**GROW (GREEN OUR Wolverton) APRIL NEWS**

**Get the BUZZ about Wolverton’s Roadside Verges !**

We would like to enhance the biodiversity of our roadside verges and are working with our neighbouring villages to persuade Warwickshire County Council to adopt the recommendations of the Plantlife Good Verge Guide for their seasonal grass verge cutting: www.plantlife.org.uk. Seven in ten councils in the UK are already helping to conserve wildflowers on roadside verges using these management guidelines. Where wildflowers grow, wildlife follows.

Rather than making several cuts throughout the summer, the recommendations are that the council mow verges just twice a year, where road safety and visibility permit, ideally in February-March and again in September-October. This one-off late summer cut would give wildflowers an extended flowering season to further attract insect pollinators and allow time to set seed.

We have identified three wide verge areas that would be suitable for biodiversity management, and these are situated on the Langley Road between Wolverton crossroads and the Wolverton / Langley parish boundary. Raking up the mowings in these key areas will also help reduce the build-up of organic material and encourage wildflower germination the following year. The verges will start to look less tidy than maybe people are used to, but the benefits to our local wildlife will be significantly increased- think a bit more Gertrude Jekyll than Capability Brown! Long term, we can look forward to seeing beautiful swathes of wildflowers along the lanes linking our partner villages.

This year, we need to start recording the plants and insects currently found in these areas so we have a baseline to monitor the effect of our biodiversity management over the next few years. Please contact rosemary.stone@hotmail.co.ukif you have a reasonable knowledge of identifying wildflowers, butterflies etc and are interested to take part.

**💡*Continuing the theme………****this May, why not give the mower a rest and leave part of your lawn or even all of it(!) to do its own thing and participate in ‘No mow May’? See what wildflowers, butterflies, bees and other insects appear.*

**Important Message for Dog owners: Stick and Flick not Bag and Drop!**

Our litter picking team continue to trawl the roadside verges and village footpaths to make Wolverton a cleaner and greener place to live. However, one of the more unpleasant aspects of this is dealing with numerous discarded doggie poo bags- yuk!! Leaving bagged poo on footpaths, hanging on hedges or abandoned in a field is not only unpleasant for others but poses a serious risk to wild animals and livestock if they ingest the bag and contents. Please take away your used bags, even if the bags are biodegradable,and dispose of them in an eco-friendly manner at home. Alternatively, use a stick and flick the poo into the bottom of a nearby hedgerow where micro-organisms can get to work on decomposition.