

## **Navins Wildflower Meadow 2016**

It has now been 10 years since Mountsorrel Heritage Group commenced work, during the winter of 2005/6, on developing the small piece of waste ground adjacent to Christ Church at the foot of the Navins, into a small wildflower meadow. Originally conceived and planned by the late Ken Wiblin, the work is now led by Jeff Scott.

The original seeding has been followed over the years by a regular pattern of traditional meadow management techniques; scything, seed drop and then hayraking to develop what is now a wildlife rich haven close to the heart of the village.

The initial seeding included Common Knapweed, Wild Carrot, Field Scabious, Oxeye Daisy, Plantains, and Cowslip. Over the years there has been considerable self-seeding and the judicious addition of further wildflower seed and seedlings to enrich the meadow and increase its value for wildlife.

The annual management cycle has included the grubbing out of highly invasive brambles and the minimisation of bindweed, both of which would run rampant if not managed. Yellow Rattle which was in the original sowing has been added to control the growth of the stronger grasses.

From a pair of plants in 2010 spring and early summer 2016 saw the best show yet of Primrose, Cowslip and Oxlips. These were followed by a major showing of Campions, Oxeye Daisy, Red Clover, Field Scabious, Teasel and Ragged Robin.



***26 April 2016***



***16 June 2016***

After the recent final raking for winter some Snakes-Head Fritillaries were sown in the damper areas of the meadow. These were grown over the last four years from locally gathered seed and nurtured until the flower bearing bulbs were thought large enough to plant out. We await next spring with interest!

Scything this year revealed very few vole nests which, whilst disappointing after the 50+ found last year, is to be expected as there does seem to be a two-year cycle for them. What has been noted this year is the butterfly and moth activity of the site, even this late in the year we noted during hay raking, a good number of Red Admiral and Comma butterflies and a host of varied bees using the large, nectar rich, ivy area for feeding.



***29 September 2016 - The Meadow ready for winter***

In 2010 the site was surveyed by a botanist who identified some 50 plant species and we hope to repeat the survey next year.