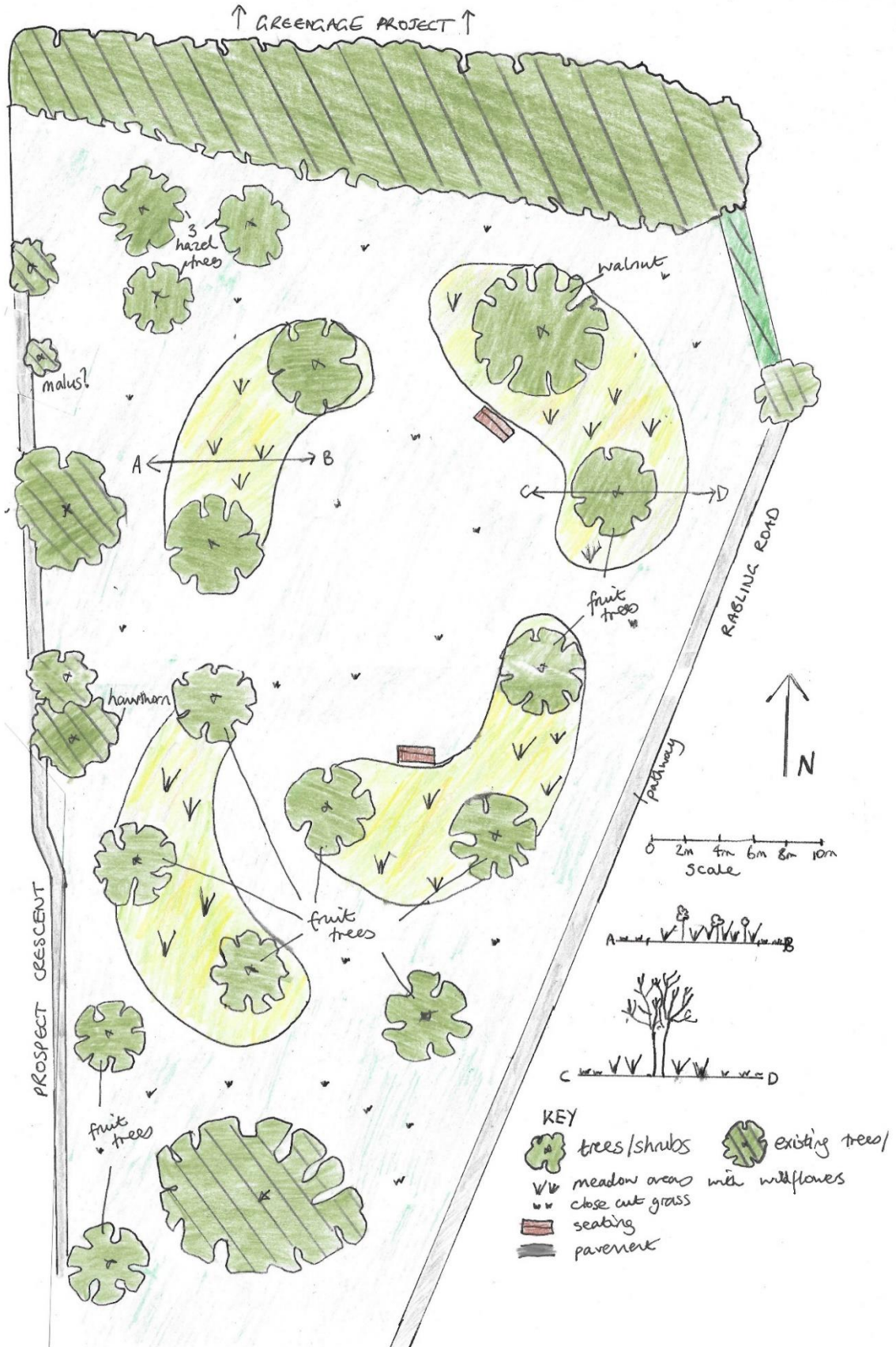


# Rabling Road Green 'Pocket Park' Design Proposal



## **Description and Concept**

The area has been designed with 4 main curved areas of longer grass with the idea to sow wildflowers or plant plug plants within these areas in the first year. Several species were observed on a site visit including birds foot trefoil, red clover and selfheal, other varieties may appear if mowing ceases in spring, this can be observed and surveyed in the first year. These areas can be mown in early spring and then again in late August/September with defined edges (see sample images below), this will not only enhance the appearance of the site but will provide a valuable resource for wildlife. Standard fruit trees can be planted within these areas with a few more scattered elsewhere, the design has allowed for 15 new trees. The trees can be mulched around the base to prevent competition from the grasses and help water retention.

The concept of the design is to provide an informal, low maintenance garden, with flowing, adaptable shapes that will provide pleasant areas for people to sit and relax in, picnic, meet friends or play games and can be used for educational purposes. There is a larger central open space to allow for games and small-scale community events such as produce stalls, seed and seedling swaps. The winding edges and paths will provide a more interesting route across the green and children will love moving around the many paths. The design has been made around existing trees and current use, without edges and formal entry points.

The addition of fruit trees to the site and the associated blossom will provide a valuable nectar source for pollinators and be aesthetically pleasing. A variety of species such as apple, pear and plum, can provide this successively over a couple of months. Trees will provide a more diverse structure and further habitat for birds and insects.

The plan does not include the formally managed area to the south or propose any changes to the existing trees already managed by the Town Council, however we have discussed the area with the Town Council Operations team and talked about potential plants that would further benefit wildlife.

Seating can be provided in the form of formal benches, logs or stones and there is potential to add other features such as information signs, bug and bird houses and maybe art features as the community garden develops.

## **Tree Species**

The planting plan contains one larger feature tree to complement the existing tree, the suggestion is an English Walnut tree which will provide an interesting feature. There is also a group of 3 Hazel trees included which can be coppiced at around 15 years old and will provide hazelnuts. The remaining 11 trees, it is proposed, could be made up a selection of fruit trees to suit all tastes and provide interest. It should include some local heritage varieties if possible. Suggestions include, Bramley apple, Bullace, Medlar, Greengage, Damson, 2 varieties of pear, plum, Crab apple, cherry tree, and a dessert apple.

## **Community involvement**

The planting and aftercare can be carried out with Greening Swanage working group volunteers in conjunction with the Greengage project who are very keen to be involved with this garden. We are also working with the Operations Department who will continue with the mowing. Several of the residents close to the site have expressed their support for such a project and it is hoped that more people and groups will continue to be involved with the site's development.

## **Timing**

It is proposed that much of this work is undertaken this winter, although it will be developed over a number of years including the meadow areas.

## Inspiration



The arboretum and annual meadow at Holme Nurseries has provided inspiration for the meadow shapes with tree planting within these areas.



All Saints church have allowed some of their lawns to grow long with neat mown edges and have enjoyed colourful flowers, more insects and even 2 species of orchids this year.



Other flowers that could be planted include field scabious (right) and knapweed (left), teasels, daisys and yellow rattle. Below, blossoms providing a welcome sight in spring.

