

Kirkbymoorside Town Council
Information for the meeting on Monday 19 May 2025

19. Wildflower Verges

- a. To note that parts of the verges designated as wild flower areas, (as part of the NYMNP Grubs Up campaign) have been cut, contrary to the agreed schedule

23 April 2025

You will probably be as disappointed and upset as I am to see how the grass in the wild flower areas has been cut today. Photo attached and others sent separately.

After I presented my report on the wild flower trial the council agreed to continue with the same areas this year. This was also part of the Grubs Up Campaign by the NYMNP.

A meeting was held with Phil Gospel at which Jean and I explained what the Council had agreed.

However after doing the agreed cut and collect a few weeks ago the areas have been cut again today. This should not have happened.

Visibility strips were to be cut but instead a wide area has been cut south of the A170. The whole area under the beech tree north of the main road has also been cut.

As you know in the spring last year several of us spent an afternoon planting wild flower plug plants in the rain. In the autumn we spent hours raking the cuttings and planting yellow rattle seeds given to us by NYMNP.

All our hard work is wasted because Phil has not followed the agreed regime. I feel this is completely unacceptable.

Please add an item to the agenda for the council meeting in May to note what has happened and discuss how this can be addressed.

Many thanks

Chris (Cllr Chris Dowie)



Photo above: Junction of West Lund Lane and A170



Photo above: Junction of West Lund Lane and A170



Photo above: Taken from junction of West Lund Lane and A170 facing east along A170

Response: The contractor has explained that along the length of the A170 east of the junction at West Lund Lane a path has been created by pedestrians on the verge. The concern was that by reducing the width of the cut area along the A170 pedestrians would be encouraged to walk closer to this busy road, which would not be safe.

For the area to the west of the junction it has been made clear to the contractor that for all remaining cuts only a 1m margin along the verge and around the In Bloom planter should be cut.

Minute 24118 of the Ordinary meeting dated 18 November 2024:

24118 Agenda item 13. Wildflower Friendly Verges

a. An update on the wild flower areas trial was **received**. Cllr Dowie praised the efforts of the volunteers involved in the raking exercise on 2nd and 3rd November. Lessons learnt from this year's trial are that the wild flower areas need to be cut in early spring and the cuttings removed. There should then be no further cuts until September and no later than the end of September. The grass must be cut when it is dry to avoid it being flattened by the machinery. After that the cuttings should be left in place for a week before being removed. Ideally some machinery should be used for this but if that isn't possible then volunteers will need to be recruited again.

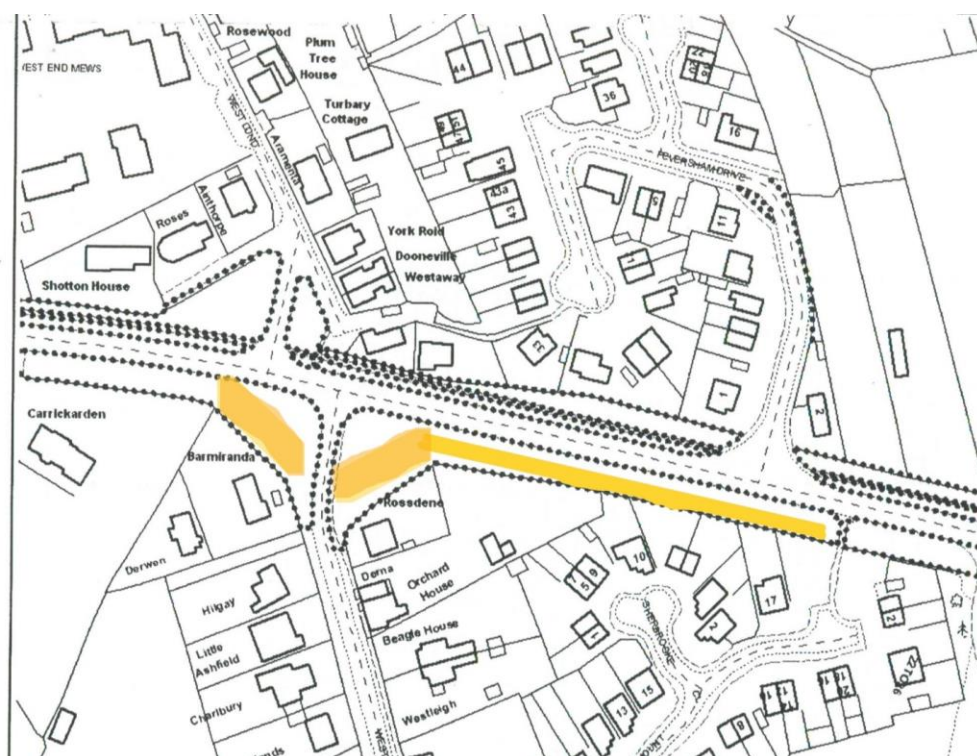
b. Proposals for revisions to the grass cutting schedule were considered.

Cllr Illingworth proposed that, in line with the approach to verge cutting by North Yorkshire Council, having declared a climate emergency, the Town Council should consider leaving some additional areas uncut in order to provide a 'corridor' for pollinators.

Cllrs Dowie and Illingworth proposed a revision to the designated wild flower verges to include:

- i. A170 east verge, on the raised bank outside the sports field
- ii. A170 east next to the road signposted Keldholme only
- iii. Old Road, on the west bank side opposite Springfield Lane
- iv. Old Road, on the east verge south of Eastway Close, north of the memorial bench
- v. A170 west, on both sides of the junction with West Lund Lane and extending along the verge east towards Sylatech.

The area to the north of the A170 west at the junction of West Lund will return to the original grass cutting schedule of 14 cuts per annum.





Picture above: May 2025 area of verge at junction of West Lund and A170 returned to original grass cutting schedule.

*Each of the areas will be cut once in the spring, and all arisings collected, and then be left uncut until the end of September when the final cutting exercise will be carried in the same way as hay making, again with all arisings removed. In each of the designated wildflower areas the compulsory 1m safety strip will be mown frequently, as appropriate. **Agreed.***

Following a meeting on 18 November with the grass contractor, attended by Cllrs Dowie, Illingworth and the Clerk, quotations are awaited for the costs associated with the collection and disposal of arisings from the autumn cut.

- b. To consider appropriate steps to ensure these areas are not cut again until the late summer**
- c. To consider the frequency of mowing visibility splays in the wild flower areas**
- d. To note temporary suspension of the grass cutting of the A170 verges in support of 'No Mow May'**

In respect of 'No Mow May' the entire length of the A170 will remain uncut providing a pollinator corridor. Taking into consideration feedback from residents, the sensitivity to grass cutting in the residential areas, and existing opportunities for pollinators in the gardens, no changes will be made to the frequency of cuts during May.