

Our Nature Estate



As part of our commitment to combating the declared Nature Emergency and delivering the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan, the City of Edinburgh Council has implemented innovative grassland management through the programme called *Our Nature Estate*.



Why does it matter?

Our bees and butterflies and other pollinators are in serious decline. This programme allows more native wildflowers to grow and flower for longer and be used as a food source for pollinators. Pollinators are vital, as they allow plants to fertilise, develop seeds, and produce fruits across gardens, allotments and agricultural land.

Over spring and summer in 2024, we compared 10 plots mown every 2 weeks to 10 plots mown every 6 weeks. Key findings from the analysis conducted by the University of Edinburgh revealed the following results:

- 14 additional species of flowering plants
- 6,364 more individual flowering plants
- A 4,167% increase in nectar availability for pollinators, with significant nectar resources in early spring
- Enhanced visual and structural diversity throughout the year

This programme supports biodiversity through naturalised grassland and the direct enhancement of grassland through meadow creation and bulb and plug planting. These changes will be balanced with access, recreation and community use and only implemented where appropriate. Our mowing schedules and the use of desire lines and perimeter cuts are designed to ensure these plots remain accessible and presentable.



Edinburgh
Nature
Network



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Our Nature Estate

What to expect?

- Sports areas (e.g., football pitches) will continue with weekly cuts.
- Recreational spaces and areas directly next to homes will be mown approximately every 2 weeks.
- New creative cutting styles will incorporate maintenance edges, shape-cutting and grassland islands to improve aesthetics while reducing the perception of messiness, supported by community feedback.
- Plots containing native, low flowering plant species such as daisy, buttercup and clover will be cut every 6 weeks to allow these flowers to thrive without being outcompeted by grasses. These plots will receive a maintenance edge cut every 2 weeks.
- Plots planted with bulbs/wildflower plugs, located underneath trees or containing native taller flowering species such as ox-eye daisy and cow parsley will have a mowing frequency of approximately 3 times a year to allow these species to thrive. These plots will receive a maintenance edge cut every 2 weeks.
- We are raising awareness to justify changes through newsletters, social media, signage, and local consultations.
- Local residents and community groups will be involved with plot planting and enhancement.



We appreciate your support for this initiative, which will directly support local biodiversity and pollinators like bees and butterflies in your local area.

Find out more at **ThrivingGreenSpaces.scot/one**

Scan
me →



Edinburgh
Nature
Network



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

• EDINBURGH •
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL