Kings Heath Festival, Wildflower Meadow

Ellen & I spent part of of a gusty Saturday afternoon at Kings Heath Festival in Kings Heath Park with friends from Kings Heath Floral Trail (above) and Kings Heath Forum (below).

The weather was lovely in its way, but not suitable for setting out documents. Even so, we managed to talk to people about the Highbury portion of the floral trail (meadow grasses north of Shutlock Lane entrance) and the Highbury Trust proposal. We haven't posted anything about the meadow grasses before, so bit of explanation is in order.

Early this year, as part of our tree trail project, we talked with the floral trail people about their route through the park, and suggested a wildflower meadow as a useful addition to the more formal floral displays through the village. We felt that a wildflower meadow would be in keeping with the agricultural history of the land, while adding wildlife and educational interest. So we discussed it with the Parks staff, who agreed to a trial scheme. The maintenance crew were instructed to leave a portion of former meadow uncut until the Kings Heath Garden

Show (when the grass will be harvested for hay and the meadow used as an overflow car park). The edges of the meadow and a 'desire line' through it have also been cut.

Letting the grass grow has realised benefits, such as the reappearance of meadow buttercups, and seeing the tall grasses wave in the breeze is a pleasure. Ellen has been noting the plant species, and this will be added to our plant survey information. Lastly, it may be that the cutting regime moves to another area of the park in subsequent years so that we get a sense of what works best.