

Increasing the opportunities for Nature in Wigan's Greenheart

Mark Champion Wigan Projects Manager

Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Kieran Sayer, Biodiversity Officer

Wigan Council

Wigan Greenheart- past, present and the future

- ▶ A partnership of the organisations working in Wigan has been around in various forms for nearly 30 years
- ▶ 42+ sites with over 1442 ha of conservation or ‘countryside amenity’ land.
- ▶ Greenheart Farm - ‘Countryside Stewardship’
- ▶ Greenheart Landscape Recovery

Realising the potential

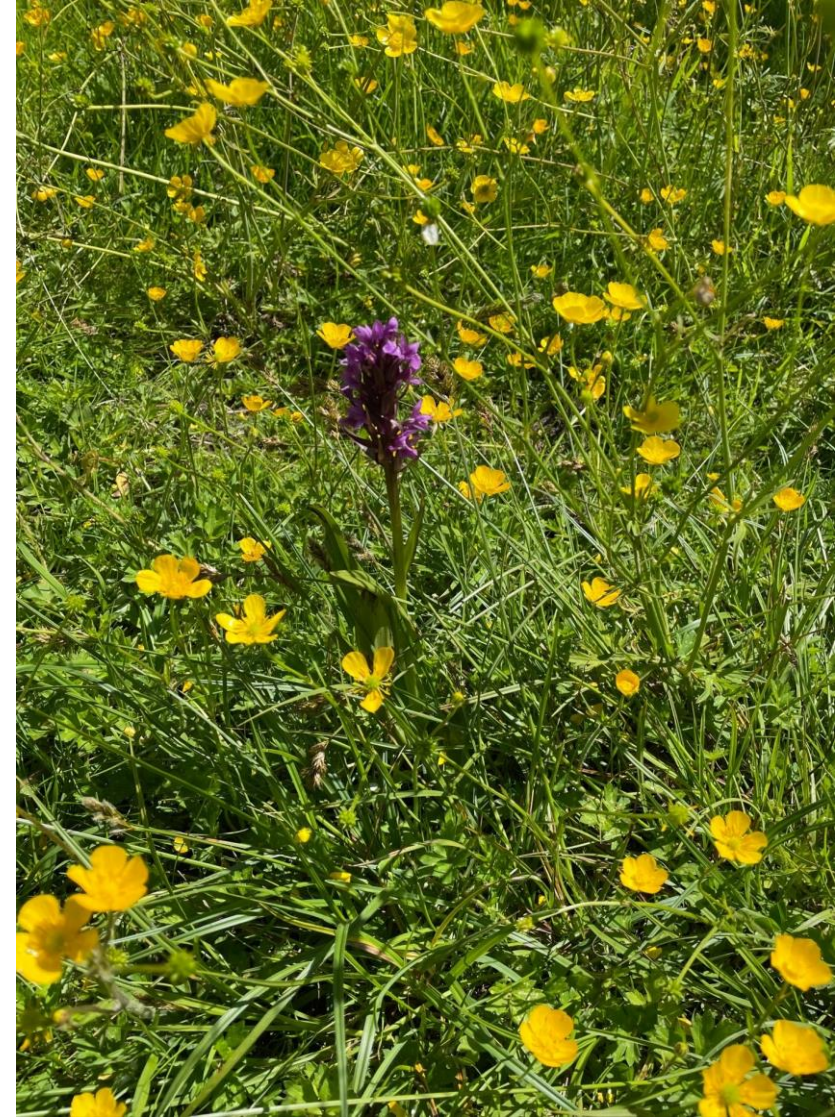
- ▶ 25 years of managing the grasslands in wigan
- ▶ Greenheart Farm - 'Countryside Stewardship'.
- ▶ 70ha of wildflower meadow in management or development borough wide.
- ▶ Greenheart LRS
- ▶ Site visits to reserves



Developing wildflower and wildlife opportunities in Wigan

- ▶ Species-rich meadows
- ▶ Managing by hay cutting
- ▶ Cattle grazing
- ▶ Developing markets for grassland
- ▶ Mission to change mindsets

Wigan Grasslands





Options appraisal

Methods of selecting important grasslands and deciding on management techniques

- ▶ UKHabs methodology
- ▶ Condition assessment (this also means that the sites are BNG enabled)
- ▶ Looking at species and the 'direction of travel' of the habitat
- ▶ Carbon sequestration
- ▶ Looking at which taxa that can be conserved on the site this also requires access planning

Options appraisal



Golborne Park







The benefits achieved

- ▶ Increased biodiversity in Wigan countryside
- ▶ Important stepping stones for improving species connectivity across the wider landscape
- ▶ Creating safe areas for wildlife
- ▶ Conservation of key taxa including skylark, orchids and grassland fungi
- ▶ Improves visitor experience providing a colourful and natural space for quiet reflection

Future plans

- ▶ Seeking potential areas in each of the council and partner-owned sites for biodiversity improvements
- ▶ Management plan for grasslands
- ▶ Increased connectivity for people and wildlife
- ▶ Increased conservation and visual amenity value of the grasslands
- ▶ Monitoring to investigate quantitative and qualitative improvements
- ▶ Interpretation boards