



Llawlyfr Hyfforddiant • Training Manual

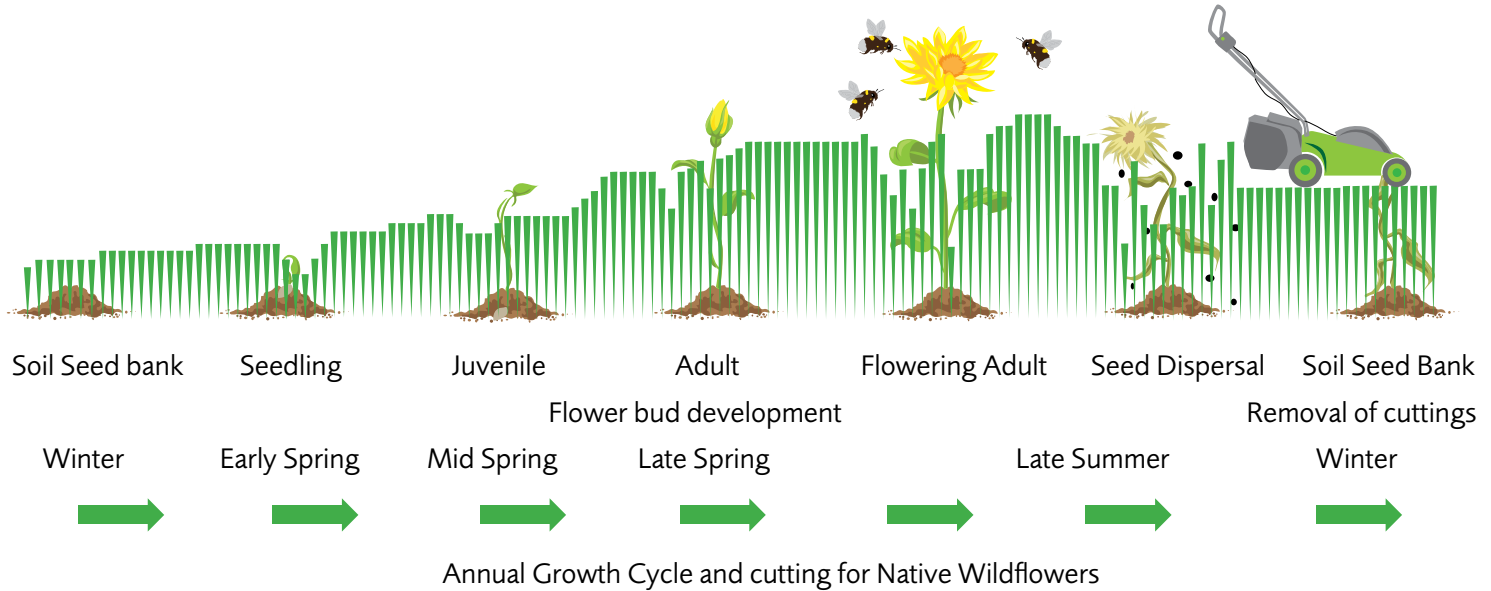
www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/nin

Primary Objectives

To pilot alternative management of open spaces to:

- Increase habitat for pollinators – More food, shelter, hibernation sites and opportunities to reproduce to increase populations
- Connect isolated habitats allowing pollinators to move around, find resources and repopulate areas
- Increase the source population of pollinators to spread into wider countryside and support food production
- Increase diversity of pollinator species.

Cutting regimes to achieve primary objectives



Cutting regimes to achieve primary objectives

- 1 x Cut and Collect late August/early September
- Possible additional cut (and collect if needed) late in the year or very early the following year

Rationale

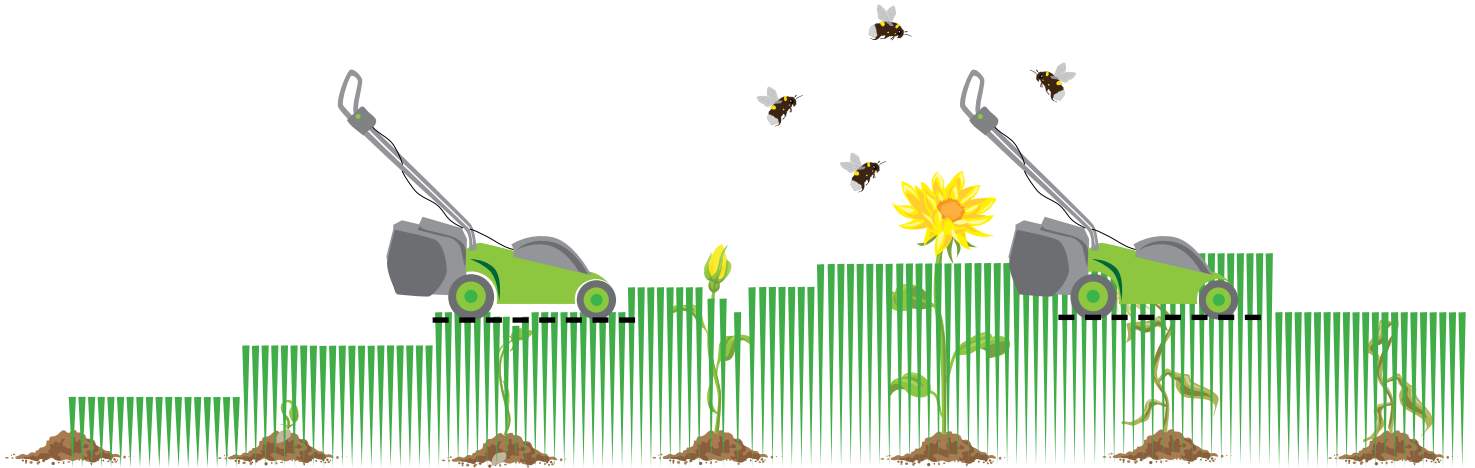
- Many plants are annual (grow from seed, produce a seed in one year and die). This approach will allow annual plants able to complete their lifecycle
- Flowers provide food source for pollinators
- Seeds to ensure next years flowers
- Collect cuttings (after the plants have released their seeds) removes nutrients from the soil, slowing the growth of competitive grasses
- Removal of cuttings allows light and air to flowers improving their chances of success
- Autumn can be very warm and wet, ideal for grass growth. Removal of this late flush of grass can reduce competition for space and light improving the success of flowers

Complementary Objectives

Where it is not appropriate to manage sites to achieve the optimum benefit for pollinators or it is not possible to do so, we can adjust our cutting regime to have other environmental benefits:

- Improve general health of other wildlife and the natural environment both above and below ground
- Increase resilience of the natural environment to pests and diseases
- Increase resilience of the natural environment to drought and flooding and the impact of flooding on people and property

Cutting regimes to achieve complementary objectives and contribute to primary objectives



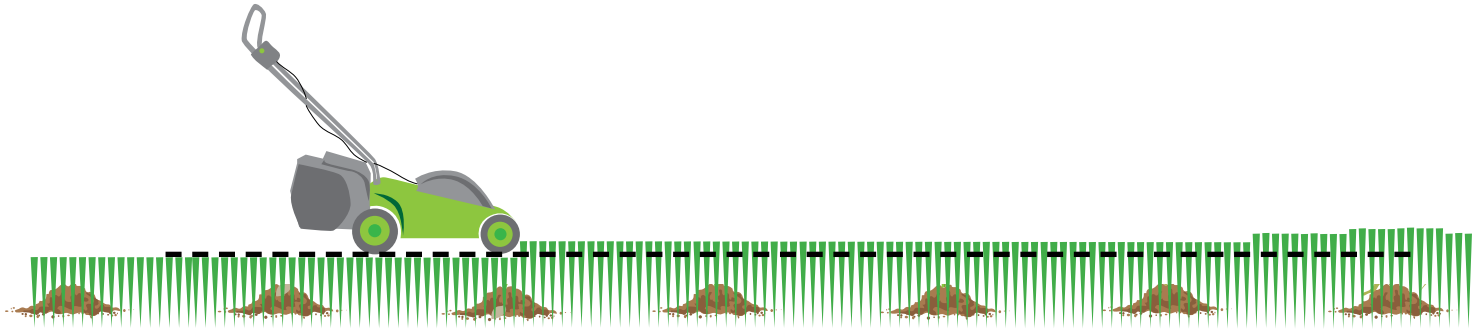
Cutting regime to achieve complementary objectives and contribute to primary objectives

- Increase the time between cuts and raise the cutting height

Rationale:

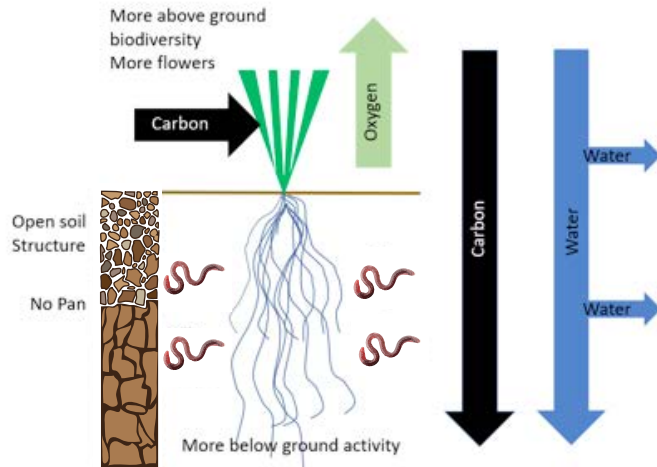
- Some of our common flowers are low growing and will miss being cut by being below the cutting height, surviving and continuing to provide a food resource to pollinators.
- More time between cuts allows taller flowers the opportunity to develop and provide food for pollinators before they are cut.
- Better root development
- Reduces compaction and improves soil health

Comparison with High Frequency Mowing

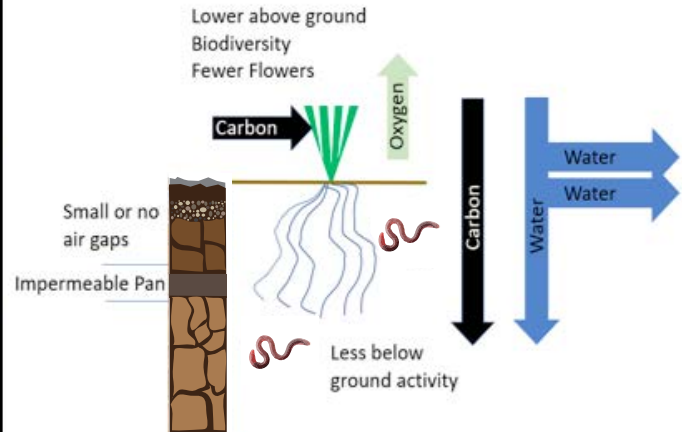


Nature Isn't Neat Mowing Regime Rationale

High cut, low frequency mowing.



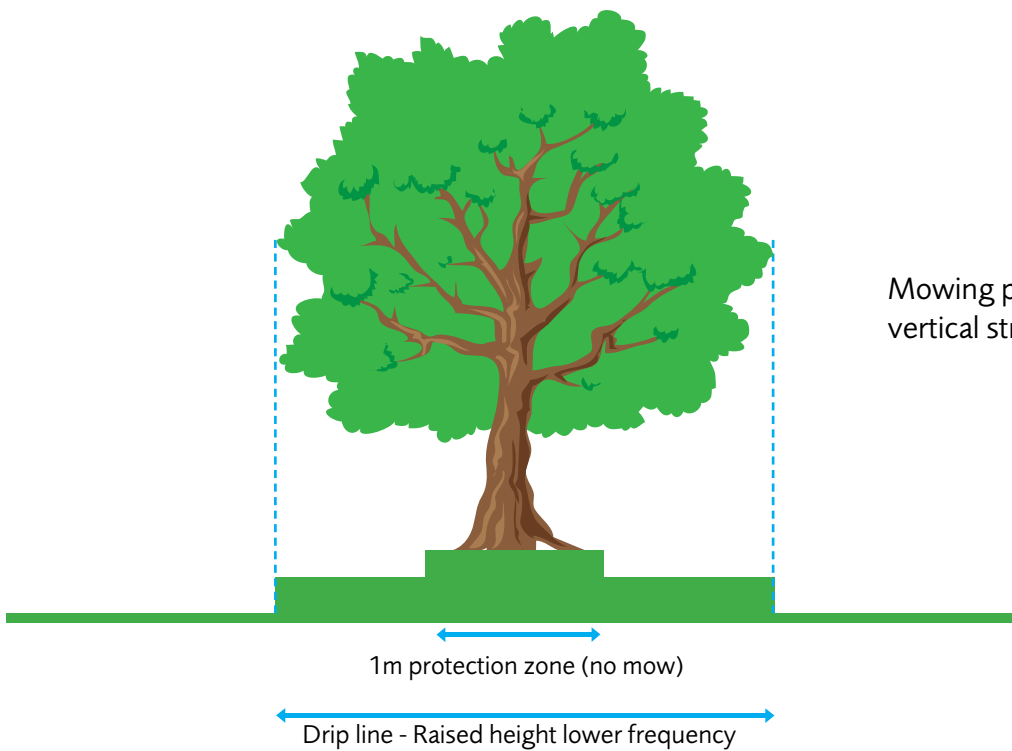
Low cut, high frequency mowing.



Nature Isn't Neat mowing regimes

Key Principles

- Areas marked out with stakes for single cut and collect after mid August
- Lower frequency, raised cutting height under all large trees
- 1m radius (no cut) protection zone area around base of all established trees (with your help we can monitor issues such as scrub development and cut every 2 or 3 years if necessary)
- Round off corners and create wavy edges of larger open spaces
- Reduced mowing should be adopted on slopes where practical
- Maintain mowing along edges of paths -2m wide cut alongside major paths
1m wide cut along minor paths.
- Litter pick before mowing



Mowing profile showing
vertical structure

Mowing under tree canopies







○ 1 meter no mow around base of tree

3 - 4 x per year raised cutting height
under canopy – 1st cut not before 1st
April

1-2 meter wide cut along paths

Mowing under tree canopies



-  1 meter no mow around base of tree
-  3 - 4 x per year raised cutting height under canopy – 1st cut not before 1st April
-  Connect reduced mow cutting areas where tree are close
-  1-2 meter wide cut along paths (1 m on minor paths, 2m on major paths)

Edges of POS



Larger open spaces

- 3 – 4 x cut, raised cutting height around edges
- Edges scalloped, not straight
- Be consistent on mowing line
- Start mowing edges from mid April not mid March.
- Final cut to include collect where possible

Use of herbicides

It is now understood that Glyphosate has a detrimental impact on the health of insects including pollinators. Use of Glyphosate to prepare urban wildflower displays is counterproductive. Urban displays should be prepared without the use of herbicides and monitored for change.

- Where else do you use herbicide and have you ideas where it's use can be reduced?
- No herbicide use around base of trees
- Reduction of herbicide use to only where essential
- Reduction of frequency of use of herbicides where possible
- Greater care to reduce overspray and drift

Logistics

- Reduction in mowing frequency for some areas as often provides time for litter picking and adjusting mower height
- What can be done to make cutting easier and reduce the need for spraying
 - Removal of knee rails or other furniture where no longer needed?
 - Other ideas?

Benefits for wildlife

- Plants allowed to complete lifecycle of flowering and setting seed increases population of flowers
- Additional flowers provide food for pollinators
- Some seeds are food for small mammals, birds and insects.
- Longer grass provides shelter for small mammals such as mice, voles shrews as well as all sorts of insects which in turn are food for bigger wildlife such as hawks and owls
- Removal of grass helps suppress soil fertility preventing grasses from out competing flowers
- Lower frequency cutting allows better root development and therefore access to water and nutrients needed for plant health
- Less mowing reduces soil compaction improving plant health
- Both improved root development and less soil compaction improves resilience to drought and flooding

Benefits for People

- Supports farm yields (food production)
- Greater carbon storage in the soils and plants
- Increase oxygen production
- Improved capacity to absorb water reducing flooding
- Reduces standing water and water runoff from slopes, reducing flooding
- Improves absorption of pollutants and their impact on health
- Better health, mental and physical.

Key messages to the public

- MCC is trialling new approaches and will be monitoring the response
- Over time, we will adapt what we do in response to monitoring
- This is part of ongoing work to be more gentle with the environment
- There are lots of unseen benefits to people
- The trial supports MCC legal obligations and duties as a public authority to manage the environment sustainably
- This is not a cost cutting exercise, we are working differently, not less.
- More information is available from wasteandstreetservices@monmouthshire.gov.uk



MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

MONMOUTHSHIRE
meadows group



Bees for Development



transition**monmouth**
creative community action... for life after oil

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