



LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY



Kent and Medway are creating a Local Nature Recovery Strategy - but what is it? And what does it mean for our nature? Take part in our learning activities to find out all about it!

Learning Worksheets



GROUP ACTIVITIES



TALK AND LEARN



FASCINATING FACTS

GET IN TOUCH!



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Making Space for Nature Champions Activities

Tick when complete!



Talking Activity 1: What does a healthy natural environment offer us?



Research Activity: What habitats do we have in Kent?



Talking Activity 2: What challenges does biodiversity face?



Talking Activity 3: Which is better - land sparing or land sharing?



Drawing Activity 1: What would you like our natural environment in Kent look like?



Outside Activity: Biodiversity Survey



Problem Solving Activity: What challenges does the biodiversity in your playground face?

What is the Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

Hey there, eco-explorer! Did you know that our county needs a nature boost?

Kent is a giant web of different habitats like woods, rivers, and grassland. But these habitats are facing some challenges. Maybe birds have trouble finding food, butterflies lack flowery highways, or the local stream looks a bit sad. That's why we are creating a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) to work out how we can help!

The **LNRS** is a plan – **a map** and a **to-do list** – to make our awesome ecosystems stronger and more vibrant. It involves different teams of nature champions (farmers, conservationists, even you!) working together to:

Find the hidden treasures:

Like explorers scouting, we'll map out all the thriving natural areas, we have here in Kent and Medway.

Fix the wobbly bits:

We could plant trees to create leafy corridors for birds, animals and insects, build ponds for buzzing dragonflies, or even connect parks with "stepping stones" of greenery.

Share the secrets:

We can all share what we've learnt from the LNRS to educate everyone about the importance of working together to help nature.

NEW WORD ALERT!

What is **Biodiversity**?

Biodiversity is the incredible variety of all life on Earth, from towering trees to delicate spiders, and it's what makes our planet healthy and full of surprises!



Why Do You Think a Healthy Natural Environment is so Important?

Time to Talk!

On your table, have a think about what you think a healthy natural environment offers us.

You might want to think about what we use our land for here in Kent, and what kind of help we receive from thriving habitats and ecosystems...

NEW WORD ALERT!

What is an **Ecosystem**?

Ecosystems are networks of living and non-living things that make up our natural environment – from the soil and water, through to the fungi, plants and animals – each of them play a role to keep our natural environment working, and together, they make up an ecosystem.

NEW WORD ALERT!

What is a **Habitat**?

Habitat is the word we use to describe where our biodiversity lives – Food, water, and a safe place to sleep are all part of a habitat. There are all kinds of habitats around the world, like forests, oceans, and even deserts!



What Habitats Do We Have Here in Kent?

Kent is a giant treasure chest overflowing with diverse landscapes, each one brimming with unique animal residents and exciting adventures!

Coasts and Beaches: We have miles of coastline stretching under the sun. Look closely, and you'll see playful seals basking on sand banks, crabs scuttling amongst the seaweed, and graceful gulls soaring overhead. This coastal haven is where seabirds build their nests, and a wealth of sea creatures make their homes in the rockpools and on the shore.

Woodland: Step into a world of towering trees, where you can hear the chirping symphony of birds flitting through branches, the rustle of deer brushing through ferns, and the tap-tap-tap of a woodpecker searching for lunch. These ancient woods are home to shy bats, burrowing badgers, and majestic owls watching over the forest floor.

Meadows and Grassland: We have vast stretches of beautiful, rare grassland, buzzing with bees and butterflies. Here, hares dart through tall grasses, and majestic skylarks sing songs to the sun. These meadows are a playground for insects, a hidden kingdom for small mammals, and a source of life for countless birds and wildflowers.

Rivers and Wetlands: Our meandering rivers wind through the county. See if you can spot the graceful glide of a kingfisher on the hunt, or herons and egrets standing tall on the water's edge. These watery highways are home to sleek otters, colourful dragonflies, water voles, and so much more! You might even be lucky enough to spot an otter, or even a beaver!





What Habitats Do We Have Here in Kent?

Time to Research!

We've had a look at some of the habitats we have here in Kent, but there are lots more.

Use your computer or tablet to do some research and see what other habitats there are in Kent! How many can you find?



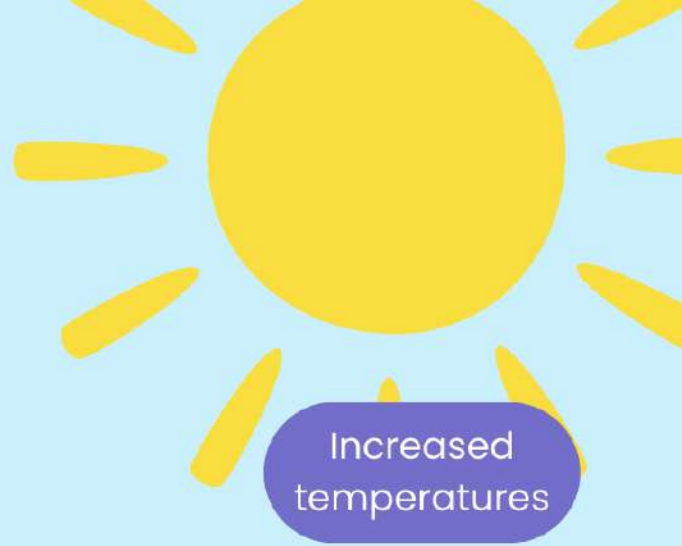
Whilst we are lucky to have amazing habitats in Kent, we still need to look after our nature, because sometimes things happen that make it harder for it to be healthy and happy.

Time to Talk!

On your table, have a talk about some of the things that might make it harder for nature to be healthy and happy... In the next pages, we will go through some of the challenges that nature faces...



Challenge: Climate Change



Increased temperatures



Increased Rainfall



Wildfires



Flooding



The atmosphere around the Earth acts a bit like a greenhouse, warmed by the sun. But when we burn too many fossil fuels, it releases "gassy blankets" that trap warmth, making things a bit too toasty - that's climate change! It melts ice, messes with weather, and creates difficult living conditions for both biodiversity and people.





Challenge: Habitat Loss

People take up a lot of space! We need space for our houses and buildings, for growing food and keeping livestock, and for our roads and railways.

The trouble is, all of this uses up space that our biodiversity needs as habitats. When they lose habitat space, they can't get the food they need, or the right sort of natural environments to live and reproduce. So when we lose habitats, we lose biodiversity too!

Housing and buildings

Roads and Railways

Food Production



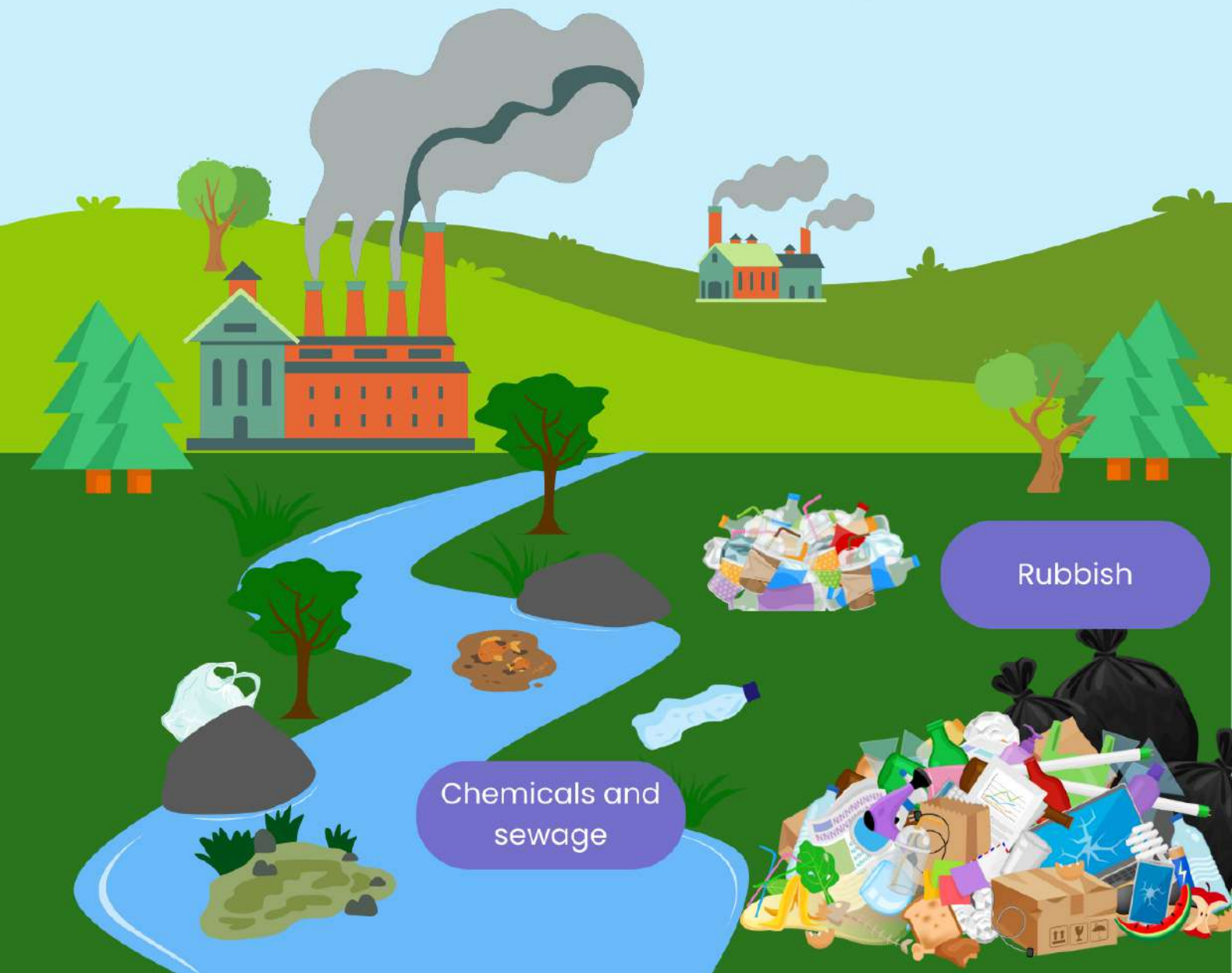


Challenge: Pollution

Pollution happens when we put too many harmful things into our natural environment, like chemicals, fertilisers, sewage, and rubbish.

These can upset the natural balance in ecosystems, destroy habitats, and make our water, air and soil unhealthy.

Fumes and smoke



Rubbish

Chemicals and sewage



So How Should We Use our Land to Help Biodiversity?

Some people think we should set land aside just for wildlife – this is called **land sparing**, where we use some land just for farming, and the rest of the land stays wild and untouched, keeping our natural environment packed with animals and plants, just like the picture below.





Some people think we should mix farming and nature on the same land, and work out better ways for the two to live alongside each other – this is called **land sharing**. We might plant trees next to crops, build little ponds for insects, or even let some wildflowers grow between rows of vegetables, just like you can see below..





Time to Talk!

Which do you think is a better idea? – Land sharing, or land sparing? You might find that both have good points and bad points...what would those be? On your table, have a chat about it and see what ideas you come up with...





As we develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and make decisions about the land, we will probably need to use **both** land sparing and land sharing to help nature.

Land sparing in our nature reserves and local wildlife sites, and in our ancient woodlands, for example...

And land sharing on our farmland, and also in our towns and cities, and even in our parks and gardens, so that we can make space for nature everywhere across the county.





One thing is for sure, when it comes to making decisions about the land, a **lot** of people need to be involved, from farmers and landowners, to environmental groups. We need **everyone** to let us know what they would like to see for nature in Kent.

Farmers and growers



People who work to protect the environment



Businesses



Community groups



And you!



So...what do you want our natural environment in Kent to be like? What should we protect? What would you like to see more of? What are your hopes for all the different habitats and species here in Kent?

Time to Draw!

Sometimes the best way to imagine something is to draw it! On a blank sheet of paper, try to draw what you would like our Kent landscapes to look like...what habitats do you want to include? Woodlands? Rivers? Grassland? Will you draw a landscape that shows only our wildlife, or will you include our towns and roads? It's completely up to you!



Did you know that lots of people work in different jobs to help protect our habitats and species? Let's take a look at some of those!

Country Park and Nature Reserve Wardens

Country Park and Nature Reserve Wardens have the important job of looking after these special green spaces - we have lots of nature reserves and country parks in Kent, and they are huge, covering hundreds of acres! Wardens make sure woodlands are well managed, waterways are healthy, and pathways are clear so that everyone can enjoy the park! They create and maintain habitats, to ensure our wildlife has everything they need to thrive!

They also have an important role as educators, teaching visitors all about the habitats and species they have there, and getting people excited about our nature!





Foresters

Foresters are responsible for looking after our forests and woodlands. They make sure the trees are healthy, clear spaces where shrubs have become overgrown, and plant new trees to keep the woodland going for years to come! Foresters have to work outside in all weather, and get to know the wildlife of their forests really well.

Foresters are trained to use powerful tools like chainsaws, so they can work in a way that is safe for them, and the trees they are looking after!





Ecologists

Ecologists study how plants, animals and the environments all work together. They gather information on habitats and species, and think about how human activities, like building houses, would impact them. Ecologists are often involved in Nature Recovery projects, helping to protect certain species, or restore habitats!

NEW WORD ALERT!

What is **Nature Recovery**?

When we talk about Nature Recovery, it means improving and protecting our natural spaces - fixing damaged habitats so that our biodiversity can flourish, and looking after certain species that may be struggling, so we see lots more of them around!





Environmental Scientists

Environmental scientists carry out experiments to solve problems we have in our natural environments - like how we can make our soils healthier to grow food in, or how to remove pollution from the water.

Being an environmental scientist can include working outdoors and indoors, collecting information about the problem, and then going to their lab to study, run experiments, and figure out ways to solve it!





Farmers and Agronomists

Farmers play an important role in looking after our natural spaces – a lot of our land here in Kent is farmland, and the farmers here not only have to grow our food, but also make sure the land stays healthy! This means farming in ways that aren't harmful to nature, and making sure the land is full of things like hedgerows and trees, to provide lots of habitats for our wildlife.

To help them do this, farmers work closely with Agronomists. An agronomist's job is to stay up-to-date with the latest ways to farm that are both good for the environment, and that help grow lots of food. They do lots of research and run trials on the farm, to see which ways of working are the best!

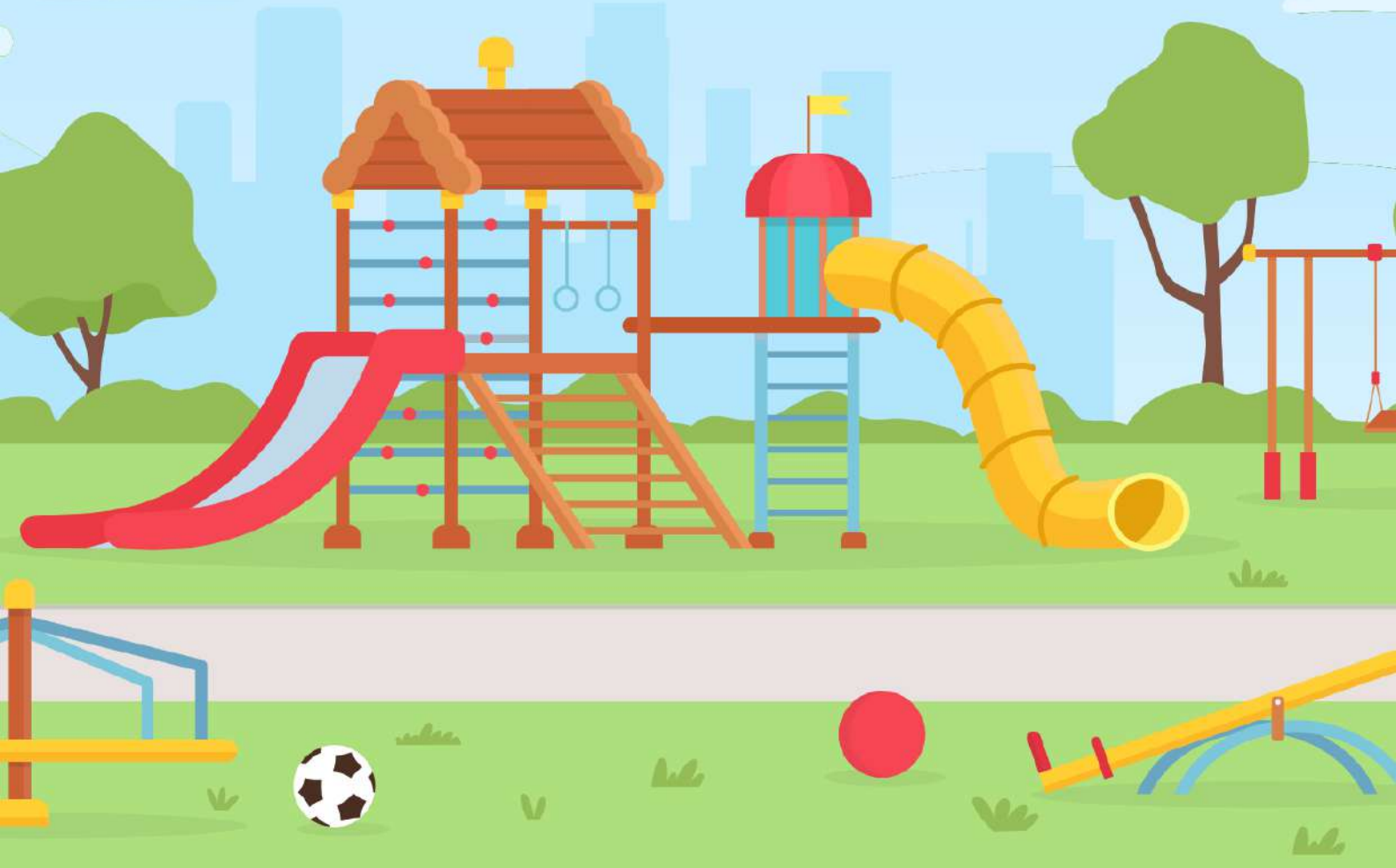




Time to Get Outside!

The best way to experience nature is to get outside and see it all around you. You can find nature everywhere - in the park, in your garden, on the streets...even in your school playground.

Take a nature walk in your playground, and let's see what we can find - what birds and insects can you spot? Can you see any trees or plants? Write down what you find - this is called taking a survey.





Time to Problem Solve!

So, you've got your survey of all the biodiversity you found outside. Now let's think...can you think of any challenges that the biodiversity in your playground faces?

On your table, see if you can come up with any solutions to those challenges that you have noticed. This is just what the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will do: it will find out what problems our biodiversity faces in Kent, and work out ways to solve them!

Perhaps you can even create some new inventions that help your local biodiversity! Be as creative as you can!



More Activities to Try!

Learn about the Soil:

In your classroom, set up a mini compost bin, to learn all about how our food waste breaks down to become compost that we can use to improve our soil. If your teacher is feeling really adventurous, you can even set up a wormery and learn about how these amazing composting superheroes munch all our food into super-powered compost!

Plant Some Seeds:

Maybe you've got space in your playground or your garden to grow some flowers or vegetables...maybe you can even think of a space to grow a tree! Growing plants not only helps our biodiversity, but as they grow, you can learn all about their life-cycle, from seeds to a fully-grown plant! Perhaps you can even draw them at each stage of their life, so you can see how much they change!

Organise a Clean Up!

The smallest actions can help our biodiversity - even cleaning up litter! Why not organise a school or community litter pick, to give our natural environment a helping hand! Make sure to always use gloves and litter-pickers!

Thank you for learning all about the Local Nature Recovery Strategy!



So, remember, the **Local Nature Recovery Strategy** isn't just a plan – it's an **adventure**! You can be a nature champion too, planting seeds, learning about local wildlife, or even joining nature recovery activities – every small action contributes to a healthier, happier natural environment for everyone . We can all work together to make our county the most thriving nature hub that we can!

So, get out there, explore, and be a part of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy adventure!





This Making Space for Nature Champion certificate is awarded to:

.....
*To recognise their excellent work in learning about the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Kent and Medway.
Great job!*



**Making Space
for Nature
in Kent and Medway**

Teacher Guide

Thank you for your interest in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)! We have created this pack in the hope that we can engage children with the LNRS, since they represent future generations of environmental ambassadors, and will have an important part to play in recovering and safeguarding nature for years to come.

The principle aim of the materials is to explore the challenges faced by our biodiversity in a way that is accessible to young children, and encourage problem-solving and critical thinking in realising nature recovery solutions. We have designed the pack with 7-8 year olds in mind, but we hope the material is adaptable within your classroom to be useful for younger or older ages, offering ideas for activities or discussion and debate.



Talking Activity 1: What does a healthy natural environment offer us?

Since it is referenced several times throughout the materials, we suggest a short opening discussion on what we mean by our “natural environment”.

This opening question tackles the concept of “ecosystem services” – these are the services that we benefit from when ecosystems function well. You can encourage the children to come up with a wide range by thinking about them in terms of **provisioning services** (e.g. food and freshwater provision, or timber and raw materials), **regulating services**, (e.g. carbon sequestration, flood control, or temperature control from trees), **supporting services** (e.g. pollination and soil formation), and **cultural services** (e.g. green spaces for recreation, education, and inspiration).



Research Activity: What habitats do we have in Kent?

Some other habitats that we can suggest if the children need a bit of steering could be:

Coastal saltmarsh

Chalk streams

Wet woodland

Orchards

Hedgerows

Intertidal Mudflats

Wood Pasture



Talking Activity 2: What challenges does biodiversity face?

We have suggested some challenges in the pages following the question page: climate change, habitat loss and pollution. However, there may be many more challenges that children come up with, and these three should only be considered as starting points!

Climate change is a very complex topic, which we have explained here in very simplistic terms - for older children, discussion points could include the idea that it is the speed of change of climate conditions that is a central issue - change is happening so quickly due to human influence, it doesn't allow biodiversity the chance to adapt to new, less favourable conditions.



Talking Activity 3: Which is better – land sparing or land sharing?

Some of the benefits of land sparing include being able to protect and enhance habitats and species, and reduce greenhouse gases from a reduction in deforestation. Some of the disadvantages include the need to intensify agriculture elsewhere to make up for limited agricultural land, a potential reduction in the variety of crops grown, and a risk to food security.

Some benefits of land sharing include creating diverse habitats across our landscape that integrate nature – like hedgerows, buffer strips and through agroforestry methods. It also includes the use of nature based solutions to solve problems created by climate change impacts. Disadvantages can include a lower production level of crops from lower levels of intensification, and to allow the space for nature.

For older students, this YouTube video offers an easy to understand, short summary of the land sharing/land sparing concept:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=2n9nP8sdXyY

Drawing Activity 1: What would you like our natural environment in Kent look like?

In this activity, the children should feel free to imagine any landscape they want to see for Kent – It could include urban settings, freshwater settings, rural settings, or coastal settings, or all of them, and be as colourful and creative as they wish!

Once they have completed their drawings, we would love for you to send them to us, so that we can feature them on our website and social media channels – you can either scan them and email them to makingspacefornature@kent.gov.uk

or you can post them to:
Making Space for Nature

Department of Growth, Environment and Transport
First Floor
Invicta House
Maidstone
ME14 1XX



Outside Activity: Biodiversity Survey

This activity suggests the playground as the outdoor setting, but is adaptable to any outdoor space that is safe and suitable for children to explore. Feel free to supplement the activity with maths elements, (such as the use of tallies and sorting, colours and shapes), artistic elements (leaf and bark rubbings, collage from found nature items), or English language elements (poetry, describing words for textures, sounds, smells). It can also be an opportunity to practice mindfulness, encouraging the children to be aware of their senses whilst in nature – what can they see, hear, smell, or touch?



Problem Solving Activity: What challenges does the biodiversity in your playground face?

This exercise builds on the previous talking activity that asked children to consider the general challenges for nature – in your setting, there might be examples of specific challenges that they can identify, such as a lack of wildlife corridors for biodiversity to be able to move between areas. Perhaps there is a lack of trees, or a lack of water sources. Maybe there is a lack of shrubbery, or wilder patches of greenery for birds and insects to shelter in. This is then an opportunity for children to think about how to solve these problems – can you put bird baths in the playground, plant wildflowers, or even a tree? Can they think up any amazing inventions that might solve some of the problems, like a solar powered litter hoover?? It can be as crazy and imaginative as they like!



We hope you enjoyed these learning materials. For any further information about the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Kent and Medway, please visit our website at:

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or email us at:

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