

# KENT'S PLAN BEE



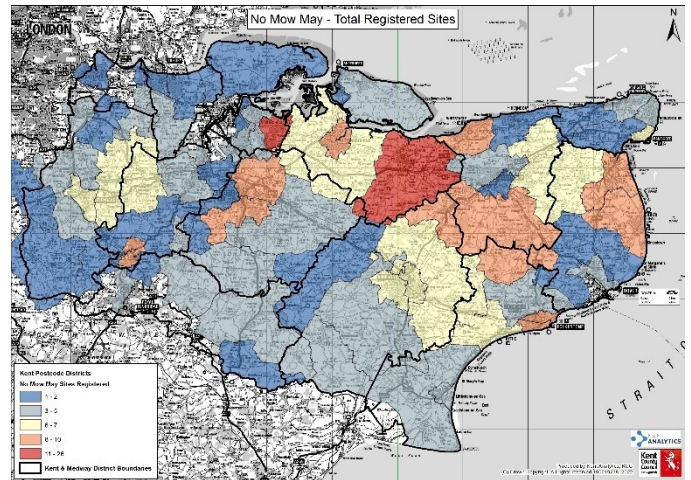
## July 2022 Summary Newsletter

### No Mow May Pledge Results

A big thank you to everyone who took part in Kent's Plan Bee No Mow May pledge. As part of the national No Mow May campaign promoted by Plantlife, people committed to leave their lawns and grassland areas uncut for at least the month of May. This allowed wild plants to grow and flower, providing forage, food plants and nesting areas for pollinating insects and other animals that depend on these vital grassland habitats.

Through our online survey, we collected information about the pledges from across Kent. The results reveal that:

- **352 pledges** were received from 336 residents and 16 organisations
- The total area of land pledged to be left uncut amounted to over **14 hectares or 35 acres**, which roughly equates to almost 500 tennis courts!



- The highest area of land pledged was in Swale, and the largest individual numbers of pledges were recorded in Swale and Canterbury.

### What you had to say about No Mow May



The biggest motivation for people to take part in No Mow May was 'to grow more flowers for pollinators', which is a strong affirmation for Plan Bee and its objectives. This was supported by the additional reasons that 'wildflowers are beautiful' and 'to mow less often throughout the year'. For some people, No Mow May is part of their organic and wildlife-friendly approach to gardening, to encourage as much wildlife as possible – as well as reducing the amount of time, effort and fuel used.

The Plan Bee team is already thinking about how we can make next year's No Mow May 2023 campaign even better. Talking to colleagues in KCC, we know that there is much more that we can continue to improve across the County Council, including the management of verges and the land we manage around our buildings and offices. We also hope to collect pledges from Districts, Boroughs, Town, and Parish Councils.

What you had to say about No Mow May – all your thoughts and reflections of No Mow May

### Bees Needs Week

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##### BEE'S NEEDS WEEK 2022 – HABITATS AND LAND USES

If you own land in the environments below, here are some tips to optimise them for Bees' Needs:

- Gardens** - To help bees in your gardens you can:
- Plant a wide variety of flowers to support a range of bees through providing food throughout each life stage.
  - Provide nesting sites for bees.
  - Allow part of your garden to go wild through minimal management and disturbance.
  - Reduce chemical use in the garden (try companion planting to deter pests)

- Agriculture** - To help bees on agricultural land, you can:
- Encourage Wildflowers along margins, plant flower-rich hedgerow species.
  - Use Short-term rotational mixtures & Long-term perennial mixtures that support pollinators.
  - Put aside field to create Improved Grasslands.
  - Provide nesting and hibernating sites.
  - Reduce pesticide spraying crops (especially when crops are in flower and being pollinated by insects)

- Industrial & Brownfield Sites** - To help bees on industrial land you can:
- Manage the sites for wildflowers that the bees need to feed on.
  - Allow patches of bare ground for borrowing solitary bees.
  - Allow parts of the site to go wild and use natural succession of plants to create a variety of habitats.

In July we spent a week dedicated to Bees Needs and the different types of habitats and land use where you can find bees and how we can help bees in these locations. We have summarised all the information into a handy guide for you to download from our [Resources and Information album](#) on our Facebook page.

As well as looking after their habitats, there are 5 simple actions that anyone can take to help pollinators:

- 1) Grow more flowers, shrubs, and trees.
- 2) Let patches of land grow wild.
- 3) Cut grass less often.
- 4) Do not disturb insect nests and hibernation spots.
- 5) Think carefully about whether to use pesticides.

## BeeWalking – Getting involved in the bee surveying project

Did you know that Kent is a hotspot nationally for bumblebee species? 22 of the 24 bumblebee species have been recorded in the county, including 5 of our rare and vulnerable species. Maybe you are concerned about changes in bumblebee numbers, or would you like to know more about the vital pollinators and how they use your garden or neighbourhood green spaces. Do you walk a regular route close to home and notice the wildflowers and bumblebees as you go?

BeeWalk is the citizen science survey set up and run by Bumblebee Conservation Trust since 2008 across the whole country. It is a standardised method for collecting information about bumblebee species and their abundance. The data collected are used to monitor changes in bumblebees' populations over time, in relation to climate change, environmental impact and land use change.

Most importantly, **BeeWalking is fun, anyone can do it & it's great to contribute to a vital long-term study.**



### Setting up your own BeeWalk

- Step 1 - Register as a Beewalker on [www.beewalk.org.uk](http://www.beewalk.org.uk)
- Step 2 - Create an account on the BeeWalk website
- Step 3 – Plan your route and check permissions for the site
- Step 4 – Enter your route and sections on the BeeWalk website
- Step 5 – You're ready to go!
- Step 6 – Enter your findings on the BeeWalk website

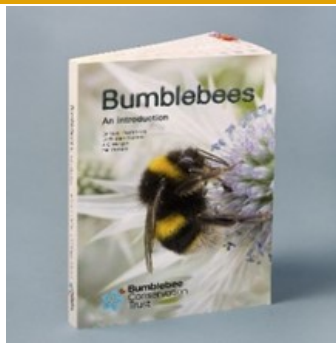
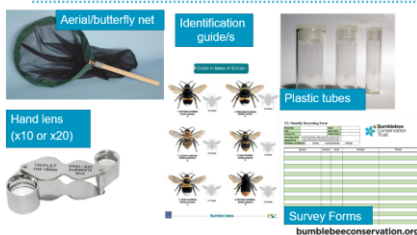


### How to do a BeeWalk:

- Simply walk a set route (which you chose yourself) once per month (or more frequently!) between March and October.
- The route should generally be about a mile long (and take about 1 hour walked at a steady pace). The walk should only be done on good days (sunny/cloudy, with little wind and no rain) between 11am-5pm.
- Record the bumblebees you see along the way, and the number of each species, and whether it is a queen, worker, or male.
- Take photos and make any additional notes. Photos can help with bee identification
- Complete recording form, start/end times, weather



#### Survey kit



#### What else might be useful?



Use our Bee Spotters Sheet to keep a record of which bees you see in the Summer on your BeeWalk. Available to download as a PDF from [Kent Children's University Pollinator Challenge](http://Kent Children's University Pollinator Challenge).

Support is available at [www.beewalk.org.uk](http://www.beewalk.org.uk) which has access to:

- Website resources
- Full guidance document
- Guidance videos
- Links to ID resources

Contact [beewalk@bumblebeeconservation.org](mailto:beewalk@bumblebeeconservation.org) or [planbee@kent.gov.uk](mailto:planbee@kent.gov.uk) for more information

Thank you to our Plan Bee Officer, Emma Lansdell, for writing this month's article.

Photo credits: Bumblebee Conservation Trust & Rosie Bleet

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### BEE SPOTTERS SHEET

Buff-tailed Bumblebee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Early Bumblebee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Leafcutter Bee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mason Bee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sea Aster Bee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shrill Carder Bee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tree Bumblebee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Wool Carder Bee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## What to see in August

Look out for newly emerged Queen **bumblebees** that have left the nest, mated, and now looking for suitable places to overwinter. **Solitary bees** out now include Common Yellow Face Bee and Patchwork Leaf-cutter Bees.

August **moth** highlights include Setaceous Hebrew Character, Jersey Tiger, Red Underwing, August Thorn, plus many more.

**Butterflies** include Gatekeeper, Large White, Small Copper, & Chalk Hill Blue.

You may notice more social **wasps** and **European hornets** out and about looking for food to feed their larvae.

Marmalade hoverflies are still out in force but start to look for the larger hornet mimic **hoverflies**.

**Wildflowers** to spot this month include Burdock, Centaury, Great Mullein, Heather, Hemp Agrimony, Knapweed, Wild Marjoram, Wild Parsnip, Devil's-bit scabious, Harebell, Common Fleabane, Water Mint, Red Bartsia, Wild carrot, Tansy, Meadowsweet, and Yarrow.

Spotted any of these or any other pollinators and wildflowers? Post them on our Facebook page or tag us in your photos @KentsPlanBee

## POLLINATORS TO SEE IN AUGUST



Spotted any of these? Why not share them on our Facebook page @KentsPlanBee



## Events and Awareness Weeks in August

### National Allotment Week

We will be celebrating National Allotment Week, running from 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> August. The theme this year is Bugs, Bees and Broccoli, which acknowledges the importance of gardening with nature in mind. The National Allotment Society and Buglife have developed a survey you can take to find out which bugs are on your allotment. Download the survey sheet from the [National Allotment Society website](#) to take part. We would love to know which pollinators you find on your allotment and what features you have that make your allotment more pollinator friendly. Let us know by dropping us an [email](#).

### Summer Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge is back again, and we will be celebrating with Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives. This year's theme is gadgets! There are many gadgets that you can use to record and identify pollinators. We will be exploring some of these, so keep an eye on our [Facebook](#) over the week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> August for some fun pollinator-themed reads and gadget activities! The Summer Reading Challenge runs in Kent from 9<sup>th</sup> July to 10<sup>th</sup> September and aims to keep children reading over the summer. For more information on how to take part in the Challenge, head to the [Kent Libraries website](#).

### Wild About Gardens

The next Open Gardens event is taking place on 25<sup>th</sup> September in [Faversham](#). The KWT website says the event on the 7<sup>th</sup> August is **cancelled!** You can also book onto the Autumn online workshops on the [Kent Wildlife Trust website](#).

Wild About Gardens poster for Summer Open Gardens and Autumn Zoom Online Workshops. The poster features a blue background with a white fence, a green field, and a blue butterfly. Text includes: "SUMMER OPEN GARDENS with wildlife advice & plant stalls", "Sunday 31 July: Great Chart, Ashford", "Sunday 7 August: Doddington, near Faversham", "Sunday 25 September: Faversham", "AUTUMN ZOOM ONLINE WORKSHOPS", "Thursday 20 October 7.30-9pm: Helping Hedgehogs in gardens", "Saturday 12 November 3-5pm: Building & Maintaining a wildlife pond", "£5 per person Booking advisable". Logos for Kent Wildlife Trust, Kent County Council, and other sponsors are included.

Keep up to date with the latest news via our [Kent's Plan Bee Facebook page](#)

If you received this email indirectly and would like to subscribe to our mailing list, please email us on the address below with the subject line "Sign Up". If you wish to unsubscribe from this mailing list, please email us on the address below with the subject line "Unsubscribe".

Do you have a Kent pollinator news story or event that you would like featured in our newsletter? Have you created a pollinator friendly community space? Got your neighbours together to create a row of pollinator friendly gardens? Or do you have an event about Kent's pollinators you would like advertised? Email it to the address below and we will be in contact about a potential space in the Newsletter.

[planbee@kent.gov.uk](mailto:planbee@kent.gov.uk)

All the previous editions of the Newsletter have now been added to our webpage. You can download them as PDFs or share the website address on your social media. Find all the Newsletters on the [Pollinators section of Kent County Council's website](#).

Edited by Hannah Simmons, Graduate Biodiversity Officer, Kent County Council.

For a Pollinator Friendly Garden of England

