

Hardwick Climate Action Group – Biodiversity Team

Proposal for increasing Biodiversity in Hardwick through a few trial areas on Parish Council land around the village

Increased biodiversity in our village will provide additional habitat and diverse food supply for butterflies, insects, pollinators, bats and birds – all vital for ensuring a healthy ecosystem. Half a mile of verge with increased biodiversity can produce 20kg of nectar per year – enough to support millions of pollinators that, amongst other things, ensures the security of our food supply. 97% of wildflower meadows have been destroyed since the 1930s so every little bit of new habitat is vitally important.

In addition to benefiting the climate and local wildlife, creating wild flower spaces and increasing the biodiversity within the village will also have numerous advantages for local residents. One of the main advantages is the educational opportunities it will provide. We hope to involve the primary school and pre-school, as well as the uniformed organisations and other groups of children and young people in the village, in the planting and maintenance of the areas. Hands-on learning is particularly beneficial, and engaging children when young about the benefits of biodiversity is very important for ensuring these areas are protected and promoted for years to come.

We seek permission for use of the land. We will organise the preparation of the land, raise funds to purchase seed, and help with the sowing of the sites. We will provide an aftercare plan, so that the sites will continue to regenerate year after year and provide a lasting legacy.

Adapted from "On The Verge Cambridge"



Meadow
areas at
Cherry
Hinton
Hall



A. Introduction:

We hope to be able to demonstrate that small areas can be set up and maintained in such a way that biodiversity can increase in our village. These areas should provide interest and pleasure to residents and, we hope, inspire them to take on some of the ideas in their own gardens. If successful, additional areas around the village can be added later.

We will put together a plan that is achievable given the time and energy available. It is hoped that we can involve the school children and other village residents over time.

We are alert to the need to make all parts of the village look tended and deliberate. This will be achieved by use of appropriate weather-resistant aluminium notice boards explaining the aims at each location. Mowing of narrow strips around areas of long grass and wild flowers should indicate that the plants have been left to grow deliberately - this has already been seen in some of the front gardens around Hardwick.

Area 1: Bramley Way

Area 2: Blenheim Way

Area 3: Footpath between Egremont Road and a branch of Limes Road

Area 4: Area between Ashmead Drive and Sudeley Grove



Examples of front garden areas in the village already displaying wild flowers, as seen on 7th & 8th July 2021





Examples of front garden areas in the village demonstrating the effect of mowing round the edges. As seen on 8th July 2021

B. Detailed plans:

Area 1: Bramley Way

This is a lozenge-shaped area of grass, surrounded by paving, and with narrow green strips on east and west sides. There are few houses facing it, and no trees growing there.

Proposal:

Remove grass from the two narrow strips and seed with suitable wild flower mixes. Both strips are too narrow to be of other use.

Replace grass with wild flower mixes at the north and south ends of the lozenge, leaving the central area still available for recreational activities.

Provide a notice board.

Note: These areas would be large enough to give a good idea of what a sown area of wild flower meadow looks like, and how it attracts creatures, which might help make the biodiversity case if we later apply to spread the treatment to other areas in the village.

Maintenance:

Central area of the lozenge be cut as now by the Parish Council.

Border strips and ends of the lozenge be cut in late summer, once wild flowers have set and shed seeds. Material to be removed for composting (e.g. on Fields of Grace site, where composting is already established by Hardwick Climate Action Group members).



Area 2: Blenheim Way

There is a small triangular patch of ground at the north end. The north and west sides of this are already provided with good natural vegetation. At this time of year, the overhanging trees provide a lot of shade and so the grassy area is very patchy. It might well be better to turn it over to suitable wild flowers.

Proposal:

A suitably chosen wild flower mix be seeded across the area - best done in spring or autumn.

The narrow edge closest to the road to be cut occasionally to show the area is tended, and a suitable notice board added.

Maintenance:

Occasional monitoring

Cut in late summer, once wild flowers have set and shed seeds. Material to be removed for composting (e.g. on Fields of Grace site, where composting is already established by Hardwick Climate Action Group members).



Area 3: Footpath between Egremont Road and the branch of Limes Road that leaves the main Limes Road

Proposal: The area is bounded on the east by the trees along the side of the recreation ground and already has a good range of plants in the hedge and on the ground. To protect it, provide a notice board, and arrange that a narrow strip along the edge of the path be mowed.

Maintenance: Mow a narrow strip along the edge of the path no more than fortnightly. Remove cuttings for composting.



Area 4: "Wild" area between Ashmead Drive and Sudeley Grove

This is an area the Parish Council is allowing to stay largely untended. It is overgrown, with trees, undergrowth, and a single path through the middle. Trees cut down because they are considered a risk are left as log piles in the area. It has high value for wildlife compared to other parts of the village.

Proposal:

Designate a "wildlife corridor" along the length, possibly marked by a fence, and with explanatory notice boards at the Egremont Rd end and by the footpath linking Ashmead Drive and Sudeley Grove.

Add a few young native tree species here to replace the old ones that have been felled. Seedlings raised from the trees already growing there can be used.

Maintenance:
As it is at present.



Recent views from northern and southern ends.

C. Funding

Potential sources will be identified, and application made, as appropriate, when more detailed plans have been agreed and costs worked out.

<https://www.anthonybrowne.org/nature-funding>

<https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/environment/biodiversity/pebble-fund> (applications are invited once a year, so we may apply in 2022)

D. References:

Cambridge City Council parks and open spaces - Biodiversity Toolkit

<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/s55963/Appendix B Parks Biodiversity Toolkit.pdf>

Plantlife Road Verge Campaign

<https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/management-guidelines>

https://www.plantlife.org.uk/application/files/7916/1191/6240/Road_verge_guide_2021_WEB.pdf

<https://www.onthevergecambridge.org.uk/>

<https://wildseed.co.uk/page/sowing-and-aftercare>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/gardening-for-wildlife/lawns-for-wildlife/lawn-care-and-management-basics/>