

Lindum wildflower turf

Preparation, Laying and Maintenance guidelines

1. Preparation

Existing vegetation should be killed or removed. Dig over or rotavate the soil to at least 100mm deep and rake over to create a reasonably fine tilth. Remove large stones, roots or clods of earth.

The wildflower turf does not require a top quality finish to the soil preparation, as the end result is intentionally 'meadow like'. However it is vital that the roots of the plants in the turf are all in contact with the soil to ensure that the turf establishes well. By the same token the soil need not be completely level as the turf will develop robustly and any slight unevenness will be lost as the turf grows to its full height.

2. Drainage

Attention must be paid to both underground and surface drainage. Ideally the soil should be free draining and not compacted. However if waterlogged soil is the problem please contact us for advice.

3. Soil Structure/fertility

Wildflowers can survive on fewer nutrients than conventional lawn grasses. If the soil is highly fertile, grasses and weeds tend to swamp out wildflowers as they are, generally, less competitive. Therefore wildflowers will do better on poor soils than lawn grasses and it is important NOT to apply fertilizer to the soil prior to, or after laying the turf.

Where wildflowers are seeded, it may be necessary to remove good quality top soil to increase the success rate of the seed. This is not always necessary with the wildflower turf as it acts as a weed blanket and establishes before the weed seeds in the soil can become competitive with the more developed plants in the turf. Therefore Wildflower Turf will establish on a large range of soil types and soil structures.

4. Turf Laying

When laying the turf rolls, do not overlap the joined edges and do not create tension so that the joints pull apart. Care should be taken to ensure that all joins are butted up correctly to prevent the development of weeds growing up from beneath the turf.

Providing this is achieved the laying of the turf should be reasonably quick as a bowling green finish is not needed! Once laid water the turf well as this will help it to 'settle in'.

5. Watering

Once laid water the turf thoroughly. If the soil is not soaked before laying it is important to check that this initial watering soaks through to the soil beneath the turf. During this watering check by lifting a corner of the turf to ensure that the soil is damp. Do not allow the turf to dry out during the time it establishes. For the first growing season it is important to water the turf occasionally, during extended dry spells. Once well established the wildflower turf will tend to cope with most circumstances but the flowers will benefit from water during very dry periods.

6. Fertilising

No fertilizer is needed, although in some circumstances, for example on a green roof or where the turf is on very low fertility soil such as sand or gravel, the addition of a light dose of fertilizer at certain times of the year may improve plant development.

7. Mowing

Once established the wildflower turf requires very little maintenance, however, there is one important task to carry out each autumn: to cut the plants and remove these cuttings.

This can be done by strimming and raking or using a mower and collecting the cuttings. Make sure these tools are sharp and try to minimize trafficking. Cutting the plants back to 2 to 3 inches (50 to 75 mm) in length is a vital part of their lifecycle and ensures that re-growth will continue year on year.

This should be carried out in the autumn, ideally after the plants have set and shed their seed. Not only does this tidy up the area for the winter but it stops the summer growth from covering the growing plant in a layer of rotting plant material.

An open sward over the winter ensures healthy, disease free plants which can benefit from what light is available to them during these months. As the spring approaches the wildflowers and grasses are in the perfect position to develop flowers and seed heads quickly to repeat their perennial cycle thus ensuring a wildflower meadow year after year.

On more fertile ground, an additional cut may be required in early spring to stop the grasses from becoming too dominant. The cuttings should be removed.