“What plants councils could plant for pollinators”
A brief history of planting trends (the last 500 years...) private and public

Man conquers nature
17th Century Formal
17th Century Formal
English Landscape, hedges - picturesque, rockeries, lawns, flowerbeds
Reaction against industry - Rolling hills, grouping trees, romantic wilderness
Worlds first publically funded park - Birkenhead, Joseph Paxton
Mien Ruys and modernism
20th Century concerns over biodiversity, sustainability, population growth, peak everything
Piet Oudolf
- Blocks and drifts
- Hardy perennials
- Dense planting >10/Mtr
- No mulch, No Mypex
- Limited knowledge required
- Annual cut
New Perennial Movement
- Intermingling plant communities – massive increase in plant density –
• James Hitchmough - spontaneity, self sowing vegetation - London Olympics 2012 - agricultural origins
  • <100 plants per M2
  • No Mypex!
• Soil overlaid with 75mm clean sand as planting substrate
• High degree of knowledge required - identification of common weeds
Meadows a history of human intervention
E.O Wilson - Origins of humans - Savana of Africa
Co-existance with large ungulates
1Hr maintenance per 10M2 per year
Limited palette of plants until knowledge base is established
The promotion of a looser aesthetic
The importance of winter structure
Peace Park Kilkenny - 2000m²
End of first season
Teagasc, Moorepark, Fermoy
Loose aesthetic
Clean crisp design
Recreation of upland grasses and hedgerow species
What I’ve Learned

• Bring humans along!
• Reduction in maintenance
• Stimulation of dynamic processes to enhance natural stability
• Promotion of naturalistic look
• Cutback late winter – mown...

Works best on large scale
CONTD...

• Use of natural templates for understanding landscape – often called “prairie”
  • Woodland planting
  • Moist open ground
  • Moist meadow
  • Dry habitats (Asian steppe)
  • Dry steppe hillside planting
  • North American Prairie
Where to next?
Design the process not the plants!
Design the process not the plants!
Where to next?
Bring humans along!
“Seek to protect animals and plants that lived in the farmed habitats of the last century, rather than imagine what could live there if they stepped back” – Feral - George Monibot
Just add water
Design the process!
Fin.