



Chet Valley set to be Norfolk's first pollinator corridor



Today, 25 March, Bergh Apton Conservation Trust had planned the official launch of the Chet Valley B-Line, had not coronavirus supervened. This is an ambitious project to stop pollinator decline, including the much-loved bumble bee, by creating a pollinator-friendly corridor along the River Chet. We will work to improve habitats for bees, hoverflies butterflies and other pollinating insects along a 17km stretch of the Chet - from its source in Poringland to Hardley, where it meets the Yare. This year, the Bergh Apton Conservation Trust nature reserve, a key site for pollinators, will also double in size.

The idea of the B-Line is to provide corridors of pollinator-friendly habitat to facilitate their dispersal and survival in a changing environment across an otherwise adverse landscape. The threats are a combination of habitat fragmentation, agricultural intensification (including pesticide use) and climate change. Loss of pollinators is a conservation disaster and has huge economic consequences for global agriculture. Pollinator corridors work by providing 'stepping stones' of habitat, preferably no more than 500 m apart, with flowers for nectar and pollen, food plants for larval stages, suitably structured vegetation for protection from predators. There are many aspects of land and garden management that can help. We plan a programme of events and activities to engage local communities and help them participate, as soon as it is safe to carry on with them.

The project is led by Bergh Apton Conservation Trust (BACT), but closely involves Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT), South Yare Wildlife Group (SWYG), Norfolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG). It is funded by the Water, Mills & Marshes Landscape Partnership Scheme administered by the Broads Authority and is supported by Buglife (National Invertebrate Conservation Trust), Norfolk Naturalists Trust, The Woodland Trust and is part of the RHS Its Your Neighbourhood scheme. Loddon, Chedgrave, Bergh Apton and Poringland Parish Councils have formally given their support, others have nominated Parish Councillors to work with us. More news soon! Follow us on Facebook or email us at chetvalleybline@gmail.com