

Wild Towns Project. Fairford Greening 2021

Starting in spring 2021 more flushes of flowers will be flourishing in verges and green spaces in and around Fairford. As we embark on restoring wildflowers at strategic locations throughout the town.

Wild Towns is a partnership project with Fairford Town Council, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, the Ernest Cook Trust and Ecosulis Ltd., funded by a number of partners and the European Regional Development fund.

With insects and pollinators in steady decline now is an important time to act and with the Wild Town project we will be able to buck the trend against this decline and contribute towards natural forms of regeneration.

Native seed mixes are being planned and planted to make mini meadows for pollinating insects such as bees and beetles, helping to stop declines in insects important to our wildlife and wellbeing.

Fairford is located along a "bee-line" so adding wildflower areas, allows movement through the town for insects. Not only helping locally but adding to a landscape scale helping support biodiversity regionally.



Figure 1. turf cultivated with powered equipment

As we start the process we will need to disturb the soil, While some of the interventions may initially look unsightly, the longer term benefit will be lovely to look at and alive with wildlife.

There will also be a change to the way some areas are maintained during the growing season, with the new wildflower areas only being cut at the start of the season, around



March to April, to even out winter growth, and at the end of the season, in September, once the plants have gone to seed.



Figure 2 meadow growth year 1 with high percentage of grasses

We will be selecting native perennial wildflowers and introducing these to existing grass areas. As many species require the right conditions to grow and can take several seasons to flower many areas will take more than one summer before producing flowers, so we ask for your patience while they are establishing.



Figure 3 meadow year 2 with more of the wildflowers coming through

Over time the sward will start to change and with the correct management you will start to see more wildflowers than grass, but wildflower meadow are not created over night or even in one growing season, they take time and we want to create sustainable native meadows. Our management will need to be adapted and respond to the challenges each year brings.



Figure 4 meadow year 3 high percentage of wildflowers now present



Figure 5 meadow year 5 a well-established meadow with little to no grass

For instant effect other areas will have native bulbs planted giving brilliantly bright bouquets to benefit bugs and brighten borders.

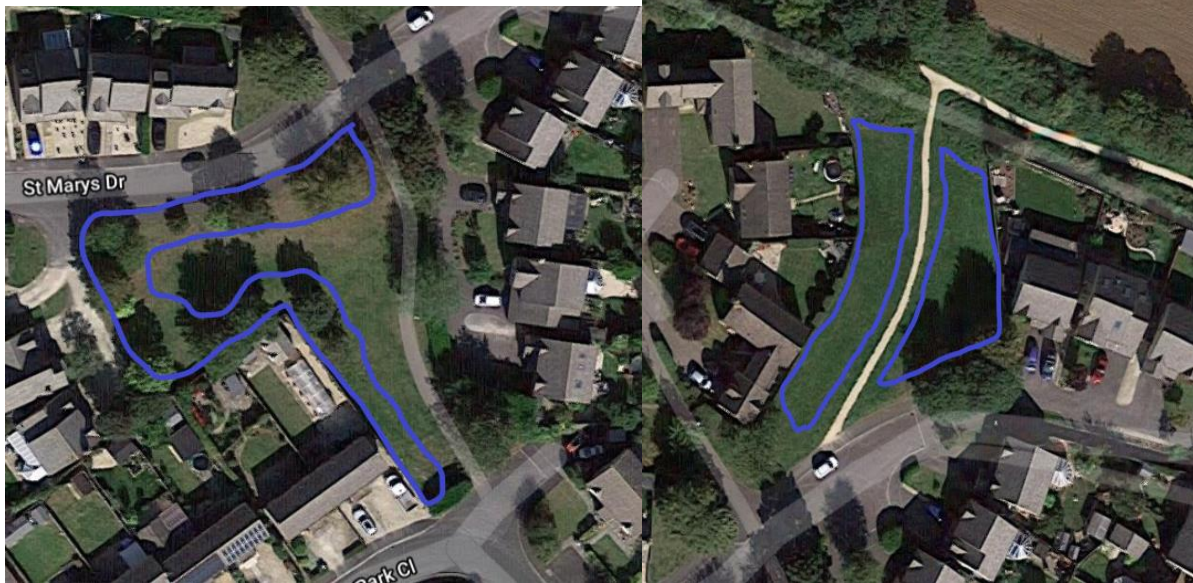
Two example area plans.

Gloucestershire
Wildlife Trust



European Union

European Regional
Development Fund



For more information on the Wild Towns project go to
www.gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk > wilddowns or Fairford Town Council.