



Wildflower Planting Policy

Adopted on: 3rd March 2021

1. Introduction

Requests to plant native wildflowers on land owned or managed by Ringwood Town Council (RTC) are occasionally made to Councillors and Council Officers. This Policy seeks to give clear guidance regarding the circumstances where such requests may be granted.

2. RTC Owned Open Spaces

- 2.1 In accord with the Open Spaces Act (1906) Section 10, RTC shall “hold and administer the open space or burial ground in trust to allow, and with a view to, the enjoyment thereof by the public as an open space within the meaning of this Act and under proper control and regulation and for no other purpose: and maintain and keep the open space or burial ground in a good and decent state.” In addition, there may be covenants or other legal obstacles that restrict changes of a particular open space.
- 2.2 Enjoyment by the public may take many forms, such as picnicking, dog walking, areas for children to play or simply admiring the beauty of that area. The Council needs to take into account the expectations of all parishioners, so a balance of well-maintained grass, formal playgrounds, wildflower areas, etc. is required.
- 2.3 Requests by a person or organisation that a particular area is set aside for native wildflowers will include a site plan and timings that will be

considered by the Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee if deemed necessary by Council Officers.

- 2.4 This policy is not intended to restrict the ability of RTC to plant wildflowers on its land at its own discretion and expense or to oblige it to do so.

3. The Planting Scheme

- 3.1 RTC reserves the right to require a plan for any proposed planting scheme, where the person or organisation wishing to carry out the work may be required to:

- Carry out and provide on request appropriate risk assessments for the activities proposed;
- Prepare the ground and plant in a manner that is not detrimental to the soil or the surrounding area;
- Assess the area and propose the planting of species that are in keeping with the soil and aspect;
- Manage the planted area for a time period agreed with Council officers, which will likely be 5 or more years, in order for the planting to realise self-regeneration and be clear of undesirable plants. Particularly in the initial years, additional planting may be required to enhance the scheme and as maintenance;
- Ensure Council grounds staff are able to mow or otherwise work on the area if required. To assist, grounds staff will need to know what plants have been sown so they can take into account the particular flower types and their reproductive cycle.

- 3.2 For avoidance of doubt, the person or organisation requesting the planting scheme will be responsible for any and all costs incurred in carrying out and maintaining the scheme for the agreed time period.

- 3.3 A planting scheme is more likely to be approved if it has fulfilled the requirements of Section 3.1 and also made a case that the area is suitable for and would benefit from wildflower planting. Factors like visual amenity, increased biodiversity and position of the site will be taken into account, thus fulfilling RTC's obligations laid out in Section 2.1.