

# Broadland Flood Alleviation Project: rare & scarce plants

## Marsh mallow *Althaea officinalis*

**Description & distribution:** A tall, 'velvety' leaved multi-stemmed perennial, typically 50 - 150cm in height. Nationally scarce, it is present in the Broadland area along the lower Yare, Waveney, Bure & Thurne rivers. The plant is found in unmanaged grassland with a brackish influence, including amongst rond, floodbank, and folding habitats, & along dyke margins.



**Potential impacts:** Through disturbance of the rond, floodbank, folding and dykes, flood defence works have the potential to reduce populations of the plant. Works may destroy the plant itself, & disturb the seedbank necessary for natural regeneration.

**Mitigation:** Baseline surveys are used to establish the presence & distribution of Marsh mallow in the works area prior to scheme initiation. Where impacts are unavoidable, the aim is to ensure that populations are subsequently restored to at least their former levels. Mitigation may involve the use of fencing to protect plants present within the works area, where possible. Where impacts are unavoidable ripe seed is collected in the season before works starts, & sown onto suitable areas of the site once works are complete. Additional seed is used to raise plants for translocation to the reinstated habitats upon completion of works. Such measures are used to supplement any natural regeneration from the seedbank. Monitoring is undertaken to gauge the success of natural regeneration & the need for further reseeding &/or replanting.



Marsh mallow plants are grown from seed for translocation to re-instated habitat upon completion of flood defence works