

Petition: Make Guildford Pesticide-Free 4 August 2021

“We the undersigned petition Guildford Borough Council to Phase out the use of pesticides, including glyphosate, in Guildford.”

The petition organiser’s supporting statement accompanying the e-petition reads as follows:

“Every year, our pavements, streets, parks, playgrounds and other open spaces in Guildford are sprayed with pesticides. In particular, glyphosate is used across the borough on a regular basis. Inevitably, we as Guildford residents come into contact with these pesticides, as do our children, pets and local wildlife.

Pesticides (including glyphosate) have been linked to an array of health problems, from neurological disorders such as Parkinson’s disease, cancers such as non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma to autism in children. Vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women and the elderly are most at risk of being affected.

As well as damaging human health, pesticides harm urban biodiversity. Pesticides are key contributors to the dramatic reductions in insects such as bees and other pollinators. Glyphosate has been shown to affect bees’ ability to navigate, their sleep, larval development, and immunity to deadly infections (1). Glyphosate also kills flowering plants that bees and other insects rely on. This reduction in pollinators has far-reaching consequences for both wildlife and people.

Pesticides contaminate our water supply and harm aquatic life. They also poison our soils and harm soil invertebrates such as worms (2).

Urban pesticide use is unnecessary. Many towns and cities around the world have banned them (3). Pesticides are banned in all green public spaces across the whole of France. Copenhagen and Seattle manage their public spaces without pesticides. Councils across the UK are showing it can be done too with over 60 councils now implementing programs to phase out their use. Locally, Waverley borough, Petersfield and Chichester have all committed to phase out pesticides whilst trialling alternatives.

Well tested, cost effective and safe non-chemical alternatives to pesticides exist and are already being used in other towns locally (4). Using alternatives, or simply leaving some weeds in place to flower (where they do not cause a hazard) would have a positive impact on biodiversity and human health in Guildford.

We are asking Guildford Borough Council to phase out the use of pesticides, including glyphosate, in Guildford.

Please support us, sign this petition, share it with your friends and help make our town pesticide free.

This petition has been organised by Guildford Environmental Forum, a voluntary organisation that works to promote environmental protection in and around Guildford.”

Please visit our website to find out more: <http://www.guildfordenvironment.org.uk>

Further Information:

1. Pesticides are particularly harmful to bees, studies show.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/sep/24/monsanto-weedkiller-harms-bees-research-finds>

2. Vital soil organisms being harmed by pesticides

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fenvs.2021.643847/full>

3. Countries that have banned Glyphosate

<https://www.baumhedlundlaw.com/toxic-tort-law/monsanto-roundup-lawsuit/where-is-glyphosate-banned-/>

4. Alternative Weed control solutions

<https://www.pan-uk.org/alternatives-to-herbicides-a-new-guide/>