

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

14 May 2026

Decision Report –

Recommendation that the Council:

- **Approve in principle a 12-month pilot wildflower meadow at Brierley Road Field/Devonworth Place.**
- **Delegate Officers to:**
 - i. **Undertake public consultation,**
 - ii. **Secure landowner consent**
 - iii. **Bring full details of the above including accurate costings for accessible walkways, seating, shrub, and tree planting to Environment Committee for approval.**

Ward(s)

Cowpen

Risk Management

£20,000 exists within the Civic Pride budget and a further £3,500 exists within new seat budget.

Objective

Promoting the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community.

Crime & Disorder Prevention

None.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An equality impact assessment would be conducted should this proposal be agreed to ensure the inclusion of accessible design for those with mobility issues.

Report

A proposal had been received in relation to creating wildflower meadow in the Cowpen Ward, Appendix 1. The Council has the power to provide such recreational facilities as the authority considers appropriate¹. The land proposed is Devonworth Place which is located behind the Spar on Brierley Road and is a Protected Open Space². The land is currently grassland and is under the ownership and maintenance of

¹ Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976: Section 19

² Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036

Northumberland County Council. A map of the proposed area is included as Appendix 2

There is increasing public and local government focus on biodiversity, environmental enhancement, and improving access to attractive green spaces within communities. Small-scale projects such as wildflower meadows can provide visible and low-cost improvements that contribute positively to the appearance and ecological value of public open spaces.

Blyth Town Council has long been an advocate of establishing wildflower areas for the benefit of biodiversity, the environment and the local community with verges established and maintained with the agreement of Northumberland County Council at the areas shown in the table below.

Location	Approx m²	Plant mix
Links Road	22.5m ²	Various
South Newsham/Rotary way	1122m ²	Crocus, daffodils, and some wildflower mix
Chase Farm Drive	170m ²	Various (covers early to late pollinators)
Cowpen Road	135m ²	Crocus and pollinator mix
Albion Way (seeds sowed Spring 2026)	609m ²	Annual Wildflower (Sarah's Bouquet & Cornfield)
	2058.5m²	

The proposal aligns with the Council's wider objectives around civic pride, environmental sustainability, and community wellbeing. Establishing a trial meadow would provide an opportunity to assess whether this approach could enhance the area for residents while supporting pollinators and local biodiversity.

The creation of a wildflower meadow with approx. area of 1750m² is estimated to cost £4795 for weed spraying and sowing. It should be noted that sowing is done in March to April, so there is adequate time to plan and deliver this project for 2027.

To create cut walkways throughout a wildflower meadow, the Council should consider the provision of grass matting on these routes to ensure the walkways are accessible to all. Routes would need to be planned, measured, and costed.

Other suggested additions to the wildflower meadow include:
Trees approx. £200 each,
Picnic benches £600 each plus installation,
Litter bins approx. £210 each.

Revenue costs, such as cutting of walkways is not yet known and this would need to be discussed further with Northumberland County Council as it would form part of the core grass cutting work.
The trees would also need to be watered during the first three years to help with establishment.

A trial would allow the Council to evaluate community feedback, maintenance implications, and overall success before considering any longer-term commitment or expansion to other suitable sites within the town.

As per the proposal, it is suggested the council commence costings, feasibility, and consultation therefore it is recommended that a report be brought back to Environment Committee once this further information is obtained.

Elaine Brown
Deputy Town Clerk
6 May 2026

Appendix 1

Proposal, seconded by D Carr.

I am writing to formally ask the Council to consider a proposal for the field on Briarly Road in Cowpen.

I would like the Council to explore the idea of transforming the area, on a trial basis for this year, into a wildflower meadow with clearly cut grass walkways running through it. The intention would be to create something visually attractive, environmentally beneficial, and slightly different for residents to enjoy.

This could include thoughtful additions such as tree planting, a small number of seating areas or picnic benches, and some summer flowering shrubs to brighten the space. The idea would be to enhance the field rather than permanently alter it, giving residents something new and positive while still maintaining open access.

I believe this could be a simple but meaningful project that contributes to the wider regeneration and improvement of our communities across Blyth. It would also be an opportunity for councillors to work collaboratively in delivering visible improvements for residents.

At this stage, I am asking whether the Council would be willing to consider this proposal and, if appropriate, begin discussions on feasibility, costs, and community consultation.

I look forward to your response.

kind regards

Councillor Brian Erskine
Cowpen Ward Councillor.

Appendix 2

