



Kent Coast Bulletin

Issue 7 - Winter 2006

THANET'S COASTAL WARDENS CELEBRATE THEIR FIRST YEAR

The work of a pioneering scheme, which aims to protect Thanet's beaches, has celebrated its first anniversary. The Thanet Coastal Warden Scheme, set up by the Thanet Coast Project last year, has nearly 90 volunteers who each look after a part of the coast from Reculver down to Sandwich. The Wardens act as the 'eyes and ears' of their beaches by recording the types of visits made by coastal users, marine and bird life and by reporting any pollution or damage to the Thanet Coast Project.



The Thanet Coastal Wardens celebrate their first anniversary © TCP

Some of the year's triumphs have included the completion of three days of intensive training, assisting with a variety of Thanet Coast events and the reporting of incidents such as vandalised beach huts, missing life buoys and stranded marine mammals. There are now over 20 new volunteers ready to start the next volunteer training.

Cllr. Roger Latchford OBE, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Commercial Services, said: "This project has been a complete success and it's all down to the hard work of the wardens and the organisation of the Thanet Coast Project. By setting up a variety of training opportunities, our wardens have been able to help record the types of wildlife visiting our shores, monitor when the beaches are at their busiest and report the types of activities occurring at our beaches. The Thanet Coast Project have also had a tremendous year with record numbers of people taking part in their events - which just illustrates how important our beaches are to local residents and visitors alike."

Naomi Biggs, Thanet Coast Education Officer, said: "This evening was really a chance for us to say a big 'thank you' and show our appreciation for the hard work our wardens do around our coast. The role of these wardens is vital as they provide a crucial out of hour's look at the people and wildlife that visit our bays and beaches. By reporting on such issues as litter, pollution and endangered wildlife, the wardens also play an important role in protecting the different users of our beaches including human and marine wildlife."

Anyone interested in becoming a Volunteer Coastal Warden should contact the Thanet Coast Project on 01843 577 409 or email thanet.coast@thanet.gov.uk

NETWORK NEWS

Welcome to the winter edition of the Kent Coast Bulletin, which provides updates on recent initiatives from around the Kent coast. Thank you to all contributors to the bulletin. The next edition will be published in the spring and if you have some news you would like featured, please let me know.

This edition looks at the important monitoring Canterbury Dive Club are undertaking through the Adopt a Wreck scheme and Warwick Energy's proposed Thanet Offshore Wind development and its recently completed Environmental Statement. There's good news for the Maritime Heritage Trail, which has secured further funding, and in Member Focus the Crown Estate outlines its role as landowner around Kent's coast and details funding opportunities for coastal and marine work. Finally, new work from the Thames Estuary Partnership and Canterbury Christ Church University is detailed under Kent Coastal Research. And congratulations to the Thanet Coastal Warden scheme, whose 90 volunteers celebrate their first year this winter.

I'm pleased to announce that the Personal Water Craft Spring Seminar will be held on 18th May in Herne Bay. A programme will be circulated shortly.

I hope you find the Bulletin interesting and useful - if there is anything you would like to see featured in the future please let me know.

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The Kent Coastal Network & Bulletin is funded by:



The Kent Coastal Network was established with funding from:



This project has received European Regional Development Funding through the INTERREG III B Community Initiative



INTERREG III B NORTH WEST EUROPE



Work on Kent's remaining Shoreline Management Plans gets underway

The South East Coastal Group (SECG) has recently commenced a coordinated series of work on two Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) which directly relate to the Kent Coast. The two plans are the Medway Estuary and Swale SMP and the Isle of Grain to South Foreland SMP review. These plans are non-statutory, policy documents for coastal defence management planning around the Kent coast.

Our coastline is a place where people live, work and play. It is important for recreation (whether sporting activities or simply enjoyment), for local people and visitors. There are many features which tell us about our history and amazing wildlife and landscapes. Our coastline is also under pressure and is changing. Climate change effects include sea level rise and increased storminess. SMPs consider flood and erosion risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment, and present a policy framework to manage these risks in a sustainable manner for the next 100 years. The risk management policies that are considered for each stretch of shoreline are: hold the existing defence line; advance the existing defence line; managed realignment; and no active intervention.

The original Isle of Grain to Dover Harbour Shoreline Management Plan covered the open coastline and was completed in 1996. It defined coastal defence management for a 50 year time period based upon the Government guidance issued at that time. Since 1996, the SMP has guided numerous coastal defence strategies and schemes. However, government guidance for producing SMPs has been substantially revised to reflect changes in legislation and government thinking and a review of the plan is now necessary to keep the policies current.



The Medway and Swale Estuaries were outside the scope of the original Isle of Grain to Dover SMP and consequently are not currently covered by an SMP. The Medway Estuary and Swale SMP will now address this shortcoming and provide the strategic framework required to guide coastal defence management policy for the estuaries.

The projects are being run in parallel for consistency and to make the best use of the time taken for all parties involved in the consultation. Both projects will be guided by a steering group comprised of technical officers from

organisations with responsibility for managing the shoreline and a group of elected members (local councillors). The developing plan will also be guided by a stakeholder group to ensure that all the issues are considered when drafting future management policies for the shoreline. Wider public consultation will occur around Christmas 2006.

If you would like more information on the project or to keep up to date with the projects, visit www.se-coastalgroup.org.uk The website also contains details of the South Foreland to Beachy Head SMP which is complete and currently being considered for adoption by the relevant operating authorities.

The nature of Thanet's coast: helping people and wildlife thrive

The Kent Coast from Whitstable around to Deal and extending out to sea around Thanet is special. Some of the habitats and birds that can be found here are so unusual that they are specially protected. Local people and authorities have been working together for over six years to look after them.



Work started back in 1998/99 when, through a sequence of four stakeholder workshops, local people and authorities worked out how their activities could take place in a way that also allowed nature to thrive along this coast. The resulting 'North East Kent European marine sites Management Scheme' lasted for six years but it is now time to take a fresh look and write the Scheme for the next six years.

The first scheme focused on three specially protected birds (Turnstone, Golden Plover and Little Tern) and key habitats (the chalk caves, the chalk reef on the shore and stretching out under the sea and the sand and mudflats). Concentrating on particular birds and habitats made sense from the point of view of the UK and European laws that protect them - but it didn't make much sense for how nature works. To put this right the next scheme will also include other habitats and species, how the natural systems work and the way humans interact with them. This all adds up to an internationally agreed approach to management called the Ecosystems Approach.

The contents of the next scheme are also being agreed through stakeholder workshops, which are due to take place over the next six months. The workshops will include people who represent many interests including recreational activities, fishing, tourism, economic regeneration, the natural and physical environment and local communities. By coming to the workshops these people will influence what goes into the next Scheme. They will consider:

- what is working well now
- how this can be improved and strengthened
- what else needs to happen
- how this can be achieved

The focus of this decision-making is to find the action that is achievable over the next six years and that will take the management of this coast and sea in the right direction for both people and nature to thrive.

For further information contact Thanet Coast Project Officer on 01843 577672 or email thanet.coast@thanet.gov.uk

Kent Environmental Information Database is launched

The Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre's (KMBRC) website is now hosting the Kent Environmental Information Database (KEID), an on-line reference catalogue of research papers and other documents.

The North East Kent Coastal Scientific Advisory Group highlighted the need for a centralised point to more easily locate the disparately distributed scientific information that has been carried out in relation to Kent's marine and coastal environments. It was agreed that the development of a central collation point in the form of a searchable metadatabase (a database containing data about data) would enable users to find out what work has taken place and where.

With funding from Kent County Council, Interreg IIIB (through the SAIL project), English Nature and Warwick Energy, KMBRC hosted the Kent Coastal & Marine Information Database Project with a database developed from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre's Environmental Survey Directory.

Data collation and database development took place during 2005 and the details of over 650 documents are now available through searches carried out on the website.

KEID holds metadata relating to reports and other documents stored at a variety of source organisations, with a current focus on the marine and coastal environments of Kent. An on-line search can be carried out by keyword, publication date, author and subject area, with search results providing metadata on the documents, their storage location and contact details.

KMBRC are actively encouraging further regular submissions to the database. These can be emailed directly to KMBRC or via the on-line submission form. This will enable KEID to become, and remain as, an up-to-date source of information for researchers, developers and other interested parties.

The Kent Environmental Information Database is now available at www.kmbrc.org.uk/keid. For further information, contact stefanie.buell@kmbrc.org.uk

Kent Environmental Information Database Search
31 Results found
Click here for Depository contact details

| | |
|---|--|
| Title: Anthropological Study of Kent Fishing Communities - Research Objectives and Methodology | |
| Author(s): OTA, Yoshitaka | In: Rogers, P. (Ed.) (2005) ENRR 630 'Making Connections' Proceedings of the Second North East Kent Coastal Conference, 11 November 2004. Pp. 40-43. Paper summarising the equivalent presentation from the conference. |
| Publication Date: 2005 | Describes the research objectives, theoretical framework and research method of a study of small-scale fishing. Includes a few of the preliminary observations to the study. Study area: North East Kent coast incorporating fishing communities between Whitstable and Ramsgate. |
| Depository(s): EN | |
| Title: Characteristic Properties of the Soils in the Coastal Slopes at Whitstable and Heme Bay, Kent | |
| Author(s): WOODROW, L.K.R. | Report reviewing the aspects of soil behaviour which affect the values of the soil strength parameters for London Clay using lab test results and analysis of existing failures. Recommends parameters for methods of soil stability analysis of the London Clay Cliffs at Whitstable and Heme Bay. |
| Publication Date: 1985 | |
| Depository(s): CCC | |
| Title: Coastal Erosion and Sea Defence Work in the Whitstable Area: A Report | |
| Author(s): BOWLER, Dr. Eileen | Report discussing factors affecting coastal erosion in the area between Seasalter and Tankerton, Whitstable. Gives details on the physical character of the area, the influence of weather conditions on the coast of North Kent, the history of coast protection in the area. Includes historical information from tide tables and newspaper reports. |
| Publication Date: 1975 | |
| Depository(s): CCC | |
| Title: Coastal Protection and Loss of Habitat With Ref to <i>P. officinale</i> (Hogs female) at Tankerton Slopes | |
| Author(s): BLYTH, Jennifer | MSc Thesis looking at the issue of coastal protection conflicting with habitat conservation, looking at the specific example of Hogs Female on the Tankerton Slopes, Whitstable, Kent. |
| Publication Date: 1987 | |
| Depository(s): EN | |
| Title: Impact of a Submerged Sewage Pipe on the Littoral Fauna, <i>Arenicola marina</i> , at Whitstable, Kent | |
| Author(s): WARDLE, J. | Undergraduate dissertation assessing the impact of a sewage pipe on the littoral fauna, <i>Arenicola marina</i> . |
| Publication Date: 1987 | |
| Depository(s): EN | |

Sample results page from the database © KMBRC

Sign-posting you to the right beach

England's coastline offers a little something for everyone, from young families indulging in a day's play on the sand in summer to older folks enjoying a walk on the shore during autumn. And thanks to a new award by ENCAMS, we can all find the type of beach we are looking for.

From April 2007, the new award will examine beaches and celebrate exactly what they have to offer for visitors. So, if it's a vibrant resort, that's just how ENCAMS will promote it. And if it's an idyllic haven, we will help push that image to those who enjoy our picturesque coastline. So everyone has the best time!

The new scheme will replace and build on our Seaside Awards programme, which for the last fifteen years has rewarded resort and rural beaches.

Working with key partners, ENCAMS is developing a new coastal recognition system which will recognise managers' ability to manage land effectively for a variety of visitors. ENCAMS has carried out detailed market research over the last three years to find out what beach managers want from the awards, what different users want from their beach visits and to identify potential conflicts when different users meet. We want to use this intelligence to help shape a new system for recognising well-managed coastlines and also to enable us to communicate directly to specific user groups, to encourage them to make visits to coasts that they will enjoy. Put simply, the new system aims to ensure that the right people are in the right place at the right time, doing the right things.

ENCAMS has been working with stakeholders over the last five years to develop a beach management system and users of the Seaside Awards have also helped to shape them over the years. The requirements of different coastal users, the beach management system and the Seaside Awards will be combined to help to form a framework for the proposed new system.



The new system is currently being trialled by a range of beach managers and it is intended that first applications will be submitted in summer/autumn 2006 and that the first beaches to be 'recognised' will be publicised in spring/summer 2007.

For further details contact Diane Cliff at ENCAMS on: diane.cliff@encams.org

Who we are

The Crown Estate manages one of the largest property portfolios in the United Kingdom, valued at over £5 billion. It includes over half of the UK's foreshore and virtually the entire territorial seabed as well as shops and offices, homes and business parks, farms and common land, forests and mineral quarries. All of the net profit we make is annually paid to the Treasury for the benefit of all UK taxpayers and last year this contribution was over £180 million. Our work is guided by three core values: commercialism, integrity and stewardship. We operate on a commercial basis, but significant emphasis is placed on maintaining the heritage of the estate and conserving its environment.

The Marine Estate

One of the most fascinating and varied parts of The Crown Estate is the marine estate. It includes around 55% of the UK foreshore, approximately half of all estuary beds and tidal rivers and almost the entire seabed out to the twelve nautical mile territorial limit.

Our commercial interests include marine aggregates, aquaculture, renewable energy, cables and pipelines, moorings, ports and marinas, but not oil, coal or gas.

We have granted several thousand leases around the UK coastline to local authorities, ports and harbours, and conservation bodies such as English Nature, the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

The Marine Estate and Kent

We have many varied marine estate interests in and around the Kent coast. These include parts of Dover Harbour and the Port of Sheerness; moorings on the River Medway; the foreshore at various places including at Deal and Chapel St. Leonard's; the seabed including the Downs and the Goodwin Sands; and Special Areas of Conservation such as the foreshore between Dover and Kingsdown Cliffs.



An exciting development is the new offshore windfarm at Kentish Flats, off the north coast of Kent. This site of 30 wind turbines can produce around 90 megawatts of energy (enough for 100 000 homes) and was one of the first operational offshore windfarms in the UK. The Crown Estate does not own, operate or regulate offshore windfarms but owns the seabed on which they are built. In accordance with government policy on renewable energy, we have awarded areas of the seabed for development through two "rounds" and grant leases for projects once the developers have obtained all the necessary planning consents.

We work with Cluttons, a firm of managing agents with offices in Maidstone, who deal with our customers on our behalf around the Kent coast. If you would like to contact Cluttons, please speak to David Elliott FRICS on 01622 756 000.

The Marine Estate and Kent's Coastal Communities

The Crown Estate runs a Marine Stewardship Programme to support practical projects, research and other initiatives that help improve the marine environment and bring benefits to local communities. There are two aspects of the Programme that are focused on local communities and may be of particular interest to people around the Kent coast:

The Marine Stewardship Fund - We have been supporting projects through this fund since 1999 and over £1 million has been awarded to a wide range of community projects. These include environmental improvements, information and 'best practice' guides, better access to the marine environment via jetties, ramps and paths, research and education projects, coastal look-out stations, seminars and conferences.

The Communities and Renewables Fund - The Crown Estate plays a key role in enabling the development of offshore renewable energy schemes such as windfarms and devices that harness wave or tidal energy. We are looking for innovative projects that develop partnerships, raise awareness and understanding about offshore renewables and deliver lasting benefits for local communities.

To see examples of successful projects, to check your eligibility for funding and for information about how to apply, please visit our website www.thecrownestate.co.uk or contact Cathryn Hooper on 020 7210 4818 or David Philip on 0131 260 6076.



If you would like your organisation featured in Member Focus, please contact the Kent Coastal Officer.

ADOPT A WRECK IN KENT - UB109

Jon Bramley from Canterbury Dive Club & Invicta Sub Aqua Club reports on the Adopt a Wreck scheme

"I heard loud shouting in the boat and then everything was still. The boat was flooded up to the conning tower. I climbed up the ladder to the hatch and the navigator stood on the rungs behind me. When I tried to open the hatch it blew open and I and the navigator became wedged together. It took thirty seconds of hard struggle to free ourselves and then I rose quickly to the surface. I was astounded to find 5 others already there including a machinist who had been carried through all the compartments on the rising water and shoved out of the forward hatch".

Commander Oberleutnant zur See Kurt Ramien's dramatic account of the sinking of his submarine UB109 off of Folkestone on the 29th August 1918. Only 8 of her crew of 36 survived the mine explosion and sinking.

The Kent coast is one of the worlds top shipwreck diving areas. There are literally hundreds of wrecks around our coast resulting from accidents, bad weather and conflict. Many of these remain to be described and most are not even plotted on current charts.

In Kent we have about 60 registered sub aqua diving clubs and many certificated divers, trained by BSAC, SAA and PADI amongst others. The diving season here runs from about April until November (though increasingly some hardy souls do dive all year around) and during each season hundreds of dives are carried out by local and visiting divers.

While it is our hobby and something we do for fun many of us also like to do something extra with of our diving, especially if this helps conserve the underwater environment that we have the privilege of seeing. On a national level the Marine Conservation Society and the Nautical Archaeological Society (NAS) have recognised this fact and both have actively embraced the recreational diving community through their respective Seasearch and Diving with a Purpose projects.

Within Diving with a Purpose run by the NAS there is a scheme called Adopt a Wreck, which promotes the adoption of wreck sites by dive clubs and individual divers. This scheme has been running for three years and within the UK over 50 wrecks have been adopted, three of these in Kent.

In 2004 Canterbury Dive Club (BSAC Branch 0326) adopted UB109 as a submarine that they would survey and monitor and each season we ensure that we dive this wreck to check on its condition. Since adopting her we have also partially completed an underwater video of her and undertaken background research on her history, construction and crew.

Recreational divers can play a significant role in the protection and recording of our marine wildlife and maritime history. They are keen, interested and visit more sites than can possibly be covered by professional marine biologists or archaeologists. On a local level Kent Wildlife Trust and English Nature have engaged volunteer scuba divers and together the highly successful Kent Seasearch has been formed. Local professional archaeologists however seem to be much shyer and their active engagement of the general recreational diving community is yet to occur. Well done therefore to the Portsmouth based NAS and their Adopt a Wreck scheme.



Photograph showing conning tower of a U Class Submarine lying at the bottom of the English Channel © Mark Gilmour



Picture showing deck gun of a U Class Submarine. Note much of the outer hull decking has fallen away © Mark Gilmour

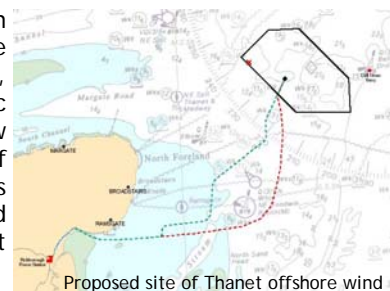
For further information on the Adopt a Wreck scheme see www.nasportsmouth.org.uk/wreck/adoption.php or contact Jon Bramley on jonathan.bramley@btopenworld.com

BLOWING IN THE WIND



Wind energy off the Thanet coast

With the increasing focus on the World's energy requirements and the impact that this has on the planet, the UK Government has set a target that 10% of our electricity supply should come from renewable sources by 2010, increasing to 15% by 2015. As a result of this commitment, licenses were granted in December 2003 to develop 15 offshore wind farms in three Strategic Areas around the UK coastline. The Thames Estuary Strategic Area hosts three significant new projects plus two demonstration projects, one of which is the Kentish Flats project off Whitstable. Thanet Offshore Wind Limited (TOW), a subsidiary of Warwick Energy Limited, is currently seeking consent from the Department of Trade and Industry for the construction and operation of one such new wind farm, 11.3km offshore from Foreness Point, the eastern most point of the Kent coastline.



Project overview

The 300MW project, costing in excess of £300m, will consist of up to 100 wind turbines producing enough green electricity to power 240,000 homes in the local area. Each turbine nacelle, or hub, complete with three blades will be mounted upon a cylindrical steel tower, which will in turn be supported by a foundation fixed to the seabed. The maximum height of the turbine would be up to 150m from sea level to the blade tip in the vertically up position and the minimum clearance would be 22m to the blade tip in the vertically down position. The individual turbines will be interconnected to an offshore substation. Electricity will be transmitted by two subsea cables to the landfall in Pegwell Bay and then onto the existing substation at the disused Richborough Power Station, for connection to the electricity network.



Construction of the offshore works is currently planned for the summer months of 2008 to avoid adverse weather and disrupting overwintering birds. A number of temporary jobs will be generated during the construction phase with up to 20 full time positions being required during operation.

The completed wind farm will have an operational life of 40 years during which time it will undergo regular maintenance, which will probably be carried out from a service base in Ramsgate. A full decommissioning plan will be agreed prior to construction, which will include for the eventual complete removal of all offshore structures above seabed level. It is envisaged that the Thanet Offshore Wind Farm, along with similar developments, will help the UK to meet its international obligations on climate change and bring about a better environment for us and generations to come.

Environmental Statement

Accompanying the consent application is a full Environmental Statement regarding the proposed development. This draws on the results of the many environmental and technical surveys and studies that TOW has commissioned since early 2004. These have concluded that the development will have a minimal impact on the local environment, whilst making a significant contribution to meeting renewable targets.

Aerial and boat based surveys showed very low numbers of seabirds using or flying over the Thanet site. Those recorded included razorbill and guillemot, small numbers of terns and red throated divers together with fulmar, kittiwake and gannet. Although birds can be susceptible to disturbance effects and collision risk from wind farms in view of the low numbers recorded, and the fact that they fly near the surface of the sea, the impact of the wind farm is considered to be minimal.

The marine ecology of the area is typical of this part of the southern North Sea with common and widespread organisms being recorded as part of the surveys. Of note, however, was the presence of *Sabellaria spinulosa*, a type of worm, which in the right conditions can build a reef like structure that is of importance for marine life. In order to minimise disturbance to this area, further surveys will be undertaken prior to construction in order to locate the foundations appropriately. Given this mitigation and further monitoring of the area after construction, no significant impact on the marine ecology of the area is anticipated.



The navigation assessment has shown that with appropriate measures in place, the introduction of the wind farm would not raise the risks to shipping above levels currently being recorded at other areas around the UK coast. The marine traffic predictions support the introduction of an additional navigation buoy, as proposed by Trinity House Lighthouse Service in the area to the north of the Thanet site. Other surveys have included looking at the marine and coastal water quality, the natural fish resource, commercial fisheries and the visual effect that the wind farm will have on the seascape. These have similarly concluded that the development will have a minimal impact on the local environment, whilst making a significant contribution to meeting renewable targets.

Consultations are ongoing with over 100 statutory and non statutory bodies representing key interest and user groups in the Thanet District and wider area. Four public exhibitions have already been held in Margate, Broadstairs, Ramsgate and Deal generating significant local support for the project.

MARITIME HERITAGE TRAIL COASTS TO MORE FUNDING



Upnor

The coastal regions of Kent and Medway are set to benefit from a grant of £310,000 secured by the Maritime Heritage Trail to restore and revive many of the region's cultural and historic attractions. The funding, from the European Union programme Interreg III A, is part of a two-year campaign and projects in Medway, Canterbury and Thanet are earmarked to benefit from this injection of cash.

The Maritime Heritage Trail is a co-operation project between the areas of Medway, Kent, East Sussex, Nord-pas de Calais and The Somme to increase awareness and understanding of the Transmanche region's rich maritime cultural heritage and to develop and promote tourism of that resource for the benefit of the region, its residents and visitors. The UK half of the trail has recently been extended and now includes the East Sussex coast, running north east from Brighton along the East Sussex and Kent coasts to Gravesend. The French part of the trail extends along the entire Nord-pas de Calais coast from Dunkerque in the north to Cayeux sur Mer in the south.

"The value of tourism to the area is tremendous and we intend to maximise on our existing attractions and develop new ways for visitors to enjoy them," said Catherine Perepelytsya, project officer for the Maritime Heritage Trail. In 2005 we saw a marked increase in visitors to the region - due in part to the publicity surrounding the bi-centenary of Trafalgar and artist JMW Turner - and we must build on this to stimulate economic development, tourism and employment."



HMS Gannet

Since its inception in 2001, the Maritime Heritage Trail has secured a major amount of funding to boost maritime tourism in the region. Major projects to date include:

- restoration of the HMS Gannet at the Historic Dockyard Chatham
- improvement of Town Pier Square, Gordon Promenade and the riverside area in Gravesend
- repairs to the Saxon Shore Way, between Reculver and Herne Bay
- website for the Whitstable oyster yawl Favourite
- restoration of the Hugin Viking Ship and The Sundowner, a Dunkirk Little Ship
- improvement of visitor facilities for Upnor Castle
- a poster Campaign with South Eastern Trains
- development of four walking/cycling routes along the trail
- bi-lingual website and updated leaflets on the Maritime Heritage Trail

This new funding will bring further investment to the trail and will include:

Medway - Installation of improved interpretation panels at Upnor Castle, which will depict the daily life of the castle, the Dutch raid of 1667, the castle's links to the river and the Navy and details of what life in the castle was like in Elizabethan times. The castle will also benefit from a renewal of the multi-lingual guide system and other audio visual interpretation. The project will also, in partnership with the Royal Engineers Museum, create an accessible and interpreted store to house the reserve collections of large museum objects of both the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust and the Royal Engineers Museum, allowing visitors access for the first time. At HMS Gannet (1878) a computerised, bi-lingual virtual tour will be installed, to enable those who cannot get on board to "visit" the ship and to allow all visitors to see a virtual reconstruction of the ship's un-restored machinery spaces. Finally, in Medway, a detailed scheme will be developed for the removal, conservation and display of the ships timbers from the Wheelwrights' Shop.



Upnor at night

Canterbury - The project will enhance the appearance and facilities at Herne Bay and Whitstable in order to maximise the enjoyment of visitors and residents as well as attract new visitors. This will include installation of decorative lighting along the Herne Bay seafront, art and sculpture installations in the Neptune car park and a visitor trail from the shore to the town centre. In Whitstable there are plans for an improved maritime interpretation panels at various locations in the town and a children's competition to design lights for the seafront.

Thanet - Continuation of the Designed for You series of talks on artists' fascination with maritime themes, JMW Turner and the changing architecture of coastal towns. The aim is to provide opportunities for local people to learn more about art and artists, to engender civic pride in the local area by exploring Thanet's and Kent's artistic and coastal heritage, to encourage local people to visit Droit House and Turner Contemporary and to keep locals up to date with the progress of the construction of Turner Contemporary and the renovation of the historic Pier.

Catherine Perepelytsya concluded: "We have great plans for the future of the Maritime Heritage Trail. It has been designed and developed as part of an on-going commitment to tourism promotion and development on both sides of the Channel with EU support, and Kent and Medway's coastline offers more of an insight than any other part of the country into what made Britain great."



Slip number three at Chatham Historic Dockyard

For more information on the Maritime Heritage Trail, to order a brochure or download walking tours visit the trail's website at www.maritimeheritagetrail.co.uk

KENT COASTAL RESEARCH AND EVENTS

Thames Estuary Partnership - update on work

The beginning of the year saw the publication of the Thames Estuary Partnership's Thames Estuary Research Agenda. The document has been developed over the past year by the Thames Estuary Research Forum (TERF) to help address areas of strength, opportunity and need with regard to Thames-related research. It is hoped that the Agenda will assist in promoting, coordinating and implementing future research projects based on clearly identified research gaps.



Over the summer, the Partnership will be working with the research community and TERF to coordinate a number of pilot student projects. By developing links between students, the Research Agenda and host organisations, the Partnership aims to establish a framework for successful research projects. Copies of the Agenda are available from the Partnership.

In addition, phase 1 of the Partnership's State of the Thames Estuary project has recently gone out to consultation. The three phase programme of work will raise awareness, improve knowledge and aid decision making throughout the Thames Estuary and this first stage aims to assess the current state of the estuary, in terms of the natural, social and economic environment, and identify existing and emerging threats and the management required. Consultation ends on 5th March 2006 and copies of the document can be downloaded from the TEP website or ordered from the Partnership on a CD-ROM.

For more information on TEP's work or to obtain copies of the aforementioned documents, please contact the Partnership Office on 0207 679 5281 or tep@thamesweb.com.

Stour Estuary monitoring programme enters its 14th year

For the last thirteen years, Canterbury Christ Church University's Ecology Research Group (ERG) has monitored the physical, biological and chemical condition of the Stour Estuary and, following recent discussions with Pfizer, who sponsor the surveys, the ERG is set to continue the work.

The upper reaches of the Stour Estuary are fresh water whilst the lower reaches are brackish. Because the environment is tidal, it is in a constant state of flux and this makes it a difficult place for organisms to colonise, survive and thrive in. Additional pressures are placed upon the aquatic environment by effluents discharged from various treatment works, the extraction of water for both industrial and farming use and use of the river by the leisure industry.

As an environmentally aware company, Pfizer has retained the ERG in a consultancy capacity to survey the River Stour and Pegwell Bay on a regular basis. A range of physical, chemical and biological parameters are sampled and analysed to ensure the good condition of the estuary is maintained and Pfizer makes the reports freely available to the Environment Agency (EA).

This relationship between Pfizer, the ERG and the EA can only be beneficial - the Stour Estuary is monitored by independent experienced consultants with detailed knowledge of Kentish rivers and

the Kent coastal environment, the work is paid for by a multi-national company that employs many local people and the results are read by the guardians of the environment.



Sampling in Pegwell Bay © CCCU

The Ecology Research Group is based at Wye. If you would like to find out more about our work and what we can do for you, contact jat1@canterbury.ac.uk or gbd1@canterbury.ac.uk



Events

- 5 March - Shoresearch at Folkestone Warren. Contact info@kentwildlife.org
- 19 March & 2 April - Plumpudding spring beach clean. Contact naomi.biggs@thanet.gov.uk
- 1 & 5 April - Pegwell Bay spring beach clean. Contact naomi.biggs@thanet.gov.uk
- 2 April - Shoresearch at Pegwell Bay. Contact info@kentwildlife.org
- 8 April - Sandwich Bay spring beach clean. Contact naomi.biggs@thanet.gov.uk
- 9 April, 13 May & 17 June - Rock Doc Walk. Contact naomi.biggs@thanet.gov.uk
- 12 April - The Great Egg Case Hunt. Contact naomi.biggs@thanet.gov.uk
- 13 May - Shoresearch at The Street, Whitstable. Contact info@kentwildlife.org
- 21 May - Early season beach search at Reculver. Contact KWT 01622 662012.
- 25 May - Shoresearch at Dumpton Gap. Contact info@kentwildlife.org
- 27 May - Low Tide Day. For event details see www.riverocean.org.uk/lowtide/index.html
- 4 June - Seashore scavenger hunt at Westbay. Contact naomi.biggs@thanet.gov.uk
- 17 June - Shoresearch at Herne Bay's Neptune Arm and Hampton Pier. Contact info@kentwildlife.org

Becoming a member of the Kent Coast Network

To become a member of the Kent Coast Network, please send the following details to the below address:

Contact name, organisation, address and telephone/fax number, email and organisation website

 elizabeth.holliday@kent.gov.uk
 Environment & Economy, Kent County Council, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XX

Or register online at:
www.coastalkent.net