

Long grass and wild flowers

Grass areas are often mown on a regular basis to provide informal play areas, yet long grass and wild flower planting can also provide habitat and play space.

HOW TO CREATE

- Aim to manage grass areas around play spaces with different mowing regimes. Long grass is great for playing in, pulling out to make a 'bird's nest', or throwing when cut and it can attract butterflies, grasshoppers and other insects that children love to watch.
- In addition, mixing grass areas with wild flowers provides other great play benefits. Select a wildflower mix suitable for your site location; there are many mixtures that might be used including general purpose, woodland, hedgerow, wetland, sand, loam, calcareous and clay mixtures. Be careful that you don't inadvertently end up introducing a seed mixture that is not welcomed into an existing protected habitat (SSSI).
- There are two main types of wildflower/grass seed types:
 - Spring flowering: Cut at end of June, rake up hay and remove or leave for play. Might include primrose, daisy, bugle, lady's smock, cowslip, fritillary, lesser stitchwort.
 - Summer flowering: Cut at end of September. Might include harebell, field scabious, meadow buttercup, musk mallow, knapweed.
- Long grass might not be advisable in areas where ticks are prevalent.

Useful contacts

- Many web sites offer advice and direct ordering, for example see www.meadowmania.co.uk

