



BEE FRIENDLY TRUST
Coram's Fields, 93 Guilford Street
London, WC1N 1DN
www.beefriendlytrust.org
Registered charity: 1161614

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

A sculpture created by the community at Alresford rail station has won a national award for its contribution towards making the environment more bee-friendly

Local volunteers, children from Alresford Primary School and the Cobnuts Co-operative, came together with the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership, the Bee Friendly Trust, the Community Rail Network and Greater Anglia to install a unique sculpture that doubles as a home for wildlife in the station's wildlife garden.

As a result, they have been named 'Bees' Needs Champions' by the government's Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The awards recognise organisations and groups that help protect pollinators in green spaces.

The sculpture was made by the Cobnuts Co-operative - a local eco-arts cooperative who design creative habitats from the traditional material 'cob', a mixture of clay sub soil, sand and straw - in collaboration with the Alresford Primary School pupils who made their own pottery to help finalise the sculpture and give it its unique look.

The completed design also features a living roof and spaces for bird boxes.

Greater Anglia's volunteer station adopters then also installed two raised planters funded by the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership (ESSCRP) and filled them with bee-friendly plants to provide an important food source for pollinating insects.

Jayne Sumner, of the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership, said, "We just couldn't believe it when we heard we had won an award. We are absolutely delighted that our innovative community project to help protect our local wildlife has been singled out for recognition.

"Congratulations and thank you to everyone who has been involved in making the project such a success."

Dr Luke Dixon, co-founder of the Bee Friendly Trust, said, "It has been a great pleasure to be involved in such a ground-breaking project. The coming together of so many partners with different skills and interests has made this a unique undertaking. We hope that this vibrant patch of ground will be a place of inspiration and meditation for humans, and a sanctuary for wildlife."

Susie Jenkins, Cobnuts' Project Co-Ordinator, said, "We thoroughly enjoyed working in the community garden at Alresford railway station - it's a great spot for community and wildlife."



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"The support from ESSCRP and the Bee friendly Trust in navigating this project in such a tricky time was superb. Cobnuts saw plenty of cavity nesting bees during Spring so we have high hopes for the children's pottery being full of bee larvae come summer 2021."

Alan Neville, Greater Anglia's Community and Customer Engagement Manager, said: "We are thrilled to have been part of such a wonderful, and now, award-winning project. The sculpture itself was a brilliant concept, adding to the wildlife area with an engaging look whilst benefiting local wildlife at the same time. Congratulations to everyone involved."

Across Greater Anglia's network many other station adopters are also making their rail stations more wildlife friendly – with the railway increasingly being recognised by ecologists as a 'green corridor' which provides a sanctuary for many different kinds of flora and fauna.

Many have planted gardens which provide habitats for local wildlife as well as making the stations more welcoming. In total over 5700 square metres of gardens are tended to – the equivalent of 29 tennis courts.

Last year, Greater Anglia reduced its total carbon emissions by 11% overall, preventing 13,570 equivalent tonnes of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global climate change, being released into the atmosphere.

ENDS

For further information and high-res images to support this story, or to arrange an interview with a member of the Bee Friendly Trust team, please contact:
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Editor's note:

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 schools and festivals nationwide, via its 'BeeDome', a creative and interactive space

Current projects include working with Transport for London, South West Trains, Network Rail and Community Rail Partnerships to install planters and micro nature reserves on train stations



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