

What to do – Top tips for improving your churchyard for wildlife

Every churchyard is different but here are some ideas on what you could do for wildlife;

Build a compost heap – great for reptiles and small mammals

Provide bird, bat and insect boxes plus log piles.

Plant hedges – providing cover and winter berries for birds and mammals



Leave small plants and lichens on walls and monuments

Are there any grassland areas you could cut differently? i.e. remove grass cuttings from mown areas to encourage wild flower growth



Plant herbs to attract butterflies and bees

Plant trees for the future, site them carefully and inspect them annually

Maintain a list of plants and animals seen in the churchyard and make this available on a noticeboard for everyone to see

Seek advice on surveying and caring for the churchyard



Bedfordshire
Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire



Northamptonshire Churchyard Conservation Award Scheme

Patron; The Bishop of Peterborough, The Rt. Revd. Donald Allister



Importance of Churchyards for Wildlife

Churchyards and graveyards can be havens for wildlife: many birds nest and feed in them, different wild flowers grow, and their trees are often an important feature of the village.

In addition churchyards play a significant role as part of the whole mosaic of important sites for wildlife across our three counties. Grassland habitats within churchyards are particularly important havens for wildlife, such as wildflowers, butterflies and insects and can often form the remaining fragments of old, unimproved, wildlife rich grasslands.

The Wildlife Trust encourages the management of Churchyards for the conservation of their wildlife and believes this can be balanced with other values of peace and beauty which churchyards provide.

Churchyard Conservation Award

The Wildlife Trust runs the *Conservation Churchyard Award Scheme* which aims to help villages increase the wildlife of their churchyards. Any churchyard can enter the scheme and will receive an advisory visit and plaque to display. There are then Bronze, Silver and Gold awards that can be worked towards.

Advisers will visit your churchyard every three years; however advisory visits are available annually on request or if you want to apply for one of the awards. Our visits will focus on providing information on how best to encourage wildlife as well as rewarding the best churchyards.



Getting started

However big or small, urban or rural your churchyard is it will have value for local wildlife. If you would like to enter the scheme or just want some advice about management, please contact us at The Wildlife Trust and we will arrange for an adviser to meet up with yourselves, answer your questions and give some advice.

Gather a group; what skills do you have, what other groups could you involve i.e. scouts, schools, gardening clubs?

Talk to your church; explain your ideas, gain their support, who currently manages your churchyard, how and why?

Look around; what wildlife already uses your churchyard, what else could you attract?

Start small; focus on a small area first, only take on as much as you can manage.

Make a plan; what can you do, when and why? – present it to your church.

Contact us; The Wildlife Trust BCN, Lings House, Lings Way, Billing Lings, Northampton, NN3 8BE

Telephone (01604) 405285

Email; northamptonshire@wildlifebcn.org

Further Resources;

www.wildlifebcn.org/churchyards

www.ecocongregation.org

www.northantschurchyardgroup.org.uk

