

# Duke of Gloucester plants rare species to help protect biodiversity and climate



By [Miranda Norris](#)

Senior reporter



Duke of Gloucester at Long Mead in Eynsham

**The Duke of Gloucester planted rare plants at Long Mead Local Wildlife Site to help save Britain's floodplain wildflower meadows and the wildlife that depends on them.**

Devil's bit scabious was lost from Long Mead on the Thames at Eynsham and other local meadows in the 1980s. As a result, the marsh fritillary butterfly, which depends on it entirely, is now extinct in Oxfordshire.

The Duke met Professor Kevan Martin and Catriona Bass, owners of Long Mead and initiators of the Thames Valley Wildflower Meadow Restoration Project, which has just won the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire's Climate Action Heroes Award.

In their thatched barn, he watched a presentation about the vital importance of floodplain meadows in the context of the climate and biodiversity crisis.

He then met a number of local landowners who have been working to connect up these ancient meadow fragments, by creating meadows in between them to make a continuous meadow corridor.

Lucille Savin of Merton College and John James of Christ Church College told His Royal Highness about the meadows that they have restored in [Oxford](#) with TVWMRP. The Duke also met Dr Matt Bulbert of Oxford Brookes University whose students are also engaged in the project.

The Duke was then taken into Long Mead meadow where he met local community members and participants of Long Mead's carefarming programme who are hand-propagating the rarer flowers of floodplain meadows.