



**Kent**  
Wildlife Trust

# Nature markets for farms

A guide from  
Kent Wildlife Trust



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# Farming for a Wilder Kent

Kent Wildlife Trust Group has a mission to deliver a Wilder Kent by 2030: to increase wildlife abundance and climate resilience across 30% of Kent's land and sea.

We cannot deliver this alone; working in partnership with farmers and landowners in Kent is fundamental to this strategy.

We know that sustainable food production and the restoration and protection of our natural environment are interconnected. We support farmers and land managers in achieving this through agri-environment scheme routes and leveraging private capital and funding. This enables them to address multiple crises at once in an economically uncertain environment.

# Farmer Clusters

## What are they?

Farmer Clusters are groups of farmers working together at a landscape scale to deliver positive actions for the wider environment and local community. Farmers in a cluster tend to meet a few times a year to determine their priorities and a facilitator will help organise farm walks and talks so farmers can share their activities. Working together as a cluster allows farmers to take the initiative for local environmental projects and are increasingly helping farms draw in funding that individual farms would not normally be able to access.

## How do they work?

Farmer Clusters can form around a sub-catchment or local character area. They often start small and rapidly grow as more farmers decide to join. A facilitator is key in helping coordinate meetings, mapping landholdings and assisting in priority setting. Many facilitators are hosted by external NGOs, such as Kent Wildlife Trust.

## How can Kent Wildlife Trust help?


Kent Wildlife Trust have worked in partnership with farmers in the Darent Valley, Marden and the Upper Beult to set up three successful Farmer Clusters. We work with farmers to find the best funding mechanism and facilitator for their cluster as no two groups are the same! Our experienced facilitators help clusters develop their priorities and will introduce the right people at the right time for additional advice, drawing from a wide network of ecological expertise, both in-house at the Trust and through our Adonis Blue Environmental Consultancy (ABEC). Since 2019, over 30 farms have received baseline natural capital assessments supported by funds facilitated by Kent Wildlife Trust Group.

**“We joined the cluster because farming sustainably is important to us and we wanted to find out more and share ideas. The cluster has been great for getting to know other farmers. The support and guidance of Kent Wildlife Trust has been invaluable.”**

**Ramstile Farm**



Farmers from the Upper Beult Farmer Cluster learning about the creation of new ponds for great crested newts.

 Find out more: [kwtg.uk/farming-for-wildlife](https://www.kwtg.uk/farming-for-wildlife)



# ELMs - Landscape Recovery

## What is it?

The Defra Landscape Recovery scheme is one component of Defra's new Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs). The scheme funds landscape-scale projects through bespoke, long-term agreements that extend beyond 20 years. It focuses on long-term changes in land-use on a large scale, with financial support coming from public and private sectors, also known as 'blended finance'. The primary goal is to achieve positive environmental and climate outcomes through habitat and ecosystem restoration.

## How does it work?


To participate in the Landscape Recovery scheme, one or more land managers must submit an application demonstrating their commitment to collectively deliver over 500 hectares of land-use change for the benefit of the wider environment and climate. Land-use change involves converting existing agricultural land into new wildlife habitat. The application process requires mapping out the proposed changes and providing a detailed description of how the project will achieve its environmental and climate goals, while also supporting the local community and enhancing the landscape.



Landscape Recovery Pilot Defra visit

## How can KWTG help?

Kent Wildlife Trust have a proven history of successful applications to Defra, including Kent's first ELMs Landscape Recovery Pilot Project alongside farmers in the Darent Valley. Our experience of working with Farmer Clusters enables us to develop projects collaboratively, effectively and at the necessary scale. Supported by our dedicated in-house fundraising team, we guide farmers through the application process and continue to host staff during the project delivery phase.

 Find out more about the Darent Valley Landscape Recovery Pilot here: [kwtg.uk/DVLR](https://kwtg.uk/DVLR)




# ELMs - Countryside Stewardship and Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)

**Many farmers will be familiar with Countryside Stewardship (CS) and the more recent Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) under ELMs. It is now time to revisit these options given announcements of increased payment rates becoming available.**

Applications can be made online after registering on the rural payments service.

Free SFI advice, including on farm visits, is currently available through NIAB, Savills and AKC under the Future Farm Resilience Fund.

 Find out more at: [futurefarmingresilience.com](https://futurefarmingresilience.com)

For Countryside Stewardship advice, Adonis Blue Environmental Consultancy can assist in collaboration with your land agent to provide expert ecological knowledge, maximising the wildlife and financial benefits of your scheme. Your local Natural England Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer (CSFO) offers free support for Higher Tier applications.

Farm cluster groups are increasingly coordinating schemes to achieve their group objectives in restoring target species and habitats.

 Explore fantastic examples of landscape projects with CS, such as the East Kent Valleys Meadows Project ([kwtg.uk/east-kent-valleys](https://kwtg.uk/east-kent-valleys)) and the Marden Farmers' Turtle Dove project [mardenwildlife.org.uk/farmland-and-farming](https://mardenwildlife.org.uk/farmland-and-farming)



# Regenerative Farming Networks

## What is regenerative farming?

Regenerative farming involves a range of practices aimed at regenerating soil health and establishing a sustainable farming system that relies less on artificial inputs. Regenerative farming is about working with nature rather than against it. Key principles include diversifying crops, integrating livestock, building soil health, minimising tillage and improving water infiltration.

## Why do we support this approach?

Regenerative farming is a process. Therefore, farmers can incrementally incorporate various techniques and technologies, spreading the risks over time. By transitioning to regenerative practices, we aim to secure the future of farming in a wilder Kent. Our goal is to assist all farmers in Kent in adopting regenerative approaches. Ultimately, we want to help farmers produce healthy food, earn a fair and sustainable income, and restore wildlife across their farms.

## Organic vs regenerative farming

Kent Wildlife Trust supports the organic movement, which has championed a nature-friendly approach to growing healthy food. However, organic certification presents a binary option based on specific practices, making it challenging for most farms in the UK to achieve certification.

Regenerative farming, while less defined, is based on principles aimed at regenerating the land and soil. Therefore, many more farmers can begin their journey toward a sustainable farming future by adopting a regenerative approach tailored to their unique settings while focusing on desired outcomes.

## How can we help?

Kent Wildlife Trust has been working with regenerative farms by assisting on-farm trial planning and sourcing funding opportunities. We also facilitate meetings and support the development of case studies and marketing materials. This service is offered on a case-by-case basis, depending on the connection to an existing funded project, other available opportunities, or as a service charged for by Kent Wildlife Trust. We also collaborate on projects with other like-minded organisations, such as the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG).

- Farm trials;
- Peer-peer learning;
- Development of local Regenerative; Farming Networks;
- Case Studies.



Find out about the Co-op Foundation funded liquid compost field trial with Bockhanger Farms Ltd and Court Farm: [kwtg.uk/liquid-compost](http://kwtg.uk/liquid-compost)



## Nature Friendly Farming Networks (NFFN)

Kent Wildlife Trust is a member of the NFFN. We support the network's aims to promote sustainable farming in policy and advocate for farmers to be recognised and rewarded for the Nature-based Solutions (NbS) they deliver for their local area and wider society.



For more about the NFFN in Kent, visit: [nffn.org.uk/steering-group-england](http://nffn.org.uk/steering-group-england)





**Wilder Carbon**  
Native habitats. Natural solutions.



**Farm  
Carbon  
Toolkit**

Nature-based Solutions

# Wilder Carbon and the Farm Carbon Toolkit (FCT) Package

## What are Wilder Carbon and FCT?

Wilder Carbon has developed the mechanism for locking up additional carbon through the restoration of native habitats by reinstating natural processes in the UK. High-quality carbon units are generated from projects designed and monitored by trusted conservation experts such as Kent Wildlife Trust. These projects not only benefit wildlife and climate, but also contribute positively to society.

Farm Carbon Toolkit (FCT) is dedicated to enhancing understanding of greenhouse gases in agriculture. It offers tools to measure a farm business' greenhouse gas baseline, including both emissions and sources of sequestration. Based on this analysis, FCT provides advice on reducing greenhouse gas emissions through modifications to existing farm operations.

## How are they working together?

Wilder Carbon is working in partnership with FCT to offer a farm-focussed service package for Wilder Carbon projects.

This package will provide farmers with an end-to-end solution to evaluate, plan, deliver and finance a transition in some or all their farming practice to a more sustainable model. By adopting this model, farms can not only reduce their carbon footprint but also benefit nature, climate and society.



Cattle at Castle Farm

Through a Natural Capital Assessment completed by a Certified Project developer in collaboration with FCT, the carbon footprint of a farm and its potential for a nature-based carbon project can be calculated. This combines the FCT's carbon footprint tool with Wilder Carbon's Carbon+ Habitat Tool to calculate a farm's capacity to inset its own emissions through operational changes and habitat creation. Farmers can also explore the possibility of selling carbon credits as offsets through the Wilder Carbon platform to approved buyers, providing a pathway for farms to achieve Net Zero.

This process involves considering the entire farm business and identifying low-productivity land parcels that may be suitable for a change in land use, whether at the field scale or in smaller areas. By adopting a minimum intervention approach and creating new habitats, farms can sequester additional carbon, enhance biodiversity and diversify farm business revenue streams through the generation and sale of carbon credits.



Find out more:  
[wildercarbon.com](https://wildercarbon.com)



Be referred to a Certified Project Developer who can help you explore the Wilder Carbon opportunities on your land: [wildercarbon.com/develop-a-project/](https://wildercarbon.com/develop-a-project/)

\*Wilder Carbon 2024 Estimated Issuance Unit rate at least €100 per 1 tonne CO2e



## Nature-based Solutions

# Nutrient Neutrality

### What is Nutrient Neutrality?

Within the Stour Catchment 'Nutrient Neutrality' Zone in Kent, all developments will have to demonstrate 'nutrient neutrality'; the nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorous) from all surface water runoff and wastewater generated by the development must be equal to or less than the nutrients generated by the current land use.

### How does it work?

Kent Wildlife Trust are developing a nutrient mitigation approach that is both cost-effective and straightforward to implement, offering early mitigation for developments. Unlike more engineered methods, our approach emphasises quicker delivery of nutrient credits and lower construction costs. Importantly, our approach genuinely prioritises nature recovery through the use of Nature-based Solutions. These solutions will create and restore UK native habitats along the river corridor, providing a range of ecosystem services that benefit society, including water storage and flood resilience. Our solutions are tailored to maximise societal benefits while ensuring nature and ecosystem recovery are at the forefront of delivery. By doing so, we are seeking to offer a high-integrity, high-quality solution to the nutrient neutrality challenge.

Kent Wildlife Trust aims to provide nutrient mitigation through facilitating appropriate land management changes with landowners in the Stour catchment and matching any resulting nutrient credits with high-integrity developers. Our in-house natural capital expertise can help landowners realise such opportunities. Any credits from a project will only be sold to developers who demonstrate high environmental standards and for specific developments proven not to be detrimental to nature and the wider environment, verified by Kent Wildlife Trust Group's own expertise and due diligence processes.



Blue tit visiting a Countryside Stewardship winter bird seed plot at Coldharbour Farm.



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### How can this approach benefit you?

If you are a landowner within the Stour catchment, partnering with Kent Wildlife Trust could allow you to register your land to sell nutrient neutrality units. Kent Wildlife Trust Group can undertake an initial baseline assessment to determine your land's potential for nutrient mitigation. This step is crucial, as not all soil types or locations are suitable for providing mitigation. We can then assist with designing management and monitoring plans, and if necessary, undertake these long-term. Developers would then have the opportunity to purchase nutrient neutrality units to offset their nutrient impact.

River Stour  
©Evan Bowen-Jones



## Nature-based Solutions

# Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

### What is it?

Part of the UK's 25 Year Environment Plan, BNG aims to embed a 'net environmental gain' principle for developments. Biodiversity Net Gain is mandatory for development which has to demonstrate a measurably positive impact on biodiversity, more than a 10% net gain in biodiversity. If this is not feasible directly on the site of the development biodiversity uplift is found through restoration of nature off-site, preferably through local landowners, known as offsetting.

### How can KWTG help?

Adonis Blue Environmental Consultancy works with BTF Partnership to ensure landowners are fully informed and supported in what is a long-term investment approach. Adonis Blue can assess your land's BNG potential and broker deals with development. This includes:

- conducting fully costed land evaluations to determine income potential for BNG;
- registering your site on our exclusive BNG marketing portal;
- mediating contract agreements with suitable development;
- providing Land Agent expertise and developing and delivering detailed 30-year management and monitoring plans and supporting their implementation.



### How does it work?

Adonis Blue is delivering a solution for landowners to access opportunities through BNG, ensuring development is securing more than the required net gain in biodiversity locally. Adonis Blue secures payments for landowners to cover the costs of creating or enhancing a habitat and maintaining its condition for 30 years. For a development that demonstrates it does not harm the environment, and local authorities looking to achieve BNG requirements locally, we bring together that demand and the landowners ability to supply.

Landowners, Local Planning Authorities and developers can be reassured that Adonis Blue is providing BNG offset that follows nature-based principles, supports local nature recovery strategies and is robustly monitored for at least 30 years. Our Integrated Biodiversity Monitoring approach designed with Digital Ecology uses all the latest technology to understand impacts of land management change for habitat and species, building in climate resilience.



Discover our exclusive BNG Portal at:  
[adonisblueenvironmental.org.uk](https://adonisblueenvironmental.org.uk)

## Nature-based Solutions

# Natural Capital Assessments

### What is a Natural Capital Assessment?

For those exploring potential nature-friendly income sources for their land but are seeking guidance, an Adonis Blue Natural Capital Assessment offers a comprehensive solution. Our team of expert ecologists will assess potential income sources from your land, including carbon sequestration, BNG, nutrient neutrality and other ecosystem services. These assessments equip landowners to make informed decisions about the best opportunities for their land.

### How do they work?

Adonis Blue undertake a thorough assessment of desktop research, drone flight and on-site surveys which gather habitat, species and environmental data. This data is used to highlight opportunities for a range of Nature-based Solutions projects and estimates the potential income from enhancing the land's natural assets. Our land management advisors can provide different options for habitat transitions on your land, designed to maximise benefits for nature and potential income. Each option undergoes rigorous analysis to calculate the expected biodiversity net gain and carbon units, alongside additional benefits including

nutrient neutrality, species recovery, flood risk mitigation, pollination services, and reduction of air and noise pollution. This supports development of tailored Nature-based Solutions projects to meet business requirements, assisting landowners in diversifying income streams. Adonis Blue works closely with BTF Partnership, Kent's leading land agent, to ensure maximal realisation of your land's income potential while maintaining its long-term value.

### How can KWTG help?

Expanding into Nature-based Solutions maintains sustainable and diversified sources of income while also contributing to the health of the planet. However, navigating these emerging markets can be complex, with many requiring multi-decade land management agreements. Therefore, it is essential for landowners to understand and assess all options before committing to a project. With our expertise in emerging natural capital markets, Adonis Blue provides the guidance for informed decision-making, facilitating a transition to nature-friendly farming tailored to individual landowner needs.



Find out more:  
[adonisblueenvironmental.org.uk](https://adonisblueenvironmental.org.uk)





# Drone surveys

## What are drone surveys?

Drone surveys utilise advanced technology to record super-high-resolution imagery and 3D models of terrain and vegetation, down to a resolution of 1 cm. This data assists in classifying habitats, measuring vegetation structure and understanding changes in natural capital assets. Drone data analysis accurately quantifies carbon sequestration, biodiversity value and water quality, supporting Kent Wildlife Trust's evidence-based approach to high integrity Nature-based Solutions services.

## How do they work?

Kent Wildlife Trust's fully-certified (GVC A2 CofC) pilots employ professional industrial-grade drones and equipment to gather detailed information about your land. All post-processing is completed in-house to the highest standard, with secure data sharing. Pilots also hold insurance for commercial purposes and operate under CAA approval.

## Data collected includes:

- Habitat type;
- terrain morphology, including slope, aspect, Terrain Ruggedness Index (TRI), Topographic Position Index (TPI), terrain curvature, hillshade, viewshed, flow accumulation, basin and watershed delineation, sink identification, solar radiation, soil erosion and deposition, among others;
- vegetation structure, biomass and productivity and;
- surface water bodies, including water quality, turbidity and phytoplankton biomass.



# Technical Glossary

## Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

Identifying natural, environmentally-led solutions to local and global issues, such as localised flooding or broader climate change. A typical NbS approach to address flooding and carbon capture locally could involve a combination of leaky dams and tree planting at strategic points within a catchment. [kwtg.uk/nature-based-solutions](https://kwtg.uk/nature-based-solutions)

## Farmer Cluster

A group of farmers working collaboratively in a geographic area to enhance the local landscape, implement positive actions for nature and benefit the local community. [kwtg.uk/start-farmer-cluster](https://kwtg.uk/start-farmer-cluster)

## Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMs)

The government's post Brexit farming support scheme, replacing the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. Environmental Land Management (ELM) update: [kwtg.uk/ELMs](https://kwtg.uk/ELMs)

## Countryside Stewardship (CS)

Now incorporated under ELMs, providing payments for environmental actions to improve, soil, water and wildlife, typically under two, five or 10-year contracts. [gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants](https://gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants)

## Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)

A new scheme under ELMs, providing payments for specific actions with shorter contracts and different options from the CS scheme. [gov.uk/government/collections/sustainable-farming-incentive-guidance](https://gov.uk/government/collections/sustainable-farming-incentive-guidance)

## KWTG

Kent Wildlife Trust Group, including Adonis Blue Consultancy and KWT Enterprises. [kwtg.uk/about-kwtg](https://kwtg.uk/about-kwtg)

## Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)


The mechanism for developments to compensate for environmental loss when new developments take place. [kwtg.uk/BNG-info](https://kwtg.uk/BNG-info)







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