

The Making of a Bee Bed

Once we have received your site information regarding the Bee Bed Design Checklist, and have an idea of the aesthetic that your group is aiming for, we send you out your wonderful peat-free and organic plants.



The planting plan shows you exactly what plants you have (plants also come labelled in the box), how many of each, and a suggestion for where they will work best in the Bee Bed. The information in the 'Positions' column gives an indication of the height of the plants, with taller plants generally labelled for the centre or back and shorter plants at the edge or front. The 'Winter leaf?' column is useful for thinking about how the Bee Bed will look in the colder months – it's good to get a reasonably even spread of plants with leaf in winter. Consider also the 'Flowering time/colour' information for how to compose the Bed's colour palette.

Variety	Quantity	Position	Winter leaf?	Flowering time/colour
<i>Brunnera macrophylla</i> 'Jack Frost'	8	Any		
<i>Geranium</i> 'Rozanne'	6	Any		
<i>Helleborus</i> 'Yellow Lady'	10	Any	x	
<i>Viola cornuta</i> 'Alba'	10	Edge	x	
<i>Cirsium rivulare</i> 'Trevor's Blue Wonder'	3	Centre		
<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i> 'Red Dwarf'	6	Middle		
<i>Helenium</i> 'Sahin's Early Flowerer'	4	Middle		
<i>Vernonia crinita</i> 'Mammuth'	6	Middle		
<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i> 'Lavendelturm'	6	Middle		

With the Bee Bed prep out the way, the exciting moment has come to lay out your plants and get planting (and watering)!



The Bee Bed maintenance plan provides you with detailed guidance on how to look after your Bee Bed for many years to come.

Task	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Notes
First year only Twice weekly visits to carry out: • watering • weeding • maintain bed edges													Plants will need a good soaking each time you water (10 seconds for each plants with a watering can/hose is good). Unless there is significant rain, water three times a week. Plants will need less watering as they become established. Weeding is extremely important whilst plants become established. In general, a hoe works well although tougher perennial weeds such as docks, creeping buttercup and grasses will need to be uprooted by hand. If your bed is dug into the ground, you will need to maintain the 'trench-cut' edges you have cut using an edging tool and edging shears – this will neaten the planting space and reduce encroachment of surrounding vegetation.
First two years Fortnightly visits to carry out: • weeding • maintain bed edges • inspecting pests and plant diseases • watering as required													Weeding continues to be very important. Unless there is significant rain, water twice a week. Remove pests by hand if necessary – refrain from spraying.
Once in early spring: • cut back dead foliage and flowerheads, excluding evergreen plants • apply compost													In March/April (from the following year after planting), cut back dead foliage and remove. Leave healthy foliage of evergreen plants. Apply peat-free, general purpose compost around base of plants – if bark mulch has been used, scrape this back before applying compost and then repositioning mulch.
From third year Monthly visits to carry out: • weeding • maintain bed edges • inspecting pests and plant diseases • watering as required													Weeding remains extremely important, but your efforts in previous years should have reduced their numbers! In general, a hoe works well, although tougher perennial weeds such as docks, creeping buttercup and grasses will need to be uprooted by hand. Unless there is significant rain, water once a week. Remove pests by hand if possible – refrain from spraying.
Once in early spring: • cut back dead foliage and flowerheads (excluding evergreen plants) • apply compost													In March/April, cut back dead foliage and remove. Leave healthy foliage of evergreen plants. If you have planted woody shrubs, cut back only last year's growth. Apply peat-free, general purpose compost around base of plants – if bark mulch has been used, scrape this back before applying compost and then repositioning mulch.
Once every 3 years in early spring: • divide plants to give them a new lease of life, and reduce the size													After roughly 3 years, plants will need to be divided e.g. if they begin to produce smaller or fewer flowers, they develop a dead centre, or they require staking (depending on the plant). Divide plants by cutting smaller section/s out with a



Following this guidance, your Bee Bed will flourish and provide lots of food for pollinators!



One last but important thing: The Bee Bed signage! This ensures that passers by know what the Bee Bed is all about. The QR code provides lots of information on the project, as well as information on how to get involved.

