

Bee Superhighway

introduction for teachers



Aim

The Bee Superhighway is a project created by Kensington and Chelsea's Ecology Service to make the borough pollinator friendly, working in partnership with residents, schools, businesses and community groups. It aims to increase the provision of food, shelter and nesting sites that benefit pollinators by creating 'pollinator hotspots' across the borough. These hotspots connect existing habitats and green spaces, forming a borough-wide 'Bee Superhighway'.

As part of the Bee Superhighway project, we have created this education pack for schools in Kensington and Chelsea to learn about the importance of pollinators and create pollinator hotspots in their school grounds. We have designed lesson plans and curriculum-linked activities about pollinators and pollination that teachers can use, and will work with local schools to improve their grounds for pollinators.

To find out more about the Bee Superhighway and discover the Bee Superhighway sites, please visit our website:

storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/93910cf39a5d451c841e2cd5442271b9



Why help pollinators?

Bees and other pollinators need our help to survive and thrive in the city. They play a vital role in pollinating flowers and without them many common plants would not be able to fruit and set seed.

The numerous types of bees are the main pollinators in this country, but other insects such as hoverflies, beetles, thrips, butterflies and moths also provide important pollination services.

Recent years have seen a worrying reduction in pollinator numbers, with some species declining by a quarter. Threats of climate change, loss of suitable habitat including brownfield sites in urban areas, and intensive farming have meant that it is increasingly hard for pollinators to find the food, water and shelter they need to survive.

We can all do our bit to help reverse this decline through small easy changes and improvements to our outdoor spaces. Gardens, balconies and school grounds all add up to be a valuable asset as they make up over a third of all the green space in London. To pollinators, these spaces can be valuable pit stops providing the resources they need to survive.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Lesson plans

The Ecology Service have designed lesson plans for schools to learn about the importance of pollinators, explore the topic of pollination and outline ways to help. There are lesson plans suitable for different age groups: Foundation and Key Stage 1; Key Stage 2; and Key Stage 3. The lesson plans indicate links to the National Curriculum and are designed for teachers to run with their classes. The lesson plans have additional accompanying resources such as PowerPoint presentations, activity worksheets and links for extension work.

Lesson plan outlines

- * **Foundation and key stage 1:**
What is a pollinator? – Storytelling and looking for pollinators.
- * **Key stage 2:** Who pollinates plants?
– Craft activity and identification of pollinators.
- * **Key stage 3:** Pollination and interdependence – Discussion on interdependence, pollination and food safety with related scavenger hunt.
- * **Key stage 3 or 4:** Flower-insect timed counts – Investigate which pollinators visit which plants (linked to the RBKC school food growing programme).
- * **Foundation to key stage 2:**
Make a pollinator finger puppet
– A fun creative project.

Making your school grounds pollinator friendly

Improving your school grounds for pollinators is a great way to support local ecosystems and create hands-on learning opportunities for students. Here are some ideas to make your school grounds more pollinator-friendly:

- 1. Plant native flowers:** Choose native plants that provide nectar and pollen for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. Consider including a variety of plants that will bloom at different times of the year. A list of plants can be found on the RHS Plants for Pollinators webpage.
- 2. Provide homes for bees and other pollinators:** Pollinators, especially solitary species of bee, need places to nest. Installing bee and bug hotels or leaving patches of bare soil can help support their populations. You can also plant a variety of plants that provide shelter and nesting options.
- 3. Reduce pesticide use:** Avoid or minimise pesticide use to protect pollinators.
- 4. Provide water sources:** Set up shallow water basins or birdbaths to provide hydration for bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects.
- 5. Encourage student involvement:** Engage students in planting and maintaining pollinator gardens and educate them about pollinator importance.

These small changes can make a big impact in supporting local pollinators. For further details check out our website.

Bee hotel offer

The Ecology Service has a limited number of bee hotels to enhance your school grounds. Please apply by contacting us at

 ecology.centre@rbkc.gov.uk