

Pollinating the Peak

Impact and legacy 2017-2021

**NATIONAL
LOTTERY**
Project of the Year
Award 2021



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“The legacy of the wonderful Pollinating the Peak project will buzz throughout the Bumblebee Conservation Trust for many years to come. The lessons learnt have revolutionised the way we engage a wide range of audiences through science and education activities – volunteers, supporters, schools, and many, many, others – and done wonders to raise the profile of our work throughout the wider conservation sector across the UK.”

Gill Perkins - CEO Bumblebee Conservation Trust

Bumblebee Conservation Trust

Bumblebees are familiar and much-loved insects that pollinate our crops and wildflowers. Bumblebees act as useful indicators of the health of our environment, and bring inspiration and enjoyment to many.

Sadly, bee diversity has fallen in over half of UK landscapes since 1980, and numbers and distribution of many bumblebee species continue to decline. The Bumblebee Conservation Trust was established in 2006 to address the decline in the UK's bumblebee populations.

Our focus is to stop the extinction of our very rarest bumblebees and to create a long-term sustainable future for all bumblebee species. We are the only organisation in the UK solely dedicated to reversing the decline of bumblebees.

Our vision is to create a world where bumblebees are thriving and valued.

The Trust has developed projects across England, Scotland and Wales to deliver its strategy to raise awareness and protect our precious bumblebees.

Our vision is to create a world where



Pollinating the Peak

Pollinating the Peak (PTP) was the Trust's **largest engagement project** to date. The project had a key focus on **connecting new audiences to nature**.

PTP was based in Derbyshire and the Peak District and had learning and participation at its core, educating people of all ages through fun and innovative ways. Engagement enabled people to take positive action and make the Peak District a buzzing haven for bumblebees including the rare Bilberry bumblebee (*Bombus monticola*).

This report talks about the impact and legacy created during the project's delivery stage from 2017 to 2021.



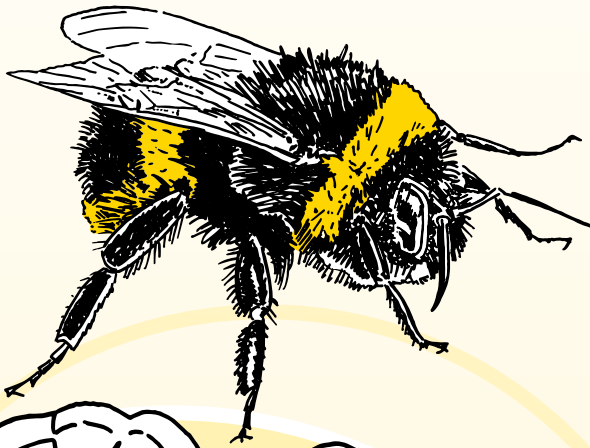
bumblebees are thriving and valued

**THE
PROJECT
DIRECTLY
ENGAGED WITH
OVER 20,000
PEOPLE OVER
FIVE YEARS**



Children learn how fantastic bumblebees are at our "Super Hero Picnic" in Derby

Pollinating the Peak achievements 2017-2021



BUZZING GA

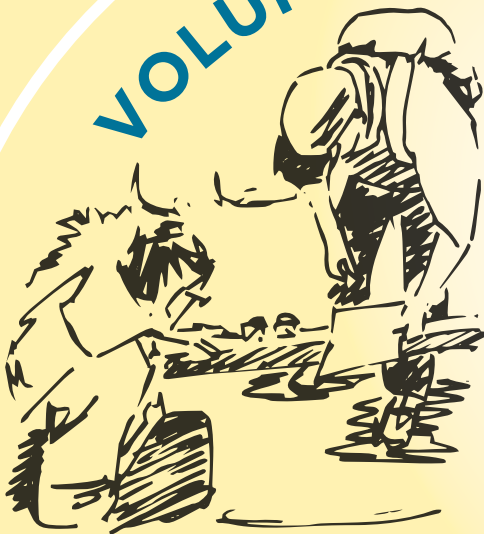


SKILLS FOR BEES



- **398 people** trained in bee
- **15 beewalk** transects se the project an monitor bum species and n
- **55 volunteer** bumblebee
- **100 records** Bilberry bum (*Bombus mo* in Derbyshire between 2017-20.

VOLUNTEERING



- **50 local volunteers** have given up **4206 hours** of their time to help bumblebees
- **777 people trained** in Bee ID, beeWalks, habitat works and events management



BUZZ

RDENS

Over **49,000** new users of **Bee kind tool** for planting bumblebee friendly plants

1000's of seedballs made

300 bumblebee plants given away.

BUZZING COMMUNITIES



- **437 hectares** of **land improved** for bumblebees
- **173 people trained** in land management and practical habitat works like scything
- **274 community events.**

BUZZING SCHOOLS



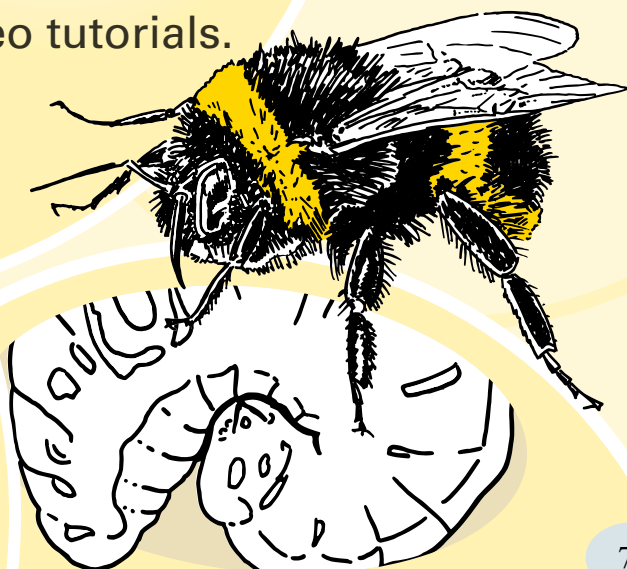
- **Over 2540 secondary school students** engaged with our Bumblebee Education Experience (**B.E.E.**)
- Over **1000 downloads** of the online KS3 lesson teacher packs
- Engaged with **over 14,000 online** with our video tutorials.



BUZZING TOURISM



- **14 legacy art pieces** across Derbyshire
- **1650 Great Bilberry Bumblebee Hunt activity packs distributed** to people in Derbyshire.





National Lottery Project of the Year award presented to staff and volunteers by Michaela Strachan

Awards

PTP was a huge success and has been recognised nationally as an award winning project. This is due to the enthusiasm and team work from the Trust staff, partners and our amazing volunteers that we were able to inspire thousands of people to love and care for bumblebees, especially the Bilberry bumblebee.

PTP was picked from thousands of projects across the country and **won National Lottery Project of the Year 2021** in recognition of the excellent work completed connecting new and diverse audiences.

The upgraded Bee kind online gardening tool was nominated for three awards including Best Green and Sustainable campaign for the Northern Marketing awards and it **won Technology for good at the Prolific North Awards**.

The Trust **won the Community Engagement Award from the University of Derby careers and employment service** for work the project's Community Engagement Officer did with student volunteers.

The project's Bumblebee Education experience (B.E.E.) was **shortlisted for the Learning and Outreach Museum and Heritage Awards 2020**.

Dylan Green and Darcey Gillie were **awarded National Volunteering Awards from The Bumblebee Conservation Trust** for their volunteering work with PTP.

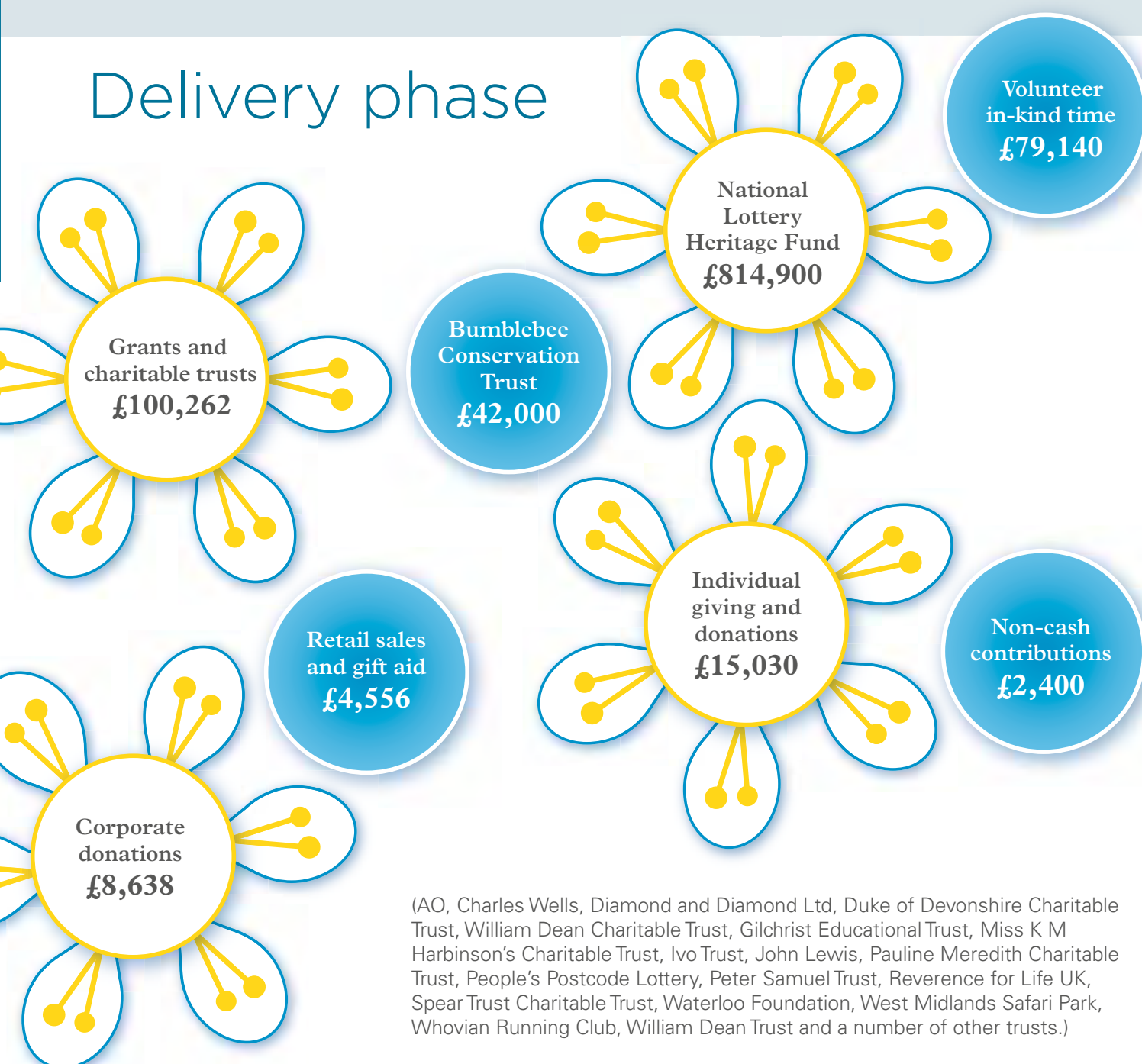
Funding

The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) recognised the need to protect our natural heritage, which includes all bumblebees but especially the rarer species like the Bilberry bumblebee (*Bombus monticola*).

The project was supported by NLHF during 2016 in the development year with £153,200 along with £25,000 from the Aviva Community fund.

NLHF were the main funder for the delivery phase from November 2017 – October 2021. The Trust also secured income from charitable trusts and other small grant funds along with volunteer in-kind time. We also received some pro bono work from professionals with media and press releases from Richard Bunting and graphic design work from Alex Johns.

Delivery phase



COVID-19

As with so many other organisations, the Trust had to adapt and change quickly during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The project was due to finish in October 2020 but additional funding was secured and permission given from the Trustees and NLHF to extend the project until October 2021.

Many adaptations to the original plan had to be made to ensure staff, volunteer and public safety. Despite the national lockdown restrictions, the project completed its targets within the timeframe and budget and found some very innovative solutions to fulfil the activity plan.

A flexible blended approach of in person and online engagement took time to adapt but actually had some benefits for the project, including wellbeing check-ins with our staff and volunteers and less travel and working from home did reduce our carbon footprint.

The national restrictions actually helped the project to develop new ways to deliver in several areas which formed part of the legacy, for example:

- Additional effort was put into **online resources** such as the educational videos and tutorials.
- Delivery of online events with partners such as Derbyshire Wildlife Trust reached hundreds of people.
- The development of the bumblebee activity boxes were an ingenious way of reaching our communities and **were distributed** via our volunteers and partners and foodbank schemes which helped us reach disadvantaged groups.
- **Use of new technology** such as the 3D projection mapping for the Hello Bumblebee exhibition enabled us to trial remote engagement from empty shop windows on the high street.

‘During the last 18 months of a worldwide pandemic the Pollinating the Peak volunteer community has been a consistent pillar, providing a vital opportunity to meet (sometimes virtually) with like-minded people, learn from their unique blend of skills and experiences, and work towards a common goal.’

Volunteer

Partnerships

The success of PTP is because the team developed long term working relationships with a wide range of partners, all of whom had an important strategic input into environmental conservation, species protection and community engagement throughout Derbyshire. They provided skills, expertise, guidance and support for the project. **Working in partnership, we empowered individuals and communities to take small easy actions that together have made a big difference.**



Steering Group Partners

- Chatsworth
- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Derbyshire Wildlife Trust
- Little Green Space
- Moors for the Future Partnership
- National Trust
- Peak District National Park Authority



PTP Steering group L to R: **Tim Birch (DWT)**, **Rhodri Green**, **Frances Horsford (PDNPA)**, **Anne Welch (DCC)**, **Richard Bunting (LGS)**, **Sally Cuckney**, **Annie Ives**, **Gill Perkins**, **Nicola Spence (Chatsworth)**, **Andy Benson**, **Ted Talbot (NT)**, **Steve Porter (Chatsworth)**.

Others partnerships include

- Derby City Council
- De Monfort University
- Don Catchment Rivers Trust
- Eastern Moors Partnership
- Friends of Buxton Station
- High Peak and Hope Valley Community Rail Partnership
- Inspire Community Gardens
- Jez the Scythe – aka Jeremy Hastings
- Junction Arts
- Ministry of Justice
- Peak District Mosaic
- Rethink Nature Partnership
- Serpentine Community Garden
- Severn Trent
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Transforming the Trent Valley
- White Peak farmers group



“I just caught a bee all by myself... and I think that there’s no reason to be scared of bees any more”

girl on a bumblebee safari



The project



Pollinating the Peak is thousands of people learning about our local bumblebees, caring more about them, planting, recording and speaking out for them.

PTP provided a wide range of activities that formed the basis for engaging thousands of people of all ages and inspired the next generation of entomologists, citizen scientists and people that care for bumblebees. The project worked on separate but interlinked strands including; Buzzing Gardens, Buzzing Communities, Buzzing Schools, Buzzing Tourism, Skills for Bees and had volunteering at its core.

During the development phase the project tested ideas and began to build a team of volunteers that would continue through to the end of the project. One of the most important pieces of work that informed the whole of the project was the interpretation plan for the project. **PTP worked with TellTale on ensuring we had consistent clear, simple messaging that allowed the project to communicate with partners, volunteers and public about the importance of bumblebees.**

Our hidden treasure

The Bilberry bumblebee, also known as the 'mountain bumblebee' is one of Derbyshire's hidden treasures.

It lives on the moors in the Peak District and feeds on bilberry and heather. PTP had a direct impact in securing the future of this rare and iconic species by increasing public awareness, improving favourable habitat and monitoring local bumblebee populations.

This special Peak District treasure is difficult to find but is small bright and beautiful with an orange tail and is of ecological importance and also intrinsically valuable.

Because of the project, landowners like the National Trust, have now identified Bilberry bumblebees as a key species in their land management plans. The other key legacy for this species is more people recording and monitoring it.

Volunteers have been scouring the moorlands in search of the Bilberry bumblebee with great success and have contributed to some important national data records.

Our volunteers found several 'hot spots' across the Peak District and even recorded a nest which is important data and of national significance.

MORE THAN
100 RECORDS
OF *BOMBUS*
MONTICOLA HAVE
BEEN DOCUMENTED
THROUGHOUT
THE PROJECT

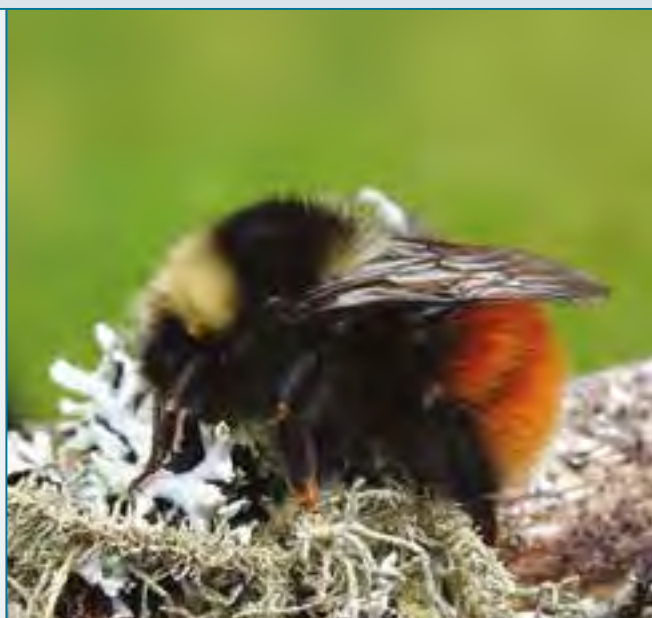


*"It was the best bumblebee day ever!
We found and recorded over 30
Bilberry bumblebees."*

Volunteer

*"I have set up a new Bee Walk transect on Lantern Pike, which I have surveyed monthly during the past two years, but have visited at least weekly on a more informal basis, at the same time monitoring plants on which the Bilberry bumblebee relies. Being involved with Pollinating the Peak has also encouraged me into the hills across the High Peak in search of *Bombus monticola* and other bumblebees, reporting back information regarding new unrecorded populations."*

Volunteer



Valuing our volunteers

The success of the project is down to the many individuals who gave up their time to volunteer for the Trust. It was essential to provide an exceptional journey for our volunteers, where they were given the right training and tools to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence.

Both our own volunteers and volunteers from partner organisations have developed their skills to be confident to give talks, lead bumblebee safaris, deliver ID training, and record their BeeWalk transects, make practical habitat improvements like planting or scything and inspire their local communities to care and protect our precious bumblebees.

Volunteers also contributed invaluable help behind the scenes at events, packing boxes and counting leaflets, inputting data and other administration tasks.

Our volunteers now have their own kits which include pots, nets, ID sheets, first aid kits and family craft activities and work together as a team.

Our volunteers recruited more volunteers and improved the Trust's ability to reach underrepresented groups in more communities across Derbyshire.

They are ambassadors for the Trust and are all bumblebee heroes.

“Once again a massive thank you from DCRT for the Buzzing Riversides training today and for sharing all your bumblebee knowledge with us! Fiona, the course was led fantastically and you did a brilliant job at keeping a mixed ability audience really engaged and interested!”

(Don Catchment Rivers Trust)

We are astounded by the positive attitude, determination and enthusiasm from all our volunteers. Because of their commitment to the Trust they are able to attend events independently and inspire and teach others.

They have inspired thousands of people across Derbyshire to love and care for bumblebees, particularly the rare Bilberry bumblebee.

Collectively the volunteers contributed an enormous amount of time to the project, equating to over £79,000 of in-kind match funding.

**50 PEOPLE
VOLUNTEERED
OVER 4200
HOURS TO HELP
BUMBLEBEES**





Buzzing Gardens

One of the most important things that people can do is plant for bumblebees.

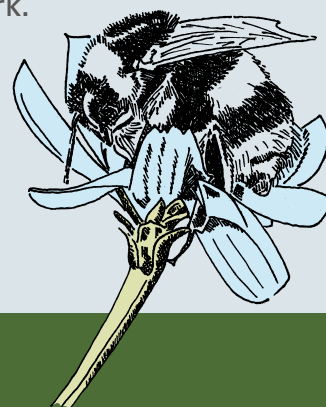
Increasing habitat, creating nesting sites and providing enough flowers for bumblebees to feed from is an important way people can take action for bumblebees.

Getting people to plant bumblebee-friendly plants was a key aim across all of the project events and talks and crossed over all of the work that we undertook in communities and schools. The project gave away hundreds of bumblebee friendly plants, worked with local community gardening groups and also attended large scale events to promote our upgraded "Bee kind" online planting tool.

Gardening is good for people's wellbeing and planting bumblebee-friendly plants provides a sense of worth and inclusion.

More flowers and wild spaces in urban areas is not only good for bees but people and has a proven positive effect on people's mental and physical health.

We delivered a wide range of activities that inspired and supported individuals, families and community groups to garden for bumblebees. **We recognised the need to make gardening easy for beginners and showed that a window box, balcony or container is just as important as planting in a large garden or local park.**



Plant giveaways

We gave away hundreds of bumblebee friendly plants, helping people make a start on their journey to making their spaces great places for bumblebees.

We worked with groups like Inspire Community Gardens and volunteers who propagated and grew plants for the project.

Volunteers also ran open gardens to demonstrate bumblebee-friendly gardening and raise money for the work of the Trust.

These provide a great opportunity for people to pick up practical ideas for planting, learn about bumblebees and even go home with a plant or two.

Plants like bugle were picked as they are easy to grow and are super-foods for bumblebees. **We gave away over 300 bumblebee-friendly plants to children and families in Chesterfield which provided a good start for those that are not familiar with gardening or may not have had the resources to buy their own plants.**

One plant each could make all the difference!

Seedballs

Bees only eat flowers.

The project made **thousands of seedballs** with community groups, families and schools and took the message of flower power as way of feeding our hungry bumblebees. This is a wonderful easy family activity to roll flower seeds in a mix of compost and clay. This fun, 'messy' and hands on approach worked well in to getting people of all ages to make a difference and plant for bumblebees.

Propagation workshops

Our first face to face events after lockdown were propagation training workshops for our volunteers in conjunction with one of the head gardeners, at Chatsworth.

The staff and volunteers learnt important skills and gained insightful tips and hints on how best to grow Bilberry plants and others from seed and how to take cuttings from established plants (ensuring all COVID-19 safety measures were met).

This event was a highlight for both staff and volunteers and, rain or shine, our volunteers always had a smile (even with a mask on). The feedback was very positive with **many volunteers saying it was their best day in 2020.**

People really missed meeting up so it was crucial to continue to find COVID-secure ways to train our volunteers.



Seed Collections

Seed harvesting provides an opportunity to preserve bee-friendly flowers to replant or share with friends and family.

Growing plants from seed can be a cost effective way of ensuring a garden is full of beautiful blooms year after year. With land owners permission, volunteers collected seeds from local parks and meadows to create additional habitat within the local area and also improve their own gardens for bumblebees.

Talks and demonstrations

We delivered over 50 talks and demonstrations about bumblebee ecology and gardening and also raised awareness about the importance of protecting the Bilberry bumblebee.

The talks provided a spark of interest, through primary schools to the University of the 3rd Age, local community and gardening groups, hundreds of people were then inspired to take action for bumblebees in their local streets, schools, parks and neighbourhoods.

As well as working with local groups we attended the RHS Chatsworth Flower Show (in 2017, 2018 and 2019). We talked to hundreds of people about gardening for bumblebees and how to use the Bee kind planting tool.

Bee kind

Bee kind is a free online gardening tool which helps people pick the best plants for bumblebees, all year round.

One of the project outputs was to upgrade it to include over 800 plants that can help gardeners pick the perfect bee-friendly flowers for their specific garden or community space.

People can tailor their choices if they log in and get recommendations for their soil type, sun direction and also learn how to improve their bee-friendly gardening score. People can get a score of how bee-friendly their garden is and can then improve their score when they add more plants to their spaces and create much needed forage and habitat for bumblebees.

The Trust worked with the Royal Horticultural Society to identify the best plants and volunteers contributed hours of their time inputting the data.



As well as being award winning, it proved very popular during lockdown and **we have had over 47,000 new users on the website**. The aim is to continue to have more schools, communities and individuals creating bumblebee friendly gardens, streets and neighbourhoods. beekind.bumblebeeconservation.org/



Bumblebee friendly planting

The project demonstrated how easy it is to make space for bumblebees in community and recreational areas like parks.

Working in partnership with Chesterfield Borough Council, volunteers planted up an empty bed in Eastwood Park, to be full of bumblebee-friendly plants which were selected using the Bee kind tool.

We also worked with Severn Trent Water and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust Junior Rangers to design a 'bumblebee bed' and interpretation board by the courtyard cafe in the popular Carsington Water Visitor Centre.

As well as planting and tending the flower bed, these young volunteers demonstrated how to make seedballs and shared information on how to garden for bumblebees.



“We have recently started a Junior ranger group at Carsington water ... we were visited by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust who taught them so much about bees, why they need help and why they are so special. They researched what plants would provide the best garden for year round flowers for the bees using the ‘Bee kind’ web tool. The bed is intended to act as inspiration for the many visitors that come to the site to show them what they can achieve to help wildlife in a small space.”

Diane Gould, People Engagement Officer – Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

*Volunteer celebration at the
lantern parade through
the streets of Bolsolver*





Buzzing Communities

A huge focus of the project was engaging with communities, schools, and individuals, reaching people in rural and inner-city areas and getting people to learn more and care more about bumblebees.

The project provided a wide range of free, family activities including the Great Bilberry Bumblebee Hunt, talks and exhibitions which all raised awareness of all bumblebees especially the Bilberry bumblebee.

The project delivered tailored land management advice and training to several landowners. We supported local authorities, prisons and landowners like the National Trust and farmers to improve their land for bumblebees and our communities who live and work in Derbyshire.

Staff and volunteers were trained in practical land management techniques including scything and monitoring grasslands and meadows.

One of the areas where we were able to engage with new audiences was in the towns and cities, across Derbyshire.

We travelled the county visiting local events with our stalls full of bumblebee information and activities. Village fairs, vintage car shows, apple days, well-dressings, dog trials and county shows, we did them all!

Bumblebees and prisons

The project developed an excellent working relationship with the Ministry of Justice, In particular, Foston Hall and Sudbury prisons.

This relationship is an important legacy as the sites offered huge potential for bumblebee habitats and opportunities for training of prisoners. Foston Hall prison has gone on to create a wealth of much needed habitats and it has not only helped bumblebees but also had a positive effect on the wellbeing of both staff and prisoners.

Initially we ran some bee ID training at the Prison. The women prisoners were really enthusiastic and starting catching bumblebees in nets and identifying them very quickly.

This training helped improve the skills of the prisoners and provide them with confidence to understand more about bumblebees and increased their desire to make the prison grounds more bumblebee friendly.

“Thank you, I have loved it! It has been such a different day and I want to write a diary about the bees I see.”

(Prisoner at Foston Hall Prison)

Our work at Foston Hall prison has been highlighted by the Ministry of Justice as an example of best practice. The project had a positive direct impact on raising awareness and created a legacy of staff and prisoners who are committed to taking continued action and making it more bumblebee friendly.

“This last year we’ve set up an orchard on our meadow area and created a couple of new haven sites throughout the prison. We also got a bit of extra funding through a celebration of wildlife award to help us develop more ecologically next year so it’s all looking positive!”

“I just wanted you to know that our bumblebee sites are doing wonderfully this year, we’ve set up four permanently now. We’ve also sewed a whole lot more to try and make everything even better!”

Prison staff



Scything

Scything is an important way to connect to the land and manage it in a sensitive and ecological way.

In partnership with the Peak District National Park Authority we created a wildflower meadow on the office grounds of their headquarters and it has become an important demonstration and training area for scything and to improve the grounds for wildlife and people.

Hello Bumblebee

Part of the adaptations to COVID-19 was to find new ways to engage with communities and so working with artists, Glassball, we developed 'Hello Bumblebee' exhibition.

Originally the exhibition would have had lots of hands on activities for children and families but because of COVID-19 restrictions we used empty shop windows on the high street with the use of new technology to reach out to people. We projected a short film with 3D mapping animation and messages through poetry to demonstrate how important bumblebees are.

The exhibition was successfully launched in an empty shop in the centre of Chesterfield in June 2021.

We hoped the exhibition simply interrupted people's journey at the shops and to make them just stop and think about bumblebees. This was a challenge without any staff management and the first time the Trust has tried engagement in this way. It has been successful in that we were able to leave it unattended.

We successfully found an innovative solution to engagement using technology and reaching communities in urban areas in new ways.

Buzzing farms and train stations

PTP worked with many partners to manage land to better benefit bumblebees. We established a key link with the White Peak Farmers group who were keen to improve their lands for wildlife.

"From the two on-farm events that we had and an evening talk there is no doubt that we did all learn a great deal about managing bees and the little changes we can make at farm level. Thank you for your time and effort put in that night and for educating us on the fascinating lifecycle of the bumblebee, its habitat and what we can do to help Pollinate the White Peak".

White Peak Farmers group

"The leaflet guides you up onto nearby moorland at Light Wood to view bee species, including the rare and endangered Bilberry bumblebee (native to the High Peak). Not many folks know about our special resident insect, so this is 'Hidden Nature.'"

Friends of Buxton Station

Working alongside the High Peak and Hope Valley Community Rail Partnership - Buzzing Stations was created where they have planted bumblebee-friendly flowers and increased awareness.

Really taking the Bilberry bumblebee to heart was the Friends of Buxton Station who have run bumblebee safaris, created artworks and encouraged the whole town to celebrate bumblebees and develop self guided walks to highlight our local treasure.



Cages on Hathersage Moor

Working with the Eastern Moors Partnership the project staff and volunteers planted 1000 bilberry plug plants across Hathersage Moor to increase future nesting and forage for the Bilberry bumblebee.

The plants were protected from grazing sheep and deer with cages designed to blend into the landscape and allow the plants to grow.

Small interpretation signs were put on them to tell walkers what they are for. The plants and bumblebees will be monitored by volunteers and provide much needed habitats. This work created a real buzz in the press with over 180 articles which undoubtedly help raise the profile and awareness of our rare treasure.



“The Eastern Moors Partnership have worked closely with the BBCT’s fantastic Pollinating the Peak Project over the last few years. Our volunteers and staff have benefitted from numerous training sessions on ID, habitat requirements, beneficial management practices, and generally encouraging us to see the landscape we care for through a ‘bumblebee’s eye view’.”

Community events and stalls

To reach our communities we tapped into existing events and they were planned and delivered to be accessible for everyone and reached by public transport. They were free to attend and included training and family activities.

The team of staff and volunteers were excellent at providing fun, inviting and high-quality engagement at events from talks to bumblebee safaris, community stalls and parades. A highlight event was the Sheldon Village Fair where the community were an inspiration for taking positive action for bees. As part of the project celebration events, volunteers made huge bumblebee lanterns and joined in the Christmas town parade through the streets of Bolsover.





Giant props to show the wonder of bumblebees



Buzzing Schools

A major part of the project was its formal education programme, with a specific aim of reaching secondary school students.

Inspiring them to pursue careers in science and become the next generation of bumblebee conservationists. The flagship element of this was the Bumblebee Education Experience (B.E.E.).

B.E.E. was a free, curriculum-linked education package, delivered in the classroom and supported by a range of online resources. The project also worked with local universities to offer careers advice and 'real life' project experiences.

B.E.E. proved to be an overwhelming success and the project engaged with **thousands of young people, including students from Special Educational Needs (SEN) schools.**



Bumblebee Education Experience (B.E.E.)

We aimed to inspire young people and address the disconnect school children have with nature by providing a 'wow' experience with a formal curriculum linked secondary schools programme.

It consisted of two main parts. Firstly an interactive show with giant props like a bumblebee nest and flowers that light up with UV and told the story of bumblebees.

The show challenged common bumblebee misconceptions, before exploring several of the bumblebees' extraordinary adaptations, such as how fast they beat their wings, how they see and the incredible relationships they have with flowers. It also explored our close connections with bumblebees and equipped students with simple ways to get involved in bumblebee conservation.

This was followed up with hands on experiments using hi-tech microscopes and activities in the classroom.



These workshops allowed groups of up to 30 students to use high quality equipment to delve deeper into the world of bumblebees. Students used microscopy to analyse pollen, develop their bumblebee identification skills and used ultraviolet light to uncover hidden floral markings and create field sketches.

During lockdown the project had to adapt as school visits were no longer allowed. The team focused on the online engagement tools which were well researched and well received by teachers. A field work lesson was also developed so it can be used outside of the classroom which is an important asset for teachers to provide students. PTP made this easier for schools so they could do the fieldwork on school grounds.



"Our School is for students with severe learning difficulties. I would definitely host the Bumblebee Education Experience again. The experience was entertaining and pitched at the right level for our students who enjoyed both aspects the assembly and workshops. Andy and Sally were very approachable and friendly, they understood the needs of our students and the organisation of the day went very well."

Teacher, St Andrews' Special School

University partnerships and Online resources

As part of our work to provide young people with the skills required to work in the conservation sector, we developed partnerships with local universities, such as De Montfort University and Sheffield Hallam University.

Over the course of the project we provided students with 'real world' projects to give them experience in working to a brief, with a conservation charity. The experiences ranged from designing a bumblebee themed gardening calendar to researching links between conservation skills gaps and the national curriculum fieldwork requirements.

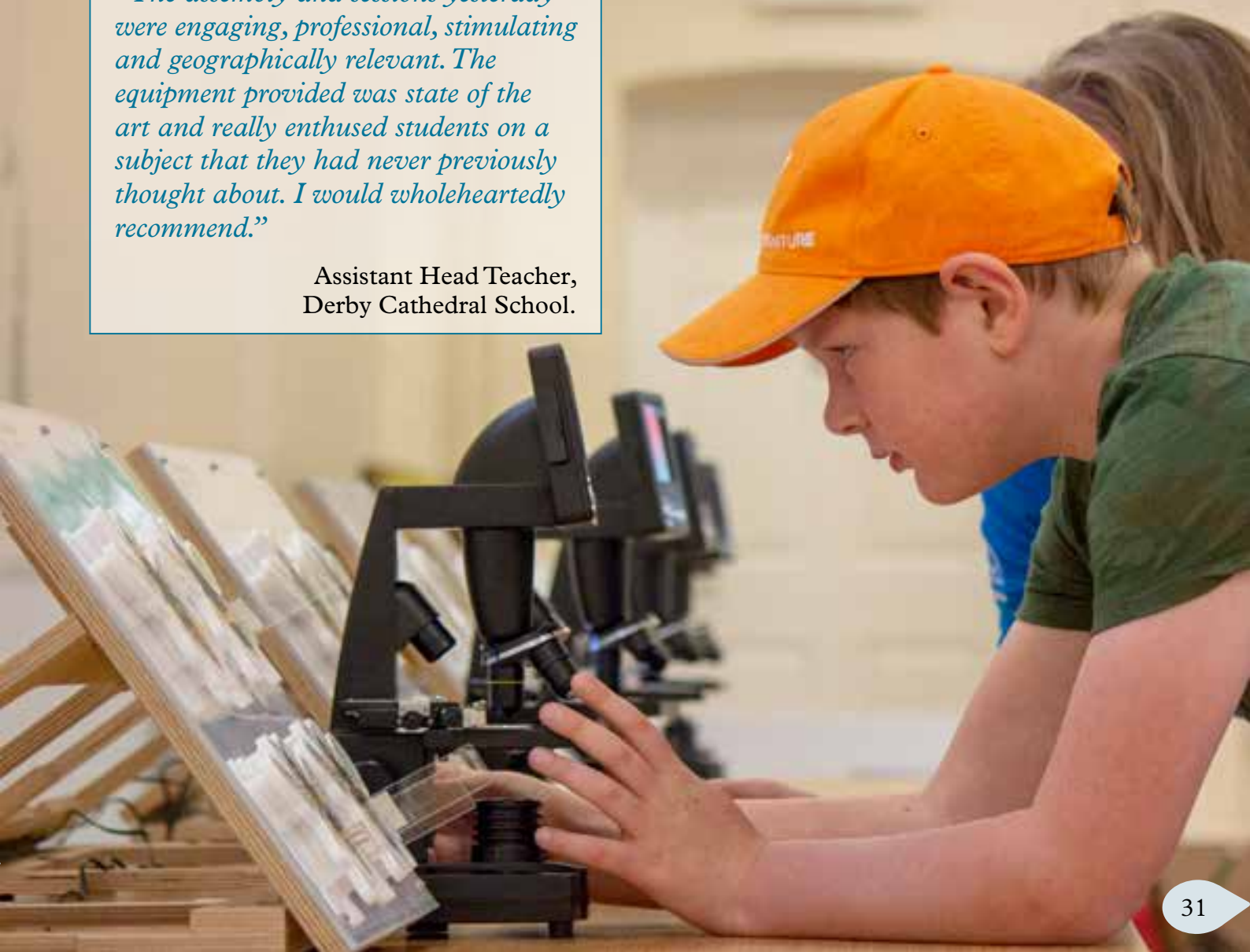
“The assembly and sessions yesterday were engaging, professional, stimulating and geographically relevant. The equipment provided was state of the art and really enthused students on a subject that they had never previously thought about. I would wholeheartedly recommend.”

Assistant Head Teacher,
Derby Cathedral School.

B.E.E. also developed a wide range of free online resources and key stage 3 lessons plans which included topics on Insect Pollination, Natural Selection and Survival, Static Electricity, Habitat Classification and Vegetation Survey.

The engaging educational videos also help aid teaching and cover Pollination, Basic bumblebee ID, Static Electricity and Evolution.

The online resources are an important way to make it easier for beginners, students and teachers to access information and to attract a wider audience than first thought possible.





**Bumblebee
Conservation
Trust**

Congratulations!

You've finally found the
Bilberry bumblebee...

...now go and join the
celebration!



**The Great
Bilberry Bumblebee
Hunt**



**HERITAGE
FUND**

Buzzing Tourism

The Peak District is a major tourist destination and attracts people from large cities like Sheffield, Manchester and Derby.

The project tapped into important highly visited tourism hot spots and events like well dressings and country shows to target large numbers of recreational visitors with fun, family friendly and inspiring activities to highlight the Bilberry bumblebee.

A key element to the tourism event programme was the Great Bilberry Bumblebee Hunt as well as attending events like Chatsworth Country Fair.

We were able to connect to many more diverse communities through the tourism especially after lockdown when many more families visited their local parks and moorlands.



Hunting for treasure

The Great Bilberry Bumblebee Hunt (GBBH) was to be a series of pop-up family trail events. These were to run over the spring and summer of 2020 at key public venues across the project area.

Each trail would highlight one common bumblebee, with fun activities and a hunt for the elusive Bilberry bumblebee herself. Aimed at social groups and active families and it was envisaged to be a high-profile awareness-raising campaign linked to legacy artworks that tell our bumblebee story:

*The Bilberry bumblebee is our little treasure – more precious than gold – sometimes hidden away and hard to find, but if you **look closely** enough in the right places she's there to see - and anyone could find her.*

Although originally nine events were planned the project had to adapt the hunt dramatically due to COVID-19 but the end results created a lasting legacy. The team successfully delivered one main event at Markeaton Park, Derby. The staff and volunteers had a great day as they were finally able to meet face to face with members of the public. All the volunteers were trained beforehand to take small groups around the trail and animate the clues and prompt questions and answers for the treasure hunt in a COVID-safe manner. **Over 200 people attended and enjoyed the hunt trail and activities.**

“Just letting you know how much I enjoyed the event on Saturday. It was really lovely to do something ‘in the flesh’ after so long cooped up inside at home.”

Participant



“Getting facts from all the bee posts was really, really, really, really, really good!”

“We only stopped for 10 mins and haven't left after an hour as enjoying it so much”!

Participants

Nine permanent carved wooded posts were created along with temporary posts with ceramic bees representing the eight common bumblebees and of course the special treasure – the Bilberry bumblebee. Each post has a clue and fun fact about bumblebees and an opportunity for people to take a rubbing. The posts all point to a key letter which also spells out BUMBLEBEE!

One huge benefit the project has now left is a **legacy resource of the permanent Great Bilberry Bumblebee Hunt trail** for people to use and keep on visiting. Derby City Council are really pleased to have the bumblebee artworks and posts and have said how well they are being used.

Activity boxes

As we were unable to run as many events the team developed GBBH activity boxes. **Each pack was carefully curated and contained activities and resources to make a Bilberry bumblebee.**

So that people could also run their own hunts, the boxes included a set of attractive and collectable bumblebee cards, a treasure hunt map, and an album to keep them in, all beautifully illustrated by local artist Becca Thorne.

Everything was included like pens, glue and other materials so no one would be excluded from taking part. This was expensive but very worthwhile in making the activities free for families and provided opportunities to reach new audiences successfully.

Volunteers packed 2000 boxes and 1600 were distributed to community groups and families via events, foodbanks and local foodbox schemes such as in Matlock.



*Training volunteers in
bumblebee identification*



Skills for Bees

Helping people to recognise the common bumblebees seen in our parks and gardens is an important first step towards developing identification and monitoring skills.

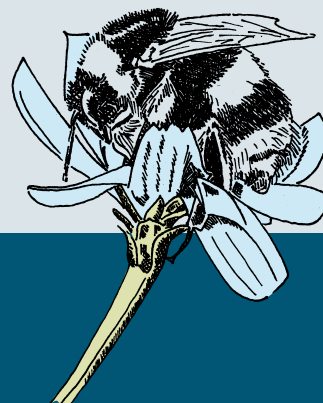
We trained individuals, community groups, volunteers and staff from partner organisations to identify, record and monitor both common and less common bumblebees, keeping a special look out for the rare Bilberry bumblebee (*Bombus monticola*).

The project has trained and supported volunteers to monitor bumblebees as part of our national BeeWalk survey scheme. We have seen 15 new transects set up during the course of the project. The data collected on these BeeWalk transects is fed into national records and is vital for monitoring bumblebee populations, giving us early warning of declines in abundance and distribution, but also highlighting where populations are recovering due to conservation work.

The project delivered several types of training including:

- Bumblebee ID training for beginners
- Intermediate ID training
- Train the Trainer
- Bumblebee safari training
- BeeWalk support and training.

The project also developed an app for mobile devices called - *What's that bumblebee* to help people identify the bumblebees they see when out and about.



Bumblebee Safaris

Bumblebee safaris are short guided walks with a focus on finding and observing bumblebees in the wild. They are one of the first steps in raising awareness of the importance and beauty of bumblebees with the general public.

WE DID
55
BUMBLEBEE
SAFARIS



We have developed training and resources to help people plan and lead safaris for all ages – and have run hands-on training days for staff and volunteers in partner organisations across the project area. Working with groups like MOSAIC allowed people from urban areas to explore nature within their own communities. This training has proven to be very successful in giving people the confidence to ‘just have a go’ and take away any fears of being stung and to recognise the difference between a bumblebee and a honey bee or a fly.

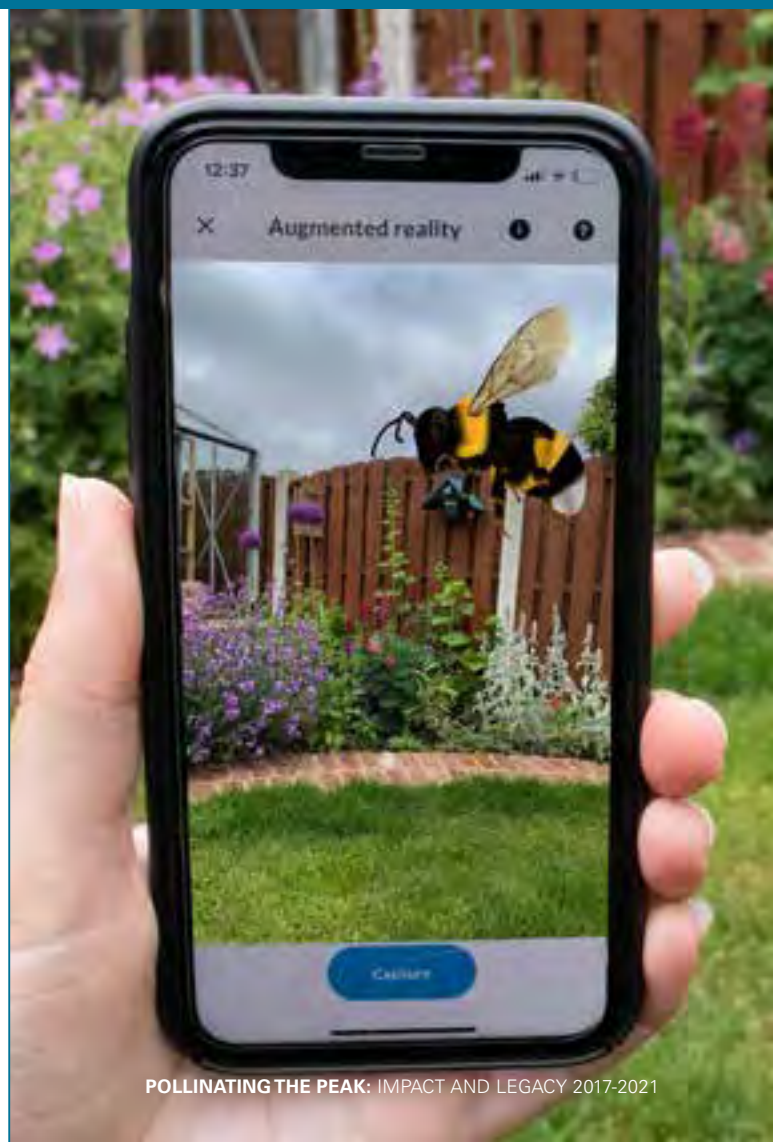
This has been a key legacy for the project and our volunteers can now take their own kit bag to lead bumblebee safaris in local parks.

What's that bumblebee?

The project encouraged people of all ages to be curious and **learn more about bumblebees**, regardless of where they were or how much bumblebee knowledge they had.

The ‘What's that bumblebee’ app, developed by the project, allows people of all ages to engage with and identify the UK's eight most common bumblebees. The app uses augmented reality, illustrations, images and species details to create a simple and accessible tool for all ages.

It is free and has had over 10,000 downloads and was incredibly popular during lockdown when many were discovering nature and looking at bumblebees more closely. People wanted easy to access information and information on their phones whilst out and about to check the species of the bumblebee they found in their local gardens and parks.



Interpretation and Artworks

We put bumblebees on the map of Derbyshire!

The project has developed a **wealth of resources** both physical and online that are **free and accessible**.

Interpretation was a key tool for the project to engage local people and visitors in a fun and informal way. PTP used a range of interpretative techniques from guided walks and interactive activities at events to sculptures, interpretation panels and trails.

The project worked with local artists to develop 14 legacy art pieces. This was again another adaption to find new ways of engagement throughout the pandemic. Ideally it would have been nice to have community input into the finished pieces but this was not possible with COVID-19 or the time remaining on the project.

The artworks are of mixed media such as wooden sculptures, willow, textiles and mosaics and have been installed at important visitor destinations across Derbyshire and the Peak District National Park and urban parks in Derby and Chesterfield. They were designed to be beautiful and stop people on their journey to spark conversations about bumblebees.

These physical resources have had an important impact on raising the profile of the Trust and our partners and also provide information and activities after the project such as a permanent bumblebee trail in Markeaton park.



Children in Derby excited about their bumblebee activity boxes



Lessons learnt

The project was lucky to have a very experienced and enthusiastic staff team with a mixed skill set to deliver such a large engagement project.

The project worked so well because it was place based - we took the project to the people directly into urban and rural communities.

Key and consistent messaging helped make it easy for people to feel empowered to take action and tell others how important bumblebees are.

Innovation is not always cheap but having the ability to 'try' new things proved a good way to manage the project.

Local connections proved invaluable in getting the project going and enabling lasting partnerships to flourish.

Clear, simple, accessible and consistent messaging is key to success for engagement for all ages along with well researched activities that were tested and provided quality engagement

The steering group worked well as a team to deliver common goals and make Derbyshire a haven for bumblebees.

The volunteers had an exceptional journey and felt valued and so thrived to become independent and confident in teaching and sharing their skills with others.

The project helped to prove that 'hard to reach' audiences are only hard to reach if the engagement programme is not tailored to their needs.

Impact and legacy

The project has worked hard on securing a lasting legacy for bumblebees in Derbyshire. **Our partners and volunteers have more resources and skills in understanding, creating and maintaining bumblebee friendly habitats.**

We have a team of over 50 volunteers who are very skilled in monitoring and recording bumblebees, delivering bumblebee safaris and events, practical habitat works and other engagement works like talks and providing ID training. The time and investment in their training and providing them with the right equipment has enabled local people in Derbyshire to be the real legacy.

PTP has undoubtedly had a positive impact and created a lasting legacy for all bumblebees but especially the Bilberry bumblebee. The project has raised awareness of this iconic species and worked with partners to create additional habitat and management plans that will protect its future in the Peak District.

The project has also had a huge impact on people in Derbyshire. More people know more and care more and have been inspired to plant and tell others about the importance of bumblebees.

Finding creative solutions to make the school activities and community events fun and engaging for all ages has been a real success of the project.

PTP is leaving a lasting impact on bumblebees. This includes a legacy of improved habitat for pollinators within the project area, a better understanding of population health through increased biological records, a wealth of interpretive and learning resources, skills for communities and individuals and greater capacity for volunteering for bumblebees in the local area.

Pollinating the Peak has had so many successes, but the enthusiasm and teamwork from everyone involved to make it happen has been wonderful. We found innovative and creative solutions and adapted to COVID-19 to ensure the project completed all of its original targets and so much more.



Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the funding and support from all our funders and people who made donations and the main funder of PTP, the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Without their commitment to conserving our natural heritage; namely bumblebees, the Trust's work across Derbyshire would not have been possible.



We would like to thank the Trust's CEO - Gill Perkins, for having the vision and imagination to create Pollinating the Peak and make the project a reality.

We would also like to thank all the Bumblebee Conservation Trust staff and Trustees who worked together as one big team to ensure the project's success.

We are grateful for the guidance and support from the Steering Group and other partners who provided a legacy past the project.

A very special thank you goes to our amazing volunteers who are the real heroes of the story and gave up so much of their time. They all continue to work with passion, enthusiasm, dedication and have a unique way of teaching others to love and care for bumblebees.

A huge thanks also goes to the PTP project team; Andy Benson - Education Officer, Annie Ives - Project Assistant, Eilidh Shields - Project Finance Officer, Rhodri Green - Community Engagement Officer and Sally Cuckney - Project Manager for their expertise, skills and creativity which enabled us to reach new audiences, make the science fun and accessible for so many people across our communities.

Finally, we are sincerely grateful to everyone who has been part of the project, you are the legacy of the project who will continue to protect all the UK bumblebees, especially the Bilberry bumblebee in the Peak District.

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