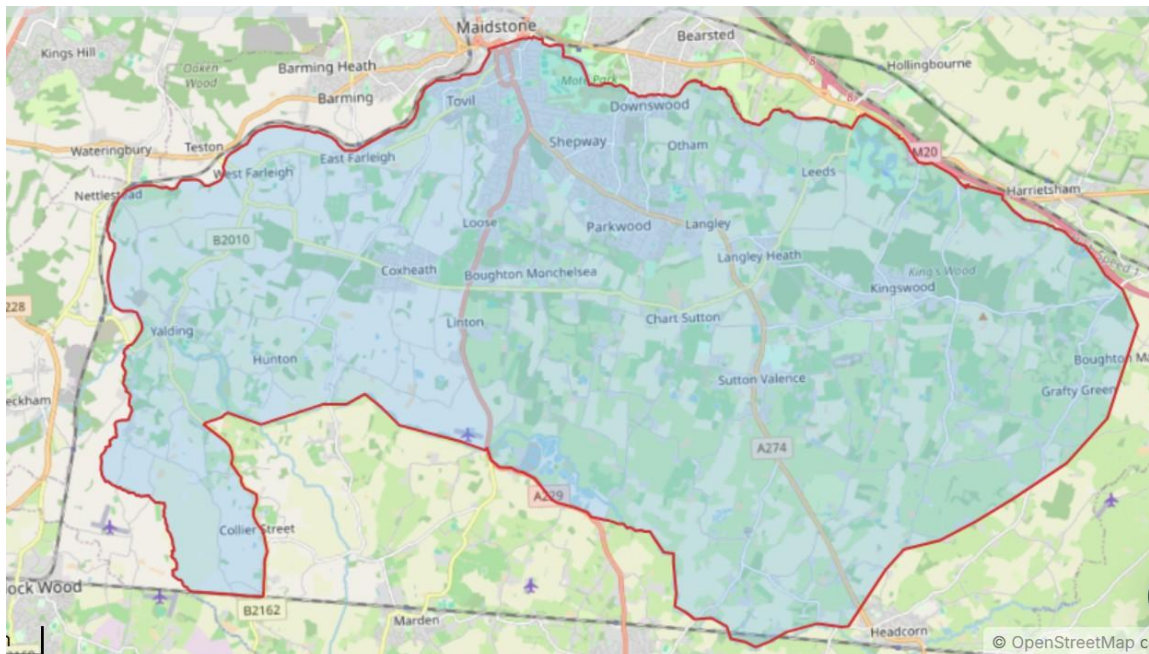




Farmers and landowners along the Greensand Ridge — you are warmly invited to join us

A friendly, farmer-led cluster working together for profitable, resilient farming and a healthier local landscape.



Aims

Our aim is to support farmers and landowners along the Greensand Ridge south of Maidstone to thrive economically while enhancing nature and bringing wider benefits to the local community.

We believe farmers are stronger together. Many of today's biggest opportunities – from funding and advice to nature recovery and long-term business resilience – are easier to access when neighbours collaborate. By working as a cluster, Greensand farmers and land managers can achieve more than any single holding could alone.

Why Join the Greensand Farm Cluster?

Financial Benefits

Joining the Cluster can help your business access opportunities that are often difficult to achieve alone.

- Improve access to Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes and other grant funding.



- Develop collaborative projects that attract funding for habitats, water management, access and landscape recovery.
- Receive support in identifying income opportunities from natural capital, carbon, biodiversity and ecosystem service markets.
- Share costs and expertise across neighbouring farms.
- Gain access to specialist advice that can help maximise returns from environmental land management.
- Strengthen the evidence base needed for future funding applications and environmental audits.

Environmental Benefits

Many environmental challenges do not stop at farm boundaries. Working together allows greater impact and more effective use of resources.

- Improve habitat connectivity across the wider landscape.
- Support pollinators and natural pest control species that benefit agricultural production.
- Enhance soil health, water quality and flood resilience.
- Protect and restore important habitats such as hedgerows, woodlands, ponds, grasslands and field margins.
- Contribute to Kent's Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities.
- Increase the resilience of farms and wildlife to climate change.
- Monitor and demonstrate positive environmental outcomes across the landscape.

Social Benefits

The Cluster is about people as much as it is about the environment.

- Learn from neighbouring farmers facing similar challenges.
- Share ideas, practical experiences and innovations.
- Build relationships with local organisations, advisers and land managers.
- Create a stronger collective voice when engaging with government agencies, local authorities and environmental organisations.
- Increase community understanding of the positive role farmers play in managing the countryside.
- Support the long-term sustainability of farming businesses within the Kent Greensand landscape.

Objectives

To identify and connect with a significant number of farmers and landowners in the area defined our geography

To share practical advice and support, improve knowledge and understanding



To provide professional facilitation for the group's activities and to generate sufficient funds to be an effective cluster

To evaluate natural capital and understand nature finance opportunities for individual farms and for the cluster as a whole

To manage land in a way that enhances food security while having a net positive impact on nature.

To contribute to healthier soils, cleaner air and water, climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity gain.

To identify key opportunities for species recovery based on the unique geography, geology and habitat within the area.

Progress so far

Membership: 30 farmers and landowners, 23 members of the rural community, voluntary, private and statutory organisations

Incorporation: The Greensand Farm cluster is a Not-for-Profit Community Interest Company. Companies House Number 17092842

Steering Group: James Smith, David Catt, Oli Pascall, Macey Willard, Peter Paterson, Charles Tassell, Caroline Jessel

Facilitator: Dave Shenton of Kent Wildlife Trust

Financial Support: Maidstone Borough Council has funded a baseline ecological survey for the cluster and a facilitator for two years, shared with Marden cluster and employed through Kent Wildlife Trust.

Key Activities: Water quality improvements with focus on the River Beult and Loose Stream, Turtle dove support and habitat improvement, mink eradication, hedgerow health, soil improvement and pesticide/ herbicide minimisation.

Commitment

Joining is simple and informal. There is no obligation to take on new work or attend every meeting — just a willingness to hear more, share ideas when useful, and explore opportunities with neighbouring farmers and landowners.

If you are happy to share your **SBI number**, it will help us with planning and future funding applications, but it does not commit you to anything. The more hectares represented in the cluster, the stronger our case for attracting meaningful support for the area.



We would be delighted to hear from you. For an informal chat, more information, or to join the group, please email our facilitator, Dave Shenton, at dave.shenton@kentwildlife.org.uk or call 07378 297605.

You can also visit [Greensand Farm Cluster | Kent Wildlife Trust](#).

You can also contact Caroline Jessel at crjessel@btinternet.com or on 07979770134.

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