



The B-Lines: Creating the network

B-Lines is a landscape-scale biodiversity initiative, being developed and promoted by Buglife – The Invertebrate Conservation Trust, which aims to create a UK-wide network of wildflower-rich habitats.

How can local authorities help?

Local Authorities with their wide ranging responsibilities, services and land holdings are in a unique position to help deliver key parts of the B-Lines. Many opportunities exist across local authority work areas and duties, including their role in local planning and also as managers of public and amenity spaces, brownfield sites, schools, car parks, roadside verges and roundabout.



Buglife and Plymouth Council are working together to create new areas of wildflower-rich meadow on a number of City parks. Local Communities and schools are getting involved planting wildflowers and seeding the meadows and starting to enjoy a mass of wildflowers and the butterflies and bumblebees they attract.

What needs to be done to create the B-Lines

In order to develop the B-Lines into an effective UK- wide network we need to link our existing wildflower-rich sites together by 'filling' the B-Lines with as many flower-rich areas as possible. This can be achieved in a number of ways, for example by restoring Local Wildlife Sites and SSSI, creating new high quality habitats and increasing the numbers and range of wildflowers in amenity grasslands by relaxing mowing regimes and creating urban meadows¹.

Within each urban area the aim should be to maintain or establish at least some large areas of high quality permanent wildflower-rich habitat (ideally > 2 ha) which provide insect pollinator needs throughout the year, including food (nectar and pollen), nesting and over-wintering shelter. Ideally these will include not only summer flowering meadows, but also other habitats such as areas of taller grown uncut grassland and areas of flowering shrubs.

Hundreds of smaller more scattered flower-rich areas (both native wildflowers and suitable non-native species) can also be developed wherever opportunities arise, providing valuable 'feeding stations' across your town or city. These can utilise stream or river courses, temporary brownfield sites, road verges, roundabouts, disused railways or canals.

Five Actions for local authorities to help create the B-Lines

1. Check the B-Lines maps to see where these run through your local authority
2. Ensure Local Wildlife Sites and Nature Reserves are looked after sympathetically
3. Create flower-rich areas in parks, school grounds, roundabouts, car parks etc
4. Make small changes to the management of any un-utilised land or amenity space to create both permanent and temporary wildflower-rich areas
5. Encourage local people to get involved

Making a Difference ...

Communities and local authorities across the country are already doing some great work, however much more needs to be done.....



Sowing mixes of annual wildflowers can provide incredibly attractive areas for local people to enjoy. Seeding alongside key road networks can make commuters journeys to work that much less stressful.

Annual mixes can provide very valuable nectar and pollen resources for insects over spring, summer and autumn. As new seed needs to be sown each year it can be an expensive, however using narrow strips of annuals on the outside edges of larger areas of un-mown grass can be a cheaper option.



Local Wildlife Sites and Nature Reserves are often left neglected, and lose their floweriness. These sites often provide homes to much of the wildlife that lives in our towns and cities, and provide the core of the B-Lines network. It is essential that they are managed appropriately and that local communities are better informed about their wildlife value.

Informing people of the link between these wildlife sites, more 'showy' urban meadows and their own gardens will hopefully result in increased action by everyone.

Further Guidance is provided in other B-Lines Fact Sheets and at [Buglife](http://www.buglife.org.uk/).

Please contact us if you would like further advice, or if you would like to develop a pollinator project in your Council area

ⁱ <http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/Bees-needs>