amongst the perennials. They were selected with colour in mind to render the beds as attractive as possible to visitors walking through the park. Five volunteers undertook the work. In addition, after consultation with residents two designs for a new play area have been shortlisted with the final design being installed later this year. (B3)

Community

A Friends group for Dane John Gardens was started in late 2018, aiming to replicate other successful Friends groups in Canterbury which are working in partnership with the Council.



Dane John planting scheme

7. Franciscan Way

The Franciscan Way forms part of the riverside walk in Canterbury (behind the Franciscan Chapel and garden) and was constructed in 1990 by the City Council, on land gifted to the city by the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church. It connects Greyfriars Garden to Stour Street and is a popular walkway with residents, those who work in the city, and tourists. The Franciscan Way flower beds are looked after by three volunteers through the Canterbury Society who work in the garden weekly. (B1)

Horticulture

In the Autumn of 2020 volunteers prepared the soil with organic, non-peat mushroom compost and planted spring bulbs which are particularly pollinator friendly (crocuses, snake's head fritillary and snowdrops, followed by camassia). Volunteers have also lined the brick borders of the raised beds with damp-proofing to maintain moisture as the area is very dry, as well as planting perennials and adding a good layer of organic mulching after planting to retain moisture during the dry summer season. (B2)

Environment

The aim is to make the planting more pollinator friendly; by extending seasonal interest (using asters, sedum and verbena for autumn, and cyclamen, hellebores and ivy for winter), including climbers such as honeysuckle and jasmine and a wide variety of native plants. Perennials with silver foliage and purple flowers have been included to attract moths. (Solitary mining bees have already been recorded using the flower beds.) Extending the seasonal interest will also allow residents to enjoy the garden during the winter and spring more. (A3, B2)

Community

Herbs and perennials which have fragrance, taste or texture such as Sarcococca, lavender and rosemary have been included. This will be of particular interest for visits by the children at the St Peter's Methodist Primary School which is close to the Franciscan Way. The Franciscan Way is wheelchair accessible and has benches for resting and enjoying the open space, so the enhancing of the planting will be of benefit for enjoyment by elderly and vulnerable residents. The volunteers also ensure that this walkway is kept free of litter. Funding has been received from the KCC combined member grant scheme. (C1, C3)

8. Franciscan Gardens

The Franciscan Gardens are at the rear of Eastbridge Hospital and are a haven of peace in an otherwise busy city. They are the grounds of the first Franciscan settlement in the UK and are a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Over the last year the gardens have received a full renovation, returning the gardens to reflect their medieval origin (along with a nod to its most recent usage as a flower nursery in the 1900s) and will be open to the public later this summer.

FranciscanGardens.org.uk

Horticulture

The established wildlife hedges at the back of the wildflower meadow have been tidied and brambles cut back. Small rosettes of cowslips are now flowering, and foliage of the scabious and cow parsley are beginning to appear amongst the grass. Meadow turf was laid along the riverside in October (taken from the area that is now the cutting garden) and is thick with patches of yarrow, hedgenettle, and wood anemones. There are two large greengages, a plum and three old apple varieties. Traditionally, medieval monks were buried in unmarked graves beneath apple trees. Planting fruit trees in the meadow gives a respectful, historical nod to the first Franciscans who would have lived (and died) here. (A2, A3, B1)

In the Cutting Garden the team has planted achillea millefolium (yarrow), acanthus mollis (bear's breeches) ammi majus (Bishop's flower) and digitalis (foxglove) all grown at home from seed last autumn. Clumps of geranium sanguineum (cranesbill), tanacetum parthenium (feverfew) and borago officinalis (borage) have been transplanted from other parts of the garden where it is not wanted, and the penstemons and lupins transplanted from the riverside border are thriving. The garden contains vigorous sweet pea plants (raised from seed) that scramble up two of the hazel wigwams. A later batch around two other wigwams have been planted to get a prolonged flowering period in the summer. Dahlia tubers – all single peony-flowered types (great for pollinators) and each one named for a Bishop (very fitting for the "Holy Garden") and oxeye daisies have gone into rows in the cutting beds. (A3)

The rose border and the border behind the low wall near the chapel have been carefully hand-weeded and "curated". Clumps of snowdrops "in the green" have been lifted from elsewhere, divided and replanted in gaps. Large clumps of cyclamen hederifolium have been spaced out along the rose border in the Cloister Garth. (A3)

Environment

Each year, a part of the Franciscan Gardens is allowed to grow as a wildflower meadow which attracts significant wildlife and is unique within the city. Some new birds have arrived in the gardens recently including a dozen moorhens, a large heron and a kingfisher. (B2) In the future an area of the garden near the chapel will be planted to create a symbolic reference to the altar in the layout of the original Franciscan church building. (B1)

Community

The pathways have been levelled to enable access for all, and the gardens are due to reopen to the public in the Summer of 2021, with timed entrances and guided tours available. (C1)



Franciscan Gardens - Cuttings Garden



Franciscan Gardens - Meadow

9. Hambrook Marshes

Lying just over a quarter of a mile southwest of the Westgate Towers, Hambrook Marshes are fifty acres of remarkably unspoilt grazing marsh, bought by a local benefactor in 2014 when its future was uncertain, and now owned and looked after by the Love Hambrook Marshes CIO.

Horticulture

Three of the fields are still managed by traditional summer grazing with cattle, one is being rewilded by allowing it to scrub over naturally, another is mown for an annual hay crop, and in a small area of osier bed one-year-old willow growth is harvested each winter by local basket weavers.

Environment

A team of volunteers is currently being recruited to help with regular litter-picking and management tasks such as fencing and scrub clearance. Much of the wildlife management is achieved by the small herd of cattle that graze the marsh from April to October, creating an uneven sward as habitat for a wide range of insects. They also help

maintain an open landscape by nibbling off any invading scrub before it can get established and their dung provides another important insect habitat, as does their churning up of muddy areas.

Up to 60 snipe overwinter on the wetter areas, to be joined by kingfishers, herons and little egrets and in summer the breeding population of birds includes mallard, moorhen, reed bunting, whitethroat, stock dove and great spotted woodpecker.

104 species of birds, 242 species of plants and 20 species of butterflies have been recorded; of particular interest is a small colony of marbled white butterflies in the scrub field, with a peak count of 27 last July. 8 species of dragonflies have also been identified, the most distinctive being the banded demoiselle. The most notable recent discovery was a trail of distinctive otter footprints in soft mud beside a ditch, together with a couple of probable night-time sightings.

Community

The twin aims of the trustees are to maintain open access to the public on foot or bicycle, and to enhance the marsh's wildlife interest. Its value to local people was amply demonstrated during the COVID-19 lockdowns as Hambrook Marshes was the only extensive area of easily accessible countryside in which Canterbury residents could legally take their daily exercise. The local community is kept in touch with via a popular Facebook page, website, and monthly newsletter, while information boards scattered around the site tell visitors a little about the site's history and wildlife.

Regrettably, open access can create some problems, and most of the popular boardwalk and two pond-dipping platforms were destroyed by arsonists in 2020. This inspired local musicians to put on an online concert of music, song, and poetry, raising around £3000 towards the cost of dealing with the mess; some of the money was spent on creating a pond where the boardwalk had been and, less than a year later, damselflies and dragonflies are already egg-laying on its sparse vegetation.

The trustees objected strongly to the council's proposal to extend the Wincheap park and ride onto the flood meadow immediately opposite Hambrook Marshes. They are immensely grateful to the Save Wincheap Water Meadows campaign group for all the hard work they put into opposing the plan, which has been shelved for the time being due to Highways England failing to approve the new road layout that would have been needed.



Hambrook Marshes - Cattle



Hambrook Marshes - Osier collecting

10. Kingsmead Field

Kingsmead Field is a designated Village Green which nestles between the two branches of the river Stour just outside the city centre. It is owned and managed by Canterbury City Council with the support of the Friends of Kingsmead Field. The Friends group was formed in 2015 after a long community-led campaign to save the field from development. kingsmeadfield.org.uk and Facebook/Friend of Kingsmead Field

Horticulture

As part of the initiative to increase the value of the district's open spaces for pollinators, the Friends group and the Council are experimenting with the rotational management of the wild area at the back of the field. Following the removal of the turf from a section of this area in April 2021, volunteers from the Friends group have sown Landlife's Traditional Meadow Wildflower seed mix, containing over 20 classic species of perennial wildflowers. Some cornfield annuals were also added to the mix to provide flowers this year. (A2, A3)

In May 2021, the Friends group worked together with the Kent Humanists to plant a new weeping willow on the field as part of the launch of the Humanist Climate Action initiative. Two small alder trees were also planted on the riverbank. (C3)

Environment

In February 2021, 'Welcome to Kingsmead Field Village Green' signs were installed on the field. The design of the signs was the result of close collaboration between the Council and the Friends group. The images on the signs reflect the unique character of Kingsmead Field and its importance for nature, recreation and the local community. (B1)

The Friends group is an active member of the Canterbury Riverside Group and works closely with the Our Stour project of the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (KSCP). Several members of the Friends group are both river wardens and riverfly monitors. They hold regular river cleans and monitoring sessions to assess the diversity of invertebrate life in the river.

Community

Earlier this spring, the Friends group set up a litter-rota for the field as it was proving impossible to arrange larger litter-picks due to the restrictions of lockdown. There are now over 20 people on the litter-rota, including several families. The field is litter-picked at least twice a week by volunteers on the rota. (C1)

In order to enhance the provision of outdoor recreational facilities on Kingsmead Field, the Council and the Friends group have been working on a project to install a Green Gym on the field. The centrepiece of the gym will be a Big Rig which offers unlimited opportunities for a creative workout. It is hoped that the gym will be installed later this year, subject to the gym obtaining the necessary permissions. (C2)

The Friends group continues to work very closely with the Canterbury



Kingsmead Field – Wildflower sowing



Kingsmead Field – Wildflower sowing



Welcome signage and wildflower sowing



Society on a number of initiatives. These have included a petition calling for a district-wide Pollinator Action Plan, a Meadows & Pollinators Photographic Competition and a Nature-Friendly Gardening Celebration. (C1)

The Friends group communicates by monthly emails to its members (200+), frequent posts on its Facebook group (700+ members) and via its website. In December 2020, the Friends group produced a 2021 calendar featuring the wonderful birdlife on the field, especially along the river corridor. (C2)

11. The King's School

The King's School, Canterbury is reported as the oldest school in England. St. Augustine established a school in Canterbury 597AD. In 1541 it was made the responsibility of the new Cathedral Foundation of Henry VIII and the school came to be known as The King's School.

Horticultural

The School is blessed with extensive gardens. Replanting of key areas has taken place, incorporating plants for, year round interest, differing forms of architectural structure, texture and colour complementing our historic buildings, during this period we have planted approximately 350 new plants and over 1500 bulbs, and are committed to continuing this strategy over the coming years.

A newly developed woodland area using a blend of shade and drought tolerant plants have been used.

Cellerers is host to 50 fruit trees and 12 beehives are accommodated within this area, in collaboration with this, the grass has been allowed to grow longer to create a wild meadow and also incorporated within this area is our Knott garden.

Green Court, bulbs encompass the London Plane trees to provide an array of colour and scent from January to June, with a finale of blue / white bedding plants inspired by the colours of the school to celebrate Kings Week.

Blackfriars garden has been created not only to encourage pollinators and wildlife, but also to inspire the art student's use of line, colour, texture shape and pattern, with the assistance of a striking Agave and Trachycarpus a lavish, Callistemon, the inclusion of alpine and a prairie garden.

Environmental

We are reducing our carbon footprint with the introduction of electric mowers and are reducing green waste; what is generated we have a 100 % recycle policy. Currently, we shred all our green waste for reuse as an organic material as mulch for the beds and borders.

There have been sightings of stag beetles amidst our gardens, to encourage more wildlife the addition of log piles and bird feeders and bug hotels have been added. Alongside this, the use of single flowered plants and berry producing shrubs have been introduced. We are environmentally sustainable through the division, propagation and re-planting of self-setting plants.



The Kings School

12. Miller's Field

Miller's Field is owned by the City Council and is Canterbury's first eco-park. The planting and mowing regimes have been changed to be more environmentally friendly. (A2)

Horticulture

Early flowering is provided by snowdrops along the river border and daffodils below the row of hazel trees. The flower beds continue to host a mix of pollinator-friendly bulbs and perennials including *Polygonatum multiflorum* (Solomon's Seal), *Alchemilla xanthochlora* (Lady's Mantle), an important early food source for emerging bees, and *Echinacea*, with the addition of a few annuals. (A3). Where the daffodils grew in the spring the grass has been left to grow through the summer to provide an inviting habitat for local wildlife.

Environment

An interpretation panel has been installed to explain the aims of the project. Miller's Field is enhanced by a sculptural seat designed by Tim Norris which received an award in the Canterbury Society Design Awards and was shortlisted for a National Civic Voice award. (B1)

Bat, bird and insect boxes are positioned on several of the mature trees in the field, as well as a variety of pollinator-friendly plants. A mixed native hedge, planted by volunteers with Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership and maintained by The King's School has now matured along the boundary of Miller's Field and the carpark, providing food and shelter for birds, small mammals and insects. Hedgerows, as with other urban trees, have many benefits for people too, as they improve air quality, add to the attractiveness of an area and improve people's general wellbeing. (B2)



Miller's Field - River walk



Miller's Field - Planting



Miller's Field - Autumn

13. Oaten Hill Area

The Oaten Hill & South Canterbury Association (OHSCA) continues to plant up and maintain corners of our city. They entered the Bloom campaign in 2012 as part of the City entry and have entered three areas for It's Your Neighbourhood since 2016 and have planted another two small areas as well. In all of their plots, the aim is to provide interest 365 days a year with bulbs, winter flowering plants and coloured foliage supplementing the summer planting. They are very active in planting trees to green up their local streets and have planted 36 altogether.

14. Pound Lane Car Park

In the Autumn of 2019, residents of the St Peter's area of Canterbury city centre cleared the entrance to Pound Lane car park and plants were selected for all year interest, with pollinators in mind and for their hardiness in dry conditions. *Sanguisorba 'Tanna'* (a burnet), tall grass *Calamagrostis Acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'* and a metre or so of the low-growing Orange Hawkweed (Fox-and-cubs) *Hieracium Aurantiacum* have been planted (B1, C1). In 2020 the *Knautia Macedonica* was moved to Kingsmead Fields and has been replaced with a pollinator friendly *Ceratostigma Plumbaginoides* which will be flowering from July through to late September. Volunteers continue to weed and maintain the beds while letting the plants mature.

15. St Augustine's Abbey



St Augustine's Abbey was founded in 598, after St Augustine arrived in Kent on a mission to convert the pagan Anglo-Saxons to Christianity. Within 100 years, the work begun by Augustine had converted the whole of England, and the abbey that bore his name was at the heart of English Christianity.

St Augustine's developed over the centuries into a great Romanesque abbey, one of the grandest and most influential in Europe. However,

this power and prominence was not to last. The Suppression of the Monasteries under Henry VIII saw much of the once great abbey destroyed. In later years, St Augustine's became the site of a royal palace, a poorhouse, a gaol and a school. The abbey now forms part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognised for its great importance to the history of Christianity in England. St Augustine's Abbey is now looked after by English Heritage Trust. english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/st-augustines-abbey



St Augustine's Abbey

Horticulture

Early flowering is provided by snowdrops under the larger trees and along the top of the Campanile mound. Later in the year areas of grass within the Abbey are encouraged to grow, allowing wild flowers, which in turn provides an area for bees and butterflies to thrive. (B2)

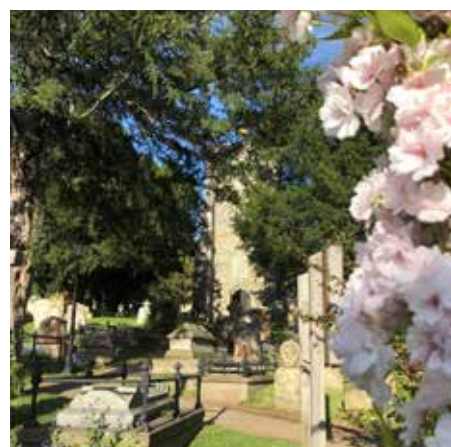
Community

St Augustine's Abbey has an active and diverse group of volunteers that reflect all areas of the local community. They also have many residents who visit the site daily, to soak up the tranquillity of the Abbey.

16. St Martin's Churchyard



St Martin's Church is closed for burying so Canterbury City Council are responsible for its maintenance, with the assistance of the Friends of St Martin's. It was entered in the Churchyards category in 2017 and 2018, winning Silver Gilt in 2019 and 2020. The Friends group works hard to keep the country churchyard atmosphere and has added more summer flowering plants and a big planting of daffodils to boost the established flowers. Over lockdown, the progress on planting has stalled a little, but since autumn, there is now a flourishing cherry tree taking pride of place by the entrance to the churchyard.



St Martin's Church - Cherry tree

17. St Martin's Priory (Canterbury Christ Church University)

St Martin's Priory borders St Martin's Church and is set within the 2.5 acres of gardens. The Priory is used to host external events, such as weddings. When not booked for events, the grounds are open for use by staff and students, making a very tranquil location for breaks and quiet study.

The Grade II Listed Building is surrounded by a wonderful variety of gardens. The Tudor Lawn and Rose Garden are carefully managed and are currently being prepared to be reopened for events.



St Martin's Church - Forget-me-nots

The herbaceous border is also being reworked for the summer with the planting guided by the university's Green Heritage/Bioversity approach, ensuring that planting is sympathetic to the location and history of the site. Further from the building, areas of grass have been allowed to grow, as part of "No Mow May", with paths being cut to allow access. These wilder areas act as a haven for a range of wildlife, especially birds and insects. (B2)



St Martin's Priory – Pond



St Martin's Priory – Labyrinth



St Martin's Priory – Grounds

18. St Mary de Castro

St Mary de Castro is a small, closed churchyard just a short walk from Dane John Gardens.

Horticulture

During 2020/21 nine volunteers planted about 600 bulbs in the main border. The bulbs were chosen to enhance the appearance of the border but also were selected with pollinators in mind. The 400 species Crocus flowered in early March and could be heard as well as seen as they were well visited by bees, as were the Chionodoxa. The daffodils selected were a mixture of native British daffodils and early flowering ones with the aim of cheering people up as early as possible after the winter. (A3)

Tulips were selected for their colour contrast in order to be attractive. Alliums were chosen because they are popular with people and insects.



St Mary de Castro - Tulips

50 or 60 perennials have been added. The Euphorbia were chosen for structure in a bed where shrubs need to be of a height and density which is fairly transparent. Nepeta, Aster, Rudbekia and Perovskia have been added for pollinators later on in the year. Crocosmia, Lychnis, Ballotta and Luzula were planted for structure and colour. One end of the border needs to reflect that it is under trees and the rest is in full sun in the open. (A3)

Community

The area has struggled with antisocial behaviour including rough sleeping, street drinking, drug dealing etc. Residents and the public have raised this as a concern through the newly formed Friends of Dane John and St Mary de Castro and the plan is to design out the antisocial behaviour. (C1)

Funding comes from Canterbury City Council, Friends of Dane John, St Mildred's Area Community Society and from The Canterbury Society. (C3)

Volunteers have spent an average 50 -60 hours clearing rubbish from the border, weeding, planting and some watering; one 87 year old has been known to start at 9 and finish at 6!

19. Solly's Orchard

In 1236, the Dominican order of friars established a priory on this site and by 1260 several buildings, including a church, had been built. By 1650, most of the priory buildings, including the gatehouse which stood on the orchard, had been demolished except the guesthouse and refectory of the medieval priory remain to the south of the orchard. In 2007, fourteen apple trees were planted to re-establish the old orchard. The apple varieties chosen have a religious theme: Chorister boy, Christmas Pearmain, Easter orange, Eden, Harvest festival and Ten Commandments. The trees are managed by artisan cidery Rough Old Wife Cider through a licence with the Council, the first of its kind in the country.

Volunteers from the St Peter's Residents' Association have been busy transforming the orchard's borders over the last few years. What began as work on one perennial border along the orchard wall has now extended into both the neighbouring 'Weir Garden' and the narrow beds alongside the river between two bridges. (A2) StPetersAssociation.co.uk

Horticulture

Two large patches of 8ft Miscanthus grasses monopolised the riverside beds - a precious space because it is the only bed in the park which is in full sun. These have been replaced with three plants from beds that required more sun and space: Lobelia Tupa (Chile) 6ft with red flowers, Thalictrum Splendide 6ft, white flowers and Miscanthus Nepalensis all of which are more manageable and very decorative with copper tassels. Also in this corner sits a giant Canna, ginger and eucomis.

The Weir Garden border now boasts a perennial bed with plants including mimosa (early spring flowering), spring bulbs - erysimum planted on the bank particularly good for pollinators (longest flowering range of any perennial)

In Solly's Orchard, a new climber has been introduced on the wall: Clematis Urophylla Winter Beauty with white bell-flowers through winter. This suffered from the harshest winter cold but has recovered. The main border now contain low growing Phlox Paniculata and Blue Scaevola, to cover as much soil as possible.

A leaf-mould container was constructed in 2019 from natural material, and leaves are raked from Solly's by volunteers. For the first time in 2021 all beds have had leaf-mould spread on them from leaf rakings of 2019. This should minimise the need to water and will help reduce the amount of watering required during the summer months. (B3)

20. The Butterfly Garden

The Butterfly Garden is a walled garden, on the edge of the River Stour, occupying a building gap in Pound Lane which was created in 1983 by the demolition of two 19th century cottages. The garden was planted in memory of local publisher Kenneth Pinnock, who received the John Hayes Award for his book 'A Canterbury Childhood' published after his death in 2009. As he was one of the founders of the Canterbury Society, it



Solly's Orchard - walled garden



Solly's Orchard - Pollinator



Solly's Orchard - New beds

was decided that the award should go to The Canterbury Society, who used the money to help with the costs of planting in the Butterfly Garden (C4). canterburysociety.org.uk

Horticulture

Special planting along the top of the riverside wall leads the visitor into the seclusion of the garden. A mixture of dwarf rockery tulips was planted: 'Red Riding Hood', 'Pinocchio', 'First Love', 'Albion Star' and 'Calypso'. Tuberous Begonia 'Apricot Shades' were planted out as the tulips died down. Evergreen, Hardy Geranium Pyrenaicum 'Bill Wallis' (a deep blue) was also planted at intervals. (A1)

The earliest display in the central sunny bed comes with crocus and snowdrops, while winter aconites appear in the shaded area. These are followed by tulips and daffodils. In the autumn, alliums and camassia were planted amongst the dahlias in the sunny bed to provide interest while the dahlias are getting underway.

Two varieties of single dahlia were chosen for their generous display of golden pistils containing pollen: 'Waltzing Matilda' (water-melon pink) and 'Clair de Lune' (pale lemon). Salvia Nemorosa 'Caradonna' has been used for contrast and white Oenothera Lindheimeri, formerly Gaura Lindheimeri, (Beeblossoms) give extra height. Other pollinator friendly herbaceous perennials, such as phlox and penstemon provide extra colour in this bed, along with other nectar producers, such as wallflower, verbena, scabiosa, thyme and marjoram. Lavender and jasmine, on the west-facing wall, provide perfume in the summer. (A3, B2)

The moisture retention of the light soil was improved using copious amounts of compost and a good layer of leaf mulch (from the leaf-mulch container in Solly's orchard) is added annually in spring. (A2)

In the shady bed, height is provided by Thalictrum Aquilegifolium (meadow rue) and Aruncus 'Horatio', an improved goat's beard. Anisodonta 'El Roto', of the Malva family, is backed by the white flowered potato vine, Solanum Laxum 'album' on the wall, where there is a little more sun. In the shade of another wall are a group of Sarcococca for early perfume. Several ferns have been planted in this bed, some of which will become quite tall with time, with foxgloves planted in-between them. More unusual Veronicastrum Album and Kirengeshoma have also been planted in this section. Meanwhile, hardy geraniums 'Biokovo' and 'Rozanne' help to cover the ground. (A3)

Many plants have been donated by members of the Kent Branch of The Hardy Plant Society; for example, a Dregea Sinensis, a choice climber, for the north wall, which has a white flower with good perfume and a very generous donation of blue camassia from Swallowfields Nursery, Elmsted. (A3, A4)

Tall grasses Hakonechloa Macra 'Albovariegata' were kindly donated by the head gardener at the Cathedral, who holds the National Collection of this species. (A3, A4)

Environment

The plants were chosen with the aim of encouraging pollinators such as butterflies and bees to this peaceful, secluded riverside walled garden. Structural diversity has been considered to provide both foraging and shelter for wildlife, by including shrubs, climbers, perennials, herbs and ground creepers. Plants were chosen with consideration for creating long, varied seasonal blooming. Clematis Urophylla 'Winter Beauty' provides good evergreen foliage and white flowers during the winter. (A3, B2)



They have been planted for succession to extend the seasonal availability of nectar and pollen by including early blooming varieties such as winter aconite, snowdrops and crocus, followed by camassia and allium, long flowering varieties such as dahlias, scabious, verbena, osteospermum and Anisodonte 'El Ryo' (a shrub of the Malva family) and the wallflower, Erysimum 'Winter's Joy', and late blooming varieties such as Asters and Sedum. (B2)

As far as possible double or multi-petalled flowers have been avoided. The open, single flowers of the two varieties of dahlias were chosen to provide landing pads for pollinators' easy access to nectar and pollen. Wherever possible, clusters of one species have been created to attract more pollinators rather than scattering individual varieties throughout the garden. By consistent dead-heading, the dahlias provide a valuable source of late nectar, as well. These, along with the salvia, verbena and scabious also provide close clusters of flowers which means bumblebees can access many flowers without needing to expend a great deal of energy. In contrast, the digitalis, penstemons and honeysuckle provide deep corollae with more nectar per flower for the garden bumblebee and the common carder bee with their longer tongues.

Community

The Canterbury Society has two volunteers who attend to the garden weekly, while small volunteer groups are called upon to help with planting spring bulbs in the autumn, watering, weeding, dead-heading flowering plants in the dry summer months, as well as pruning and attending to the creepers. Volunteers also keep the garden litter free.

21. The Kent Community Oasis Garden (KentCOG)

In 2018, a new community garden opened on the campus of the University of Kent. It is designed to become an outdoor space which can promote wellbeing and environmental awareness among staff, students and members of the local community.
blogs.kent.ac.uk/kentcog/

Kent Community Oasis Garden is now seeing the blooming of over 1000 daffodil and tulip bulbs, which were planted to enhance the visual appearance of the garden in springtime. The garden has entered into a new partnership with East Kent Mind focusing the garden's activities on wellbeing, with sessions on coping with anxiety and improving low mood alongside the usual garden activities. Since COVID-19 disrupted work on-site, the KentCOG coordinator has been running online eco-therapy sessions for students, staff and community members. Since being back on site, the KentCOG volunteers have been restoring the site and catching up with the growing season ready to welcome students back. The group is currently restoring some old beds that used be part of Hothe Court Farm and turning them into flower beds for cut flowers.



The Kent Community Oasis Garden



The Kent Community Oasis Garden

22. Vauxhall Field

Vauxhall Field is a large open space next to the river Stour serving a local community in an area of high deprivation. The open space has suffered from long-term problems of littering, fly-tipping, metal-stripping and the burning of household waste. To help tackle these problems, a project was launched in 2017 involving members of the local community, All Saints Church, East Kent Housing, local Councillors and Canterbury City Council. The project helped to establish a strong partnership and led to the creation of a multi-stakeholder group under the leadership of Canterbury City Council. The aims of the group are to tackle problems as they emerge and to improve Vauxhall Field as a valuable amenity space.

Community

Initiatives that have been organised by members of the multi-stakeholder group have included community litter-picks, tea-parties, a river-dipping event, a wildlife workshop for families and a daffodil-planting event. Members of the local community have often turned out in large numbers. Canterbury Sea Cadets have also taken part in many of events as their headquarters is located close by. (C1, C2)

Canterbury City Council has funding to fulfil one of the main long-term objectives of the multi-stakeholder group, namely the provision of a play area for local children. Early consultation took place in Autumn 2020 and received an overwhelmingly positive response from local residents, with a lot of valuable feedback from parents and children.

A further consultation is now taking place on two possible play schemes. Following this, the two designs will be evaluated with one scheme selected to be built in Autumn 2021. (C3)

23. Webb's Garden at St Martin's Hospital

Webb's Garden is a beautiful, walled garden within the grounds of St Martin's Hospital. A wide range of vegetables, fruit and cut flowers are grown in the garden. These are sold to staff within the hospital and to members of the local community. It has been a challenging time due to COVID-19 and restrictions that have been in place. A small number of volunteers have tended to the garden to ensure all the produce is cared for and grows. A newly created memorial garden is currently being planted and as restrictions are lifted more volunteers are returning to enjoy the garden as it continues to bloom. Facebook/Webbs Garden.



Webb's Garden



Webb's Garden

24. Westgate Parks

Westgate Parks are identified as Canterbury City's premier open space and an important gateway to the city and the Stour Valley. Westgate Parks consist of Westgate Gardens, Toddler's Cove, Tannery Field

and Bingley Island. Situated next to the Westgate Towers, the Westgate Gardens are ornamental formal gardens created by the Williamson family who lived in Tower House. Tower House was given to the City of Canterbury in 1936 by the family. Facebook/Friends of Westgate Parks

Horticulture

At the beginning of the year the Friends received a Members Grant of over 2K from Kent County Council for various improvements needed in the Parks during 2021, which includes £380 specifically for the Physic Garden -to be matched by Friends of Westgate Parks funds as well as labour. This project is well advanced and ongoing. The total amount of time must by now exceed 100 hours (C1).

Over the past year a considerable number of Friends of Westgate Parks volunteer hours have been devoted to maintaining and now trying to improve the Physic Garden. The beds had become very overgrown, some key plants having been lost/died out, others had spread to neighbouring beds, vitiating the basic concept that each separate bed was devoted to plants useful for medicating specified bodily systems. The beds are now far less overgrown, but they are still working toward ensuring that the right plants are present and are in their rightful places.

A special project has been the lavender maze in which the plants had grown old, woody, some had died, and the whole planting was steadily being invaded by 'weeds.' Volunteers have grubbed out the whole maze and re-planted with new lavender seedlings.

The wall that forms the backdrop to the garden was planted with apple trees during the HLF project, circa 2015. They were cordoned but sad to say metal thieves stole the wires! The group does not plan to replace

the wires, but keep the apples pruned as free-standing trees. The long bed in which they stand has been planted with spring bulbs. A dozen *Cotoneaster Franchetii* plants have been planted against the wall to create an intermediate 'layer' below the trees and behind the bulbs and herbs at the front of the long bed, to give all-year interest. The berries in winter are attractive, often eaten by birds, and the flowers are attractive to bees. This particular *Cotoneaster* is also considered excellent for absorbing air pollution.

The planting of purple *Crocus* bulbs earlier in the year by the Canterbury Rotarians was part of their Leprosy awareness campaign known as Purple4Polio. When a child receives their life-saving polio drops on mass polio immunisation days, their little finger is painted with a purple dye to make it clear that they have had their injection.

Community

The Friends of Westgate Park continue to help maintain and manage the park through a formal agreement with CCC. The group now operates with a formal memorandum of understanding. It sets out the group's aims, how it will work together and areas CCC and group will maintain such as the community murals, physic garden and wildflower meadow. The Friends also work with members of the adjacent



Westgate Parks

Umbrella Centre. At present a volunteer from there frequently joins the friends on their regular weekly morning gardening work. In addition to gardening, the Friends regularly have to clear discarded beer cans, cigarette butts and some drug related litter but this is all part of our attempts to improve any park visitors' enjoyment of a real city asset. They are helped by Andy the Serco gardener who leaves containers each week to fill with discarded foliage which he later collects. Westgate parks communicates with its users through a Facebook group (570+ members) and a website. (C2)

25. Whitefriars Shopping Centre

Whitefriars Shopping Centre contributes around 24% of Canterbury's city centre shopping space. 2020/21 has proven to be a very challenging period in all respects, with the shops subject to lockdowns during 2020 and right through into May 2021, including the key spring season.

To celebrate reopening, Whitefriars have partnered with local nursery Meadow Grange to create their colourful bloom display. The nursery has supplied 45 hanging baskets, plus 36 troughs window boxes to display in the shopping centre. The flowers will bloom from May through to September and include varieties that will appeal to local pollinators, including the bees based in a hive on the roof of the shopping centre. In addition, six *Betula utilis* (Himalayan Birch) have been positioned within the square in large wooden containers, to soften what would usually be a concrete space and provide a positive environment for visitors. Whitefriars.co.uk



Whitefriars Square



Whitefriars Marlowe Arcade



Whitefriars Bloom Window Vinyl

Environment

1. Local Identity and Pride of Place

Art in the Landscape

A number of initiatives have taken place over the last few years to use art to improve unloved areas of the city.

Canterbury School of Visual Art's Living Sculptures

Selected student artists studying at Canterbury School of Visual Art at Canterbury College are currently designing living sculptures to be showcased in Canterbury this summer. Sites in Whitefriars and the University of Kent have already been agreed and it is hoped one more space will be used too. The creation of the sculptures requires support from other departments including welding through the Motor Vehicle, Animal Care and Land Based Studies department, all working with and inspiring students and facilitating this whole project. Costs for the project will be paid for out of the Friends of CSVA trust. The Sculptures will appear in Whitefriars and University of Kent.

BID Window Vinyl Project

Since June 2020, Canterbury BID has produced over 120 bright, bold, window vinyls for the city's window spaces. The themes have included:

- **Canterbury in Bloom:** Canterbury BID in partnership with Kent County Council began a project to celebrate the city's green spaces with vibrant images covering empty retail units. Each window reflects an entry to the Canterbury in Bloom portfolio with images of the space in bloom, details of the volunteers that look after it, and pollinators found in that particular location. A green map has also been designed so people can find the city's green spaces along with a QR code taking people to the BID's Green Spaces webpage.
- **Canterbury at Christmas:** Canterbury BID commissioned Graphic Design students from Canterbury Christ Church University to create Christmas Selfie trail across the city featuring Christmas activities that the city usually features including the market, panto, lights switch on and more. Visitors were encouraged to share selfie photos in order to potentially win a Canterbury Gift Card.
- **Creative Canterbury:** a celebration of the city's past and present creativity featuring details of famous residents of the city (including Christopher Marlowe, Aphra Behn, Mary Tourtel and Joseph Conrad), the cultural events that run annually (including Pride, CSP, Canterbury Festival and more), details of our UNESCO sites and the role of pilgrimage.
- **Sun Yard Exhibition Space:** a new corridor exhibition space to showcase Canterbury's creative futures. So far, the space has hosted exhibitions created by Canterbury School of Visual Art at Canterbury College and in 2021 Canterbury's Graphic Design student's summer show.



BID VinylProject



BID Vinyl Project



St Dunstons Underpass



St Dunstons Underpass



St Dunstons Underpass

St Dunstan's Underpass

In October 2020 Canterbury was delighted to see official opening of the newly decorated pedestrian underpass which goes under the railway line in St Dunstan's Street. It had been an eyesore for years, dark and grubby and plagued with graffiti.

Over £5000 came from members of the community through crowd funding, and was increased by local developer, Network Rail, Canterbury Cathedral and city and county council funding.

The space is now a bright and pleasant public space. The walls are covered in special coating so that new graffiti can be easily washed off. The space is decorated with original works by young artist Henry Cockburn's paintings of Canterbury (a vivid and attractive portrayal of life in the city) and is our first 'Art Gallery in an Underpass'. The year 2020 marked the 850th anniversary of Thomas Becket's death, so Henry Cockburn has produced a special painting for the underpass, commemorating King Henry II's visit to Canterbury in 1170, where the King walked barefoot down St Dunstan's Street to do penance for his part in the murder of Thomas Becket.

This has been a real community project. Local people have come together to raise the money to renovate this neglected subway, add to the public art which residents and visitors can enjoy and commemorate an important event in the history of Canterbury.

2. Natural Environment

No Mow May

Canterbury has joined the 'No Mow May' campaign for 2021, leaving many of the verges to go wild along with strips of park area including Miller's Field. This forms part of the national campaign run by Plantlife, an initiative to encourage the growth of flowers for pollinators. In Kingsmead this area was demarcated with a dashed red line and the volunteers intended to monitor the flowers grown in the area.

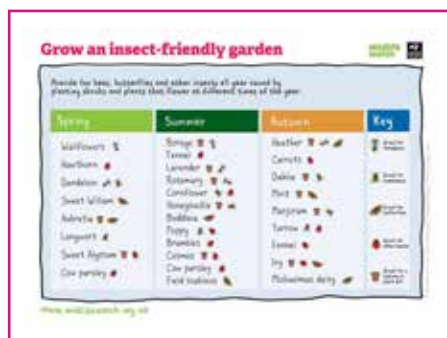
Canterbury Biodiversity Network

There is a growing realisation that the world is facing two interrelated environmental crises - a climate crisis on the one hand and a biodiversity crisis on the other. This has been evidenced by a series of high-level reports in recent months demonstrating the unprecedented loss of species and ecosystems over the last 50 years. With this in mind, a small steering group formed the Canterbury Biodiversity Network in late 2020 with three main aims:

1. To facilitate information exchange and joint working between groups and individuals engaged in protecting biodiversity in the district.
2. To encourage the creation of a district-wide Nature Recovery Network and the promotion of Nature-based Solutions to climate change.
3. To call for concerted action at the local, regional and national level to protect and promote biodiversity.



Plan Bee pollinator pictures



Plan Bee pollinator chart



Information Panel at Sainsburys

The Canterbury Biodiversity Network grew out of the Canterbury Sustainable Development Goals Forum and the Canterbury Climate Action Partnership and will work in close partnership with them.

The Canterbury Biodiversity Network meets three times annually. The inaugural meeting on the 26 January 2021 was very well attended by 35 individual participants, representing the several stakeholder groups. Most of those who attended the meeting are involved in a range of initiatives to protect and improve natural habitats for the benefit of wildlife. However, there are very few opportunities for broad-based discussion on biodiversity issues at the local level. It is with this goal in mind that the Canterbury Biodiversity Network was initiated. Following the inaugural meeting Canterbury City Council has formed a Biodiversity Working Group.

The second meeting of the CBN was held on 25 May 2021 with the focus on the Wilder Blean Project and the third meeting will be held on 19 October 2021 with the focus on The Green Recovery Challenge Fund Project in Seasalter, Wraik Hill and the Blean.

Kent County Council's Plan Bee

A pollinator action plan has been developed by Kent County Council to take the lead and encourage local communities to improve the food sources and general habitat for pollinators in Kent. Pollinators such as bees, wasps, butterflies, moths and hoverflies are vital for food, economy and environment and we must act to reverse their rapid decline. We are especially mindful of our privilege to be described as 'The Garden of England'. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Make the council a community leader in action for pollinators
- Ensure that pollinators' needs are always considered throughout the county council's work and services
- Put the conservation of pollinators and their habitats at the heart of land management and planning
- Make the county council a significant contributor to the recovery of pollinator populations.

Plan Bee is ensuring the land and spaces for which Kent County Council is responsible and continues to be managed for the benefit of pollinators. This includes roadside verges and parks and any other land the Council owns, manages or can influence. It is establishing that the County Council will work with local planning authorities to seek to use the planning system to benefit pollinator populations and their habitats and food sources. It is giving a lead to the people of Kent generally, to take their own action, however big or small, in their communities, workplaces, schools and homes. It is working continually to make people aware of the importance of safeguarding pollinators in their communities and how they as an individual can help.

More can be found at www.kent.gov.uk



**Please help our pollinators!
Sign the ePetition!**

Bees and other pollinators have suffered a massive decline in recent decades. But they are crucial for our environment and the pollination of our crops. We need to do much more to help them!

Please sign the ePetition calling on Canterbury City Council to adopt a Bee Plan to help protect pollinators and their habitats. We have until 30 September to get as many signatures as possible. 3000 signatures will trigger a Council debate on the adoption of a **Pollinator Action Plan**. Please sign and share! Follow this link:

<https://democracy.canterbury.gov.uk/mg/EPetitionDisplay.aspx?ID=120&RPID=16321353&PID=16321253>

Or search 'petitions' on canterbury.gov.uk

Pollinator Action Plan flyer



Our Stour River Clean



CRG and KSCP River Clean



CRG and KSCP Group Photo



CRG and KSCP River Clean



Trollies found during River Clean



KSCP recording litter



University of Kent Bio Blitz



University of Kent Bio Blitz

Pollinator Action Plan

In 2020 The Canterbury Society submitted an e-petition to Canterbury City Council requesting the Adoption of a Pollinator Action Plan. The petition received 2022 signatures and the Council agreed to adopt a pollinator action plan. In March 2021 Anna Stevens, Environmental team leader at CCC, organised an online workshop to enable networking between key stakeholders, to aid the delivery of ongoing work for pollinators in the Canterbury district. This was attended by 50 stakeholders. The Pollinator Action Plan is now in the process of being drafted.

University of Kent Bio Blitz

On the 29 May 2021, students from the School of Anthropology and Conservation held a BioBlitz at the University of Kent Canterbury campus. A BioBlitz is an intense biological survey, normally taking place in a 24-hour period that aims to record all living species within a designated area. The students organised a series of sessions that were open to other students, staff members at Kent, and the local community, which were led by naturalists, taxonomic experts, and volunteers around the campus to survey for birds, bats, small mammals, hedgehogs, badgers, invertebrates, bryophytes and much more!

The data from the event is still being analysed however, the latest count shows 244 different species being recorded in a 24-hour period on the Canterbury Campus. Further information will be published on the University's website about the event showcasing the findings and highlighting some special finds. The data will also be used to inform the University's new Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan.

The event was supported by staff from the School of Anthropology and Conservation, Estates Department, and the Safety, Health and Environment Unit.

Canterbury Riverside Group and the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (KSCP)

The Council's draft Heritage Strategy (January 2019) recognises that the River Stour has been '*the lifeblood of Canterbury from its earliest days*' and that the Stour has played a critical role in shaping Canterbury's heritage. The Stour is classified as a chalk river which means the water is of good chemical quality and has relatively stable temperatures and is consequently able to support a diverse ecosystem. Chalk rivers are rare habitats with only 200 found globally, with 85% of these are found in England.

This recognition of the importance of the Stour is also reflected in the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (adopted in November 2018). Many recent improvements to the River Stour have been implemented by the Canterbury Riverside Group, which brings together the Council, the Environment Agency, the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (KSCP) and local community groups.

KSCP has undertaken additional work, such as the installation of riverside planters throughout Westgate Gardens and the creation of a wetland area at Kingsmead Field. It has also launched a three-year 'Our Stour' project which consists of six distinct components:

- Rivers in Focus (using photography to highlight the value of the Stour)
- River Wardens (to help protect and monitor the river)
- Aqualab (a mobile classroom to bring the flora and fauna of the river to life)
- Flowfilm (using film-making to highlight environmental issues on the river)
- River conservation tasks for volunteers
- Landowner workshops (to promote river-friendly land management)

The Our Stour project has been very well received. There are now 15 river wardens in the city of Canterbury and 19 in the district as a whole. Over 1,000 children have taken part in river-dipping and Aqualab sessions. Six river cleans have taken place in 2020-21, involving over 23 volunteers and the equivalent of 10 volunteer days. In total, 63 bags and multiple large items were removed from the river.

Inevitably COVID-19 had an impact of the amount of volunteering work that could be organised but even so, a significant amount of man hours and effort was invested in the River Stour clean-ups. River Warden volunteers have also been removing rubbish independently whilst out on their walks and surveys of the river- estimate that approximately another 15bags of rubbish have been removed by volunteers.



No Mow May Sign on Kingsmead Field

3. Hard Surfaces and Open Grass Areas Canterbury City Council

Canterbury City Council

Tackling littering, graffiti, dog fouling and fly tipping form one of four key components of Canterbury City Council's Corporate Plan for 2021-23 and are a key focus. Various techniques are being used in order to change people's behaviour including tough enforcement against those that break the rules and publicising the punishments they receive.

The Love Where We Live campaign has continued with marketing activity designed to encourage people to pick up their litter and clean up after their dogs.

The Enforcement team carry out regular patrols under an operation called Operation Foul to target dog walkers that do not clear up after their pets and to educate owners.



Plastic Free Canterbury River Clean

An enormous amount of work is going into cleaning graffiti, catching those that carry out the criminal damage with the help of £500 reward for information from the Council and helping business and private property owners to design out the opportunities for tagging etc.

Working together with Kent Police, Canterbury BID and others to tackle antisocial behaviour in all of its forms as well as its causes is top of the agenda as evidenced by a joint effort to secure £382,358 in Safer Streets 2 funding from the Home Office for more CCTV, bike and property marking kits in the city centre, lots of crime prevention freebies such as purse dipping bells etc and equipment for engagement events.

Canterbury Climate Action Partnership (CCAP)

Canterbury City Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and appointed a Climate Change Officer in April 2020 and created a Climate Change Board to help achieve the goal of a zero carbon Canterbury district by 2030. The community set up an independent Canterbury Climate Action Partnership (CCAP) in June 2019, on which many of the Bloom partners, including the Business Improvement District sit. CCAP is a partnership between the Canterbury Society and the Canterbury Sustainable Development Goals Forum. It has now grown to include representatives from other local civic society groups, the three universities, business, residents' associations, faith groups, youth groups, Greenpeace and many others. The group will also be organising a Climate Change Festival running the last week of October, to complement the launch of COP26 in November.

Plastic Free Canterbury

A Plastic Free Canterbury initiative formed in 2020 to complement the successful Plastic Free Town campaigns on the coast. The group has been set up under the umbrella of the Canterbury Climate Change Partnership and involves Councillors from the three main political parties, Canterbury BID and members of the local community. A Facebook group has been set up, and a 'Plastic Waste Survey' has been circulated to local businesses regarding their policy around single use packaging. The group are currently seeking case studies from local green businesses to help show best practice.

On Saturday 12 June 2021 Plastic Free Canterbury co-ordinated four teams of 15 volunteers to litter pick on the banks and in the Stour River in Canterbury, as part of the Great British Spring Clean from Westgate Gardens through St Radigund's and Kingsmead to ASDA. Volunteers from The Canterbury Society, Friends of Kingsmead Fields, Kent Union, UKC and the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (Our Stour Project) participated.

The aim of the river litter pick was to highlight the problem of single use plastic polluting our rivers.

At the same time a sponsored walk of the river took place to raise money for the Plastic Free Canterbury accreditation application and for helping to keep the Stour River free from litter. A total of 1985 pieces of plastic were retrieved from the river!

No Food Wasted Forum (Produced in Kent)

Produced in Kent started a "No Food Wasted" Forum in early 2020. The group was set up to reduce food waste and create greater access to good food. In June 2020, the group announced the launch of a new business to business app called Food Loop for the county's growers, producers, butchers, farmers and shops, restaurants and pubs with the aim of reducing food waste and getting food to those who need it. Food Loop is the first B2B app of its kind and differs from existing food exchange apps including OLIO or Too Good to Go – which work on a business to consumer (B2C), or consumer to consumer (C2C) model, dealing mostly with smaller quantities, often prepared food, and have a focus on retail and hospitality outlets in urban areas servicing urban customers or community initiatives.

Food Loop is in the first phase of a 12-month trial period and is embarking on a crowdfunding campaign as well as being part of Community Renewal Fund bids. The app connects businesses with businesses introducing suppliers of surplus food across the food chain – growers, producers, retail and hospitality, as

well as community initiatives who are dealing with surplus in donated food stuffs – operating in urban and rural areas. It encourages suppliers to be a force for good and redistribute a larger part of their food surplus, thus creating a sense of community.

Canterbury Business Improvement District

Canterbury BID is on the Board of Canterbury City Council's Climate Change Partnership Group and is leading on the "waste" workstream, with two aims (1) supporting the Council's net zero targets and (2) providing a better service for businesses. A Trade Waste Survey is being conducted in June-July 2021 to help us understand the waste streams, volumes, existing suppliers, collection and disposal methods, current pricing and any ideas of concern.

The BID also completed a round of deep-street cleaning in April 2021, to aid local businesses as the COVID-19 lockdown began to ease. Graffiti removal and deep-street cleaning have been identified as key areas for improvement by traders. Anti-graffiti wipes are now handed out, free of charge to BID businesses and our team of Ambassadors report daily on any graffiti issues across the city. In addition, they attend a weekly meeting with the Police and other organisations to follow up any issues of concern. Based on feedback and consultation with traders, going forward the BID will commission a regular programme of deep street cleaning and a rapid response cleaning service. On 9 June Canterbury BID joined the Great British Spring Clean to help remove graffiti from local landmarks and to speak to businesses about reporting future graffiti. The group were joined by the Lord Mayor for this event.

As part of our recovery for 2021 we have created a series of short videos featuring our green spaces. Our Summer City Guide also features the County Council's Plan Bee and Franciscan Gardens.

Litter Round Table

Throughout the pandemic, community groups and individual residents have found ways to continue litter-picking in order to improve the appearance of the city. The Litter Roundtable (a community initiative bringing together councillors, council officers, the BID, and representatives of residents' associations) has met by Zoom on three occasions (August 2020, October 2020 and April 2021). Items under discussion have included the Council's new Local Authority Trading Company, the problem of graffiti, the need for a Street Art strategy, the creation of Plastic Free Canterbury, the need for urgent action to clean up the River Stour, and the Great British Spring Clean 2021.

The Local Community

The local community has played a dynamic and catalytic role in promoting action to tackle the problems of litter, fly-tipping and graffiti. Residents' associations and community groups have worked collaboratively with the Council and the BID and have set up a Litter Roundtable to provide a forum to discuss ways of addressing the problems with Councillors and Council officers.



Plastic Free Canterbury Litter Pick and River Clean

Community

1. Year-Round Activity and Future Commitment

Canterbury in Bloom's partners all deliver extensive programmes throughout the year. The COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging and led to many planned projects being curtailed or postponed. However, we have been cheered by the amount of activity which has been able to survive the restrictions, from litter pickers to volunteer gardeners, continuing to improve and invest in their city's green spaces, for the benefit of all. Now that lockdown is easing, groups and organisations are coming together again to pick up these projects once again.

The Canterbury Society

The Society organises seasonal litter picks - for the Great British Spring Clean, an annual River Stour clean and an autumn litter pick of the river pathways.

The Canterbury Society is an active member of the Riverside Group, a founder member of Canterbury's Litter Roundtable and a founder member of the Canterbury Climate Action Partnership.

2. Communication and Awareness

Partners each develop their own communication and press programmes. Below are some examples of coverage throughout the year,

Facebook Communities

During COVID-19 the power of social media has been essential to ensuring that our communities continue to be connected. The following pages have been developed to bring news to the community of the work created through Bloom's volunteers and community groups.

- Canterbury in Bloom
- Wild Canterbury
- Brymore Nature Group

The Canterbury Society

In celebration of National Meadows Day 4 July 2020, the Canterbury Society held an online photographic competition during July and August, for adults and children, with the aim of drawing attention to the fact that 97 per cent of the UK's wildflower meadows have been lost since the 1930s, resulting in a dramatic decline in the population of pollinating insects across the country. 21 adult entries and 10 children's entries were received. A beautiful photograph of a lone tree standing in a meadow of buttercups beneath an atmospheric blue-grey sky was the winning entry. A close-up photo of a butterfly feeding on a wildflower in a meadow was the winning entry in the Under-16s category. The small prize-giving event was held in the Butterfly Garden on Sunday 30 August 2020.

On the 5 May 2021 a Nature-Friendly Gardening competition was launched by the Canterbury Society at an online talk given by Maureen Rainey, Kent Wildlife Trust on creating a garden that is inviting for wildlife. Three monthly awards will be given during May, June and July, to the most innovative nature-friendly garden project. Participants will share their photographs/videos and description of their project on the Wild Canterbury FB group. Canterbury City Council are sponsoring the awards of £30 each month.

The Canterbury Society communicates with its members and supporters through a monthly newsletter, by email (246 members), Facebook page (247 members), Instagram and its website (<https://www.canterburysociety.org.uk>). It holds regular events for its members (at present online) and submits press releases to the local paper.

3. Funding and Support

- Individual partners each fund their own activities through their own fundraising.
- Whitefriars provide support to Canterbury Bee Keepers Association which has hives on the centre's roof.
- The BID funds the city-wide hanging basket programme and also provides campaign coordination, entry fees and the portfolio from BID resources. Hanging baskets on business premises has increased from 245 in 2015, 340 in 2017, 370 in 2018, 400 in 2019, 352 in 2020 and 380 in 2021. The planting is selected to maximise the floral impact for the longest period whilst still retaining both the ability to be a source of nectar to bees and other pollinating insects and absorb pollutants to help improve air quality. It's been more important than ever for 2021 to provide a citywide, colourful hanging basket display to enhance the city businesses re-opening gradually after the period of lockdown.
- Kent County Council, through Councillor Robert Thomas, has supported the cost of the Canterbury in Bloom Vinyls currently decorating the city centre.



Canterbury Society Litter Pick



Canterbury City Council Jet Washing Streets



Canterbury BID Great British Spring Clean



Canterbury BID Great British Spring Clean



Pollinator Competition Flyer

Conclusion

This is the eighth time that Canterbury has entered the South & South East in Bloom competition. The breadth and variety of partners has been our strength and privilege from the very beginning. Our 'strength in diversity' continues to flourish as our existing groups continue to grow and new groups join us.

We thought last year was tough – but 2021 has been even more challenging to our efforts for 'Canterbury in Bloom'. There has been no operator, volunteer, employee or business that has not been impacted by the global pandemic locally. The timing of the lockdowns, with the brakes on and off during 2020/21, has meant that planning and implementation of some horticultural and environmental projects has not happened on time or has been postponed. Many of our volunteers are in the vulnerable, older brackets, and the vaccine rollout has really only just started to have a meaningful effect. This will inevitably have an impact on Canterbury once again this summer.

That said, we are already aware that local groups, the Council, shops, organisations and other businesses are keen to help the city to stay blooming. The open spaces in and around Canterbury have played a significant role throughout the crisis of this pandemic, supporting well-being and economic recovery, turning crisis into opportunity. We are always delighted by how much is still going ahead, and by the care and investment made in the city's horticultural scene. The beautiful hanging baskets installed by the Business Improvement District at the end of May 2021 are leading the way, as the city now reopens fully for summer trading. Many residents will not be travelling abroad this year – their city will take on a special significance and contributing to an ongoing community-led recovery as they spend more time here.

Appendix 1:

A selection of the press coverage from this year:

<https://www.canterburybid.co.uk/canterbury-is-ready-to-welcome-you/>

<https://www.canterburybid.co.uk/more-new-vinyls/>

<https://www.canterburybid.co.uk/canterburys-festive-selfie-trail-has-arrived/>

<https://www.canterburybid.co.uk/dedicated-volunteers-help-canterbury-win-gold-in-bloom/>

Golden touch for city's blooms

Canterbury has struck gold again in the South and South East in Bloom competition.

It is the only small city in the region to take home the top honour, with the award yet another in a long line of accolades for the Canterbury in Bloom committee and the city's green-fingered volunteers.

While the national Britain in Bloom awards were postponed this year due to Covid-19, Canterbury remains one of the leading cities in the country for its collaborative and colourful approach to keeping the city's street displays, public gardens, and green spaces flourishing.

Led by the Canterbury Business Improvement District (BID), the committee comprises of 19 local community groups, businesses and local authority members working together to make improvements to the city's horticulture,



Hanging baskets in the city

biodiversity and environment.

Canterbury BID chief executive, Lis Carlson said: "In what has been a chal-

lenging year for many, we are thrilled to receive this award, and that Canterbury has continued to blossom so brightly thanks to the care and attention of so many people.

"While some planned projects were affected by the Covid-19 lockdown, the teams continued to work tirelessly before, during and after lockdown to keep Canterbury blooming for residents and visitors to enjoy."

Over the past year more than 20 horticulture projects have launched or continued in the city.

Canterbury BID completed a new round of deep-street cleaning over the summer, and put a new schedule of regular cleaning in place as well as putting up 400 colourful hanging baskets.

New murals were also installed around Kingsmead Fields and Rheims Way underpass.



Winners Ian Hufton and Shira Lahav, and right, runners up Rosa Cary and Seth Player



24 JUNE 2021 **THE DAILY NEWS** 10 JUN 2021 22:00

LITTER BLITZ ON THE STOUR




Volunteers with their haul of litter following the cleanup. A member of the Canterbury Society joins in the mammoth effort.

Single-use plastic 'scourge' laid bare in river clean-up

By Gerry Warren
gerry.warren@thepress.co.uk

Volunteers have gathered up 1,400 pieces of plastic litter, the Stour to Canterbury is up and running.

It's a grim sight, a pile of plastic litter, mostly single-use plastic, that has been washed up on the banks of the Stour river, just outside Canterbury.

The litter, which includes plastic bottles, food wrappers, and other debris, is a stark reminder of the impact of single-use plastic on the environment.

One of the participants gets stuck in to help clear the river.

Stour to Canterbury: Clean up of the river to help clear the litter.

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Stour to Canterbury: Clean up of the river to help clear the litter.

'Help nature thrive in gardens'

Gardeners are being urged to make their open spaces as nature-friendly as possible to create "urban green corridors" across the city.

The plea comes from the Canterbury Society and the Friends of Kingsmead Field which want to see every opportunity taken to give a home to wildlife.

The aim is to encourage bees, butterflies, birds, reptiles and small mammals to thrive.

Its celebration of nature-friendly gardening was launched yesterday (Wednesday) at an online talk given by Maureen Rainey, from the Gardening for a Wilder Kent team



The group says even a small pond would benefit wildlife

at Kent Wildlife Trust.

Now, three monthly awards, in May, June and July, will be

given to projects which show what can be achieved, including creating ponds, letting grass grow and leaving areas untouched to provide shelter.

Those taking part are being asked share photographs, or videos, and a brief description of their nature-friendly gardening projects on the Wild Canterbury Facebook group.

Individual or community projects are welcome, as are whole gardens or parts of gardens.

The three winners will be highlighted on the Wild Canterbury Facebook group and receive a £30 garden centre gift voucher, sponsored by the city council.

www.canterbury.co.uk To advertise 01634 227807

The mural features wildlife from the area

VIBRANT MURAL TRANSFORMS DRAB HOARDING

Artists Liam Dowd and Sam Sure

By Gerry Warren
gwarren@thekmgroun.co.uk

There's graffiti tagging and beautiful street art - and this stunning mural definitely falls into the latter category.

This work has been completed on the riverside stretch of hoarding which surrounds the development at the back of Kingsmead Field.

It is a joint project between Canterbury City Council, developer Coombe, the Friends of Kingsmead Field and local street artists Liam Dowd and Sam Sure.

It stretches for 40 yards, bringing a welcome splash of colour and vibrancy to otherwise drab hoarding.

It was the idea of the Friends, whose spokesman Sam Pettman says: "It reflects the rich diversity of the natural world living on the doorstep of this site and shows how we can create something spectacular when we all work together."

"I am really grateful for the efforts of the council and Coombe for helping to make this transformation happen."



Artist Sam says the artwork is already turning heads.

"Attitudes to street art have really changed," he said. "Fifteen years ago, we would have got strange looks from passers-by and we would have been quite nervous about what they were going to say to us. These days everyone is so excited to see murals like this going up. We have had so many people stopping to chat with us and thank us, from the youngest to the oldest."

The hoarding screens the development of 16 homes on a former section of Kingsmead Field, close to the existing Kingsbrook Park development.

Originally, the council had plans to build on the whole field, which led to a campaign by residents to prevent any development at all.

However, following discussions with the Friends, a compromise was reached that involves only 25% of the

field being built on, with the remaining 50% classified as a Village Green.

Cllr Rachel Carnac, vice chairman of the city council's Covid-19 Emergency Committee, said: "I think the work of a very talented artist combined with the passion of both the Friends and Coombe has created something very special especially as it reflects our long-running and very popular Love Where We Live campaign."



Ian Hutton's winning photo of a tree in a field of buttercups

Creating a buzz with stunning nature pics

By Gerry Warren
gwarren@thekmgroun.co.uk

Two impressive nature pictures particularly caught the judges' attention in a photography contest organised by the Canterbury Society.

Now, the images of a tree in a field of buttercups and a butterfly on a wildflower have earned amateur photographers Ian Hutton and Shira Lahav first prizes in the adult and under-16s classes.

The theme of the competition was insects and pollinators, aimed at drawing attention to the loss of wildflower mead-lands which has seen a dramatic decline in pollinating insects.

So it was fitting that Ian and 11-year-old Shira received their prizes in the Butterfly Gardens next to the river Stour in Pound Lane, which is managed by the Canterbury Society on behalf of Canterbury City Council.

The two competition winners were each presented with cheques for £50 and prints of their winning images by one of the judges, Beverly Price.

Raising up in the under-16



Shira Lahav's winning photo of a butterfly on a wildflower

category, Ross Curry, 11, and Seth Playe, eight, received £10.

Almost 2,000 people have signed an e-petition, started by Jan Pahl from the society, which calls on the city council to adopt a Pollinator Action Plan to encourage land management which is sympathetic to bees and other pollinators.

City council transport and environment officer Richard Moore said: "The council will organise a workshop in the autumn to discuss the propo-

sition and adoption of a pollinator plan for the district."

"We would like to get principles established early in the new year so that any revised moth-tenance standards can be incorporated into the new grounds maintenance contract."

Prof Pahl added: "Some people complain to the council if grass is not cut short regularly, but we hope they will understand that long grass and flower meadows provide vital homes for wildlife."