

RECTORY FARM

WITHERSDALE

SUFFOLK

IP20 0JR

Recent history and landscape setting thoughts at Rectory Farm

Rectory Farm for many years was a small working farm, the last commercial use being a pig unit. Some twenty plus years ago my wife and I were fortunate enough to purchase and move into the farmhouse at what was known then as Church Farm. It had been unoccupied for a few years the house sat on asphalt and mown lawn surfaces, boxed in by five metres tall leylandii hedging. The photograph below shows the conifer hedge enveloping the house and its garden



The wide landscape scene is open and agricultural. Directly surrounding the conifer hedges we see limited species grass pasture. In the valley bottom a drainage channel, wet in winter dry in summer. Quite a fruitless landscape scene when considering biodiversity. This was very apparent to us with no songbirds' present

The initial years were spent maintaining, with a light touch, reducing the field sizes, encouraging more species, planting hedges and hundreds of trees to expand the biodiversity and fully understand what naturally does well on the north facing slopes from the high clay ground to the loam and silt low roadside meadows. At the same time our fledgling business Timothy Garden Design was keen to learn and establish itself in Norfolk and Suffolk. We have enjoyed some fabulous projects throughout East Anglia, further afield in the UK and worked with clients in many other countries. Key to much of that success is working with a landscape, reading, and analysing where it can be encouraged and enhanced. Rectory Farm today is a valuable demonstration tool to Timothy Garden Design, whether from harvesting rainwater, generating electricity, considering alternative energy, bring life back to a water course, taking an agricultural grassland to a wildflower meadow, seeing the Kingfishers, watching the Owls, all benefiting from the consideration applied to the landscape. Habitat matters. Over the years many of our clients have enjoyed some time at Rectory Farm.

Currently my wife and I work in a studio room above the garage, quite detached from our landscape, very attached to our home. We would like to establish a new studio with views over the wildflower meadows, and through the woodland, whilst also being close to the gardens. Covid has unfortunately prevented any clients visiting our small studio this year. So unfortunate when the biodiversity was so good. Quite a different pasture / meadow scene today at Rectory Farm.....



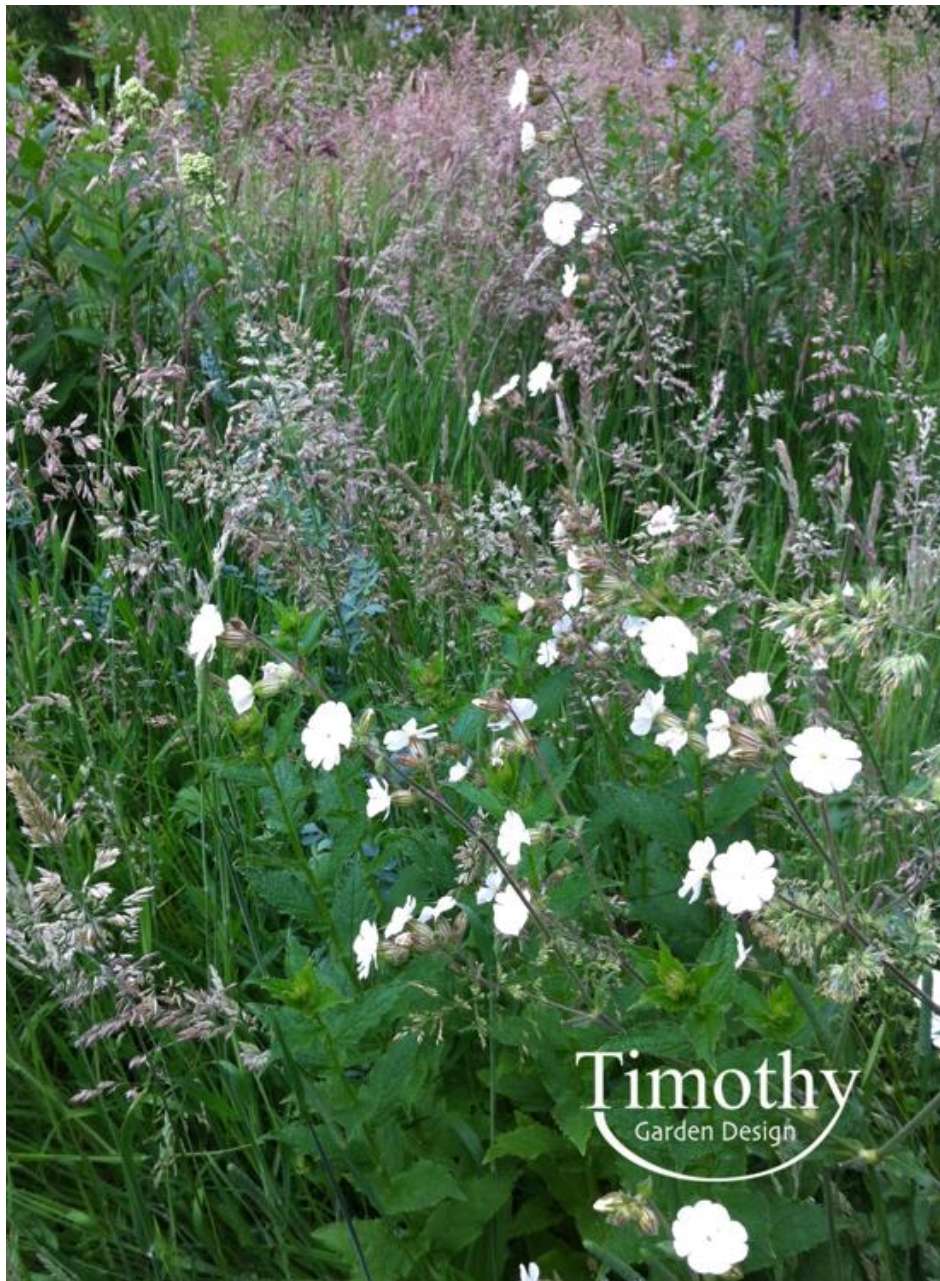
and wildflower flourishing too later in the year...



The thought is to develop the barn seen above into our new studio, ensuring it belongs to the landscape, with key East Anglian small barn details. Just as the cluster of barns once looked in the neighbouring field to the west. Hence our engagement with Mike Chapman a barn specialist.

By having more than one room we can once again bring clients back to look, learn and understand our Suffolk landscape. Our work could also consider doing more with the landscape asset, perhaps having small occasional groups for landscape education. The B1123 'valley' from Harleston to Halesworth is blessed with Architects, Potters, Artists, Sculptors some of whom have international recognition, many of whom we work with in our projects. Being able to do more at Rectory Farm will not only be wonderful for Timothy Garden Design but good for all of us.

Some early June wildflowers at Rectory Farm....



Our grass cutters at work...



We hope these few words and pictures demonstrate our commitment to Rectory Farm, where we very much enjoy our subject.

Timothy Carless

MSGD Landscape Designer