

MAY 2020

IWERNE COURTNEY AND STEPLETON GROUP PARISH COUNCIL, DEVON

Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Group Parish Council own and maintain the recreational land in the centre of the village. Six years ago they set aside land as a wildflower and fruit tree area. The council then planted fruit trees: pear, apple, cherry and Bramley.

Councillor Judith Hewitt took charge in creating a wildflower meadow; she mowed the area to soil and fundraised £250, by selling cakes to the community, and bought and sowed locally sourced Wildflower seeds. This, however, produced disappointing results as the mowed grass grew back thick and fast.

In the autumn, Cllr Hewitt bought yellow rattle seeds and planted them in small patches within the field. The next spring she started to see results! Councillor Hewitt now waits until late July before cutting and removing the grass. Now Cllr Hewitt plants yellow rattle seeds in small patches and gradually different plants are being let in to grow amongst the grass. To give the wild seed a better chance of growing, the grass needs to be kept short until early spring which is weather dependent.

Councillor Hewitt now mows a path around the area and gives updates to the village as to what is growing. She has had positive responses from residents appreciating the wildflowers. Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Group Parish Council work alongside their principal authority, Dorset Council, to plant a wildflower meadow. Councillor Hewitt is making use of a special mower which shuck the seeds and plants them while picking up the grass.

For more information please email: Claire.goldfinch@nalc.gov.uk

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