

South Dublin County Council Pollinator Plan 2021 – 2025



Foreword



As Mayor of South Dublin I am very proud to launch SDCC's Pollinator Plan. The Plan is based on the All Ireland Pollinator Plan which outlines 30 actions local authorities can take to help pollinators.

The Plan is the Council's commitment to promoting habitats for pollinators in this county and addressing the rapid decline in our bee populations.

Currently in Ireland one third of our bee species are threatened with extinction. This is because we have drastically reduced the amount of food (flowers) and safe nesting sites in our landscapes. The **All-Ireland Pollinator Plan** is about all of us, from farmers to local authorities, to schools, community groups and businesses, coming together to try to create an Ireland where pollinators can survive and thrive.

For many years South Dublin County Council have been taking actions to support pollinators on public land. We have also been working with local community groups, residents' associations and schools to help raise awareness of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. To better support these efforts and to better promote the work being undertaken, we have developed the SDCC Pollinator Plan and committed to carrying out a range of focused actions. SDCC is committed to playing its role in making Ireland a place where pollinators can survive and thrive.

Alongside the council's work in the Public Realm, the community also has a part to play in ensuring the success and positive impact of implementing the actions listed in this plan. If communities are interested in improving their areas for pollinators by either reduced mowing or bulb planting, please do not hesitate to contact the council by using the fix your street app at www.fixyourstreet.ie.

Cllr Ed O' Brien,
Mayor,
South Dublin County Council



WHO are our pollinators?

While other insects play a role, most pollination on the island of Ireland is carried out by bees.

We have one type (species) of managed honeybee and 97

different wild bees. That includes 20 bumblebee and 77 solitary bee species. Research shows that reliable pollination services depend not only on healthy honeybee populations, but also on an abundance and diversity of wild bees and other insect pollinators.



Honeybee



Bumblebee



Solitary bee

WHAT do our pollinators need to survive?

Just like us, pollinators need food and a safe place to live. Experts agree that inadequate nutrition is a major cause of declines. We want pollinators to be there when we need them, but our landscape doesn't provide the abundance and diversity of flowering plants that they need to survive throughout their life cycle. To have a healthy balanced diet, they need to be able to feed on pollen and nectar from a range of different flowers from MARCH through to OCTOBER. Spring is when hunger gaps are most likely to occur. It is important to prioritise increasing native plants (trees, shrubs, wildflowers) across the landscape to provide food for pollinators. Pollinators also need plenty of safe nesting habitats - long grass, bare earth, crevices in dry stone walls or wood - that are free from pesticides.

WHY do we need to help our pollinators?

Pollinators are important to farmers that grow pollinator dependent crops, to gardeners that want to grow their own fruits and vegetables and for the health of our environment. The annual value of pollinators is at least €53 million in the Republic of Ireland and £603 million in the UK. Furthermore, 78% of our wild plants require insect pollination. Without pollinators, these flowers would disappear, and our countryside would be a very different and less beautiful place.

All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025

One third of our 98 bee species are threatened with extinction from the island of Ireland. If we want them to be there to pollinate crops and wild plants for future generations we need to manage the landscape in a more pollinator friendly way and create a joined-up network of diverse and flower-rich habitats. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025 is supported by over 68 governmental and nongovernmental organisations who have pledged to deliver 81 actions to achieve this goal and make Ireland, North and South, more pollinator friendly.

www.biodiversityireland.ie/pollinator-plan





Economic contribution of Pollinators

€ The economic contribution of pollination by wild bees was recently assessed as £1,800 or €2,400 per hectare.

🇮🇪 The National Biodiversity Data Centre reveals that pollinators contribute €53 million to the Irish Economy each year.

BEES! Bumblebees



EARLY SPRING: Queens are establishing nests.

In the early days of the nest it is estimated that a *Bombus terrestris* queen may have to visit as many as 6000 flowers/day to get enough nectar to maintain the heat needed to brood her eggs.

SPRING - SUMMER: nests are growing, workers are active.

AUTUMN: queens are fattening up ready for hibernating.

Bombus terrestris queens need to weigh at least 0.6g to successfully hibernate and emerge next spring.



Solitary Bees



62 species (80%) are mining bees who nest in bare ground or south/east facing banks of bare earth (soil, sand, clay, peat).

Are pollinators declining in Ireland?

More than half of Ireland's bee species have undergone substantial declines in their number since 1980.

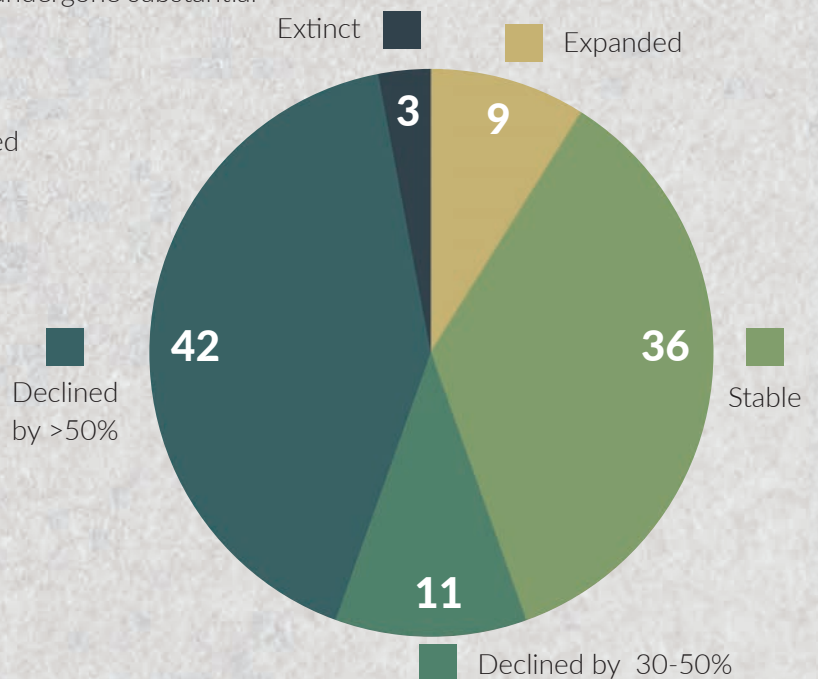
Three species have become extinct.

One third of our 98 bee species are threatened with extinction from Ireland.

6 Species are critically endangered.

10 endangered.

14 vulnerable.



Actions SDCC is taking to help pollinators - providing food, shelter and safety

These are some of the actions SDCC is taking to help protect our pollinators



Corkagh-meadow



Rathfarnham Castle Park

A

Protect what you have

The easiest and most important thing you can do is identify and protect existing areas that are already good for pollinators

Action 1

Manage and restore semi-natural habitats and their native plants on Council land

Action 2

Identify and protect existing sources of food and shelter for pollinators on general Council land

Corkagh Park



Alter the frequency of mowing

Changing the frequency of mowing allows wildflowers (food) to flower among the longer grass. This is the most cost-effective way to provide food for pollinators

B

Action 4

Aim to create at least 5 meadows (one cut and lift per year)

Action 3

Identify at least 10 locations that are mown under a pollinator friendly regime (5 cut and lifts per year)

Action 5

Identify at least 10 flagship roadside verges that are managed to be pollinator friendly (one cut and lift per year)

Action 6

Introduce a layered mowing approach to other verges

Common blue butterfly spotted at a wildflower meadow



C

Pollinator friendly planting

Take the actions below to ensure you have flowers blooming that can provide food for pollinators from March-October



Accessible, pollinator friendly planter in Firhouse

Action 7

Plant a native perennial wildflower meadow

Target areas like Parks, Roadside verges, Off-road pedestrian routes, and Greenways



Native perennial wildflower in Tymon Park

Action 8

Plant a native hedgerow

Hawthorn is one of the native hedgerows in Ireland



Action 9

Replace improved grass with a dense clover sward

Clover flowers are valuable food source for pollinators. i.e red clover



Action 10

For future ornamental tree planting select from pollinator friendly species



Dactylorhiza sp. Orchid in Rathcoole Park

Action 11

For new works ensure 75% of ornamental planting is pollinator friendly

Action 12

In future ornamental maintenance planting try to select from the pollinator friendly planting code

SDCC Grange road wildflower



Cowslips SDCC wildflower meadow

Action 13

Make some urban planters pollinator friendly

Identifying some urban planters where the standard annual bedding mix could be replaced by perennial pollinator friendly plants

Action 14

Make some urban roundabouts pollinator friendly

Kilmahuddrick roundabout midmarch



Tulips and Daffodils create attractive visual displays in spring but are not a good food source for pollinators. Where used, it is recommended they be combined with more pollinator friendly bulb planting (e.g., Snowdrop, Crocus, Muscari) Allium).

D

Provide nesting habitats

In addition to food, wild pollinators need safe places to live.



Grange road wild flower meadow with natural hedging for habitat

Action 15

Manage hedgerows for pollinators



Waterstown Park hedgerows

Action 16

Bare earth/sand banks for wild pollinator nesting



Mining bee bank Tymon Park

Many Solitary/ Mining bees often nest under bare earth

Action 17

Holes in wood or concrete for wild pollinator nesting



SDCC mining bee in Tymon Park

Action 18

Bee hotels for wild pollinators

Any free land where bee hotels could be kept safely.



Insect hotel in Glendoher

Reduce use of pesticides

Pesticides include insecticides, fungicides and herbicides, all of which can be harmful to pollinators

E

Action 19

Ensure best practice where the use of pesticides cannot be avoided

We have adopted the All-Ireland pollinator plan pesticide best practice code. This is being applied all across the SDCC land

Action 20

Reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides (herbicides, insecticides & fungicides)



Waterstown Park



Wildflowers in Waterstown Park.

Herbicide has the greatest negative impact on pollinators. Pollinators need a range of flowers to feed on from spring through autumn. The overuse of herbicides is making it very difficult for them to find enough food to survive in our landscape.

Apple trees being planted in Lucan



F

Taking it further

Providing funding, training and further engaging with the community

Action 21

Build actions on pollinators into existing frameworks and initiatives

Currently developing a Green Infrastructure Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy and developing SUDs guidelines for the County. Actions for pollinators will be built into all of these plans.

Action 22

Fund pollinator projects on council land to demonstrate best practice to other sectors



SDCC headquarters pollinator friendly planter

Accessible, pollinator friendly planter in Firhouse

Action 24

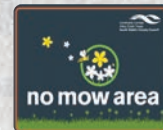
Promote & distribute pollinator friendly guidelines to other sectors

Action 23

Put up signage to identify pollinator friendly habitats on council land



As part of cooperation with tidy towns Groups



SDCC Signages

Action 25

Promote & distribute the junior Pollinator Plan to local schools

Action 26

Facilitate or deliver training on pollinators and how to take action to protect them

Training programme currently being designed and plan to give presentations to Tidy Towns and other groups.



Pollinator action presentation given in SDCC

Action 28

Promote and get involved in other pollinator related initiatives

Action 27

Fund a special pollinator award in the Tidy Towns

Action 29

Log your existing and new 'Actions for Pollinator's on the mapping system to ensure your efforts are recognised

Action 30

Take part in the bumblebee Monitoring Scheme



Firhouse wildflower scheme



Firhouse urban planter team



Actions for Pollinator mapping system





Crocuses in Willsbrook Park, early March.



Wild Orchids in Rathcoole Park

1	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Manage and restore semi-natural habitats and their native plants on Council land	Ongoing exercise to identify areas of grassland which will be managed as meadows rather than cut regularly	139 ha Hectares managed as meadows
2	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Identify and protect existing sources of food and shelter for pollinators on general Council land	Map areas where meadows are being developed. Survey of trees around the county (30,000 trees over 3 years) Surveying of trees and hedgerows as part of planning applications. Hedgerow management in parks and open spaces. Management of water courses and wetlands. Control of invasive species on all Council owned land	Ongoing programme of surveying trees using ArboTrak. Continued mapping of meadows. Staff engaged in planned programme of removing invasive species
3	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Identify at least 10 locations that are mown under a pollinator friendly regime (5 cut and lifts per year)	This will be done in association with tidy Towns Groups	
4	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Aim to create at least 5 meadows (one cut and lift per year)	Progressing in multiple sites	
5	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Identify at least 10 flagship roadside verges that are managed to be pollinator friendly (one cut and lift per year)	In association with Tidy Towns Groups	
6	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Introduce a layered mowing approach to other verges	Progressing in multiple sites	
7	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Plant a native perennial wildflower meadow	Wildflower meadows being managed in multiple sites	



8	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Plant a native hedgerow	Identify areas where hedgerows could be planted	Native hedgerows specified in new development sites and parks
9	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Replace improved grass with a dense clover sward	Implemented successfully on new roads around Grange Castke business park	This will be suggested to all departments within the council- Roads, etc for use in areas such as road verges. We will request this be considered on development sites as part of the planning system
10	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	For future ornamental tree planting select from pollinator friendly species	This is currently our practice. This is also requested as part of planning applications across the County	Requested as part of all development sites
11	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	For new works ensure 75% of ornamental planting is pollinator friendly	In practice	
12	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	In future ornamental maintenance planting try to select from the pollinator friendly planting code	Implemented currently	
13	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Make some urban planters pollinator friendly	Implemented currently	New planters at County Hall in Tallaght developed as an example of high quality Pollinator planting scheme
14	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Make some urban roundabouts pollinator friendly	Plan to plant pollinator friendly bulb planting schemes at various locations across SDCC area	

Firhouse pollinator friendly planting scheme





Dandelion in Tymon Park

15	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Manage hedgerows for pollinators	Currently underway countywide	
16	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Bare earth/sand banks for wild pollinator nesting	examples in Tymon Park	
17	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Holes in wood or concrete for wild pollinator nesting	In many locations. Will progress with community groups	
18	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Bee hotels for wild pollinators	In several locations. Will expand countywide	
19	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides (herbicides, insecticides & fungicides)	Already removed from parks, play areas. Reducing as new maintenance methods are developed	
20	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Ensure best practice where the use of pesticides cannot be avoided	All staff involved receive full training	
21	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Build actions on pollinators into existing frameworks and initiatives	Currently developing the County Development Plan, Green Infrastructure Strategy, Parks and Open Space Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy and developing a SUDs design and evaluation guide for the County. Actions for pollinators will be built into all of these plans	
22	Action	Areas implemented	Comments
	Fund pollinator projects on council land to demonstrate best practice to other sectors	Bulb Planting schemes in design	Identify locations for pollinator friendly bulb planting schemes in prominent locations on roadsides Countywide



23	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Put up signage to identify pollinator friendly habitats on council land	Current practice	Will be included at all wildflower meadow locations and at pollinator friendly bulb planting locations
24	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Promote & distribute pollinator friendly guidelines to other sectors	As part of cooperation with tidy towns Groups. A video will be available as training to Tidy Towns Groups	
25	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Promote & distribute the junior Pollinator Plan to local schools		
26	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Facilitate or deliver training on pollinators and how to take action to protect them	Training programme currently being designed and plan to give presentations to Tidy Towns and other groups	
27	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Fund a special pollinator award in the Tidy Towns or Ulster in Bloom competition		
28	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Promote and get involved in other pollinator related initiatives		
29	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Log your existing and new 'Actions for Pollinator's on the mapping system to ensure your efforts are recognised		
30	<i>Action</i>	<i>Areas implemented</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	Take part in the bumble Monitoring Scheme		



Orchid in Waterstown Park



Accessible, pollinator friendly urban planter in Firhouse





Making your own bee hotel

You will need:

- Reeds/bamboo stems: Use stems or tubes 4-8mm in diameter, minimum 10cm in length. Don't use plastic straws, as they are not the best nesting materials for many solitary bees. Try collecting reeds growing in marshy areas, or get them from a local thatcher. Bamboo is available at most garden centres, and you can hollow it out using a drill bit.
 - String or wire
 - A small piece of PVC piping or equivalent plastic or untreated wood container
 - Scissors or wire cutters
- Take a piece of string or wire and bundle the tubes together. Make sure the tubes are tightly secured, using a second piece of string or wire if necessary. You can stop here, and hang up your bundle of nest tubes.
 - **Optional:** If you want to better protect the nest tubes from rain and wind, enclose them in a container. A small piece of PVC piping or any other small plastic container will do.
 - Cut the front of the tubes so that they are approximately the same length as the container (minimum 10cm in length).
 - Now insert the tubes into the container with the open end facing out. Make sure tubes are packed tightly so they will be secure when the nest is placed outside.

How to make your hotel:

- First, make sure that one side of all of your tubing is closed; if working with reeds or bamboo, each tube should be cut on the "internode" in the centre of the section to create a natural end.
- Next make sure the open sides of the tubes are all facing the same way. Scatter tubes with different diameters and slightly different lengths throughout the bundle.

Top Tip:

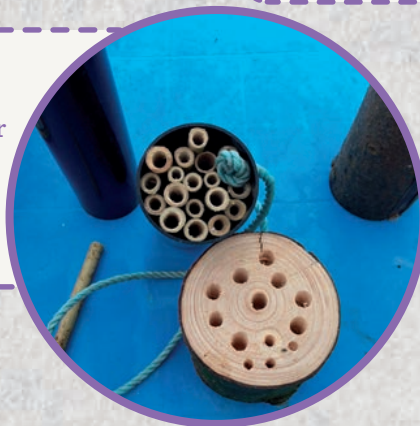
Try putting a sloping roof on top of your bee hotel to ensure it stays dry during rainy weather



Bee hotel made with drilled holes and hollow stems

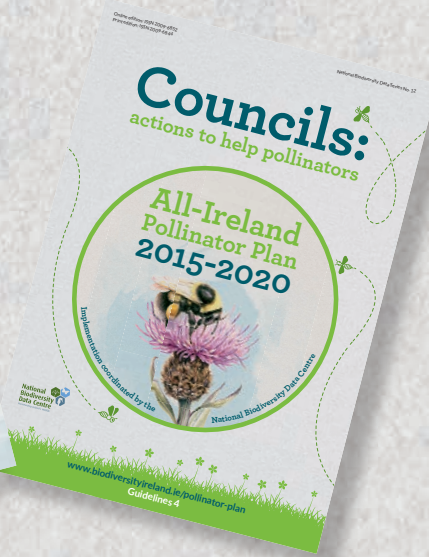
Top Tip:

Don't hang your bee hotel near bird feeders so the nesting bees won't be easy targets for hungry birds



Sketch page





Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council

