

## Kent State of the Environment Report: Biodiversity Update

*Last Updated: July 2020*

*Next update: Winter 2020*

*This data is published by the Sustainable Business and Communities Team of Kent County Council*

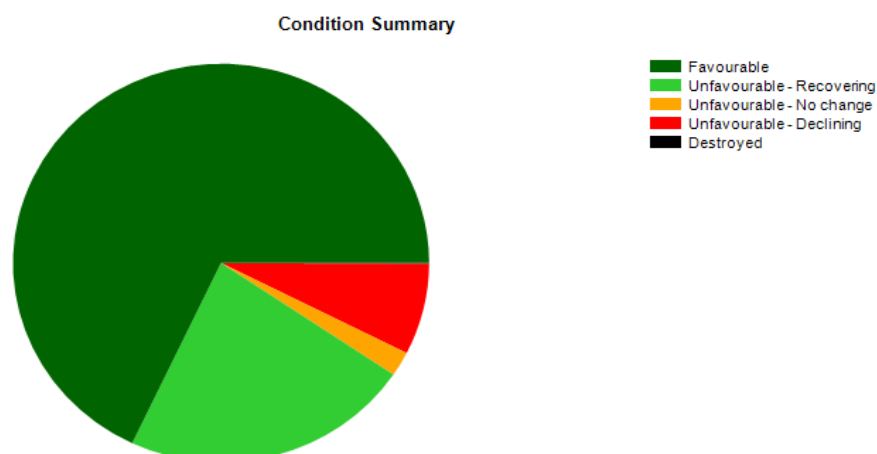
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Biodiversity includes all species of animals and plants, and the natural systems that support them, which in turn form the foundation of our ecosystems. These provide us with a wide range of good and services that are critical in supporting our economic and social wellbeing – including food, fresh water and clean air (it is currently estimated that 30% of services are declining or degraded in state). Additionally, ecosystems provide protection from natural disasters and offer climate regulation, water purification and crop pollination.

### Key facts

In Kent, there have been several changes to the local biodiversity and landscape, mainly as a result of variations in woodland management and urban development. The Kent Nature Partnership monitors the number of local sites in positive conservation management each year. As of 2018/19, 41% of Kent's local wildlife sites are positively managed, a -2% decrease on the previous year.

In 2019, the final percentage of Kent's SSSI sites in favourable condition was 68%. As of July 2020, this remains in line at 68%. As noted by the Kent Nature Partnership, the target of SSSI's in favourable condition by 2045 is 75%.



In 2016, DEFRA recorded that over 5 million people volunteered in their local natural and historic environment. Within Kent and Medway 35,949 people volunteered in 2017/18 – this new indicator will continue its development over the coming years. In addition, Kent County Council undertakes a public perception survey to further understand the public use of the environment. Between 2014-

2016 there was a 5% increase in participants using the natural environment at least once a fortnight (from 78% to 83%), although this fell by -2% in the 2018 survey. The 2020 survey is currently taking place and results will be published later this year.

Kent County Council conducted a tree canopy cover assessment across the Kent districts and Medway. Canopy cover is a two-dimensional metric, which can be used to quantify the spread of tree cover across an area. The average canopy cover of Kent and Medway is estimated at 17%.

## Further reading

For further information, we recommend the below documents:

- A Green Future (25 Year Plan by the UK Government) [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf)
- Biodiversity 2020 Strategy for England <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/england-biodiversity-indicators>
- Kent Nature Partnership Biodiversity Strategy 2020 to 2045 (in public consultation until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019) <http://kentnature.org.uk/uploads/Kent%20Biodiversity%20Strategy%202020%20-%202045.pdf>
- Kent Nature Partnership: 2015-2025 Biodiversity Strategy <http://kentnature.org.uk/kent-biodiversity-strategy.html>
- Public Perceptions Survey [https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/88170/Kent-environment-survey-research-report.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/88170/Kent-environment-survey-research-report.pdf)
- UK National Ecosystem Assessment <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/Resources/tabid/82/Default.aspx>

## Data sources

UK National Ecosystem Assessment Follow-on (NR0150)

<http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&Completed=2&ProjectID=18081>

Designated SSSI Sites, Natural England

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SearchCounty.aspx>

Local Sites in Positive Conservation Management, DEFRA

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-sites-in-positive-conservation-management--2>

England's 2020 Biodiversity Indicators, DEFRA <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env09-england-biodiversity-indicators>