



Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway Board

Terms of Reference – October 2023

The 2021 Environment Act established the requirement for a system of spatial strategies for nature and environmental improvement, developed at the local level as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Together, the strategies will cover the whole of England with no gaps and no overlaps.

Kent County Council is the Responsible Authority for the development of the Kent and Medway LNRS, which will be undertaken by the project Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway.

The main purpose of the strategy is to identify locations to create or improve habitat most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and provide other environmental benefits, such as carbon sequestration, flood and water management and nature-rich places that support improved health and wellbeing.

The development of the LNRS is underpinned by regulations and guidance, which stipulate that the Strategy must:

- Agree priorities for nature's recovery.
- Map the most valuable existing areas for nature.
- Map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.

The Strategy's development must be evidence-led and collaborative, with wide involvement of public, private and voluntary sectors. The work should be transparent and inclusive, with clear communications.

A governance and delivery structure (illustrated at end of document) has been created to ensure that the Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy:

- meets the requirements of the regulations and statutory guidance;
- benefits from the knowledge and expertise within the county, to ensure it is technically sound; and
- engages all stakeholders along the way, so there is the support and buy-in that will be required to see the successful delivery of the Strategy's priorities.

Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Board: To provide political and strategic oversight and governance for the development of the Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Board will:

- Ensure the statutory and legislative¹ requirements of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy are met.
- Ensure that the Strategy is developed in an appropriate and timely way and undertakes comprehensive engagement with all stakeholders.
- Act as a review panel and decision-making forum for the tabling of any objections to the Strategy's preparation and/or the Strategy itself.

Specific tasks for the Board will include:

1. Review and agree the work programme and approach for the development of the Strategy.
2. Monitor progress and sign off any amendments to the agreed approach and timetable of work.
3. Review and agree that each milestone has been completed in line with the LNRS regulations and statutory guidance and has sufficiently engaged and consulted with relevant stakeholders.
4. Following pre-consultation provision of the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy to the Supporting Authorities and Neighbouring Responsible Authorities, approve the Strategy for consultation.
5. Following pre-publication provision of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to the Supporting Authorities and Neighbouring Responsible Authorities, approve the Notice to the Secretary of State of intention to publish.
6. Act as a review and decision panel for any publication advisory notices² received from Supporting Authorities.
7. Act as a champion and advocate for the project, broadening support for the Strategy and widening engagement across all sectors.

The Board membership will comprise:

Country Land and Business Association Kent Chair
High Weald AONB Director
Kent County Council Cabinet Member and Director for Environment
Kent Downs AONB Director
Kent Nature Partnership Chair
Kent Rural Partnership Chair
Kent Wildlife Trust Chief Executive
Medway Council Cabinet Member for Environment and Director of Place
National Farmers Union Kent Chair

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2023/341/made> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-nature-recovery-strategy-what-to-include>

² Where a Supporting Authority considers that part of a final LNRS cannot be justified based on the findings of the consultation; and/or a Supporting Authority considers that the final LNRS is materially deficient, they may give a "publication advisory notice" to the Responsible Authority (regulation 15).

Natural England Deputy Director Kent and Sussex
 Supporting Authorities represented by Kent Chief Planners Chair and Tonbridge and Malling
 Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Regeneration and Property.

Provisional meeting schedule:

Milestone	Indicative timeframe
Project commencement – publication of work programme and approach to Strategy development.	September/October 2023
Project launch	October 2023
Completion of local habitat map of “areas of particular importance for biodiversity” and the Strategy area description and opportunities for nature recovery.	January/February 2024
Completion of the statement of biodiversity priorities and potential measures.	July/August 2024
Completion of the Local habitat map of “areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity”.	November/December 2024
Review and resolve pre consultation objections and approve the Strategy for consultation.	January/February 2025
Approve Notice to the Secretary of State of intention to publish.	May/June 2025

Extraordinary meetings of the Board may be called in response to any objections raised in relation to the Strategy’s preparation and/or the Strategy itself; and should any Supporting Authorities raise a publication advisory notice that cannot be dealt with within the indicative timeframe.

The MS4N project officer responsible for the Board will be the MS4N Project Manager.

Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway Board

Political and strategic oversight and governance

Steering groups – support, oversight and guidance

Technical Advisory Groups

Stakeholder Engagement Groups

Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway Supporting Authorities

Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway Delivery Group

- Data, evidence & mapping
- Species recovery
- Stakeholder engagement
- Land advice network

- Climate change & NBS
- Habitats & species
- Access & connection
- Utilities
- Transport
- Developers & business
- Landowners, farmers & managers

- Terrestrial
- Rivers & freshwater
- Coastal & marine
- Priority & threatened species



Governance and delivery structure