

## **Summary of River Work Plans and Objectives**

The River Darent is a chalkstream which rises in the greensand hills south of Westerham. Until the late 1800s it was considered one of the finest trout chalk rivers in the country. However, the fortunes of the river changed over time and pollution and abstraction led to a sharp decline in wildlife in the valley. We have come a long way since that time and the Darent Valley Action Plan in 1992 started the process of restoration. We now have the Darent Valley Landscape Recovery project and the DVTF is playing its part in the continuing restoration of this rare chalkstream habitat. Our plans include:

### **River restoration**

The legacy of many water mills on the Darent is an engineered river with some canalised sections. We are working towards restoring gravel runs, pool and riffle sequences and counteracting the low river flows in summer months.

### **Wild Trout**

We have some evidence of wild trout on our stretch of the river but we are in active discussions with the South East Rivers Trust and other parties to restore a spawning population of wild trout.

This is part of the Darent Valley Landscape Recovery project.

### **Re-lighting the river**

Some stretches of the river are over-shaded by bankside trees. This restricts the growth of aquatic and bankside fauna. Light entering the river will encourage the growth of ranunculus (water crowfoot) in the river which provides a habitat for insect life and a larder for fish and other wildlife. We are working on re-lighting with the North West Countryside Partnership.

The club works in partnership with a wide range of organisations to help enhance the habitat of the river. These include the Environment Agency, South East Rivers Trust, Kent Wildlife Trust, North West Kent Countryside Partnership, Darent Valley Farming Cluster and the Wild Trout Trust.