

## Project Type: Churchyard Conservation

**Project Title:** The Wildlife and Habitat Project

**Location:** St Mary's Church, Comberton.

**Aims:** To make the churchyard an ever more beautiful as a place for solace, reflection and enjoyment and increase the biodiversity of both the flora and fauna within it.

**Total Cost:** All resources donated

**Funding Sources:** N/A

**Project Duration:** Initial survey in 2020. In May 2022 the church was presented with a SILVER award in the Churchyard Conservation Scheme.



### Brief Overview

Before Covid, the Diocese, in collaboration with the local Wildlife Trust, set-up a scheme to encourage parishes to turn their churchyards into wildlife havens. After an initial survey in 2020, the Vicar, David Newton, set up a small Steering Group to explore how the church in Comberton might respond.

Three separate mowing regimes set up in 2021 soon allowed plants suppressed by years of close mowing to recover and by the spring of 2022 changes were clearly visible.

A small patch of Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), a plant becoming scarce in the county, was already thriving. Nest boxes, log piles, bare earth areas and a 'bug basecamp' were installed. A survey of small mammals in the spring showed a healthy population of bank voles and wood mice, which will be good for owls and other raptors.

The Steering Group were thrilled that their first steps were rewarded with a Silver Award following a visit by the scheme judges in May. Plans are now in hand to build on this success, create an even more diverse range of habitats, and involve the community in monitoring the changes.

To see more images, the proposal and the management plan, please visit the website listed below.

### Top Tips:

Communicate, communicate, communicate with as many "stake-holders" as possible ,through as many different mediums as possible.

**Websites:** <http://www.stmaryscomberton.org/the-building-and-churchyard.html>

Churchyard Conservation Scheme in [Cambridgeshire](#) and [Norfolk](#)

**Contact:** If you would like to know more about this project or speak to the people involved, please contact: Robert Cook, Chair of Steering Group [pandrcook2@gmail.com](mailto:pandrcook2@gmail.com) 07711 417 694