

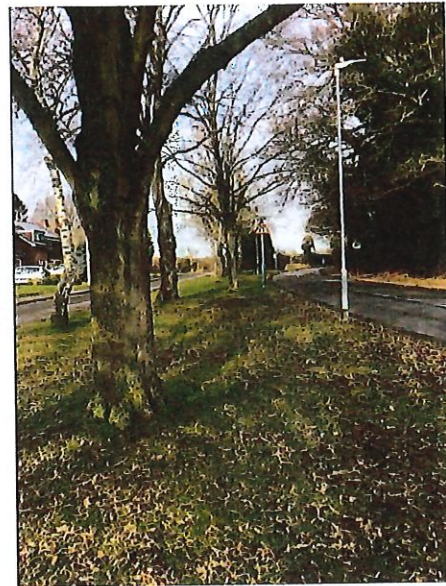


# Highway Soft Landscape Team

## Urban Areas

### Urban Grass Verges

Urban Grass - 6 cuts per annum between following dates		
Cut No.	Start	Finish
1	13 March	14 April
2	17 April	19 May
3	22 May	22 June
4	3 July	2 August
5	21 August	21 September
6	25 September	25 October



- ◆ Urban Grass is usually in built up areas and is cut with a ride on mower and strimmers.
- ◆ The cuttings are not collected and are spread evenly over the verges.
- ◆ Cuttings are cleared from hard surfaces with a blower.
- ◆ Obstacles such as lamp posts are cut with a strimmer.

### Urban Conservation Verges and 'Plan Bee'

- ◆ Our conservation verges are maintained to help protect and enhance the biodiversity within the urban environment
- ◆ Cuttings are mulched or collected based on individual management plans for each site
- ◆ Conservation verges are cut once with the last urban Grass cut of the year during October.



## Rural Swathe



Rural Verges. Swathe cut once per annum on following dates			
Tier	Visits	Start	Finish
Tier 1 roads	1	01 June	30 June
Tier 2 & Tier 3 roads	1	01 October	30 October

- ◆ A 900mm wide swathe cut takes place on rural roads by a tractor and flail along both sides of the road. Cuttings are not cleared.
- ◆ A separate vehicle follows the tractor to cut around obstructions with a strimmer.
- ◆ Swathe cutting does not include hedges.



The primary aim of swathe cutting is always highway safety, but we have two cutting windows, one in the summer and one during the autumn. Roads are cut depending on their needs for safety and environmental benefit and divided into the following categories:

◆ **Tier 1 - Highway Safety Swathe Cut**

Roads with highway safety as their priority need.

◆ **Tier 2 – Lower Value Biodiversity Swathe Cut**

These roads will include our Beelines, which is a network of interlinked pollinator routes and general conservation verges.

◆ **Tier 3 – Higher Value Biodiversity Swathe Cut**

Roads or sites with higher level biodiversity conservation and pollinator value as their priority need. These contain protected verges and include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Roadside Nature Reserves (RNR) and Bee Roads.

## Rural Hedges



Rural Hedges - 1 cut per annum		
Visit	Start	Finish
1	1 December	31 January

- ◆ Rural hedges are normally outside of built-up areas and are usually native trees and shrubs such as hazel or hawthorn.
- ◆ Rural hedges are faced up off the highway to a height of 5.5m or 2.5m depending on location. Works are carried out with a tractor and flail cutter.
- ◆ Rural hedges are cut between December and January to leave berries on hedges late as possible to allow birds and wildlife to forage for food.



## Weed Control

Weed Control - 2 treatments per annum		
Visit	Start	Finish
1	17 April	17 June
2	14 August	09 October



- ◆ Weed control is undertaken twice per year.
- ◆ Footpaths, kerb lines, traffic islands and roundabouts & detached alleyways are treated.
- ◆ Weeds can take up to 10-14 days after treatment before they start to brown off and die.
- ◆ Tall weeds which cause an obstruction or health and safety concerns may be removed.

For more information on our highway soft landscape maintenance programmes visit:

[Soft landscape maintenance - Kent County Council](#)

For information on "Plan Bee" visit: [Kent's Plan Bee | Facebook](#)

We are always pleased when residents report faults to us and the best way to do this is using our online reporting tool at [www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults). We will provide a unique reference number to enable tracking of our progress. Residents can use the tool to see what we maintain on their road and see if an issue has already been reported to us.

We ask residents to ring us on 03000 41 81 81 if they spot a problem on the highway that could cause an accident.

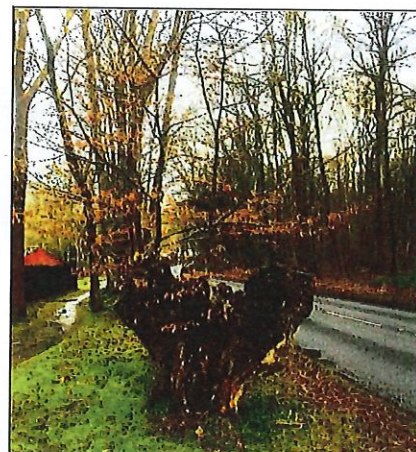
# Highway Soft Landscape Team

## Highway Trees



### Routine Tree Safety Audits (TSA)

- ◆ Routine tree safety audits are completed every 5 years on most sites. This frequency is increased to every 3 years for our Resilient Highway Network and annually for High-Speed Roads. Trees will be checked for issues relating to pests, disease, past husbandry and/or structural weakness.
- ◆ Highway clearance is also checked to ensure that trees and vegetation are kept to a minimum height of 5.5m over the carriageway and 2.5m over the footway where applicable.
- ◆ Following the audit, remedial works will be completed as required to ensure our assets are kept in good arboricultural condition and statutory highway clearances are met.
- ◆ Utility cables and pipes that run both above and below ground remain the responsibility of the service provider and in case of a fault with your service you should contact them directly.
- ◆ Where a tree is felled, a 1m stump will remain until available resources allow for removal.



**We do not** deal with nuisance related issues, such as:

- ◆ height and width of tree canopy
- ◆ falling leaves, seeds and sap
- ◆ insect or bird droppings
- ◆ light and shading
- ◆ branches overhanging private property.
- ◆ interference with television reception, telephone/power cables
- ◆ and solar panels

*Please respect our workers space and safety by driving carefully and slowly through roadworks. Feedback from our workers shows that too many drivers go through roadworks too fast and without due care or consideration. Everyone is entitled to a safe workplace. Our men and women work next to moving traffic and risk injury every day.*

## Tree Planting

- ◆ We plant new trees between November and March and aim to replant all trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or Conservation Area status within 2 years of removal.
- ◆ We have an annual tree planting programme to plant trees. These may be existing sites or completely new sites where trees have not been planted before. Sites are specified in advance and are identified through our tree inspection process and in response to planting requests received via our fault reporting tool.
- ◆ We aim to fulfil as many of these requests as possible where suitable sites are identified, those which we are unable to fulfil are added to our forward works program for future years.
- ◆ We welcome collaboration with residents, councillors and voluntary groups who may be able to provide funding to fulfil requests for trees. For more information, please visit the Kent County Council website.



## Tree Emergencies

If you spot a tree that is causing a risk to pedestrians, road users or is blocking the highway call us immediately on **03000 41 81 81 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday** or on **03000 41 91 91** at all other times.

For more information on our highway soft landscape maintenance programmes visit:

[Soft landscape maintenance - Kent County Council](#)

We are always pleased when residents report faults to us and the best way to do this is using our online reporting tool at [www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults). We will provide a unique reference number to enable tracking of our progress. Residents can use the tool to see what we maintain on their road and see if an issue has already been reported to us.

We ask residents to ring us on 03000 41 81 81 if they spot a problem on the highway that could cause an accident.

## 2023 - 2024 Highway Soft Landscape & Arboriculture Maintenance Work Programmes

(v1.1 20 April 2023)

	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February
<b>Urban Maintenance Programmes</b>												
Grass (Urban) Cut 1	14 Mar to 13 Apr											
Grass (Urban) Cut 2												
Grass (Urban) Cut 3												
Grass (Urban) Cut 4												
Grass (Urban) Cut 5												
Grass (Urban) Cut 6												
Grass (Urban) Conservation & Wildflower Cut 1												
Shrub Bed (Urban) Visit												
Rose Bed (Urban) Visit 1												
Rose Bed (Urban) Visit 2												
Hedge (Urban) Visit												
<b>Weed Control Programmes</b>												
Weed Hard Surface Treatment 1												
Weed Hard Surface Treatment 2												
Giant Hogweed Treatment 1												
Japanese Knotweed Treatment 1												
Arrestor Beds / Gravel Traps Treatment 1												
Arrestor Beds / Gravel Traps Treatment 2												
<b>Rural Road Programmes</b>												
Visibility Splay Cut 1												
Visibility Splay Cut 2												
Visibility Splay Cut 3												
Swathe Cut 1 - Tier 3 Full Width - Higher Value Biodiversity												
Rural Standalone Footway Cut 1												
Swathe Cut 1 - Tier 1 Roads - Highway Safety												
Rural Standalone Footway Cut 2												
Swathe Cut 1 - Tier 2 Roads - Lower Value Biodiversity												
Swathe Cut 1 - Tier 3 Roads - Higher Value Biodiversity												
Hedge (Rural) Cut												
<b>High Speed Road (HSR) Programme</b>												
HSR - all vegetation work types												
<b>Off-road Cycle Routes Programme</b>												
Off-road Cycle Routes Visit 1												
Off-road Cycle Routes Visit 2												
<b>Tree Maintenance Programmes</b>												
Basal & Epicormic Removal												
Pollards												
<b>Tree Safety Works</b>												
Notes												
All programmes and dates are subject to change for operational, safety or adverse weather events. This includes delays while we work safely during the pandemic.												
Definitions / Abbreviations												
RNR, Road Side Nature Reserve, SSSI, Site of Special Scientific Interest; HSR, High Speed Road; Bee Roads, specifically managed for rare bees and pollinators; Bee Lines, green corridors across wider landscape to connect habitats for bees and pollinators												
Asford District												
Asford Borough Council carry out the Urban Maintenance Programme on KCC behalf. Their programme dates and frequencies maybe different, but similar to the programme dates above. All other programmes in the district are operated by KCC												
Dover District												
Dover District Council carry out the Urban Programmes on KCC behalf. Their programme dates and frequencies maybe different, but similar to the programme dates above.												
Folkestone & Hythe District												
Folkestone & Hythe District Council carry out the Urban and Rural Road Programmes on KCC behalf. Their programme dates and frequencies maybe different, but similar to the programme dates above.												
Devolved Town & Parish Councils												
A small number of Town and Parish Councils carry out the devolved urban or rural maintenance on SLT behalf. Contact SLT for details												
KCC Highways & Transportation Soft Landscape Team (SLT) - Programmed Works												
SLT operate all KCC highway owned vegetation maintenance programmes in all districts and have over-sight of the programmes carried out in Ashford, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe Districts and devolved Town & Parish Councils (as above)												
Road Safety & Adhoc Works												
SLT operate all vegetation works on KCC countryside highway owned vegetation for road safety or obstruction issues. SLT also carries out additional adhoc vegetation works as needs dictate throughout the year.												
Rural swathe programmes												
All roads will be swathe cut once per annum.												
Arboriculture												
SLT operate all arboriculture works on KCC highway trees countywide												
Check with Highways Soft Landscape Team for updates.												

# KENT'S PLAN BEE



## April 2023 Newsletter - No Mow May Special

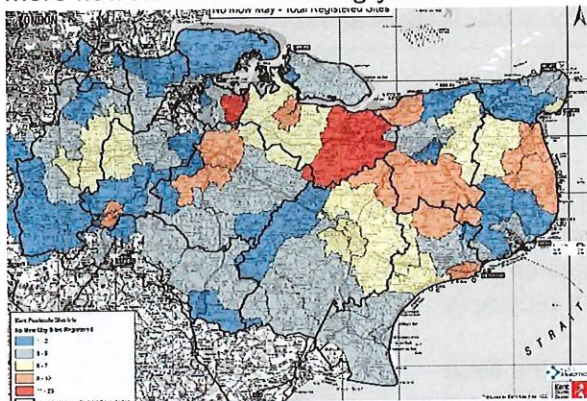
### Kent's Plan Bee "No Mow May Pledge" Site Re-opens for 2023

If you haven't already, it's time to put away the lawnmower and strimmer, sit back, relax, and tune in to the gentle hum of your local pollinators.

#### What is No Mow May?

'No Mow May' is a campaign by the charity Plantlife to let your lawn grow throughout May and provide a carpet of flowers for our pollinators to feed on. Why not give it a go this year to see what colourful flowers appear and the pollinators that they attract? Even leaving a small patch of your lawn uncut will make a big difference. For more information visit the [Plantlife website](https://www.plantlife.org.uk/).

If you complete May and want to continue not mowing, you can leave your lawn uncut into June, even July and August. This will allow the flowers to continue to bloom and go to seed, giving you more flowers for the following year.



Heatmap of Kent with locations of those who took part in No Mow May 2022. Hotspots were in Faversham and Gillingham

- ✿ 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!
- ✿ On a District basis, the highest area of land pledged was in Swale, and the largest individual numbers of pledges were recorded in Swale and Canterbury.

But this year, we want to make it bigger and better! Can we pledge more land than last year? Which District will record the most pledges this time? Make sure to share your pledge with your family, friends, and neighbours to get them involved and make this No Mow May even bigger than last year! Visit <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/plan-bee> today and enter your pledge to be part of the campaign.

As well as our pledge site, this month on [our Facebook page](#) we will be bringing you tips for improving your lawn for wildflowers, along with what Kent County Council are doing for No Mow May (read the article on the next page for a sneak peek into KCC's No Mow May Sites). And at the end of May, don't forget to take part in Plantlife's Every Flower Counts survey to see which flowers are growing in your lawn!

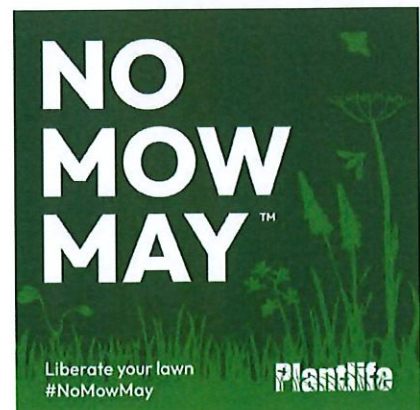


Photo credits to Bumblebee Conservation Trust  
Make the No Mow May Pledge today and show your support for Kent's wildflowers and pollinators

#### No Mow May Pledge Site

We want to know if you are taking part in No Mow May this year. As part of raising awareness for the Plantlife campaign, our pledge site on our [Let's Talk website](https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/plan-bee) has been re-opened for 2023 so Kent residents and organisations taking part in No Mow May can say where in the county you are leaving your lawn uncut for May. Whether a garden or allotment, or you're a business or landowner looking to pledge a larger piece of land, we want to hear what you have planned!

This is the second year we are running the survey. Last year's results revealed that:



## Kent County Council's No Mow May Sites

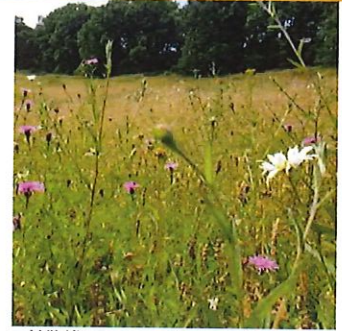
Kent County Council (KCC) is introducing new sites to be included this year in its No Mow May campaign, allowing wildflowers to blossom, grow and help precious pollinating insects to feed, nest, and breed. In total, 13 new KCC locations have been put forward for No Mow May this year, which join the areas left for conservation efforts by Highways set up in previous years.

### Country Parks

Six of KCC's Country Parks are joining the No Mow May campaign by allowing more than 50 hectares (over 123 acres) to flourish – being managed specifically for valuable habitats and features favoured by rare wildflowers and insects.

Look out for:

- The wildflower meadows and pond areas for pollinators, plus solitary bee holes in fence posts at Brockhill Country Park.
- A combination of grazing and mechanical cutting to create the conditions for wildflowers to thrive at Trosley Country Park.
- Grazing of Cheviot goats at Preston Hill next to Lullingstone Country Park. Also, the pollinator picnic tables next to the meadow!



Wildflower meadows at Brockhill Country Park



Acid/neutral grassland verge RNR near Tunbridge Wells

### Highways

More than 450km of road verges in rural and urban areas across Kent are managed specifically for conservation, by KCC Highways. This includes Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs). These verges provide invaluable habitat corridors for wildflowers, pollinating insects, and other wildlife.

Look out for:

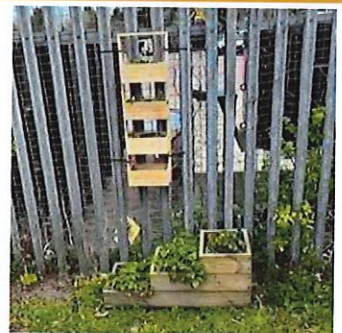
- The neutral grassland verge of the Tonbridge RNR which provides an important flower rich steppingstone for pollinators in an urban environment.
- The acid/neutral grassland verge RNR near Tunbridge Wells that supports many pollinators and other invertebrates through its wildflower diversity.
- Oxeye daisies & a huge diversity of wildflowers at the RNR near Maidstone.

### Household Waste Recycling Centres

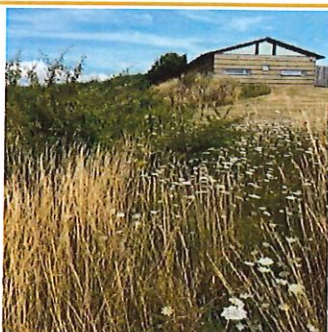
Five Household Waste Recycling Centres with valuable grassland areas will be allowed to grow throughout May.

Look out for:

- A wide grassy verge to the entrance of Margate Household Waste Recycling Centre, with planters and bug boxes made from recycled materials.
- An area of neutral improved grassland at Dover Refuse Transfer Station that is part of site used to welcome school groups learning about recycling, and hopefully soon biodiversity!
- Three pockets of semi-improved grassland and verges within the New Romney Household Waste Recycling Centre, kept short by rabbit grazing.



Planters and bug boxes at Margate Household Waste Recycling Centre



Unmanaged grassland at Thistley Hill in Dover

### Other KCC Sites

Other KCC sites also joining the campaign include the grounds around KCC offices, day care centres and adult education centres.

Look out for:

- Over 3.5 acres of semi-improved chalk grassland and other habitat at Thistley Hill in Dover. Whilst grassland around the buildings and car parks is regularly mown, the remaining areas of grassland and scrub have been unmanaged for several years and are already great for pollinators.
- Other KCC offices, such as Worrall House in Kings Hill, are leaving parts of their grounds unmown. Overtime, it is hoped that some KCC staff may volunteer with pollinator monitoring activities during their lunch breaks.

Make sure to follow [our Facebook page](#) for more information on KCC's No Mow May sites. We will also be posting about how you can improve your lawn for wildflowers and pollinators throughout May.

Below are some websites for further information on No Mow May and managing your gardens and lawns for pollinators and other wildlife:

[Plantlife's No Mow May](#) [Kent Wildlife Trust Wild About Gardens](#)  
[RSPB Wild Lawns for Wildlife](#) [Gardener's World – 5 tips for a wildlife-friendly lawn](#)  
[Natural History Museum - How to grow a lawn that's better for wildlife](#)



Image Credit: Plantlife



## Pollinators to see in May

It's May and the emergence of spring pollinators is in full swing.

**Bees:** Shril Carder Bumblebee (*Bombus sylvarum*), Wool carder bee (*Anthidium manicatum*), Long-horned bee (*Eucera longicornis*)

**Moths:** Elephant Hawk-moth (*Deilephila elpenor*), Cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaeae*), Yellow-barred Long Horn (*Nemophora degeerella*)

**Butterflies:** Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*), Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*)

**Beetles:** Common Cockchafer (*Melolontha melolontha*), Sulphur beetle (*Cteniopis sulphureus*)

**Wasps:** Ruby-tailed Wasp (*Chrysis ignita* agg.), Black-banded spider wasp (*Anoplius viaticus*)

**Flies/ hoverflies:** Batman Hoverfly (*Myathropa florea*), Broad Centurion (*Chloromyia Formosa*)

**Wildflowers** to spot this month include Bluebells, Buttercups, Common Vetch, Cowslips, Cow Parsley, Garlic Mustard, Ground Ivy, Oxeye Daisy, and Speedwells.

Spotted any of these or any other pollinators and wildflowers? Post them on our [Facebook page](#), tag us in your photos @KentsPlanBee or [email us](#) your photos.

## POLLINATORS TO SEE IN MAY



Shril Carder Bumblebee  
*Bombus sylvarum*



Elephant Hawk-moth  
*Deilephila elpenor*



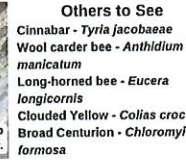
Common Blue  
*Polyommatus icarus*



Batman Hoverfly  
*Myathropa florea*



Ruby-tailed Wasp  
*Chrysis ignita* agg.



**Others to See**  
Cinnabar - *Tyria jacobaeae*  
Wool carder bee - *Anthidium manicatum*  
Long-horned bee - *Eucera longicornis*  
Clouded Yellow - *Colias croceus*  
Broad Centurion - *Chloromyia formosa*

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



## Upcoming Events and Resources

### Wild About Open Gardens

The Wild About Open Garden events are back! The next event is taking place on 14 May in Minster. Book onto this and other events through the [Kent Wildlife Trust website](#).

- Sun 14 May 1-5pm: 26 Cliff Gardens, Minster, Sheppey, ME12 3QY
- Sun 4 Jun 1-5pm: Bapchild, Sittingbourne
- Sun 11 Jun 1-5pm: 68 South Hill Road, Gravesend, DA12 1JZ
- Sat 17 Jun 1-5pm: 1 Victoria Close, Edenbridge, TN8 5BT
- Sat 24 Jun 1-5pm: Myrtle House, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green, Maidstone, ME17 2AR
- Sun 25 Jun 1-5pm: Endymion, Perry Wood, Selling, Faversham, ME813 9SF
- Sat 23 July 11am-4pm: Goodnestone Park, near Sandwich
- Sat 3 Sep 1-5pm: Lacey Down, 22 Canterbury Road, Lydden, Dover, CT15 7ER

### Bumblebee Conservation Trust Free Online Identification Training

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust are hosting several free online events to improve your bumblebee identification skills. Book your free place through the Trust's [events calendar](#) on their website.

Entry-level: 12 May, Intermediate-level: 23 May

### Other Pollinator Events

There are a few other pollinator events coming up. Use the links below to find out more and book your places:

- Singleton Environment Centre & Kent's Magnificent Moths – 14 May, 1030-1230, Singleton Environment Centre, Ashford – [Magnificent Moths for Beginners](#)
- White Cliffs Countryside Partnership Green Gang – 28 May, 1400-1530, Samphire Hoe – [Make a Giant Orchid](#) (Childrens event)
- White Cliffs Countryside Partnership Green Gang – 30 May, 1300-1500, Folkestone Warren – [Butterflies, Bees and other insects](#) (Childrens event)
- Friends of Kingsmead Field – 7 June, starts 1930, St Stephen's Church Hall, Canterbury CT2 7AB - 'The Plight of the Bumblebee' talk

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



