

Appendix D

Hertfordshire update

- **Dacorum**

<https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/environment-street-care/landscape-recreation/biodiversity-and-conservation> . We have been re-wilding, creating meadows for a few years now.

- **Hertfordshire County Council**

The alternative verge maintenance approach was implemented during the 2020 maintenance season. Hertfordshire County Council has a vast area of roadside verge that has the potential to yield wildflowers that feed the local pollinators. By cutting selective verges less often, at the right time and removing the grass cuttings, it is thought that wildflowers would naturally flourish, or would have a better opportunity of doing so. As we are now into our second season, we have added some additional sites to be cut along with our existing locations, this will also include some sites located on the high speed roads which include the A41, A414, A10 and A505.

- **Hertsmere**

We've got 12 meadow areas in our parks and about 6 smaller ones in some housing areas. We seeded originally and then have left for the natural species to thrive. We cut twice a year. Leave the cut grass for a few days for the seeds to fall and then lift it.

A lot of the larger areas were I believe chosen because they were difficult to cut anyway. In the housing areas they were sites where ball games were a little more anti-social.

I live in Surrey and am watching a social media debate mature here. Overall the policy is landing very well but there are issues in some of the housing estates – which I think are reasonable.

- **North Herts**

We had an audit completed by *Herts Country Council Countryside Management Services* of NHDC owned sites which could be considered for 'Wilding' we are currently in year 2 of the trial – using 10 sites where we allow the grass to grow (wild) and then we cut (leave for 2 weeks) and then remove the arisings. This is usually in August / September.

We have volunteers who do a Wild Flower Audit to see the effects before it is cut.

- **Stevenage**

We left areas last year and additional areas this year which we are monitoring feedback on. The two reasons as you would expect. The biodiversity agenda but also financial. The areas are carefully selected within green spaces etc rather than housing estates.

Some general thoughts. With the right comms this is generally welcomed but

- It needs careful management to ensure vehicle sight lines are maintained and
- It doesn't often look as attractive in more formal housing estate areas and leads to complaints of neglect.

Overall a good thing for increasing biodiversity but that should be the primary aim rather than a money saving measure from reduced mowing.

- **Watford Borough Council**

We've now introduced some areas of reduced mowing / wildflower seed at Callowland Rec, Garston Park, along Radlett Road, and soon to be Watford Fields. We spotted your nice signs and will be installing something similar to inform the public/remind operatives.

We already had large areas of conservation grass in many of our parks including Cassiobury, King George V, Riverside, Garston and Lairage Land LNR.

We're now waiting on the recommendations from the Herts-wide audit and will look to introduce some more areas.

- **Welwyn**

[Hang on a mow! Delay to grass cutting to encourage mini meadows - Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council - Working better, together \(welhat.gov.uk\)](#)

Areas that have been designated as Conservation Grasslands, Wildflower Grasslands, or Ecotones due to ecological or botanical interest are only cut once a year, normally mid-August - Mid-September. All arisings are left in situ.

The biggest challenge we have faced is the differing opinions of councillors and residents. Some support the "no mow" approach but a lot like the clean look that freshly cut verges and open spaces give. We have increased the areas we are not mowing by 5 this year so it is an ongoing process of identifying sites and engaging with stakeholders before deciding.