



Yorkshire
Wildlife Trust

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Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

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The pond in Ferrensby is a brilliant community asset and has been recently improved to attract more native wildlife. This is incredibly important in the current climate, where, according to Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's "State of Nature Report" (2024) nearly 1 in 5 native species have declined by more than 25% in the past 20 years. The work that has been done so far has made a visible improvement on the water quality, as well as supporting a plethora of species including amphibians, bats, otter, butterflies, and as seen on my visit, huge numbers of dragonfly. This is very promising, and something that, in my opinion, should be encouraged. Without the surrounding native vegetation, many of these species would not be seen in such high numbers.

There is always a fine balance between making space for nature and ensuring a community asset such as this remains something that all residents and visitors can safely enjoy, but it does not need to be one or the other, there are simple ways in which it can be both.

Wildflower areas

Benefit to nature: planting areas of UK Native wildflowers will attract pollinators throughout the flowering season, in Autumn, once the flowers have all set seed, these should be cut (and the arisings removed) to ensure the soil does not become too rich, and that grasses do not over-compete.

Benefit to people: areas of wildflowers might not look appealing all year round, once the flowers have died off. To ensure these areas look well maintained, consider erecting a low woven "fence" around the wildflower patch to create a smart looking distinction between mown and "natural" areas (as in this AI image).



Wildflower verges:

Benefit to nature: as above, more diverse verges will attract pollinators, the longer vegetation is also important for overwintering caterpillars, as well as shelter for small mammals and amphibians.

Benefit to people: consider mowing a small strip at the road edge. This gives the appearance of a more maintained verge,





keeps the road edges clear and visible, yet the remainder of the verge can serve its purpose to benefit wildlife.

Raised planters:

Benefit to nature: raised planters can be bought from companies such as NatureArk or WildPod and are cleverly designed to provide habitat for hedgehogs, bees, invertebrates and amphibians. You can get an “off the shelf” kit, or create your own more simple variation.

Benefit to people: these planters look attractive, and the planting in the top of them can be annual plants to give year-round colour.



Ways to be involved

Community ponds such as Ferrensby's need a team of dedicated individuals to maintain the areas both for wildlife and for people, but there are other ways that residents could get involved, depending on where their skills and interests lie. Perhaps a pond wildlife photography challenge, a bespoke painting of the pond, or providing tea and cake for a village event such as pond dipping or dragonfly ID. If there was funding available, an interpretation panel could be designed by the community and put near the pond to tell visitors about the history of the pond, as well as the wildlife they might see.