



Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Making space for the county's nature

What is the Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was introduced by the Government through the Environment Act 2021 to help tackle the long-term decline of nature. Across England, 48 LNRSs are being developed to build a shared picture of where action for nature can make the biggest difference.

The Kent and Medway LNRS was published in November 2025, and we're now moving into the next phase – supporting its delivery on the ground. Kent County Council is responsible for leading this work, alongside farmers, landowners and local partners, to help turn the strategy into practical action.

To understand the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, you can think of it as a "road map for nature." It is not a legal requirement for you to change your land management, and it won't prevent you from carrying out your farming business, nor will it preclude future development of your land. Instead, it's a framework that shows you:

- **What we already have:** Through a map called the Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) – this maps existing, important and designated habitats across the county, including SSSI's, local wildlife sites, nature reserves and irreplaceable habitats.
- **What we want:** A map that identifies Areas that Could be of particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACIB), where taking action to recover nature will have the biggest impact and will be most beneficial.
- **How we get there:** A comprehensive list of our priorities for biodiversity in

the county, and of practical actions, or "measures", for the focus areas identified in the ACIB, such as creating new woodlands, restoring hedgerows, or managing floodplains.

For farmers and landowners, the LNRS offers you a **clear, locally agreed map of priority habitats and actions**, helping you see where nature-based improvements on your land will deliver the biggest impact for biodiversity.

This makes it easier to choose interventions that align with **Environmental Land Management (ELM) options**, and because LNRSs identify where nature recovery is most needed and most likely to succeed, they also help farmers position themselves for **private green finance**, such as **Biodiversity Net Gain uplift, utility-company payments, or blended finance models** with confidence.

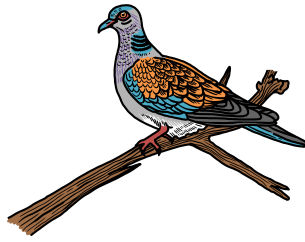


I'm a Farmer - Why does the LNRS matter to me?

For farmers, growers and landowners, the LNRS isn't about more red tape. It's about opportunity, and being at the forefront of anticipated shifts in how the countryside is managed and funded. It's important to note, The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is a guide, not a restriction, and it will not mandate any action on your land. It also will not affect any land management option agreements that you have in place. Instead, it offers a evidence-based guide for how to integrate nature recovery into your farm business, helping you to diversify income and secure the long-term health of your land and the wider environment.

Here's how the LNRS can benefit you and your land:

- **Decide which environmental actions are most appropriate for your land:** The LNRS offers an evidence-based “menu” of nature recovery actions that may be suitable for your land. By exploring the mapping tool, you can decide which actions you wish to prioritise, and which actions best align with your land management plans and aspirations
- **Align those actions with schemes or funding opportunities:** The Local Nature Recovery Strategy helps you position yourself for both public and private money. The government has indicated that future agri-environment schemes, such as the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) and Countryside Stewardship, will be more closely aligned with the priorities of the LNRS. It also highlights areas where your land could be a priority for other natural capital markets, such as carbon sequestration through new woodlands. This can turn less productive or marginal land into a long-term asset.
- **Identify Opportunities to work at a landscape-scale:** The LNRS is built around the Lawton principles (2010), aiming to create bigger, better and more connected habitats that support healthy, functioning ecosystems. By working together with your farming neighbours and sharing local knowledge, the LNRS can help strengthen farm businesses, enhance the landscape, and support a countryside that continues to produce food while boosting nature. It can also guide you towards larger-scale funding opportunities and deliver more meaningful environmental benefits, helping build a stronger and more resilient rural community.
- **Strengthen Business Resilience Long-Term through Improved Soil, Water and Biodiversity:** Functioning ecosystems and healthy soils mean greater resilience for your land in the face of climate uncertainty. By exploring the land management measures in the LNRS, you can help to restore vital ecosystem services, such as flood and drought protection, improved nutrient cycling and natural pest control, that will help to keep soils productive for years to come. And by working with nature, you can reduce your reliance on artificial inputs, saving money and helping your business function efficiently.



Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and the LNRS:

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a legal requirement in England, introduced in 2024, that makes sure any new development – such as housing or infrastructure – leaves nature in a better state than it was before. Developers must improve the amount or quality of habitat by at least 10%, measured using a standard biodiversity metric.

For farmers, this creates a revenue opportunity; If a developer cannot deliver all of their required habitat improvements on their own site, they can buy “BNG units” from farmers who create or enhance habitats on their land, such as wildflower meadows, hedgerows, wetlands or woodlands. This gain must be secured for at least 30 years.

How BNG and the LNRS work together:

The ACIB: The LNRS maps identify specific "focus areas" (the ACIB) and recommended "Potential Measures" (actions) for nature recovery. These are locations where creating or enhancing habitats will have the most significant ecological impact and contribute to the area's wider biodiversity goals.

The BNG Habitat Hierarchy: The BNG metric calculator encourages developers to deliver their biodiversity gain on-site, but if that's not possible, they must deliver it off-site. When looking for off-site habitat creation or enhancement, they are required to prioritise land that is:

- Within the same Local Planning Authority (LPA) area.
- Within the same LNRS area.
- Within a high priority area identified by the mapped potential measures of the LNRS.

Strategic Significance: If your land has Potential Measures mapped by the LNRS, and you are carrying out the Potential Measure that has been specified for that land, then this translates into a **higher value per BNG unit that you create**, specifically, a 15% uplift in value of the unit. In essence, the LNRS helps to formalise the BNG market for nature recovery, where units delivered in the right place (as identified by the LNRS) are more valuable.

To reiterate, you must be prepared to carry out a Potential Measure that has been mapped for your land in order to be eligible for an uplift in its BNG unit value. It's also important to note that more than one Potential Measure may have been mapped for your land – whilst there is a preferred hierarchy for the order that these are delivered in (explained in the next section), you should discuss the options with your land advisor, and consider which is most appropriate for your farm business.

Practical Example:

A developer needs to offset a housing development in Kent, where chalk grassland has been compromised as a result. The Kent and Medway LNRS has mapped the land on your farm with Potential Measures for chalk grassland restoration . A developer looking for off-site BNG units will see that a project on your farm (creating chalk grassland) directly aligns with the LNRS. This satisfies the developer's need for a strategic, high-impact BNG site, and by carrying out the Potential Measure specified for the land with the LNRS, it is eligible for a 15% uplift in the value of the BNG unit.



Using the LNRS to consider Higher Level Stewardship Options:

The LNRS can be used as a practical decision-making tool when reviewing or renewing land management agreements. By showing where nature recovery actions will have the greatest strategic benefit locally, it helps you consider whether small adjustments to existing options could better align with county priorities, future funding direction and long-term business resilience.

Practical example:

A farmer in Kent has an HLS agreement coming up for renewal, with options for grassland management and hedgerow maintenance already in place. When reviewing the LNRS map, they see their land has Potential Measures mapped for chalk grassland restoration and improved hedgerow connectivity. At renewal, the farmer decides to slightly adjust their options by extending grassland restoration into a nearby low-yield field and prioritising hedgerow works identified by the LNRS. This small change helps ensure their agreement aligns with locally agreed nature recovery priorities, gives confidence that the management is delivering maximum strategic benefit, and positions the farm well for future agri-environment support and emerging nature markets.



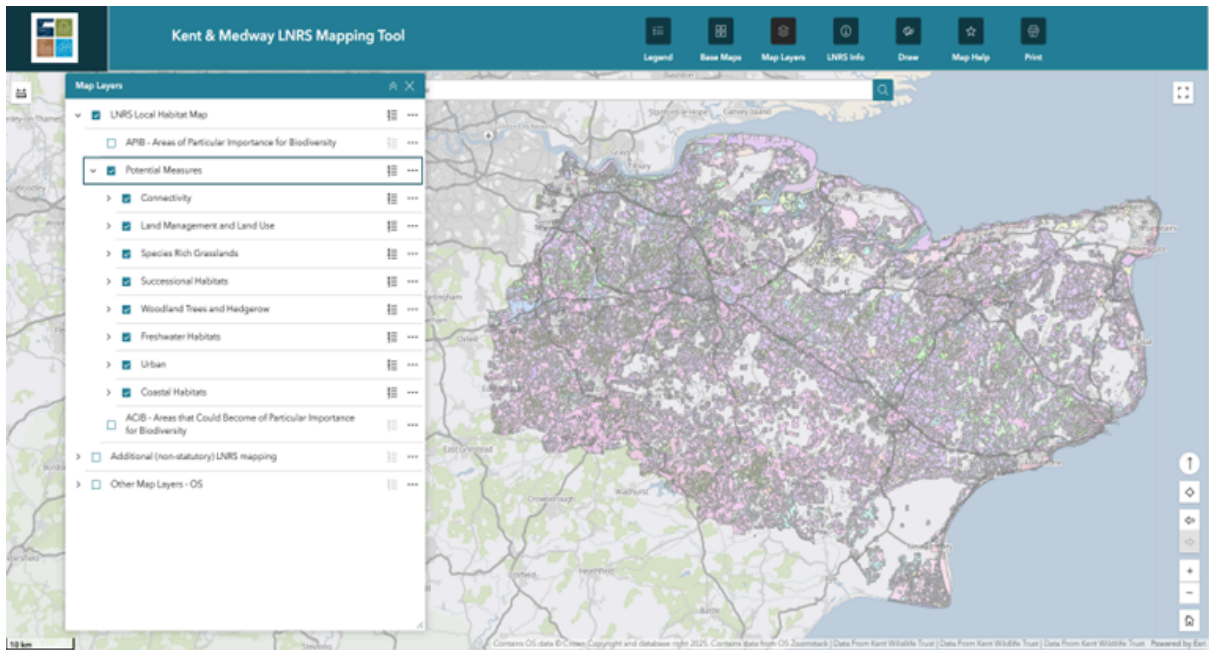
Navigating the LNRS Documents and Maps

We recognise that the LNRS contains a lot of acronyms and can feel complicated at first. However, when using the map, the most important thing is to look at which measures have been mapped for your land. These may include *Potential Measures*, which are the statutory measures of the LNRS. These are the ones that may qualify for an uplift in BNG value, as outlined in the previous section.

If you are not focused on BNG and simply want to explore what nature-recovery actions could take place on your land, you can also look at the *Wider Measures* that may have been mapped. These are non-statutory, but they still highlight valuable opportunities for nature recovery—especially when considered alongside the statutory Potential Measures.

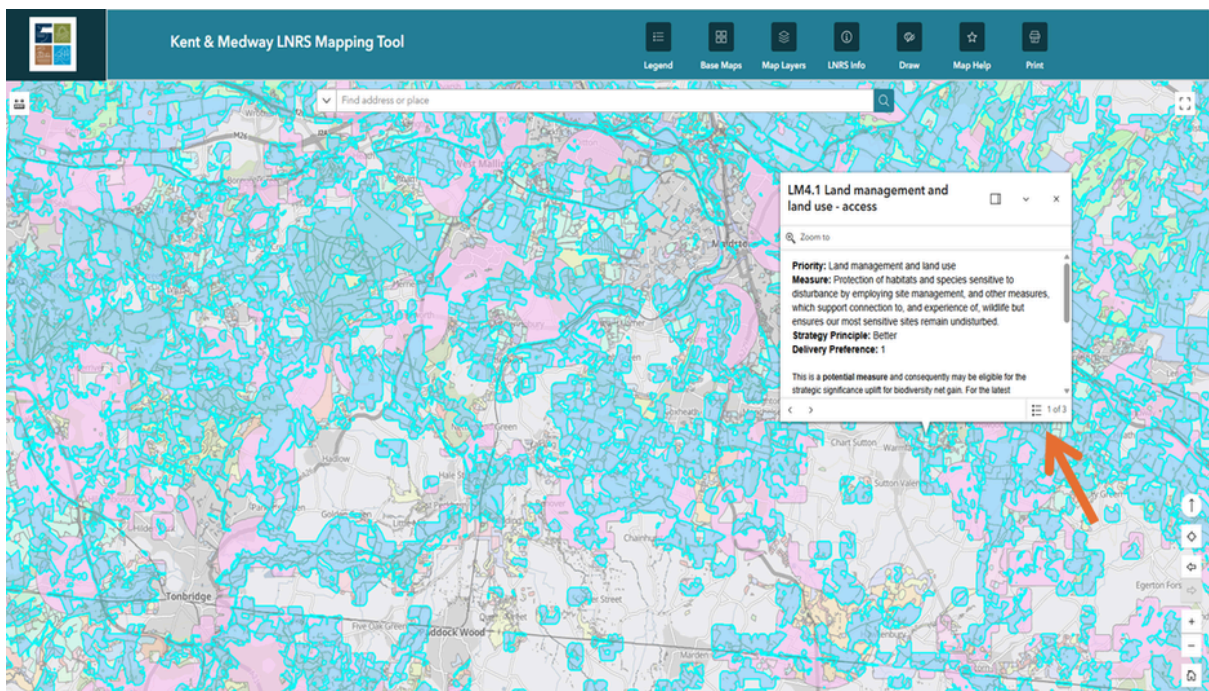
We highly recommend watching the video tutorial on how to use the Mapping Tool for the LNRS – you can find it [here](#).

When you open the map, all Potential Measures are displayed by default. We've set it up this way so it's immediately possible to see which areas have mapped Potential Measures, and which areas do not. However, this creates a very data-dense view, so the map may take a few minutes to load – please be patient with it!

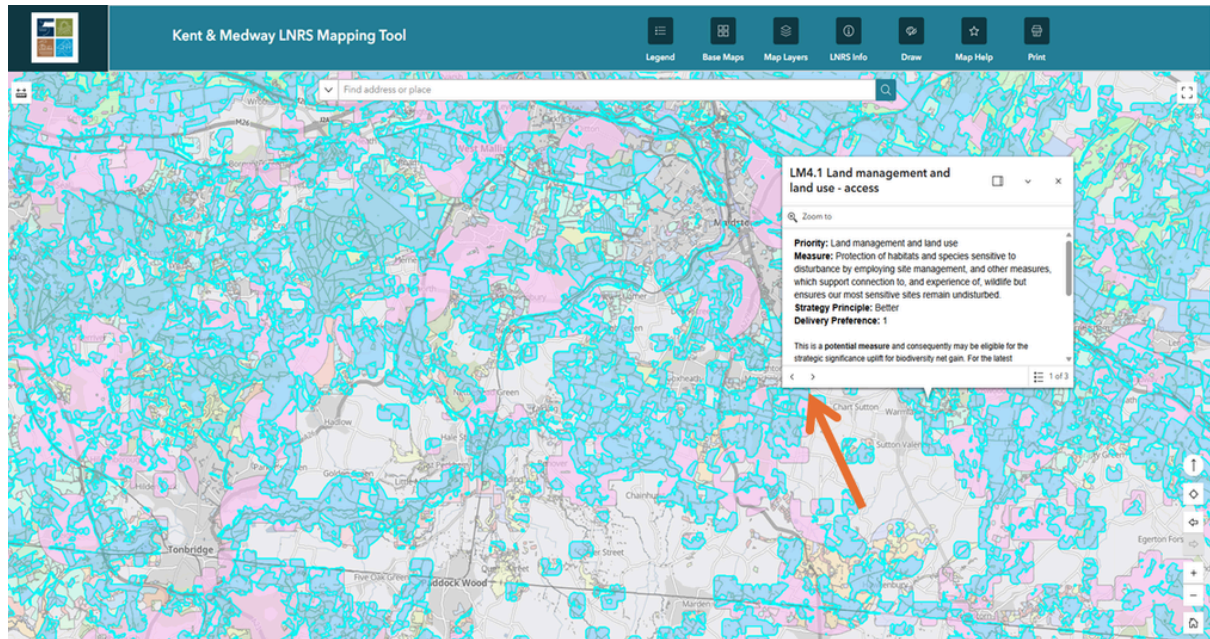


You can now locate your land. You can search by street name or postcode in the “Find address or place” search bar, or by using the “find my location” button on the right of the screen.

Click on the coloured areas of the map to see the potential measures that have been mapped for that area. It is likely that more than one Potential Measure will have been mapped for a location. If it has, you’ll see it listed as one of several here:



And you can use the toggle to scroll through and see each measure that is mapped, as shown below:



If more than one Potential Measure is mapped for an area, you'll see a "Delivery Preference" shown in the pop-up box, with a number beside it.

This number (from 1 to 4) indicates the *preferred order* for delivering the Potential Measures. A Delivery Preference of **1**, as shown in the map above, shows that this measure sits highest in the *suggested delivery order* for that mapped area.

While this ranking reflects the LNRS delivery preference, it isn't a requirement to deliver measures in this order. If another Potential Measure mapped for this area suits your land management plans better—even if it has a lower delivery preference—you can go ahead with that one first.

It's important to remember that all mapped measures are indicative only and must be ground-truthed. The map shows where certain actions *could* be suitable based on strategic data, but suitability varies from farm to farm. **We strongly encourage discussing the mapped measures with your land advisor**, who can help interpret what's been proposed, identify the best opportunities, and ensure that any actions you choose are realistic, effective, and aligned with your long-term management goals

Your land may fall within the APIB, meaning it is already designated for its important ecological features. We have mapped potential measures to land

within the APIB, despite the existing designations - this is to ensure we have captured all opportunities for nature recovery. However, it is important to note that the LNRS does not offer further protection over and above the existing designation. Additionally, **you must seek permission from the relevant authority before carrying out any actions.** This ensures that new measures do not conflict with existing management plans or the requirements of the designation.



FAQs:

"Will this force me to change what I do with my land?"

It's a strategic framework that identifies where nature recovery could have the most impact, but it doesn't place new restrictions on land use, nor require landowners to carry out the actions shown on the map. You remain free to decide what is right for your farm and business.

"Will my land be devalued if it's on the LNRS map?"

No. Having potential measures mapped to your land on the LNRS map will *not* devalue your land. The LNRS is not a designation and carries no legal restrictions. It does not change land use rights, impose new constraints, or affect planning status. The map simply highlights opportunities for nature recovery, but it doesn't alter the value, status, or permitted use of your land.

"Can I still get funding for nature recovery actions that are different to the LNRS measures that have been mapped for my land?"

Yes, you can. You're not limited to only delivering the measures shown on the LNRS map. The LNRS shows where certain actions could have the biggest strategic benefit for biodiversity, but you can still receive funding for other

nature-recovery actions, depending on the requirements of the specific scheme you apply to.

“Will the LNRS maps change or be updated regularly?”

LNRSs are required to be reviewed and republished every 3–10 years, with the exact timing decided by the Secretary of State, who will give four months’ notice before a review begins. All LNRSs across England will be reviewed at the same time. This means the maps can and will change, but only as part of these formal review cycles—not on a rolling or frequent basis.

“Can I use the LNRS to develop collaborative projects with neighbours?”

Yes, absolutely. The LNRS is designed to help identify shared priorities across a landscape, which means it can be a useful tool for developing collaborative projects with neighbouring farmers or land managers. The maps highlight where joined-up action—such as creating habitat corridors, restoring rivers, or buffering woodlands—could have the greatest impact across multiple holdings. Working together can also make some projects more viable, more attractive to funders, and more effective ecologically.

“Can LNRS actions be combined with food production?”

Yes! The LNRS is *not* designed to replace food production or prevent normal farm operations. Instead, it highlights opportunities where nature-recovery actions can sit alongside productive farming—such as improving soil health, boosting pollinators, enhancing water management, or creating habitat in less productive areas.

“Who do I contact if I want advice on using the LNRS?”

The Nature Recovery team are here to support you in getting the most out of the LNRS. For any help or guidance on the strategy or the mapping tool, please contact Rachel.boot@kent.gov.uk, and we will be happy to assist you.

To read the LNRS in full, or for practical guidance on how to deliver the nature recovery action on your land, visit

www.naturerecoverykent.org.uk



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