



The Land Repair Helix

Site plan: Roadside verge

Site name: _____ Date: _____ Prepared by: _____

Diesel, oil or paraffin spilled on land → Contain, soak up, dispose properly (Spills)

A few litres of oil can pollute a large area of soil, a drain or a stream.

- ☐ £ Stop the leak and block nearby drains with covers or sandbags
- ☐ £ Soak it up with sawdust, wood shavings, straw, coir, cork granules or wool
- ☐ £ Clay granules (cat litter) work well on hard surfaces
- ☐ £ Keep a ready-made spill kit beside every fuel store and generator
- ☐ ££ Dig out badly soaked soil, then let microbes treat it in a biopile

NI: If oil reaches a drain, watercourse or groundwater, ring the NIEA Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Used sorbents are hazardous waste and must go via a registered carrier.

Take care: Don't use peat, which destroys bogs, or washing-up liquid and detergents, which spread the oil into the water.

Mown-to-the-ground verges → Cut less, collect the cuttings (Rewilding)

Frequent mowing and leaving cuttings on the ground feeds coarse grass and kills wildflowers.

- ☐ £ Cut once or twice a year, in late summer, and remove the cuttings
- ☐ £ Leave strips or patches uncut over winter for insects
- ☐ £ Sow yellow rattle to weaken vigorous grasses
- ☐ ££ Use local-provenance wildflower seed, or let the seed bank recover by itself

NI: Many NI councils take part in 'Don't Mow, Let It Grow'. Keep visibility strips mown at junctions for road safety.

Gappy, flailed hedgerows → Lay, gap up and let them grow (Rewilding)

Hedges cut hard every year flower little, give poor shelter and slowly die out at the base.

- ☐ £ Cut in rotation every 2 to 3 years, in winter, never during the closed period
- ☐ £ Let some hedgerow trees grow up
- ☐ ££ Plant gaps with native hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel and holly
- ☐ ££ Lay overgrown hedges to thicken them at the base

NI: In NI, hedge cutting is not allowed from 1 March to 31 August, except for clear road-safety reasons.

Few pollinators → Flowers from spring to autumn (Rewilding)

Bees and hoverflies need food from March to October, and nesting spots.

- ☐ £ Leave dandelions and clover in amenity grass
- ☐ £ Plant spring-flowering willow, hawthorn and blackthorn, and late-flowering ivy
- ☐ £ Leave bare south-facing banks for mining bees
- ☐ £ Cut pesticide use

NI: The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan has free guides for farms, councils, businesses and schools.

Invasive plants spreading → Catch them early, treat properly (Rewilding)

Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and rhododendron crowd out native plants, damage structures and spread along rivers and roads.

- ☐ £ Learn to recognise them and map where they are
- ☐ £ Pull Himalayan balsam before it sets seed (June to July), and repeat each year
- ☐ ££ Treat knotweed with a specialist herbicide programme over several seasons
- ☐ £££ Excavate knotweed where development needs it, under a management plan

NI: It's an offence in NI to plant certain invasive species, or cause them to grow, in the wild. Knotweed waste is controlled waste and must go to an authorised site.

Take care: Never strim or flail knotweed: tiny fragments regrow.

Litter and fly-tipping → Design it out, report it fast (Rewilding)

Litter and dumped waste blight places, harm wildlife and signal neglect, which draws more dumping.

- ☐ £ Report fly-tipping to the council quickly; most NI councils take reports online
- ☐ £ Organise or support community clean-ups, such as Live Here Love Here
- ☐ ££ Fix lighting, fencing and sightlines at dumping hotspots
- ☐ ££ Use a registered waste carrier and keep transfer notes: your duty of care doesn't end at the gate

NI: Councils enforce litter and fly-tipping law, and NIEA deals with larger illegal waste sites.

Take care: Don't move dumped waste that may be hazardous, such as asbestos or drums. Report it instead.

Light pollution → Light only what you need (Rewilding)

Unnecessary night lighting disrupts bats, insects and birds, and wastes energy.

- ☐ £ Switch off or dim lights when they aren't needed; use timers and motion sensors
- ☐ £ Point lights down and shield them; avoid lighting hedges, trees and water
- ☐ ££ Use warm-white LEDs (3000 K or lower)

NI: New lighting can need planning permission, and excessive artificial light can be a statutory nuisance.

Take care: Keep safety lighting where people need it.

Important. For contaminated land, forever chemicals (PFAS) or any spill reaching a drain, watercourse or groundwater, get specialist advice and involve the regulator. In NI, report pollution to the NIEA Incident Hotline on **0800 80 70 60** (24 hours). Contaminated-land remediation normally goes through planning, using the Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) framework.

Sources. DAERA and CAFRE guidance on the Nutrients Action Programme and the hedge-cutting closed period (1 March to 31 August); NIEA incident reporting (nidirect); LCRM (Environment Agency, used by NIEA); UK and EU work on PFAS (Defra PFAS Plan 2026, ECHA); the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan; the "Don't Mow, Let It Grow" initiative run by NI councils and partners.

Position at 16 October 2026. For information, not legal or engineering advice. Robert J. Park · [linkedin.com/in/robertparkuk](https://www.linkedin.com/in/robertparkuk) · WhatsApp @robertjpark