

Comments from the survey January 2024

Priorities for managing your land	Information on having livestock	Your experience with plant or wildlife surveys
Diversity of habitats for our meadows but managing specifically for dormice in the wood	We do not want livestock because we don't want the responsibility	We have had experts to do NVC and other botanical surveys and regular reptile surveys in the meadows. Monthly dormouse box tours with expert in the wood. We lack expertise but not enthusiasm to do other surveys
Understanding and supporting the microbial life within our soil	It would add a layer of complexity for me regarding Soil Association certification.	The analysis we've had done on our soils has reassured us that we're going in the right direction
We want to attract as many birds as possible, and particular birds - nightingales were great in 2023, but swifts and turtle doves would be great. We hope to build a pond in 2024 as there are lots of frogs, newts and dragon flies in the area. As a 73 year old and an 80 year old we cannot undertake heavy maintenance so tips as to how to best look after our woods would be good. We are on heavy clay so our wild flower meadow does not thrive so experiences in this regard would be helpful.	Before we planted our woods we let a woman who cares for neglected animals put sheep and horses on our land. The arrangement was that she cared for them, but they needed someone on site. After we were attacked by a vicious large sheep (!) and the traumatic death of a horse we cancelled the arrangement.	The Living Forest carried out the survey which was expensive but the main problem is we don't quite know how to implement it! Our expertise is lacking.
Restoring a very small piece of chalk grassland	Horses for owner's daughter - now grown Sheep - do not know why	
We are working on some of our land to create specific habitat for Biodiversity Net Gain purposes but also try to follow rewilding principles as far as possible given the relatively small scale of our land - no big predators except man!	We will be having sheep and ponies to manage the sward in the autumn and generate suitable habitat for species rich grassland	We were fortunate to survey most of our land (by KWT) as part of the BNG process so the cost was covered
Only have 3 acres, including a meadow and small wood. I just want it as wildlife-friendly as possible.	Would need complete re-fencing. We do have badgers and foxes!	

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	Although we do not 'own' any livestock we have about 20 sheep on our land who graze but belong to a third party farmer	
Restoration of the natural environment for sustainable human future with financial benefits	two ewes in lamb and three breeding chickens	I am a licensed dormouse handler
Managing the habitat that was already here, including plants of unimproved grassland, but as it is a small site this involves some clearance to maintain a mosaic and create more diversity as well as conserving existing species. We also added a large pond 5 years ago, this was not planted up but is being allowed to naturally vegetate and develop.	Two rare breed sheep borrowed from Sally (fellow KLAW member), these are winter grazing. This is the second winter we have had sheep. I am still doing some brush cutting of scrub and other maintenance but much less than when I was previously cutting most of the grassland and collecting by raking.	Luckily this is my job and hobby!
Mainly semi-natural woodland, coppicing work in progress	Area unfenced therefore livestock impractical. Area is SSSI pigs etc not allowed.	
United Kingdom		
Revitalising a small area of north kent downland to encourage native species of plants and wildlife	The introduction of sheep is to help with restoring the grassland	A number of people who have expertise in plants and wildlife have made informal visits and commented on their findings.
Our woodland is a small fragment of a larger woodland, that we know supports a wide range of species. Generally we're just trying to keep it from becoming all the same and are encouraging regeneration.	We couldn't have livestock, it's open woodland.	I've experience in surveying small mammals using small mammal traps and reptile surveying using refugia. Camera trapping has also been effective. I've done butterfly, bumblebee and dragonfly surveys, but not I'm not an expert, still learning! I moth trap quite a bit at home. I've had training but have little experience in chalk downland plant surveying.
Re-establishing a coppice cycle		We had a very light touch evaluation (not a formal scientific survey) by a private expert and the KWT when we established a management plan for our land 15+ years ago
	We intend to have a couple of horses, couple of either goats or sheep, and some chickens	Never thought to have a survey done

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The land is carefully managed with a light touch to provide a mixture of relaxed habitats which allows nature to flourish	We used to have a few sheep grazing on part of our ground just to keep the grass in check when we had less time than we do now!	
Most of my (3 acre) land is garden, so human needs (leisure, food growing, places for cars, building materials etc) play an important role in how it is managed. It is a mixture of completely wild, semi-wild, informal/formal garden. I believe there is already a lot of diversity due to this patchwork of habitats, and I would like to keep building upon this.	I have considered having livestock to aid in managing the grass, but I feel like I don't have enough knowledge/experience at the moment, or the set up (in terms of fencing etc).	I don't really know where to start! This is so much that could potentially be surveyed and I don't have enough knowledge to understand what would be most useful.
Being on the outskirts of Canterbury, public access is also key to everything we do at Hambrook Marshes. Paths, stiles, gates, seats and information panels all have to be maintained or replaced. We are also currently embarking on an education project that will encourage local schools to visit the site, making use of an educational pack that we have put together.	We have cattle for up to seven months of the year, but have had problems obtaining a reliable grazer. It is also proving hard to get the number of cattle we want for the period we want. While cattle are integral to our current management plan, the cost of fencing is high, and much of our effort is geared towards maintaining/renewing fencing, repairing stiles and kissing gates.	Up to now surveys have been conducted mainly by myself, but with some assistance from personal contacts. We now have fairly comprehensive lists for mammals, reptiles, amphibia, butterflies, dragonflies and plants. We haven't as yet identified any other groups that it would be beneficial to survey. Of more value than a simple survey is regular monitoring, which we do for birds. This could be extended to other plant or animal groups, but then it is a question of time or finding other people who can commit to this ongoing exercise.
Managed through Higher Tier Countryside Management. Some funding aimed at species including bumblebees and turtle dove but we want to increase as much Biodiversity as we can.	Romney sheep for meat and wool, main farm income if not including subsidies. Local breed.	I'm starting to make notes of species during my working days on the farm.
I only have a small plot which is leased on a grazing licence, therefore I am trying to create a specific wildflower meadow habitat,	6 sheep, they are working to reduce the rough grass burden, BUT may have been on too long, I find getting the sheep easy enough, getting them off and to the butcher is a more complicated prospect!	I have done this at a basic level only.

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due to my limited permissions to create other features.		
	Rare breed sheep used for the grazing of species- rich pastures.	
Our land is grade four on London Clay. We planted about an acre with native trees in March 1993, to improve habitat on our land, which was used as a horse paddock previously. We created our wildlife meadow about 5 years later. The pond was dug about 2003, after seeing the one at HDRA at Yalding. It does not have a lining and is a transient pond (it usually dries out for a month or two in late summer).	We used to keep pigs, bees, chickens, geese, turkeys etc but now only grow our own fruit and veg. Although I hope to get chickens again in the spring (I think a weasel got my last 4)	I am not an expert but an enthusiastic amateur, but have a friend who is good at ID and usually does an annual count of my green winged orchids. I usually keep a record of new fauna and flora. I have done surveys in the past as a Parish Tree and Pond Warden and recorded Great Crested Newts for KRAG.
Originally aimed at nightingales and turtle doves, although we now try to encourage a wide range of flora and fauna.	We don't live on site and the fences are inadequate.	We have breeding bird survey done every year, bird ringing, dormice and bat surveys by experts.
Or wilding. Deciding on which would be best	Have an agricultural tie which we may want to have lifter so need to break tie for 10 years (which means have no livestock)	Had a student come and do a survey which was useful and best of all free!
The Pines Garden was originally farmland and from the seventies up until 2000 was a traditionally managed semi formal garden. Since 2000 the management has been carried out without chemicals.	We have considered sheep but as a garden open to the public we would need to manage this carefully and staffing constrains us.	None
We are trying to achieve chalk grassland - this is such a rare habitat we feel that even our few acres is a significant area to preserve.	We have sheep which graze extensively across our land also a couple of horses which we keep to certain areas.	Sue Buckingham did a walk about on our land - it was very informative and her enthusiasm for what we had achieved was very gratifying. We are heading in the right direction and have some good conservation worthy species present.
Mainly coppice woodland - little felling done now except for firewood - paths keep open and wide for walking, flowering plants, butterflies.	one small paddock occasionally has sheep in it just to eat it down.	Plants, birds, dormice surveyed at lengthy intervals.
Diversity of habitats, but overarching priority to not disturb the barn owls.	We will be having cattle later this year (?) to fulfill a countryside stewardship agreement.	

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looking at how ecological agriculture can promote increased biodiversity and build reciprocal relationships between humanity and nature.	I have had sheep graze and lamb in the past but have moved further towards more holistic land management and horticulture/permaculture	Just personal and app based identification and record taking at present

Identification apps	Funding for the management of your land	Topics you are interested in learning about
I do report sightings onto iRecord but only once I have established the ID by other means. I haven't used it for identification purposes PlantNet has been a game changer for us		Managing habitats for invertebrates. More detailed look at groups of invertebrates - eg absolutely loved the dung beetles workshop.
Merlin is a very interesting tool, the only one I currently use	I would welcome funding that wasn't retrospective.	Soil biology resources as I believe it is at the root of most of the topics above. To reduce/remove our dependancy on agro-chemicals.
Merlin is idiosyncratic occasionally giving implausible answers (eg we do not have bitterns nor mocking birds on our land) I am interested in what apps are useful, and feel I need to learn more about day flying moths.	The Woodland Trust - We had a donation of a thousand whips to plant to start our mixed woodland following a free survey of what should be planted there.	Inheritance advice. How do we ensure that the woods are protected after we die? I would like to learn more about day flying moths. Also how can squirrels be managed as they are taking over our land?
	NOAB FIPL small grant for some work, tools & a 5 year plan	
We rely on expertise from KWT ecologists but also are trying to encourage citizen science for more eyes on the ground	Biodiversity Net Gain funding for habitat creation. Woodland Trust, Maidstone Borough Council, Forestry Commission and International Tree Foundation funding for tree planting	
Only plant apps to date - these do vary but must be said are getting better	KWT provided funding for establishment and work towards improving stream flow and enhanced wetland areas	Is it worth entering a topic on 'renewables'?
	RPA grants - Dan Tuson has been exceeding helpful. Need the government to be more committed to ELMS for small land-owners	

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	and to get their act together to open applications.	
I use iRecord for recording rather than ID. Merlin has been amazing for helping me learn a bit of bird song and helped me record greenfinches on my land before I saw them. PlantNet is the best plant app I have found but I definitely recommend that you need some knowledge to use it and cross-reference with books. The best plant ID books I generally recommend are Francis Rose 'Wild Flower Key' and David Streeter's Collins Wild Flower Guide.	Natural England District Level Licensing scheme for GCNs funded the digging of our new pond, this was through Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership rather than directly applied for by me. I also had some conservation volunteers and hedge planting funded by KWT Ashford Meadows scheme.	Identification of taxa that I don't usually ID
	FC Woodland Management Grant ended 2010 Kent Downs and Marshes Leader Grant 2011	
	United Kingdom	
	A very debilitating process!	I am in serious need of a contractor to take on the pruning of my heritage fruit trees. There are about 40 half standard trees needing attention, but experts seem to be in short supply .
I wouldn't use iRecord for identification, it's best used to submit records. I don't believe any of the apps can replace good field craft but when you're stuck on something they can be a really good aid to being pointed in the right direction. Bloomsbury Wildlife Guides are very good, as are the WILDguides, but as you get into a subject you'll find that just one book is not enough! There are many helpful people on social media that will help with ID and also tell you why something is what it is, Kent Moth Group, Kent Caterpillar Group, BWARS etc		

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I haven't tried any	I am yet to apply as I think 6 acres is not funded	
iNaturalist used to record interesting observations, but still prefer ID books when needed!		
I recommend both of the apps that I use (see notes already written for KLAW). I also find that the ID tool in the iphone photos app is very handy and usually correct.	As the land is our garden, we have not considered looking elsewhere for funding as yet. I would like to make a new large pond and would like some expert advice on how to do it, and perhaps expert monitoring of biodiversity change in the area. Perhaps these could be something we could seek funding for, but I have not looked into this as yet.	
iNaturalist useful but not always accurate and can be inconsistent. Merlin also useful but not always accurate. Apps are a useful starting point, but guide books and local experts are also essential. Best to photograph any unidentified species when possible.	For the last ten years our running costs have primarily been funded by Basic Payment Scheme and Countryside Stewardship payments (farming subsidies), although the former is due to end in the next few years. We have used this income to pay for insurances, repairs to fencing, gates, seating, tree works, volunteer costs, website fees, etc. We have also secured funding for discrete projects from the Coop, Waitrose, Kent Community Foundation, local councillors and private donors.	Rewilding, scrub management, wildlife recording
I found inaturalist was wrong a lot of the time when identifying plants. Just started using Merlin, seems good most of the time.	Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship started 2023. Mid Tier 5 years before. Just entered an SFI agreement.	Hedge laying, management / establishments of riparian buffer strips next to ditches
I find my phone always running out of space when it does routine updates and asking me to delete apps to free it up- possibly I need a more expensive contract	The parish council have not been very flexible although I have asked for a rebate on the grazing fee due to the nature of the project being for conservation rather than a financial gain for me	regenerative vineyard management would be interesting!

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and a newer phone to facilitate more apps!		
	I have mixed sentiments on funding. There is a part of me that believes that in the midst of a cost of living crisis that funding should be targeted to the most needy. I'm not sure that those who have land for pleasure are those in greatest need. I think the outcomes need to be measured or monitored to ensure funding is appropriately used.	Hedgerow management could be included as this would have relevance to most landholders.
The Seek app is easy to use but not always correct. It is easy just to photograph the plant or beast. Sometime it uses different common names that can give a clue to the latin name. I have a number of ID books, which I use a lot.	I applied and recieve a Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier payment (for 5 years) although it is only about £100pa it helps to pay for my hay to be cut and baled.	
We have found Pl@ntNet very useful - not least because plants are static.	Partial costs paid for improving habitat for nightingales and turtle doves (Natural England), bird seed for turtle doves (RSPB), digging of ponds (Natural England) and funds for a biochar project (North Kent Downs AONB), partial payment for dormouse boxes (Peope's Trust for Endangered Species). The rest is self-funded.	
Picture this is great for live plant ID and you can save to 'your garden' which gives me a record to consult		
	We are looking at grants but have not had major success in the past	drought tolerant planting
Prefer books such as Wild flower key by Francis Rose	Would love to have some funding	
	Used Nat.Eng. and Forestry Comm. funding in the past, but not for several years.	Not currently

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	on various schemes, and starting on a stewardship agreement from 1/1 /24	employing a group ecologist
Picture Mushroom app for fungi.	fipl	Nature friendly Food production e.g. Ecological Agriculture/permaculture.

Views and experience of attending KLAW events.	Experience / knowledge to share with KLAW	Events you would like to host or are willing to help with
Hambrook Marshes last January - inspirational to see what enthusiastic community action can achieve. Completely heartwarming Mystole Orchard tours - gave us aims and ideas for our own land Being alerted by Klaw to other events has been extremely useful to us - Green Hay Making at Hearts Delight Farm, Dung Beetles, Meadow Management at Wye Village Hall, Kent Field Club AGM	We are enthusiastic generalists rather than knowing much about anything!	Maybe at our wood - it is beautiful in April and May. I haven't approached John Buckingham about this but perhaps he would be prepared to hold a bird ringing demonstration there as a focal point for interest. If there are any more than a few, though, parking may be an issue. A bird ringing event at the meadows in September (John willing) is another possibility which could then include a demonstration of cutting the meadows with our large lawn tractor.
I've unfortunately been too busy, but would love to host an event here	I would be happy to share our journey towards organic certification. And host a Soil Health Day this year too.	We are hoping to host a Soil Health Day
We enjoyed Upper Mystole Park Farm and Nimrod (For damselflies) but we are limited these days by the fact we cannot drive long distances. Car sharing or picking up from railway stations would be appreciated.	Probably not as we are amateurs.	Not sure that our land is of sufficient interest for a KLAW event but we are happy to host or assist with organising an event. Again transport is our restriction.
Interesting to see what people are doing & good to meet knowledgeable people	My knowledge base is extraordinarily wide, but very shallow	
Very enjoyable and interesting- would have like more exercise and a proper look round though	Am well versed on Nature opportunities and strategy having been chair of the South East Nature Partnership	Not sure if I have the time to host an event but would be happy to with the right support
Very useful and informative	Renewable energy sources and products; water features and pond construction	Apologies that isn't a flat 'no' - as I would be more than willing to host an event but am away for several weeks for the first half of this year!

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	dormice monitoring, new ponds, chicken keeping, RPA grants, I don't want to give any talks but happy to chat informally	Happy to host a visit and a tour round. happy to add KLAW members to dormouse monitoring group and train them to receive a licence
Always interesting, great to learn new things and wonderful to talk to other members	Yes	Possibly but time is my major constraint at present. Botanical and habitat survey skills. A visit to my land but parking is a constraint.
	Charcoal making, woodland management	Charcoal burn
	Sadly no!!	
	Taking on an ex cornfield with the intention of introducing grassland, planting trees and locating the former pond meant some rapid sourcing of expertise for someone with only the memories of what countryside had been rather a long time ago. Many people have helped me, and I m very happy to share any knowledge I have gained with anyone who is also in need of encouragement.	I am very happy to show to others what has been achieved in the initial 12 years and how I hope things will develop in time.
Very much enjoyed seeing the hedge-laying process.		I'm sorry but I'm cutting down on my workload this year.
We have only been to one so far, but it was great to meet up and talk to other people who have similar interests and points of view.	We are not focused on any one thing but feel we have a good all round knowledge of our 'patch'	We would be quite happy to host an event in the future but during 2024 we have other commitments which make it difficult to fit anything in this time round.
I have been to the AGM at Ed's, the funding workshop, and the Experts picnic. I have also been and visited some member's land outside of meetings. It has been a privilege to meet other members and walk around their land with them, learning from their expertise and experience. So far I have found that most members have many areas of land where they are doing conservation or rewilding at scale. As my land is a garden, for me it is more a case of taking conservation/rewilding in principle and interpreting it on a micro-scale, adapting it to the garden context. It would be nice to meet people in the group who are working in a similar context to me if there are any!	Bits and scraps picked up in the last few years, but no expertise in any particular area.	I would be willing to host the AGM if we need an alternative to Ed's in future.

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All visits have been of interest, but will undoubtedly become more useful as KLAW gets larger, with a greater breadth of habitats, issues and experience.	One of our trustees has enormous experience of liaising with city and county councillors, and also of making use of social media.	We have already hosted one event at Hambrook Marshes, but would be happy to host a second one, perhaps concentrating on one or two particular aspects of the site.
Dung beetles day was very helpful and it was great meeting other land owners.	I worked as an Ecology consultant for 12 years and have been a sheep farmer since I was young so maybe, but I'm not sure what at the moment.	I will probably be hosting an event with Bumblebee Conservation on our farm this summer, but it's not confirmed yet. I've been doing surveys and managing habitats for bumblebees on our farm since 2012.
	Knowledge of working at KWT and other NGO's, general conservation knowledge, specialism in farmed environment	Meadow management with Janet Upsome
Keith and Jennie's gathering. Lovely to meet like- minded people.	Practical Hedge-laying and meadow management expertise- Rob	
n/a	We came here 30 years ago, I have some experience and knowledge of smallholding, renewable energy and our sewage reed bed, but unlikely to be things members don't know already.	Happy to host but need more info on what is involved and what sort of numbers may be expected.
Really good opportunity to meet like-minded people and learn new skills and practices.	Nightingales and turtle dove habitat, pond creation, boreholes, of solar power, biochar production.	Currently planning nightingale and turtle dove session, naturalist picnic, burd ringing demo and bat identification evening.
It's useful and interesting to see examples of different habitats/land and hear how other landowners manage and make decisions about their land		
Your events are always pleasant and educational, it is good to meet so many people who care about nature	We have a gardener who has some knowledge but previous colleagues move on	We would be open to suggestions as I am not sure what the event should be focussed on
Lovely friendly events where you can network with some amazing people.		Happy to help if in the local area of Dover / Canterbury
Always useful meetings	Nothing particular	Age has taken over - less energy for projects now!
Most enjoyable, and inspiring.	Hm.....not really !! apart from a cuppa and a walkround.	

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I have hosted successful committee events here in the past and attended a few visits to UMPF	Yes. I am continuing to develop a demonstration of Nature Friendly Farming and Permaculture that I will continue to share	Details to follow but have plans for reconnection events this year and tours of local landscapes.