

FINDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY
OPEN SPACES, TREES AND HABITATS

Findon Village: Open Spaces, Trees and Habitats

The Village of Findon presents as a green place: tree lined roads, grass verges and wide strips of roadside planting of trees and hedgerows which provide a range of habitats. Within the built up area of the village and adjacent to it are green open spaces. The green public rights of way, bridleways and the long distance footpath “The Monarch’s Way” which link village with the surrounding countryside ensure that all residents are able to access Natural Greenspace” (Natural England 2010).

Between the built up area in the village and the A24 are still some green fields, and “The Findon Gap”, the two fields within the Parish Boundary that separate Findon from Worthing.

Green Spaces

The Green spaces identified below in the Findon Neighbourhood Plan Survey allow for recreation and community gatherings, but also provide a range of habitats increasing biodiversity. Most consist of greensward but also include trees, areas of undergrowth, hedgerow and natural grassland.

- Old Pond Green
- The Village Hall Land
- Homewood
- Lime Green
- The Oval
- Nepcote Green
- The Cricket Field
- Allotments
- School Playing Field

Other green areas are those of local businesses: hotels, such as Findon Manor and The Village House, and The Wyevale Garden Centre

Housing developments such as Convent Gardens and Fox Lea

St John’s churchyard and the Graveyard within the village.

The area of allotments associated with The Quadrangle is no longer available to the Village.

****Issue: Suggestion for further action***

1. The Survey identifies Homewood and its facilities for play as a priority for action. However

some of the smaller open spaces lack both biodiversity and interest for younger residents e.g. The Oval. To encourage children to access the outdoors and learn more about species advice could be taken from the RSPB and sites such as www.playengland.org.uk.
2. Local businesses may not see **their** land as a village asset

Green Corridors

“Green corridors” that link these open spaces so that species can move from one habitat to the other are essential in maintaining species biodiversity. These are one of the key characteristics of Findon. Gardens provide one such link for birds and airborne plant species however for others it is the unfenced grass verges and retained old strips of roadside planting, importantly **unfenced** strips of land, e.g. Cross Lane, upper Steep Lane, Nepcote Lane between the village centre and Nepcote Green, that provide green corridors with their trees, undergrowth and hedgerows. These provide foraging lines for bats, shelter for small mammals and amphibians and are a great food source for insects and birds.

Issue: Fencing and dividing of roadside -planting

The A24

Findon Village is circumvented by the A24 which provides a significant barrier to many species and has some impact on the environment of the village in terms of noise and pollution. Most built up areas of housing and recreational green spaces are east of the A24, the Church to the west. There is no direct evidence showing its impact on species.

From the A24 there are 5 routes into the village reducing congestion.

Issue: impact on species including human

Impact of future road possible developments such as the routing of A27 on the archaeology and habitats.

Bio-diversity within the Village

Trees

The Findon Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) records identify significant numbers of trees e.g. 151 in Steep Lane and Nepcote Lane, 33 in Convent Gardens, 15 in grounds of Findon Manor Hotel within the built up area of the Village. These give Findon its green identity, provide a range of habitats and significantly also provide a barrier for noise and pollution e.g. from the A24. Now within the National Park **all** trees in Findon are protected and permission should be sought before felling.

Issue: felling of trees without permission: are residents aware that all trees are protected

The Sussex Biodiversity Record for Findon

The Sussex Biodiversity Record for the Parish of Findon shows it to have a rich variety of wild-life.

Priority species specifically identified within the built up area Sussex Protected Species Register

Two of the five protected species identified within the parish have been noted within the built up area of the village close to a green space: grass snakes at Roger's Farm and Downside Avenue just outside the parish and slow-worms at Homewood and Findon Place.

Bat Inventory

Of the five species of bat identified within the parish four have been identified mainly within the built up area; these include the generic *Chiroptera*, *Serotine*, *Pipistrelle* sp. and Brown Long-eared bat. The most significant number of three species was found in the roof of a relatively new house in Fox Lea.

Bird Inventory

The Sussex Ornithological society holds bird records from 1990 onwards and the information for Findon does not differentiate between the built up area and countryside.

Suggestion for future action: *The RSPB recognises the value of gardens for birds and instigates an annual garden watch, residents could also be asked to submit data to an observer for the village.*

Biodiversity Action Plan Species Inventory

Stag Beetles, and many species of moths.

The Rare Species Inventory also identifies Stag beetles and Moths within the built up area

The Sussex Invasive Alien Species Report

This is produced to reduce the risk to native plant and animal species. In the built up area of Findon the following have been identified: Spanish bluebell, Hybrid bluebell, Wall cotoneaster, Himalayan cotoneaster, Japanese Knotweed, yellow Archangel, Red valerian and Horse-Chestnut Leaf-miner Moth.

Further action:

Publish information for residents for identification and advice

Issue and Further Suggestions to protect and improve bio-diversity.

Any future housing developments within the built-up area should not only protect the green spaces and bio-diversity but also improve this. This is especially important where infilling occurs and the pressure is to maximise built- up space. Even small scale developments can contribute significantly to creating and enhancing wild-life habitats (Code for Sustainable Homes)

The green corridors need to be protected

References

Natural England 2010

RSPB

www.playengland.org.uk

The Sussex Biodiversity Record for Findon

Tree Preservation Orders Findon

Code for Sustainable Homes

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