

To: Stokesley Town Council
From: Climate Action Stokesley and Villages
Subject: **No Mow May**



Request

Climate Action Stokesley and Villages (CASA v) asks that 4 areas as detailed below are left uncut during May 2023. Let it bloom June would be very welcome.

Context

We are currently facing the triple crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. It is estimated that almost one million species is on the brink of extinction. A key group for biodiversity and the well-being of both ourselves and the planet are pollinators, including bees, but there are many other insects and invertebrates that are of fundamental importance.

According to reports 97% of wild flower meadows have disappeared since 1945 because of changes in land use, habitat loss and changes in agricultural methods including the use of pesticides. This means It is also estimate that between 1980 and 2013 every square kilometre has lost 11 species of bee and hoverfly.

Leaving the grass clippings on the mown areas has the effect of increasing the nitrogen content of the soil meaning that it is too rich for most wildflowers. Those that can compete include dandelions, stinging nettles and brambles. The loss of biodiversity limits the ability of soil to sequester carbon, reduces its ability to withstand drought and to absorb water thus making floods more likely.

According to some estimates each mow reduces biodiversity by 50%. Biodiversity provides resilience and a healthy environment. Plants convert energy from the sun making it available to other life forms. Bacteria and other organisms breakdown organic matter into nutrients providing plants with healthy soil. Pollinators are essential in plant reproduction and guarantee our own food production.

Objective

The UK has an estimated 1500 different pollinator species. They include bumble bees, solitary bees, wasps, flies, hoverflies, beetles, butterflies and moths. May is a crucial month for pollinators but also birds, small mammals and plant life. Many plants, including crab apples, apples, strawberries and tomatoes, to name but three, rely on these pollinators to be able to fruit. Allowing the grass to grow and flowers to blossom increases the amount of nectar available to these pollinators by significant amounts.

In addition to the possible increases to the amount of nectar, not mowing will also give an opportunity for a variety of different plant species to emerge. Those plants that will be much maligned dandelion, daisies, selfheal, but we may also see some other plants.

In addition, CASaV hope to encourage Stokesley residents to refrain from mowing during May
It is our intention to survey the areas to see what plants emerge.

Application

CASaV have asked for four areas to be left uncut. We ask that the area around Pinewood Close is cut as normal as this has been included for the previous two years so it may be time to give this area a break

CASaV recommend that, where relevant, a strip nearest the footpath or road be mown as normal for presentation purposes.

With specific reference to the area on the Acres opposite Woodlands Walk, there is a footpath of desire across this patch. If at all possible, we would ask that this footpath be mown making it a clear path through the area. It is hoped that this will encourage people to look at the plants that are been given the opportunity to grow.

Signs to be posted that will clearly show the area to be left unmown together with the last mow dates in April and first mow dates in June. The signs will also show the No Mow May objectives with the organisations supporting this initiative.

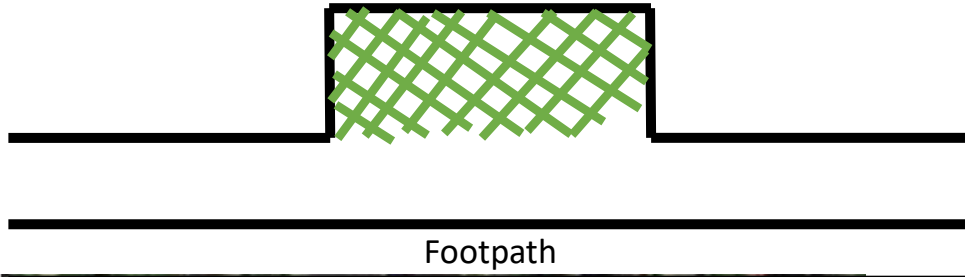
CASaV Actions

CASaV will put signs at all areas at the beginning of April to show that there will be a No Mow May area. Town Council contact details will also be added, with specific reference to the proposed site between the Acres and the Paddock.

An interim survey will be done to provide some interest in the different sites and the success of the area. This will also help to provide a more useful survey.

No Mow Locations

Area on footpath between the Riverslea and the B1365



Area running between the Leven and the rear of The Beeches



Area by the footpath from the Acres to the Paddock



The corner of The Acres and opposite Woodlands Walk



Supporting organisations

<https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/no-mow-may>

[Take part in 'No Mow May' \(yorkshireswildlife.co.uk\)](http://yorkshireswildlife.co.uk)