

1. Aims.

Verge cutting takes place across the estate by the ranger team and will be considered sensitively with conservation and biodiversity in mind. Please feel free to contact us if you are aware of any significant wildflowers or biodiversity hotspots.

2. Why are verges important?

- Verges are an opportunity to create species rich grassland.
- Species rich grassland provides valuable habitat and ecological resistance and resilience.
- Species rich grassland is aesthetically pleasing and therefore reduces the burden on management both through resource and cost.
- Provide habitat for invertebrates and feeding opportunities for other fauna.
- Important to area aesthetics and significant to local community.

3. Management of verges.

In England, the responsibility for managing road verges falls primarily to local councils and Highways England however at Sherborne we will contribute our efforts where appropriate.

The management of verges throughout Sherborne will differ depending on several factors. First, whether they are being actively managed by a third party. Second, with the safety of staff and volunteers in mind – presently, the team can operate safely within 30mph zones or on verges exceeding 1.5m. Third, whether the verge is of sufficient size to contribute to biodiversity and/or whether it is an area (for example, Sherborne Main Street) where aesthetics and vehicular movements are of equal weighting. Fourth, capacity and resource of the Sherborne ranger team - due to resource limitations, it is unrealistic to target every verge on the estate, so an approach to select those that must be maintained for aesthetics or to provide the best ecological potential should be adopted.

3.1. General recommendations for verge management.

- Maximise structural diversity to present opportunities for a variety of fauna and flora.

- Cut and collect – soil fertility is the primary issue across Sherborne Estate verges – reducing nutrification is the long term answer to verge management.
- Embrace optimum mowing regimes – resisting cuts between April and August and cutting no more than twice annually on verges that are being managed for biodiversity.
- Targeted spraying can be effective but this is not currently considered a suitable option by the Sherborne Estate Ranger team.
- Utilising yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) to paratise grass species and ‘open up’ swards.
- Build community support.

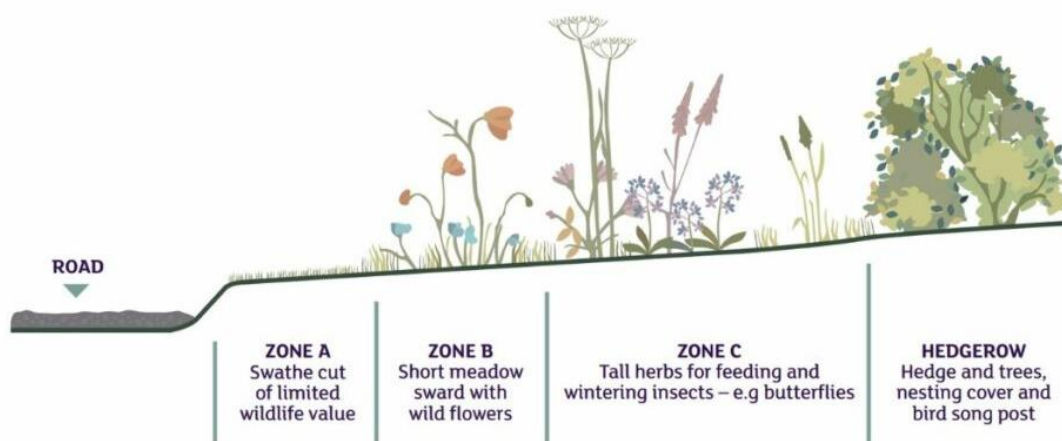


Figure 1: zoned approach to verge management.

4. Bibliography and recommended reading.

- PlantLife - [Road Verge and Green Space Management Best Practice](#)

5. Appendix

- Appendix includes locational maps of the Sherborne Estate village verges that have been selected as a priority for active management.



Figure 2: Verges of Sherborne Village west extent.

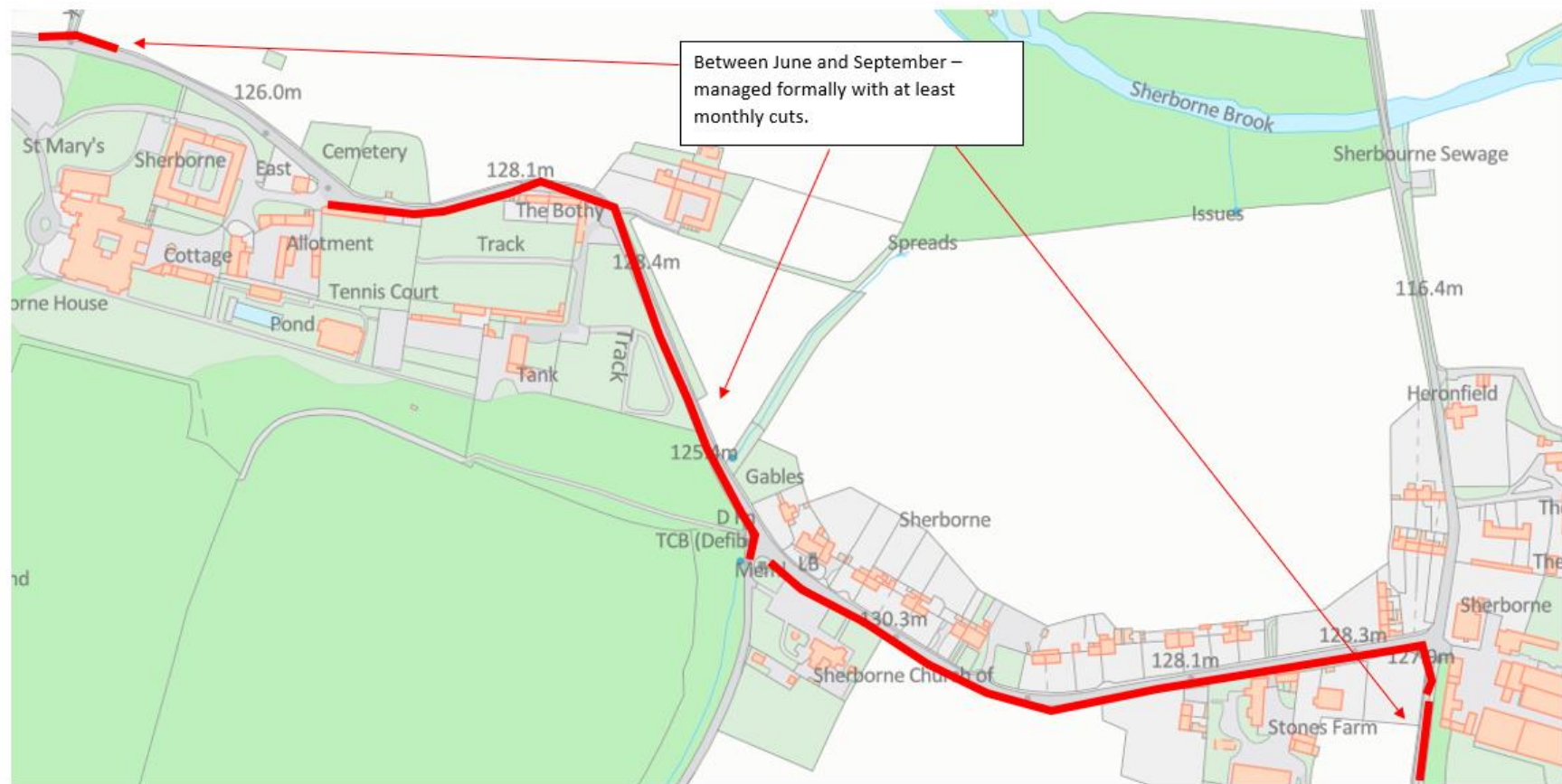


Figure 3: Verges of Sherborne Village central extent.

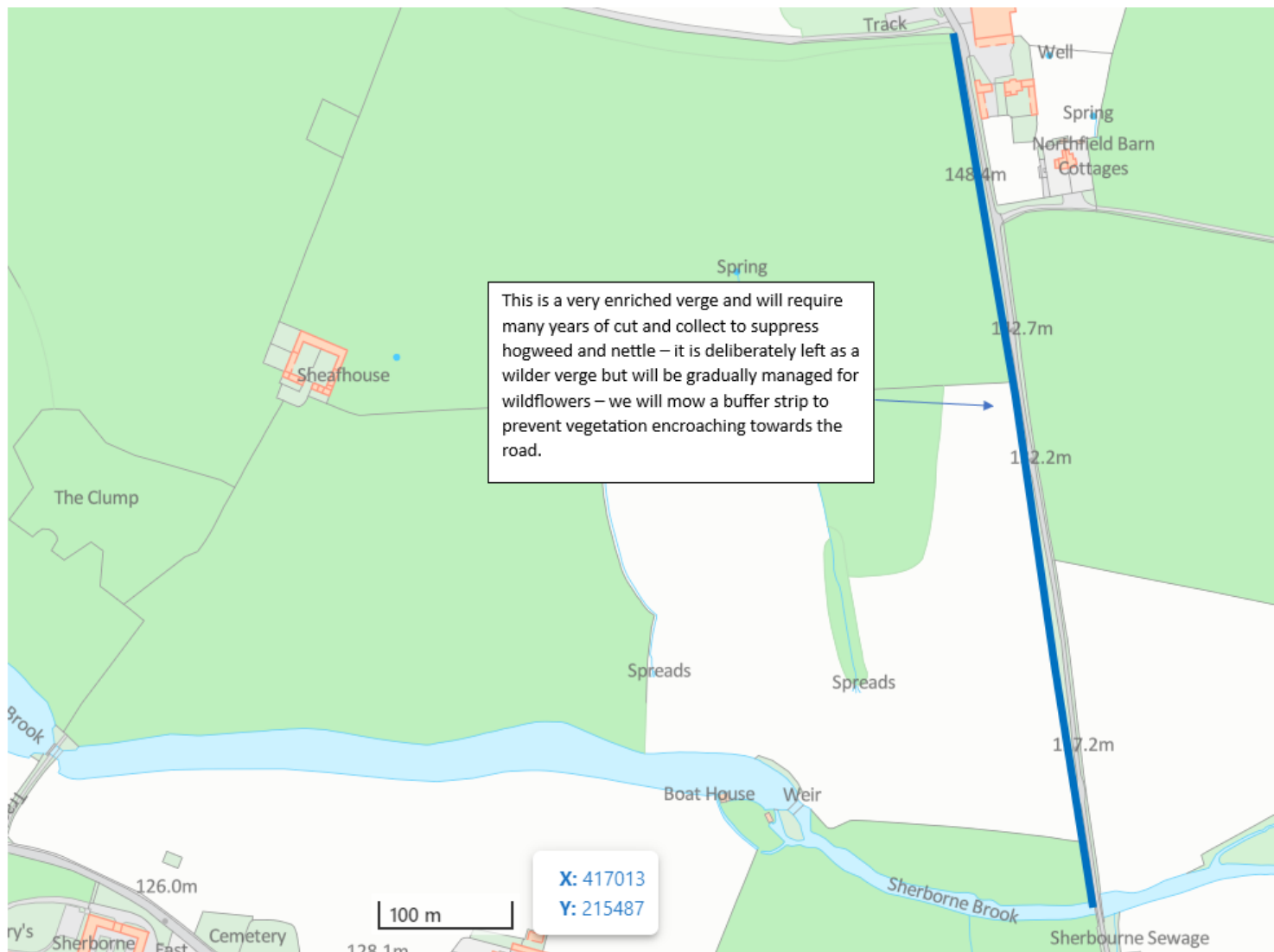


Figure 4: Verges of Sherborne Village east extent.