

# Denbighshire Life on the Verge

## Newsletter | Summer 2014

### In the beginning

In early 2013 Helen Melvin and Jenny Briggs were walking in the lanes around Bodfari and were appalled to see how many beautiful wild flowers had been destroyed by the County Council's early cut. Helen set up an on-line petition at Change.org which was signed by over 600 people. Meanwhile Jenny found that there were also many like minded local people and so formed a group to work with and persuade Denbighshire County Council to manage the verges more sensitively. Members of this group and their affiliations are listed below.

### The aims

The group's long term aim is for improvement in the wildlife management of verges – specifically one cut per year and as late as possible, certainly not until mid July at the earliest. In this way wildflowers are allowed to set seed and nesting bees and other wildlife are left undisturbed for longer.



will, without compromising public safety, preserve valuable nesting sites and nectar sources for pollinating insects whilst still conserving wild flowers and increasing the seed bank.

### What we are doing and what we have achieved

We are campaigning at both local and national levels and have met with senior officers from Denbighshire County Council in Autumn

2013. Members decided that they were not prepared to alter the cutting regime throughout the whole county but were prepared to extend the existing Roadside Verges Project to interested Community Councils. As a result, biodiversity staff in the County Council, who are also members of the group, have embarked on a programme of visits to the following Community Councils and this is on-going:

Bodfari	Llanferres	Nantglyn
Aberwheeler	Llandyrnog	Dyserth
Tremeirchion, Cwm & Waen	Llangynhafal	

Verges and railway embankments are currently one of the largest areas relatively unaffected by pesticides and, as we all know, pollinating insects are under considerable threat. More sensitive management of verges



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or search 'Denbighshire Life on the Verge'

These particular areas have been chosen largely as a result of pressure from members of the public. We have been successful in Bodfari, Aberwheeler and Dyserth where the verges are, on the majority of roads, currently flourishing.



Hemp nettle



Bryneglwys road verge

We set up a Facebook page – Denbighshire Life on the Verge – to which Karen Roden has contributed many interesting links to relevant sites.

In addition we have written to a number of newspapers, which sparked off a lively debate in the Denbighshire Free Press. An article entitled 'On the Verge of a Crisis' was published by The North Wales Wildlife Trust. Articles have also appeared in the Denbighshire Free Press and the County Council newsletter 'County Voice'.

## How you can help!

**Write to Denbighshire County Council to complain when you see verges macerated but also to congratulate and thank them when they have obviously managed the verges sensitively. Perhaps the most important and effective thing that you can do at this stage is encourage your Community Council to apply to be part of the Roadside Verges Project.**

**Please also contact your County Councillor. If you enjoy using Facebook please visit the site, feel free to add your comments, and to 'like' the page.**

### Members of the group:

Helen Melvin – Member of Public

Jenny Briggs – Member of Public

Lizzy Webster – DCC Biodiversity Officer

Kate Taylor – DCC Senior Biodiversity Officer

Adrian Lloyd-Jones – North Wales Wildlife Trust

Les Starling – North Wales Wildlife Trust and Sustainable Denbighshire

Dr Oliver Prys-Jones – North Wales Wildlife Trust and Bee Ecologist

Most of the photographs in this newsletter were taken on Denbighshire road verges by Alexander Falkingham (Trainee Warden, Denbighshire Countryside Service).

