

The Potwell Dyke Grasslands Southwell

The 1.72 hectares of The Potwell Dyke Grasslands are the last natural remnants of the Archbishop of York's deer park and hunting ground. Owned by the Southwell Cathedral Chapter they have been identified as being of substantive nature conservation value and designated a Priority Habitat by Natural England, now managed by volunteers as a Nature Reserve.

They comprise a variety of habitats which include marshes and traditional hay meadows divided by ancient hedges and bordered in part by the Potwell Dyke. The unusual geology contributes to the development of the rare habitats.

The grasslands are a gem of biodiversity and remarkable for the range and abundance of wildflowers and are one of a dwindling number of wholly natural grassland meadows, most having been destroyed by recent farming methods.



If you would like further information,
would like to join our Saturday working parties
or book a guided walk or school visit please
either:

email us at: office@southwellminster.org.uk
or
telephone: 01636 812649



The grasslands are managed using traditional methods to maintain and enhance the variety of plants and wildlife. In Autumn sheep graze the site to trample in the seeds thereby aiding their spread and germination.



A comprehensive management plan forms the basis of an agreement between the Cathedral Chapter and Natural England to actively preserve this very rare and special site.



Work on the site has resulted in a noticeable increase in the biodiversity of the grasslands. Over 200 plant species have now been identified including 5 orchid species, Southern Marsh, Common Spotted, Bee, Pyramidal and Twayblade.



Volunteers undertake work ranging from fence and hedge maintenance to pulling up invasive plants. Surveys are carried out to record the flora and fauna on site and the large number of butterflies, moths and other insects.



The National Curriculum encourages outdoor learning and the grasslands provide an excellent educational resource. School groups can learn about the history, geography and geology of the site as well as identification of flora and fauna.



Seasonal access is allowed. Please act responsibly on the reserve and follow the Countryside Code. Enjoy the site but leave no mess. Respect the flora and fauna. All dogs must be kept on a short lead.

