

Farnsfield Parish Council

Grounds Maintenance Greening Strategy Policy

Our District Council Newark and Sherwood are also our contractors of choice for the Grounds Maintenance Services within the owned green open spaces and play areas within Farnsfield Parish Council. Farnsfield Parish Council are taking the option written into the Grounds Maintenance Contract to share the greater “Greener” approach that NSDC deliver in some of their own Parks and Open Spaces. These District managed Parks and Open spaces are award winning and they currently hold 5 Internationally recognized Green Flags within the District, to which the “Greener” approach is championed.

Farnsfield Parish Council wish to manage some of our green open spaces with this management approach, adopting alternative ways of managing grasslands in green spaces to benefit nature by creating meadow areas in a managed way.

This approach will let wildflowers and grasses flower and grow and create better habitats for pollinators such as bees, wasps, hoverflies butterflies and moths.

Details of the FPC grounds maintenance contract with NSDC can be found on the FPC website. The clerk has responsibility for managing the contract and there will be occasions when weather factors and seasonal variations might affect timings of grass and hedge cutting

<http://www.farnsfieldparishcouncil.co.uk/shared/attachments.asp?f=a6796499%2Df22e%2D4c46%2D8fdd%2D35735e5110e7%2Epdf&o=Grounds%2DMaintenance%2Dthat%2DFarnsfield%2DPari sh%2DCouncil%2Dis%2Dresponsible%2Dfor%2D2022%2D2025%2Epdf>

Why act now in the Village

We are in a biodiversity and climate crisis. The UK’s flying insect population has declined by as much as 60% in the last 20 years. Climate change threatens populations of many insects and the birds and animals that feed on them.

<https://cdn.buglife.org.uk/2022/05/Bugs-Matter-2021-National-Report.pdf>

Reasons to increase and celebrate Biodiversity into Farnsfield

- Grasslands can store as much carbon as forests.
- Reducing mowing reduces CO2 emissions and allows flowers to have better root systems encouraging water storage and reduce flooding. Wildflowers are more drought tolerant too.
- Letting flowers grow allows pollinators to forage on nectar and pollen giving them the energy to pollinate fruit trees and vegetable crops. In the long term this means that crops and fruit we eat will benefit ,leading to food security.

- Longer grass provides food for grasshoppers and moths and provides food for the birds and bats that feed on the insects and increases a range of habitats for insects, amphibians, small mammals and birds
- Agricultural use of land tends to reduce biodiversity through use of pesticides and production of single crops. Locally, some farmers have helped wildlife by managing areas of wildflowers. The Southwell Trail is a great wildlife corridor. Towns and villages contain good areas of public and private land that can also be used to support our plants and insects.

Wildlife and People

Farnsfield green spaces are managed with a range of users in mind.

Most recreation areas and play areas are closely mown so that sport can take place and pathways cut so that children and adults can enjoy a variety of leisure pursuits. The attenuation basin is used for impromptu cricket whilst the bank is left longer for wildflowers and grasses. The Bunds are a recent addition and NSDC cut these in September/October. Grasses near hedge lines will be allowed to grow longer to increase biodiversity and habitat formation.

Other areas like the Ridgeway Green Space are managed by the RBL (Remembrance Garden) and the WI (planters and Spring bulb area) Community Spaces (meadow areas and wildflower / grass borders agreed by the Parish Council. Evidence shows that community participation in managing green spaces leads to a sense of ownership and pride in an area and improves mental and physical wellbeing for participants. (NSDC mow/strim around these areas on a regular basis). The benches provide places for people to sit and enjoy nature (See details of the small green spaces that are strimmed when necessary).

<http://www.farnsfieldparishcouncil.co.uk/shared/attachments.asp?f=a6796499%2Df22e%2D4c46%2D8fdd%2D35735e5110e7%2Epdf&o=Grounds%2DMaintenance%2Dthat%2DFarnsfield%2DPari sh%2DCouncil%2Dis%2Dresponsible%2Dfor%2D2022%2D2025%2Epdf> also shows

FAQ

• Will there be more litter and dog fouling?

It is an offence to drop litter in any public space and the Parish Council will continue to monitor this. It is the dog owners' responsibility to pick up mess regardless of the height of the grass and the environment.

• Why can it look untidy?

After the flowering season, areas of long grass can start to look messy as plants put energy into seeds for the next year's flowers. These areas still have a vital importance for pollinators and other insects, birds and mammals such as hedgehogs to enable them to complete their life cycle. The meadow area in the Millennium Wood is cut annually and grass removed to reduce fertility. There is evidence that Yellow Rattle and Knapweed have spread over the last 2 years. Cherry has been removed but Spindle is flourishing on the margins.

What can landowners like Farnsfield Parish Council do to protect wildlife?

1. Grow more wildflowers such as Lady's smock (growing in allotments) birds foot trefoil (still flowering on the bunds in September) Ivy (fruiting in hedgerows on Hadleigh Park and the Acres) Nettles (flowering on Ridgeway green space). Different and diverse vegetation leads to a greater variety of butterfly species, insect, and bird life. We also have a bat population to

support on Parish Council land and flowers such as the White Campion appear in the bunds and on the Ridgeway.

2. Provide Bird boxes, bug hotels and log piles (Millennium Wood and Hadleigh Park)
3. Embedded net gain environmental projects into new infrastructure designs.
4. Avoid herbicides (herbicide exclusion zones) Within the Grounds Maintenance Contract the use of Glyphosate is taken as a last resort where safety can't be guaranteed in other maintenance methods.
5. Reimagine supposed weeds such as dandelions as wildflowers and let some grow. They provide early nectar for bees.
6. Adopt spaces for nature in the centre of communities to demonstrate the importance of linking natural corridors of vegetation (trees, hedgerows, and grassland) for insects and birds to flourish. Consigning wildflowers and grasses to remote areas devalues their importance and success in increasing biodiversity.

“Every space in Britain must be used to help wildlife”-David Attenborough

Trees (Woodland, Copses) and Hedgerows.

Farnsfield Parish Council are responsible for a number of trees in the Parish, and these were surveyed in 2016 and 2022. Recommendations from the surveys are carried out when necessary.

Link to tree survey and FPC Tree policy

[Farnsfield Parish Council Tree Risk Assessment 20-12-2021.pdf](#)

[Tree Policy File Uploaded: 6 October 2022 123.8 KB](#)

The Millennium Wood

The Millennium Wood has a 10 Yr. management plan 2016-2026. Full details can be found on the Parish Council website. [10 Year Woodland Management Plan 2016-26 File Uploaded: 11 October 2020 686 KB](#)

The woodland maintenance plan has a strong volunteer element and a grant for tree poppers and bulb planters was awarded by NSDC in 2019

In 2022 trees along the main paths were surveyed and work carried out where necessary, to ensure public safety

The Copses

The Copses are managed as outlined in the Tree policy. Thinning of the Copses has occurred in recent years in line with tree thinning in the woodland to let more light into the understorey and to protect wildlife habitats.

A Copses Management policy was passed by the previous council in March 2023 but this included certain practices that do not comply with the Greening Strategy outlined in this paper.

[Hadleigh-Park-Copse-Management-Plan.pdf](#)

Hedgerows

will continue to be monitored by the Parish Council and maintained under the NSDC management contract.

Policy Details / Version History

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