



James Hehir Wildflower Meadow
UK Habitat Classification Survey Report
2026

Site name: University of Suffolk James Hehir Wildflower Meadow

Grid reference: TM 17068 43818

Area: 540.43m²

Date and time of the survey: 8th June 2026

Weather conditions: partly sunny, slight wind (7mph), 16°C

Recorders: Thomas Heathwaite, Stefan Harris (student), Simon Girling and five other diagnostic radiography staff members.

Location, description, and geology of site:

The site is located on the University of Suffolk campus which is in the centre of Ipswich. Bordering the Bumblebee Buffet Area and Bulb land to the east, is Alexander Park. Suffolk new college borders just to the north of the University of Suffolk campus and the marina and Ipswich wet docks are to the south of the University of Suffolk campus. The centre of Ipswich is about 1km from the site campus.

The bedrock geology of the site consists of clay, silt, and sand (the Thanet Formation and Lambeth Group) and the superficial deposits consist of sand and gravel (the Lowestoft formation).

Statutory and Non-statutory designations:

There are no statutory designations within a radius of 1km of the survey site.

Three non-statutory designations are present within a radius of 1km of the survey site including Nitrate Vulnerable Zones 2017 Designations (England), total catchment source protection zone and drinking water protected area (surface water) (DEFRA, 2024)

Habitats and species:

Given the Wildlife Garden is only 22 meters away, the finding presented within the 2022 Wildlife Garden Phase 1 Habitat Survey report is likely to be valid here too.

Methodology:

Before the site visit, a note of the previous species that were present at the site, including photos, were taken. A desktop survey consisting of 1) the geology of the site; 2) statutory and non-statutory designations and 3) a search using the NBN Atlas (2025) of all protected species recorded within a 1km radius of the survey site listed on the UK Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006), and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* was also conducted.

A visit to site was made on the 8th of June to survey the site, with weather conditions 16°C, partly sunny, light wind of 7mph.

Plants were surveyed using 1 meter squared quadrats, using standardised sampling (see figure 1). Plant species present in these quadrats were recorded, along with their local frequency in each quadrat. From this, dominant species were noted, as well as abundance and local frequencies. The habitats were mapped as per the UKHab Ltd, (2023) UK Habitat Classification System, V2.0 methodology. Where habitats were too small to map, target notes were added.

Any species observed throughout the survey period were also noted

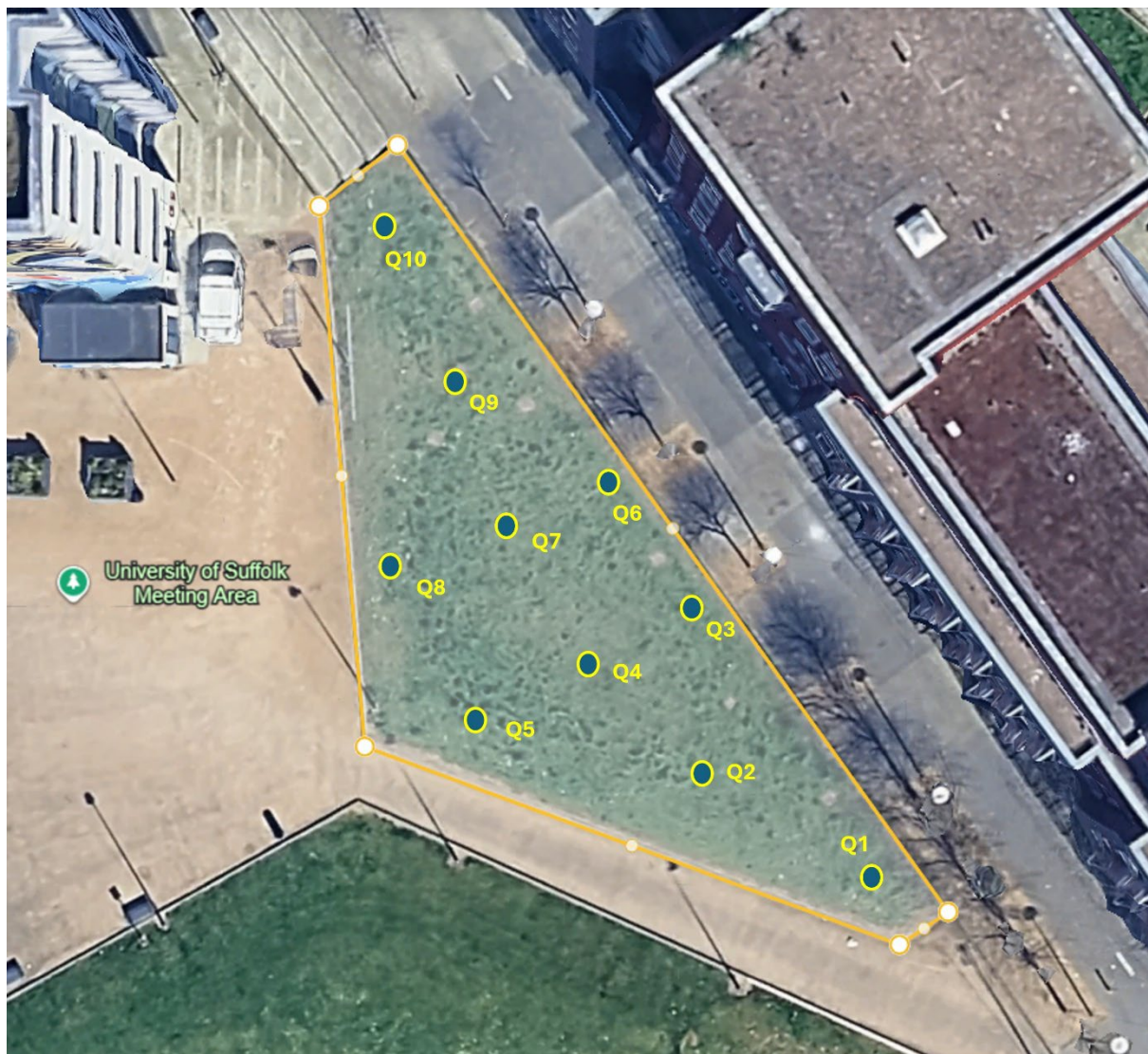


Figure 1, a diagram showing where each quadrat was placed, using systematic sampling. The highlighted area inside the yellow boarder indicates the whole sampling site boundary, and the blue dots with yellow outlines indicates where the quadrats were laid. Image produced using the Google Earth application (Google Earth, 2025).

Results:

The habitats are described below. Figure 2 shows the habitats and boundaries present at the survey site and their codes. Table 1 shows the species that were present within the quadrats, their local frequencies and a photo where relevant (Figures 3 to 7).

Total species richness (plants and animals combined) is estimated at 16 species. This figure includes red admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) and peacock (*Aglais io*) butterflies which have been seen on the meadow during the spring (but not during the survey).

The UK Habitat Classification (UkHab Ltd, 2023) essential secondary codes of relevant for this site are: 33: line of trees, 61: re-created habitat and 80: open mosaic habitats on previously developed land.

The UK Habitat Classification (UKHab Ltd, 2023) additional secondary codes of relevance for this site are: 500: dry, 528: walking or cycling route, 804: car park, and 814: educational premises open space.

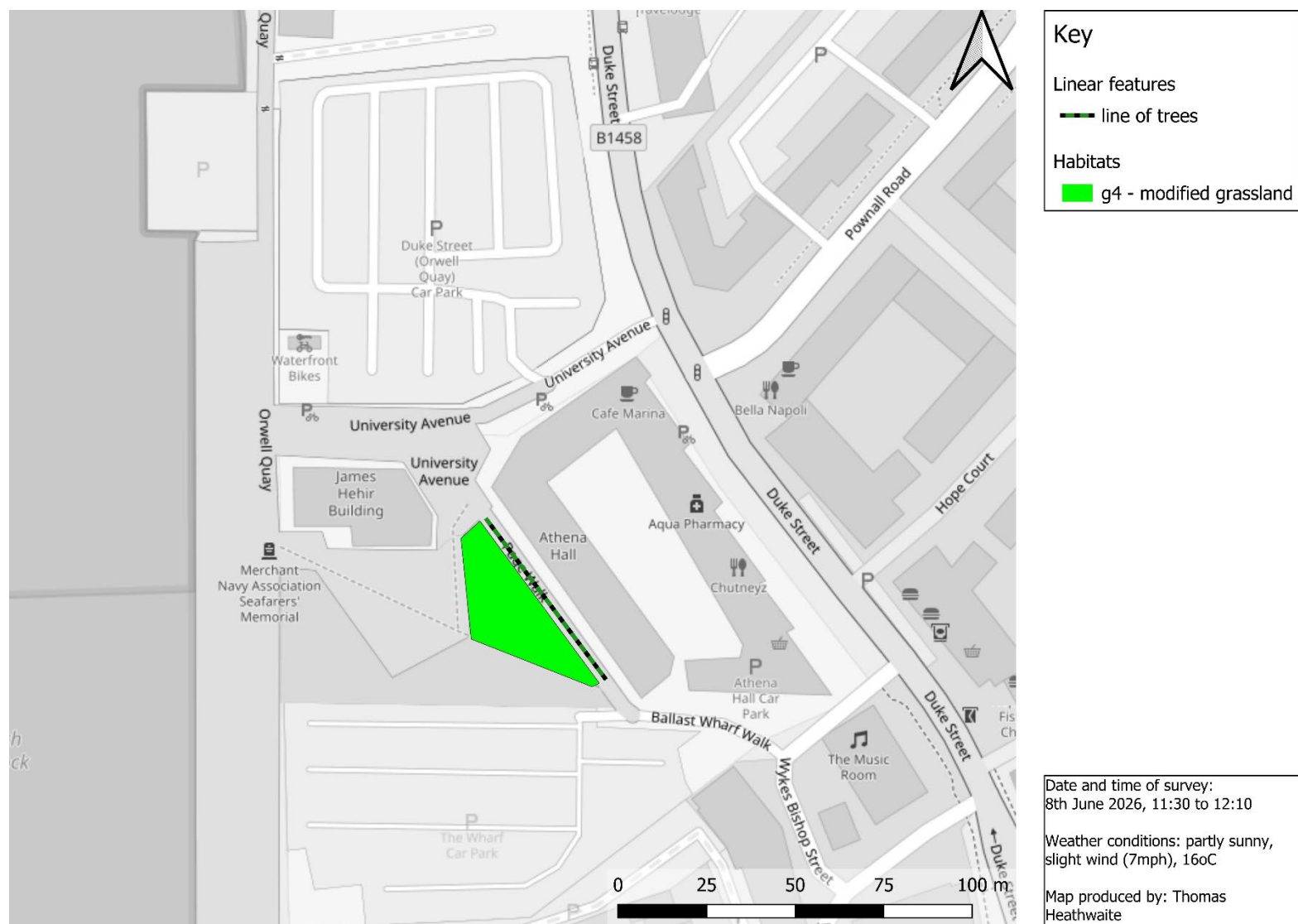


Figure 2, habitat map of the University of Suffolk's James Hehir Wildflower Meadow, Ipswich, OS Grid Reference: TM1706843818 using the UK Habitat Classification methodology (UKHab Ltd., 2023)

Table 1, a table describing the species found in each quadrat, the local frequency and a photo, if taken

Quadrat number	Species name	Photo?
1	$\frac{3}{25}$ = common yarrow (<i>Achillea millefolium</i>) $\frac{3}{25}$ = meadow clary (<i>Salvia pratensis</i>) $\frac{1}{25}$ = wild clary (<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>) $\frac{3}{25}$ = monocots (species unidentified)	

Figure 3, an overview of quadrat 1

2

$\frac{6}{25}$ = Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*)

$\frac{25}{25}$ = wild clary (*S. verbenaca*)

$\frac{1}{25}$ = black horehound (*Ballota nigra*)

$\frac{3}{25}$ = Creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*)

$\frac{1}{25}$ = lady's bedstraw (*Galium verum*)



Figure 4, an overview of quadrat 2

3

$\frac{10}{25}$ = lady's bedstraw (*G. verum*)
 $\frac{20}{25}$ = grass (species unidentifiable)



Figure 5, an overview of quadrat 3

4

$$\frac{23}{25} = \text{lady's bedstraw } (G. \textit{verum})$$

$$\frac{2}{25} = \text{grasses (species unidentifiable)}$$

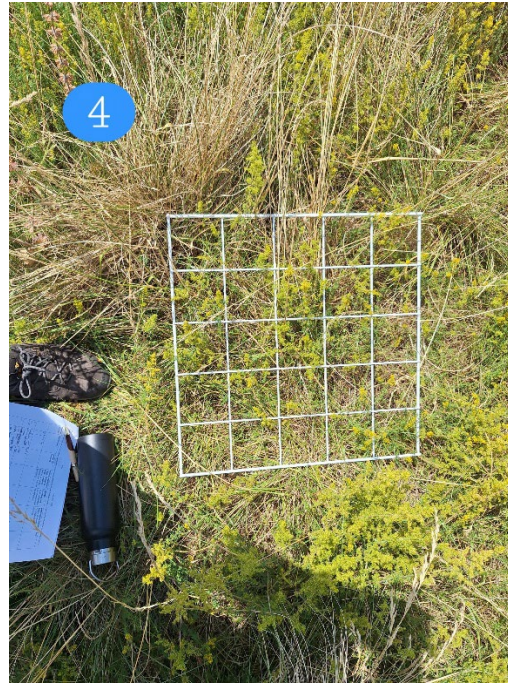


Figure 6, an overview of quadrat 4

5

$$\frac{3}{25} = \text{wild clary } (S. \textit{verbenaca})$$

6

$$\frac{24}{25} = \text{wall barley } (Hordeum \textit{murinum})$$

$$\frac{3}{25} = \text{hedge mustard } (Sisymbrium \textit{officinale})$$

$$\frac{2}{25} = \text{field bindweed } (Convolvulus \textit{arvensis})$$

$$\frac{1}{25} = \text{common yarrow } (A. \textit{millefolium})$$

$$\frac{4}{25} = \text{wild clary } (S. \textit{verbenaca})$$

7

$\frac{25}{25}$ = red fescue (*Festuca rubra*)
 $\frac{25}{25}$ = lady's bedstraw (*G. verum*)



Figure 7, an overview of quadrat 7

8

$\frac{25}{25}$ = grasses (*species unidentified*)

9

$\frac{11}{25}$ = hedge bedstraw (*Galium mollugo*)

$\frac{17}{25}$ = common yarrow (*A. millefolium*)

$\frac{2}{25}$ = timlothy (*Phleum pratense*)

$\frac{3}{25}$ = lady's bedstraw (*G. verum*)

10

$\frac{4}{25}$ = lady's bedstraw (*G. verum*)

$\frac{24}{25}$ = wall barley (*H. murinum*)

$\frac{11}{25}$ = common yarrow (*A. millefolium*)

$\frac{4}{25}$ = greater knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*)

Discussion:

Although this meadow is in its 5th year, this is the first time the meadow has been surveyed. It is therefore encouraging that the meadow is home to 16 species, though there is great potential based upon these results for the species richness to be increased significantly.

Overall, the data shows:

- Modest diversity of flowering species, such as wild clary (*S. verbenaca*), common yarrow (*A. millefolium*), lady's bedstraw (*G. verum*), hedge bedstraw (*G. mollugo*), and greater knapweed (*C. scabiosa*).
- Dominance of grass in quadrats 2 to 10 particularly, red fescue (*F. rubra*), Yorkshire fog (*H. lanatus*), and wall barley (*H. murinum*).

Recommendations will seek to improve the diversity of wildflower and traditional meadow species present and reduce encroachment/ dominance of grasses both with the aim of this meadow eventually coming under the classification G3 natural grassland (UKHab Ltd, 2023).

Recommendations are:

- Monitoring grass encouragement and dominance. Quadrats 2 to 10 showed substantial to complete dominance of grasses. It is recommended to keep an eye on this grass dominance, and if it continues over multiple years in the future, an early spring cut targeting the grass species such be considered. The semi paratoid, yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), should also be grown and planted in grass dominance areas as this would naturally reduce grass dominance whilst also benefiting pollinators (Rowntree and Craig., 2019). However, yellow rattle (*R. minor*) is notoriously difficult to establish, due to its unreliability of seedling survival rate and it needs several sessions to establish (Hejduk et al., 2020). Some studies have also suggested that nutrient rich, more productive soils affects yellow rattle's (*R. minor*) survival rate, however this is unclear (Hejduk et al., 2020). Notwithstanding this, it is recommended that a thorough planting programme is initialised over the autumn to reduce the dominance of the above species, particularly as Hejduk et al., (2020) showed that *R. minor* can reduce fescue (genus *festuca*) biomass.
- Improve the diversity and amount of coastal forb species, to include species such as oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), and selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*). This can be achieved using plug plants, seeds of individual species, or as a seed mix such as a coastal wildflower seed mix; seeds may have a higher success rate.

- Whilst the meadow provides some biodiversity value already, this could be further improved through: leaving small uncut refuge areas each year on a rotational basis; installing insect hotels nearby and the expansion of the meadow into the other two amenity grassland areas (already in the [University of Suffolk's Habitat Action Plan 2025 to 2030](#))
- Monitoring of species such as wall barley (*H. murinum*), hedge mustard (*S. officinale*), and field bindweed (*C. arvensis*) to ensure over dominance does not happen.

Limitations:

There is the limitation of survey effort which may mean that the actual species richness may be higher than found. This will always be a limitation of all surveys.

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