

Glossary







Term	Definition
Acid grassland	Habitat characterised by grass-dominated vegetation found on nutrient-poor, free-draining acidic soils that are often derived from rocks such as sandstones and gravels.
Active management	Human intervention to maintain or restore habitats and ecosystems to a desired condition. This approach is particularly relevant in areas that have been degraded or where natural processes no longer maintain desired ecological conditions.
Adaptation (climate change)	An approach to climate change that involves adjusting systems, infrastructure and behaviours to prepare for and cope with the unavoidable impacts of climate change, rather than addressing the root causes. This process builds resilience by adapting to both gradual changes and extreme events.
Agroforestry	A process that integrates trees and shrubs into crop and animal farming systems to create more diverse, productive and resilient land management systems. This practice enhances farm outputs by improving soil health, providing shelter from extreme weather and creating new income streams from timber, fruit and nuts.
Ancient tree	Defined as trees that are in the third and final stage of their lives. They typically have a small canopy and a wide trunk with hollows. There is no set age for a tree to be considered ancient, as different species age at different rates.
Ancient woodland	An area that has been continuously wooded since at least 1600AD in England and Wales (1750 in Scotland and 1830 in Northern Ireland). These sites have developed irreplaceable and complex ecosystems with unique habitats and specialist plant, fungi and invertebrate communities that have developed over centuries. They are divided into two categories: ancient semi-natural woodland (native trees and shrubs) and plantations on ancient woodland sites (where ancient features are retained after replanting).
Arable wild plants	Wildflowers that depend on regularly cultivated land, such as fields for growing crops, to complete their life cycles. These plants, including species like poppies, cornflowers and corn buttercups, rely on annual disturbance of the soil for germination and growth.
Areas of particular importance for biodiversity (APIB)	The Strategy area's national conservation sites (National Nature Reserve, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Marine Conservation Zones and Ramsar), Local Nature Reserves, local wildlife sites and irreplaceable habitat. The areas eligible for inclusion in this map are tightly defined by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy regulations.

223

Term	Definition
Areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity (ACIB)	The extent of the mapped potential measures, with areas of particular importance for biodiversity excluded. These are the areas where the Strategy proposes effort should be concentrated to restore habitat, to achieve the greatest gains for nature and derive the greatest benefits from a healthy, functioning environment. They are the areas of Kent and Medway where targeted action will enable us to deliver the priorities laid out by the Strategy.
BAP Priority Habitat	UK BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) Priority Habitats are a range of semi-natural habitat types that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action. A site is identified as a BAP Priority Habitat when its characteristics meet specific criteria and thresholds, and has certain key features, as outlined in the official Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) descriptions.
Better	A Lawton principle: Improving the quality of our existing habitats and ensuring they are in a healthy and functioning state, by applying and resourcing better and appropriate management.
Bigger	A Lawton principle: Increasing the size of the habitat, not only by extending but also by buffering, to protect it from the pressures of human influences.
Biodiversity net gain (BNG)	A mandatory requirement that aims to make sure that development has a measurably positive impact on biodiversit This gain is calculated using a standardised metric that identifies the biodiversity value of the land lost and the biodiversity gained.
Blue carbon store	Carbon captured and stored by marine and coastal ecosystems, such as seagrass and saltmarshes, as well as seafloor sediments. These ecosystems lock away carbon for long periods, performing a vital role in the global carbon cycle and mitigating climate change.
Blue mussel beds	Dense mussel beds that cover the seabed and create a habitat.
Bottom fishing	Trawling the seabed with towed nets to catch fish and other marine species living on or close to the seabed.
Breeding ground	An area where birds, fish or other animals habitually breed.
Brownfield	Previously developed land which is abandoned or underused. They are typically a mix of bare ground, short grassland, patches of weedy tall herbs, longer flower-rich grassland, scrub and temporary pools. Brownfield habitats have experienced periodic disturbance and abandonment, which, combined with low-nutrient soils and introduced materials, creates the mosaic of early successional habitats. This is why they are now often referred to as open mosaic habitat on previously developed land.
Buffer strips	Areas of land maintained in permanent vegetation, such as grass, shrubs or trees, that help to control air quality, soil quality and water quality. They are commonly used to protect water bodies from runoff, in particular agricultural runoff, but are also used for other habitat types sensitive to pollution and disturbance.

Term	Definition
Canopy cover	The area covered by a tree or shrub when viewed from above, including the leaves, branches and stem.
Carbon capture, usage and storage	A technology aimed at capturing carbon dioxide emissions from industrial processes, power plants and other sources, to prevent them from entering the atmosphere and contributing to climate change. The captured carbon dioxide can then be either reused in industrial applications or stored permanently in geological formations deep underground.
Carbon sequestration	The process of capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in various forms to reduce its presence in the atmosphere, to help mitigate global climate change. Sequestration occurs naturally through biological processes like photosynthesis by trees and plants, and through geological processes involving the storage of carbon in the Earth's crust. Humans also enhance sequestration through conservation efforts and develop technological methods to capture carbon dioxide from industrial sources, storing it underground or in other forms (see 'Carbon capture, usage and storage').
Catchment (river)	An area of land where water, from rainfall, snowmelt or ice, collects from higher areas such as hills or mountains. Water flows over the landscape into streams and tributaries, and down into the soil, eventually finding its way to the local river, lake or reservoir. The water absorbed underground slowly feeds the river in drought periods. River catchments can vary in size from small urban areas to large estuaries. They are extremely complex and intertwined ecosystems that support a range of biodiversity and enable human activity. Any changes carried out upstream will eventually be noticed downstream.
Chalk cliffs	Chalk cliffs are formed from the compressed, mineralised skeletons of tiny marine plankton that accumulated on the seabed over millions of years. These soft, porous white rocks have been uplifted and exposed to the elements, forming dramatic coastal cliffs shaped by wave action and erosion.
Chalk grassland	Chalk grassland, also known as lowland calcareous grassland, is a rich, species-diverse habitat found on shallow, nutrient-poor, lime-rich soils overlying chalk bedrock. These conditions allow a variety of small, short herbs and plants to thrive, rather than dominant lush grasses. Chalk grassland is internationally important for its rarity and biodiversity, supporting numerous butterfly and plant species.
Chalk reef communities	Unique marine ecosystems found on the soft, chalk platforms along the south and east coastlines of England. These rare habitats support diverse communities, including extensive algal flora, mussels, and various fish and seabirds.
Chalk stream	A rare river habitat fed by pure, mineral-rich water from underground chalk aquifers, resulting in a clear, stable and consistent flow and diverse wildlife. England has 85% of the world's chalk streams, which support unique aquatic plants, insects and fish.

Term	Definition
Clay river	A river system with a substrate or surrounding landscape dominated by clay, which often features heavy soils, lower-lying floodplains and a dense network of headwaters and larger river corridors. Clay rivers tend to be flashy, that being one in which the water level rises and falls very quickly in response to rainfall – this can make these rivers vulnerable to pollution. Changes in water levels can affect surrounding floodplains and bankside flora and fauna.
Coastal	Habitats found wherever the land meets the sea – these are areas that are inundated at high tide.
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	Periodically inundated pasture or meadow with ditches, which maintain the water levels and contain standing brackish or freshwater. Located on coastal lowlands or floodplains.
Connectivity (habitat)	The degree to which a landscape allows the unimpeded movement of organisms and natural processes between habitats. It is essential for maintaining healthy populations, facilitating gene flow and seed dispersal, and enabling wildlife to adapt to environmental changes like climate change.
Cover crop	A plant that has grown to cover the soil for a period, not for harvest, to improve soil health and manage its environment. Key benefits include reducing soil erosion and nutrient loss, increasing soil organic matter and fertility, suppressing weeds and providing habitat for beneficial insects and wildlife. Commonly sown after main crops are harvested, cover crops are then cut and left in the field as a green manure to feed subsequent crops, or are tilled in to add organic matter and nutrients to the soil.
Crop rotation	The practice of planting a sequence of different crops in the same area across different growing seasons to maintain soil health, prevent the build-up of pests and diseases, and optimise nutrient use. It breaks the life cycles of pests and diseases, improves soil fertility by varying nutrient demands, and reduces reliance on chemical inputs.
Defra	The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – a ministerial body responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing a green economy, sustaining thriving rural community and supporting the country's food, farming and fishing industries.
Delivery partner	A strategic collaborator involved in the development, implementation and delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy
Designated site	 A site classified as statutory sites – with protection under UK, European and international law – or non-statutory – recognised in local planning as being of importance in the local area. Often, the most important sites have more than one designation. Statutory sites: Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites and National Nature Reserves. Non-statutory sites: Local Wildlife Sites, Roadside Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves

Term	Definition
Diffuse pollution	Diffuse pollution, or non-point source pollution, occurs when pollutants are released from scattered sources, such as agricultural runoff, urban stormwater and atmospheric deposition, and are carried into waterways and groundwater by rainfall and surface runoff. Unlike point source pollution, which comes from a specific, identifiable site like a pipe, diffuse pollution originates from a wide range of activities and accumulates to have a significant impact on water quality and the environment at a larger scale, such as a river catchment.
Ecological integrity	The ability of an ecosystem to maintain its natural characteristics, including a complete community of organisms with a characteristic species composition, diversity and functional organisation, and the ecological processes that sustain them. An ecosystem with integrity is resilient, able to withstand and recover from disturbances, and provides ecosystem services.
Ecosystem services	The direct and indirect benefits that humans receive from healthy, functioning ecosystems, encompassing tangible products like food and water, and intangible benefits like climate regulation and cultural inspiration. These services are typically categorised into provisioning (goods), regulating (processes), supporting (fundamental functions) and cultural (non-material) benefits.
Environment Act 2021	The UK's framework for environmental protection, which introduced legally binding targets for areas like air quality, water, biodiversity and waste. It established the Office for Environmental Protection to oversee compliance, modernised waste crime regulations, mandated biodiversity net gain for development, created Nature Recovery Networks and introduced new duties for local authorities on waste and nature recovery. The Act aims to improve environmental quality, halt species decline, increase recycling and enhance resource efficiency by providing new powers and responsibilities for government bodies and businesses.
Ephemeral headwater stream	A small, temporary stream, usually forming from precipitation like rain or snowmelt, which is not connected to groundwater.
Estuary	A semi-enclosed coastal body of brackish water (a mix of fresh and saltwater) where rivers or streams flow into the sea. These transitional zones between a river and the ocean form highly productive ecosystems that serve as vital habitats for diverse wildlife, act as natural filters for pollution, offer coastal protection from floods and storms, and are important for human activities like fishing and recreation.
Evidence-led	A strategic approach where decisions are guided by the collection and analysis of verifiable data and evidence rather than relying on subjective opinions.
Fauna	All the animal life present in a particular region or time.

Term	Definition
Flood plain	A flat, low-lying area of land next to a river or stream that is periodically covered by water when the river overflows its banks.
Flora	All the plant life present in a particular region or time.
Flow	The amount of water moving down a river at a given time and place, measured as a 'volume of water per unit' over time.
Forage	Area over which an animal can search for and source food.
Freshwater	Naturally occurring water with a low salt concentration, found in rivers, lakes and groundwater. It is essential for life, supporting diverse ecosystems and providing water for human use.
Freshwater wetland	An ecosystem permanently or seasonally saturated with water that contains low concentrations of salt. They are transitional areas between dry land and open water, characterised by specialised vegetation that has adapted to waterlogged, oxygen-poor soil conditions.
Functional habitat	A specific area that not only meets an organism's basic survival needs like food, water and shelter, but also provides the necessary ecological and physical components to support its life cycle, including reproduction and movement. Its classification takes into account aspects like resource availability, connectivity and the impacts of landscape features.
Functionally linked land	An area of land outside a designated protected site that is used by the species for which the site is designated and is therefore critical to its conservation. The land serves a crucial purpose for these species, by providing space for feeding, breeding, resting or migrating. This land does not need to be physically joined to the protected site – the connection is behavioural and ecological, as the species travel between sites through the surrounding landscape.
Functioning (ecosystem)	A dynamic system where biological, geochemical and physical processes occur, supporting the collective life activities of plants, animals and microbes while cycling energy and nutrients. It maintains stability, regulates essential processes and provides benefits to humans.
Gill woodland	A habitat found in the extreme upper reaches of rivers, where springs and streams first form in small, steep, wooded valleys. The steep sides mean that many gill woodlands have remained untouched and undisturbed by human activity. Gill woodlands have an unusual micro-climate.
Good ecological status (water body)	Indicates a healthy, functioning ecosystem with only minor deviations from undisturbed natural conditions, reflecting a good balance of biological, chemical and physical elements.
Grassland	An ecosystem dominated by plants of the grass family, but may also include various herbs, sedges and legumes.

Term	Definition
Green space	 Defined in Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (unless stated otherwise in mapping methodology) as: parks and gardens – urban parks, country and regional parks, historic, formal and managed gardens, children's play areas, stately homes amenity green space – informal recreation spaces, village greens, urban commons natural and semi-natural urban green spaces – woodland and scrub, grassland, heath or moor, wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and disturbed ground green corridors – rivers and canals including their banks, cycling routes, pedestrian paths and rights of way allotments community gardens and orchards city farms cemeteries, churchyards and other religious grounds playing fields and pitches golf courses equestrian sites
Groundwater	Water that has filtered below the Earth's surface into porous underground geological layers called aquifers. It is a vital natural resource that supports both ecosystems, by flowing into rivers and wetlands, and human communities through private and public water supplies.
Habitat change	The alteration of an area where a plant or animal lives, caused by factors such as human land use, climate change, natural disasters and pollution, leading to habitat loss, degradation or shifts in vegetation and conditions.
Habitat corridor	A strip of land or water that connects two or more separate natural habitats, allowing animals to safely move between them to find food, water and shelter, and to breed. These corridors, which can be natural (e.g. hedgerows) or artificial (green bridges over roads), are essential for maintaining biodiversity, genetic diversity and the ability of species to migrate in response to climate change.
Habitat fragmentation	Where a large, continuous area of natural habitat is divided into smaller, isolated fragments due to human activity such as urbanisation, infrastructure and agriculture. Impacts on wildlife include reduced available habitat, barriers to species movement and feeding, lower genetic diversity, and increased vulnerability to disease and other threats.
Headwater stream	The source of a river or stream, where water from rainfall, snowmelt or springs first accumulates and begins to flow. These streams are the highest, smallest tributaries in a river network, acting as the foundation for the health of entire river systems.

Term	Definition
Heathland	An open, low-lying landscape dominated by heather, gorse and grasses on poor, acid soils, typically requiring human management like grazing and burning to prevent it returning to scrub and woodland. This distinctive semi-natural habitat supports a range of rare wildlife and plants, including specific birds, reptiles and invertebrates.
Hedgerow	A planted or natural line of shrubs, often with trees, that creates a physical barrier or boundary, but also functions as a complete wildlife habitat and ecosystem. They are vital green corridors that stitch together fragmented landscapes, providing essential food, shelter and nesting sites for a vast array of wildlife, such as birds, bats and insects, while also offering carbon capture and flood prevention.
Hydrogeological	The occurrence, distribution and movement of water below the Earth's surface (groundwater).
Hydrological	The movement, distribution, management and quality of water on Earth and in the atmosphere (surface water).
Important Bird Areas	Globally significant sites identified by BirdLife International for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity.
Important Invertebrate Areas	Sites, identified by Buglife, that are home to nationally or internationally significant invertebrate populations and their habitats. They support diverse species, from beetles and moths to freshwater Shrimps and Woodlice, and habitats from the shoreline, along rivers and to the uplands.
Important Plant Areas	Key sites, identified by Plantlife, with exceptional botanical richness, rare, threatened and socio-economically valuable plant species, and rare and threatened habitats.
Intertidal	Also known as the littoral zone, the area of a shoreline that is exposed to the air at low tide and submerged at high tide. It experiences dramatic environmental shifts, including changes in temperature, salinity and wave action, requiring the organisms that live there to be highly adaptable. Habitats within the intertidal zone include rocky shores, sandy beaches, mudflats and saltmarshes.
Invasive species	A non-native organism that causes significant ecological, environmental or economic harm to its new environment. While most non-native or introduced species are harmless, a small percentage spread rapidly and negatively impact native species and habitats.
Irreplaceable habitat	Habitat that is very difficult (or takes a very long time) to restore, create or replace once it has been destroyed, due to its age, uniqueness or species diversity. For the purposes of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, areas of irreplaceable habitat are defined as those on the biodiversity net gain irreplaceable habitats list, namely ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavements, coastal sand dunes, spartina saltmarsh swards, Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub and lowland fens.

Term	Definition
Lake	A large body of standing water, typically freshwater, completely surrounded by land and often fed by rivers, springs or precipitation. While most are natural, lakes can also be artificial, formed by mineral extraction or river damming.
Land management	The process of planning and controlling how land and its resources are used.
Land manager	A person responsible for overseeing and directing the use and management of a piece of land.
Land use	How humans utilise a specific area of land for various purposes, such as residential, commercial, industrial, agricultura or conservation activities.
Landowner	A person, entity or group with ownership rights to land, meaning their name is on the property's title, and they have the legal right to manage, use and sell the land.
Landscape scale	Working over a large geographical area, such as a river catchment or an entire region, collaborating among multiple landholders and stakeholders to manage natural systems and deliver interconnected benefits for nature, society and the economy.
Lawton principles	Four guiding rules – More, Bigger, Better and Joined up – for creating a resilient ecological network, proposed by Professor Sir John Lawton in the 2010 Making Space for Nature report.
Local authorities	An administrative body, run by elected councillors, that provides public services within a specific geographic area, such as housing, planning, environmental health, leisure facilities, waste management, schools, roads, libraries and social care. Collectively, services provide for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the community. In the context of this Local Nature Recovery Strategy, relevant local authorities are Kent County Council, Medway Council, Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Dartford Borough Council, Dover District Council, Folkestone & Hythe District Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Swale Borough Council, Thanet District Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Local habitat map	A map of the Strategy area that provides a clear visual way for groups and individuals to understand the areas which are, or could become, of particular importance for biodiversity and the environment to target nature recovery action. The mapped parts include: • location and extent of areas identified as of particular importance for biodiversity • locations where potential measures have been proposed • location and extent of areas identified that could become of particular importance for biodiversity.

Term	Definition
Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)	A new system of spatial strategies for nature, introduced in the Environment Act 2021. They help map out the action needed to restore nature, working closely with local stakeholders, especially farmers and land managers. When put together, they will be key to meeting the government's England-wide nature targets.
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	Areas designated by local authorities for their significant local wildlife, geological interest or educational value. These reserves provide safe habitats for plants and animals, offer spaces for public enjoyment and learning, and support biodiversity. Local authorities, such as town or county councils, establish and manage local Nature Reserves, often encouraging the community to be involved in their care and access.
Local Plan	Local Plans are documents prepared by a council's local planning authority to guide future development by setting out a vision and framework for the area. They cover housing, employment and other priorities, and identify areas for development or restriction. They are based on up-to-date evidence, undergo an independent examination to ensure soundness and, once adopted, become the starting point for deciding planning applications. Local Plans should safeguard the environment, enable adaptation to climate change and help secure high-quality accessible design.
Local planning authorities	 A local government body that is empowered by law to exercise urban planning functions for a particular area. The following local planning authority roles are assigned in the Strategy area: Kent County Council – planning authority for minerals and waste and county council developments (e.g. schools and roads). Medway Council – planning authority all planning matters, including minerals and waste, council developments (e.g. schools and roads) and housing. District and borough councils – all other planning matters that are not delivered by Kent County Council.
Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs)	Sites designated on the basis of their representation of the most important, distinctive and threatened species and habitats within a national, regional and local context. In Kent, they are proposed locally, using robust, scientifically determined criteria and detailed ecological surveys. Their eventual delineation is by the relevant local planning authority.
Lowland drains and marshlands	Low-lying areas of waterlogged terrain, often found inland or along coasts, characterised by grasses, reeds and sedges.
Lowland meadow	A species-rich grassland habitat that has developed over centuries on neutral, low-nutrient soils. It is a highly biodiverse environment, traditionally managed by grazing livestock or cutting for hay. These meadows are a priority for conservation in the UK due to a significant and continuing decline in their extent.
Lowland mire sites	Rare and threatened wetlands characterised by peat formation, such as lowland fens and valley mires.

Term	Definition
Making Space For Nature	The project that developed the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
Mapping platform	The online tool used to present the Strategy mapping and enable it to be viewed and studied easily.
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Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)	A specific type of Marine Protected Area designated to protect nationally important marine species, habitats, geology and geomorphology in UK waters. These zones safeguard rare or vulnerable underwater features and are established through legal orders to contribute to an ecologically coherent network of protected areas and meet biodiversity commitments.
Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)	A designated area of the ocean, sea or estuary, managed to protect and conserve marine life, habitats and cultural or historical features. Their key purpose is to protect and recover rare, threatened and important habitats and species from damage caused by human activities. Marine Protected Areas include Marine Conservation Zones, and Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas with marine components.
Migration	Seasonal movement of species to a different environment, often for breeding or food. With climate change, migration may also mean the movement of species in response to changing habitat conditions.
More	A Lawton principle: Through habitat restoration and creation, establishing new, nature-rich sites that not only provide more space for nature but also provide connectivity between existing core sites.
Mosaic habitat	An area containing closely adjacent, diverse habitat types, such as grasslands, scrub, wetlands and bare ground, creating a complex, interconnected landscape supporting high biodiversity. This patchwork of different environments allows various species to thrive by providing a range of resources and microclimates within a relatively small area.
Mudflat	A coastal wetland that forms in sheltered areas, such as bays, lagoons and estuaries, where fine silts and clays carried by tides and rivers are deposited. They are part of the intertidal zone, so are covered by seawater at high tide and exposed at low tide.
National Character Area (NCA)	England is divided into 159 distinct National Character Areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, cultural and economic activity. Boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape, not county or district boundaries.

Term	Definition
National conservation sites	Sites that are designated and managed for their significant ecological value and biodiversity, with some level of protection. In Kent, we have the following national conservation sites: National Nature Reserve (NNR) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Special Protection Areas (SPA) Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) Ramsar
National Landscape	A designation applied to an exceptional landscape with a distinctive character and natural beauty precious enough to be safeguarded in the national interest. On a par with National Parks, National Landscapes are protected and enhanced for nature, people, business and culture. There are 46 National Landscapes across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Strategy area includes all of the Kent Downs National Landscape and a portion of the High Weald National Landscape.
National Nature Reserves	A protected area of land designated for its nationally important wildlife, habitats or geological features. They offer opportunities for research and for people to experience nature firsthand.
Native Oyster beds	A complex marine habitat created by Native Oysters on the seabed, providing a hard, rocky structure from the shells of dead and living Oysters. These beds are crucial ecosystem engineers, filtering vast amounts of seawater, supporting biodiversity by providing habitat for juvenile fish and shellfish, and stabilising sediments.
Native species	An organism that occurs naturally in a particular region or ecosystem due to local natural evolution, having evolved in its natural range without human intervention. These species are adapted to the local environmental and play a specific role in the local food web.
Natural form (river)	A free-flowing, dynamic river that creates diverse habitats and landforms by eroding, depositing and meandering, creating features like gravel bars, oxbow lakes and varied vegetation zones. Unlike modified or straightened rivers, which are often channelised and cut off from their floodplains, a natural river maintains a complex, varied structure and supports a rich diversity of wildlife. Its unrestricted flows transport natural sediment transport and create complex ecological niches.
Natural regeneration	The ecological process where plants and woodlands re-establish themselves without human planting, primarily through seeds, suckering or layering from existing trees. It is an important method of forest creation and recovery, offering benefits such as greater genetic diversity, increased resilience to pests and climate change, and lower management costs than tree planting.

Term	Definition	
Nature-friendly farming	A farming approach using sustainable practices that produce food while restoring and protecting the natural environment. Rather than depending on high inputs of artificial chemicals, this approach builds farm resilience by working with natural processes to improve soil health, increase biodiversity and mitigate climate change.	
Nature-based solutions	Actions that protect, manage and restore natural and modified ecosystems to address societal challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss and poverty. They involve working with nature to provide human wellbeing and biodiversity benefits, offering cost-effective, adaptive and resilient approaches.	
Non-native species	An organism introduced to an area outside its natural range, accidentally or deliberately, by human activity. The vast majority are not considered harmful, but a small proportion become invasive, causing significant damage to the environment, economy or human health.	
Nursery (fish)	An area with abundant food and protection that supports the growth of juvenile fish before they move to adult habitats	
Open coast	A stretch of coast where natural forces and systems are dominant, so are wild and natural.	
Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land	A high-biodiversity habitat, primarily found on former industrial (brownfield) sites, that develops from a mix of bare ground, short-sward grassland, scrub and ruderal (unmanaged weed) vegetation communities. This divers supports rich invertebrate and plant communities, including rare species.	
Open space	 Defined in Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (unless stated otherwise in mapping methodology) as: parks and gardens – urban parks, country and regional parks, historic, formal and managed gardens, children's play areas, stately homes amenity green space – informal recreation spaces, village greens, urban commons natural and semi-natural urban green spaces – woodland and scrub, grassland, heath or moor, wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and disturbed ground green corridors – rivers and canals including their banks, cycling routes, pedestrian paths and rights of way allotments community gardens and orchards city farms cemeteries, churchyards and other religious grounds playing fields and pitches golf courses equestrian sites. 	

Term	Definition	
Permaculture	A design philosophy and framework for creating sustainable human habitats and agricultural systems by imitating patterns found in natural ecosystems, rather than working against nature.	
Pest	Any animal or plant that is considered a nuisance, causes damage or poses a health hazard.	
Planning system	The process for managing land and buildings, balancing the needs of the community, economy and environment. It is primarily administered by local authorities, although national policy also applies.	
Pond	A small, still, contained body of water, usually fresh but sometimes brackish, which can be natural or artificial and which holds water for at least four months of the year. Ponds serve as vital habitats for diverse wildlife, including plants, invertebrates, amphibians and fish, while also offering benefits like flood reduction and cooling effects. They come in various shapes and sizes, from small garden ponds to larger natural pools.	
Potential measure	The proposed action to deliver the priority. It must be practical and achievable.	
Potential measures mapping	Mapping that identifies where actions agreed as necessary to fulfil this Strategy's nature recovery priorities should be strategically targeted to achieve the greatest gains for biodiversity and deliver the widest environmental benefits.	
Priority	The outcome we want to see for nature.	
Priority species	Species that this Strategy has determined should be prioritised for recovery action. They were identified from an initial list of threatened and locally significant species.	
Production and provisioning services	Tangible products obtained directly from ecosystems that support human life and needs, including food, water, timber, genetic resources and medicinal resources. These services involve the extraction, harvest and use of natural resources for subsistence or industrial purposes, such as agriculture, fishing, mining and energy generation from natural sources.	
Public Right of Way (PROW)	Legally protected routes in England and Wales that people can use for travel, often on land privately owned but accessible to the public. There are different types of Public Rights Of Way, including footpaths (for walkers), bridleways (for walkers, horse riders and cyclists), restricted byways (for any non-motorised transport) and byways (open to all traffic, including motor vehicles).	
Q10 flows	The flow in cubic metres per second which was equalled or exceeded for 10% of the specified term – a high flow parameter which, when compared with the Q 95 flow provides a measure of the variability, or flashiness, of the flow regime (Source: https://nrfa.ceh.ac.uk/derived-flow-statistics).	

Term	Definition
Ramsar sites	Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, an intergovernmental treaty focused on the conservation of wetlands. These sites are recognised for their role in conserving biological diversity and their biological or hydrological value. Most Ramsar sites overlap with the Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.
Recreational disturbance	Any human leisure activity that negatively impacts wildlife or habitats, causing changes in behaviour, habitat damage or physical harm to animals.
Reedbed	A wetland ecosystem characterised by dense stands of Common Reed (Phragmites australis), where the water table is at or above ground level all year round. These habitats form at the transition between land and water and serve as vital natural filters, removing pollutants while producing clean water. Reedbeds are also crucial for biodiversity, providing essential habitat and food for a wide range of wildlife, including rare birds like the Bittern.
Regenerative practices	A set of farming and land management techniques designed to reverse soil degradation, improve biodiversity and enhance the health of the entire ecosystem, rather than just sustaining it. Approaches include reducing inputs, reducing cultivation, having no or minimum till, enabling deeper rooting, having stronger rooted swards, overwintering stubble, including cover crops, minimising compaction, ploughing along a contour, and maintaining invertebrates and bacteria.
Resilience (climate change)	The capacity of ecosystems to withstand, adapt to and recover from climate-related hazards, such as extreme weather events, and slow-onset changes like sea-level rise. It involves understanding risks, developing land management strategies, and implementing a combination of adaptation and mitigation actions to cope with, and thrive under, a changing climate.
Resilience (ecological)	An ecosystem's ability to withstand and recover from disturbances, so that it maintains its core structure and functions while continuing to provide vital services like clean water and climate regulation.
Responsible Authority	The organisation that leads the preparation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy – in most cases a combined authority, county council or unitary council. For the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the responsible authority is Kent County Council.
Rewilding	A large-scale conservation approach that restores ecosystems by allowing natural processes to take over, giving nature the space and freedom to recover and adapt on its own terms. It goes beyond traditional species-focused conservation by emphasising the large-scale restoration of natural systems and the return of missing species to restore functioning, biodiverse and resilient ecosystems.

Term	Definition
River	A natural stream of fresh water that flows from a source on high ground towards another body of water, such as the sea, a lake or another river. The journey of a river is shaped by the land it flows across, and it gradually erodes land and deposits sediment along its course.
Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs)	Protected stretches of roadside verge that are managed to conserve biodiversity, serving as vital refuges for rare plants, insects and other wildlife. Often a remnant of once-extensive habitats like meadows, these verges are particularly valuable in landscapes that have been fragmented.
Safeguarding	In the context of this Strategy, this does not imply a formal protection nor a prevention of potentially impactful activities, unless this has already been identified within an existing and adopted Local Plan or an established legal protection. Safeguarding may be delivered by setting aside the land but it also refers to using active management to prevent loss and damage, using buffers to minimise human impacts, and connecting habitats to increase resilience. Where measures refer to safeguarding areas, this does not mean that nothing can happen in these areas but that appropriate action should be taken to support the habitats and species these areas are notable for.
Saline lagoon	An area of shallow, coastal saltwater that is partially or completely separated from the open sea by a natural barrier, such as a sandbank or an artificial one, like a sea wall. This restricted connection to the sea creates a unique environment where the salinity can fluctuate, ranging from brackish (less salty than seawater) to hypersaline (saltier than seawater).
Saltmarsh	A coastal wetland, found where land meets saltwater, dominated by salt-tolerant plants like grasses and shrubs that are regularly flooded by tides. These vital habitats act as natural flood defences, provide crucial environments for diverse wildlife, and are important for carbon sequestration and nutrient remediation.
Scrub	Also known as scrubland, this is an area dominated by shrubs, bushes and other low growing plants, often forming a transitional zone between open grassland and woodland. These habitats are valuable for wildlife, providing shelter, food sources like berries and seeds, and breeding or roosting sites. Scrub habitats feature a diverse mix of vegetation, with natural edges and a mosaic of different heights and ages of shrubs, grasses and herbs, such as brambles, hawthorn and thistles.
Seagrass	The only type of flowering plant that can live fully submerged in seawater, its roots, stems and leaves forming underwater meadows that are vital ecosystems. They play a crucial role in coastal health by providing food and shelter for diverse marine life, acting as nursery grounds for fish, storing significant amounts of carbon (known as blue carbon), filtering pollutants, and stabilising coastlines.

Term	Definition
Sensitive land management	Implementing practices that deliver environmental and climate benefits alongside food production. Key practices include creating wildlife habitats, improving water quality by reducing pollution, increasing resilience to flooding and drought, planting trees, managing soils sustainably and reducing carbon emissions.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A legally protected area of land, habitat or geological feature in the UK that is of national or international importance for nature and geology. Designations are made by bodies like Natural England and NatureScot, with owners and occupiers having responsibilities to manage the land and seek consent for potentially harmful activities.
Soil management	Practices that maintain or improve soil health, fertility and productivity for sustainable agriculture and land use. Key practices include adding organic matter, using cover crops, practising crop rotation, reducing soil compaction and avoiding working wet soils.
Spatially framed strategy	A plan or approach that integrates physical space into strategic decision making, often by focusing actions on specific locations to achieve maximum benefit. This Strategy focuses action on where its most needed and where it will deliver the greatest benefits.
Special Areas for Conservation (SACs)	A protected area in the UK and Europe designated to conserve natural habitats and species listed in the Habitats Directive. These areas form part of the Natura 2000.
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	A designation for land or sea sites that are internationally important for protecting vulnerable bird species, especially migratory and Annex I listed birds, under the EU's Birds Directive. These areas form part of the Natura 2000 and require conservation measures to protect the birds, their habitats, eggs and nests.
Species-rich grassland	Grassland with more than 15 plant species per square metre, more than 30% cover of wildflowers and sedges (excluding White Clover, Creeping Buttercup and injurious weeds) and less than 10% cover of White Clover and perennial Rye Grass.
Species-rich hedgerow	A hedgerow that contains a high diversity of native woody plants, typically defined as having at least five native woody species within a 30-metre section. These hedges are crucial for biodiversity, providing food, shelter and movement corridors for wildlife. They also offer other benefits like windbreaks and soil erosion control.
Spring	A natural point where groundwater flows to the surface, forming part of the water cycle.
Stage Zero restoration	A philosophy that involves working with natural processes to repair a modified channel network that has incised (cut into) or aggraded (built up with sediment) the land it flows over, to restore the water connection to its floodplain. For more information see https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk/2022/12/09/resetting-our-rivers-how-taking-them-back-to-stage-zero-could-help-nurture-nature/

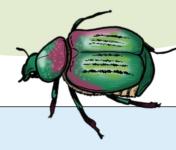
Term	Definition
Stakeholder	An individual, group or organisation within or has links to the Strategy area.
Strategic significance	The local significance of a habitat parcel based on its location and habitat type. This statutory biodiversity net gain metric formula takes different factors into account, including the habitat's size, condition, type and strategic significance. Where a Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been published, high strategic significance (and the associated score) is applied when: • the location of the habitat parcel has been mapped in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as an area where a potential measure has been proposed to help deliver the priorities of the Strategy; and • the proposed intervention is consistent with the mapped potential measure in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the habitat parcel.
Stream	A smaller, flowing body of water that can be a tributary to a larger river. By contrast, a river is a substantial natural stream that is wider, deeper and often navigable. The distinction between the two is subjective and depends on factors like size, flow and geographical significance.
Successional habitats	A specific stage within the natural process of ecological succession, where one habitat type gradually transforms into another over time. These habitats are defined by the mix of plant and animal species present, and they naturally progress through a series of stages, from pioneer species to a relatively stable climax community, such as a mature forest.
Supporting authority	The local planning authorities in a Local Nature Recovery Strategy area that are not the lead responsible authority. Their role is to provide input and ensure the Strategy accounts for their area's local priorities. For this Strategy the supporting authorities are: Medway Council, Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Dartford Borough Council, Dover District Council, Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Swale Borough Council, Thanet District Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Supporting measures	Supporting mechanisms, processes and functions that are considered critical to the delivery of the identified potential measures for habitats and species. If these are not addressed, those measures will be limited in their success.
Surface water management	Environmentally friendly methods to manage rainwater by using natural processes to filter, store and slowly release it, which helps reduce flooding and pollution, improves water quality and creates green spaces in urban areas.
Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	A natural approach to managing surface water runoff in urban and rural environments. Unlike conventional drainage, which quickly pipes water away, sustainable urban drainage systems use a sequence of techniques to mimic natural drainage, slowing and holding back water while filtering out pollutants.

Term	Definition
Sustainable land management	A land management approach which aims to balance human needs with the long-term health of the environment by reducing land degradation, enhancing biodiversity and mitigating climate change impacts.
Swift Bricks	A universal nest brick for cavity-nesting small bird species.
Traditional orchard	A low-density planting of standard or half-standard fruit and nut trees in permanent grassland. Managed in a chemical-free way, these orchards are a distinct habitat that supports a rich diversity of wildlife. This contrasts with modern, intensive orchards that use high-density plantings of dwarf trees and are managed with chemicals.
Transitional habitat	The boundary zone between two different ecosystems or plant communities, such as where a woodland meets a grassland or where fresh and saltwater interact in an estuary. These areas are characterised by a unique mix of species from both adjacent habitats, creating conditions that support a high level of biodiversity and act as important wildlife corridors.
Trees outside woodland	A critical and often underestimated resource in both rural and urban landscapes, defined as trees on land that does not meet the criteria for a forest (typically <0.5 hectares). They include trees in hedgerows, parks, gardens, agricultural land and along roads and waterways. They provide disproportionately high ecological, cultural and economic value compared to the small area they occupy.
Urban cooling	The use of strategies and technologies to counteract the urban heat island effect, when cities become significantly warmer than their surrounding rural areas. This is mainly due to dense urban development, which uses materials like concrete and asphalt that absorb and retain more heat. Urban cooling strategies include green, blue and grey infrastructure.
Urban environment	A human settlement characterised by high population density, infrastructure and a built-up landscape, distinct from rural or natural areas. These cities, towns and suburbs are dynamic ecosystems shaped heavily by human activity.
Urbanisation	The increasing proportion of people living in urban areas, or cities and towns, compared to rural areas, and the resulting growth of developed areas.
Vegetated shingle	A rare and fragile coastal habitat that forms on stable shingle beaches. These are beaches composed of pebbles and stones, rather than sand. The plants that grow there must be highly adapted to withstand the harsh conditions of wind, salt spray and drought.
Veteran tree	Ancient trees are veteran trees, but not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient. Veteran trees are survivors that have developed some of the features found on ancient trees. However, veteran trees are usually only in their second or mature stage of life.

Term	Definition
Wet woodland	A tree-dominated habitat that grows in poorly drained or seasonally flooded soils, featuring trees that are adapted to waterlogged conditions. These woodlands are important for biodiversity, especially invertebrates, and play a vital role in water quality by buffering pollutants and helping to control flood risk by storing water.
Wider measures	Proposed actions which would be similarly beneficial over wide areas or when it was not possible to determine specific locations to carry out the proposed action. Collectively, they identify areas of additional opportunities for nature recovery but do not form a part of the formal Local Nature Recovery Strategy's local habitat map.
Wilding	Allowing plants to grow uncultivated to encourage wildlife or, more broadly, the process of restoring natural processes to an area of land with minimal human intervention.
Wildlife corridor	Linear features, either natural or artificial, that connect fragmented habitats, enabling animals and plants to move, disperse, migrate, breed and access resources like food and water.
Wood pasture and parkland	Historic and ecologically rich mosaic habitats that feature large, open-grown trees in a matrix of grazed grassland or heathland.
Woodland	An area of land covered with trees and shrubs.



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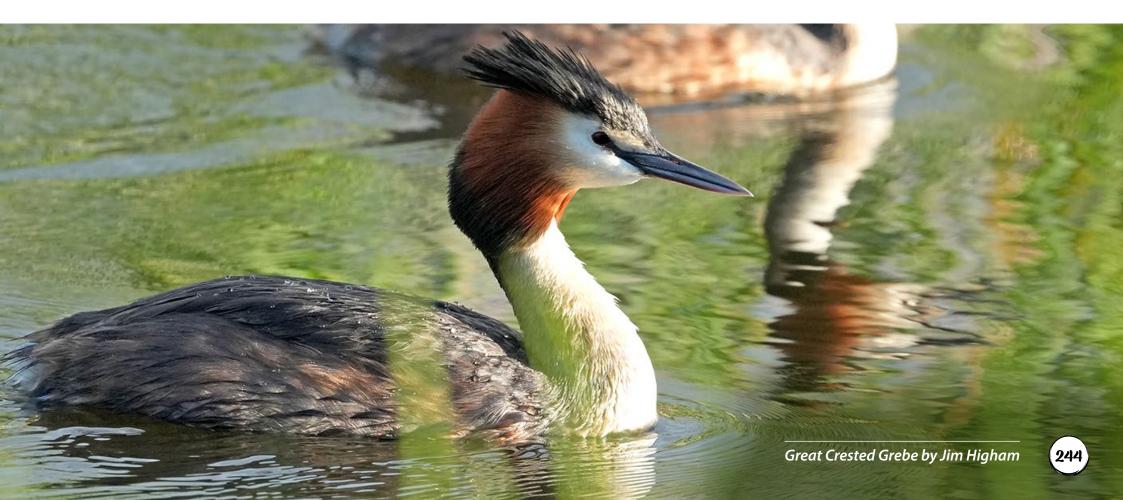
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	https://consult.defra.gov.uk/uk-marine-strategy-programme-of- measures-3/uk-marine-strategy-part-3/supporting_documents/UKMS3%20 Consultation%20Document.pdf
Unleashing Rural Opportunity	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/unleashing-rural- opportunity/unleashing-rural-opportunity



Documents providing information to the Strategy Area Description	
Air Pollution Impacts On Avian Species Via Inhalation Exposure And Associated Outcomes (Sanderfoot & Holloway, 2017)	https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aa8051
Catchment Data for WFD Water Bodies	https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/
Ecological Consequences of Gamebird Releasing and Management on Lowland Shoots in England (NEER016) Natural England (2020)	https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5078605686374400
Greater Thames Estuary (NCA81)	https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/greater-thames-estuary/
High Weald (NCA122)	https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/high-weald/
High Weald National Landscape	https://highweald.org/
Important Invertebrate Areas	https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/important-invertebrate-areas/
Important Plant Areas (IPAs)	https://www.plantlife.org.uk/protecting-plants-fungi/important-plant-areas/
Kent Downs National Landscape	https://kentdowns.org.uk/
Kent Habitat Survey 2012	https://kentnature.org.uk/publications/kent-habitat-survey-2012/
Kent State of Nature 2022	https://kentnature.org.uk/state-of-nature/
Local Nature Reserves: Setting up and Management	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/create-and-manage-local-nature-reserves
Local Wildlife Sites	https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/projects/local-wildlife-sites
Low Weald (NCA121)	https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/low-weald/
Marine Conservation Zones	https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/marine-conservation-zones/
Marine Protected Areas	https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/about-marine-protected-areas/
UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) (Met Office)	Met Office's UK Climate Projections (UKCP)

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National Nature Reserves in England	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-nature-reserves-in- england
North Downs (NCA119)	https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/north-downs/
North Kent Plain (NCA113)	https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/north-kent-plain/
Plant Defences Mediate Interactions Between Herbivory and The Direct Foliar Uptake of Atmospheric Reactive Nitrogen (Campbell & Vallano, 2018)	https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-018-07134-9
Protecting the Most Important Habitats for Birds	https://www.birdlife.org/projects/ibas-mapping-most-important-places/
Roadside Nature Reserves	https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/roadside-nature-reserves
Romney Marshes (NCA123)	https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/romney-marshes/
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-areas-sites-of-special-scientific-interest
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/special-areas-of-conservation/
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/special-protection-areas/
Wealden Greensand (NCA120)	https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/wealden-greensand/

