



River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board Annual Update - January 2025

This short presentation provides an overview of the RSIDB's main activities and achievements in 2024.

Board Membership

Appointed Members

- Cllr J Bright – TDC
- Cllr R Carnac – CCC
- Cllr C Hallett – ABC
- Cllr A Hicks – ABC (Vice Chair)
- Cllr D Ledger – ABC
- Cllr R McGeever – ABC
- Cllr G Meaden – ABC
- Cllr D Parks – DDC
- Cllr W Scobie – TDC (Deputy Vice Chair)
- Mr L Wooltorton – CCC

Elected Members

- Mr P Dunn – Ash Levels
- Ms N Dyas – Minster & Monkton
- Mr D Fuller – Wye
- Mr G Holdstock – Canterbury, Fordwich & Ickham
- Mr P Howard – Ashford
- Ms A Lynch – Chislet North
- Mr T Quested – General Valleys
- Mr G Steed – Lydden (Chairman)
- Mr M Wilkinson – Chislet South

Co-opted Members

- Mr T Pont – Natural England
- Mr P Williams – Natural England

Board Staff

Peter Cackett

Operations Assistant

peter.cackett@rsidb.org.uk

James Dilnot

Operations Officer

James.dilnot@rsidb.org.uk

Peter Dowling

Clerk & Engineer

pete.dowling@rsidb.org.uk

Ana Eastwood

Finance & Rating Officer

ana.eastwood@rsidb.org.uk

Shaun Revell

Water Level Controller

shaun.revell@rsidb.org.uk

Joe Williamson

Technical Officer

joe.williamson@rsidb.org.uk



Board Meetings

- 1** — February 6th 2025
2pm at Bromley Green FC TN24 0PQ
- 2** — June 5th 2025
2pm at Godmersham & Crundale Village Hall CT4 7DR
- 3** — August 21st 2025
2pm at Chartham Village Hall CT4 7JA
- 4** — November 6th 2025
2pm at Godmersham & Crundale Village Hall CT4 7DR



Operational Activities

Watercourse Maintenance

The IDB's main activity is the routine maintenance of IDB designated watercourses to maintain channel flow capacities to improve drainage and local flood risk, and to provide appropriate water level management for the benefit of the local environment. This includes in-channel weed cutting, de-silting, spoil spreading and tree/shrub maintenance.

Water Level Management

We continue to manage water levels across the district, operating and maintaining water level management structures and clearing obstructions as necessary, particularly prior to and during periods of heavy rainfall, but also to retain water during drier periods

Public Sector Cooperation Agreements

A substantial length of Main Rivers continue to be maintained under this agreement on behalf of the Environment Agency and the IDB has continued to manage all water levels (on Main River and IDB watercourses) in close cooperation with local EA staff. The IDB also continues to maintain Mathews Close Dyke in Middle Deal, on behalf of Dover District Council under another PSCA, in order to help reduce the risk of localised flooding.

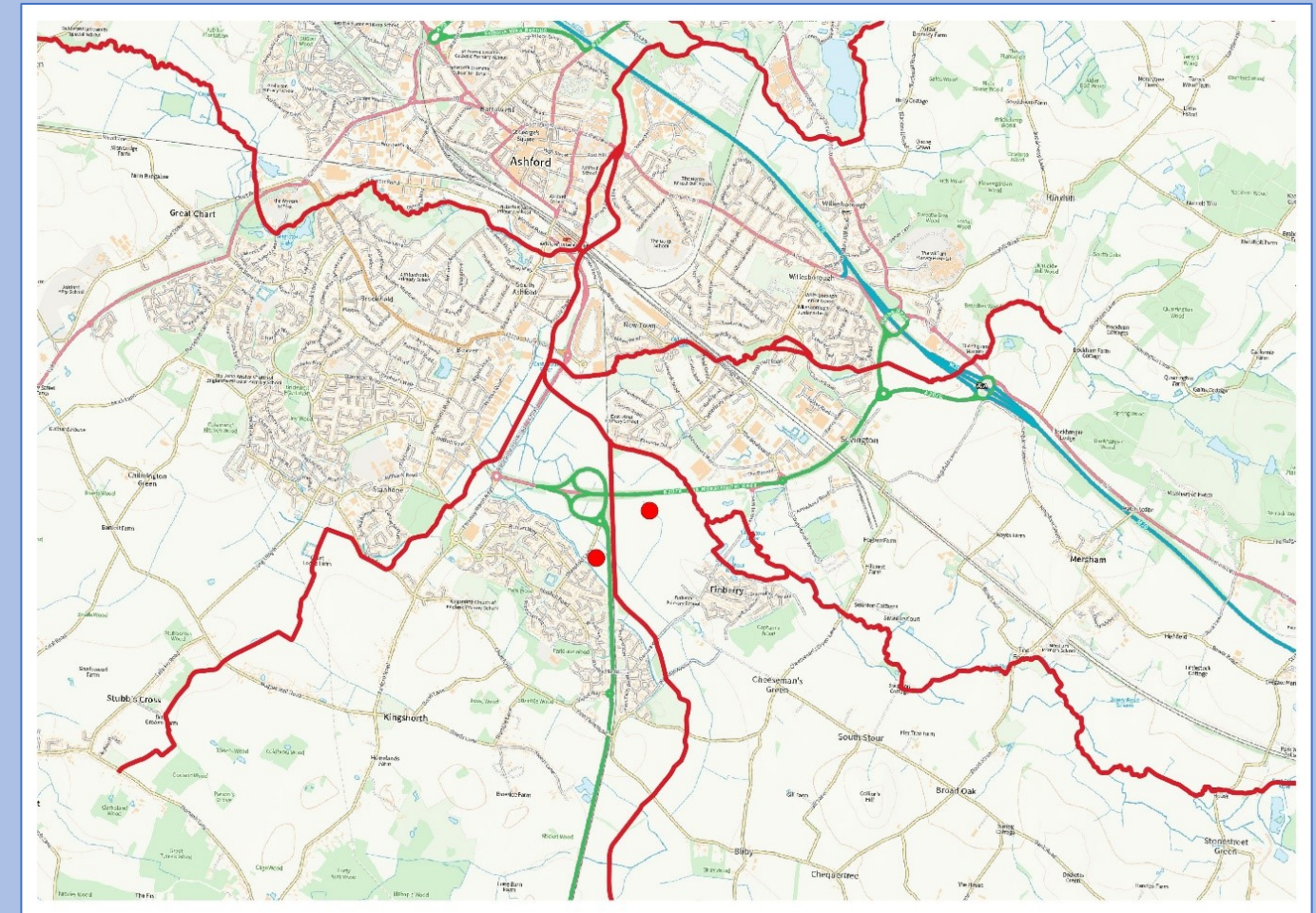
Planning and Consenting

Planning Applications and Consent

As well as its operational activities, the IDB comments on planning applications which could potentially affect drainage and flood risk.

Good working relationships have been developed with local planning authorities, in particular KCC which is the Lead Local Flood Authority. All landowners and developers should be aware that the IDB's **prior written consent** is required for any proposed works which could affect **any** ordinary watercourse in its district (Main Rivers are managed by the Environment Agency). This is in accordance with Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the IDB's own Byelaws, which can be viewed on its website: www.rsidb.org.uk.

The IDB is always happy to advise on planned works which may affect any watercourse, as this helps to minimise the need for formal and sometimes costly enforcement action. Contact is best made by emailing enquiries@rsidb.org.uk.





Asset Improvements

Funding

The IDB was successful in obtaining an Asset Improvement Grant in 2024-25.

Renewal and Upgrade

The grant is being used to renew and upgrade a number of ageing water level management structures.

Future Upgrades

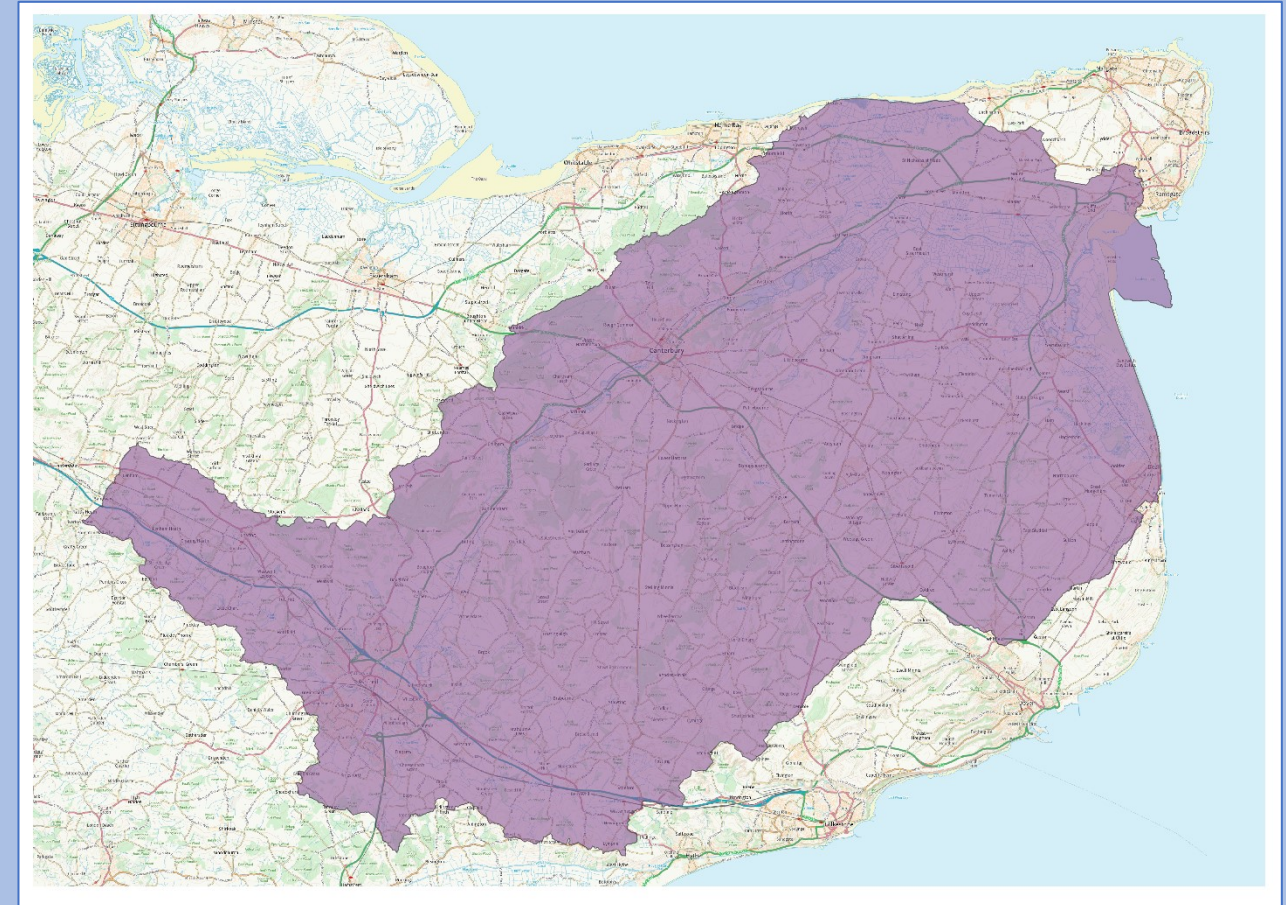
Two further applications for grant funding have been submitted for further upgrades in 2025-26.

Possible Extension of the IDB District

Proposal

The gradual urbanisation across the Internal Drainage District and beyond, combined with increasingly unpredictable weather patterns, presents challenges to all concerned by increasing the risk of flooding to land, property and infrastructure.

Following discussions with KCC and the Environment Agency, the IDB has proposed to extend its district to the full catchment boundary, to improve its ability to influence development and to help reduce local flood risks. This proposal will be consulted on in 2025.



Biodiversity Action Plan

The Board's latest BAP, produced in close liaison between the Board and the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership (KSCP), is available on the IDB website.

This document is due **to be reviewed** again in 2025, with comments and suggestions from interested parties appreciated. We have continued site specific maintenance standards for all IDB maintained watercourses, which aim to retain and enhance issues of particular ecological interest and also manage issues of concern. We have continued to implement a number of river **enhancement projects** and will next year be seeking to install a number of **leaky dams** in the upper reaches of the catchment, so we would welcome contact from any interested landowners. Another section of **the Delf** in Sandwich has been faggoted and de-silted, in cooperation with the Environment Agency, to help improve flows in this unique watercourse.

Plan to restore biodiversity



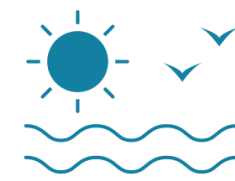
Land
Protect
wild areas



Farming
Make better
for nature



Cities
Make space
for nature



Oceans
Protect marine
habitats



Water
Safeguard
lakes and rivers
for wildlife



Climate
Reduce impacts
of climate
change



Food
Plant based
diet, reduce
waste



One health
Manage whole
environments
to aid health

Biodiversity Action Plan

(...cont.)

Efforts have continued to address a serious outbreak of Parrot's Feather in **Wademarsh Stream** on the Chislet Marsh with a good degree of success (with no further outbreaks this year). The area will continue to be monitored to address any further issues. We are extremely grateful for the ongoing support of KSCP's excellent team of conservation volunteers (information on volunteering can be found at KSCP's website: www.kentishstour.org.uk).

The Board has reviewed its working practices and adjusted its maintenance programme to help minimise risks to nesting birds. With this in mind, **it would be most helpful if landowners, occupiers and interest groups could highlight any known environmental issues or concerns** so these can be taken into account when we are planning and managing works. A grant was obtained to deliver the **North and South Streams Peat Restoration Project** at Northbourne to help protect and enhance an area of rare lowland peat (further details to be made available on the website).





Enforcement

Unfortunately, the Board from time to time has to take a number of Court actions to recover unpaid Drainage Rates and to rectify unconsented works. This is most regrettable, especially when rates are sometimes for relatively small amounts and the need for consent is clearly explained on the Board's website. Ratepayers are reminded that Drainage Rates are payable on demand and are needed to fund IDB activities. However, should there be any concern, query, or difficulty in paying these rates, it is requested that contact is made with the Board's Clerk & Engineer to help avoid costly and time-consuming Court actions.

East Kent Beaver Advisory Group

In the right place beavers, which are now protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, can bring many benefits (reduce the risk of flooding and drought, improve water quality, increase biodiversity) but not without risks if in the wrong place (through their damming and burrowing). The Stour catchment now has a healthy and growing population of beavers and as a result we are experiencing an increasing number of problems.

The IDB is a member of the East Kent Beaver Advisory Group (EKBAG) which provides advice and support to landowners affected by beaver activity. As previously requested, in order to help improve understanding of the benefits and impacts, **all sightings of beavers or evidence of their activities should be sent to the EKBAG at beavers@wildlifegateway.org.uk and ideally copied to enquiries@rsidb.org.uk.**



Association of Drainage Authorities

The River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board is a member of the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA), which is the national association for water level management organisations in the UK with over 230 members.

ADA continues to work closely with the Environment Agency and the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra).

More details on ADA's activities and policies can be found on its website:
www.ada.org.uk.



River Stour (Kent) IDB website: www.rsidb.org.uk

Contact: enquiries@rsidb.org.uk