

CREATING WILDER STREETS

Gardens in Britain cover an area larger than all of the country's nature reserves combined. There is an amazing opportunity to create a network of connected wild spaces that allow wildlife to move more freely and safely.



Imagine a street where all houses and buildings have dedicated spaces for feeding and sheltering wildlife...

Then imagine that street connected to another one and another one, all with spaces for wildlife...

In time, there would be an entire network of streets across the country allowing wildlife to pass through both urban and rural areas freely and safely...

This is a guide on how to create a neighbourhood nature recovery network, with advice and images from members of Wilder Portsmouth, the pioneers of Wild Streets. Wilder Portsmouth is a Wilder community group funded by Southern Co-Op.

Before you start

Due to the corona virus pandemic, please adapt our activities to adhere to the most recent government guidelines and help prevent the spread of the virus. Actions suggested in this toolkit are suggestions only and should be modified in a way that suits you and the community best.

Wilder starts on your doorstep

The first and easiest step to creating a Wild Street is to show your wild side to the world. You can make space for nature in your back garden, but it's the

front of the house that everyone is going to see from the street. There are lots of ways you can create colourful, wild spaces that are buzzing with life - right where passers by can enjoy them and pick up inspiration to take home with them.

No matter what sort of space you have on your doorstep, you can make space for nature. Even if you don't have a front garden, you can place plant pots on your doorsteps, hang window boxes, or grow a vine plant along the wall. Our resources at hiwwt.org.uk/wilder-actions can help you with advice on how to get started.

Current Wild Street residents have come up with some ingenious solutions for smaller spaces. From bin shelters with green roofs, 'nature swap' stalls for neighbours to share plants and seeds, to using chalk messages to point out the wonderful wild flowers that appear in our pavements or using a board to share ideas and wildlife sightings with their neighbours. Even the streetlamps are decorated with 'missing species' posters to highlight species declines and signs with information about Wild Streets and our Wilder Strategy.





Encouraging neighbours to go wild

If you don't know your neighbours already, this is a great way and reason to reach out to them and get to know them a little better.

Starting a face to face conversation is the easiest way to engage with your neighbours about creating a Wild Street, you could try knocking on their doors, or saying hello next time you walk past them, but this may not always be possible or yield a positive response.

Having a nature swap station, a Wilder plaque in your window, or posters on street lamps will pique the interest of those passing by and will get a conversation started about making space for nature. Andy Ames, a Wild Street resident, and leader of Wilder Portsmouth, noted that people were taking pictures of his bin shelter and that's how he started talking to people. If you can, ask your immediate neighbours if they'd like to create a hedgehog highway with your mutual fence.

You may want to start a WhatsApp group, social media group, or a mailing list on e-mail so that you can stay in contact with one another and map your

Wilder plaques

Once you've committed to creating a Wild Street, the Wildlife Trust will award you with a plaque that you can stake in your front garden or window sticker for your front window so that you can proudly show your neighbours why you are doing this.

Wild Streets are so much more than gardening.

Wild streets are all about connections. Just as important as joining up the small spaces for wildlife, is coming together with other people to create positive changes for your street, community and future. As well as practical actions on the ground, you could join forces to call for your local council or others to play their part and help towards nature's recovery.



progress in connecting your houses to form a Wild Street. Wild Street resident, Jenni, recommends choosing a form of communication that you think will work best for your community and don't be afraid of trying different methods.

Wilding community spaces

Not all streets are solely residential. You may have schools, churches, shops, and other businesses with space that may be able to support wildlife. Some of this land may even be owned by the council. Approaching the stewards of the land and engaging in a conversation about how the land could support more wildlife would not only help in expanding a Wild Street but would also inform more people who visit that school, church, or business from outside the area about the initiative. Here are some tips for approaching these organisations:

- Do your research. Find out who are the key decision makers who will grant you permission for your project.
- Reach out to all potential collaborators and arrange a face to face meeting.
- Think carefully about how best to persuade the organisation to take action.
- Come to the meeting with your own suggestions but keep an open mind and embrace their suggestions.
- Establish an ongoing relationship and keep in touch.
- Bring community support. The more people who care about the issue, the more persuading power you will bring to the table.

Top advice:

Jenni advises to "start small and see what happens. My Wild Street has been a success because people really care about nature, especially what's in their own back yard, and they love having like-minded people to talk about it with."

Part of #TeamWilder

This guide is brought to you by Team Wilder - an initiative led by at Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. Become part of the team and join a growing movement of people taking action for nature locally.