



## MEETING PAPER

Subject: Update on Bee Cafes and Bee Highways

Meeting: Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee

Date: Monday 18 March 2024

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~/NON-CONFIDENTIAL

### Background/Introduction

At its meeting on 19 February 2024, the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee requested an update from the Project and Committee Clerk on work she had been doing regarding bee cafes and bee highways.

### Details

The idea arose from the following article I saw in the December 2023 edition of the Suffolk Greenest County Community Newsletter:

#### **Paul Martin, Gt Bealings Climate Emergency Rapid Response Squad**

"Hi I'm Paul Martin, a retired Engineer, Climate Activist and 2023 Eco Shed of the Year winner! I'd been entering the Eco category of Shed of the Year every year since 2017 and eventually became the winner in 2023 with the Bee Cafe Shed! It appealed to the voters as it was an automated off-grid pollen factory that kept bees fed on their daily commute. I'm now building an urban bee corridor with 10 Bee Cafe planters funded by Woodbridge Town Council. The planters are packed with Bee friendly plants and are mostly self watering from captured rainwater, so far the Bees love them!"

Find out more about this great project by clicking here [Gt Bealings Climate Emergency Rapid Response Squad | Facebook](#)





The Gt Bealings Climate Emergency Rapid Response Squad has a really interesting Facebook page, which showcases the work they have been doing, and the Bee Cafes particularly drew my interest. Members of the group had designed and created planters (as pictured above) and filled them with a variety of plants loved by bees. The planters are also able to collect and store rainwater which can be slow-released into the planter, meaning they are mostly self-sustaining.

I reached out to Mr Martin from the group, who wrote the article above for the Greenest County newsletter, to make initial enquiries as to whether he would be willing in principle to work with us. He responded enthusiastically and said he would be happy to support the Council if it chose to proceed with the installation of Bee Cafes in its parks. He advised that Woodbridge Town Council had already commissioned some, but he was required to adapt the design for use in public parks, so would get back to me once he had a suitable design.

I took this to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting in January 2024, and they were provisionally supportive of the idea; requesting further information when it was available.

The Town Council owns enough parks and open spaces across the town to potentially create a 'Bee Highway', by installing Bee Cafes at a number of locations, thus giving bees regular places to rest and feed.

As part of its consideration of this idea, the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee also asked me to find out what native bee species can be found in this area and what can be done to conserve and support them. I have found data on our native bee species in this area and am collating information about what we can do as a Town Council, and also what members of the public can do to support bees in their own gardens. If Council is supportive of the idea, I am starting to think how we could run a public campaign about supporting bees. There is a wealth of information available online, particularly from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, and this also includes many activities which children can be involved with. It would be a really positive step if we could inspire young people to 'bee the change' and support our local bee population. I will continue to give this some thought and would welcome any ideas.

#### Recommendations/Decision

This meeting paper is to provide an update of the work I have done so far, and the ideas regarding bee support and conservation which I will be bringing to the relevant Committees and Sub-Committees to consider in due course.