

Management Plan

The "Summer Lane Verge" is on the south edge of Summer Lane at its junction with Derby Road (B5023). The site is some 12m by 15m, roughly rectangular, bordered on two sides by the roads and on two sides by domestic fences. A tarmacked footpath crosses the site diagonally from the Derby Road to Summer Lane, and this is joined by a second path along the other diagonal which leads eventually to Pillar Butts. A semi-circular path lies in the other half of the rectangle, but currently has no function except to give access to a litter bin.

At the start of the project, the vegetation consisted of mown grass, with a large silver birch towards the centre, and three mature trees bordering one fence. A few taller plants survived on the unmown margin where the footpath to Pillar Butts enters.

- Long term vision
 - Progressively transform the short grass monoculture to a species rich environment
 - Maintain site lines at junction
 - Provide a visually attractive area by encouraging a diversity of wild flowers
 - Provide enhanced "environmental services" to the immediate locale, such as absorbing pollution and encouraging pollinators
 - Provide a focus for education and community engagement, for example, by advertising details of the varieties of flowers on the site. Community engagement will encourage more ambitious projects, and instil a sense of pride in the town.
- Medium Term Plan
 - Mow annually in late August/September to maintain the grassland while ensuring that wild flower seeds have been set - mowings to be removed
 - Every four to six weeks, mow a margin (600-900mm) (the framing verges) by the paths to maintain a cared-for appearance, maintain sight-lines and avoid long grass flopping across the existing paths - mowings to be removed eventually, but may be used as temporary mulches along the fences lines
 - In the autumn of the first two years, prepare the site for wild flowers, for example, by scarifying it to expose the soil and sowing yellow rattle to reduce the vigour of the grass and stop it overwhelming the wild flowers
 - Sow wild flowers and wild flow seeds annually until they are self-sustaining
 - Annually review opportunities for education and engagement
 - Annually review the site for the presence of species protected under schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and record any such presence (for a list of plants see, for example <https://naturenet.net/law/sched8.html>)
- Short Term
 - every 4 to 6 weeks scythe the front semicircle on Summer Lane to 30-60mm and remove cuttings
 - every month, mow the margins if needed, pick up and dispose of any litter, check that the litter bin is being emptied and notify the DCCC if litter needs collecting, check for injurious weeds and invasive plants
 - where necessary, remove and dispose of injurious weeds and invasive plants (see Appendix A) by hand weeding, ensuring the use appropriate protective equipment and methods of disposal
- Engagement
 - look for opportunities to arrange community activities such as bug hunts for children, or citizen science projects such as cataloguing types of flowers present
 - create information sources, for example, on species that are present or are present on other similar sites. These may be on-line, exhibitions at local events, or the occasional temporary notice on the site itself
 - identify and use media opportunities to publicise successes

Appendix A: Injurious Weeds and Invasive Species

The Weed Act 1959 states

"Where the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food ... is satisfied that there are injurious weeds to which this Act applies growing upon any land he may serve upon the occupier of the land a notice in writing requiring him, within the time specified in the notice, to take such action as may be necessary to prevent the weeds from spreading."

"This Act applies to the following injurious weeds, that is to say—

spear thistle (*cirsium vulgare*), (Savi) Ten.
creeping or field thistle (*cirsium arvense* (L.) Scop.),
curled dock (*rumex crispus* L.),
broad-leaved dock (*rumex obtusifolius* L.), and
ragwort (*senecio jacobaea* L.);

and to such additional injurious weeds as may be prescribed by the Minister by regulations." In practice, the act would only be applied if the weeds are likely to affect adjacent farm land or grazing animals, and so should not affect the site as it is over 100m from any known grazing.

The Wild Life and Countryside Act 1981

The Act makes it an offence to release into the wild any animal, plant or micro-organisms not ordinarily resident to the UK or which constitutes a known threat or is listed in Schedule 9 of the Act. Schedule 9 species includes plants such as Japanese Knotweed, which has an adverse impact on local plants and Giant Hogweeds that erodes river banks and increases river flooding risks in the country. There is no obligation to report or eradicate such plants. For a list of such plants, see, for example, nature net <https://naturenet.net/law/sched9.html>).

Note

Although individuals of the species identified as injurious or invasive may feed some insect species, these plants tend to out-compete and exclude other species. Moreover, the sap of some species (e.g. ragwort, giant hogweed) is toxic to humans. The plan aims to prevent such weeds taking over the site, especially where they pose a risk to people.