

How it's done: Community Meadow case studies



Creating a new meadow

The Green Backyard Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

At the Green Backyard, two sites were established, totalling 0.9 hectares. This Community Meadow project was a partnership between Buglife and The Green Backyard, and was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.



The sites

1. a raised mound of fertile earth that had been used for growing mixed ornamental plants and strawberries. Changing into an annual meadow
2. a patch of mown rough grass changing to a perennial meadow

Preparation

Site one was cleared and weeded over the winter of 2011, raked and then site two was mown short and partially turf stripped by volunteers in September 2011. Remaining turf stripped in October 2011, when topsoil was also inverted by a mechanical digger. Soil raked and cleared of large stones and debris.

Sowing

Site 1: sown by volunteers with Landlife's 'Signature' annual meadow in mid-March 2012. Seed was sown at a rate of 5g/m², and bulked out in a bran carrier to show where the seed had been spread and to help ensure an even distribution. Site 2: sown by volunteers in early October, with Landlife's Downland and Heritage meadow mixes (50:50) at rate of 1g/m². Some remaining annual seed was also sown here in March 2012.

Maintenance

Site 1: weeded during spring 2012 and flowered from mid-June, continuing until early September. Seed was collected from the meadow, which was then dug-over.

Site 2: Meadow cut and raked-off in early November 2012

Results

Meadow flowered with annuals and species from weed bank from June 2012, dominated by wild carrot later in season.

Extras

Artificial nesting sites for solitary bees (and solitary wasps) were created by constructing a 'bee wall' and a 'bee bank'. The bee bank was formed from a core of turf and soil, capped to 15cm with sharp sand. The bee wall comprised blocks of untreated wood, drilled with holes of varying diameters, assembled together on a south-facing wall of a shed.



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Brickfields Triangle Plymouth

Brickfields Triangle Community Meadow was created by Buglife in partnership with Plymouth City Council and The Millfields Trust. The project was funded by The Co-operative's Plan Bee campaign. Brickfields Triangle Meadow is 1.24 hectares.

Preparation

In November 2011 the existing amenity grass was cut short and the cuttings removed.

Seeding/Planting

After cutting, the site was seeded using a deep slot seeder. 7kg of Yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus*

minor) and 4kg of Oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) were sown in the site at a rate of 1g per m², bulked up with sharp sand as a carrier.

In March 2012, four local primary schools took part in a massive planting scheme to enhance the meadow area with 5,600 plug plants. These included Lesser knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), Bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), Oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) and Viper's bugloss (*Echium vulgare*). Plugs were planted at a density of 4 plants per m².

Maintenance

In autumn 2012 the meadow received its first cut, with the cuttings being removed from the site. This annual management will continue.

Results

Throughout the summer the meadow was a blaze of colour. Community bug hunts and seed scattering days were held in the summer and early autumn. The site was visited by the South West In Bloom judges.



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