



Parish Council

Nature Recovery Plan for Fordham

May 2025 - Fordham Parish Council

Nature recovery plan: Fordham

May 2025

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Fordham Parish Council is passionate about reversing the decline of nature and wants to take action protect what is special about Fordham create new habitats and get more people involved in caring for and enjoying the natural environment which is all around us.

This nature recovery plan sets out a medium-term plan for the creation of more nature rich habitats in Fordham.

This plan sets out what we want to achieve over the next ten years.

To do this, this plan has a double page for each theme we'd like to take action on, setting out what we currently have, where we'd like to get to, and how we are going to get there.

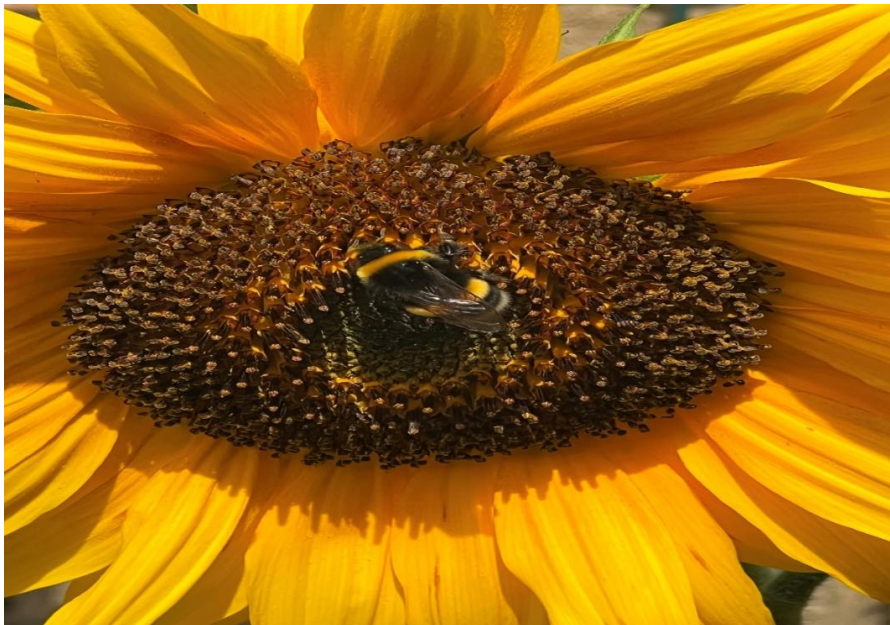
But to be a success, we will need your help! You can help be taking action in your own garden, or perhaps volunteering to help tidy up or manage a public space.

Our Five Point Recovery Plan Objectives

1. To make Fordham Parish an even better place for nature and for local people, recognising that access to nature also helps improve our health and wellbeing.
2. To inform, inspire and encourage the active participation of the community in helping nature to flourish and biodiversity to increase in the Parish.
3. To protect, and where possible enhance, the most special natural environment spaces in Fordham, specifically Fordham Nature Reserve and Townsend Wood
4. To create new habitats, with a special focus on hedgerows, trees on recreation ground, other wildlife habitats where possible.
5. To see anecdotal, or measurable if possible, gains for wildlife, such as increases in bird numbers, more sightings of hedgehogs, a richer and more plentiful variety of butterflies, and an increase in tree cover and hedgerow quality.

Summary of Overall Actions:

1. Launch a Publicity campaign in the Summer / Autumn of 2025 to publicise what we want to do to include the Parish Magazine, Social Media and Posters
2. Make a fund available to provide flower seeds and plants for those who cannot afford to pay dependant on circumstances.
3. Run a 'Best Garden' competition in early 2026.
4. Select some public areas for rewilding / planting.
5. Make available a clear list of available grants that is regularly updated.
6. Set up a meeting in the Summer / Autumn of 2025 to pull together an improvement plan (working with the School, Church, Garden centres etc)



Theme 1: Gardens

Introduction

Together, the UK's gardens are larger than all of our National Nature Reserves combined. They play a key role in connecting habitats, especially across urban areas, and provide safe refuges for wildlife in an ever-busy environment.

Gardens do not have to be large to benefit wildlife and less is more when it comes to management. It's not necessary for individual gardens to offer everything a species needs if nearby gardens contribute too, for example a blackbird will nest in one garden but forage and bathe in others.

What do we have in Fordham?

There are approximately 2200 homes in Fordham, therefore we have approximately 2200 gardens, each of which can be a mini-oasis for wildlife. This collage of photos below show some great examples of habitats for wildlife, all of which were found in Fordham.





Gardens: Action Plan

The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Encourage homeowners to create wildlife friendly gardens, by encouraging and developing awareness and promoting the importance of wildlife within Fordham.
2. Run a 'Best Garden' competition in the summer of 2026.

As a local resident, you can help by:

1. Choosing native plants whenever possible
2. Choosing bee and insect friendly flowering plants
3. Installing a bird, bat or hedgehog box
4. Making sure there are small gaps in the boundary wall or fence, so small creatures can roam freely (but not so big that dogs, cats, foxes or larger animals become a problem)
5. Purchasing a compost heap, but make sure it is turned regularly to prevent it becoming a home for unwanted pests
6. Putting in a small pond or other water feature – even something as little as an old washing up bowl will attract wildlife, and provide water stations for birds, hedgehogs and insects.
7. Letting the grass grow in part of your garden.
8. Making sure any hedges do not inhibit use of the public pavement.

More reading:

Wild About Gardens – Encouraging wildlife to your garden with RHS and the Wildlife Trusts [Wild About Gardens / RHS Gardening](#)

RSPB – Gardening for Wildlife <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/gardening-for-wildlife/>

National Trust - Nine ways to build a wildlife friendly garden
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/gardening-tips/nine-ways-to-build-a-wildlife-friendly-garden>

Theme 2: Allotments

Introduction

Allotments often have many of the same features as gardens but without the physical boundaries between plots so offer a large area for wildlife to utilise.

What do we have in Fordham?

We currently have 47 allotments in Fordham, covering several acres on Collins Hill. We offer full and ½ plots, although they are predominantly full plots.

It is a large open area with natural hedging to the front and rear of the grounds.

Tenants grow a variety of produce, flowers, vegetables and fruits.

To apply for an allotment plot you should contact the Clerk on the following email address:-
Christine.standley@fordhamparish.org.uk



Allotments: Action Plan

The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Survey our current allotment area, identifying what parts of it are good for nature, and what parts have potential for enhancement
2. Consider improving or expanding the number of allotment plots, and encourage more people to take up a plot
3. Encourage Bug hotels and hedgehog houses/habitats

As a local resident, *you can help by:*

1. Considering taking up an allotment plot, if one is available, or register your interest.
2. When you have a plot, think about planting flowers that will attract bees or butterflies...or simply leave one or two 'misshapes' or bolting vegetable to flower naturally (for example, don't cut and throw away a bolting leek – let it flower, and it will attract a host of bees and insects)
3. Going organic, rather than use pesticides
4. Growing small fruit trees
5. Providing bird baths, water stations for hedgehogs and insects

More reading:

National allotment society - <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/>

Theme 3: Churches and Their Grounds

Introduction

Churches have been a focus for communities for thousands of years and, alongside their primary purpose, are refuges for many species. Bats are well known for inhabiting churches due to their open structure and relative quiet.

The ancient stonework can be rich with lichens and mosses while the ledges and roofs can be ideal places for nesting birds. The church grounds have often escaped the damaging effects of fertilisers and ploughs so contain remnants of ancient grassland where fungi thrive and wildflowers flourish.

What do we have in Fordham?

We have the Anglican Church, and a Congregational Church which is closed at the moment, but there are hopes to be able to re-open it at some point.

At the Anglican Church (St Peter & St. Mary Magdalene Church), the Parish Council have over the last couple of years been able to install Owl and Bird Boxes, Swift boxes in the Church Tower and have also set up a number of 'Bug Hotels' and composting areas for the grass cuttings. We were also awarded the Bronze Award for Wildlife.





Churches and Their Grounds: Action Plan

The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Work with those currently responsible for maintaining the churches and their grounds, and see what could be done to improve them for nature to exist and thrive.
2. Continue to work with the PCC to protect wildflowers and native/rare flowers.
3. It is a possibility that the Parish Council will take over the closed graveyards this year and if this happens the necessary actions will be introduced to keep them in a tidy order.

As a local resident, **you can help** by:

1. Visiting the church grounds and note what you see and hear.
2. Helping with any survey work or actions set up by the parish council or church.

More reading

Caring for God's acre: <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/>

Bats in churches: <https://batsinchurches.org.uk/>

Theme 4: School Grounds

Introduction

We currently have a Primary School within Fordham, the school is in the centre of the village and the play area is surrounded by natural trees and shrubs.

What do we have in Fordham?

Fordham Primary School is located in Isleham Road. It caters for ages 4 – 11, Reception and Year 1 – 6, currently there are 2 classes per year group, catering for approximately 400 students. Facilities include 2 tarmac playgrounds, a playing field and an area designated as a Forest School and outside classrooms, this area is on a piece of land leased from the Parish Council.

As a Parish Council we would like to work more closely with the school to encourage, enhance and develop wildlife within the grounds. We currently have a planting scheme in place for spring 2025 and we will be planting bulbs and wildflower seeds

We hope to build on the projects already underway, and for the children to come up with new schemes that they would like to see in the school grounds to enhance wildlife and nature.



School Grounds: Action Plan

The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Work together in partnership with the school to be more nature friendly.
2. Work with the school to improve the forest school area.

As a local resident, you can help by:

1. Encouraging the children to get involved in Nature projects.
2. Volunteering to help out with any School nature projects.

Theme 5: Amenity Areas

Introduction

Fordham Recreation Ground is an open space for people to enjoy at their leisure,

What do we have in Fordham?

It is currently used by the Football & Cricket clubs and Fitness Boot Camps, there is also a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) which can be hired for a variety of activities. It's a large open space that can be used at any time for a variety of activities.

It is surrounded by Natural trees and hedging.

Bird boxes have been erected in the trees. Native bulbs planted and wildflower seeds sown.





Amenity Areas: Action Plan

The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Maintain the trees and hedging.
2. Set aside areas for rewilding & spring bulbs (these have already been planted for the spring of 2024).
3. Safeguard long term health and safety of the trees.

As a local resident, you can help by:

1. Helping to maintain these areas and keep the natural environment.
2. Ensuring that any litter is disposed of correctly.
3. Keeping a watchful eye out for any attempts at vandalism.

Theme 6: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Introduction

Fordham has one Woodland Area called Townsend Wood, which is currently maintained by the Woodland Trust.

What do we have in Fordham?

Townsend Wood is situated in the heart of the village, although quite a small area it is open to the public and is used by quite a lot of dog walkers.



Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows: Action Plan

The ***Fordham Parish Council*** will aim to:

1. Work with the Woodland Trust to make sure that the area is well maintained and looked after for future generations.
2. Develop an Improvement plan together with the Woodland trust

As a local resident, *you can help* by:

1. Keeping the area clear of litter and make sure that it is disposed of correctly.
2. Making sure that there is nothing harmful to birds & animals that already live in the area.
3. Keeping dogs under control

Theme 7: Grasslands and Road Verges

Introduction

Road Verges are owned and managed by Cambridgeshire County Council and maintained by Fordham Parish Council

What do we have in Fordham?

Various road verges throughout the village



Grasslands and Road Verges: Action Plan

The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Introduce some tailored cutting plans to allow for native plants and natural growth.
2. Choose the most suitable areas for the natural growth so as not to have an adverse impact on the residents.
3. Trial some rewilding areas around the Village signs.
4. Encourage the garden centres / businesses to sponsor some areas.

As a local resident, *you can help* by:

1. Respecting the road verges and not damaging them.
2. Volunteering to help in the maintenance of any projects that are undertaken.

Theme 8: Areas Designated for Nature

Introduction

We have a Nature Reserve on the edge of the village which is partly managed by The Wildlife Trust and a group of volunteers.

What do we have in Fordham?

Our Nature reserve is on the edge of the village and locally known as Brackland Rough. It is accessible to the public by a series of footpaths and board walks. It is partly managed by The Wildlife Trust together with a team of volunteers who keep it maintained and weed free. However the section owned by the Parish council is currently not maintained and care should be taken when walking in the area.



Areas Designated for Nature: Action Plan

The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Work with The Wildlife Trust and volunteers to keep the area well managed and maintained.
2. It is hoped in the medium term a new lease can be arranged between the PC and the Wildlife Trust to ensure continued care and management of the area.

As a local resident, you can help by:

1. Treat the Nature Reserve with respect for the wildlife that it sustains.
2. Encourage usage of the Reserve.

Theme 9: Water (Streams, Ponds and Ditches)

Introduction

River Snail – this is a Chalk Stream and runs through the centre of the village.

What do we have in Fordham?

The River Snail runs through the centre of the whole village. We have been told that it is a chalk stream and therefore quite rare and to be protected.

The parish of Fordham lies predominantly upon the Lower Chalk, overlaid in a few places by the Middle Chalk, and traversed from south to north by a strip of alluvium along the gently winding northward course of the river Snail, which divides into several channels as it flows past Fordham village. A wider strip of river gravels touching the river extends from the eastern boundary towards the site of the village. Watercourses bounding Chippenham and Snailwell fens on their north and west, which in places form the parish boundary, drain south of the village into the Snail, whose courses have occasionally been adjusted there, altering its distance from the modern Fordham Abbey, to suit the landscaping of its park. North and west of the village other drainage channels run into the Snail and into Burwell New River from the former fenland. From the 1970s the Snail was frequently polluted by outflows from Newmarket's sewage system: repeated attempts were made in the late 1980s to cleanse and protect the river. The river is now in good condition.



Water (Streams, Ponds and Ditches): Action Plan

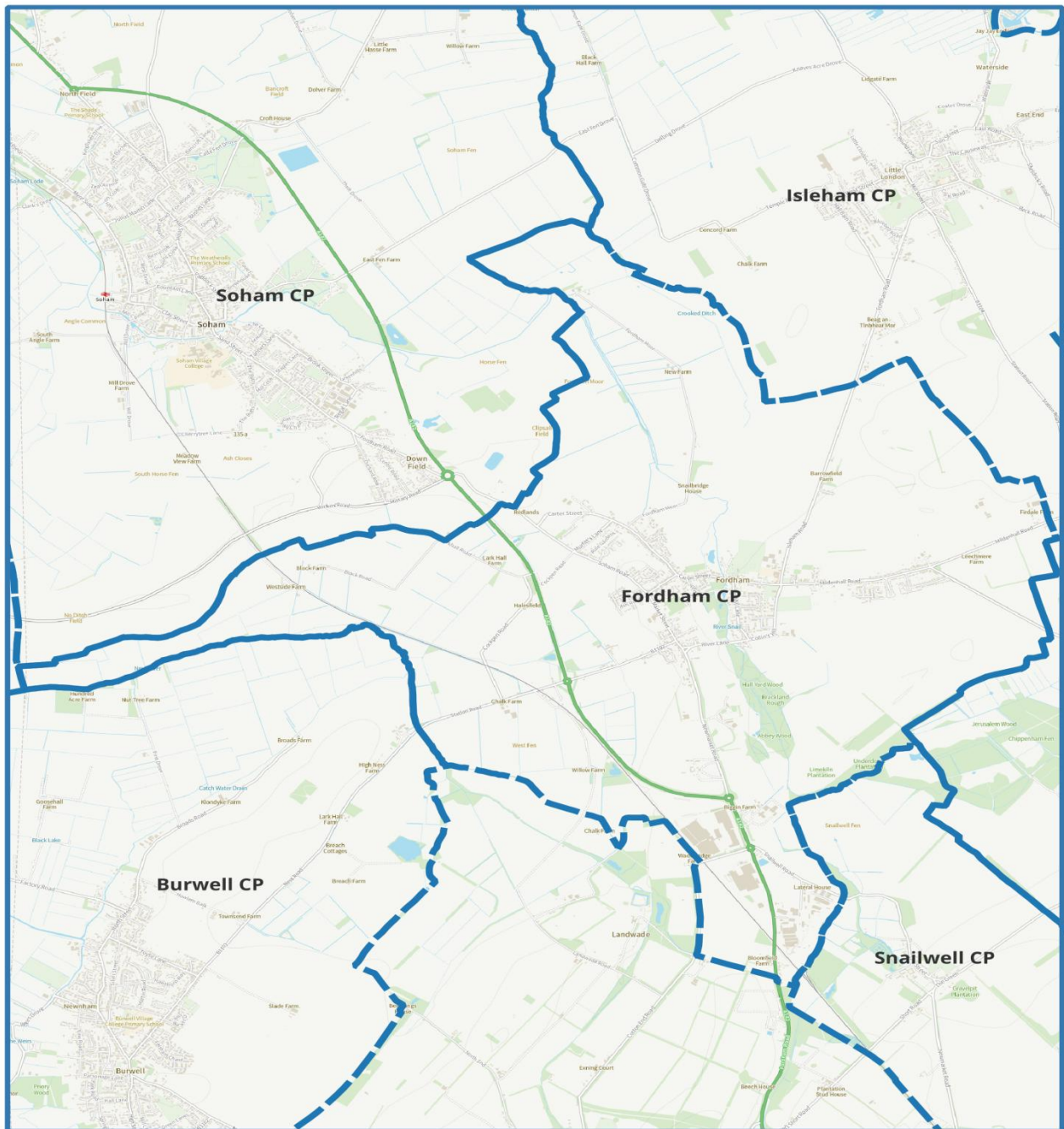
The **Fordham Parish Council** will aim to:

1. Be mindful of the area if/when Planning Applications come before Council for discussion.

As a local resident, you can help by:

1. Respecting the wildlife already living on the river
2. Protecting the banks

Appendix 1: Map of the Parish



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Map of Fordham Parish Council Boundary

Date: 09/11/2023
Scale: 1:38,986.710256



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Appendix 2: Summary Action Plan

The following table sets out some of the key actions the Parish Council intends to take over the period 2025-2027

Project	Description	By Who / Cost	Additional comments
Gardens	Encourage homeowners to create wildlife friendly gardens, by encouraging and developing awareness and promoting the importance of wildlife within Fordham. Run a 'Best Garden' competition in the summer of 2026.	Homeowners themselves. The parish council may make funds available to assist in this.	This is a long term project that aims to gradually improve what we have in Fordham.
Allotments	Survey our current allotment area, identifying what parts of it are good for nature, and what parts have potential for enhancement. Consider improving or expanding the number of allotment plots, and encourage more people to take up a plot. Encourage Bug hotels and hedgehog houses/habitats.	Parish council.	Enhance the Allotment area and keep it active and an asset to the village.
Churches	Work with those currently responsible for maintaining the churches and their grounds, and see what could be done to improve them for nature to exist and thrive. Continue to work with the PCC to protect wildflowers and native/rare flowers. It is a possibility that the Parish Council will take over the closed graveyards this year and if this happens the necessary actions will be introduced to keep them in a tidy order.	Parish council and the PCC. .	
School Grounds	Work together in partnership with the school to be more nature friendly. Work with the school to improve the forest school area.	Parish Council (PC) School	

Recreation Ground	Maintain the trees and hedging. Set aside areas for rewilding & spring bulbs (these have already been planted for the spring of 2024). Safeguard long term health and safety of the trees.	The Parish council.	The Parish council already maintains the Recreation grounds and will endeavour to improve it where it can.
Townsend Wood	Work with the Woodland Trust to make sure that the area is well maintained and looked after for future generations. Develop an Improvement plan together with the Woodland trust	The Parish council.	Again this is a long term project working with the Woodland trust.
Grasslands and Road Verges	Introduce some tailored cutting plans to allow for native plants and natural growth. Choose the most suitable areas for the natural growth so as not to have an adverse impact on the residents. Trial some rewilding areas around the Village signs. Encourage the garden centres / businesses to sponsor some areas.	The Parish council.	It is hoped to rewild around the village signs on the approach roads during 2025.
Nature Reserve	Work with The Wildlife Trust and volunteers to keep the area well managed and maintained. It is hoped that once the official land registry documentation is in place that a new lease can be arranged between the PC and the Wildlife Trust to ensure continued care and management of the area	Resident volunteers. The Parish council.	Currently parts of this reserve are dangerous to access.
River Snail	Be mindful of the area if/when Planning Applications come before	The Parish council	

	Council for discussion. It is a quite rare Chalk Stream – so care must be taken to look after it.		