

Alresford given title of “bee friendly” town

May 31, 2022



Efforts to support bees in Alresford and at its railway station have led to the town becoming one of the first in the country to be officially named a ‘Bee Friendly Town’.

The status has been granted by the [Bee Friendly Trust](#) with Alresford one of eight towns to receive the accolade nationally.

The [Bee Friendly Trust](#) launched the scheme - which aims to transform concrete jungles into wildlife havens - in 2021, with the first awards granted last week.

There are nine criteria that towns have to meet in order to attain ‘Bee Friendly’ status which includes planting up roundabouts, encouraging bee friendly schools, pubs and businesses, putting up homes for wildlife, planting wildflowers and being pesticide-free.

To achieve this, Alresford’s main projects focused on areas near to the old station house with a wildflower area to attract bees, and other habitats created at the village allotments and playing field. A roadside verge was sown with wildflower seeds and a bee hotel was mounted on the station house wall.

- [Thetford station volunteers get funding for swift and bat boxes](#)
- [HS2's new wildlife habitats in Warwickshire spring into life](#)
- [World Bee Day: HS2 launches British Black Bee conservation project](#)

The parish council and [Greater Anglia](#) station adopters have also worked with the [Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership](#), the local primary school and [Cobnuts Co-operative](#) at Alresford rail station to create an extensive wildlife garden with a specially-commissioned bee friendly sculpture and planting, which in 2020 earned them a Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) 'Bees Needs Champions' Award.

Parish council chairman and volunteer station adopter, Frank Belgrove, who received the award on behalf of the community, said, "We're so thrilled to hear this wonderful news! So many people, young and older, in the community have played a part in encouraging pollinators to flourish in our town.

"Bees are vital to us all and this excellent award status for our community will increase awareness of their importance and help us do even more to help and support them."

Dr Luke Dixon, co-founder of the [Bee Friendly Trust](#), said, "Alresford is a wonderful example of the community coming together to make their town a greener, friendlier, uplifting place to live.

"The work in and around the station, led by committed community volunteers, makes it a delightful place to step off a train, or wait for the next one to come along."

Jayne Sumner, [Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership](#), said: "Congratulations to everyone involved. We are pleased to have played a part through our support of the wildlife garden at the station.

"Across Essex, rail stations are becoming very important spaces where we are supporting the volunteer station adopters in creating havens for wildlife – and Alresford station is one of the best examples of this supporting all sorts of pollinators and even becoming a refuge for slow worms."

"We look forward to continuing to work alongside the adopters at Alresford station who have made it such a special, lovely place to be."