

Cambridgeshire Churchyard Conservation Management Plan for St Peters Church Carlton June 2024.

Grassland and wildflower areas	Illustration	Description	Management Summary	Planting Ideas and comments
Long grass Summer flower area		Summer meadow, left as long grass throughout the summer. Must have at least partial sun.	Mow in March, then cut in late July/August, to emulate traditional hay meadows. Final cut in October if possible. All mowings to be removed. Ties in with No Mow May	Allow natural regeneration of existing native plants for first 2 years but can introduce yellow rattle to help reduce the grass but sow seeds well before the winter. Could also introduce native wildflower seeds, from local verges or wild areas.
Short Grass		Short grass, principally for community amenity use. These are lawn type areas but small plants will flower between cuttings.	Cut regularly throughout growing season; every 2 or 3 weeks between April and mid-October.	Consider occasionally mowing round unusual or interesting species (such as hoary plantain, below) if appropriate. 
Uncut grass area		Left totally uncut to act as cover for small mammals, amphibians, overwintering butterflies. At least some in a sunny position.	Leave indefinitely but may change area on a 2 or 3-year rotation.	Leave areas under the trees in the woodland area & some grassy areas that have sunlight

Medium grass Spring flower area		Spring wildflower area (e.g. clover, sweet violet, speedwell, lungwort, primrose, celandine) and bulbs such as bluebells, wood anemone, grape hyacinths, crocus).	Cut monthly from May to October, after flowers have finished and set seed. All mowings to be removed. Planting in clumps looks better and helps pollinators find flowers.	Initially, allow natural regeneration of existing spring flowers but plants such as native primrose, snowdrop, cowslip, crocus, winter aconite, bluebell, can be introduced. N.B. Daffodils look good but most are highly bred and have little pollen although bumblebees will visit wild daffodils (<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>). Plan to create this properly next spring
Efforts to develop wildflowers and reduce coarse grasses		Reduce grass by collecting all mown grass and by planting yellow rattle seeds in autumn. (Seeds must reach very low temperatures to germinate.)	Scrape semi bare patches in summer flower area for sowing yellow rattle.	Yellow rattle is semi parasitic on grass so helps reduce grass content in wildflower areas and helps wildflowers to flourish. Plan to obtain yellow rattle seed & sow in the autumn
Carlton Buttercup (<i>Ranunculus crassilobus</i>)		There are patches of the buttercup under the trees		Avoid cutting the buttercup during the growing season
Nettle patch in a sunny position.		Nettles are important foodplants for a variety of species of butterfly, moth eggs and their caterpillars	Some nettles must be in a sunny position.	Stinging nettles support at least 40 insect species, in addition to butterflies and moths. The flowers also provide seeds for birds later in the year.

No use of chemicals or herbicides		Routine use of chemicals harms birds, earthworms, hedgehogs, frogs, plants and other wildlife	Routine use of chemicals harms birds, frogs, earthworms, hedgehogs, plants and other wildlife.	
Trees, shrubs herbs, ivy				
Mature ivy left wherever possible, in sunny areas			Mature ivy is a rich source of pollen for insects, including butterflies, bees and hoverflies and provides birds with berries later in the year.	N.B. ivy takes 10 years to mature so clumps should be left wherever possible.
Area of herbs and seed bearing plants, left over winter		Herb border, with plants to attract pollinators and feed birds in winter.	Manage annually, as required, to prevent plants from becoming woody or top-heavy.	Examples: lavender, heathers, rosemary, borage, oregano, teasels Is this something we want to do? I've got 2 lavender plants available if we think its worthwhile
Trees		Mature trees well maintained New plantings well cared for	Make static log and brushwood piles from dead trees and branches	Any new planting will be native species, provide pollen and berries/fruit for birds and not shade summer flower areas. Can plant spring flowers under the trees - celandine, wild garlic, crocus,

Hedging and shrubs		Attractive to insects, provide berries for winter feeding and sites for nesting birds.		Hedging plants can include native hawthorn, beech, spindle, blackthorn, hazel, holly, field maple, buckthorn, buddleia.
Water		Crucial for wildlife. Provide bowls or trays for bathing birds, small mammals and insects. Rota to top up water regularly, especially in dry weather.	Plant trays are useful, with a stone to prevent insects drowning.	Plan to put a shallow container for water near the wooded area
Composts		Heaps of grass cuttings, twigs and dead flowers from graves.	Must be in a partially sunny spot, away from walls, to avoid damage. No need for Green Bin.	For grass mowings and small woody cuttings. Can build a compost container with pallets. Plan to create a grass heap when we clear the grass later in the year.
Log or brushwood pile		Plenty of wildlife makes its home in dead wood and uses it as a source of food or to hibernate.	Logs and branches up to 1 m length in piles up to 600 mm high. Some in a dampish spot.	In woodlands, fallen wood occurs naturally and many species have adapted to use this habitat. But in our increasingly tidy countryside, fallen and dead wood is not easily available
Stumpery		Stumperies are made up of old tree roots, stems and stumps of trees. These can be combined, to offer a space for wildlife. Ideally place in a shady corner, with some in partial sunlight.	Leave undisturbed. Could plant ivy, to partially cover logs or spring flowers at base.	Use materials that may otherwise be wasted. Stand logs closely together in a vertical position, half buried in soil. Pack soil between the gaps to bury the bases of the logs. These will support species like stag beetles that like damp, submerged dead wood. Could we create a stumpery?

Variety of habitats				
Bird boxes (or nesting sites) bat boxes (or bats using building), insect hotels, badger entrances, bees in stone work		Constructions such as bat, swift or bird boxes, bird baths, insect hotels. Nest boxes ideally need to be cleaned out in winter.	The nest box entrance hole size effects the species attracted: 25 mm for blue, coal and marsh tits, 28 mm for great tits, tree sparrows and pied flycatchers, 32 mm for house sparrows and nuthatches	Could consider visiting Landbeach or Swaffham Bulbeck church to see inhabited swift boxes. All wildlife should be celebrated in the churchyard wherever possible. Hope to put up some bird boxes later in the year
Sustainability Water butts or similar in use		Introduce policy of no plastic flowers but allow planting on graves of native species. Don't think we can do this Carlton	It is recognised that a no plastic flowers policy may be very difficult to introduce in some cases.	Consider installing water butts or similar. Plan to collect some water from the down pipes from the guttering
Management, communication and public involvement		Notices to explain the management of grassland and other features, such as nettles. Notices placed in specific areas, as appropriate. Free posters from Caring for God's Acre 	Encourage others to help rake cut grass or help survey wildlife such as wildflowers, butterflies, mammals or birds. Publicise Churchyard Conservation Award and provide a seat for quiet contemplation	Spread the word about biodiversity to the local community. Consider using Cambridgeshire Mammal Group to help conduct survey of mammals https://www.cambsmammalgroup.org.uk/ Plan to display posters on the church noticeboards & circulate details to the community. Spread the details by word of mouth & put details on village website

Recording and Surveys		Annual or biannual identification and location of living things – plants, flowers, butterflies, moths and other insects, small mammals, birds	Record any increase in numbers and status such as rarity	Try looking for local knowledgeable people to help. Cambridgeshire Mammal Group can help with small mammal surveys, such as hedgehogs. Cambsmammal@gmail.com Plan to compile a list of wildflowers found in the churchyard
Sketch plan of churchyard				A member of the community has agreed to put together a picture of the churchyard.



Caring for God's Acre - for very useful resources and ideas. <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/>

The Quiet Garden Movement.

Quiet Gardens are special places created for contemplation, prayer, stillness and rest. They help promote the spiritual, mental and physical well being of those who use them.

Not all Quiet Gardens are found in churchyards, although the latter can be very suitable locations. Quiet Gardens have some seating and may be partially enclosed by trees, shrubs and flowers. The website provides more information. <https://quietgarden.org/>