

Plantlife Case Studies – Restoring Shropshire’s Verges Project 2021/22

Managing grassland road verges: a best practice guide

Case Study: Restoring of wildflower road verges

A case study from: Restoring Shropshire’s Verges Project (RSVP)

BUSHMOOR VERGES PROJECT

Partners/Funders: Supported by the Shropshire Hills AONB Trust, through the AONB Conservation Fund, Restoring Shropshire’s Verges Project (RSVP), the National Trust, Stepping Stones Project, Shropshire Council Highways Department, and local botanist and verges contractor

Costs:

- Volunteer time approximately 200 hours
- Shropshire Hills AONB grant for botany survey, in the green snowdrop bulbs, and next steps verge assessment = £275



Twitter and Facebook @ShropsVerge

Contact:

stepping.stones@nationaltrust.org.uk

RESTORING SHROPSHIRE’S VERGES PROJECT: BUSHMOOR VERGES PROJECT

The Bushmoor Verges Project began in early 2021 with the formation of our enthusiastic Volunteer Group made up of around a dozen local residents. Our verges are approximately three quarters of a mile in length. To make the project manageable, we started small, and in May & June, with the help of a local botanist, surveyed the verges. We were amazed to identify around 100 varieties of wildflowers!

During July and August pernicious flowering Hogweed was safely dead-headed, collected and removed from the verges. Then in the autumn of 2021, and with an emerging partnership with the local National Trust Stepping Stones Project, a 150m stretch of the verges was cut and the arisings hay raked into composting piles. Building on our partnership with the National Trust in November, we engaged the services of a local contractor to cut, collect and scarify our the verges on both sides of the Bushmoor Road from the edge of the hamlet all the way down to the Felhampton Bridge.

In early 2022 the verges were seeded with a wildflower mix and ‘in the green’ snowdrops bulbs were planted in an identified wooded area.

The Verges Survey in May & June



Pernicious flowering Hogweed in July



Hay raking cut arisings in the autumn



Cutting and collection in November



Planting 'in the green' snowdrops in February



2022 to 2023 plans

The 2022/23 year is about consolidation, appreciation and the sustainable conservation. We therefore plan to build on our work over the past year and over time enhance and develop the verges along both sides of the Bushmoor Road from the edge of the hamlet to the railway bridge this side of Felhampton as a habitat for the growth and diversity of wildflowers, invertebrates, birds and small mammals and:

- build on the partnership initiated with the National Trust and Shropshire Highways Department in 2021/22 to establish the Bushmoor verges as a pilot site for the cutting, collecting and bio-digestion of vegetation
- continue with our efforts to engage with the owners of the land immediately adjacent the Bushmoor verge and with the local Primary School
- continue to work with, support and value the 'in kind' contributions of the Bushmoor Volunteer Group as a source of energy, enthusiasm, and ideas
- offer opportunities for local residents and visitors to enjoy, engage with, participate in and promote the work of the Project
- contribute to Shropshire AONB Conservation Funds and the National Trusts promotion of the Bushmoor Verges Project as an example of a successful community-led bio-diversity focused project through our engagement with appropriate activities
- document, photograph and video the Project's activities throughout the year from April 2022 to March 2023 including contributions to the RSVP Facebook page
- contribute to the on-going development and sharing of verge best practice case studies with other verges projects throughout the year from April 2022 to March 2023, and complete and distribute an end of year report

The cut and rake team in the autumn



The verges in bloom in June

