



St Luke's Campus Biodiversity Trail



University
of Exeter

The Biodiversity Trail has been devised to help students, staff and visitors enjoy a route around the St Luke's Campus that can help demonstrate the impact of some of the sustainable practices. It can start/finish at any point around the route.

Map key

Insect Palace,
Richards Building

Naturalised Bulbs,
Quad Tree Stands

Wildflower Meadows

1 Swift Boxes, Giraffe House

2 Buddleia and Bird Boxes,
Baring Court Car Park

3 Bug Hotel,

Front of Medical School

4

5

6



Visiting the campus

The Line 4 bus stops at the St Luke's Campus. Limited parking is available on campus. For further information on parking and directions to the campus please visit:

[exeter.ac.uk](https://www.exeter.ac.uk) 🔍 'directions'

Cross Keys is situated on the St Luke's Campus and offers a range of options, whether you're dropping in for a mid-morning coffee or meeting friends for lunch. Please see our website for opening times –

[exeter.ac.uk](https://www.exeter.ac.uk) 🔍 'eat and shop'

Guidance for visitors

- Please remember that the grounds and roads on the University are private and you visit at your own risk
- Children must be supervised at all times
- Please keep to paths, do not disturb the wildlife or pick flowers and do not cause damage to property, trees plants or lawns
- We do not allow barbecues, fires or camping
- No skateboarding, roller-skating, aggressive cycling or any other activities which cause damage or annoyance
- Please listen to any additional advice given by the University staff
- Access may be restricted or permissions withdrawn at any time
- Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times
- Dog owners are required to clean up after their dog



The grounds at St Luke's Campus are recognised as integral to the heritage, visual amenity and contribute to the biodiversity of both the city and the South West. The campus displays examples of the National Collection of Azara (a South American semi-evergreen shrub).

The management of the campus incorporates a balance between formal horticulture and sustainable practices that can support and promote biodiversity, for example:

- Reduced mowing regimes around the margins of amenity open space.
- Introducing and expanding areas for naturalised bulbs and wildflower planting.
- Balancing native and non-native in revised campus planting schemes.
- Introducing bug hotels and insect palaces to suitable locations throughout the campus.
- Introducing bird and bat boxes to suitable locations on campus.
- Creating woodland piles from materials generated from tree works on campus.
- Reducing chemical weed control in planted areas through use of bark mulch and mulch generated from recycled green waste on campus.

1 Insect Palace, Richards Building



This is one of a number of wall mounted insect palaces which provide habitats for a range of insect species and lifecycle stages.

Insects play a very important role in healthy ecosystems. Bats, birds, amphibians and mammals include insects in their diets. Some insects are predatory on plant pests eg, ladybirds on aphids. Many are also important plant pollinators for both ornamental and commercial crops.

2 Naturalised Bulbs, Quad Tree Stands



Spring flowering bulbs such as crocus and daffodils flower early. As temperatures begin to rise and light levels improve, insects become active and the Spring flowering bulbs provide an early pollen source.

The bulbs provide excellent early season colour. As the flowers fade, the grass is left uncut until the plants leaves build up energy underground, for next year's display. This provides opportunities for a more diverse range of grass and grassland species, as well as a broader range of habitats.

3 Wildflower Meadows



St Luke's Campus has been expanded with an additional floor added to the South Cloisters building. The re-landscaping of the campus introduced the opportunity to create new habitats.

Wildflower meadows were created with mostly native annual species, to provide a long period of flowering including cornflower, corn marigold, corn poppy and scabious. These generally require careful management, using low fertility soils and cutting/raking off late Summer to build up the seed bank.

4 Swift Boxes, Giraffe House



Swifts are summer visitors to the UK from warmer climates such as Africa. Sadly, in recent years, their numbers have been in decline.

In an attempt to encourage swifts to visit the St Luke's Campus, swift boxes have been mounted on the Giraffe House building.

These boxes also contain speakers which can send out a call in the Summer, as birds arrive to breed, to let them know this is a safe place to nest.

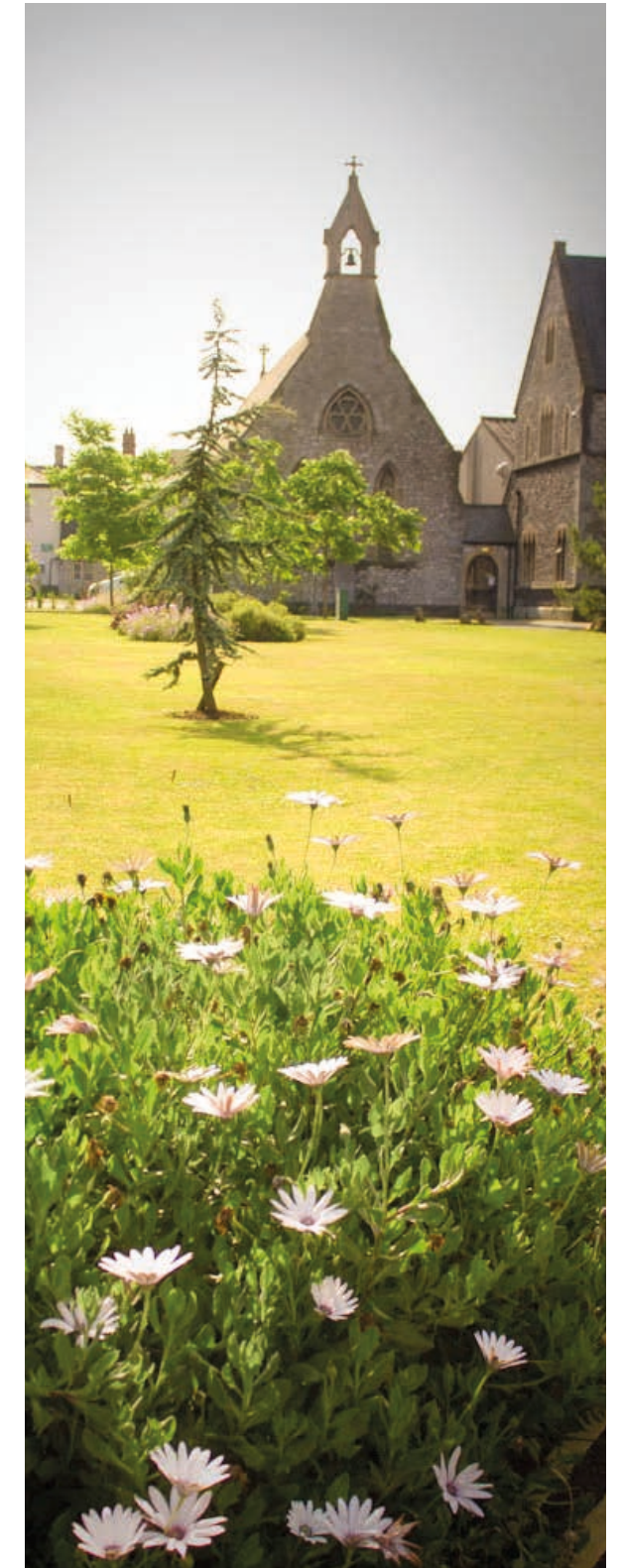
The proximity of insect palaces and wildflower meadows also means that there is plenty of insect activity, the swift's principle food source, nearby.

5 Buddleia and Bird Boxes, Baring Court Car Park



Species of buddleia are also known as butterfly bushes, as a consequence of their flowers being well known for attracting a wide range of butterfly species to feed on the nectar.

In addition to the planting, bird boxes have been introduced to adjacent trees. Principally these are used by smaller bird species such as blue tits and great tits.



6 Bug Hotel, Front of Medical School



The Grounds staff at St Luke's Campus are aware that some 'rubbish' can be turned into valuable treasure. At this location they have recycled materials found on campus, including old pallets, bricks, bottles and cans, with natural materials to create a bug hotel.

The habitats created not only provide a home for insects and bugs, but they are also used by amphibians such as frogs and toads. We hope that they could also encourage other species such as slow worms onto campus.

Summary

This trail is by no means comprehensive but is designed to provide a representative flavour of the estate management techniques that can help sustain a variety of ecosystems. It also tries to convey the type and range of biodiversity that this supports.





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