



Wild About Barrow

11th February 2021

Wildflowers are coming!

Wild About Barrow has officially adopted its first verge to increase native wildflowers and encourage other wildlife to flourish.

Barrow has joined the Blue Campaign for rewilding Britain, along with over 40 other Leicestershire parishes.

The verge is located at the Cotes Road/Willow Road roundabout and looks out onto the Soar valley. At the moment the verge has just tussocky grass and a few wildflowers but this is all due to change. In January the Parish Council agreed to **Wild About Barrow (WAB)** taking on its management.



Cotes Road roundabout verge

Today Leicestershire CC put blue heart plaques on the verge to mark the site as being managed for wildlife and as a reminder not to cut the grass.



Alison Rushton with LCC officials

In the summer NatureSpot will send an expert to survey the verge and advise on future management. Some verges already have a rich diversity of wildflowers whereas others need the ground to be scarified and sown with native wildflower seeds.



Annette Richardson, Chair of Barrow in Bloom, with LCC officials

At the end of the summer the grass will be cut and the cuttings removed.

Wildflowers thrive in poor soils and leaving the cuttings would feed nutrients back into the soil, benefiting grasses.

The following spring, depending on advice from NatureSpot, wildflower plant plugs or seeds will be sown. Development of a verge for nature takes time so the wildflowers will only improve with time.

Leicestershire CC are supporting this initiative with expert advice, an online course, providing blue plaques and paying for the wild-flower survey.

Wildflowers in the UK have suffered devastating losses in the last century. 97 per cent of ancient wildflower meadows have been destroyed since the 1930s according to Plantlife. However, they add that roadside verges are an amazing resource: if managed for wildlife, they'll hum with insects and help all sorts of wildlife to move and thrive. A good verge will supply a diverse source of nectar and pollen for over 130 species of invertebrates – from February to September.'

So, keep an eye out for nature returning to this verge!

Britain in Bloom has 3 core areas: horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation. **WAB** is dedicated to the second area but we can't do this without you. If you would like to be involved, regularly or just occasionally check out this website, Barrow upon Soar village on Facebook or email **WAB**.

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