

# River Dour Steering Group

**Ray Newsam - Chairman, River Dour Steering Group**

**N**ot much has been happening on the practical side with the River Dour since the last newsletter report, but much has been happening in the background in preparation for what we hope will be big improvements in the coming years.

Our membership of the Kentish Stour Catchment Partnership with the South East Rivers Trust, White Cliffs Countryside Partnership and Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership has been formalised and our share of the funds awarded to that partnership is starting to trickle through the various levels of bureaucracy. By the time the newsletter is published we hope they will have been used for increased staff time to pull together all the reports on the River Dour from various agencies and bodies, and produce our immediate 'action plan' to work towards the Water Framework Directive target of raising the quality of the river from its current 'Poor' status to 'Good' by 2025. The first formal meeting of the partnership was held in the autumn, the next one is due in early February.



*River Dour 1906*

As part of this process, in October we had a visit from the director and four trustees of the Wandle Trust (on which the SE Rivers Trust is based), who were thrilled to find a chalk stream that has many of the problems and potential of their own river in suburban London. We hope to be doing a reciprocal visit shortly to look at their solutions to the similar problems faced by the River Dour.

We have had several meetings over the last few months with relevant partners and bodies with an interest in the river – I spoke at a River Parish Council meeting which resulted in the award of a grant towards our projects, I have also been making good contacts with the Trustees at Crabble Mill, and have had several meetings with the Communications and Engagement Team at DDC. One of these was with two representatives from the Angling Trust to discuss their Fishing for Life, Building Bridges and Voluntary Bailiff schemes, and we hope to be able to report progress on these soon.

A further site visit was held at Crabble Mill with a geomorphology specialist from the Environment Agency who has produced a report highlighting work that needs to be done on the mill pond, and which produced some interesting information not known before. We will be working with the mill trustees towards securing grants for this work and hopefully will produce a fuller report for the newsletter soon. We should also thank the mill trustees for allowing us use of the mill for our group meetings.

Flooding of the A20 underpass has been a problem several times in the last year, the worst event being during the recent tidal surge when the river over-topped its channel. Through our membership of the catchment partnership we are aware that the Highways Agency and Environment Agency are working towards a solution to prevent repeats of these occurrences, and hopefully there will soon be some announcements about this work.

Leaving the best news to last, at the DDC/KCC You Decide event at the town hall in November our project to secure funds for new safety and work equipment for the River Dour clean-up volunteers was not only successful but came top of the public vote, so when the clean-ups start again in April we will have a whole new set of waders, buoyancy aids, litter pickers etc for our volunteers to use. A big thank you is due

to our volunteers (who had a jolly pre-Christmas get together at the White Horse) and to the public for voting for us. It was also a good networking event: following on we picked up some new volunteers, received a small grant from Cllr Sue Jones of DTC towards our project, and I will hopefully be speaking to Dover Town Council and other local bodies shortly about our plans for the future.



*River Dour*



National  
Trust

## Plant Fair

**Saturday 10th - Sunday 11th May,  
10am – 4pm**

Come along to our 14th annual plant fair at the White Cliffs of Dover. We have thousands of plants to tempt those green fingers all lovingly grown by our very dedicated volunteers.

### Free Car Parking

**Saturday 10th – Sunday 11th May**

This voucher entitles the holder to free parking.

**Please surrender voucher on arrival**