

## Who are we?

We are a community group of people who love nature. Some of us are ecologists, but mostly we are enthusiastic amateurs. Over 100 people keep in touch, and many actively help with projects and campaigns.

We work with the Town, District and County Councils.

We are grateful for the support of many other organisations, including Burleys (who manage the District Council sites), and the Railway Land Wildlife Trust.

*Bees, butterflies, bats and other animals need connected green spaces that they can fly along to find food – and each other!*

*We want to create “stepping stones” of wildflowers across Lewes, linking the town to the Downs, making corridors along which wildlife can thrive.*



## How can you help?

You can **cut your lawn less often** and stop using weedkiller. Daisies, dandelions and other common ‘weeds’ are critically important sources of local and seasonal nectar and pollen.

You can **donate** to help us to buy more wildflower seeds, so more people can plant them throughout Lewes, helping gardens and verges to become mini nature reserves!

You can buy, **sow and grow seeds** now. Plant them out (up till the autumn) in your garden or a verge near you. Native wildflowers will survive the winter, and flower next year!



You can help **survey the wildflower patches**. You don't have to be able to recognise the plants now. You'll soon get to know the ones that are most common!



You can help us to **plant out wildflower plug plants** – this happens occasionally, and we email out to let people know where and when.

**Join our contact list** and get to hear what's going on and how you can get involved!

Email [lesleyhealey267@gmail.com](mailto:lesleyhealey267@gmail.com), or Visit our Facebook page **wildflowerlewes**

## WILDFLOWER



- 🌸 **Bring more wildflowers into Lewes**
- 🌸 **Encourage all pollinators: bees, butterflies & moths, and other insects**
- 🌸 **Make a home for wildlife that lives amongst taller plants**
- 🌸 **Provide food for birds, bats and other animals**
- 🌸 **Give local people the opportunity to connect with nature on their doorstep**

## Why WILDFLOWER Lewes?

97% of our wildflower meadows have been lost nationwide since the 1970s, with devastating knock-on effects on the insects, like bumblebees & butterflies, and the wildlife that depends on them.



We want to do our bit in Lewes to stem this loss by cultivating more wildflower patches across the town, creating “stepping stones” that join up isolated habitats.

We want people to have wildflowers to enjoy near their homes, and have a chance to get involved in looking after the nature on their doorstep.

We are so lucky to be nestled in the chalk hills of the South Downs – a rare habitat with an abundance of wild plants that we can bring into our town.

As well as public spaces, we can make room for wildflowers in our gardens. That will provide a home for common and rare insects and the other animals that rely on them.



## We need a rich variety of pollinators!

3 out of 4 crops producing seeds or fruits used for human food depend on pollinators. More than half the food we eat depends on pollinators for cropping. Without pollinators, we'll have no fruit, far fewer vegetables and cereals, and far fewer birds – many depend on insects as food.



Bees (bumble and honey), moths, flies, wasps, beetles and butterflies all pollinate plants. 40% of invertebrate pollinator species face extinction, and numbers of all are falling, due largely to pesticides, loss of habitat, and of their own food plants.

## What is Wildflower Lewes doing?

### Working together

Most green spaces in Lewes are owned and managed by either the District Council or East Sussex County Council Highways.

We work with all three councils (Town, District & County) to identify more opportunities for wildflowers to grow. In addition, our volunteers get stuck in with practical help sowing, planting plugs, and monitoring the results on council managed land.

### Sow and grow!

We encourage people to sow, grow and plant out native wildflowers in their own gardens or road verges nearby. We've provided good quality wildflower seeds for free to support this.

## Verges campaign

Thanks to all of you who signed our petition, we successfully persuaded the Councils to only cut the verges twice a year!

Two cuts a year at the right time allows flowers to grow, bloom and set seed for next year. The flowers feed insects and the growth provides homes for wildlife. Highways are responsible for keeping sightlines and pathways clear.



We continue to work with the council to make sure verges are cut at the right time for wildflowers.

### Planting yellow rattle

We've sown yellow rattle. Known as the “meadow maker”, this hemi-parasite should decrease the amount of rough grass, enabling more space for flowers and herbs to grow.

### Is it working?

Each summer, we survey a few patches across Lewes. We identify the wildflowers, see what's doing well and learn lessons to improve success and make recommendations to the councils. Although most of us are amateurs, it's easy to learn to identify flowers we see most often, and there are more expert eyes who can help out!

