



## Simple signage to reassure visitors when leaving grass to grow longer

If you plan to have wild flower areas in your burial ground that are welcome by visitors, communication is key. Conservation in these unique places is all about active management not neglect and we need to let people know what we're doing so that they don't become alarmed that grass might be longer/things are different to what they expect! Here we share a few tips on how to do this.

### Decide where

First of all decide where visitors enter and walk around your site so that you can determine where best to place any signs. It is important to have a sign in the very place that the current management may be raising an eyebrow!

We would advise having a small sign for example - where the grass is medium or long, or where you have a log pile for invertebrates. If you have a building/porch it is great to place some further explanation in there but that shouldn't replace any signage outside.

### What to use

Signs about management can be temporary and small. A simple sheet of A4 with text, possibly laminated or in a plastic slip to make it weatherproof is perfect. This can be placed on a small wooden stake with a drawing pin, nail or staple gun. Wooden stakes can be made out of pallet wood.

### Messaging

Consider including the following in your signs:

#### 1. What your intention is

*Our churchyard/cemetery (or insert name) is a very special place for both the community and for wildlife.*

*We actively manage the churchyard in a way that encourages wildflowers and benefits wildlife whilst being sensitive to visitor's needs.*

## **2. Why the site is special**

*Being an ancient enclosed piece of land, it has some of the remaining 3% of flower rich meadow habitat left in the country because it has not been ploughed, fertilized or treated with herbicides. The last botanical survey showed that we had well over ??? species including wildflowers, ferns and grasses.*

## **3. What you are doing (with timescale!)**

*We are leaving some areas of grass to grow long for around 12 weeks over the spring and summer months to let the plants flower – helping preserve and enhance this special habitat.*

## **4. Maybe list the animals who will benefit from this long grass**

*Many animals benefit from the grass being left to flower. Butterflies, bees and other small invertebrates enjoy the pollen and nectar, while swifts and bats will feed on the invertebrates attracted to the site.*

Say about slow worms or frogs etc etc – whatever is in your site.

## **5. Can you include a call to action?**

*'Let us know what you see in the wildlife book'*

*'Join in with our volunteer work party – 10am-12 on the first Saturday of the month'*

*'Read more about it in our Management Plan in the porch'*

## **6. Have a nice ending**

*We hope you enjoy seeing the plants and animals thriving in the churchyard/cemetery/other*

## **7. Try and include the name of a contact person**

*Please contact ... on ... if you have any questions specific to this churchyard/cemetery/other*

## **8. If you feel directing people in our direction will help, feel free to add**

*For more information on managing burial grounds in a sensitive way for people, wildlife and heritage visit Caring for God's Acre, [www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk)*

## Some examples

We have lost the name of the churchyard this sign is from - if it is yours please let us know so we can acknowledge you! Lovely inclusion of food web information.



Below are signs at Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, St Michael's Church, Llandre, Ceredigion. We used one main sign with text to set the context. Then various other signs which related to the areas outlined on the Management Brief (which was in the church) e.g. Area A/Area B



Information at St Andrew's churchyard in Norton, Powys. This information is changed on a regular basis and is located inside the porch. It complements the small signs that are in the churchyard.

