

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Wildflowers at the Astley Ainslie Hospital

**Q: What is the purpose of the wildflower project at Astley Ainslie?** A: This project is delivery a key element of the Astley Ainslie Greenspace Management Plan, which aims to create biodiverse and visually appealing green spaces for the benefit of patients, staff, and visitors. It will enhance the natural environment of the hospital grounds.

**Q: What benefits will the wildflower meadows bring to Astley Ainslie?** A: The meadows will create a more natural and calming environment, increase biodiversity by attracting pollinators and other wildlife, potentially reduce maintenance costs, and contribute to environmental sustainability.

**Q: Where are the wildflower meadows being created?** A: The initial phase focuses on areas around the Science block, pavilions, and SMART centre. Future phases may expand to other suitable areas within the hospital grounds whilst being mindful that parts of the site are designed for disposal by NHS Lothian.

**Q: What changes will I see in these areas?** A: You will see areas of longer grass with a variety of flowering plants (see below for examples). Mown pathways and edges will be maintained for accessibility.

**Q: Will these areas be left completely unmanaged?** A: No. The Nature Rehabilitation Ranger and NHS Grounds and Gardens teams will regularly monitor the meadows. They will maintain mown pathways, remove litter, and control weeds to ensure a managed appearance.

**Q: Will I still be able to access these areas?** A: Yes. Mown pathways will be created and maintained to ensure accessibility for walking and wheelchair use. Fire escape routes are also being maintained and improved with grass reinforcement mesh to ensure accessibility.

**Q: Will the longer grass attract litter or hide dog fouling?** A: We are committed to maintaining a clean environment. Please report any build up of litter or dog fouling to the NHS Lothian estates helpdesk [loth.estateshelpdesk2@nhs.scot](mailto:loth.estateshelpdesk2@nhs.scot).

**Q: How is the hospital ensuring accessibility for wheelchairs?** A: We are using grass reinforcement mesh to create level surfaces, reinstating turning circles to appropriate radii, and ensuring paths are a minimum of 1.2m wide.

**Q: How can I find out more about this project?** A: You can find information on the NHS Lothian Charity website <https://greenhealth.nhslothiancharity.org/what-we-do/green-health-activity-on-sites/astley-ainslie-hospital/> . For specific questions about the Astley Ainslie project, please contact [aisling.murphy@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:aisling.murphy@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk).

**Q: Will there be opportunities for staff and patients to participate in the project?** A: Yes, we plan to host future events for staff and patients to participate in the creation of additional meadows. Information about these events will be shared in due course.

## Examples of the wildflowers we are introducing



Images courtesy of Scotia Seeds