



**Yorkshire**  
Wildlife Trust



# #TeamWilder Communities in Action

## CASE STUDY: Kippax Wildlife Corridor

### How did you get started on your #TeamWilder journey?

It started out when I cleared a small section of overgrown brambles outside my back gate which leads to our allotment. We have an unmade road that runs down the back of our Victorian terraced street which was originally used to deliver coal to the outhouses. It became so dark and impassable, (mainly with brambles which I don't mind), but because it has a street lamp at each end the highways department send a tractor each year to cut them back so they can maintain the light. It filled me with dread each time it came up they cut it right back to the ground. I was concerned about what was living underneath it all, and how much damage the tractor caused to the hedgehogs and frogs.

My initial thought was that if I cleared the hedgerow and tidied up the area, planted flowers and sowed seeds, then the tractor wouldn't need to come up and wildlife would be left alone. After I had done our small section, neighbours jokingly said I could do theirs. So, bit by bit the backs were transformed from dark and dingy to alive with colour and wildlife. Each house on our street has a back garden, each back garden joins up with the green space behind, the green space runs adjacent to the allotments, and the allotments joins up with the car park – this is the Kippax Wildlife Corridor.

### What actions have you taken for wildlife in your community and why?

I've had an allotment for over 20 years and have always tried to do my bit for wildlife. The first thing we did all those years ago was to plant hawthorn hedges and put in a small pond. More recently we have added more native hedging like hazel, blackthorn, rowan, and bird cherry. We have extended from the



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allotment into our back street and made a wildlife garden in the allotment car park. We've planted shrubs, trees and wildflowers to try and have provided a year-round food source for pollinators.

We have tried to increase the food available for a more natural environment for all wildlife including hedgehogs and frogs. The main reason why we have done this is that the world doesn't seem to be listening to what nature is trying to say... people feel helpless, that there's nothing that we can do. In our small way we are doing our bit to help our local wildlife, and I really do think that we as a neighbourhood have made a difference.

### What resources or support have you used?

There are some really great resources online: we use the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust website a lot to identify a wide range of bugs and wildflowers. We also use Bumblebee Conservation resources for planting guides and bee identification, and Butterfly Conservation resources for identification and planting food plants for moths and butterflies. Instagram is also very useful – you can pick up some really good and practical ideas from other like-minded wildlife lovers. It's really encouraging to see what other people across the country and the world are doing in their local communities to help wildlife too.





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**Did you empower or involve others?**

I'd like to think so. The street really has come together for wildlife, putting out extra bird feeders, water dishes for hedgehogs and planting with pollinators in mind. We have had allotment holders putting in ponds and planting pollinator-friendly plants too. We started a family-friendly Facebook/Instagram page shining a positive light on Kippax Wildlife – mainly so that local people can see what we are doing and why.

Most of our street has joined in and quite a lot of the village too. We post what wildlife we see from bees to beetles, and 'Hedgehog Cam' footage is posted regularly. We show what plants are being used regularly by our pollinators, share plant bargains and prices, swap plants and share seeds. It's still early days, but people are gaining in confidence to post what they see in their gardens and we think that's brilliant.

**What differences have you noticed as a result of your actions?**

We have seen a massive increase in insects including more bumblebee bees than ever before. At least two bumblebee nests were discovered on the allotment in the spring. We have seen an increase in butterflies and moths although there's still a lot of work needed in this area, which is what we are focusing on through spring and summer by increasing their food source plants. Hedgehogs seem to be happy with more natural food to forage, but we still have a feeding station 365 days a year. The bird population has increased in numbers with more species too.

The sound throughout the day of bird song is magical... that's the thing most people pick up on – the beautiful sound of birds, and it's so loud!

**How did it make you feel?**

Honestly... ecstatic! We thought we would see a slight difference somewhere along the line, but we didn't expect it to happen this quickly, and we didn't expect the difference to be so big. It's not only me that has noticed. It's obvious to everyone. People in the street no longer have music playing at BBQs, they listen to



the natural soundtrack instead. Everyone is doing that little bit extra to help without even noticing they're doing it. It's becoming second nature to help wildlife.

**What have been your favourite nature moments or encounters with wildlife whilst doing this?**

There are so many! It's lovely to see birds fledging from our bird boxes and hedges. It's great to see the hedgehogs on 'Hedgehog Cam' as they all have their own little personalities. It's lovely to see all the new visiting birds like greenfinches and long-tailed tits returning to the feeders with their fledglings. There's not really one thing- it's just everything – the street feels different... better... natural.

**What do you plan to do next?**

It's never ending really. More work needs to be done to increase butterflies and moths. So we're concentrating on increasing their food plants again in the coming years – basically increasing things that have worked well. We have lots spring bulbs on order for September to increase our stock of early nectar plants. We'd really like to put up some bat boxes in the car park too.

