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## PLANTS: GRASSLAND AND FLOWERS

# Wildflower enhancement



Wildflower seeds and plug plants increase floral diversity at a low cost. Plant plug plants and scatter seeds into spaces in existing grassy areas in April-May after main frosts have finished. This will help create more habitat and increased resources for pollinating invertebrates like bees.

<b>Suitability</b>	Low to medium density housing if sufficient areas of grassland are available.
<b>Management type</b>	Grassland management.
<b>Supplier information</b>	Consult with your local Wildlife Trust for advice on suitable suppliers. Information on how to source wildflower seeds can be found at: <a href="http://www.growwilduk.com/where-get-uk-native-wildflower-seeds-plants">http://www.growwilduk.com/where-get-uk-native-wildflower-seeds-plants</a>
<b>Community engagement?</b>	Yes – potential to involve volunteer residents in helping to enhance grassland areas by planting plug plants as part of a community engagement exercise.
<b>Benefits</b>	Greater floral diversity creating more habitat and increased resources for invertebrates and other wildlife such as birds and small mammals.
<b>Costs/Disbenefit</b>	Financial cost: Low-medium depending on number of plants.
<b>Level of ongoing maintenance</b>	Medium.



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		Notes
<b>How achieved</b>	Plant plug plants (and/or scatter wildflower seeds) in designated areas in April-May after main frosts have finished.	
<b>Timing of activity</b>	Plug-planting: April-May after the main frosts have finished. Seed sowing: October/November or February/March.	
<b>Long-term management</b>	<p>Recommend 2-3 mows per year maximum: year 1 mow in March (spring cut), mid-late July (summer cut) and late September to October (autumn cut).</p> <p>Mow the edges of paths more regularly than the rest to help show residents that this is a deliberate activity. Try not to mow all areas at the same time. Leave a few patches of longer vegetation over winter.</p> <p>Where possible, leave the cuttings in place for 1-3 days to give any sheltering wildlife a chance to move away. Don't leave the cuttings for longer than this time as this can increase soil fertility and reduce the diversity of plants that can grow. Where possible cuttings could be moved elsewhere on site, as they can provide food and shelter for other wildlife. Some plant materials such as hollow plant stems can be used in bug hotels and bee nests.</p>	
<b>Monitoring success</b>	<p>General recording (see page 6).</p> <p>A butterfly transect or timed count could be set up as part of the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme <a href="http://www.ukbms.org">http://www.ukbms.org</a>. Simple butterfly timed counts can be conducted using the European Butterfly Monitoring app <a href="https://butterfly-monitoring.net/ebms-app">https://butterfly-monitoring.net/ebms-app</a>. Flower-Insect Timed (FIT) counts as part of the National Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS) <a href="https://www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring">https://www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring</a>.</p> <p>Conduct Plantlife's 'Every Flower Counts' survey of lawns to survey the number of flowers present and contribute to calculating a National Nectar Score: <a href="http://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts">http://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts</a>.</p>	