

Wildflower Planting in Spring 2023, (Peter Joyce –Head of Green Spaces)

Synopsis of report:

To advise on the successful completion of wildflower plug planting on Englefield Green.

For information only

To note progress in relation to wildflower planting adjacent to St Jude's Road.

1. Report

- 1.1 At the February Committee, officers reported that the Council's Green Spaces Manager had been liaising with members of the Committee regarding location and choice of wildflowers. It was agreed that delegated authority be given to agree a wildflower planting regime.
- 1.2 Accordingly, the Green Spaces Manager liaised with Councillor Berardi and local volunteers to define a suitable choice of species. These were chosen because they usually grow well in an open and sunny location, enjoy a well-draining fertile soil, and a grassy verge. A specialist supplier of wildflower plug plants was selected to deliver 1,350 plants of the following species:
 - White campion
 - Devil's bit scabious
 - Lesser knapweed
 - Meadow buttercup
 - Sorrel
 - Nettle leaved bell flower.
- 1.3 An initial planting was carried out in early May along the raised grass bank adjacent to St Jude's Road. With the help of 10 volunteers, most of the plugs were planted. The rest were repotted into much larger pots for later planting when greater rooting had taken place. This also allowed for the identification of gaps where planted plugs had not taken well.
- 1.4 Over twenty students helped to carry out a second planting, on this occasion using a tool that carved out 25cm holes and mixed up the soil, so the wildflowers had more space to grow. Some of the children were tasked with digging up the nettle that is gradually taking over the ditch. No strimming of the bank will be carried out this season to ensure better establishment.
- 1.5 Members are requested to note progress on the wildflower planting project to the bank adjacent to St. Jude's Road.

2. Policy framework implications

- 2.1 Maintaining Englefield Green and offering a clean and welcoming open space is in accordance with the Boroughs Corporate Business Plan.

3. Resource implications/Value for Money

- 3.1 Preparation and sourcing of wildflower plug plants has been completed for the sum of £1,322, compared with an estimated cost as reported at the last Committee of £1,980.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 None.

5. Equality implications

- 5.1 None.

6. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 6.1 A more attractive environment can be maintained for local residents and users of the Green in accordance with the Council's sustainability policies.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The Committee are requested to note progress on the planting of wildflowers.

(For information)

Background papers

None