



Wilder Kent



AWARDS

2024 Guide for Entrants

Towns, Cities & Villages



Find us online

kentwildlifetrust.org.uk    

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Kent
Wildlife Trust

The natural world isn't just something for us to enjoy; it sustains us. The decline in nature puts our very survival and prosperity under threat. It doesn't have to be like this; together we can create a Wilder Kent.

Kent Wildlife Trust is working with schools, communities, developers, and local councils to ensure that we all have access to wildlife in our towns and cities and that wildlife is protected and can thrive.

By supporting them to improve existing green spaces, and create new spaces, we can promote and enable people and wildlife to coexist and flourish.



Who are we?

Kent Wildlife Trust is the leading conservation charity in the South East and one of 46 national Wildlife Trusts.

For over 60 years we have been restoring and protecting habitats to ensure that Kent's wildlife can thrive and people can enjoy the natural world around them. With your help, we can continue to do this for generations to come.



We work with landowners and developers.



We run education programmes for people of all ages.



We manage over 80 reserves and nearly 10,000 acres.

Our vision

To ensure that 30% of Kent's land and sea displays increased climate resilience and contains abundant wildlife.



We defend and restore
Ensure that Kent Wildlife Trust Group (KWTG) is delivering the highest possible impact in the face of habitat loss and climate change.



We inspire and collaborate
Build a groundswell of support for Wilder Kent 2030, scaling up our engagement to reach a larger, more diverse range of people.



We strengthen and grow
Diversify KWTG's income sources and strengthen its systems, whilst operating sustainably.



Wilder Kent Awards

Background

Wildlife is in crisis. We continue to lose our most precious remnants of wild natural space and vast numbers of our insects and birds. Our existing laws are too weak and the climate and nature crisis we face is not being taken seriously enough. We need ambitious natural climate solutions that reduce and capture carbon, stop ecosystem destruction and make our towns and cities cleaner and greener.

We are delighted that you are considering entering the Wilder Kent Awards and joining the other wonderful villages, towns and cities that are doing their part to make a Wilder Kent. We can't wait to hear about all of the ways you are helping to restore nature by taking positive action to promote a Wilder Kent.

Entering

All of the award criteria are outlined in this guide and there are multiple award tiers (Commendation, Bronze, Silver and Gold) that can be achieved. The more criteria you meet, the higher your award will be.

By entering, you will be showing your ambition to connect people with nature and protect wildlife for the future. Any achievement is a helping hand for wildlife and the scheme allows you to increase your award level year on year so that you can continue to inspire your community and help wildlife to thrive.

No matter how many criteria you can meet we would like to thank and congratulate you for your efforts in helping to create a Wilder Kent.



Why enter the Wilder Kent Awards?

There are many benefits to entering:

- Help support the health and wellbeing of the people that you serve.
- Connect your local community to wildlife and help combat Nature Deficit Disorder.
- Contribute to the national target for tackling the climate and nature crisis.
- Protect people and wildlife for generations to come.
- Encourage wildlife into our urban environments to make them a more vibrant and diverse place to live for people and wildlife alike.
- Help create a Wilder Kent.

Get started!

There are dozens of ideas over the next few pages for simple things you can do to start making an impact and help us create a Wilder Kent. This is the chance to showcase what you and your local community have been working on.



1 **GET INVOLVED** Protect wildlife

Protect wildlife in your village, town or city by safeguarding and enhancing existing habitats, and create new habitats that provide food, shelter and water to support nature. Use your local knowledge and collective power to work together to advocate for our natural environment.

You could . . .

Set out a clear policy commitment through your Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan to create green corridors and networks of habitat to support wildlife in your local area:

- Map out areas for nature's recovery.
- Set out clear policies on Biodiversity Net Gain, aspiring to create 20% improvements for wildlife through the planning process
- Explain how you will use these policies to enhance habitats in your area

Influence planning applications locally to protect and enhance wildlife:

- Oppose developments which will damage wildlife and encourage schemes which improves biodiversity.
- Work with specific developments to ensure that the best outcome is achieved for wildlife.

Create a Biodiversity Strategy for your village, town or city and set out and implement priorities for nature's recovery.

- Commit to manage council-owned land to support wildlife.
- Promote "No mow May"
- Raise awareness of the value of your local Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs)
- Ensure that management companies align their work plans with your Biodiversity Strategy.
- Form a Climate and Biodiversity Committee to guide action.
- Implement a Pesticide Free Village/Town/City Action Plan and set a date to become pesticide free.
- Encourage management of allotments to benefit wildlife.
- Develop local wilding projects.



2 **GET INVOLVED** Boost sustainability and reduce carbon

The day-to-day choices we make have a direct impact on our environment. Improve the environmental sustainability of your village, town or city to reduce carbon footprint.

You could . . .

- Install electric charging points to encourage the use of electric vehicles.
- Encourage green transport to reduce carbon emissions.
- Explore opportunities to access funding for habitat creation through nature-based solution schemes, e.g. **Wilder Carbon** to lock up more carbon in habitats that benefit wildlife.
- Set a target of becoming a carbon neutral village/town/city.
- Develop and implement an Action Plan to work towards becoming carbon neutral.
- Set up a Youth Climate Panel to engage and work with young people in the village/town/city to help to shape the council's decisions.
- Run campaigns to inform and educate residents around food sustainability.
- You could work with KWT to invest in nature to lock-up carbon for the long term.

Find out more about Wilder Carbon at wildercarbon.com

3 **GET INVOLVED** Engage with nature

Protect wildlife in Kent and teach residents how they can support it. Deliver and support activities that engage and inspire others to get involved with their natural environment and support nature.

You could . . .

- Encourage citizen science projects that record habitats and species in the local area. Ensure that data is sent to the Kent and Medway Biological Records Centre (KMBRC) to inform the bigger picture.
- Undertake demonstrable work to protect priority and locally important species.
- Encourage local people/groups to take part in **Wild About Gardens**
- Support schools and community groups to work towards a Wilder Kent Award.
- Create a mini nature reserve on available unused land.
- Support local landowners and regenerative agriculture projects.
- Participate in awards schemes that support and benefit local natural heritage.
- Support and promote community initiatives which enhance biodiversity in public spaces and private gardens.

Learn more about Wild About Gardens at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/wilder-gardens



The facts behind our three categories

1 Protect wildlife

- Around 3 / 4 of crops require pollination by insects.¹
- 41% of insects face extinction.²
- 30 to 50% of all species could be extinct by mid-century.³
- The UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world.⁴
- Urban areas are rapidly expanding and we need to ensure that these areas support wildlife.

2 Nature based solutions is currently the only reliable way to sequester carbon.

- The average hamburger takes 2,400 litres of water to produce.⁵
- Lighting accounts for 15% of global electricity use. Switching to LEDs will use 90% less energy and last longer than standard lights.⁶
- Decomposing matter in landfills produces methane gas, which contributes 34x more to climate change than CO2.⁷
- Recycling one ton of paper saves 2,548 litres of oil, 26,498 litres of water and 2.5 cubic metres of landfill space.⁸
- Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees.⁹

3 Engage with nature

- 95% of participants with low levels of mental wellbeing reported an improvement in their mental health in six weeks after starting a Wildlife Trust programme.¹⁰
- Of 87 schools, 92% reported outdoor learning improved pupil health and wellbeing and engaged pupils with learning.¹¹

References

1. The Wildlife Trusts
2. wildlifetrusts.org/take-action-insects

3. dosomething.org/us/
4. State of Nature Report
5. sumas.ch/sustainability-statistics

6, 7, 8, 9. sumas.ch/sustainability-facts/
10. A Natural Health Service Report 2019
11. Natural Connections Project, LOTC

Submitting your application

Our awards celebrate the work of local councils in reconnecting their communities with nature. Their actions provide local benefits and help tackle the global environmental threats we all face.

Throughout your journey, please fill in your submission form to keep track of how you are meeting each of our awards' criteria. All the while, ensure you are collecting supporting evidence. Your evidence may include photos and videos, reports, data, other certificates or press coverage.

Once you have filled out your submission form and gathered your evidence, you are ready to submit! Contact us for help or alternative methods awards@kentwildlife.org.uk.

Upload your evidence:



kwtg.uk/upload-evidence

To be considered for the 2024 award ceremony, all supporting evidence must be submitted to us by **Friday 31st May 2024**.



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