



## Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E) Interim Report 2024







# KUSUMA TRUST UK

## INTERIM REPORT

### 1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

1.1. **Name of Organisation:** Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT)

1.2. **Date Submitted:** 27/06/2024

### 2. GRANT INFORMATION

2.1. **Project Name:** Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E)

2.2. **Grant Period:** 23/10/2023 – 28/02/2025

2.2.1. **Reporting Period covered by this report:** January 2024 – June 2024

### 3. REPORT

#### 3.1. Progress on Intended Outcomes

**Updates grouped under the impact headings given in our concept note:**

#### **Better understanding of urban bumblebees:**

We are pleased to report that we have set up ten new BeeWalk transects as part of this project, with several more already in the pipeline. BeeWalk is our national citizen-science scheme, where volunteers walk the same fixed route once a month between March and October to gather bumblebee data for us. To date, we have also carried out three bumblebee blitz days with another eight planned for the summer. Blitzes involve us inviting local people (who want to learn and expand their knowledge of bumblebee ID) and recorders to carry out surveys with us. We have successfully recorded Brown-banded carders (in all three blitzes) and a Shril carder bee (on one blitz).

#### **Engaging diverse communities with climate action:**

B.E.E has already undertaken 21 events, including 13 bumblebee identification days (five online and eight in person) to over 180 people. Other events include two school visits (to over 180 pupils) and six community events where we either had a stall, ran walks and talks or delivered seed ball making. In total, over 530 people have been engaged from diverse backgrounds, age ranges and economic backgrounds.

A key part of this development year is community consultation, to inform the future project's direction, aims and focus areas. We have contacted faith groups, community groups, climate action groups and members of the public to gather feedback and suggestions. To date, we have received feedback from 70 people. Strong partnerships are also being built with a diverse audience, such as NHS Mental Health Services, Cody Dock, Lesnes Abbey Wood, Hackney Buzzline, Barking and Dagenham Borough Council, Tower Hamlets Cemetery, Abney Park Cemetery, Wanstead Quakers, Sustainably Muslim, Ridgeway Users, Crossness Engines, South London Waste, London Wildlife Trust, London Beekeepers

Association, Butterfly Conservation Trust, The Conservation Volunteers, London Natural History Society Recorders and Natural History Museum. In addition, we are currently exploring the concept of an innovative bumblebee display which will be accessible for different language speakers.

### **Green spaces for climate change mitigation:**

At the start of our development year, we set ourselves the target of giving habitat advice on a minimum of 50 hectares of land. We are delighted to report that we have already advised on over 75 hectares of land, offering guidance on increasing floral diversity, abundance and seasonal length of flowering across six sites. We are assessing several sites to see which ones will be suitable for case studies, including Crystal Palace Park, Wanstead Park and Barking and Dagenham Country Park. We are planning on implementing some of our advice for Crystal Palace Park and Barking and Dagenham this autumn with volunteer work party days.

### **Using nature to address growing climate problems:**

We are currently conducting focus surveys on climate change anxiety and mitigation, and during the autumn and winter we will be designing leaflets in accordance with the survey results. In autumn we will also be holding a community event in collaboration with Hindu Climate Action. This will involve singing, dancing, a bumblebee walk & talk and curries (which will be made using vegetables commonly pollinated by bumblebees).

## **3.2. Achievements and Successes**

There has been immense support and enthusiasm for the project from local recorders and experts, who feel a targeted bumblebee/ bee/ pollinator project is urgently needed in east and southeast London. We have also been welcomed by community groups, other conservation charities, members of the public and their support has been incredibly encouraging. We have a monthly newsletter which now has over 130 subscribers, this gives details of the previous month's activities and plans for the next month including blitzes, community events etc. in which people can engage. We are currently planning and developing artistic engagement along the lines of community-designed tiles and pollinator pit stops.

## **3.3. Implementation Challenges**

Due to the large amount of interest in the project we have had to prioritise working with existing groups and organisations who already have an established infrastructure. Some community groups and allotments have also expected us to investigate who owns certain pieces of land, but this is unfortunately not within our capacity, so we have prioritised working with groups who have landowner permission.

## **3.4. Quotes**

"I attended the Thamesmead B.E.E blitz this year after seeing the event advertised on Eventbrite. I enjoyed the experience so much I signed up for the newsletter and thereafter booked the blitz at Bexley. The blitz's are highly educational, informative and a lot of fun. We learned about the importance of bumblebees, identification and ecology. We were especially very excited to have seen the rare 'Shrill Carder Bumblebee!' I along with many attendees were inspired to create more bee friendly gardens and corridors, do our own surveys, inform others and attend further blitz's. Volunteers brought their own experiences and knowledge and had all their questions answered by Nikki and Scarlett which benefited the whole group. In my opinion these blitz surveys involving volunteers are a necessary and invaluable service in finding rare Bumblebees, assessing their habitats and in educating the public through participation. The Blitz's are highly enjoyable, well communicated and professionally organised. Looking forward to the next B.E.E blitz!"

-Lloyd, Bexley Resident who attended our bumblebee blitzes (volunteer).

"Best event I have ever attended with my two boys."

-Father of two boys who attended our Wanstead Park bumblebee walk (member of the public).

"Scarlett and the staff from the BBCT have been immensely helpful and supportive of our work on the Thamesmead Corridor Project in SE London. Through the B.E.E project, they have helped to set up a regular bee survey walk on the Pollinator Corridor site within the Southern Marshes where Shrill carder

bees have been found. The information through these surveys will provide invaluable data to monitor this species and support our campaign to save the adjacent Crossness Nature Reserve."

- Uy Hoang, Ridgeway Users (community group)

"Presentations began with a talk by Scarlett Weston from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Scarlett outlined the Trust's national aims in the context of pollinator decline, and its role in coordinating citizen science projects. She used the Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E) project as an example in which urban populations of bumblebees in eleven London boroughs are being surveyed, including rarer species such as the Shrill carder bee (*Bombus sylvarum*). This data will be used in collaboration with other conservation groups, local communities and planners to inform and promote habitat conservation and the development of green corridors. The talk was beautifully illustrated, delivered with enthusiasm and authority, and attracted the longest list of questions of the day."

-Mike Noble, extract from the article "The AES Young Entomologists' Day 2024 at the Natural History Museum" published in the Bulletin of the Amateur Entomologists Society (conference attendee).

### Photos:



Brown banded carder bee © Scarlett Weston



Shrill carder bee © Jeremy Gould

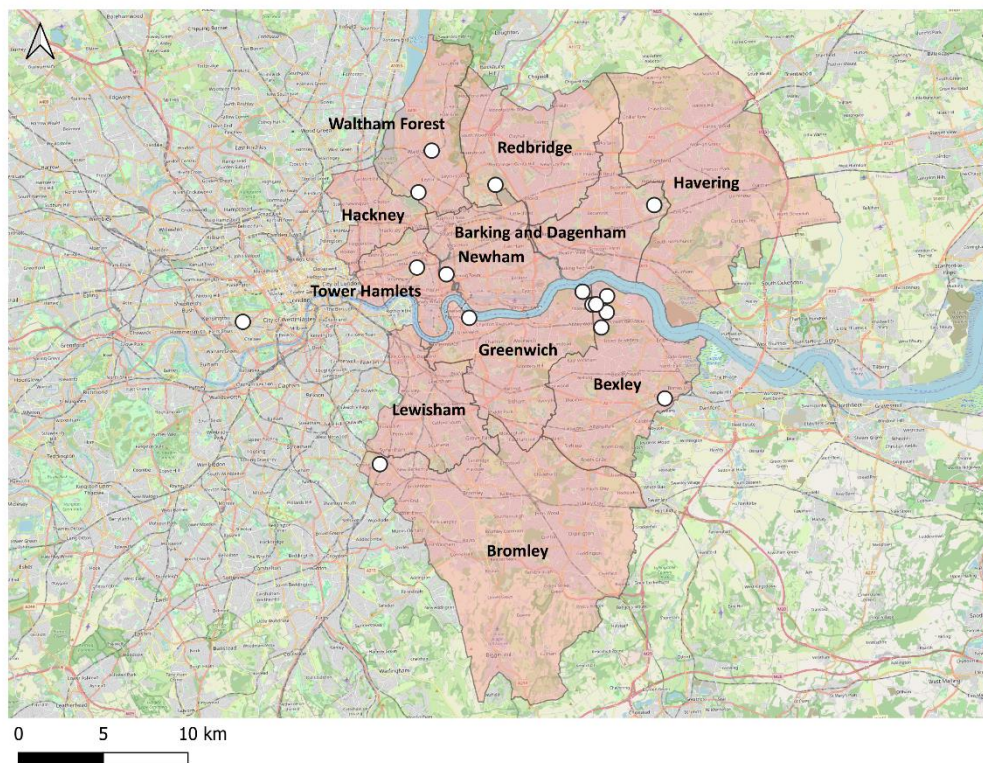


Sighting the shrill on a Thamesmead Blitz day © Nikki Gammans



## Maps:

### Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E) - Events

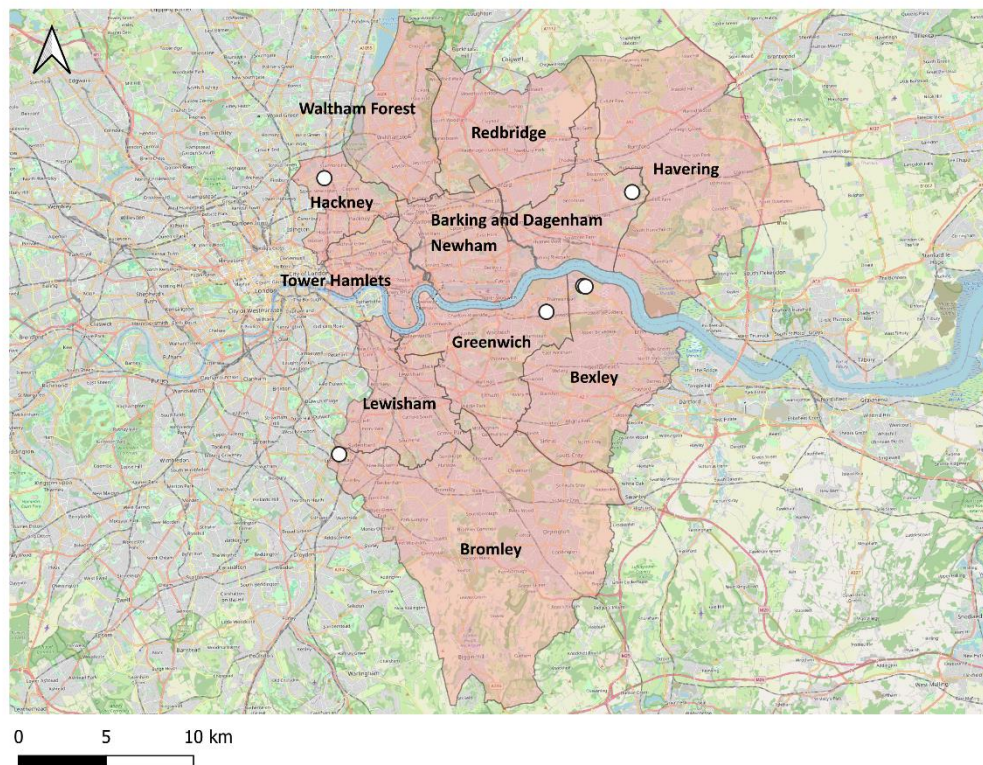


#### Key

- Events
- B.E.E Boroughs
- (c) Open Street Map

Figure 1. Locations of the 16 in-person events delivered 6 months into Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E).

### Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E) - Landowners



#### Key

- Landowners
- B.E.E Boroughs
- (c) Open Street Map

Figure 2. Locations of the 6 landowners receiving habitat management advice 6 months into Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E).



### Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E) - BeeWalks

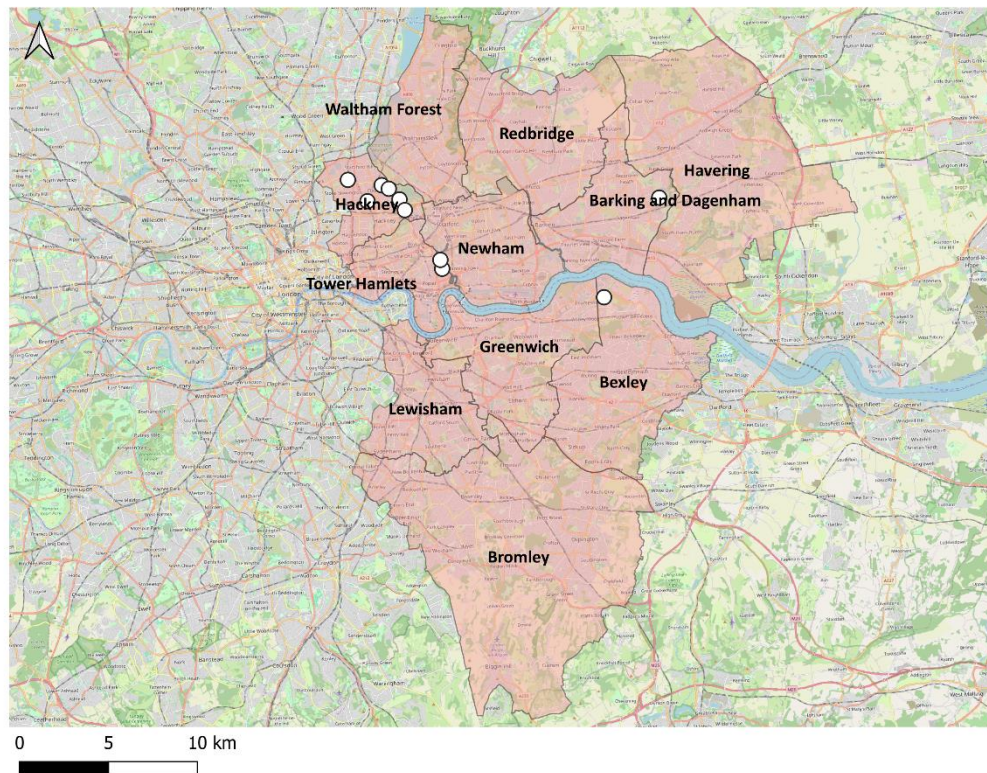


Figure 3. Locations of the 10 new BeeWalks established 6 months into Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E).

### Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E) - Bumblebee Blitzes

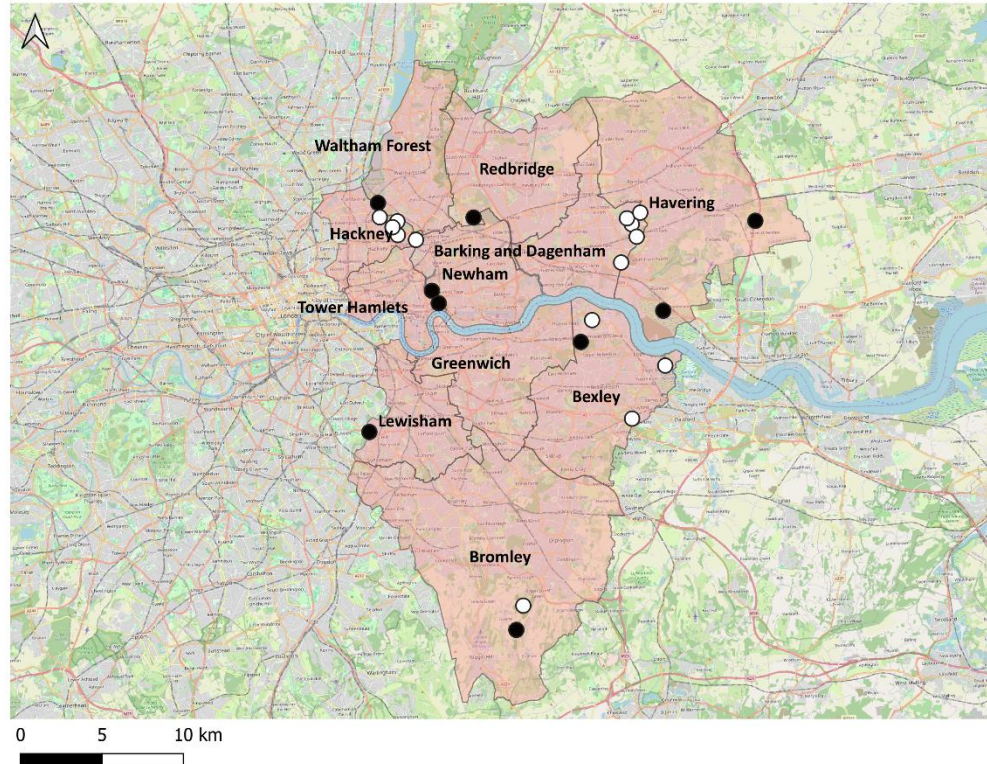


Figure 4. Locations of the bumblebee blitzes undertaken (white) during the first 6 months into Buzzing in the East End (B.E.E), and the locations of bumblebee blitzes planned in the future (black).