

Biodiversity Action at Kent 25/26 Round Up

The Biodiversity Working Group have collated some highlights of biodiversity action from across the campus. The working group is made up of students and staff from across the University including operational, academic and professional services staff; and students representing societies and projects, such as the Conservation Society, Sustainability Working Group and the Kent Community Oasis Garden. The group works to bring together knowledge on wildlife, ecosystems, and our campus green spaces, to enhance the work we do collectively to support biodiversity and engage people with nature.

2000+ species recorded!

Kent Community Oasis Garden

KentCOG's 25/26 theme was 'access to nature,' seeking to support more students in getting up close to nature on campus. KentCOG ran weekly term time Biodiversity Booster sessions for students to engage directly with surveying, nature education and mindful interactions with wildlife.

KentCOG hosted Rodentifier events as part of the UK Mammal University Challenge, as well as curriculum based surveys for pollinators with the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology.

KentCOG has put a huge amount of work into boosting habitats for wildlife on its site, which is now coming into fruition with an abundance of small mammals, birds and invertebrates being highly visible at the project. The project shows how simple actions can boost biodiversity in a small area.



Bank Vole at KentCOG

Recording species diversity on the Canterbury Campus

We have continued to record species diversity through iNaturalist. We are currently 2nd in the UK for species diversity on a University campus as part of the [Campus Biodiversity Network](#).



Green Flag Status

Kent's Canterbury campus has been awarded [Green Flag status](#) for the first time, recognising the care and commitment that goes into managing one of the country's most distinctive university campuses.

Presented by Keep Britain Tidy, the Green Flag Award is the international quality mark for well-managed outdoor spaces.

It is awarded to sites that demonstrate high standards of environmental management, biodiversity, accessibility, safety and visitor experience.

Judges described the campus as an "outdoor classroom", recognising its value for teaching and research alongside recreation and biodiversity.

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Managing and enhancing the campus for biodiversity

The Landscape and Grounds team have completed several projects this year to support biodiversity on campus.

In collaboration with the Kent Community Oasis Garden and ResLife, the Gulbenkian bed was replanted to provide a pollinator buffet that is drought tolerant and looks great throughout the seasons. Alongside activities, such as No Mow May, and our glyphosate free campus trial, we are trying to support an increase in invertebrate abundance on central campus.

This year we published our new Woodland report and recommendations to continue to build the resilience of our woodlands and improve their overall condition.

Vegetation clearance was completed on Keynes pond and Upper Eliot pond to prevent succession and increase light reaching the ponds. Work has started at Jennison pond and will continue in Winter 26.



The River - 60 years of growth

In the early 1960s, the University of Kent campus was carved out of three former farms: Brotherhood, Beverley and Hothe Court. In our 60th year we have been celebrating the landscape of our campus in many ways including the launch of a new walking trail - The River. The River is a meandering trail across campus that links up and celebrates the plant communities that form the basis of biodiversity at Kent.

Biodiversity Strategy and Nature Positive Universities Pledge

In December we launched our new Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy which lays out actions and targets for the Biodiversity Working Group. This is publicly available on our website.

The strategy publication coincided with our pledge to the Nature Positive Universities, a commitment to not only reduce our impact broadly but to reverse this into a positive restoration of natural spaces.

Our first steps this year have been assessing our baseline for campus biodiversity through mapping our habitats; collating what species surveys we have; and scoping out the data required to complete the EUSteps Ecological Footprint tool.

We are looking to complete our mapping exercise by Summer 2027 and our footprint by Winter 2026.



Canterbury District Biodiversity Network

The University continues to host the Canterbury District Biodiversity Network on campus, and proudly sits on it's coordination committee. This year we are in the process of building a new website for the network to better promote locally what we are doing and sharing good practice, local events, and opportunities for site visits.

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A busy year for the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology

DICE has been working in collaboration with Kent Wildlife Trust on protecting rare invertebrates and butterflies in the Blean, the ancient woodland to the north of campus. The project includes surveying the rare and flagship heath fritillary butterfly.

They hosted a hugely popular 'Exploring Ecology day' for 6th form students with around 150 students taking part, with talks and workshops hosted by DICE students and staff.

The Annual Spatial Nature Planning Forum took place in April, hosted by DICE, with the main sessions made available on YouTube.

DICE was awarded a £948,000 grant for avian research with a spotlight on the role of genetic conservation of recovered species.

Research and Innovation Fellows and Associates from the E3 Sharing Space for Nature team met with Professor Mark Mulligan, from Kings College London, to build FreeStations. These FreeStations are open source environmental data loggers, which will monitor noise, air, light and pollution. They are being tested on campus before being rolled out across East Kent.

A big win for the Rodentifiers!

The University Mammal Challenge is an annual competition designed to raise awareness of British mammals and gather data on mammals living on UK university campuses.

Teams from universities across the country compete to collect points, through hosting activities for staff and students like talks, workshops, nature walks, and surveys.

This year was the first year the University of Kent entered a team – the Rodentifiers, made up of BSc Ecology and Conservation students Alex, Elinor, Nat, Nathan, and Tristan. Not only did the team take home first place, they smashed the all-time record of 28,650 points by almost 50,000 points, with a total of 78,000 points!

Over the course of 3 months the team ran 11 events including bat surveys, habitat creation events in collaboration with the Kent Community Oasis garden and a Mammal Valentines event. They also captured over 60,000 images on wildlife cameras across campus.



My Campus and Other Animals

This year we launched our new communications campaign 'My Campus and Other Animals' which shines a spotlight on the other species that we share our campus with.

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BioBlitz 2026

The 6th annual Bioblitz took place in May and it was a record breaking year! We identified a record number of species, a total of 458, compared with the previous record of 323. Many of the species recorded were campus firsts. These identifications logged on iNaturalist supported our launch into 2nd place on the Campus Biodiversity Network for the UK.

The University of Kent BioBlitz is an interactive, participatory, one-day event bringing together families, school groups, and local community members to engage in nature-based learning with University of Kent students, scientists, and local wildlife experts (e.g. Kent Wildlife Trust; Butterfly Conservation; Kent Moth Group).

It is organised by students and supported by staff.



**A BioBlitz record - 458
species recorded in 24 hours!**



Conservation Society

The student led Conservation Society won the Highly Commended Academic Society award 2025/26 after another successful year of activities. Their returning iNaturalist competition had triple the number of observations and species this year.

Throughout the year, they ran a number of practical skills workshops and volunteering opportunities with outside organisations, including species ID events.

Some highlights include: volunteering in the Blean with the Kent Wildlife Trust; a bird box painting event; the entertaining Conservation 'Would I Lie to You' event; and recycled materials bird feeder making.

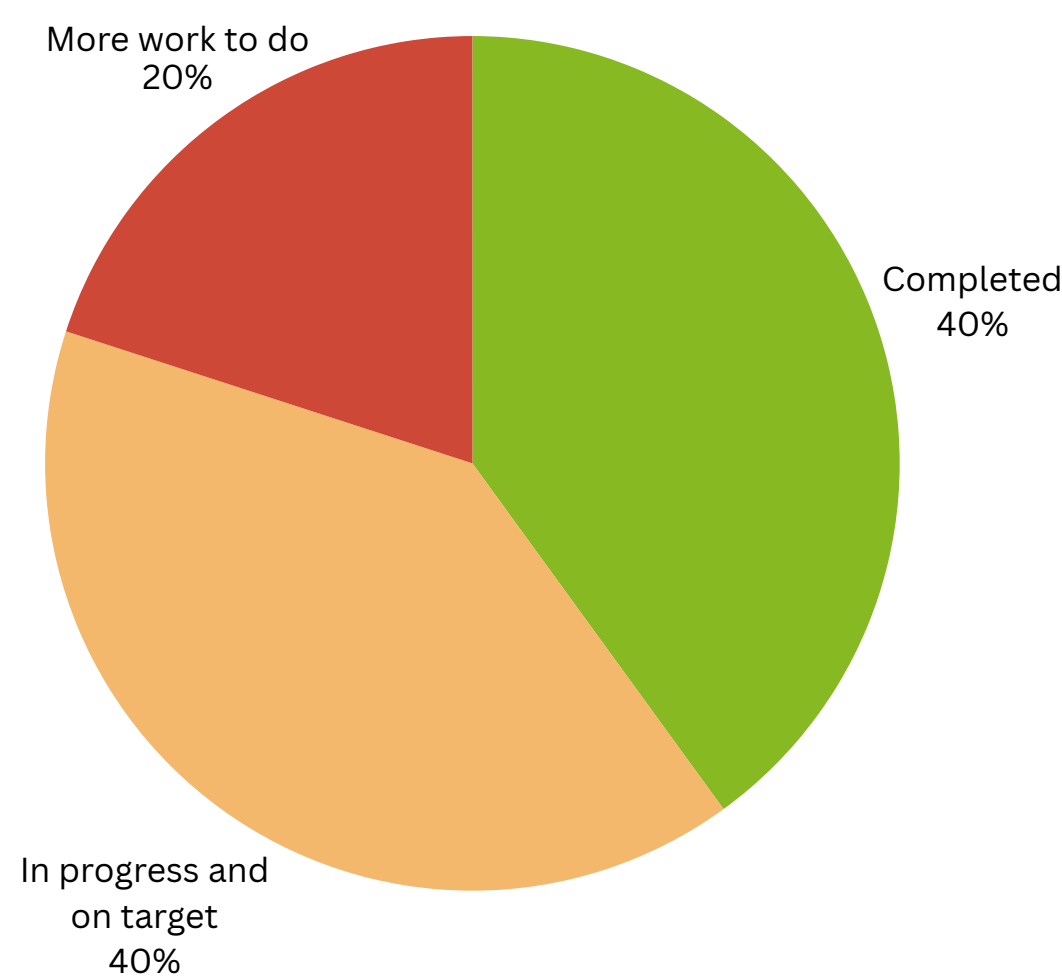


National Hedgehog Monitoring Program

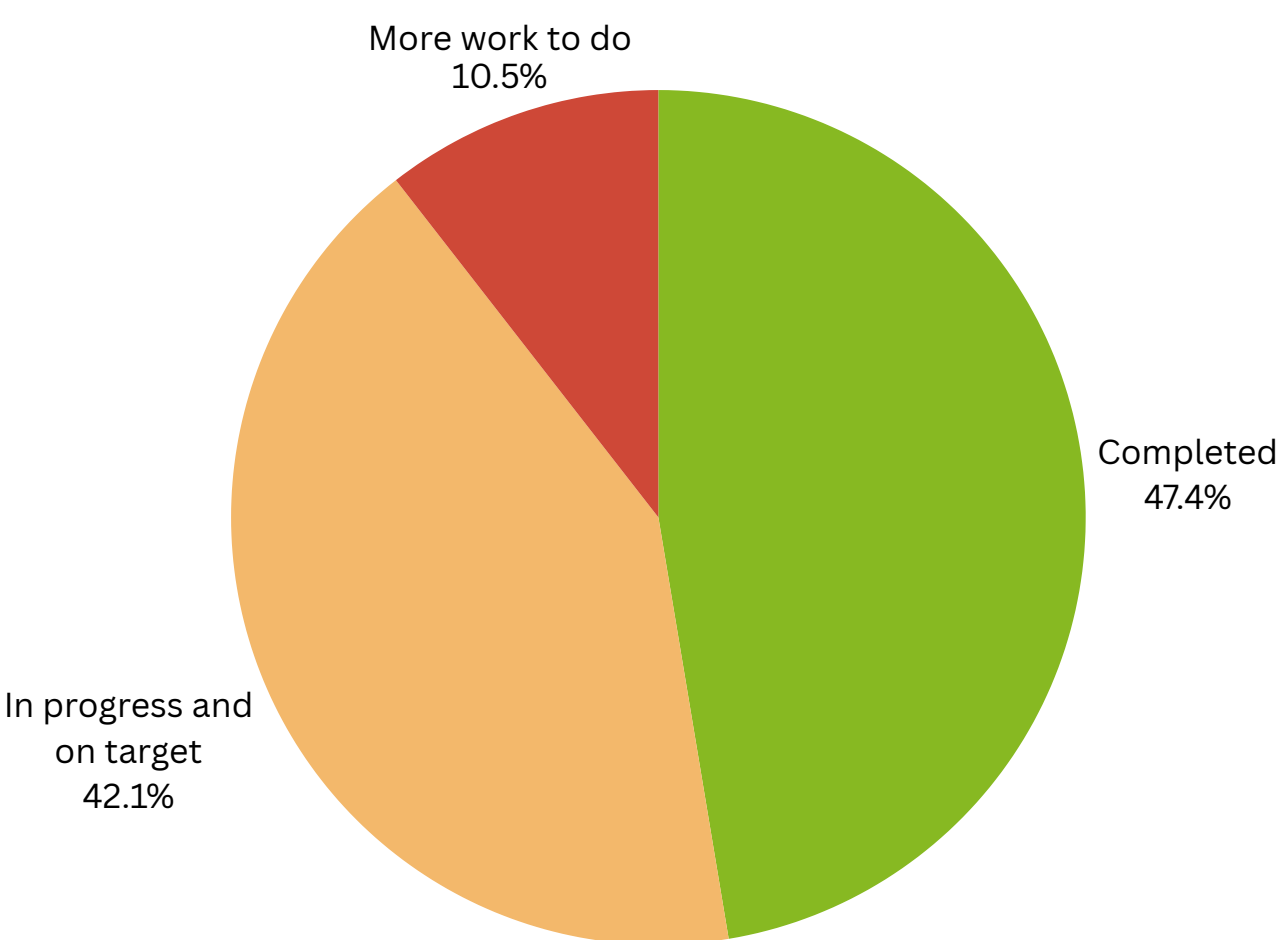
In autumn we took part in the National Hedgehog Monitoring Program, deploying 30 wildlife cameras across campus. We spotted hedgehogs on 6 of the cameras with hotspots on central campus and in Park Wood. Alongside additional student projects, we are hoping to map the movement of hedgehogs on campus and adapt our management of the landscape to better support hedgehogs.

Progress against targets

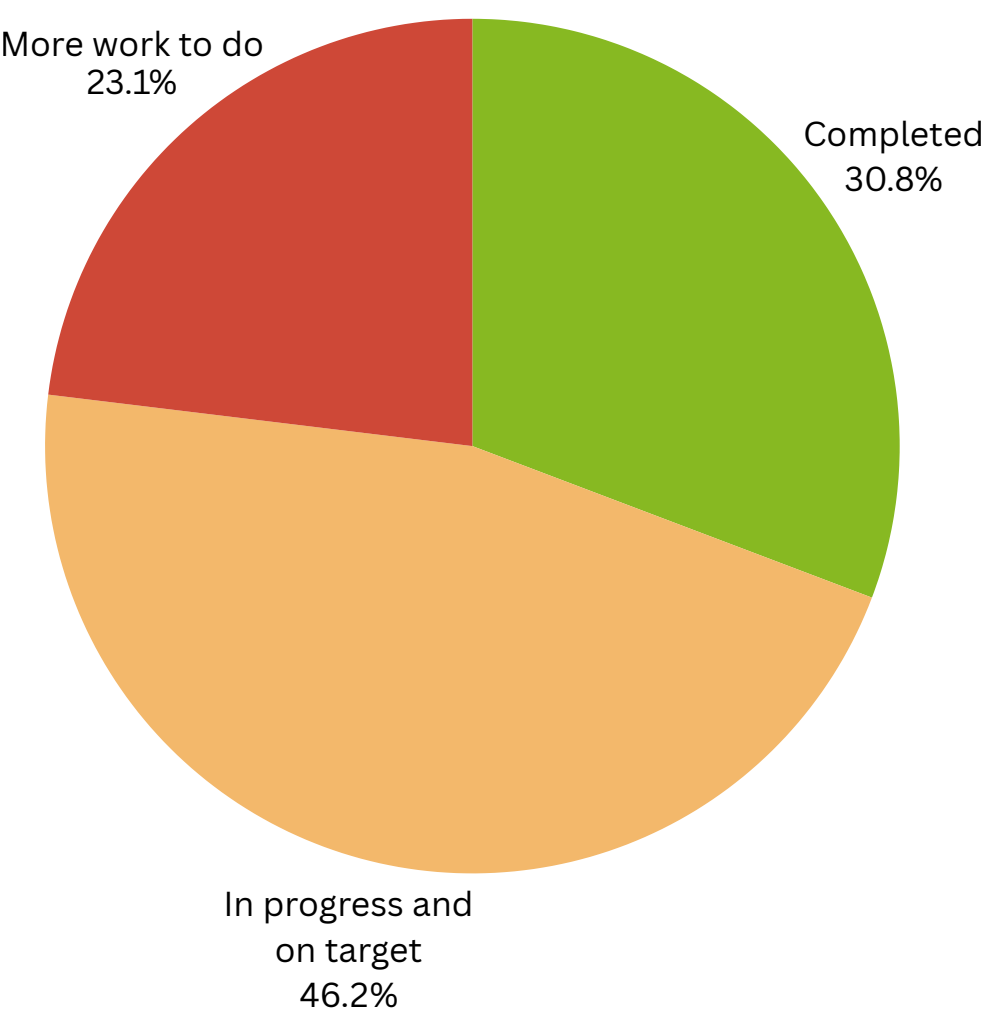
**Nature Positive University
- Establishing our baseline
2025 - 2027**



**Landscape and Grounds
Operational targets 2025-
2027**



**Communication and
Engagement 2025 - 2030**



Progress statement

We are one year into our targets and great progress has been made. Currently, there is high confidence on meeting these targets after year two. Year Two will see new targets issued based on what we have learnt from our baselining activities, as part of our Nature Positive University commitments.

Operational targets will also be updated in line with this.

There is more to do on communicating our work but there is a longer time period in which to deliver against the targets we have outlined in our strategy.

iNaturalist

Join our iNaturalist project and start recording campus species. Scan the QR code.

