

'Skin of the Earth'

Lucy Furlong

Humans don't walk here. I see
drivers stare at me through
windshields and wound down
windows as they pass by. One
day a woman and a girl stop to
look at me as I kneel to take a
photo of red clover. They double
take as I double take. A horse
and trap careers across the dual
carriageway at the Jubilee Way
junction – a time warp - a bright
sunny day. I am teetering at the
end of one part of the sward,
waiting to cross – a bride and
groom, resplendently fancy,
billowing clouds of gypsy white
wedding. I see them holding on
to each other, laughing as the
driver races away, and I miss the
shot. But people do inhabit the
sward – if not for long. There is a
tiny path worn across the grass
where lads cross over to play
football. At the end of May there
was a human-sized patch in the
waist-deep grass, where
someone had slept by the lime
tree. Amongst the wildflowers
there is rubbish, probably
thrown from car windows *
achillea * birds foot trefoil * ragwort *
red clover * **plastic bottle** * buttercup *
speedwell * **cigarette packet**
* mallow * **cigarette butt** * dandelion *
daisy * **sweet wrapper** * **plastic**
bottle * plantain * hawkweed *
ragwort * ragwort * **plastic bottle** *
buttercup * **nitrous oxide bottle** *
teasel * **plastic bottle** * bristly ox
tongue * **hub cap** * **crisp packet** * **plastic** *