

Transforming the management of our road verges

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#RoadVerges



Value of verges

700 wild flower species

87 threatened



diverse
source of
pollen and
nectar

*Where wildflowers lead,
wildlife follows...*



Well maintained = asset

The right green infrastructure in the right place along linear infrastructure networks could bring significant benefits including:

- **enhanced local character** and **user experience**;
- **revenue generation** opportunities and **reduced waste** from verge harvesting for biomass energy;
- **improved air quality**, **drainage** management and **carbon** capture, and
- **enhanced biodiversity** corridors, recreation opportunities and **quality of life**.



Road Verge Campaign

- Huge public appetite, incl 350 Gloucestershire constituents
- Promoting & celebrating good management where it occurs
- Support from national & local highway authorities, Government, Natural England & NGOs



Plantlife's vision

- All verges managed for wildlife as a matter of course
- restored and extended flower-rich verges
- maximise subsequent benefits for invertebrates and other wildlife
- Keeping roads safe & reaping the benefits of an enhanced local environment




Good Verge Guide

Four main principles behind guidelines:

1. (Annual) management is essential on verges
2. Grow, flower, seed, mow...
3. Remove the cuttings where possible
4. Mix it up to ensure range of niches





Early cutting dates reduce floral diversity over time

- no opportunity to set seed
- vigorous growth of robust species

Late cutting dates also reduce floral diversity over time

- thick 'thatch' build up
- covers open soil

No cutting is even worse

- species composition changes after only 1 year
- correct management helps to maximise species diversity

Where wild plant conservation leads, wildlife follows...

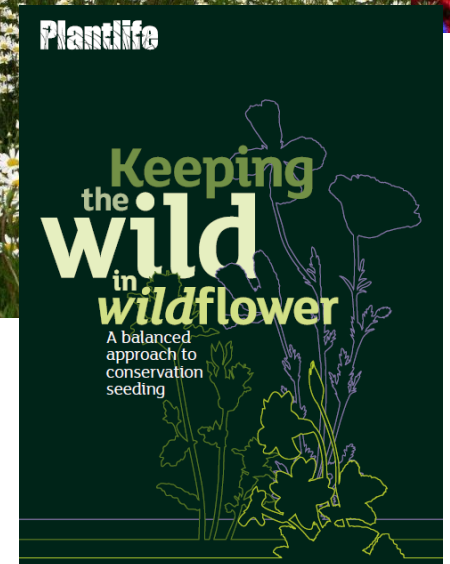
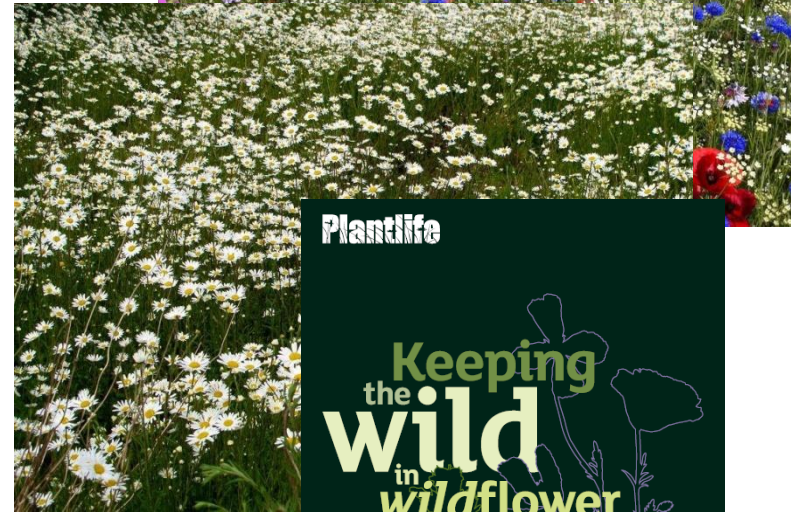
What about urban verges?



- same principles apply
- fertile soils: introduce more robust wildflowers
- intensively managed short grass can be species rich
- collection of cuttings with community involvement

What about urban verges?

- annual pollinator mixes: eye-catching; labour intensive
- mix of perennial meadow species: more cost effective; takes longer to establish
- consider suitable species and provenance



New RV technical guidance

- in association with partners from national highways agencies, industry and wildlife organisation
- best practice for highways engineers and contractors
- innovative road verge management
- Spring 2019



Supporting best practice

- Hub of technical information & support
- Best practice network
- Expertise and support



Hi fellow road verge
campaigners,
Posted: October 12 2018

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plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign



Get in touch

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