



PRESS RELEASE

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Bee Friendly Trust Launches Field Hospital for Unwanted Plants

Charity pledges to rehome garden centre surplus for pollinators



In light of recent news stating that millions of plants, shrubs and trees could be binned as a result of Covid-19, wildlife conservation charity Bee Friendly Trust has pledged to rehome garden centre surplus within its nationwide pollinator planting projects.

The closure of 2,000 garden centres and nurseries – at a key point in the gardening calendar – means many plants are being left on shop shelves, instead of being bought and planted out by the public.

The Bee Friendly Trust, which transforms areas of neglected and overgrown land into wildlife havens for bees, butterflies and other insects, is calling on any affected garden centres and nurseries to donate their plants to their charitable work, as opposed to throwing them away.

The Trust, which has its HQ at Coram's Fields, London, has set up an emergency field hospital for plants within the grounds, where they will be tended until travel restrictions are lifted and their nationwide planting projects can be resumed.

Coram's Fields and Harmsworth Memorial Playground is a children's charity that serves as a safe place for all children to come play. However, its seven-acre park and playground,

situated in Bloomsbury, central London, has had to close due to social distancing regulations.

Although much of the grounds have been given over to an emergency NHS car park for neighbouring Great Ormond Street Hospital, the Bee Friendly Trust is working with Coram's Fields ground staff to ensure none of this valuable space is wasted. And so the Trust is sending out this call for plants that can be kept at Coram's Fields for the duration of the lockdown and then found new homes in public space later in the year.

Bee Friendly Trust co-founder Dr Luke Dixon says: 'It is heartening to work with our hosts at Coram's Fields to do something positive in these difficult times and prepare for times ahead.'

Numbers of pollinators, including bees and hoverflies, have declined by as much as a third, in the past 30 years. However, by creating a network of floral habitats, which provide both shelter and forage, the Bee Friendly Trust is working to reverse this worrying trend of biodiversity loss.

Working primarily at railway stations, which offer a pre-existing cross-country network, and in partnership with the likes of LNER, TfL and Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail, the Trust has installed more than 30 floral planters at stations, including Peterborough, Cambridgeshire; Putney, London; Frome, Somerset and Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. Micro wildlife gardens and linear fruit orchards have been created on platforms at stations such as Bottesford, Lincolnshire and Falmer, East Sussex.

To find out more about the Bee Friendly Trust and its projects, visit <http://www.beefriendlytrust.org/>. Details of Coram's Fields and Harmsworth Memorial Playground are available at <https://www.coramsfields.org/about-us/>.

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For any press enquiries, please contact Emma Pritchard of the Bee Friendly Trust on 07971 880695 or email emma@beefriendlytrust.org

Notes to Editors:

About the Bee Friendly Trust

The Bee Friendly Trust was founded in 2015 to give honey bees and other pollinators the habitats they need to thrive – and to inspire individuals and communities to nurture and sustain these habitats for the future.

It is doing this in many ways:

- By installing bee-friendly flowering planters along existing transport lines, and working with railway authorities, community groups, station staff and local volunteers, to establish an interconnected network of pollinator corridors and habitats
- By creating micro wildlife reserves on areas of disused land, complete with educational signage, to engage and educate adults and children, alike
- By liaising with architects and developers to create a new generation of pollinator-friendly sites
- By leading educational workshops and participatory sessions at festivals nationwide, via its 'BeeDome' and troupe of 'Waggle Dancers'

To find out more, visit <http://www.beefriendlytrust.org/>.