

Langham St Peter & St Paul Churchyard Wildlife Management Plan

Introduction

Our guidelines for churchyard management are designed to be sensitive towards the needs of both people and wildlife. The aims are for the churchyard as a beautiful place to visit as well as being beneficial to wildlife.

Lay out shown on attached map.

Posters on notice boards of what's on and what's to see by season.

Grass Cutting

All grass cuttings should be removed. They improve the fertility of the soil, which is usually not required by wild flowers and waxcaps.

The church yard outside of the wildflower meadow is mown between March and October by Rutland County Council. They also cut the informal paths through the meadow. These are important for access and to show it is a properly managed church yard.

Wildflower meadow – cut and collected by hand March and August. Cuttings removed from church yard. One part alongside Well Street left as no-mow area to benefit insects and small mammals for food and shelter.

Longer areas of grass will be used by breeding "brown" butterflies, numerous moths and other creatures and the flowering plants within the grass by many more, making these areas the most productive part of a wildlife churchyard.

Waxcap area – maintain short sward with moss, no digging, compacting, no fertiliser. Cut and collect all clippings regularly, but especially in September. [Snowy waxcap appeared November 2023]

Chemicals

None used.

Ivy

There are some "ivy bushes" in the church yard and these are left to flower. Ivy should be left untrimmed where possible.

Ivy on the walls surrounding church yard to be trimmed to manage without damaging wall. Ivy is one of the main foodplants of the Holly Blue (along with Holly) and Ivy Bee. It provides bird nesting sites during March to July and is a nectar source for butterflies and other insects in late summer and autumn. The berries are highly nutritious.

Trees and hedging

Ideally any new trees and hedging should be native species, and planted where they will not shade out wildflower areas and gravestones with lichen in years to come.

Water

Two small bird bath / drinking water bowl placed in meadow area and topped up regularly with rain water from church rain water butts. Also the Langham Brook flows to the immediate west and north of the church yard which is a source of water for birds, mammals. Frogs breed in the brook and have been seen in the meadow.

Nest boxes / shelters

Four nest boxes for small birds made locally and placed on trees. One large Tawny Owl box fixed into mature conifer.

Two hedgehog shelter / hibernation boxes made locally and placed under shrubs.

One large insect / small mammal shelter in centre of meadow area.

Bird feeding Station

Bird feeding station with selection of suet, seed and nuts purchased and topped up by volunteer.

New Meadow plants

Meadow left to grow in its first year (2019/2020) to see what was there. Areas of tough grass trimmed, raked and bear patches sown with Naturescape N5 meadow mix in autumn 2021. Plug plants of yarrow, tansy, viper's bugloss, wild carrot, cowslips, field scabious, birdsfoot trefoil and teasel introduced.

Narcissus and Camassia bulbs planted 2019 in meadow.

Yellow rattle plug plants introduced 2019 and seeds 2020. Starting to get established 2021. More patched sown 2022, 2023.

Garden of Remembrance / Flower Beds

Planted with colourful flowering bulbs, plants with a backdrop of evergreen pittosporum, spurge, ferns and rosemary for enjoyment by visitors and insects alike.

Annual Work Plan

WHAT	ACTION	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Wildflower meadow	Scythe- cut and collect												
Yellow rattle	Cut patch and sow												
Waxcap meadow	Scythe- cut and collect												
New trees, hedge	water												
Water bowl	Keep topped up												
Ivy	Prune, keep in shape												
Elder	Prune to ground												
Paths through meadow	Mow as needed												
Notice Board	Poster – what to see												
Flower beds	Weed, tidy												
Flora & Fauna	Report to Naturespot												

