



Wilder Kent AWARDS

Thank you for applying to take part in the Wilder Kent Awards 2025. 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 you can help wildlife for as long as possible.

This form will be your submission document. You can use it to track your progress across the year and then submit this form, along with supporting evidence, by **31st January 2026** to the following website: kwtg.uk/upload-evidence

We **strongly encourage the use of photographs and videos** to evidence and support your submission. Throughout the year, it may be a good idea to create three folders on your computer to store supporting evidence for each of the three categories listed below. These folders can then be uploaded along with this submission form to the above website in January 2026. Please **do not insert photos into this form** – only use this form to describe the ways you feel you have met the criteria.

Name of school:	Example Submission Form <i>Please bear in mind this is written to be an example for schools/community groups/etc.</i>
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Have you applied for the Wilder Kent Awards before?	No – this is our first time!	Yes – please state the year you applied and level of award achieved
		X – silver in 2024

We have broken the awards down into three categories: **1. Protecting Wildlife**, **2. Sustainability and Carbon Reduction** and **3. Engage with Nature**. Use the below table to detail and record your work towards each of the criteria. You do not have to have completed everything in each category, but the more you do the more you will be helping to protect nature and create a wilder Kent. For some criteria, we have also provided some links to [Tips](#) which could help you on your journey. Best of luck!

1. Protect and Restore Nature

Criteria	Please identify which criteria you have met and describe how you have met them:
Have a wildlife garden / space supporting a range of wildlife. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have left aside several areas that are managed in a 'hands-off' approach where grass is left to grow long and wildflower seeds have been planted. We started this in 2024 and have continued with the same approach this year.• We also have log piles, some small corrugated iron sheets for reptiles and bird boxes to provide shelter for a variety of wildlife. We have installed a 'hedgehog highway' to allow access in and out for wildlife and we installed a small water dish recently with some stones in to provide a drinking station for wildlife of all shapes and sizes.• Please see photos attached of our wildlife areas, hedgehog highway, and water feature.
Ensure areas of long grass are left to provide wildlife habitat on site. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A few areas on site are left to grow long. We've had some wildflower seeds scattered in this area too to help pollinators.• We have had conversations with the garden team (or whoever cuts the grass) about leaving this area undisturbed and we have added a rope and signage to explain why this is important for wildlife.• We may have mown a winding path through this area so that people can enjoy this area as well as wildlife!

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please see images of long grass areas, our group sowing wildflower seeds, and our signage.
Install and maintain bird boxes where appropriate. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have 3 bird boxes on site that our group helped to place – we researched together which is the best direction for the bird boxes to face (north, south, east, or west) depending on which way the wall/fence faces, and how much sun/shade the place is in. As part of our winter activities, we make sure to clear out and clean these bird boxes (using guidance on the KWT website) so that they're ready for the next year. See photos attached of bird boxes installed, and of us cleaning them.
Install and maintain hedgehog boxes where appropriate. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have installed a hedgehog box near the 'hedgehog highway', tucked away under a hedge to keep it nice and sheltered. We learnt more about hedgehog behaviour throughout the year and know to check bonfires and to remove netting from garden areas. We haven't seen any wildlife using the box yet, but we're considering doing a fundraiser so that we can buy a low-budget wildlife camera so our group can see who is visiting. Please see photo of our group and the hedgehog box.
Install and maintain bat boxes where appropriate. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We used this as an opportunity to learn more about bats. We didn't think we had any bats on site but after taking time to look at the right time of day and year, we spotted a few flying up and down the treeline/path on site. We researched the right kind of place to install a bat box and even asked Kent Bat Group if they had a member nearby that might be able to come and teach us more or help us identify the bats we have on site. We are hoping to get a bat box installed soon when we have decided the best place for it to go! See screenshot of our bat research & email to Kent Bat Group.
Install and maintain minibeast homes at all suitable places. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our group have made lots of minibeast homes with recycled material and have installed them in sheltered areas. We learnt a bit more about habitats, and what creatures need to thrive. We tried to replicate that for several species – e.g. we installed a butterfly home on a sunny wall next to a buddleia plant, and put a log pile in a damp and darker area for woodlice, spiders, slugs and centipedes. Please see photos attached of our minibeast homes.
Leave food for wildlife during winter months. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a couple of bird feeders which our group keeps topped up and cleans regularly to prevent the spread of disease. We have also planted sunflowers and teasels which provide excellent food sources for birds that they can forage for themselves. See photos of bird feeders and sunflowers/teasels.
Ensure that no chemicals are used on the gardens or wild areas. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We learnt about companion planting as a way to avoid using pesticides in our small garden area. We also learnt more about how some 'pests' like ladybirds and ants can actually be quite beneficial, and this has shifted our mindsets. We have had conversations with the person that looks after the space we use and have asked them how we can work together on this – e.g. our group will spend half an hour weeding the space together instead of using chemicals to kill them.
Introduce a pond that will sustain a variety of wildlife. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We investigated this and found that due to health and safety risk, without putting in surrounding fencing (which we cannot currently afford), we would not be able to complete this action. As an alternative, we have installed a couple of water features in our wilder areas, such as the shallow water dish and other drinking stations for wildlife. In the future we might look at installing a butler sink into the ground and adding some oxygenating plants in to help keep the ecosystem healthy. Please see photo of our drinking stations.
Install simple water sources for wildlife and keep them clean. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please see photos of our wildlife drinking stations including a shallow water dish with rocks in so all animals can use to drink and wash. We share responsibility in our group for cleaning these and topping them up with rainwater from our water butt.

Work with grounds staff to maximise the site and available spaces for wildlife. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to have conversations with the person that manages the site so that we are aware of challenges, and ways we can aim to overcome them. Please see screenshots of emails/notes from meetings.
Have a Wilder Kent committee made up of staff and students that meets regularly and monitors actions. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our group has a 'Wilder Kent' meeting once every two weeks to discuss the progress we're making and decide what to focus on next. We use the action plan that we created together at the beginning of 2025 to guide us. It's helpful having a group to bounce ideas off of and to work together to achieve challenging but rewarding targets. Please see group photo/ photo of our display board in the hallway.
Have a community allotment or wild space and grow produce. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a small space on site where we can grow some vegetables and a small herb garden too. This has been useful as we have learnt a lot more about when things need to be planted, and how the weather impacts the amount you can harvest. We let the group take what we grow home, or we use it together on site. See photo of our herb & veg garden, and some of the produce from the summer.
Write to your MP about a local wildlife or climate issue. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We chatted as a group and decided on an issue we all felt passionate about in our local area. We contacted our local MP about this issue and asked if they would be willing to take action to help make the situation better. See photos of our letter/emails to the MP and also a photo of them meeting with us to learn more about the situation.
Conduct surveys - such as a BioBlitz - to identify wildlife on site and monitor it. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We took part in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch We did some research online about how to conduct a BioBlitz and printed out some resources. We scheduled a date and had a few mini-sessions, where we learnt how to ID trees and birds, in the run-up to the big day! Throughout the set date we conducted lots of fun surveys and tried to identify as much wildlife as possible. It was a very fun and educational day for everyone involved! We hope to do it again next year and compare the results. See photos of BioBlitz day & run-up sessions.
Carry out litter picks both on your school site and in the local community. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have some litter pickers that we can use, we have used them on our site and have organised trips further afield to cover more ground. We have invited the local community to join us which helps to educate and bring awareness to the problems of litter and pollution. See photos of our group litter picking on site and in the wider community.

2. Sustainability and Carbon Reduction

Criteria	Please identify which criteria you have met and describe how you have met them:
Promote recycling and provide easy access to the right facilities. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We asked our group to collect recycled materials that we then used to make bug hotels. We held a second-hand sale on site which encouraged people to do a clothes swap and raise funds for a conservation charity. We researched to find where our closest soft-plastics recycling point is and collect it on site now, as well as investigating whether we can become other recycling points for things like batteries and ink cartridges. See photos of our recycling points, our bug hotels, and the clothes swap event.
Encourage parents, students and staff to start walking to the school. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We set up a campaign to encourage walking, wheeling, or using public transport to our site instead of driving. We created posters and advertised them outside our site so that they were visible, and we did a talk/assembly to spread the word about why this is important. Please see photos of posters and our group doing the talk/assembly.
Switch off electrical equipment when it is not in use. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certain people in our group (i.e. certain children in each class) have responsibilities to check that electrical equipment that's not being used is turned off – for example, we have classroom monitors that check with the teachers if they're done using the lights/whiteboard etc. We have given the electricity monitors badges to highlight the importance the role can play in saving electricity and money.

Actively compost waste and use it to make things grow. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compost can provide challenges as they can sometimes attract rats, but we have purchased a compost container that allows us to compost our fruit/food waste without worrying about attracting extra visitors! We have learnt together about what can and can't go in the compost bin and why, and we take it in turns (e.g. each class) to collect the waste and deposit it in the compost heap. When the soil is ready to use, we use this on our small garden area. Please see photo of us collecting the compost, depositing it in the compost bin, and learning about it together.
Encourage litter-free lunches and non-disposable utensils. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have sent out an email to our group members and wider community (e.g. newsletter, social media) with an example of what a litter-free lunch looks like, in case they need ideas or inspiration. We've had a competition in each class this term to see how many of us can switch to using a reusable water. See photo of email and also of competition sheets – tally charts per class.
Take action so parents turn off car engines whilst waiting at the school gate. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We created posters to remind those dropping off/collecting not to leave their car engine running while they wait. We turned this into an official no waiting policy to encourage people to walk/wheel instead, or park and stride at a minimum. See photo of our posters on site to remind people, and see attached policy.
Reuse and re-purpose old materials to help wildlife. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have recycled materials to make bug houses and have used bottle caps to make butterfly/bee drinking stations on old bamboo canes. See photos as evidence.
Use water saving devices in any older toilets and washrooms. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of our toilets are dual flush systems so we cannot use Hippo Bags, but there was one or two older ones that now have Hippo Bags installed in them, and we are looking at maybe replacing those cisterns in the future. Our taps are push taps so they automatically turn off. We have regular reminders that if a tap/toilet is leaking or not working to tell someone who can take action and get it fixed to save water. We installed a water butt that we got through a scheme! We use this supply to water our garden area. See photos of water butt, hippo bags being put in, and posters about letting someone know about leaky taps/loos.
Monitor and improve your school's energy consumption. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We keep track of our figures and decide as a group which actions we want to take to see if we can get it any lower. We have signed up for Energy Sparks which means we are always taking action and raising awareness to reduce our energy consumption. Being more aware of this as a group and being able to visually see the difference that our action has on the figures makes it very fun and rewarding. All group members get involved and the competition element is good motivation! See screenshots of our figures.
Ensure that energy from renewable sources is used on the school site. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We did lots of research about this but unfortunately due to our site and the way we use it we haven't got any control over this. We looked into more renewable suppliers but have not yet been able to speak to the people who have the power to make changes like this. We are hoping to be able to have conversations with them in the future about changing to a renewable energy supplier and to look at investing in solar panels, but this will all be a bit further down the line.
Create a policy to eliminate single use plastic and enforce it on site. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We encourage everyone in our group/school/organisation to use reusables wherever possible. We did an assembly/had a talk about this and why it is important to us as a group. We are taking part in the Plastic Free schools campaign which has given us lots of ideas of how we can make changes in this area. See photo of assembly/talk and screenshot of plastic free schools actions.
Increase the amount of locally sourced food that is served. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have our small garden area that our group uses regularly for wellbeing, gardening, and sensory activities. The food we grow there can be eaten by those who participate or is used on site in the meals for lunch. We have had conversations with the caterers on site about whether we can source other produce from local places. See photo of garden area and the home-grown produce being taken home or to the onsite kitchen.

Promote a meat free day a week and educate children on why it helps. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a meat free day every week and we have done an assembly/talk about why this is important for the environment and wildlife. We've also got a vegetarian option on the menu for every day of the week. See screenshot of the menu
Monitor and improve your school's water consumption. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately we are unable to access the water information for our site, but we raise awareness as best as possible about reducing water consumption, so hopefully we are reducing consumption but we currently don't know for sure.
Use butts to capture rain water for use in school gardens and nature areas. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have installed a water butt through a scheme which means we can collect rainwater and use it to water our plants and flowerbeds. Neighbourly – B&Q Reuse website has been helpful for finding things like this, and Southern Water were taking applications at the time for free water butts. See photo of our water butt.
Use paper saving devices in any older toilets and washrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have installed hand dryers in all bathrooms on site. See photos of dryers.

3. Inspire and Collaborate

Criteria	Please identify which criteria you have met and describe how you have met them:
Have a 'Wilder Kent Champion' promoting the awards and your actions to the school. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have a group of Wilder Kent Awards Champions that raise awareness of the awards and why it's important to our group ethos. However, the whole group is involved in taking part in the WKAs and are enjoying the opportunity to take part. See photo of newsletter/social post/display board which identifies the members of the champions/committee.
Ensure that children have a chance to learn about Kent's wildlife whilst at school. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We try to integrate our local wildlife wherever possible in learning experiences and we have access to a forest school in which we learn about native plants and animals. See photo of forest school timetable and of children in the FS area, and also of classwork relating to local wildlife.
Encourage pupils to grow nectar rich plants at home and consider providing free seeds. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We all planted a sunflower and had a growing competition to learn more about what plants need to grow. We encouraged our group to plant more native wildflowers at home and got in contact with a local garden centre in case they were able to provide free seeds – they were able to donate some to us which we were very grateful for!! See screenshot of email chain with garden centre and sunflower competition.
Engage with parents and the community in creating wild areas locally for all. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We invited the wider local community to join us for a litter picking session in our local area. We also had a community day where people were invited to join us on site and help us maintain our small garden area. We were very grateful for the support! See photos of community day on site and litter picking.
Engage with campaigns and projects like our 'Action for Insects' initiative or 'Wilder Blean' project. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We engaged with the Big Garden Birdwatch as well as encouraging our group to get involved with initiatives like '30 Days Wild', No Mow May, 'Bugs Matter' and 'Wilder Blean'. See images of our group engaging with these campaigns!
Organise class visits to local nature reserves and sites. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We visited a local nature reserve and learnt all about the wildlife on site there. This linked in with our curriculum/group ethos as we were able to learn about sustainability, life cycles, the water/rock cycles, and much more – all within a local context! See photos of our group/class enjoying a day at the local reserve.

Run full 'Forest School' programmes for children and introduce them to nature as early as possible. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We don't have capacity on site to have a forest school area, but we have arranged with a local FS area that we can use their site so all the children can experience forest school in various seasons throughout their time here. See photo of FS timetable and of children/group members enjoying the outdoor areas in the FS and on site.
Run outdoor learning sessions often and encourage leaders to take classes outside. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We had a staff/team meeting about the different ways that we can take learning outdoors and the various benefits of this. We also put a few members of our team on an online training course (Learning through landscapes) so that we can share the knowledge from this within the team and apply it wherever possible. See photos of our classes outside, taking their learning into the outdoors. See certificate of training course.
Work with a local business or group to improve multiple areas for wildlife. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We reached out to local businesses (e.g. children/eco-team/group can write letters) to explain our aims and goals and ask whether they'd be willing to support us by donating their time, resources, or energy to help us create a wilder Kent. See emails/letters as evidence, and also the resources that were donated. They also took part in our community day.
Plant native trees, hedgerows and shrubs. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We applied for free trees from the woodland trust – we will be receiving these soon and will plant them up at the right time of year. We will be able to educate our group about why this is important for wildlife and the environment through every step of the process (assemblies/talks, planting, maintaining and care). We also invested in some ID guides from the Field Studies Council so that we can use these to learn more about the native trees and how to recognise them. See photos of ID guides and email correspondence with the woodland trust.
Carry out a fundraising day to help out a wildlife or conservation charity of your choice. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We decided to split our fundraising efforts between two different wildlife charities this year and everyone came together to do a bake sale! We also made our own bird feeders and sold them to raise money for the charities. We used the Kent Wildlife Trust fundraising pack for ideas and inspiration throughout the year to hold other events too! See photo of our fundraising days and posters that advertised it!
Run outdoor mindfulness sessions to connect with nature. Learn more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the summer months we gave the opportunity for our group/class to enjoy mindful moments in the garden areas and enjoy the peace and quiet of the natural space. We also did a group session where we listened to a guided meditation and lay on the grass listening to the birdsong. Children are given the opportunity to enjoy outdoor space in a mindful way to recentre themselves during the busy school day. We have learnt various mindful exercises to do with nature so that children can regulate their emotions using the natural world. See photos of mindfulness sessions outdoors.
Create a manifesto for wildlife - keep a diary, journal or blog of your Wilder Kent Award journey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have kept a log of all of our actions throughout the process so we can monitor what we've achieved and reflect on our progress, what went well and what we can do better in the future 😊

Other:

Check out our [Actions page](#) for more ideas on how you can help wildlife or come up with your own ideas and involve as many people as you can. Once your school is achieving gains for wildlife, why not involve other nearby schools and begin to create a network of **Wilder Schools** across your local area?

Please use this box to detail any additional steps (not mentioned above) which you have taken towards helping make a Wilder Kent:

