



**the BIG
Biodiversity
Challenge**
do one thing

**Bee Friendly Campaign
Across England and Wales
Meadfleet Limited**

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: *Pollinator Award*

Project overview

Meadfleet are a public open space management company, taking care of over 270 residential, new-build developments across England and Wales. In late 2019 we implemented a Bee Friendly campaign, making enhancements to benefit pollinating insects, creating new habitats and engaging residents in the campaign in a number of initiatives.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?

As a management company Meadfleet receives sites from a variety of developers, under various local planning authorities across England and Wales. Therefore the baseline biodiversity conditions can vary greatly. We selected sites of lower biodiversity value, e.g. large areas of mown grass or urban sites with limited green space, on which to implement improvements. We ensure areas are appropriate by consulting planning documentation and assessing current usage. The approved planting schemes and landscape plans for many areas we manage have little provision for native species and nectar-providing plants. Our initiative goes above and beyond what is required in planning permissions.

What were the reasons behind this project ?

Meadfleet genuinely felt a responsibility and desire to enhance biodiversity across the land in its management. The board of directors, one of whom is an ecologist, has been proactive in supporting this movement. Meadfleet now employ an Ecology and Conservation Manager who has published guidance notes and led training sessions for staff on how to manage sites to encourage biodiversity. Our Bee Friendly campaign acts as the flagship project we use to best illustrate our approach to staff, customers, developers and other stakeholders.

The campaign is funded entirely by Meadfleet with no costs passed on to our customers.



Meadfleet Bee Friendly Wildflower Meadow in St. Helens



Meadfleet Bee Friendly Wildflower in Pontefract

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Meadfleet's Bee Friendly Campaign aims to create new habitat to benefit bees and other pollinating insects. The campaign is due to run for a minimum of five years and we have committed to provide:

- 23,000m² of new wildflower meadows – using a seed mix of 80%/20% native meadow grasses and wildflowers to replicate hay meadow habitat
- 1500m of new hedgerows – sections of new planting of native shrub and tree species to provide nectar in spring, berries in autumn and to provide structural and linear habitat to benefit birds and mammals
- 50,000 new bulbs – bulbs of a mix of species selected to provide valuable nectar throughout the spring months.

Now in Year 2 of the campaign we have already sown over 4500m² of meadow, planted over 40,000 bulbs and over 300m of new hedgerows.

We are working with insect charity Buglife, who have advised us on issues such as species mixes, maximising benefit for pollinators. Our new habitats will be added to Buglife's B-Lines database.

We are also encouraging our customers to help pollinators and enhance their gardens. We are providing:

- Signage to inform and educate on the reasons for and the benefits of the new features
- 5000 packs of wildflower seed
- 2000 bee hotels
- Guidance of garden enhancements
- The Meadfleet website provides updates on biodiversity enhancements and provides tips and advice for customers

In addition to the creation of our new Bee Friendly areas we regularly review management of sites to enhance biodiversity, including the provision of 'wild areas' and use of plant species to benefit pollinators in new planting schemes. Our aim is to create Bee Friendly flagship sites which can be replicated across our developments. Meadfleet are long term custodians of open space, so can ensure newly created habitats can be maintained sensitively into the future.



Wildlife gardening packs donated to customers including bee friendly seeds



Bee hotels sent to customers, this one is occupied by solitary bees

Further information

Once the key targets of the Bee Friendly campaign had been established by Meadfleet's Operations Director, Relationship Manager and Ecology and Conservation Manager the campaign was rolled out in September 2019. Meadfleet has a team of ten Regional Managers (RMs) responsible for ensuring our public open space is safe, attractive and welcoming. The RMs have received training and guidance documentation in the plight of our pollinating insects and the habitat creation and management required to address the issue. Each RM has been tasked with identifying appropriate locations where our Bee Friendly meadows, hedgerows and bulb planting are appropriate. RMs have extensive knowledge of their sites required to assess the conditions and public use of areas and ensure that the measures will be a success. Monitoring of the success in the earlier years of the campaign will advise on the selection of future locations.

Now in Year 2 of the campaign we have sown over 4500m² of meadow, planted over 40,000 bulbs and over 300m of new hedgerows. We are involving our customers in assessing the improvements for wildlife. We have invited customers to participate in our 'Big Bug Hunt', as part of the UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme by undertaking a Flower-Insect Timed Count. Results will be compiled by Meadfleet and submitted to Buglife.

The BIG Biodiversity Challenge is a wonderful opportunity to publicise our campaign to benefit pollinators, to hopefully herald a change across the sector of public open space management in acknowledging the responsibilities for positive habitat creation and management.

Project Team

- Meadfleet Ltd
- Paul Cassidy MCIEEM, Ecology and Conservation Manager, Meadfleet, Samantha Hursey MCIEEM, Operations Director, Meadfleet, Lucy Gibson, Relationship Manager, Meadfleet.
- Buglife



Bluebell bulbs donated and planted on sites in 2020. This one is near Leeds



Pink Giant on Meadfleet development in Liverpool, part of 2019 bee friendly bulbs



What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

Traditionally the remit of a land management company is to ensure that public open spaces are maintained to provide safe, tidy, attractive green space on and around housing developments. The Meadfleet board and management team believe that we should also maximise and celebrate the biodiversity potential of our sites.

Our Bee Friendly campaign illustrates how we aim to operate in the future, with positive habitat creation and management to enhance wildlife, and meaningful liaison with our customers to inform and educate on biodiversity issues.

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