

Pollinator Strategy

Hertfordshire county council
2019 – 2024

White-tailed bumblebee, Cornflower Field, Napsbury



Hertfordshire

A Commitment from Hertfordshire County Council

Hertfordshire County Council is committed to helping to conserve the UK's pollinators by ensuring it will consider the needs of pollinators in the delivery of its duties and work.

The County Council will seek to protect and increase the amount and quality of pollinator habitat and manage the land in its control to provide greater benefits for pollinators. Where possible we will engage with tenants and local people to provide opportunities to make Hertfordshire more pollinator friendly.

Our vision:

Our local environment will be rich in pollinator habitats, helping support sustainable pollinator populations and making places more attractive for people to live and work in.



Red Admiral Butterfly - residential garden, Baldock



Foxgloves - Middle Farm, kings Langley

Aims: The Council will work to:

1. Ensure the needs of pollinators are represented in policy and guidance;
2. Protect, increase and enhance the amount of pollinator habitat in Hertfordshire to help prevent extinctions; and improve the status of any locally threatened pollinator species;
3. Increase awareness of pollinators and their habitat needs across local residents, businesses and other landowners;
4. Increase the contribution of land under the ownership of, or managed by the Council to pollinator conservation; and
5. Improve our knowledge and understanding of pollinators in our local area.

Background to the Strategy

The Importance of Pollinators

Our native pollinators include butterflies and moths, flies, beetles, wasps, bumblebees and 250 other species of bee. In all there are over 4000 species of insect in the UK that carry out pollination of our native wild plants and our food crops. Insect pollination is extremely important to the UK economy, with estimated values of nearly £700 million annually. Without pollinators the UK would struggle to grow as many vegetables and fruits as we do including apples, strawberries, peas etc.

Pollinators under threat

The UK's pollinators are in trouble

- Half of our 27 bumblebee species are in decline;
- Three of these bumblebee species are already extinct;
- Two-thirds of our moths are in long term decline;
- Across Europe 38% of bee and hoverfly species are in decline; and
- 71% of our butterflies are in decline.



Wayside Farm, Kings Langley

The most significant factors leading to the decline in pollinator numbers include:

1. Habitat loss – The most significant cause of decline is the loss and degradation of habitats which provide food, shelter and nesting sites for pollinators. The loss of wildflower-rich grasslands is one of the most important issues. Over 3 million hectares of these habitats have been lost in England alone since the 1930s, the loss being attributed to more intensive farming and urban/industrial development.
2. Pesticides – There is growing evidence that the use of a small number of pesticide active ingredients are having harmful effects on pollinators including honeybees, wild bees and butterflies. Wider effects throughout ecosystems are also of concern and pesticides have been implicated in other declines such as farmland birds and soil organisms.
3. Climate Change – long term changes can deprive pollinators of food supplies at times when they need them, increase their exposure to parasites and diseases, or change habitats so that they are no longer suitable. There may be gains as well as losses but a resilient network of good pollinator habitat across the area is needed for them to be able to adapt and take advantage of changes.

What pollinators need

Pollinators need many of the things we need – food, shelter and nesting areas.

Food – Pollinators need food (nectar and pollen) from March through until September. Many plants and trees can provide these food resources, including many so called ‘weeds’ such as dandelions and thistles. In addition to flowers, many pollinators need other food resources to support their different life stages – for example butterfly and moth caterpillars need particular plants to feed on.

Shelter and nesting - Dense vegetation such as tussocky grassland, scrub, mature trees, and piles of wood and stone can provide essential habitat for hibernating pollinators. Many species overwinter as adults including queen bumblebees, some butterflies, hoverflies and others as eggs, larvae or pupae. Old burrows and dense vegetation are used by bumblebees, with sunny slopes and dry ground used by ground-nesting bees such as mining bees.

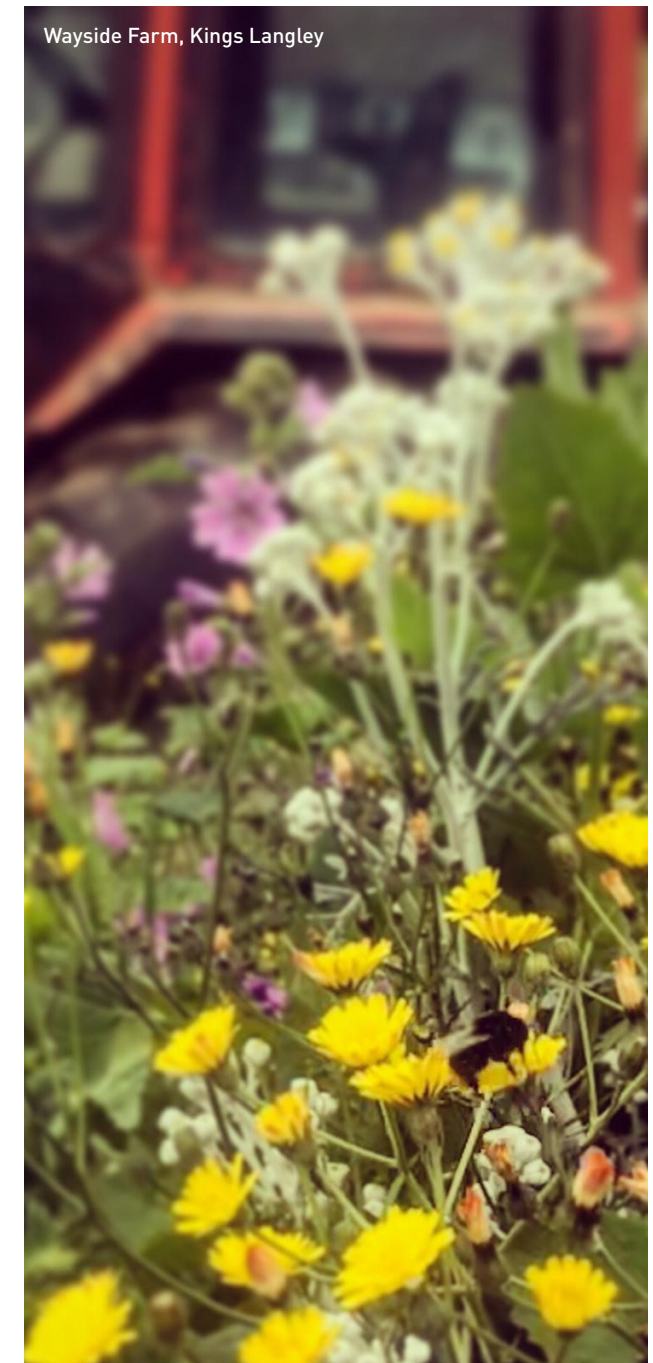
National Pollinator Strategy

The Government’s National Pollinator Strategy for England (2014) sets out a 10 year plan to help pollinating insects survive and thrive across England. The Strategy outlines actions to support and protect the many pollinating insects,

which contribute to our food production and the diversity of our environment. It is a shared plan of action, which looks to everyone to work together and ensure pollinators’ needs are addressed as an integral part of land and habitat management.

In particular the Strategy asks local authorities to take a lead across many of its work areas and duties, including its role in local planning and also as managers of public and amenity spaces, brownfield sites, schools, car parks, roadside verges and roundabouts.

This Strategy and Action Plan has been developed for Hertfordshire County Council’s rural estate with a view that other services will be able to adapt it and develop their own action plans.



Pollinators in Hertfordshire

Key principles of the Strategy

This strategy has been developed to raise awareness of the plight of pollinators and to ensure the Council, its local residents, businesses and landowners are provided with information to help us all protect and increase our pollinator populations.

This strategy is designed to ensure the needs of pollinators are enshrined across the breadth of Council work and to increase awareness of pollinators across our local community.

Working with partners and partners initiatives

Where relevant the Council will join forces and participate in other local, regional or national pollinator programmes or projects. Joined up and collaborative action for pollinators will help ensure a future for these very important species.



Higher Level Stewardship, Cornflower Field, Napsbury