

Hedgehog Awareness Week 2023

Tuesday 2 – Monday 8 May

Social media toolkit

Hedgehog Awareness Week is a national campaign where people across the country are encouraged to make space for our favourite prickly pal, hedgehogs, in their gardens.

Hedgehog Awareness Week is supported by the [British Hedgehog Preservation Society](#) (BHPS) and [Peoples Trust for Endangered Species](#) (PTES). These organisations are working nationally to help one of our favourite mammals survive into the future.

Why do we need to help hedgehogs?

Hedgehogs in Britain have undergone a long historic decline, with only around 1 million left in the UK. They are an important indicator species, which means their population numbers reflect how well wider ecosystems are doing and the health of the local environment in general.

Most recent reports show clear differences between urban and rural hedgehog population. In urban areas, hedgehog numbers show a stable population that might be recovering, highlighting the importance of gardens, green spaces and local action for securing a future for them in these areas.

In stark contrast, rural populations remain low and in the last two decades, continued to decline by between a third and three-quarters nationally. The largest declines are seen in eastern areas of England.

How you can help hedgehogs

We can all help hedgehogs in our local areas by making our gardens wildlife and hedgehog friendly, leaving the right food out for them and encouraging other people to do the same.

Let them in to your garden – simply make a 13cm square gap somewhere along your garden boundary, if you can make more than one, that's even better.

Talk to your gardener or grounds maintenance contractor about how they can change the way they work to help protect and encourage hedgehogs on your land. Leaving areas of long grass, avoiding strimming along the bottom of hedgerows and leaving log or brush piles from coppicing or tree pruning are easy changes to make. Give them [strimmer warning stickers](#), which are free from British Hedgehog Preservation Society.

Spread the word – use our free social media toolkit (see below) on your own social media accounts to promote National Hedgehog Awareness Week and show your support with followers, customers and local residents. We have also drafted an internal article which you can adapt for your own use.

Become a South Gloucestershire Hedgehog Hero – keep your support going beyond National Hedgehog Awareness Week - join our South Gloucestershire Hedgehog Hero Campaign which will help open 3,000 gardens to hedgehogs.

What is the council doing to support hedgehogs?

Our Grounds Maintenance Team have been trained to operate in a nature friendly way. We also have Wildlife Champions within the team who are creating log piles for hedgehogs across 40 council owned sites and installing hedgehog boxes in public open spaces. We have also added hedgehog aware stickers on all our strimmers to remind grounds staff to check for hedgehogs before cutting back vegetation.

We are installing hedgehog boxes across several of our sites including our Broad Lane Depot in Yate and Alexandra Way Care Home in Thornbury. We have also installed hedgehog boxes in our ten closed churchyards.

We have partnered with the Avon and Bristol branch of CPRE: The Countryside Charity, on the Hedgerow Heroes project to carry out assessments on all council managed hedgerows. We're training volunteers in hedge-laying and working with our Grounds Maintenance Team to manage our hedges better for nature.

We are working with allotment holders to make council owned allotments more wildlife friendly by phasing out pesticides, planting fruit trees and installing hedgehog boxes.

Messages for internal newsletters/staff

Help our hedgehogs

The urgency of climate change and the impact it will have on all of us is more apparent than ever. It also highlights that we must all play a part in protecting nature and reducing our own impact on the environment wherever we can.

Wildlife in the UK is declining and is affecting the fragile ecosystems which we rely on for food, shelter, clean air and water.

Taking part in National Hedgehog Awareness Week is a really simple way to help protect and restore nature in your area. All you have to do is open up your garden to nature, in particular our prickly pals - hedgehogs. Simply making a small hole (around 13cm wide and high) somewhere in your garden boundary will help hedgehogs travel safely while looking for food and water.

Improving your garden for hedgehogs gives them access to water, shelter and food and will help all forms of wildlife. It will also help improve the health of your plants, the quality of your soil and even reduce some common pests – hedgehogs eat a range of different insects as well as snails and slugs.

Social media graphics – Hedgehog Week



Social media posts - #HedgehogWeek

Use the posts below during Hedgehog Awareness Week (2-8 May)

Facebook, LinkedIn etc.

1. Join us and help raise awareness of #HedgehogWeek – we can all do our bit to help hedgehogs everyday – give them access by making a 13cm hole in the bottom of your fence, leave long grass areas and build a log pile to give them shelter. Join other people across the UK and report your hedgehog hole at www.bighedgehogmap.org/.
2. Did you know hedgehogs eat a wide range of food including insects, slugs and snails? So, helping hedgehogs, also helps other wildlife and plants and improves the health of your garden or land. #HedgehogWeek
3. Hedgehogs are the UK's only spiny mammal, but they're in danger of extinction in the UK. Help hedgehogs by supporting #HedgehogWeek with us.
4. #HedgehogWeek If you leave food out for hedgehog, use meaty dog or cat food – they love it and it's closer to the food they find in the wild. Don't leave out bread or milk as it can make them ill.
5. Leave areas of long grass for hedgehogs to hide in and look for food. It also encourages a wider variety of plants and insects to your garden.
6. Support #HedgehogWeek by reporting when you see a hedgehog at www.bighedgehogmap.org/

Twitter

1. We're helping hedgehogs for #HedgehogWeek – are you?
2. Open up your garden to nature and support #HedgehogWeek
3. National Hedgehog Week aims to help bring hedgehogs back from the brink. Find out more #HedgehogWeek
4. Help a hedgehog find a home with piles of branches or logs in your garden. #HedgehogWeek

5. Help our hedgehogs - avoid using pesticides and herbicides in your garden to help hedgehogs find more food. #HedgehogWeek
6. Seen a hedgehog? Record it on the BIG Hedgehog Map with Hedgehog Street at www.bighedgehogmap.org

More information

Hedgehog Street has a lot more information and resources for helping hedgehogs.

- Download free posters:
[How to help hedgehogs 1 Hedgehog-Street](#)
[How to help hedgehogs 2 Hedgehog Street](#)
[Can you help? Hedgehog Street](#)
- Download the free leaflet:
[Hedgehog-Street-Top-Tips-2022.pdf](#)
- Download free hedgehog hole template:
[Hole-template-V2.pdf Hedgehog Street](#)