

**Item 18. Grass cutting. Meadow Management. BMSDC**

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**Summary**

This is a request from Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils (BMSDC) to see which grassed areas, that BMSDC cut, might be left to grow longer over the summer period.

**Email from BMSDC**

“Dear Clerk, ... Since 2022, Babergh has been managing some areas of grass as meadows, letting the grass and native wildflowers grow to support wildlife, in particular pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies. We call this approach meadow management. This involves altering the mowing regime, switching from regular monthly visits to an initial cut at the start of the season (Mar or Apr), then leaving the grass uncut until Sep or Oct, at which point the areas are cut and the material removed.

The area under meadow management has gradually increased, but we want to have more areas managed in this way, where it is both suitable to do so and there is broad public support.

Not everywhere is suitable. We avoid small areas, those where long grass may affect road visibility, play spaces and those clearly valued by local people for meeting, dog walking, etc.

Not everyone likes the change. Many feel that all grass in our towns and villages should be kept short. However, increasingly we are getting more calls for us to stop mowing so often, frequently when people notice wildflowers appearing in between cuts.

I am contacting you to **ask for help in identifying areas** within your town or village that could both be suitable and supported by those that live close to and use them. You may know of areas already, or environmental groups in your area that are asking for such a change. Alternatively, perhaps you could ask for suggestions and gauge opinion via a parish newsletter or website.

If you have areas that may be suitable, we first assess them before making any decision. We also want to be confident that any change from regular mowing is what local people want. We can carry out local consultation, if needed, and will instal signs on new areas to ensure people know what we are doing and why. We are keen that any expansion in our meadow management areas is driven by our residents

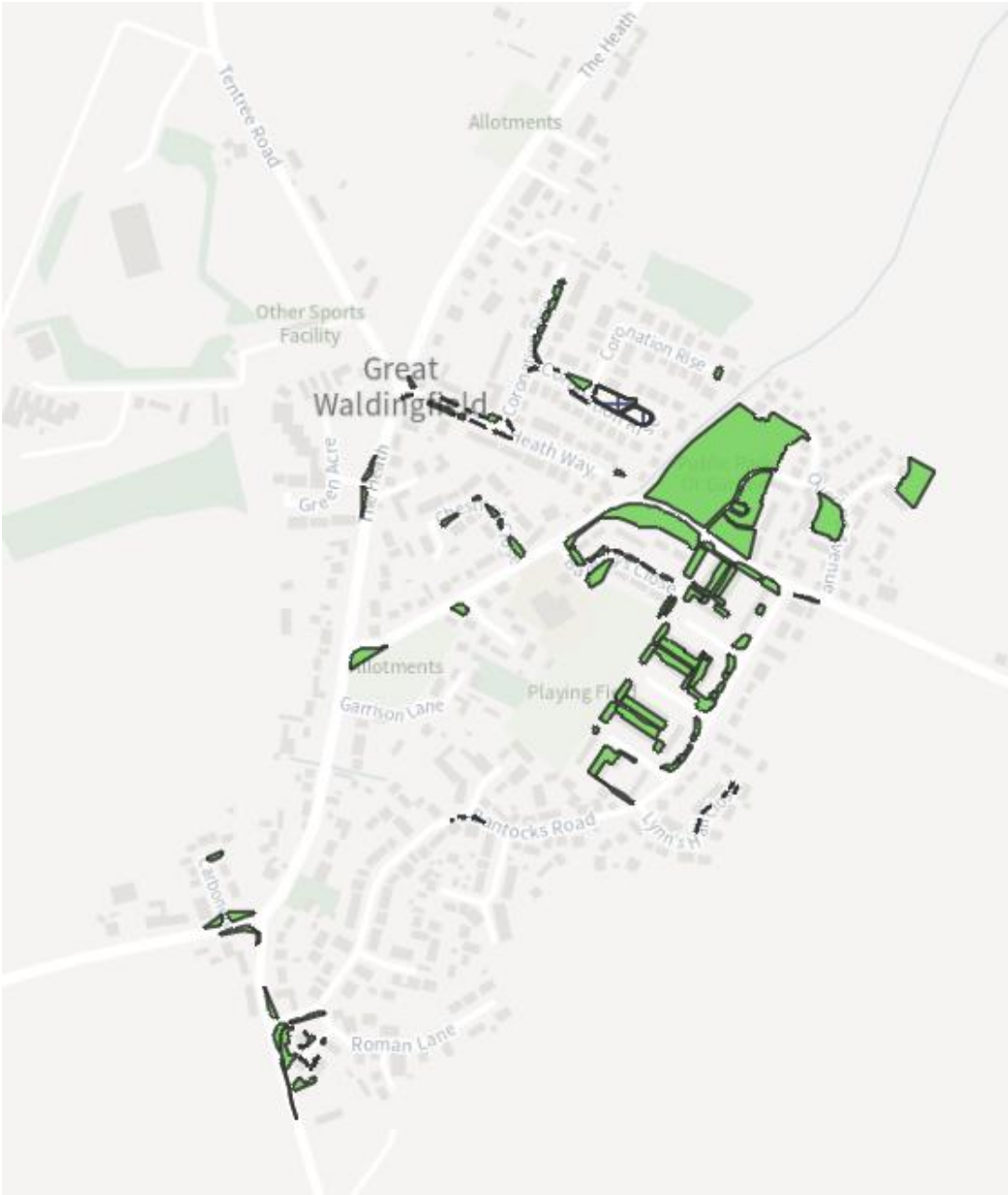
Any new area would be trialled for one year – no change would be made permanent until we know it works and is locally supported. Sometimes, when we leave a site unmown it can uncover problem plants or tree suckers, which would mean the area is best mown regularly again. Perhaps the result is disappointing to local people, with little but grass. We can either go back to mowing or can enrich such areas with wildflower seed. Sometimes, we find a wealth of wildflowers that have been hidden by regular mowing.

We can only change to meadow management on areas we mow. Sometimes, areas of grass may belong to others, and we can't make any changes to them – though we are happy to advise others if they are interested in taking the same approach.

All the areas of grass we mow, along with those already in meadow management, can be found on our online mapping page....

Maps

Areas of BMSDC grass cutting with Great Waldingfield



### Chilton Corner/ Valley Road



### Folly Road / Bantocks Road / Chestnut Close



### Greenacre / Heathway



Coronation Rise / Heath Estate



Overing Avenue / Fortress Fields / Folly Field



Action

Decide how to 'cavass' residents on the view.