



Covid Restrictions

When these were eased we started taking our monthly walks but with the recent announcement that is illegal to meet in groups of more than six we've suspended them again – we will restart once we feel confident to do it.

North Somerset Council: Health and Safety/speed limits

Our liaison with NSC was put on hold as staff were diverted to dealing with issues related to the pandemic. They are now back to more normal duties and progressing the Health and Safety/ 'Traffic Management' on the Flower Bank. The challenge is that the site is unique in being the only one they have with a 50mph limit. We are awaiting a dedicated plan from an outside expert as NSC have no-one to do it.

Our Parish Council has asked that this part of the A369 has the limit reduced; we await developments.

In the meantime no official volunteering will be sanctioned as we won't be covered by their insurance without the proper H&S in place.

Litter Picking

However, there is nothing to prevent individuals walking along the verges, as anywhere else. If anyone feels inclined to pick up litter as they pass that should not be a problem! High-vis jackets would be sensible, so long as they don't have our logo on!

Haymaking

Despite NSC being fully aware that we are well into the mowing season we can't start hay-making until we get the go-ahead from them. We hope that we will be able to sort something out soon as it's essential that we cut-and-remove to keep the essential meadow-style habitat in top condition.

We have been able to do some mowing on other local sites, for donations to our funds. For some years now we've helped Penny Brohn by cutting their meadow – they arrange corporate volunteers to rake up. We have also cut quite a large area for Chris Allcock; he's made a fine donation and is already a great supporter – helping collect Christmas trees for the shredding.

It's not intended to go into the business of grass-cutting generally but Giles and I have been involved with the Carbon Capture & Biodiversity Group of the Parish Council. One of the aims is to look at re-wilding and similar issues and they've been working with NSC who are doing the same.

We've already identified an area in the Chestnuts Playing Field at Macrae Road. The idea is to leave an area to develop into meadow, so there will be some work to do which I hope our volunteers may be able to help with. Our efforts are able to go ahead because the field is owned by the Parish and managed by Lodway Cricket Club for them; other open spaces are NSC land and managed by their contractors.

Another parish wildlife reserve is The Paddock, up the lane next to the Allotments. This has normally been cut and raked by Avon Wildlife Trust but at the moment their volunteering is suspended. As the warden, Moya, is married to Noel Ayling, one of our committee we agreed to cut this as well. It may be that we will continue to help with this, possibly with AWT volunteers and our own helpers.