Greening our Graveyards Information Sheet (Updated 11-26)

General Information

- **Designing for Biodiversity** - Designing for Biodiversity: a technical guide for new and existing buildings - Guidance for professionals - Bat Conservation Trust
- **Ancient & Veteran Tree Management -** Books | Ancient Tree Forum plus training videos and certification: Resources | Ancient Tree Forum.
- **Caring for God's Acre -** free downloads: Action Pack and Education Pack - https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/resources/
- **EcoCongregation Scotland** - https://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/ideas-for-action/
- **Tayside Green Graveyard Initiative** – https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/2015/02/03/green-graveyards-initiative/
- **Wildflower Spotter (ID) Sheets and Gardening with Wildflowers Guide** - https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature
- **Kirkyard Heritage article** – Dr Susan Buckram & C. A. Lloyd: https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/kirkyard-heritage/kirkyard-heritage.htm
- **Fortingall Graveyard -** Fortingall – Fortingall – Graveyard, Church, Yew Tree and History
- **Living Planet Report 2026** - living-planet-report-2026-english.pdf

Grassland Management

- There is a helpful section on graveyard grassland management on the **Caring for God's Acre** website (and information sheets) – see above.
- **No Mow May** – https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/about-us/news/no-mow-may-dawn-of-a-new-british-lawn
- **Daisy-Height Lawns** - raise the cutter bar to skim over low-flowering daisies, self-heal, violets, clover and let them flower. When the grass gets a bit long, cut it but leave another area with its flowers so the pollinators still have some nectar to use nearby. Cut that later when the first lawn is growing again and about to flower.
- **Pollinator Pods** – a smaller more compact version of No Mow May. Leave areas to grow long but keep the rest of the grass around it neat and tidy. Either cut in June or July or leave until end August and see what taller flowers come up. These are usually Fox and Cubs, other Hawkbits, fine grasses (great for moths) and orchids. The birds will love foraging in these areas. Then cut and remove the arisings to create a neat grassland area from autumn onwards.
- **Good Verge Guide** (very good general information for other "sites" not just verges) - https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/our-work/publications/good-verge-guide-different-approach-managing-our-waysides-and-verges



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The Pictorial Meadows Debate

Plantlife's blog - https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/blog/What-is-better-Planted-meadows-or-naturally-occurring-wildflowers

Herbicides

- Alternatives to using chemicals – and natural pest control: Naturehood Actions | Reduce pesticides and look after wildlife
- In Edinburgh, trials are underway - Group leads campaign to make Edinburgh pesticide-free | The National / Pesticide Free Edinburgh | 38 Degrees.
- Case studies from all across the UK are listed here: Pesticide-Free Towns - success stories - Pesticide Action Network UK (pan-uk.org), together with useful information from 2017: The Pesticide-Free Towns Campaign hits Scotland - Pesticide Action Network UK (pan-uk.org)
- There is a European Network - Pesticide Free Towns (pesticide-free-towns.info) with a toolkit to download - Methods & Techniques | Pesticide Free Towns (pesticide-free-towns.info). In America there is a 'non-toxic communities' website: Non-toxic cities – http://www.nontoxiccommunities.com/cities.html

Pollinators

- Pollinator Strategy for Scotland 2017-2027 | NatureScot
- Bumblebee Conservation Trust – lots of advice - https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/
- Aberdeenshire has its own Pollinator Action Plan – Aberdeenshire Council Pollinator Action Plan 2022 to 2027
- Buglife - https://www.buglife.org.uk/bugs/featured-bugs/pollinators/
- Buglife B-Lines - https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/
- RHS Plants for Pollinators lists – including garden plants: https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators
- Making Way for Nature (Tayside booklet – hard copies available: just ask) - https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/2016/07/04/making-way-for-nature/
- Beds for Bees (RePollinate Project) - https://www.repollinate.org.uk/558-2/ (and new Wildlife Gardening pamphlet - https://heyzine.com/flip-book/a65cbbed99.html)
- Nature Scot - Pollinators - get busy - get involved! | NatureScot and resources list - Pollinators - resources | NatureScot.



- Scottish Pollinators blog - Scottish pollinators | Updates on pollinators and pollinator projects from around Scotland
- Faith Communities Actions to Help Pollinators (All Ireland Pollinator Plan) - Faith-Communities-Pollinator-Guidelines-2022-WEB.pdf
- Butterfly and Moth Identification - Butterflies | Butterfly Conservation and Identify a moth | Butterfly Conservation; gardening/land management for butterflies: Gardening for butterflies | Butterfly Conservation and Enhancing Habitats for Butterflies and Moths | Butterfly Conservation.

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Ivy – a major wildlife asset

- Woodland Trust - https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/plants/wild-flowers/ivy/
- Ivy – blog - https://www.bocook.co.uk/blog/ivy-friend-or-foe

Trees and Hedges

- How to Identify Trees: A Simple Guide - Woodland Trust
- Tree Council advice for trees and hedges - Science and Research - The Tree Council
- Ancient Tree Inventory: https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/
- Bats in Trees: https://cdn.bats.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Bats-Trees.pdf?v=1541085197
- Ancient Tree Forum - https://www.ancienttreeforum.org.uk/
- Ancient Yew Group - https://www.ancient-yew.org
- Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh – Yew Hedge (book) https://www.rbge.org.uk/business-centre/botanics-books/the-yew-hedge/
- Hedge management - 30_complete_good_hedge_management_guide_leaflet.pdf
- PTES - Hedge management options including advice on surveys
- Memorial Trees - Planting A Memorial Or Remembrance Tree | Funeral Guide

Lichens



- Churchyard lichens - https://britishlichensociety.org.uk/conservation/churchyard/churchyard-lichens
- Churchyard lichens guide - https://www.field-studies-council.org/shop/publications/churchyard-lichens-identification-chart/
- Scottish Lichens - https://www.scotlandguides.org/lichens-in-scotland.html (there is also a useful Facebook page)

Fungi



- Waxcaps and other grassland fungi - Plantlife-Scotland-Waxcap-ID-guide-2024-WEB.pdf – please join Waxcap Watch
- Basic Fungi guide - Types Of UK Mushrooms: Identification Guide - Woodland Trust
- Fungi in Scotland - Fungi in Scotland | Trees for Life
- Old churchyards as fungal conservation areas - ScienceDirect
- There is a useful Facebook page - https://www.facebook.com/taysidefifefungi/

Hedgehogs

- Become a Hedgehog Champion and add sightings to the Big UK Hedgehog Map - https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/
- How to host a hedgehog (and make a hibernation box) - https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/hedgehog-homes/

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- Lots of information available - https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/2021/12/15/hedgehog-information-leaflets-contents-list/, including https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Mind-The-Gap.pdf
- We run Mind the Gap and Hedgehog Highway events/mini projects, so please contact us if you would like to find out more: taysidebiodiversity@pkc.gov.uk.

Bats

- Bats in Churches - https://batsinchurches.org.uk/
- Bats and Churches - Buildings, planning and development - Bat Conservation Trust
- Landscape and Urban Design for Bats and Biodiversity - Guidance for professionals - Bat Conservation Trust
- A year in the life of a bat - https://www.bats.org.uk/about-bats/a-year-in-the-life-of-a-bat
- Advice - Bat Conservation Trust (bats.org.uk)
- Bats in Scotland - https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/in-scotland/the-scottish-bat-project
- Gardening for bats - https://www.bats.org.uk/advice/gardening-for-bats

Swifts

- Safeguarding Swifts in Development - https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Safeguarding-Swifts-in-Development.pdf
- UK-wide comprehensive website, especially good for advice for builders and planners - www.swift-conservation.org
- Swifts – a church guide project pack - Microsoft Word - Diocese of Norwich Swift Project Pack
- Guidelines for installing Swift nest boxes in church belfries – Caring For God's Acre – the conservation charity for burial grounds across the UK
- Action for Swifts: Swift Nest Boxes in Church Belfries
- Swift-Nestbox-Church-Installation-Guidelines-compressed.pdf
- Have you seen these birds (ID postcard): https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/tayside-biodiversity-surveys/first-sightings/
- Tayside Swifts – lots of information - https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/get-involved/projects/projects-swifts/
- Best Practice Advice Note (SNH) – written by Tayside Swifts: https://www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2017-SNH-Swift-Best-Practice-Advice-Note.pdf
- The N.E Scotland (Huntly & District) Swift Group can share lots of interesting information - Huntly Swift Group - NES Swifts



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Surveys to Consider

The Tayside Green Graveyard Initiative will suggest which surveys may be best for your location – please contact us direct via taysidebiodiversity@pkc.gov.uk or caglloyd@pkc.gov.uk to find out more about Getting to Know Your Graveyard Days, Flower-Insect Timed Count surveys, Amphibians in Graveyards surveys and others, or indeed what training is available. We also run a Tayside Wildlife Recorders' Day each autumn (check the home page of www.taysidebiodiversity.co.uk for the latest information). Next year's event will be in Perth, provisionally 2nd October 2027.

Citizen Science Surveys for everyone: click on the links to find out more

An easy App or internet page to use is iNaturalist: take a photo of a plant or an insect (or a tree, mammal or bird), it will help identify it and then you can enter the record (which is ultimately shared with the National Biodiversity Network, i.e. NBN): suitable for all ages and a great way to introduce wildlife to newcomers, young and old - https://uk.inaturalist.org/observations.

- Swift Survey - RSPB Swift Mapper - https://www.swiftmapper.org.uk/
- Birds in Greenspaces (including graveyards) - Birds in Greenspaces | BTO
- Bat Survey – BCT National Bat Monitoring Programme - https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/national-bat-monitoring-programme
- Saving our Squirrels - https://scottishsquirrels.org.uk/squirrel-sightings/
- Flower Insect Timed Count (FIT Count) – FIT Counts: help us monitor pollinators | PoMS
- Buglife Pollinator Surveys - Surveying-and-Recording-Pollinators-Information-Sheet-FINAL.pdf
- Urban Flora Survey - https://www.botanical-society-scotland.org.uk/Urban_Flora_of_Scotland
- Waxcap Watch Survey (grassland fungi) - Waxcap Watch: Survey Britain's Grassland Fungi | Plantlife
- Plantlife surveys - https://www.plantlife.org.uk/scotland
- Bee Walk – Bumblebee Conservation Trust - https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/beewalk/
- Butterfly Survey – Butterfly Conservation - https://gardenbutterflysurvey.org/
- Amphibian & Reptile Graveyard Survey – Amphibian & Reptile Graveyards Survey – Tayside Biodiversity
- Slow Worm Survey (Perth & Kinross) - https://www.facebook.com/groups/2774261986054951/
- National Amphibian & Reptile Surveys - https://amphibian-survey.arc-trust.org/ ; Reptile-survey-booklet-3mm-bleed.pdf
- Hedgehog Street – add a dot to the UK map - https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/
- Consider holding a BioBlitz - https://www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/citizen-science/bioblitz.html
- Tayside Biodiversity Partnership can share its annual Wildlife Calendar which includes as many national surveys/biodiversity events as possible to link into – contact taysidebiodiversity@pkc.gov.uk.



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Scottish Seeds/Plants

Please do not buy cheap boxes of wildflower seeds – they tend to be American seeds and can include potentially invasive non-native species. Seeds from commercial companies can be termed "UK" but they are sometimes only packaged in the UK and can be foreign-sourced seeds, often from Eastern Europe or further afield; they may not be suitable for the Scottish climate.

- **Scotia Seeds** (local provenance wildflowers – based in Angus) – https://www.scotiaseeds.co.uk
- **Celtica Wildflowers** (plantplugs) – grown from local provenance seeds – Perthshire-based https://perthshirewildlife.co.uk/celtica-wildflowers/
- **Cumbria Wildflowers** – they will grow on plantplugs with Scotia Seeds stock - Cumbria Wildflowers - Cumbria Wildflowers
- **Real Seeds –** untreated pollinator-friendly garden plant seeds, plus edibles and herbs - https://realseeds.co.uk/.

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