

No Mow May

Experience and Approach of Other Councils

Warwickshire County Council

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) supports No Mow May in their country parks and they also encourage residents to take part in No Mow May at home. However, in terms of highway verge mowing they are taking a different approach, more in line with Plantlife's 'Good Verge Guidance'. They are currently undertaking a biodiversity trial with 3 large grass verges in Warwickshire, with the support of WCC's Ecology Team. They will carry out a single cut in these areas in August/September and remove the grass cuttings (cut and collect method). The Ecology Team will then survey the area after 1 year to measure biodiversity improvements against the baseline prior to the trial. They aim to expand this to other verges in the future.

In addition to this, WCC also have their community engagement scheme which assists local residents/groups to 'adopt a verge' and manage it for the benefit of biodiversity.

Derbyshire County Council

Derbyshire County Council are currently running a highway verge biodiversity trial with Derbyshire Dales District Council. Approx. 80 large grass verges, all in urban settings, have been selected for inclusion in the trial. They will all receive a single cut in August/September and the grass cuttings will be removed (cut and collect method). The County Council has funded a specialist cut and collect machine to assist with the trial, although some areas will still be managed by hand. Most of the trial plots have received a framing cut or 1m strip cut for visibility/safety reasons. Biodiversity benefits will only start to be realised after 3-5 years, however this method of grass management is proven in terms of biodiversity. Therefore, instead of the trial focussing on the biodiversity benefits, it instead has focussed on the operational changes needed to achieve those biodiversity benefits in the future.

Following the trial, they will be taking recommendations to Cabinet for the future of highway verge cutting across the county.

Oxfordshire Councils

Councils across Oxfordshire supported No Mow May by allowing grass verges to grow long during May and beyond.

Cheltenham Borough Council

Supported No Mow May by increasing the number of meadow areas in their public sites including parks, open spaces, roundabouts and throughout some villages.