

## Creating a Wildflower Area for the Parish

### Why have we created this space in our Parish?

Creating more space for nature is becoming a priority across the country, and local councils are being encouraged to improve green spaces close to where people live. A small wildflower area can be a simple way for the parish to support wildlife, brighten a prominent site and help people feel more connected to the natural environment.

Road verges can be valuable havens for wildlife. They support insects, birds, mammals and reptiles, and they also act as corridors that help plants and animals move between habitats. In a landscape where many wildflower meadows have been lost, well-managed verges can play an important role in helping nature recover.

Wildflower verges also make a difference for people. They bring colour through the seasons, create a stronger sense of place and may be one of the few everyday ways many people experience nature. In a visible location, they can also spark interest in the wider wildlife of the parish.

### How did we plant the area?

After consulting with wildlife experts, suppliers and our ground maintenance team, the area was selected in Edgehill around the base of the obelisk. In September 2024, many members of the Ratley and Upton Parish community came together to transplant small plug plants of the new wildflowers into the existing grassy area. It was a great morning for all ages to be part of the project with plenty of cake to help keep up the energy levels!





## What can you expect to see here?

Some native wildflowers are already growing on this site, so planting has mainly built on what is already there to boost existing species and increase the variety of new species.

- **Lady's bedstraw** (*Galium verum*)

Flowering from June to September

Read more about this species at:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/ladys-bedstraw>



- **Oxeye Daisy** (*Leucanthemum vulgare*)

Flowering from June to September

Read more about this species at:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/oxeye-daisy>



- **Birdsfoot Trefoil** (*Lotus corniculatus*)

Flowering May to September

Read. More about this species at:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/common-birds-foot-trefoil>



- **Wild Red Clover** (*Trifolium pratense*)

Flowering from May to October

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/red-clover>



- **Knapweed** (*Centaurea nigra*)

Flowering from June to September

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/common-knapweed>



- **Meadow Cranesbill** (*Geranium pratense*)

Flowering June to August

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/meadow-cranes-bill>



- **Betony** (*Betonica officinalis*)

Flowering from June to October

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/betony>



- **Red Campion** (*Silene dioica*)

Flowering from May to September

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/red-campion>



- **Yarrow** (*Achillea millefolium*)

Flowering from June to November

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/yarrow>



- **Yellow Rattle** (*Rhinanthus minor*)

Flowering May to September

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/yellow-rattle>



- **Common dandelion** (*Taraxacum officinale*)

Flowering from January to December

Read more about this species here:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/wildflowers/common-dandelion>



## The Future?

This project is not just about planting flowers. It is about creating a visible and lasting reminder of the fantastic wildlife already around us, while making one part of the parish more attractive for residents and visitors. It is still early days as wildflower areas can take several years to mature, however with the right annual management, we hope that this perennial wildflower area could thrive for many years and become a feature our community can enjoy and take pride in.

If you want to read more about what else is happening locally to support wildlife visit South Warwickshire Area Network for Wildlife (SWAN):

<https://swanforwildlife.org>

Ratley & Upton Parish Council is also within the northernmost boundary of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) – the largest of the 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the third largest protected landscape in England after the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. You can read more about what is happening within the CNL to support nature recovery in the wider Cotswolds here:

<https://www.cotswolds-nl.org.uk/our-work/nature-recovery/>