

Baseline wildflower survey, Lion Green Orchard Space (Area A on Wildflower trial areas proposal)

July 2021

Aims and objectives:

To establish baseline data on plant species and occurrence on Lion Green Proposed Orchard Space prior to changes in management

Introduction and methodology

Following a submission to propose wildflower trial areas on Lion Green it was agreed to record current and future wildflower diversity. On 9th July 2021 a methodical walkover survey was conducted by professional ecologist, Gareth Matthes on Area A (where a small community orchard has been planned and budgeted for). Wildflower species and their abundance were noted within the meadow using the DAFOR Scale, a simple way of recording species abundance in a given area. The acronym DAFOR stands for:

Dominant Abundant Frequent Occasional Rare

Further info: [Handout 9 - DAFOR \(norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk\)](https://norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk)

Results

The following species were recorded per habitat-type within and around the meadow space:

1. Meadow Area included 18 wildflower species (and abundances) listed as follows:

Dominant: Grasses - Bent grass, Yorkshire Fog (perennial ryegrass, locally dominant near path)

Abundant: Creeping buttercup, common daisy (locally abundant - yarrow near footpath, oak saplings near ditch-tree-line)

Frequent: Self-heal, common sorrel, hawkbit (cuckoo-flower locally frequent in damp areas by ditch)

Occasional: White clover, Pearlwort and mosses

Rare: Lesser stitchwort, ribwort plantain, common mouse-ear, field speedwell, ragwort

2. The western fenced boundary dominated by two species, nettle and hedge-bindweed.

3. The northern boundary supported Portuguese and Cherry Laurel with areas of dense bramble

4. The eastern boundary to the ditch supported: Docks, lady fern, hogweed, wood-avens, cleavers.

Conclusions

The meadow was dominated by grass-species, but forbs (flowering-herbs) were a significant feature of the meadow-sward, with seven species considered to be abundant to frequent in occurrence. The proposed orchard space has potential to support a more diverse wildflower sward, if managed appropriately (i.e. cut and collect during appropriate times of year). Follow-up surveys in subsequent years, around the same time of year as this baseline survey (late June to early July) will provide an indication as to the success of enhancing the biodiversity within the proposed orchard-space.