Actions to provide food, shelter & safety for pollinators on Council land
Benefits to Councils in supporting the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan

- Enhancing the local landscape for pollinators supports local food producers
- Making the landscape more pollinator friendly protects the ability of local people to grow their own fruits and vegetables
- Taking actions for pollinators will lead to general biodiversity enhancement
- Many actions identified are either cost neutral or could lead to cost savings
- Many actions can be supported by the wider community such as Tidy Towns, Ulster in Bloom, or by local or national NGOs. It may also involve working with Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), Area Working Groups, Development Partnerships etc. to plan and implement actions.
- Actions taken for pollinators can contribute to the Green Flag Award for parks under the sustainability, conservation and community involvement criteria.
- Actions taken may also help local community groups e.g., in the Tidy Towns competition (ROI) or in Ulster in Bloom.
**Actions Councils can take to help pollinators - providing food, shelter and safety**

*Please select some actions you could take and help us work together to protect pollinators*

We know that each Council is different, so we have suggested a range of pollinator-friendly actions to choose from. Step-by-step instructions on each action are provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong> Protect what you have</td>
<td>- Manage and restore semi-natural habitats and their native plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Protect existing sources of food and shelter for pollinators on general council land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Identify and protect existing sources of food and shelter for pollinators on general council land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Install at least 50 locations that are managed to be pollinator-friendly (at least 1 square metre per location)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Expand at least 3 meadows to a total of 1 square metre per location</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Identify at least 30 flagships meadows to be managed to be pollinator-friendly (one per metre per year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Introduce a layered planting approach to other meadows and verges</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**B** Alter the frequency of mowing

- Changing the frequency of mowing helps wildflowers (and other flowers) flourish among the longer grasses. This is the most cost-effective way to provide food for pollinators.

- **1** Alter the frequency of mowing to suit the food sources of pollinators (at least 3 meadows per year, one cut & lift per year)
- **2** Expand at least 3 meadows to a total of 1 square metre per location
- **3** Identify at least 30 flagships meadows to be managed to be pollinator-friendly (one cut & lift per year)
- **4** Introduce a layered planting approach to other meadows and verges

**C** Pollinator-friendly planting

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

- **1** Install at least 50 locations that are managed to be pollinator-friendly (at least 1 square metre per location)
- **2** Expand at least 3 meadows to a total of 1 square metre per location
- **3** Identify at least 30 flagships meadows to be managed to be pollinator-friendly (one cut & lift per year)
- **4** Introduce a layered planting approach to other meadows and verges

**F** Raise awareness

- **1** Build actions on pollinators into existing frameworks and initiatives
- **2** Fund pollinator projects where council land is to be demonstrably improved by those sectors (at least one per sector)
- **3** Put up signage to identify pollinator-friendly habitats on council land
- **4** Provide & maintain pollinator-friendly guidance to other sectors locally

**G** Tracking progress

- **1** Promote & distribute the Junior Pollinator Plan to local schools
- **2** Facilitate delivery training on pollinators and how to take action to protect them
- **3** Promote & distribute pollinator-friendly guidance to other sectors locally

*Pollinator-friendly meadow - please don't cut in April! Let it grow*
A. Identify and protect existing areas that are good for pollinators

**Action 1:**
Promote the management and restoration of semi-natural habitats and their native plants on council land
COUNCILS: actions to help pollinators

A. Identify and protect existing areas that are good for pollinators

Action 2:
Identify and protect existing sources of food and shelter for pollinators on general council land

✓ Flowering hedgerows (food)
✓ Patches of wildflowers on waste ground (food)
✓ Small wild areas with bramble/ivy (food)
✓ Existing earth banks (shelter)
✓ Dry stone walls (shelter)

DON’T REPLACE SOMETHING GOOD WITH SOMETHING THAT IS ONLY OK...
**B. Alter the frequency of mowing of grassy areas to allow more native plants to flower**

**Action 3:**
At least 10 locations mown under a pollinator friendly regime (5 cut & lifts per year)

**Info box:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mowing Regime</th>
<th>Approximate costs per HA (2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 22 Cuts per year, grass mulched back in    | €2,464.00+vat
Cost inclusive of equipment, labour and fuel |
| 5 Cuts per year with cuttings lifted       | €2,437.00+vat
Cost inclusive of equipment, labour, fuel and waste disposal        |

Cost benefit analysis based on prices from a large landscaping company in ROI. Prices are based on flat ground accessible with ride on equipment and within a 40km radius of Dublin, rates would reduce for larger areas.
B. Alter the frequency of mowing of grassy areas to allow more native plants to flower

Action 4:
At least 5 meadows (one cut and lift per year)
B. Alter the frequency of mowing of grassy areas to allow more native plants to flower

**Action 5:**
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 roadside verges
Don’t Mow Let it Grow - not cutting grass so often is the best and cheapest way to provide more food for pollinators

- Cut once a year – food and shelter
- Cut regularly
- Cut on a 6-weekly rotation from mid April - food
B. Pollinator-friendly mowing
C. Pollinator-friendly planting

**Action 7**: Plant a native wildflower meadow.

**Source native seed from Ireland and ensure that you plant pollinator-friendly species.**

This is difficult and can be costly.
C. Pollinator-friendly planting

**Action 8: Plant a native flowering hedgerow**

Traditional management of hedgerows on public land is often not pollinator friendly. If Council hedgerows are not in flower in April-May, they are not good for pollinators and other wildlife.

Native flowering hedgerow plants that are good for pollinators:

- Blackthorn (Mar-May)
- Wild Cherry (Apr-May)
- Elder (May-Jun)
- Solidago (Jun-Aug)
- Wild roses (Jun-Sep)
- Ivy (Sep-Nov)

**Spring**
C. Pollinator-friendly planting

**Action 9:** Replace grass with a dense clover sward
C. Pollinator-friendly planting

**Action 10:** For future ornamental tree planting select from pollinator-friendly species.

List of ‘Street trees’ and ‘Open Space’ trees in appendix in Council guidelines. Examples:

**Open Space:**
- Willow
- Lime
- Rowan
- Wild Cherry
- Bird Cherry
- Apple
- Horse chestnut
- Juneberry
- Indian Bean Tree
- Foxglove Tree
- Japanese flowering cherry

**Street Trees:**
- Juneberry
- Upright Hawthorn
- Pillar Crab
- Callery Pear
- Rowan
- Lime
C. Pollinator friendly planting

**Action 11:** For new works ensure 75% of ornamental planting is pollinator friendly

**Action 12:** In future ornamental maintenance planting, select pollinator-friendly species

**Action 13:** Make some urban planters pollinator friendly

**NOT GOOD FOR POLLINATORS**

Very gaudy annuals like Geranium, Begonia, Busy Lizzy, Primula, Daffodil, Tulip, Salvia splendens don’t provide food
This might look good to us, but provides no food for pollinators.
C. Pollinator-friendly planting

**Info box: Pollinator friendly perennial planting versus annual bedding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planting regime</th>
<th>Approximate costs per m(^2) (2016)</th>
<th>Typical replacement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollinator friendly perennials</td>
<td>€10-13 (9 x 9cm pots)</td>
<td>Life span of 10-12 years if well planted and well maintained. Small amount of annual replacement may be required depending on the site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual bedding</td>
<td>€10-29</td>
<td>Twice per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on prices from a large Irish perennial plant nursery. Typical annual bedding costs were provided by a Council in ROI.
C. Pollinator-friendly planting

**Action 14:** Pollinator-friendly roundabouts. Some roundabouts planted in a pollinator-friendly way with bulbs or pollinator-friendly perennials.
D: Provide wild pollinator nesting habitat: hedgerows, earth banks and hotels

Action 15: Manage hedgerows for pollinators

Action 16: Bare earth/sand banks for wild pollinator nesting

*62 mining solitary bee species in Ireland
D: Provide wild pollinator nesting habitat: hedgerows, earth banks and hotels

**Action 17**: Holes in wood or concrete for wild pollinator nesting

**Action 18**: Bee hotels for wild pollinators

*15 cavity-nesting solitary bee species in Ireland

A number of small hotels is better than one large one in terms of minimising the risks of disease and predators killing the bees.

*Bee hotels can be useful and are a good awareness raising tool, but actions 16 and 17 are preferable ways to create nest sites.*
E. Reduce the use of pesticides

**Action 19**: Reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides

**Action 20**: Ensure best practice the use of pesticides cannot be avoided

- Aim to eliminate in some locations
- Turf - spray only sports pitches, bowling greens, cricket squares
- Adopt a policy of not spraying paths until the 15th April
- Have spraying buffer zones around important pollinator habitat
- Adopt the Pesticide Best Practice Code
F: Raise public awareness of pollinators within the local area

**Action 21**: Build actions on pollinators into existing frameworks and initiatives

- City, County or Local Development Plans
- Sustainability criteria of the Green Flag Award Scheme (parks)
- Green Infrastructure strategies
- Climate adaptation plans

**Action 22**: Fund pollinator projects on council land to demonstrate **best practice** to other sectors

**Action 23**: Put up signage to identify pollinator-friendly habitats on council land
F: Raise public awareness of pollinators within the local area

Action 24: Print & distribute pollinator-friendly guidelines to other sectors

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
F: Raise public awareness of pollinators within the local area

Action 27: Fund pollinator award in the Tidy Towns or Ulster in Bloom competition

Action 28: Promote and get involved in other pollinator related initiatives

Kildare County Council & Wicklow County Council supported animation
G. Tracking progress and recognition for efforts

Action 29: Log your ‘Actions for Pollinators’ on the mapping system to ensure your efforts are recognised

![Image of the mapping system with data entry and site information]
G. Tracking progress and recognition for efforts

Action 30: Take part in the Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme

Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme

Record bumblebees along a 1–3km fixed route walk once a month from March until October
CALL TO ACTION

www.pollinators.ie

polinators@biodiversityireland.ie

Many thanks to all those who have donated images to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

Thank you