



Terms of Reference for the KNP Board

Overview of the Kent Nature Partnership (KNP)

The Kent Nature Partnership (KNP) is a coordinating strategic body, standing up for nature in the county. The KNP recognises that we are in a climate emergency and that our response to this needs to be linked to the ecological crisis facing our county's biodiversity.

There are many potential nature-based solutions to the climate emergency that we need to utilise. Trees and hedgerows and habitats such as grassland, wetland and saltmarsh all provide natural carbon sinks that can provide a significant contribution to carbon neutrality targets. The natural environment also provides mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change, particularly for flooding and drought. In our actions to tackle the climate emergency, we should simultaneously be facilitating the restoration of Kent's nature.

This use of our natural capital is at the heart of the government's 25-year Environment Plan, (25YEP) and alongside areas such as Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies these approaches will need to deliver an ambitious Nature Recovery Network, as enshrined in the forthcoming Environment Act.

The KNP's Kent Biodiversity Strategy closely aligns to the 25YEP. At a time of ecological and climate crisis, the strategy aims to steer the collaborative work of conservationists, government, business, and individuals to work in partnership so that the county's natural environment is restored and threatened species saved.

The KNP Vision

"The KNP has a vision for a restored, healthy natural environment that functions as a coherent and resilient ecological network, thriving with wildlife and plants. This will inspire engagement, underpin human health and our economy, as well as providing solutions to the challenges facing Kent and Medway."

Governance of KNP

The KNP was awarded Local Nature Partnership (LNP) status by the government in 2012 to drive positive change in the natural environment. The KNP is hosted by Kent County Council (KCC) and is structured around an executive level Board, a Management Working Group

(MWG) and subgroups established as needed. The KNP also works at a broader strategic scale, through South East Nature Partnership (SENP) which it provides the secretariate for.

Purpose of the KNP Board

To provide a strategic direction for the KNP and act as a champion and advocate, broadening support for the Partnership's work and engagement across all sectors.

To ensure KNP coordination of this engagement results in action for nature recovery.

The Board will:

- Set the strategic direction for the KNP and review progress against the Kent Biodiversity Strategy and State of Nature in Kent report.
- Ensure strategic alignment wherever possible with nature partnerships across the south east through South East Nature Partnership (SENP).
- Act as the accountable and approving executive for actions to be taken forward by the Management Working Group (MWG), utilising a project management approach.
- Endorse the KNP's position on a range of issues that lead to nature recovery.
- Provide final approval for KNP letters of support.
- Attend an annual joint meeting (AGM) between Board and MWG.

Membership of the KNP Board

The Board is chaired by the KNP Chair appointed for a 5-year term (and should not serve more than 2 terms).

The Board comprises Executives from the following:

- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit representing protected landscapes.
- Country Land & Business Association.
- Defra family.
- Kent Planning Officers Group (Maidstone Borough Council).
- Medway Council (Unitary authority).
- Kent Wildlife Trust.
- Kent Public Health.
- Brett Aggregates (Private sector).
- Kent Nature Partnership - Management Working Group Chair.

New Board members and the Chair are appointed on a 5-year basis, at which point these positions will be reviewed.: At an AGM members can come up for reappointment and

indicate in advance of the meeting if they wish to continue serving. The chair must have final say on membership.

The Board will have officer support from Kent County Council.

The Board is quorate when the Chair is present plus three other Board members.

Where members are not able to attend in person, every effort will be made to enable members to join the meeting via Microsoft Teams/teleconference.

Board Members may nominate at any time additional members; appointment of the nominee will be decided by the Board based on the contribution they will bring to the Board and the Partnership.

Guest presenters and contributors will be regularly brought into Board meetings, to cover different aspects of a rolling forward agenda as recommended by the Board and set by the Chair.

KNP Board Members' roles

The Board is a non-constituted partnership of people who collectively own the KNP initiative. Members do not represent their organisations as such but should come with the valuable perspectives from the sector to which they are linked.

Board Members are asked to:

- Collectively own the Kent Nature Partnership initiative and act as an advocate for its work.
- Make a commitment to understand the Partnership's work and be aligned with KNP aims.
- Oversee and support the delivery of the Kent Biodiversity Strategy and Local Nature Recovery Network.
- Take opportunities to influence locally and nationally for the furtherance of KNP aims.
- Attend four meetings per annum; when unable to attend, members are requested to nominate a deputy.
- At meetings disclose any matters of interest or conflict on issues that may directly affect the decision-making process.

Board meetings will often be preceded by Management Working Group (MWG) meetings, which will be held a few weeks beforehand.

A joint AGM meeting with the MWG will be held.

Minutes of Board and MWG meetings will be shared between both groups.

Completed – September 2021