

[Press release: A boon for bees as Environment Agency trials pollinator project](#)

The beloved bumblebee is one of dozens of species set to benefit from an Environment Agency project to improve habitat for pollinators.

A pioneering pilot scheme in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire sees Environment Agency teams adapting their routine work in a bid to boost biodiversity.

The teams, who maintain thousands of kilometres of river and reservoir banks that serve as flood defences, have been experimenting with the frequency and timings of maintenance work, like grass-cutting, on the banks to see what best preserves the wildflowers and herbs bees need.

They have also compared the results of removing the grass-clippings or leaving them in situ – and have found that removing them helps plants like clover, ox-eye daisies, dandelions and buttercups flourish.

Tapping into expert guidance from a consultant botanist and entomologist, the trial aims to increase the native bee population including bufftail, solitary, carpenter, mining and leaf-cutting bees, as well as butterflies, moths, and other pollinators.

This season marks the third year of the 5 year pilot – and also marks the third annual [Bees Needs Week](#), an initiative by government, conservation groups, industry and retailers to raise awareness of simple things anyone can do to support pollinators, like growing more flowers and leaving patches of their garden to grow wild.

At the same time, biodiversity officers have also been making the most of EA-owned buildings like pumping stations and unused land to install bee boxes, hotels and havens made of natural scrap material – many of which were occupied almost immediately.

Nikki Loveday, biodiversity officer with the Environment Agency, said:

It's our mission to protect people and wildlife and this is a brilliant example of how being flexible and innovative can help us achieve more for our environment.

We're adapting how we carry out vital maintenance on our flood defences and looking for any opportunity to support our precious pollinators and the wider ecology.

Ultimately, if we can make small changes at no cost we'll aim to share our learning and inspire others to do the same to have a big

impact.

Meanwhile, a series of workshops for staff are helping them learn more about pollinators and how to identify and create simple habitats. More than 50 staff have already putting this training to use in their daily work – for example, drilling holes in wooden posts for carpenter bees when fixing fences.

Entomologist Steven Falk, an expert in bees, hoverflies and other pollinators, who has delivered the training and advised on the project, said:

Bees and other pollinators put approximately a third of all the food we eat onto our plates, and it's so important we support them by protecting and enhancing their habitat.

We know from experience that doing the right things, like enriching their nesting and foraging spaces, will increase the population of our pollinators. Even small changes can make a big difference of lots of people do them at lots of sites.

The Environment Agency is in a good position to contribute since it oversees so much land and it gives me great pleasure to work with them to give a boost to our bees.

For more on small actions you can take to support pollinators, visit <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/bees-needs/>.

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Press release: Pension directors banned from running companies for 21 years

Gleeson Bessent Trustee Services (GBTS) and Gleeson Bessent Trustees (GBT), based in Preston, were wound up in the public interest by the courts in March 2017.

Investigations by the Insolvency Service into the conduct of the directors has led to the four directors giving disqualification undertakings totaling 21 years , which means they cannot run a company directly or on behalf of someone else.

Roger Bessent, of Lytham St Annes, and Tracy Park, of Freckleton, were directors of GBTS, while Roger Bessent, Matthew Bessent, of Preston, and Neil O'Donnell, of Poulton-le-Fylde, were all directors of GBT.

GBTS provided pension trustee and administration services to numerous occupational pension schemes and GBT was the trustee of three of those schemes.

In their undertakings, the four former directors accepted they failed to ensure GBTS and GBT properly performed their roles as a Trustee of the pension schemes and as a result, member's funds were exposed to greater levels of risk than that specified in standard guidance issued by The Pensions Regulator (TPR).

The former directors accepted six instances of unfit behaviour, including failing to comply with pension legislation and TPR guidance on what is expected of Trustees, as well as operating with a lack of transparency designed to persuade or encourage the public, who were not sophisticated investors, to transfer pension funds into pension schemes which relied on high risk investments.

With bans effective since last November, Roger Bessent is disqualified for 9

years, Tracy Park for 5 years and Neil O'Donnell for 3-and-a-half years.

And more recently, Matthew Bessent was disqualified for 3-and-a-half years effective from 27 June 2018.

Scott Crighton, Group Leader from the Insolvency Service, said:

Companies handling money on behalf of others have a duty to ensure that funds are properly managed.

Directors who fail in these duties will be investigated and removed from the corporate arena for a lengthy period.

Notes to editors

Gleeson Bessent Trustee Services Ltd (CR0: 07235880) was incorporated in April 2010 and Gleeson Bessent Trustees Ltd (CR0: 08207804) was incorporated in September 2012.

In giving their disqualification undertakings, Roger Bessent, Tracy Park, Matthew Bessent and Neil O'Donnell did not dispute that:

- GBTS and/or GBT failed to comply with the terms of the Governance Statement of a pension scheme of which they were Trustee
- GBTS and/or GBT failed to comply with the statement of investment principle ("SIP") of a pension scheme of which they were trustee
- the Pension Regulator has issued guidance for Trustees outlining responsibilities placed on scheme Trustees and explaining what Trustees need to do in order to comply with the law, the Pensions Act 1995 and the Pensions Act 2004. GBTS and/or GBT failed to comply with that guidance or the provisions of the pension legislation
- GBTS and/or GBT made investments in companies where the accounts and instruments did not reflect the investment made. GBTS and/or GBT failed to carry out their functions as Trustees/administrators by failing to ensure that sufficient share certificates to support investments were received and/or to satisfy themselves that there was sufficient evidence of the existence of the investment
- GBTS and/or GBT operated with a lack of transparency designed to persuade or encourage members of the public, who were not sophisticated investors, to transfer pension funds into pension schemes which relied on high risk investments
- GBTS and GBT offered contrived and artificial 'employment' to members in order to circumvent what was considered to be the guidance at the time requiring the need for members to be employed by the sponsoring employer of the occupational pension scheme

For further details on Matthew Bessent's disqualification [click here](#).

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a

court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Press release: Queen approves nomination to Suffragan See of Crediton](#)

The Queen has approved the nomination of the Venerable Jacqueline Ann Searle, BEd, MA, Archdeacon of Gloucester, to the Suffragan See of Crediton, in the Diocese of Exeter. This is in succession to the Right Reverend Sarah Elisabeth Mullally, DBE, MSc, DSc, RGN, who was translated to the See of London on the 8 March 2018.

Notice: E C Drummond (Agriculture) Limited: application made to abstract water

The Environment Agency consult the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by