

St Mary the Virgin, Houghton with Wyton PCC

LAND AND NATURE POLICY

This Policy relates to both the Church and the St Mary's Centre grounds.

In order to address appropriate management of the Churchyard and grounds of the St Mary's Centre, we will use our best endeavours to achieve the following:-

- a) Grassed areas: these will be managed by leaving a specific area of the St Mary's Centre garden where the grass is never cut; specific areas in the Churchyard and SMC garden where the grass is cut regularly and grass cuttings removed; an area in the Churchyard for spring flowers where a cutting will take place once all the flowers are spent; and a further area in the SMC garden for summer wild flowers which will be cut pre-flowering and post-flowering once self-seeding has taken place.
- b) A natural area of nettles in the Churchyard will be maintained to encourage butterflies.
- c) A dry compost area for leaf only to produce leaf mould for animal habitat.
- d) A static log pile, to compliment the bug hotel, for insects.
- e) To compliment the bird boxes in the Churchyard, specific nesting for swifts will be provided in the SMC.
- f) A bird-bath will be provided to support bird-life.
- g) Water barrels are insitu in the Churchyard for use in the garden areas and by the flower arranging team.
- h) We have a no-chemical or herbicide use directive for all those involved in the garden team.
- i) We encourage the use of only peat-free compost.
- j) Garden waste from the garden areas are recycled by the Council scheme.
- k) Winter seed-bearing plants will be left to seed for bird food, pruned during the springtime.
- l) Mature ivy will be left to provide pollen for insects and berries for birds.
- m) A grounds-management plan will be drawn up to include diagrams of the areas mentioned above.
- n) A communications board will display the land and nature principles and visitors will be encouraged to log any sightings of wildlife and nature.
- o) Periodic recording and surveys of the garden areas will be undertaken and documented.

Communication with the wider village community will take place via the Village Magazine to encourage engagement and support of this Policy.

This Policy was approved by the PCC on (date): _____

Signed (incumbent): _____

**To be reviewed annually*