



Wildlife Ways Update - Issue 8

Welcome to the Wildlife Ways Stay Connected bulletin, giving you all the latest news about this exciting programme.



It's Bulb Planting Season!

This week we have started our bulb planting across the Borough. Nearly 3.5 million bulbs are scheduled for planting across parts of our road verges and open spaces under Wildlife Ways. These will largely be snowdrops and various species of crocus, though some areas have been selected for planting with bluebells, wood anemones, autumn crocus, native daffodil and alliums. Native primroses will also be planted within these areas later in spring.

This planting is all being done by hand. Our contractors *idverde* are doing this work and some areas are intended to involve groups of local children - keep an eye on the [website](#) for details. The main purpose of bulb planting is to help pollinating insects in early spring, or in some cases autumn, where nectar may be difficult to find. Pollination is important as the insects take pollen from one plant to another, thereby making plant reproduction possible, and allows insect species to thrive.

If you want to tell us anything about your area that you think we should know, or you want to share photos of any Wildlife Ways wildflower displays you have seen, please do not hesitate to email wildlifeways@solihull.gov.uk

'Green Hay' and why are we spreading it

We have been carrying out 'green hay' spreading recently on some of our parks and open spaces. It is called green hay on account of its colour when spread, and is harvested from other meadows rich in wildflowers. Consequently, once spread, it should contain most of the wildflower seeds needed to enrich meadows poor in wildflowers. The benefits of using green hay is that it is a fresh, local and cheaper source of seed than that obtained commercially. The ground is prepared either by spraying off the existing grass, or where there are significant existing

wildflowers, by disturbing the grassland to expose bare soil in which the seed can root. The sites where this has been used this year are at Babbs Mill, Marston Green, Low Brook, Kingshurst Brook, Cole Bank, Streetsbrook green space, Hillfield and Brueton Park.

Ward Updates

Bickenhill (Route F)

The next route we are due to commence is Route F between Gloucester Way to Coleshill Road – see [here](#) for the route plan.

The works will include an upgrade to the existing pathways through Marston Green Park. Weather permitting we will be carrying out these works from late-September to November 2019. Visit [here](#) for the traffic and pedestrian diversion plans which are necessary during the works.

Elmdon (Routes A & B)

Works on Route A from Lode Lane to Valley Road, through Elmdon Park, have been completed. A new shared path will benefit both pedestrians and cyclists. Wildflower areas are now established in some sections of the park and have been prepared in others.

Discussions with Ward Members, the Elmdon Park Support Group and residents are underway to look at how we can best accommodate the proposed wildflower areas and retain grass space for local recreational use.

Route B goes from the park by the church, to Jaguar Land Rover Gate 1 and up some of Damson Parkway. Work on this section is scheduled to start in October.

Kingshurst & Fordbridge (Route H)

The upcoming works in Babbs Mill Park as part of [Route H](#) between Cooks Lane and Yorks Wood, scheduled between September and December this year, have been rescheduled for spring 2020 following a review of the programme.

Silhill/Elmdon (Route C)

The first section of this route, from Solihull town centre (Union Road) up to Damson Parkway/Lugtrout Lane will be starting shortly. The improvements will include some new crossings at School Lane, Cornyx Lane, Damson Lane and landscaping. A map of the whole

route can be seen [here](#).

About Wildlife Ways

Wildlife Ways is a £16.8 million programme – part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – to improve the borough for the benefit of people and wildlife alike. The programme will include tree, bulb and wildflower planting. It will also make it easier for people wanting to walk and cycle across the borough by widening and connecting paths and cycle routes with green spaces.

There's more on our website www.wildlifeways.co.uk - and if you've any comments or questions, please email us at wildlifeways@solihull.gov.uk



For more information about Council services, please see our [website](#).

