

# July 2024

## Archdeacon Karen writes...



A couple of years ago, 2021 I think, we decided to do 'No Mow May' for the first time ... and yes, I know it's not May – but it stretched into 'No Mow June' and 'No Mow July'! We ended up with so much grass of such great length that we actually built small stacks of it across the garden to let it dry out for a few days. The last two years we have moderated the amount of grass we have left to grow across those 3 months (and even longer) by cutting patterns in it – this year it's like waves across the garden.

It still feels counter intuitive to not cut the grass, after all, we've always cut the grass even when we had a tiny patch in our back yard many years ago. And to my parent and grand-parents generation 'cutting the grass' was almost ritualistic as they pursued the dream of a lawn. I cannot in all honesty call anything we have ever had in our garden a lawn, but I hadn't realised how ingrained the habit of regular grass-cutting was.

It was the next year, in 2022, that we noticed something rather wonderful, something that took us by surprise. In one of the unmown areas, we found a common orchid growing! It was beautiful and completely nothing to do with us. Changing the way we did things had allowed us to be surprised by the unexpected.

We remembered where the plant was and last year it grew and flowered again. This year the same thing has happened but there is now a second plant, 3 or 4 metres away from the first Wow! Abundance.

Change is always challenging, as it will be for a new government, and large-scale changes can be extremely difficult and painful. We knew that environmentally this particular small change was for the best even if it took some adapting too. The new thing, the orchids, that have happened are to me testament to the glory of creation and the whole experience, (which makes me smile every time I come up the drive), has spoken deeply to me metaphorically of the faithfulness of God in times of change and of his eternal capacity to surprise us with his creativity and abundance as we dare to do things differently.

Maybe this month, we can be on the lookout in the apparently small for those reminders of who God is and of what He is capable of when we decide to dare to change. And maybe, just maybe, that can grow our confidence in Him for the changes that we need in us, in church and in society as a whole if we are truly to see His kingdom come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Hamblin', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

**The Venerable Karen Hamblin**  
Archdeacon of East Derbyshire