

DON'T MOW LET IT GROW	5th April 2016
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	
FOR INFORMATION	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting & Enhancing our Environments & Assets
Outcome	Natural assets carefully managed to generate economic and social returns without compromising their sustainability for future generations
Lead Officer	Gareth Doyle – Head of Estates Rachel Bain – Biodiversity Officer
Cost: (If applicable)	Officer time

The purpose of this report is to provide an update in the Don't Mow Let It Grow project.

The second round application to Heritage Lottery Fund and the match funding application to Landfill Communities Fund were both successful, securing **£140k** to 100% fund this three year project. The consultants who will be delivering elements of this project have now been appointed and over the next few weeks we will be working with them, Transport NI and NIEA to get the project up and running, with a soft launch at the end of April, beginning of May.

Below is a reminder of the project summary:

The delivery phase of this project will look at the conservation of semi-natural grassland. Focusing on the management of amenity grasslands and roadside verges across Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, working in partnership with Transport NI and NIEA. This project will look at different ways of managing semi-natural grasslands to promote how small changes in management give large benefits to biodiversity and ecosystem services. The project will identify trial verges and amenity grassland sites in order to:

- educate and promote benefits to wider public, through a wide ranging community engagement and PR campaign
- carry out an economic appraisal to assess cost benefits
- train land managers, including staff, and volunteers in management options, grassland selection

- develop and highlight a range of management options through the selected Transport NI and CCGBC trial sites
- assess biodiversity and ecosystem services benefits
- species identification, Invasive Alien Species (IAS) and monitoring

A major outcome will be the production of a practical management toolkit, covering all aspects of this project that any organisation can use to show the benefits and implement similar improved operations in their management.