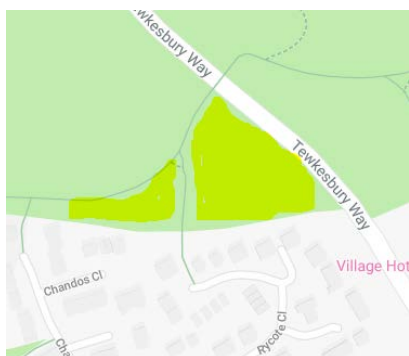


WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Wildflower Meadows Update Report

1. Update

- 1.1 West Swindon Parish Council undertook a trial of wildflower meadow treatment on a number of small areas on Shaw Ridge Linear Park during 2018. It was anticipated that the areas would be uncut by the grounds maintenance team during the growing season and two cuts would be scheduled that would remove all the growth and remove the risings.
- 1.2 As 2018 proved to be a long, hot and dry period from May to July, the grass was cut in July but did not fully return to full growth after that. On that basis a second cut was not initiated.
- 1.3 Whilst it will take 2-3 years for the grassed areas to reduce fertility and enable wildflower planting to flourish, the areas have been felt to be a successful trial to date. It was originally agreed to cut a 1 metre edge to the meadow areas and this has been applied inconsistently. This will be an aspect to improve. Signs to explain the wildflower meadow work also need to be created.
- 1.4 This Committee is asked to consider extending the wildflower areas at Shaw Ridge Linear Park next year. This would include two further patches of grass that follow on from the existing trial areas – the area above Rycote Close and Chandos Close. The Committee is also asked to consider creating a trial at Toothhill Park



- 1.5 It currently costs the Parish Council in the region of £500 per cut on the wildflower meadow area, it is anticipated that additional areas would create further costs but potentially at a reduced rate if the machinery can combine the work.
- #### **2. Recommendations:**
- 2.1 The Leisure and Amenities agrees a continuation of the wildflower meadow trials and confirms any new areas to be added to the programme

Paula Harrison Parish Manager