About the Trust

Saving the sound of summer
Bumblebees are familiar and much-loved insects that pollinate our crops and wildflowers. We have a vision for a world where bumblebees are thriving and valued.

**Saving the sound of summer**

24 species in UK
8 endangered
2 extinct

Bumblebees are an important and cherished component of our biodiversity. Several species are threatened with national extinction. We aim to ensure that populations of these species have a long-term future in the UK. Our more common bumblebee species contribute significantly to our economy through the pollination of crops. Pollination is vital for many of the nation’s wild plants and it helps to maintain affordable five-a-day fruit and vegetables. Bumblebees also support the wider ecosystem through pollinating a diversity of wild plant species.

Our income is made up through fundraising, membership, donations and legacies. Every penny we receive contributes to the Trust’s work delivering education, partnerships, projects and influencing others to help save the sound of summer.
The Bumblebee Conservation Trust was founded in 2006 by Professor Dave Goulson and Dr Ben Darvill using their research background due to serious concerns about the ‘plight of the bumblebee’. In the last 80 years, our bumblebee populations have crashed. Two species have become nationally extinct and several others have declined dramatically.

We are one of the youngest conservation charities operating across the UK and the only one dedicated solely to the conservation of bumblebees. We are one of the UK’s leading invertebrate charities and have strong technical expertise and an excellent track record of practical conservation work, awareness raising and public engagement.

The UK is home to 24 species of bumblebee. Two further species have become extinct in the last eighty years. In 1980, an Atlas of distribution of bumblebee species was created. It found that, compared to records from the turn of the last century, over a third of bumblebee species had declined in their range by more than 70% in the UK. Today eight of our 24 species are endangered.

**Who we are**

**vision**

A world where bumblebees are thriving and valued

**mission**

To increase the number and distribution of bumblebees
The Trust is a science-led organisation. Our policy stances and our practical conservation work are informed through close evaluation of the latest scientific research and best practice.

We base our work across the UK, historically where the rarest bumblebees are found. Our national ‘Bees for everyone’ project was a pivotal project and changed the face of the Trust forever!

We now have projects nationally across the UK.

Our projects demonstrate how our work can make a real difference to the plight of the bumblebee.

Making a difference

• We have been working in partnership with Natural England, Rethink Nature a group of leading species conservation organisations, and many more.

• Our advice on land management and gardening for bumblebees is in huge demand.

• Our national BeeWalk scheme is growing each year with plans to expand the number and distribution of BeeWalk transects.
Governance and staff

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is supported and governed by a board of dedicated and skilled trustees. Their professional experience covers a wide range of areas, including conservation, science, finance and business. Our conservation staff are located remotely across the UK, based in specific project areas. Our head office staff, based in Stirling, Scotland and Eastleigh, Hampshire make up our Finance & Operations, Fundraising & Membership, Communications & Marketing and Conservation & Science departments. A dedicated and integrated team to ensure the Trust is sustainable and fit for purpose.
In the last 80 years, an astonishing 97% of our wildflower habitat has disappeared from the countryside, which has left bumblebees with little to feed upon and is strongly correlated with range declines in bumblebees. This is largely due to intensification of agriculture, increased use of pesticides, climate change, and pests and disease in wild pollinators.

As well as the loss of extensive flowering meadows, many hedgerows have been removed to create larger, more manageable fields – also removing ideal nesting and hibernating places for bumblebees. So in short, key pollinators are hungry and homeless, with some species becoming or already extinct.

This is important not just because bumblebees are charismatic and charming – they are essential to so many of our crops, and the very colours of the countryside we are familiar with, not to mention the key role they
play in producing much of the food that we eat. Through the pollination of many commercial crops such as tomatoes, peas, apples and strawberries, insects are estimated to contribute over £600 million per annum to the UK economy. If bumblebees and other insect pollinator declines continue, the extremely high cost of pollinating these plants by other means could significantly increase the cost of fruit and vegetables. Bumblebees also help pollinate many wildflowers, allowing them to reproduce. Without this pollination many of these plants would not produce seeds, resulting in declines in wildflowers.

**We aim to:**

- Enhance the understanding of bumblebee ecology and conservation.
- Increase the quality and quantity of bumblebee habitat.
- Inspire and enable a diverse range of people to take action for bumblebees.
- Be an effective and sustainable organisation.
Our volunteers are vital to our work at the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. With their help we can deliver our message about the importance of bumblebees and how to help their survival to everyone across the UK. Individuals are making a huge contribution to BeeWalk, which relies on volunteers to collect data on the abundance of all bumblebee species in the UK. Volunteers walk a monthly transect between March and September identifying bumblebees.

By volunteering for the Bumblebee Conservation Trust they also make a positive contribution to the conservation of bumblebees, wildflowers and the many other parts of our natural world that depend on bees. Over the past few years, volunteers have raised funds, provided Bee ID training presentations and helped to raise awareness at many public events.
We believe in mutually beneficial relationships with all of our partners and each relationship is individually tailored to meet the needs of the company we are working with. We like to meet with potential business supporters and really understand their business and how we can best work together.

Some of the ways businesses support us include:

- Becoming a business member;
- Cause-related marketing and donating a % of sales to the Trust;
- Making us Charity of the Year.

Our brand is extremely important to us. We understand our partners wish to be associated with us and can request to use our brand on chosen products.

Business supporters range from florists, food producers to retailers selling bee themed products.
We know our work is effective and is making a difference to the plight of the UK’s bumblebees.

We have the support and commitment of 1,000s of members and over 1,000 volunteers, and have worked with over 400 farmers and landowners to create, restore and enhance flower-rich habitat for bumblebees. Further successes include over 108,000 followers across Twitter, Facebook and Instagram; major upgrade to Bee kind - our free online gardening tool with nearly 700 bee-friendly plant suggestions; and our ongoing partnership with Rethink Nature and Back from the Brink.

We aim to continue to build on these successes and grow bigger and brighter!
Why we need your help. We cannot help the UK’s bumblebees without your support!

**Bee Supportive** – support the conservation of all bumblebees, rare or common

**Bee Aware** – raise awareness and increase understanding about bumblebees and the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits which they and other pollinators provide

**Bee Sustainable** – ensure the Trust is sustainable, fit for purpose and able to respond quickly to challenges and change.

It has been found that bumblebees enable a greater yield of tomatoes than hand pollination.

Great yellow bumblebee’s found here...
Thank you for your support

We are an independent charity that relies on the generous support of the public. Please help us continue to add much needed flowers to our landscape. There are lots of ways you can get involved.

For more information visit: bumblebeeconservation.org/support-us

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