

01 Dec 2025

THE BIODIVERSITY AUDIT

of the

Civil Parish of CROWHURST EAST SUSSEX

By
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on behalf of:
Crowhurst Parish Council (CPC)



Crowhurst Parish from the south 8.8.25 © John Feltwell

Most of the parish of Crowhurst is shown in this photograph. looking north with the Link Road at the bottom of the photograph. This is at harvest time with the many fields of corn showing a nutty brown colour. RSPB Fore Wood dominates the top of photo. The fields for the solar farm are immediately to the north of the elongated Rackwell Wood which runs east-west. The Attenuation Pond is shown to the left of the bottom. Overall there is good connectivity of habitat through the parish even though there are many agricultural fields: increasing 'stepping-stone' habitats which is an aim of the parish in line with government policy. © John Feltwell

¹ Feltwell, J. Local naturalist who has lived in the area for 44 years, and who wrote '*Rainforests*' in which there is a chapter of 'Global Warming' see illustrated chapter in www.drjohnfeltwell.com. He has also been the volunteer Tree Warden for Crowhurst for over three decades.

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Executive Summary

- The village is a well-wooded parish with a good range of ancient and medieval habitats and flora and fauna.
- About 70% of the parish is protected under nature conservation law.
- The parish has had a history of being sliced-up by the London-Hastings railway line and the more recent Link Road and it is under continued threat from the east (Queensway Direction).
- Three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)s are within the parish boundary.
- Numerous Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and BAP species are present.
- The northern half of the parish is in the High Weald AONL, so it has plenty of responsibility and obligation to protect landscape and nature.
- At least one hedgerow is 'Important' under the law and is about 800 years old. It also has one of the oldest yew trees in England (ca.1300 yrs old) that was present at the Battle of Hastings in 1066.
- Most habitat loss and species loss to date has been due to man-made habitat destruction, infrastructure and intensive agriculture.
- Evidence for climate change effects on habitats and species is currently very limited.
- Some apparent effects of climate change are being felt - most recently the flooding of early March 2020, and January 2023.
- This baseline of evidence will assist with future conservation.²

The following is a summary of the facts and figures for the parish:

This includes four management plans

- Powdermill Stream NB. This stream was declared DEAD in 2025.
- Fore Wood RSPB
- Combe Valley Countryside Park
- Verges

Table WM01 Crowhurst facts and figures

² This is a working document that can be expected to be updated at regular intervals. It will be deposited on the Crowhurst Parish website, so it will be available to all. Any correspondence can be directed to john@wildlifematters.com or howleyplato@gmail.com or other members of the parish council.

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STATISTICS	
Size of parish	2,168 acres (877ha); 3.9sqmiles, or 2,496ac.
Length of parish boundary	17,868lm ³
Length of parish boundary in & out of AONL	8.75km & 9.118km
Ownership of the land	Parts owned by ESCC. None owned by Rother DC ⁴
HABITAT ASSETS	
Ancient Woodland	17 = about 15% of the parish = 129.16ha
Medieval Field Systems	ca. 17 (those in AONL area)
Meadows (managed)	2 (Muriel's and a National Trust Meadow)
Meadows	Many in the parish have never been described
Hedgerows	(length not calculated yet)
Streams	6 (Powdermill, Watermill, Rackwell, Brokes Gill, Decoy + unnamed), c 8km
Ponds and lakes	1. 40 in AONL + 30 not in AONL = 70 (info ex. AONL Unit) 2. 84 in parish (ESCC). These figures do not include garden ponds. 3. Attenuation Pond N of Link Road is ca. 5.01ha
Springs	7 (i.e. 'Spr' on maps)
Wetlands	1 large area Combe Valley (not all of the valley is in the parish)
Sandstone Outcrops	At least seven
Heathlands	None in parish
Bogs	1 (?Little Bog Wood)
SPECIES ASSETS	
(NB. these are all under-estimates, until all the prolific Sussex Biodiversity data is transcribed – particularly the invertebrates)	
Flora: Flowering Plants	Probably well over 200 species
Tree Champions	1300 yr old Yew tree in churchyard'. SIX on UK Tree Register: 3 x Remarkable trees, 1 tallest in E.Sussex, 2 x Girth County Champions
Tree TPOs	3 x 'blanket TPOs'
Trees (CAVAT valuation)	Over £3million on small sample in village
Mosses and Liverworts	64 species
Fungi	37 species
Fauna: Mammals	26 species
Reptiles & Amphibians	5 species each
Birds	100+
Fish	7 species
Invertebrates: Butterflies & Moths	24 butterfly species, 22 moth species (grossly underestimated – need survey)
CONSERVED / PROTECTED AREAS	
Statutory area	High Weald AONL (HWAONL) Size inside Crowhurst is 542ha
Statutory (Habitats)	Combe Haven SSSI, Fore Wood SSSI, Marline Wood SSSI (Combe Haven SSSI within Crowhurst parish is ca. 50.36ha).
Statutory (Species)	All bats; BAP species: hedgehog, house sparrows....
Percentage of parish CONSERVED	About 70%
Non-Statutory : Wildflower verges	5
Meadows (managed)	2 (Muriel's and National Trust)
Linear corridors	4 (hedgerows, wayleaves, link road, railway line)
Quarry Wood	Nature Reserve
NET LOSSES AND NET GAINS	
NET GAINS	50m of new hedgerow along stream on Recreation Ground in 2022.

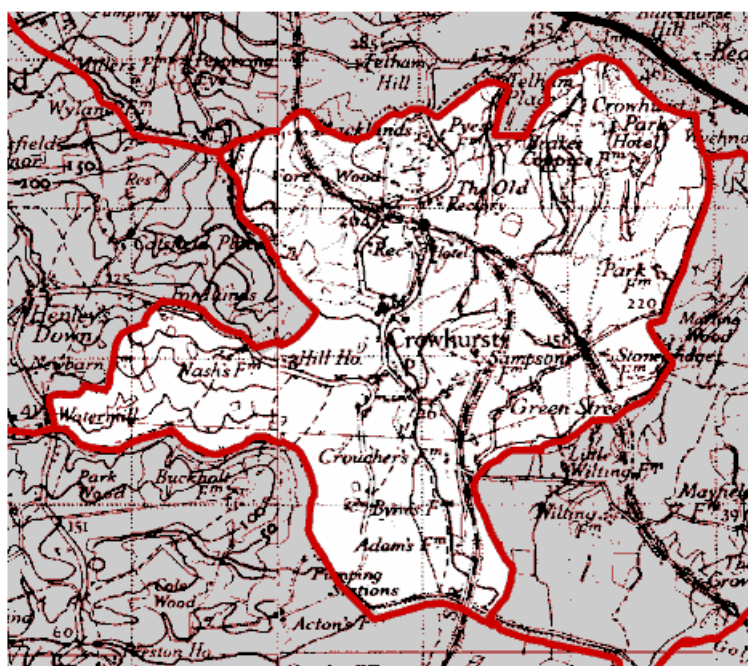
³ Sizes calculated by Rosalyn Day, 6 April 2020⁴ Confirmed from Rother by Cllr McLaren in Sept 2025.

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	Otherwise no new meadows, hedgerows, woodlands, wetlands recorded/
NET LOSSES - to Link Road NET LOSSES - grubbed out, 2019-21 Wildlife losses	Crowhurst parish lost 12.14 acres valued at £60,700 ⁵ (2017 values) 2460 sqm of habitat lost; 11 trees lost, Water vole and Native Crayfish – likely to be extinct in village
NET LOSSES (potential) of 3 allocated sites	If developed = - 1.44ha

Civil Parish of Crowhurst, East Sussex,⁶ Size

According to the Parish Council Crowhurst is 2,168 acres (877ha).⁷ According to Wikipedia it is 10.1km² (3.9sq miles, or 2,496ac)⁸ in size. It is populated by 906 people with a population density of 1,342 sqkm⁹ living in 327 homes in



the village.^{10 11}

⁵ John Feltwell, separate report on the Link Road (2023) now attached as an Appendix.

⁶ The centre of Crowhurst village is registered here as St George's Church at TQ75741233 and Post Code TN33 9AJ. Crowhurst is within '1066 Country'. Some record Crowhurst with two centres, one around the Church, the other around the Pub.

⁷ Crowhurst Parish Council <http://www.crowhurstpc.co.uk/5951> (retrieved 27 Feb 2020).

⁸ Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowhurst%2C_East_Sussex (retrieved 5 March 2020).

⁹

https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk/southeastengland/admin/rother/E04003804_crowhurst/ (accessed (15 December 2021).

¹⁰ Beth, L., 2019. Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Submission Version 2018 – 2028 Report of Examination March 2019 Undertaken for Rother District Council with the support of Crowhurst Parish Council on the submission version of the plan. Independent Examiner: Liz Beth BA (Hons) MA Dip Design in the Built Environment MRTPI. Now updated and adopted 19 May 2025.

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Agricultural and natural history background (how it has kept its biodiversity)

Introduction

The natural history of the parish has always been dependent upon how its residents have managed the land. Things have moved on since the Domesday Book which said there were 15 acres of meadows in Crowhurst. There are now fewer meadows, fewer woodlands, fewer hedgerows, and fields have become much larger. In more recent times monocultures are the norm, not meadows. Wildlife has suffered; flora and fauna are declining. We are now well into the age of man-made decline, the Anthropocene, with unwelcome chemicals falling from the sky across the whole parish, and trickling down our watercourses. The 23 farms have shrunk to a handful.

This Biodiversity Audit thus seeks to quantify what is left in Crowhurst. There is a chance that it is not too late to bring back nature (at least David Attenborough thinks this is a possibility), others think the 'tipping point' has been reached for some species, whilst others (including this author) think it is too late.

Remember that agriculture still dominates Crowhurst parish, with its big fields and is a potential threat to habitats and species. However, this needs to be balanced with the breath of biodiversity found across the remaining habitats that are still within one of the most wooded parishes in East Sussex ¹² which also enjoys being within the wooded AONL. Read on and enjoy. It is surprising then that Crowhurst is so biodiverse.

¹¹ The population is mentioned here simply because people are believed to be the root cause of climate change. The Crowhurst population has not increased much since it was recorded as having 22 households in 1086, in the Domesday Book <https://opendomesday.org/place/TQ7512/crowhurst/> (retrieved 30 March 2020)

¹² East Sussex County Council say that East Sussex is one of the most wooded counties in England <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/conservation/wild-life-habitats> (retrieved 02 Nov 25)

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Some parts parish (here looking of the west from Hillcroft Farm) may look like a desert such is the “*industrial scale of agriculture*” (a CPRE phrase) these days in early 2025 © John Feltwell



Typical landscape of the parish in May 2021 (Hillcroft Farm) © John Feltwell

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Purpose of this Biodiversity Audit

The general public are increasingly aware of the effect of man on the environment, exacerbated with diverse changes in weather brought on by global warming and climate change. Forget mini-ice ages, and that the Romans enjoyed warmer climate, what people really want to know now is how and why the world they live in, the parishes that they live in support the nature that nourishes their well-being. What has gone wrong with the environment is for others to tabulate, but villagers want to know what is still present in Crowhurst and how they can assist with its conservation.

This Biodiversity Audit seeks to address this pressing issue, listing the habitats that support the flora and fauna, whilst highlighting the everyday impacts that directly affect those precious habitats. With the local council gradually awakening to the effects of Climate Change and Crowhurst Parish Council taking on the local baton of effecting measures to bring about net zero, sustainability and energy conservation, for the well-being of everyone, this Biodiversity Audit simply anotates a time at the end of 2025 when what is known about parish's biodiverse nature is known: a quantum on which to move forward.

This audit thus sets a baseline of evidence for the parish on which data can be added in the future. Data can also be used for the compilation of Biodiversity Metrics¹³ to be prepared by all developers for any proposed planning developments in the future. The data can also be used as an evidence base for continued nature conservation in the parish.

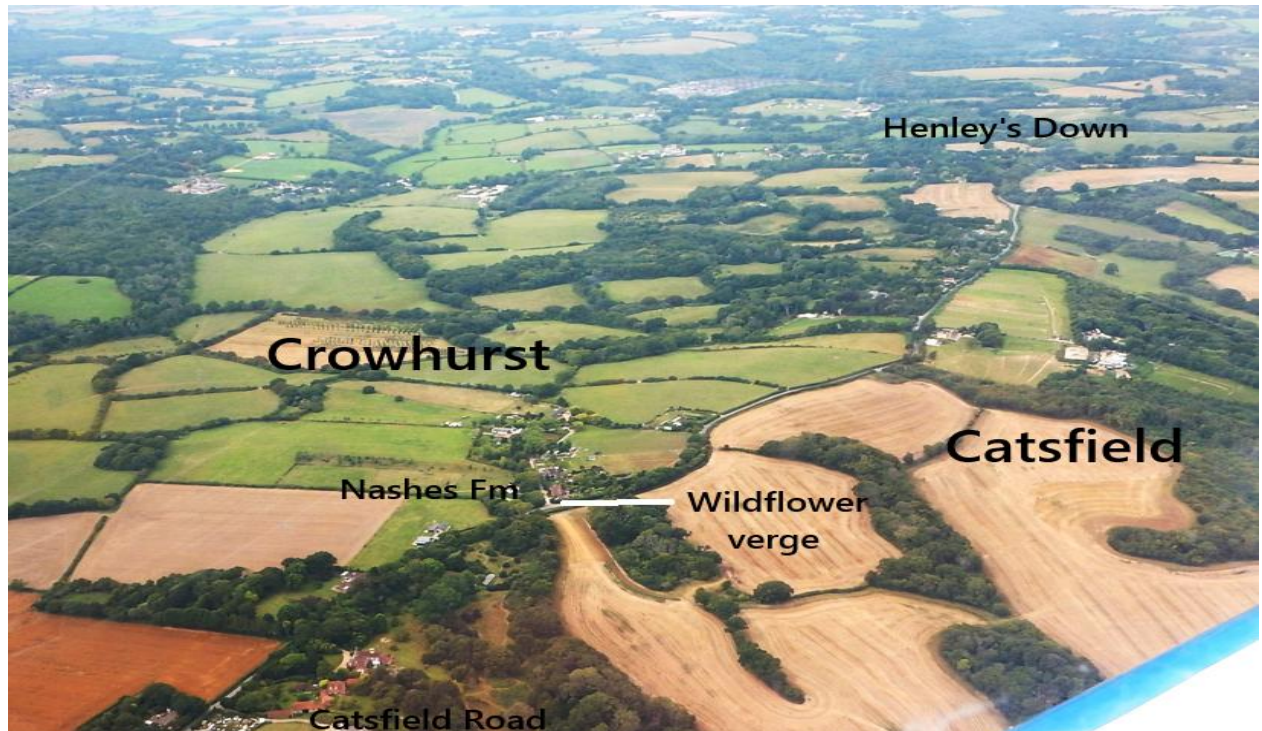
A major purpose of this Biodiversity Audit is to present the salient facts on the ecology and nature of the parish, so that DEVELOPERS will be up to speed with what is protected and not open for discussion with development plans. The three allocated sites are mentioned, and mitigations are mentioned throughout.

DEVELOPERS Yes, this is for you: should read this audit, as well as the Neighbourhood Plan ¹⁴, and the Design Plan before bringing Applications to Rother District Council.

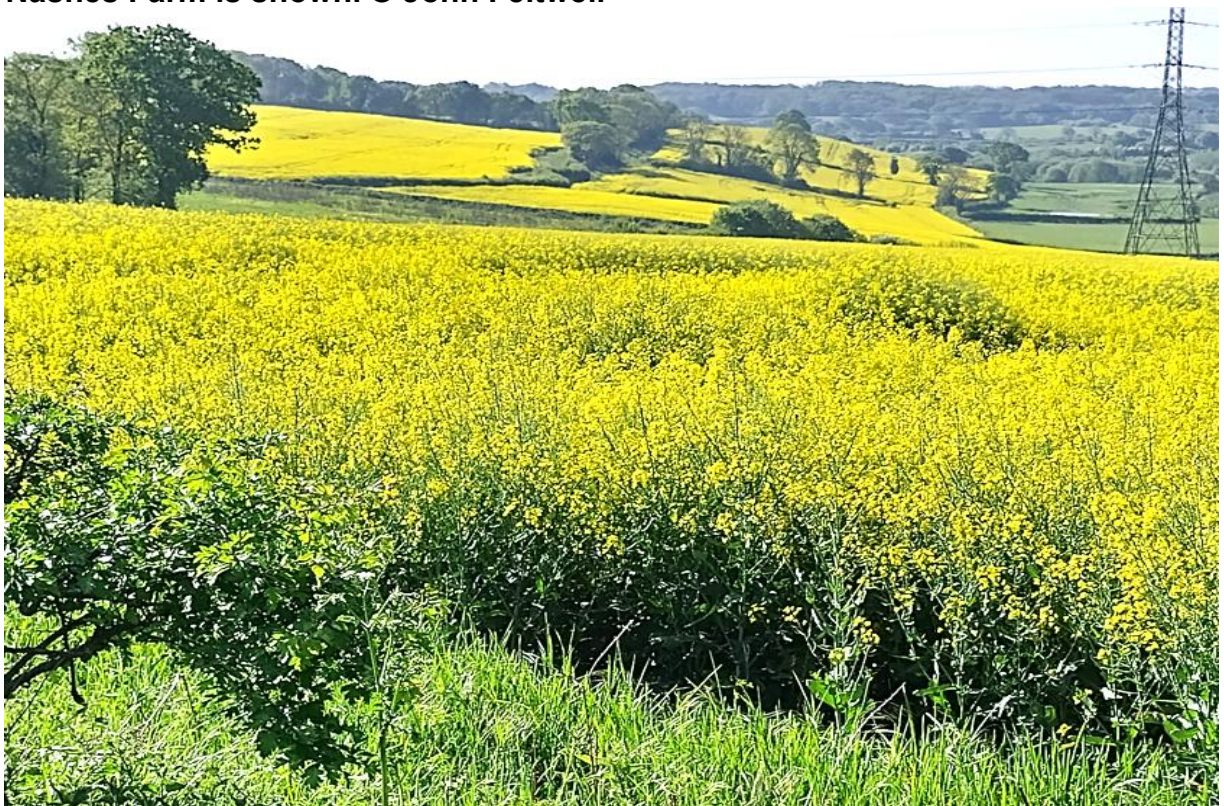
¹³ The latest Biodiversity Metric is Version 4.0 to be mandatory for development sites in January 2024.

¹⁴ Adopted 19 May 2025

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The is a view along Crowhurst Road looking south-west. North to the right hand side. Taken 8.8.25. Crowhurst Road is rather like a ridge road separating Catsfield and Crowhurst. The Roadside Wildflower Verge that is at Nashes Farm is shown. © John Feltwell



Crowhurst is clearly an agricultural parish that is subject to adverse environmental impact. This is from Crowhurst Road southwards in spring 2025

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CROWHURST LEADS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH NATURE

CROWHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Declaration of Climate Emergency (Nov 2019)

Motion for Rother trees approved (2025)

Motion for Rother rivers approved (2025)

WELL-BEING PROJECTS

Strolling Group for older and less able residents.

Yoga and the physical sports activities,

Interpretive Board at Railway Station for visitors,

Healing Centre with nature conserved areas, and community café.

1066 Walking Trail – supported through the village

CONTRIBUTION TO NET ZERO

The Climate and Ecological Emergency Resolution was agreed by CPC (Nov 2019)

Insulation of Youth Centre and Village Hall with Insulation Grant (2023)

Community Solar Farm approved (2025)

WARMER group alerting residents to energy issues

Hosting 'Warmer Crowhurst' events

Assessing housing in Crowhurst for EPC rating (WARMER)

CREATION OF NEW HABITATS IN THE PARISH

Protected Meadows (5) including Muriel's Meadow

Planted the rare Black Poplar trees in the parish (2020)

New native species hedgerow planted on Recreation Ground (2023)

Community Orchard planted (2023)

The King's Coronation Community Orchard Project, planted (2025)

New native species hedgerow (1km) to be planted on solar farm (2025)

COMMUNITY and 'CITIZEN SCIENCE' EFFORTS IN THE PARISH - started in 1999!

- 1) Community purchase of Quarry Wood in 1999.
- 2) Water analysis of Powdermill Stream, with Strandliners – on-going
- 3) Dark Skies Initiative, taking readings, and seeking award – on-going
- 4) Managing the five designated 'Roadside Verges' now on Planning maps
- 5) Managing 'Muriel's Meadow' for biodiversity – on-going
- 6) Reviewing the churchyard trees (2025)
- 7) Pond quantum in parish assessed for nature conservation
- 8) New MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) area on Recreation Ground (2025)
- 9) Taking responsibility for a large section of biodiverse Combe Valley within the parish (including the Attenuation Pond)

BIODIVERSITY AUDIT OF THE PARISH

Having a comprehensive Biodiversity Audit, regularly updated from 2020.

Surveyed the flora and fauna (with lists of species) – on-going

Assessed the Ancient Woodlands of the parish

Assessing the Management of the Powdermill Stream – on-going

Species lists (flora) of the Churchyard published

Gaining TPOs including TPO status for the 1066 Yew Tree (2024)

List of CAVAT-assessed trees in parish

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Background

This Biodiversity Audit has been produced for the 'Crowhurst Climate & Ecological Emergency Working Party' (CCEEW) as part of their commitment to Rother District Council (RDC) since declaring their own Climate Emergency in September 2019.¹⁵ The CCEEW declared the following resolution at their meeting on 21st October 2019

'Crowhurst Parish Council declares a climate and ecological emergency and aspires to be carbon neutral by 2030 taking into account both production and consumptions emissions'.

The CCEEW Working Document: Draft of 1 Nov. 2019 is working to the above resolution: One of its aims *was 'to encourage and support the community of Crowhurst to increase biodiversity.'*

The Crowhurst Parish Council (CPC) had already published their 'Environment Description' within their Neighbourhood Plan¹⁶ in which one of their stated aims under '*3.4 Environment and Heritage*' was '*Policy EH3 To protect and enhance the biodiversity, nature and wildlife in the village.*'

This audit first quantifies the physical parish, then looks at the

- Habitat Assets, then
- Species Assets, then
- Protected areas and species within the parish; then
- Finally the effects of climate change on the habitats and species.

¹⁵ Crowhurst Parish Website <http://www.crowhurstpc.co.uk/> (retrieved 5 March 2020). In September 2019, Rother District Council declared a climate emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030.

¹⁶ Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan 2025
<https://www.crowhurstpc.co.uk/neighbourhoodplan/crowhurst-neighbourhood-plan> (retrieved 27 Oct 2025).

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Gold standard

Crowhurst Parish Council (CPC) are proud to have had the first iteration of this Biodiversity Audit acknowledged by Rother as a gold standard.. Rother said that the CPC was a 'front runner for RDC' and that its Neighbourhood Plan was 'Green to the Core' (Cllr Susan Prochak, MBE 8.8.25 video of Committee Meeting).

Its Biodiversity Audit has now moved on significantly. This current audit has come a long way from 124pp to over 300pp with many more subjects covered

1st Iteration 04 May 2020 124pp
2nd Iteration 28 Jan 2022 203pp
3rd iteration 27 Feb 2023
4th iteration 01 Dec 2026 325pp

- The 2nd iteration**

Items
Farms & their influence on nature
Threats to greenspace inc. allocated sites
Tally of Habitat Assets in Crowhurst - net gains & loss
CAVAT Report (commercial value of trees)
Ash Report (state of the disease) inc felling in Jan 22
New TPO of January 2022
New Hazel Dormice data

- This 3rd iteration**

Items
The 30 by 30 campaign
Latest butterfly count
The Crowhurst Community Solar Farm proposal
Dark Skies
Climate Emergency & CEG commitments

- This 4th iteration (Dec 25)**

Items
The loss of TPO380 revealed
Climate Action Plan 2020-2026
NEW SUBJECTS / PAGES
House Martins – a new page
Trees Outside Woodland (TOW) - free mapping.. and Fairy Trees
Single tree gov.uk database on line – explained
The 6 streams of Crowhurst described = 8km
Anthropocene and Forever Chemicals
MOTION for all Rivers: All Rother Rivers supported rights from Rother
MOTION for Trees: 1066 Yew Tree with supported rights from Rother
Crowhurst Solar Farm Approved – SF in numbers - how community benefits
Aerial photos around the parish from 8.8.25
Tree Survey of the Christian Healing Centre June 2025 (20 species)
Survey results of Bryophytes following visit from BS SE Group in Feb 2024

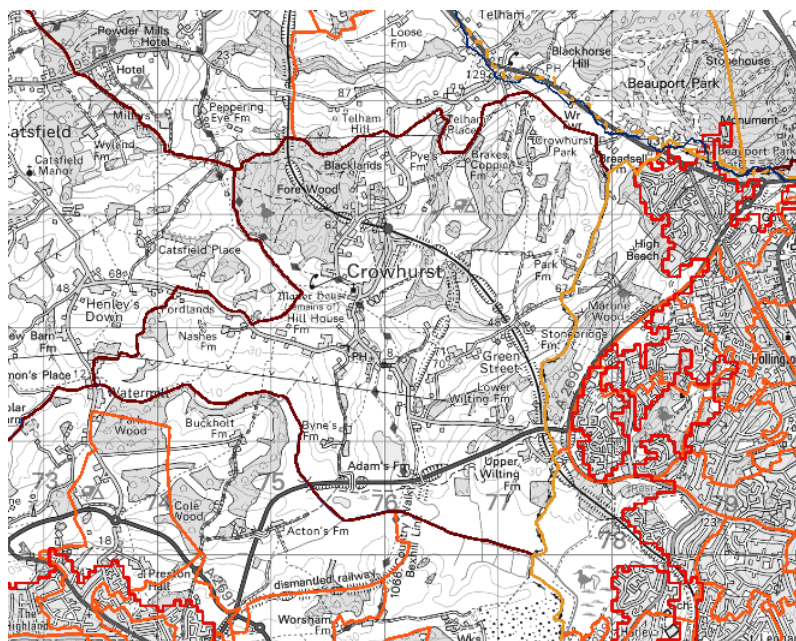
The CPC seeks to maintain that status that other parishes have sought to attain.

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Overview

Ecologically the parish is dominated by one very large block of woodland in the NW (Fore Wood) bounded in part by the parish boundary, and by the railway line (a linear green corridor) which traverses the parish in a sigmoid shape entering in the NW and exiting in the SE. Farmland comprises a lot of the parish and wetland south of the Link Road. Small woodlands, shaws and broken hedgerows are scattered around the parish as patches.

The east of the parish is buffered somewhat by the countryside along the west side of Queensway (as the Marline Woods SSSI); Queensway marking the westerly development of St Leonards on Sea.



© magic.gov.uk © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. Screen shot taken from www.magic.gov.uk by with permission from MAGIC support 6.4.13 Alexandra Hajok (retrieved 08 Feb 2020), showing some different colours representing the curtilages with adjacent parishes.

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Major Environmental Impacts (1900 & 2015)

The parish has been cut in two twice, once by the London-Hastings railway line (early 1900), and second by the Link Road (2015) creating three parish parcels (E,W,S). The southern part is now south of the Link Road – details further on.

The ecological effect has been significant as the continuity of habitats has been severed, even in the Link road where attempts have been made to '*soften*' the impact and establish some continuity of habitat across the carriageways.

In the future it is likely to be impacted by development from the east.

The following photograph shows the significant environmental impact of the construction of the Link Road in 2015. The route went through meadows and ancient woodlands in the Combe Valley, missing the Combe Valley SSSI and but going through a small piece of Marline Woods SSSI.



© Getmapping plc © East Sussex County Council, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. (retrieved 08 Feb 2020). The satellite image above showing the loss of habitat across the southern part of the parish represented by the cleared land. The pink routes are footpaths, the green existing and new vehicular, tarmaced routes, and the blue route is a new pedestrian route created. More photographs are at Technical Appendix WM01.

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Combe Valley Countryside Park

The southern part of the parish is, as stated above, now land south of the Link Road, as shown below south of the Link Road (shown in green) and the parish boundary (in blue). The surface drain-off from the carriageways north and south has the potential to impact habitats and waterways in Crowhurst.



The parish has had imposed upon it part of the Combe Valley Countryside Park which has been developed as a mitigation area as a result of the Link Road.

The construction of the Link Road through the south of the parish of Crowhurst has been the subject of an, as yet un-finished and un-published report.¹⁷ This has tentatively calculated that 12.14ac or 4.92ha. The calculations are shown in this screenshot taken from the report; the report is written by this consultant which is why a quote can be made from it. However, it would appear that the figure may well be an underestimate, as the satellite photograph shown on the previous page indicates many areas where the width is greater than 22.5m. The loss should be balanced by the mitigation measures and the new wetland areas around the site, and away from the site which have been extensive and may provide an ecological gain.

It is worth drawing attention to how RDC summarise the parish (rather well) including the following plan which shows BAP habitats. It is important to note that Crowhurst has collective responsibility for all the interconnected habitats with its neighbouring parishes.

¹⁷ Feltwell, J. 2023. An Assessment of the Ecological Delivery of the Bexhill-Hastings Link Road (BHLR) – renamed the Combe Valley Way, East Sussex, TN33 draft of January 2023. 74pp.

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This description refers to the Combe Haven Valley Landscape Character Area.

'Crowhurst is a fragmented settlement which straddles the High Weald AONB's southern boundary. It is bisected centrally by the Powdermill stream, a tributary of Combe Haven and the whole area is within the Combe Haven Valley landscape character area. It is characterised by small winding High Wealden valleys and much of the central and southern areas have drainage issues and are susceptible to flooding. SuDS will be an important consideration alongside any development that takes place. In addition there are possible land stability issues that will require further investigation. The surrounding area is well wooded, including the ecologically rich Ghyll woodland, which is also an important character feature of the High Weald AONB. Crowhurst hosts the District's sole RSPB reserve – Fore Wood, one of the largest deciduous Wealden woodlands which has been modified by a long history of coppicing, felling and associations with former iron industry: the latter dating from Roman times. Parts of it are designated SSSI and SNCI and the area is a groundwater source protection zone. Other areas of ancient woodland in the vicinity include Rackwell Wood to the east and Whitefield Wood to the south-east. The Powdermill valley is interspersed by a series of historic field boundaries that serve to define the medieval pattern of small irregular fields that are interspersed with woodland, which is typical of the High Weald. There are numerous ponds scattered across the landscape and some large geologically significant sandstone outcrops (a 'special to Sussex' feature) abutting the village to the south-east. There are numerous species recorded as present in the area, including dormice (multiple records), grass-snakes, and butterflies (including Small Heath and White Admiral). Development may take the opportunity to provide dormice boxes and the appropriate sort of habitat opportunities set out in Table 1. The south of the village abuts the Combe Valley Countryside Park which stretches all the way to the sea, connects with Hastings and Bexhill, and is home to several BAP priority habitats. The northern section of the CVCP is a dedicated 'wildlife zone' and there are opportunities to enhance this role, including by means of connectivity to the rich network of habitats north in the wider Parish. The area is also a designated 'Biodiversity Opportunity Area' (Combe Haven and Marline BOA) which identifies the following opportunities: wetland habitat management, restoration and creation; floodplain restoration and reconnection; access improvements and opportunities associated with development.' © RDC (keeping the original AONB, rather than later AONL)

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How much of Crowhurst Parish was lost to the Link Road?

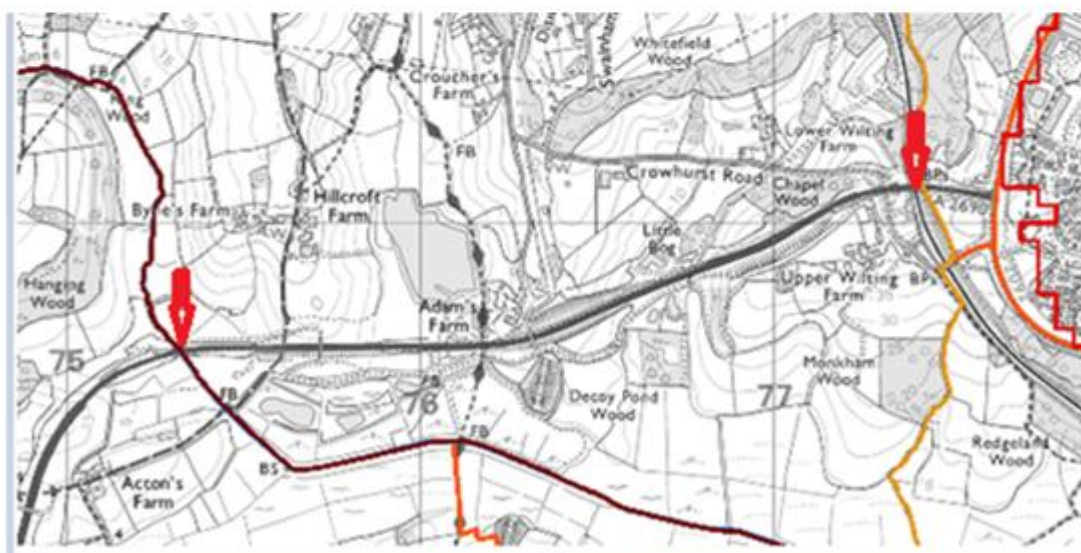
The Link Road within the civil parish of Crowhurst is that section from the Railway Line on the west of Queensway to where it intersects with the parish boundary of Catsfield before Acton's Farm. This length is ca. 2,184m⁴.

The width of the carriageways is about 15m, but where there are embankments this rises to about 30m. An average of the two is 22.5m.

Thus the loss to Crowhurst is 2,184m x 22.5m = 49,140sqm or 12.14ac (4.92ha).

Applying land prices for grazing land ⁵ at £4,400 to £5,500 per acre (say £5,000) comes out at £60,000 for 12ac.

This is 12ac of land that Crowhurst has lost from its total quantum of greenfield land in the parish. It is greenspace that has been permanently lost.



© Ordnance Survey, and © magic.gov.uk, accessed 11 Nov 2019

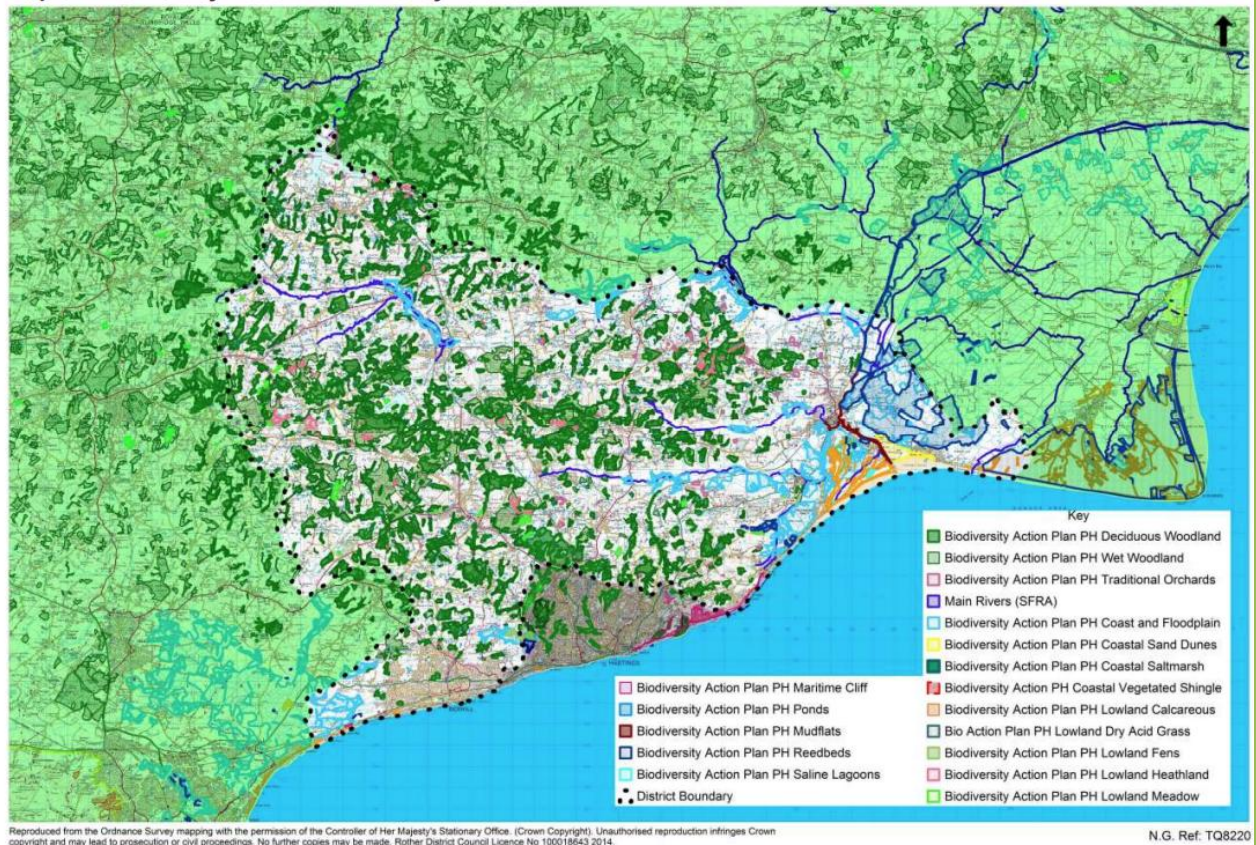
Length of Queensway to Catsfield Boundary is 2,184m (between the red arrows)

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BIODIVERISTY Action Plan Priority Habitats in ROTHER

An overview of the natural history of Crowhurst from RDC ¹⁸:

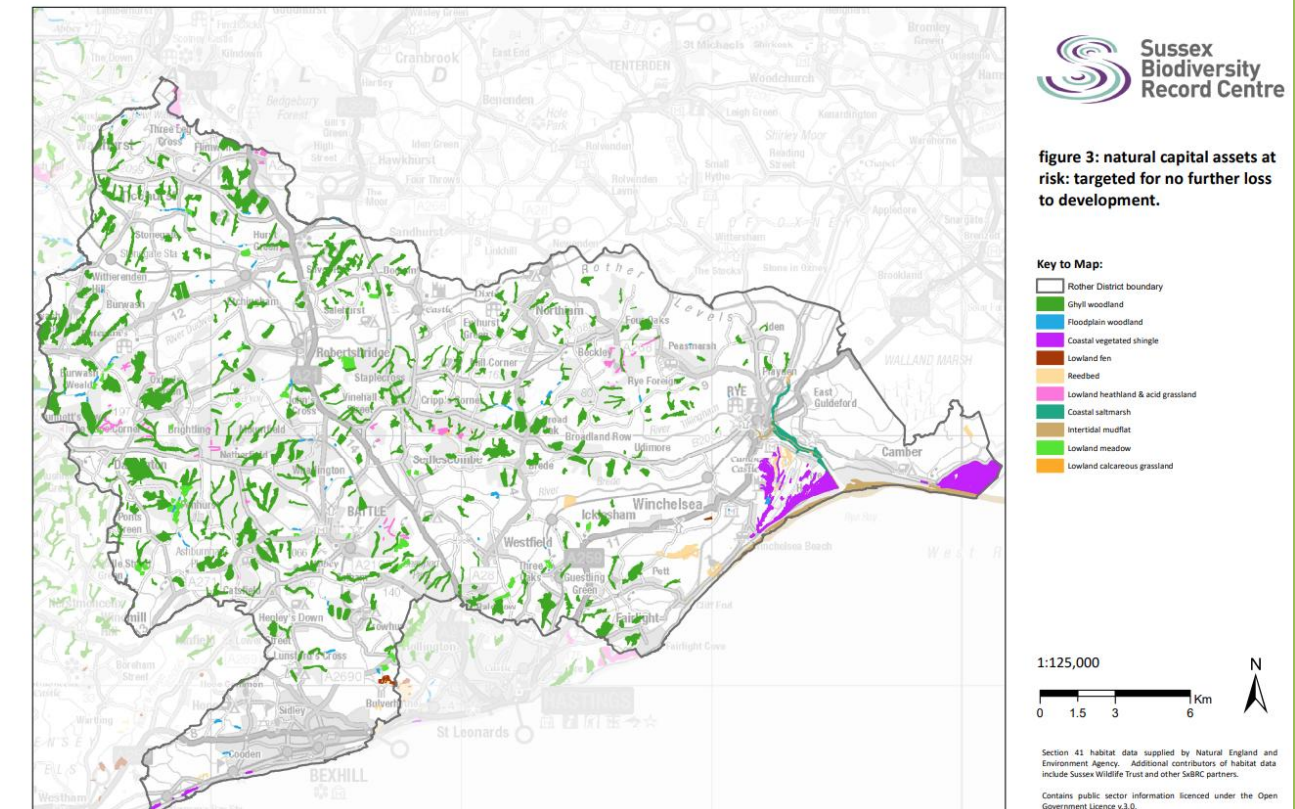
Map 3: Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats



¹⁸ Rother District Council, 2016. Development and Site Allocations Local Plan. Green Infrastructure, Background Paper Addendum. November 2016 (states October on inside cover) 49pp. <https://www.rother.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Green-Infrastructure-Background-Paper-Addendum-Nov16.pdf> (accessed 10 Dec 2021)

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BIODIVERISTY Green Areas in Rother



In conservation terms the parish is dominated by three SSSIs, all of which have been closely affected by development over the years. The three SSSIs are shown in the following plan marked in green.

The railway line was constructed before the Fore Wood SSSI was designated, but it now goes past and through the woodlands in the NW of the parish. Part of the Combe Valley SSSI is now within the parish of Crowhurst, and the Marline Valley SSSI is on the border of the parish and squeezed in between the railway line and Queensway.

The most relevant point in the plan below are the faint purple rings radiating out from each SSSI at regular distances from each SSSI. These are called Impact Risk Zones (IRZ). It is therefore clear that all parts of the parish of Crowhurst are covered by these areas of influence associated with each SSSI. There are no parts of the parish that are not in an area subject to development control consideration.

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HEAT MAPS have been produced by the LNRS – Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

(showing relative numbers of species)

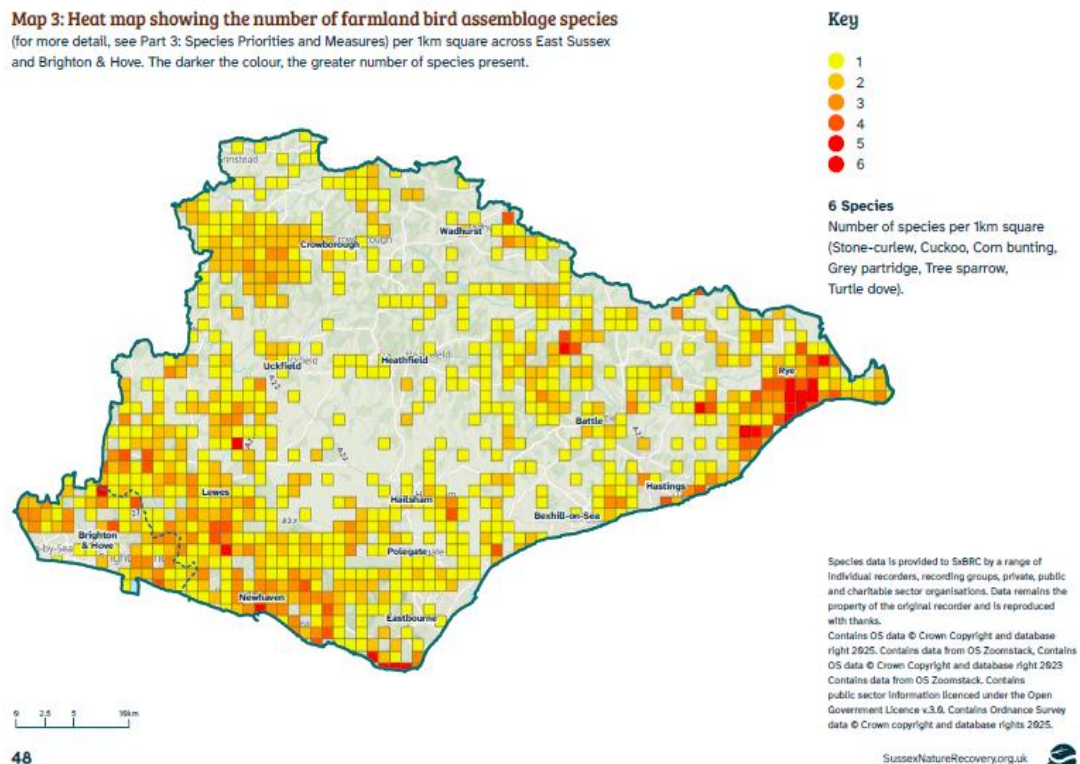
More species are found the in RED areas compared to the grey of pale yellow areas (based on 1km squares). Check out Crowhurst SE of Battle, showing grey and yellow squares. i.e. not in the greatest assemblage area for species - Rye area is!

This plan was put out for consultation in late 2025, and mostly derives from local records sent in to the local records centre by people, scientists and naturalists.

East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Local Nature Recovery Strategy: Part 1

Nature in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove - description

Map 3: Heat map showing the number of farmland bird assemblage species
(for more detail, see Part 3: Species Priorities and Measures) per 1km square across East Sussex and Brighton & Hove. The darker the colour, the greater number of species present.



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Climate Action Plan 2023-26 ¹⁹

Chasing pollution and looking after people's well-being

Rother will be able to assist the parish in cleaning up Powdermill Stream, as per the Council's aims: cleaning up pollution and creating a better environment for people's well-being. As Rother state their **Outcome 4 is 'Nature will be in recovery across the district'**. Let's hope so. Their outcomes are listed below: **Table WM02**



Biodiversity and Land Use

Outcome 4 Nature will be in recovery across the district.

Objective 4.1 Halt land and marine species decline.									
Action	KPI	Co-benefit 1	Co-benefit 2	Co-benefit 3	Cost	Carbon impact	Delivery	Lead	Progress
Host annual clean seas event to increase public awareness in PFAS, pollution, local action, partner showcasing	Annual community event	Environment - reduced flood risk	Society - community brought together	Environment - increased biodiversity	£	Low	Ongoing	Climate Team, Partner Organisations	To Start
Work in partnership with relevant organisations to improve the health of the water environments in the district	Convene or actively participate in a partnership to improve the health of the water environments in the district	Environment - increased biodiversity	Environment - reduced flood risk	Society - community brought together	££	Medium	Ongoing	Climate Team, Partner Organisations	In Progress
Work in partnership with relevant organisations to improve land management practices across the district	Convene or actively participate in a partnership to improve land management practices in the district	Environment - increased biodiversity	Environment - improved green spaces	Society - community brought together	££	Medium	Ongoing	Climate Team, Partner Organisations	To Start
Support schemes to remove negative human influence from the landscape i.e. plastic, tree tubes, litter, rubbish	Rother Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Grant to fund initiatives	Environment - improved green spaces	Environment - increased biodiversity	Society - community brought together	£	Medium	Ongoing	Climate Team, Partner Organisations	To Start

tipping, pollution sources etc.									
Develop a Green Asset Management Plan	Green Asset Management Plan adopted by Council	Economy - improved business efficiency	Society - improved public sector finances	Resilience - security in energy supply (less reliance on international imports)	£	Medium	25/26	Asset Management Team, Climate Team, Policy and Projects Team, Parks Team	To Start
Introduce conditions to new lease agreements	All new lease agreements from 2024/25 have a Nature Recovery clause	Environment - improved green spaces	Environment - increased biodiversity	Economy - opportunities for skills and training	£	Medium	23/24 - 24/25	Asset Management Team	To Start
Eliminate use of pesticides, herbicides, and peat in council grounds maintenance	Policy Introduced	Environment - increased biodiversity	Environment - improved green spaces	Society - improved public sector finances	£	Low	23/24 - 24/25	Parks Team, Policy and Projects Team	To Start

¹⁹ Climate Action Plan 209223-26. <https://www.rother.gov.uk/climate-emergency/climate-strategy-policies/climate-action-plan-2023-26>. (accessed 13 Oct 25)

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Audit RDC green assets to provide a baseline for biodiversity	Biodiversity Audit Report	Environment - increased biodiversity	Environment - improved green spaces	Environment - creation of more attractive public spaces	££	Medium	23/24 - 24/25	Climate Team	In Progress
Create a Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for the District	Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan adopted by Council	Environment - improved green spaces	Environment - increased biodiversity	Society - improved public sector finances	££	High	25/26	Climate Team, Planning Team	To Start

Adopt the county-side Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)	Policy Included in new Local Plan	Environment - increased biodiversity	Environment - improved green spaces	Environment - reduced flood risk	£	High	25/26	Climate Team and Planning Policy Team	In Progress
New Local Plan have regard to the LNRS in decision-making through policy	Policy Included in new Local Plan	Environment - increased biodiversity	Environment - improved green spaces	Environment - reduced flood risk	£	High	25/26	Planning Team	In Progress
New Local Plan - Require 20% Biodiversity Net Gain through policy	Policy Included in new Local Plan	Environment - increased biodiversity	Economy - opportunities for local investment	Environment - improved green spaces	£	High	25/26	Planning Team	In Progress
Deliver on Bexhill Tree Planting Strategy	KPIs from Bexhill Tree Planting Strategy are met	Health & wellbeing - reduced air pollution	Environment - creation of more attractive public spaces	Environment - improved green spaces	££	Medium	Ongoing	Parks Team, Climate Team, Partner Organisations	In Progress
Develop District-wide Tree Strategy	Tree Strategy adopted by Council	Environment - increased biodiversity	Environment - reduced flood risk	Health & wellbeing - reduced air pollution	££	High	23/24 - 24/25	Climate Team, Planning Team, Parks Team	To Start
Work in partnership with Town and Parish Councils to carry out biodiversity audits and create Management Plans to enhance biodiversity and increase carbon sequestration in parks and open spaces	50% of Town and Parish Councils enhancing their assets for biodiversity and carbon sequestration	Society - community brought together	Economy - opportunities for skills and training	Economy - opportunities for local investment	£	Medium	Ongoing	Climate Team, Partner Organisations	In Progress
Designate a proportion of the RDC estate to	10% of RDC estate designated to 'wilding'	Environment -	Environment - reduced flood risk	Health & wellbeing -	£	Medium	Ongoing	Estates Team, Parks Team, Climate Team	To Start

'wilding' and nature recovery		increased biodiversity		reduced air pollution					
New Local Plan - use Natural England standards and guidelines to improve green infrastructure	Policy Included in new Local Plan	Health & wellbeing - reduced air pollution	Economy - opportunities for local investment	Environment - improved green spaces	£	High	25/26	Planning Policy Team	In Progress

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The ringed ‘Impact Risk Zones’ of influence set at distances from SSSIs and other protected areas.

Developers take note.

Natural England have provided the following information regarding the interpretation of these purple rings, for the benefit of parishioners who wish to see control exercised, and developers and consultants who wish to understand the constraints on development:

‘Paragraph (v) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are responsible for consulting with Statutory Consultees if a planning application has the potential to impact on a feature within their particular remit <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/595/contents/made>. Natural England are statutory consultees for planning applications which may potentially affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Important Wetland Area covered by the Ramsar Convention and Natura 2000 sites, such as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA).

The onus is upon the Local Planning Authorities (as the competent authority in the planning process) to decide whether a development proposal is ‘in or likely to affect a SSSI’. To help them assess whether Natural England should be consulted, the Local Planning Authority use Natural England’s recently published set of mapped Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for SSSI/SAC/SPA/Ramsar sites. These can be accessed at www.magic.gov.uk and can be used by Local Planning Authorities and developers to consider whether a proposed development is likely to affect a designated site and determine whether they will need to consult Natural England to seek advice on the nature of any potential impacts and how they might be avoided or mitigated. For guidance on how to access and use the Impact Risk Zones see our [summary information sheet](#) and [questions and answers](#). Further information is available on the archived Natural England website: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605090108/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/default.aspx>. You can find the reasons why the SSSIs have been designated by clicking on the following website: <http://www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/sssi/search.cfm>.’

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Anthropocene and ‘Forever Chemicals’ – both of which affect us all.

We are all now living in the **Anthropocene** era, and Crowhurst has plenty of evidence. This describes a man-made decline of nature (flora, fauna and habitats) that has occurred during our lifetimes. It has been caused by a variety of things: habitat loss, global warming and continuous cocktail of chemicals used in our environment. Some examples:

- GLOBAL WILDLIFE – catastrophic 73% decline according to WWF. ²⁰
- ALL BIRDS – RSPB say that since 1980 one in every six birds have been lost. ²¹ and 600m breeding birds lost over last 50 yrs according to 2021 study.
- ALL BIRDS - Natural History Museum says 2/3rds decline since 1995. ²²
- HOUSE MARTINS declining 47%
- MARSH TITS declined 80% since 1960s ²³
- WILLOW TITS declined 96% since 1960s
- TURTLE DOVES declined 99% in UK ²⁴
- BUMBLEBEES – 22.5% decline in 2024. ²⁵

Forever Chemicals is a phrase that describes a huge range of man-made chemicals that are now in the environment, that are never seen, but are persistent in the environment and are likely culprits for some of the wildlife decline. They are highly likely to be in our skin. ²⁶ They do not occur naturally in nature and over 10,000 are known. They are sometimes called PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances - which describes their chemistry).

Forever Chemicals are highly likely to be all over Crowhurst. Testing is needed.

The evidence comes from Germany where between 2014-2017 scientists placed air traps across a range of habitats throughout the country and analysed what was dropping out of the air. The results were that 18 agrochemicals were recorded. In a more recent survey in 2021, 69 air suction traps recorded 109 different agrichemicals.

²⁰ World Wildlife Fund, 2024. Catastrophic 73% decline in the average age of global wildlife populations in just 50 years reveals a ‘system in peril’.

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/press-releases/catastrophic-73-decline-in-the-average-size-of-global-wildlife-populations-in-just-50-years-reveals-a-system-in-peril> (accessed 30 Sept 2025).

²¹RSPB, declines, disease and dangers – the issues facing birds. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/issues-facing-birds> (accessed 30 Sept 2025) quoting the State of Nature Report, 2023, and mentioning that 70% of the UK is farmland, and that what goes on there affects birds.

²²? Natural History Museum, 2024. A third of surveyed UK bird species have declined since the 1990s. <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/news/2024/may/third-surveyed-uk-bird-species-declined-since-1990s.html> (accessed 30 Sept 2025).

²³ Dr Richard Broughton, Linnean Society, October 2025.

²⁴ RSPB Mail shot, 29 Nov.2025

²⁵ Bumblebee Conservation Trust, 2025

²⁶ As DDT was regarded as being within us in the 1970s, widely used worldwide, but no deaths recorded due to DDT in our tissues.

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Most were fungicides, as well as insecticides in the air; it did not reflect those chemicals in the soil or water, so the number of chemicals around is thought to be much higher. Neonicotinoids ('neonics' – as known in the press) are insecticides, and represent a quarter of all insecticides used worldwide. It is important to ensure that insect pollinators are protected from these chemicals.

It is believed that the situation in Germany can be replicated in other countries with intensive agriculture. This cocktail mix of chemicals is likely to be in the countryside and city near you.

GLYSOPHATE was found in most of the samples – the names of the many other chemicals are not household names yet, such as AMPA, HCB, Folpet and Penddimethalin.

The author²⁷ stated that 60-80% of people in the USA have glyphosate in their bodies.

The issue for entomologists is that their pet subjects, insects are in decline, and they are trying to find out why. This article *'The Chemical Cocktail Hour: a roundup of environmental pollutants and insect declines'*²⁸ suggests that it is not only any one of these forever chemicals is causing death, but that sublethal effects and the combination of two or more chemicals makes a lethal cocktail that kills insects.

It is important to maintain good populations of insects to support birds and mammals in the food chain and thus to conserve biodiversity.

Without insects it has been postulated, there would be no life for man on earth.

Crowhurst is an agricultural parish. You have been warned.

Biobeads

CEG objected to ESCC in November 2025 with regard to the spillage of biobeads²⁹ into the environment (down rivers) and into the English Channel from sewage plants. According to The Guardian³⁰ 84% of SSSIs have been found with these biobeads (or nurdles). The pollution has been widespread over the last decade or so. Dr Kristina

²⁷ Reynolds, S. 2025. The Chemical Cocktail Hour: A roundup of environmental pollutants and insect declines. ANTENNA 49(2) 59-68.

²⁸ loc.cit.

²⁹ Biobeads are small plastic beads used in sewage farms to reduce toxic pollution. They work because they have a large surface area on which the toxins are affixed. Once used for cleaning water they are themselves cleaned and used again. For some reason there has been the release of millions of these beads and they have turned up on Sussex and Kent beaches. They have also entered the food chain and SSSIs. Crowhurst has three SSSIs. Sodomkova has worked a great deal on this subject with Strandliners on behalf of the CPC.

³⁰ The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/nov/26/plastic-nurdles-found-at-uk-sites-of-special-scientific-interest>

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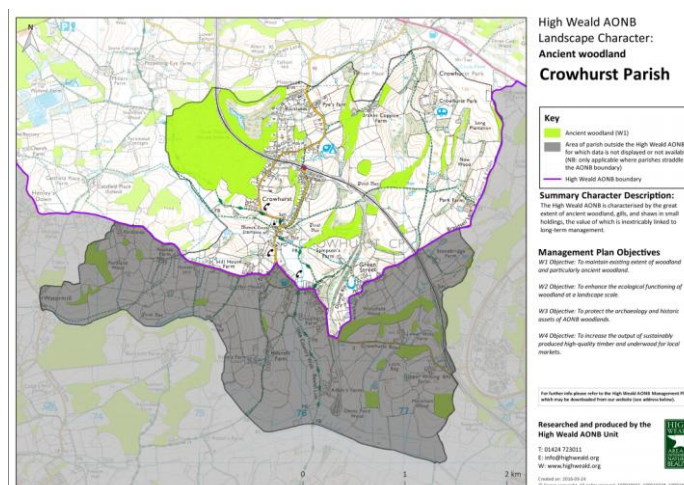
HABITAT ASSETS

- **Ancient Woodlands**
- **Fore Wood**
- **Hedgerows**
- **Medieval Field Systems**
- **Ancient Meadows**
- **Sandstone Outcrops**
- **Ponds and Springs**
- **Streams**

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Ancient Woodlands

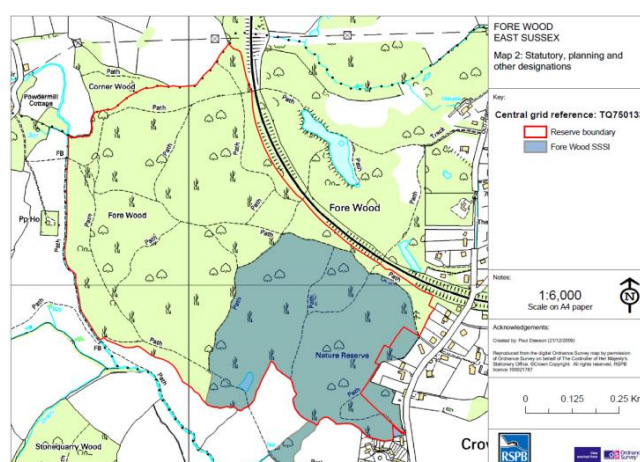
The following shows more detail on the Ancient Woodlands (showing in a lime green) within the AONL part of the parish. Fore Wood is the major block of woodland, with other fragments to the east and south east. Note there are more ancient woodlands outside the AONL, but within the parish to the southeast (shaded grey).



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RSPB Fore Wood

Fore Wood plays a prominent part in the parish of Crowhurst occupying the north west corner of the parish. Part of the whole Fore Wood (55ha) – which straddles the railway line - is the SSSI part (21.5ha) which is the south eastern part on the south side of the railway.³¹



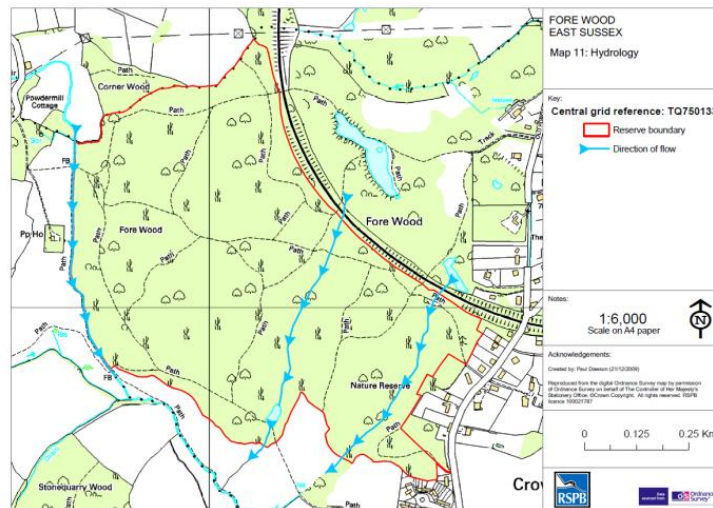
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³¹ Daw, A. & Twydell, M., 2016. RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016-2026. 55pp

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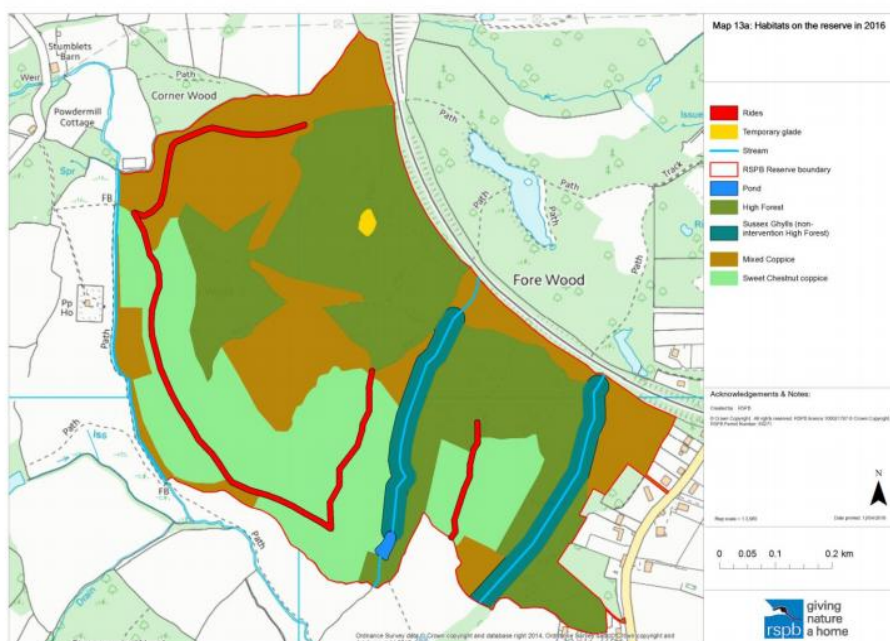
Fore Wood continued....

The following plan shows how the railway line bisects the woodlands, part of which is the SSSI. This plan neatly shows the water course and lake within the woodland.



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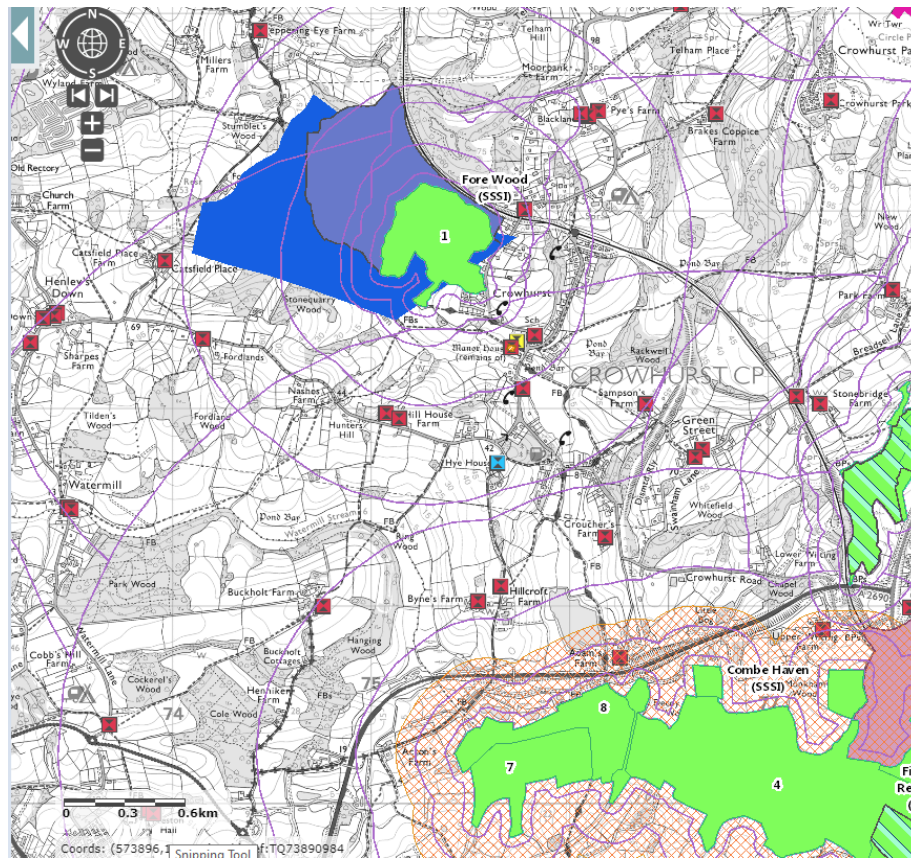
The following plan shows rides (in red), high forest (dark green), mixed coppice (light green), ponds (blue).



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RSPB Fore Wood (showing different parts of the wood)



© Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 10002077. (Retrieved 08 Feb 2020) (retrieved 27 March 2020). The red squares are Listed Buildings. The blue square is the church. The different colours of Fore Wood represent different habitat types.

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Ancient Woodlands

The following plan highlights the presence of ghylls³² in Crowhurst. These are steep gulleys in the topography that are generally very humid. The ecological significance is that they support bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) of which Crowhurst has a number of species. The following woods in Crowhurst are all Ancient Woodlands.

Table WM03 Ancient Woodlands in the parish

Name of Ancient wood	Size (ha)
'Round Wood' N of Railway Line	1.71
Brakes Coppice Wood (East)	4.59
Brakes Coppice Wood (West)	11.86
Brokes Gill	2.26
Chapel Wood	2.71
Crowhurst Park Wood (East)	0.47
Crowhurst Park Wood (West)	2.48
Decoy Pond Wood	1.91
Disused railway line wood	1.47
Fordland Wood	4.25
Fore Wood (N of Railway Line)	15.66
Fore Wood (S of Railway Line)	59.11 (RSPB Reserve is 20.9ha)
Little Bog Wood	0.63
Monkham Wood	3.87
Quarry Wood	1.8ha 4.5ac ³³
Rackwell Wood	4.96
Whitefield Wood	9.42

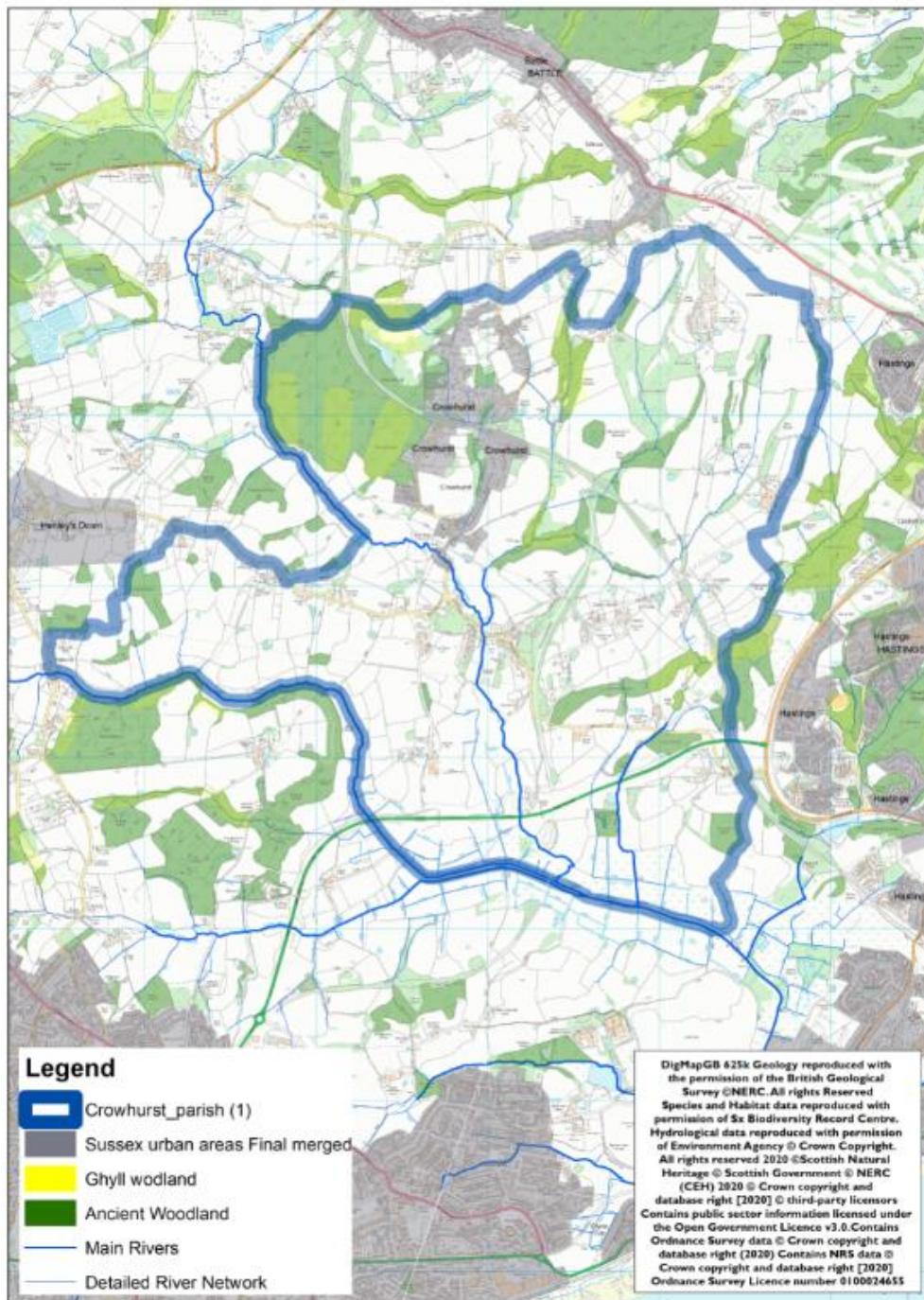
TOTAL ha.....129.16ha

³² Alternatively spelt as gill or ghyll. 'A deep rocky cleft or ravine, usually wooded and forming the course of a stream. A brook or rivulet 1625' ex. Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. – which neatly sums up ecology and topography of Fore Wood.

³³ According to Paul Johnson, Volunteer Warden pgcrow@yahoo.com

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Woods as a percentage of the parish as a whole: about 15%

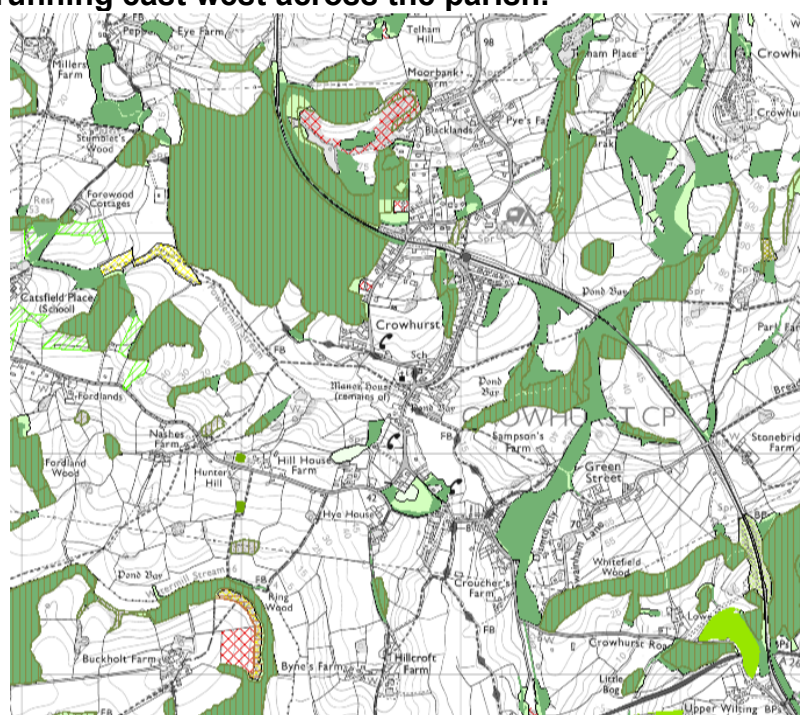
Crowhurst Ghyll & Ancient woodland

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© John Feltwell Taken in June 1993, looking NW, showing Fore Wood to the north of the photograph, the curve of the railway line, and the three rows of woodlands running east west across the parish.



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© John Feltwell June 1993 showing the woods and coppices of the parish, looking NW. Note the curve of the railway line, and how there are three swathes of woodland across the parish – good for connectivity: N-S: Rackwell Wood, Whitefield Wood and Chapel Wood. Note that this image was taken long before The Link Road was built, thus original fields and hedgerows are shown in the bottom third of the photograph.

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© John Feltwell Another view of much of the parish from the east of Queensway, also showing the extent of flooding in the Marline Valley to the south. The continuity of woodlands is good.



© John Feltwell, the village from Crowhurst Road, April 2020

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Continuity of woodland habitat

Continuity is good in the parish, in a N-S and E-W direction, but there are still plenty of gaps to fill.

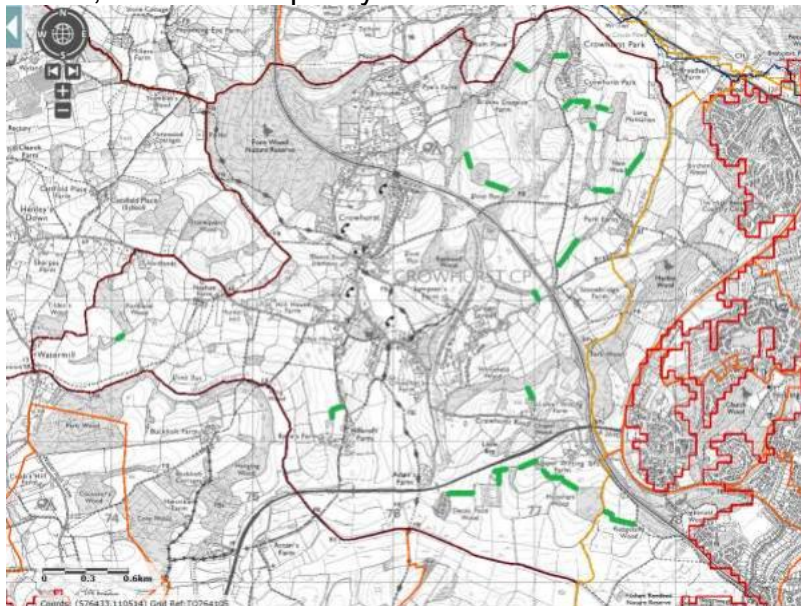
A fox could walk under cover from the NW to SE of the parish within woodland, i.e. from Fore Wood to Queensway (thanks to the railway) as per the following:

Fore Wood is connected via the green corridor that is the railway line eastwards through Broke's Wood east of Station Road, and thus via the railway line east and then south into Rackwell Wood via the 'dismantled railway' line to the south end of Swainham Lane: then eastwards via Whitefield Wood, across the current railway line and across to Queensway.

There is good connectivity with the dismantled railway line which goes northwards up to Crowhurst Park in the NE.

Generally speaking the parish is blessed with a good range of woods – nearly all Ancient Woodlands. However, the SW around the promitory of Hillcroft Farm there are few woodlands.

This following plan which shows, in green, the possible areas of woodland that could be planted so as to close gaps in existing hedgerows and woodlands. It does not show the only areas, there will be plenty of others.



© magic.gov.uk © Ordnance Survey © Wildlife Matters
(this also appeared in the Neighbourhood Plan of 2019)

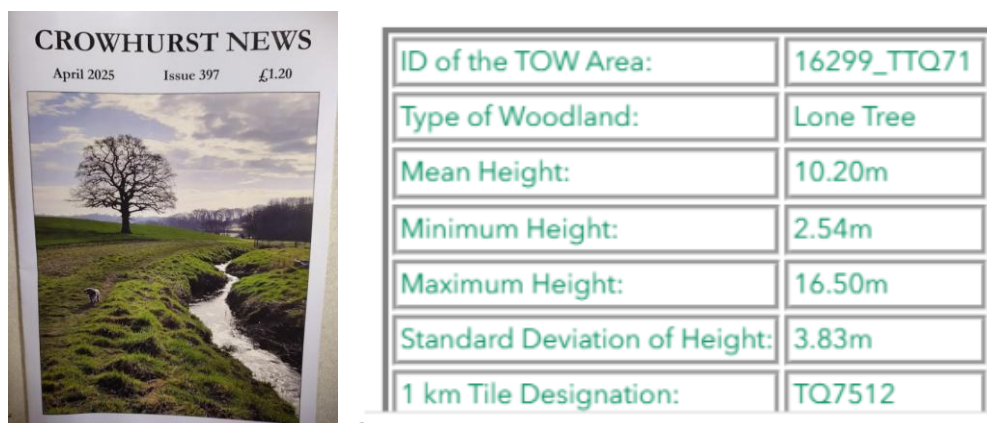
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Trees Outside Woodland (TOW)**Single tree database released 7 April 2025³⁴ Eye in the Sky**

The Government, not content in mapping all the important woodlands in the county, have now mapped all the trees that were never within those woodlands when mapped (they may have been in woodlands years ago, before woodlands were systematically felled about 30 years ago). Readers will be pleasantly surprised to learn that all the trees in the parish over 3m high have now been mapped, to an accuracy of 0.5m by satellites.

This public map is known as TOW for it shows all 'Trees Outside Woodland' and all overlapping trees from existing woodlands and hedgerows. There has always been a gap in the countryside between known woodlands (e.g Fore Wood, Rackwell) since these have already been mapped by e.g. magic.gov.uk. This release from Forest Research on 7 April 2025 has come about because various bodies have pooled their forensic photographic information to create breath-taking information about trees, bushes, hedgerows current to 2023.

The bodies concerned are Lidar, TomTom, Maxar, NASA, Esri and USGS. This has put your Tree Warden mostly out of a job, for all the single trees have now been plotted and measured, for instance the single tree shown on the cover of CN Issue 397. Open the map and right click on the tree as shown on the cover, and it comes up with all the data below. What it does not know is the species of tree, in this case an oak. So your Tree Warden is not exactly out of a job. And it gives no information on 'Fairy Trees'³⁵ such as this Cover tree. That is another story.



³⁴ Forest Research 2025 <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/trees-outside-woodland-map/>

³⁵ 'Fairy Trees' are what country folk like to call isolated trees that are frequently found in the landscape. There are a number in Crowhurst, such as the one above. They often arise after a hedgerow has been grubbed out in the past, leaving the tree, or more frequently a line of isolated trees.

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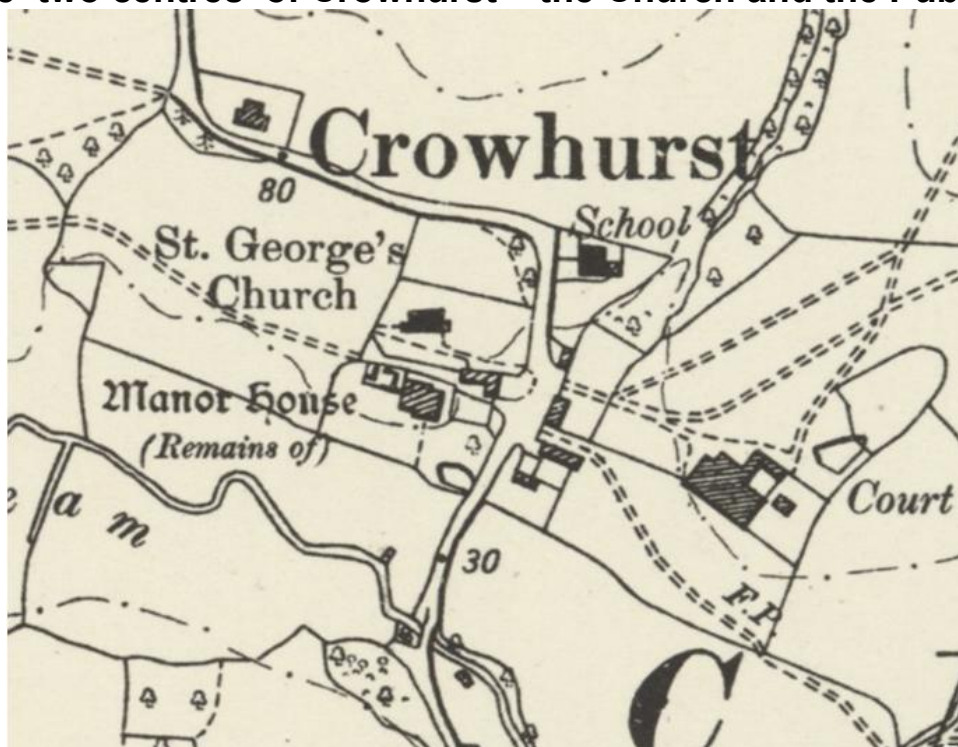
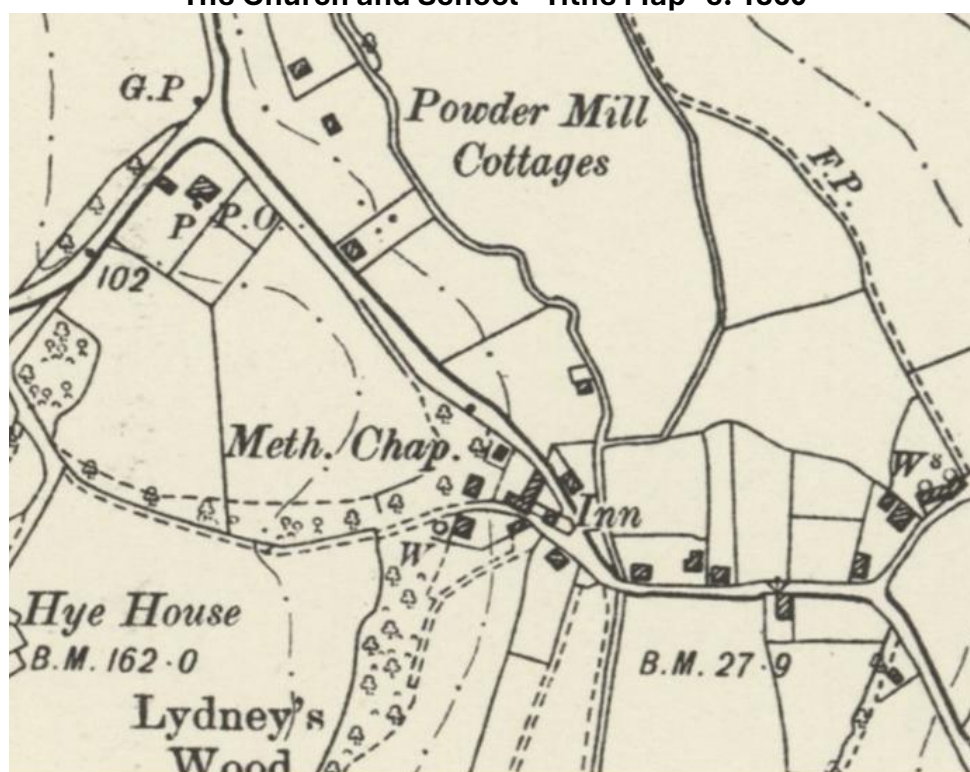
The same tree on the cover of Crowhurst News is shown almost in the centre of the TOW screenshot above, and the Footpath is also shown either side of it.

The 'two centres' of Crowhurst – the Church and the Pub (1)



This is a screenshot showing the two 'centres' of Crowhurst. NORTH is to the top. The dark blue areas are existing woodlands that have already been mapped. The green are hedgerows and the turquoise are groups of trees. This is an Open Government public map and you can zoom in and out. It covers the whole of England. One of the purposes of this public map is to assist in connectivity of habitats and recovery of nature. Now we know where the gaps are in the parish, and we can plan a Management Strategy to close those gaps with native tree and shrub plantings.

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The 'two centres' of Crowhurst – the Church and the Pub (2)**The Church and School Tithe Map c. 1860****The Public House - the Inn ! Tithe Map c. 1860**

It would appear that Lydney's Wood is no more, lost to development (and the resident badgers have not fared too well either with loss of connected habitat)

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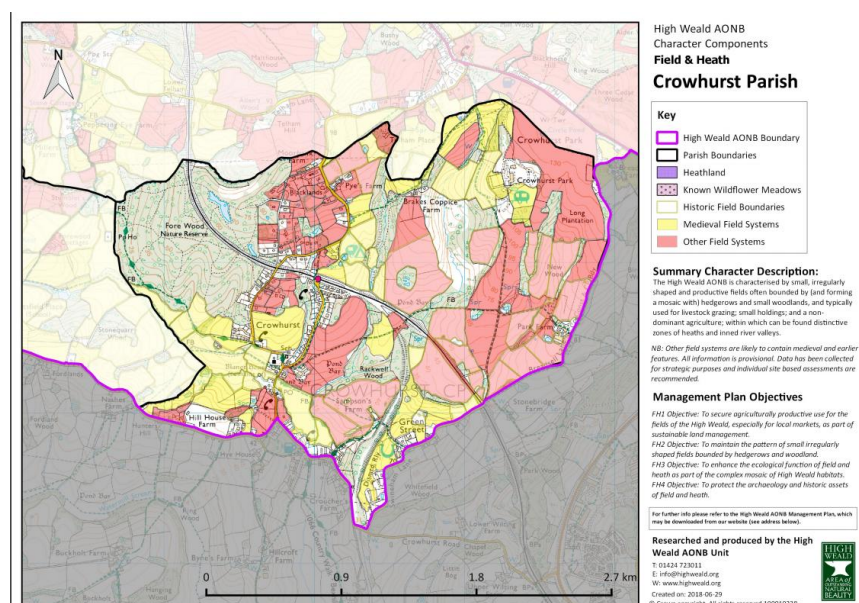
Medieval Field Systems – ancient meadows

According to the AONL unit there are approximately a dozen Medieval Field Systems in the AONL part of the parish as shown in the following plan. These are mostly in the north east of the parish in the Crowhurst Park area, north east of the station, north of Hill House and in Green Street to the east of the disused railway line. There will be other such fields in the non- AONL area to the south.

The plan is labelled ‘Field & Heath’ but for the avoidance of doubt there are no known heathland habitats in the parish (which is a pity as heathlands have excellent biodiversity).

No surveys of the ancient fields and meadows of the parish has ever been carried out, but AONL must be aware of the species status of the medieval field boundaries to have so marked them up.

The following plan from the AONL unit shows the ‘Field & Heath’ areas in the parish (only the AONL area).



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Ancient meadows support high rates of biodiversity.³⁶ Many ancient meadows are likely to be present in parish, and only two have so far been identified.

³⁶ The author of this audit has written John Feltwell (1992). 'Meadows, A History and Natural History'. Alan Sutton. 206pp.

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Table WM04 Meadows

Meadow	Location
Muriel's Meadow	(this is a private nature reserve)
National Trust Meadow	Off Old Fore Wood Lane, at Easting 576071 Northing 113627. ³⁷

in 1089 there were 15 acres of meadows according to the Domesday Bok.³⁸

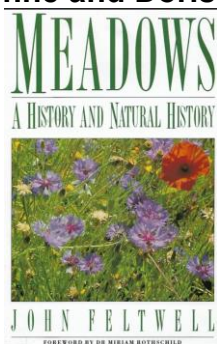


Public domain. Available

from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Crowhurst_Sussex_by_Henry_Harris_Lines_1820.jpg"³⁹ This shows St George's Church and two cottages, and three haystacks. The location could be from Cinderbrook looking northwest. When was the last haystack seen in the parish?



Two donkeys (Bojangles and Ernie) used to manage the vegetation at Muriel's Meadow in 2020-21; these have now been replaced by two sheep called Daphne and Doris.



'Meadows – a history and natural history' by the author.

³⁷ Thanks to Pam Woolley, Crowhurst.

³⁸ Domesday Book <https://opendomesday.org/place/TQ7512/crowhurst/>

³⁹ https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Crowhurst_Sussex_by_Henry_Harris_Lines_1820.jpg (retrieved 31 March 2020).

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Medieval Field Systems – ancient meadows – continued

Here are two photographs from around 1900, probably taken at Nashes' Farm



© Frances and Stephen Royston, Crowhurst, likely to be at Nashes Farm, Crowhurst



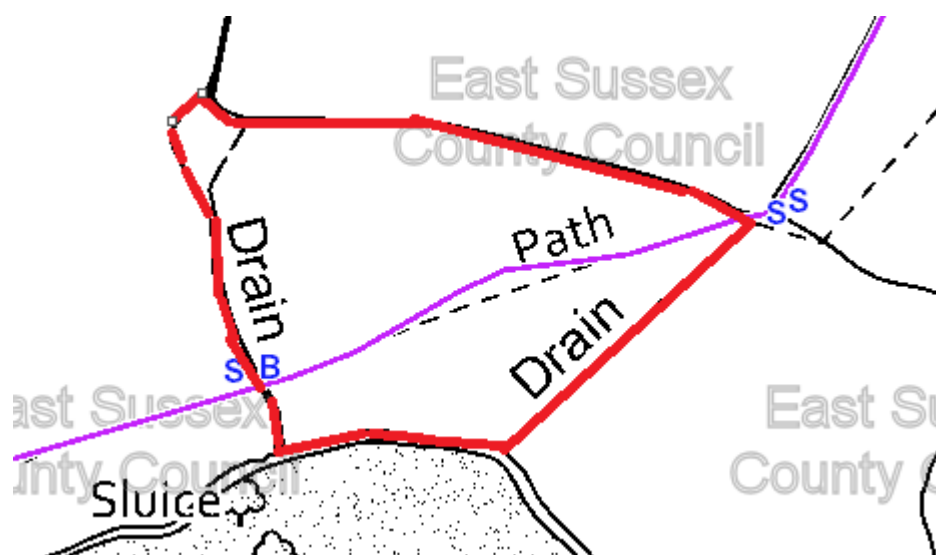
© Frances and Stephen Royston, Crowhurst. A un-named group of parishioners beside a haystack, probably in the village, and likely to have come from Nashes Farm.

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An Ancient Meadow adjacent to Watermill Stream



An ancient meadow in the SW of the parish ('Crowhurst 9' footpath goes right through the middle of it). It shows the characteristic peppering of raised ant nests throughout which is an indicator of diversity and longevity of habitat. As far as is known this meadow has never been surveyed for flora and fauna. It is at TN39 5JB and Map Ref TQ74251154; it is trapezoid in shape and relatively small at 13,089 sqm. Priority is to alert the farmer, and suggest that it is never ploughed as it will lose its biodiversity value overnight.



The red line shows the potential ancient meadow; the purple line shows the footpath that goes through it. North is to the top. S = Stile. B = Bridge. Location as indicated in text above. From Definitive Map. ©ESCC

On a final note it is worth recording that the Christian Healing Centre in Crowhurst has a patch of ant hills which they are now conserving.

01 Dec 2025

Farms – and their influence on nature

The following farms occur in the village. How the farmers worked the land had a profound effect on the 'look' of the countryside and the juxtaposition of the fields, woodlands. Hedgerows and wildlife. Hops used to be grown in the village and some of the architecture is reflective of this period for there are at least four oast houses as indicated below. There are no more hop fields in the village. However, 'hop dogs' still occur, but not presumably in large numbers. 'Hop dogs' was the nickname of caterpillars of comma butterflies whose caterpillars feed on hops.



Cryptic caterpillar of common, and adult comma butterfly

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Table WM04 Farms in Crowhurst

Farm	Notes
Adam's Farm	Ancient farm with old barn and orchard. Some parts dating from 1440
Blacklands Farm	17C restored Grade II listed timber framed farmhouse
Bynes Farm	Early 17C timber framed farmhouse and Romano-British ironworking site. Glamping and holiday cottage let
Crouchers Farm	17C Grade II listed – first mention of Croucher in 1428
Decoy Farm	Working farm
Green Acres Oast , Swainham Lane	
Green Street Farm ⁴⁰	18C Grade II listed building
Hillcroft Farm	Working farm
Horseshoe Farm (as above) - Swainham Lane	private dwelling with some fields
Hye House	
Hye House Farm	18C Grade II listed Georgian mansion. – working farm to 2016
Hyfield Riding School	
Long Walk Farm - Swainham Lane	private dwelling with some fields
Lower Wilting Farm - Crowhurst Road	working farm
Moorbank Farm, Old Forewood Lane	private dwelling with some paddocks
Nashe's Farm –Crowhurst Road	private dwelling with some fields
Oast House, -Crowhurst Road	
Park Farm Swainham Lane	Livery and holiday lets
Pyes Farm Oast	17C or earlier, Grade II listed timber framed farmhouse
Stonebridge Farm and House - Swainham Lane Oast	
Upper Wilting Farm	18C Grade II listed nr ancient bronze age settlement
Wheatcroft Farm - Forewood Lane	livery and equine
Woodside Farm - Swainham Lane	private dwelling with some fields

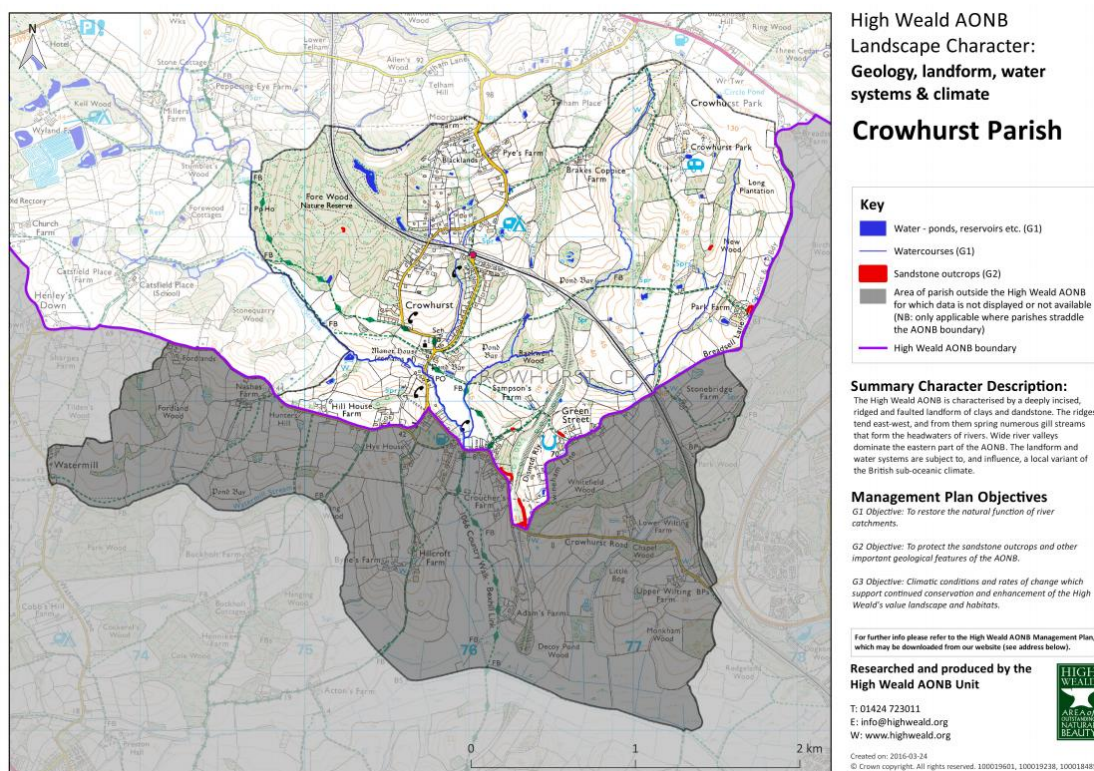
⁴⁰ Listed as 'Greenstreet Farmhouse' in the late village historian John Springford's booklet *Crowhurst A Village in History*.

01 Dec 2025

Sandstone Outcrops

Sandstone Outcrops are important habitats in their own right as breeding habitats for solitary bees (ca. 250 species in the UK) and solitary wasps (ca. 250 species in the UK).

Crowhurst has seven outcrops, at least in the high AONL part of the site (see below). There is another outcrop in the garden of Cherry Tree House opposite the Old Post Office, and it should be known that the houses along Chapel Hill are apparently on old sea cliffs⁴¹ when the fields to the north (e.g. Cinderbrook) were inundated by the sea.



© High Weald AONL, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. (retrieved 08 Feb 2020).

⁴¹ The geology of the sandstone in Crowhurst is 'Ashdown Formation – Sandstone, Siltstone and Mudstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 134-146 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Local environment previously dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas' according to igeology (an App that is easily downloaded to a mobile 'phone). Swamps and deltas are not present today in the parish even though some conditions to the south of the parish may seem like it in periods of inundation.

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©©Frances and Stephen Royston



© Frances and Stephen Royston,



© John Feltwell Sandstone rock exposed in Quarry Wood Nature Reserve, and along Sandrock Hill (below)



© John Feltwell Sandstone rock exposed along the roadside

01 Dec 2025

Ponds & Springs

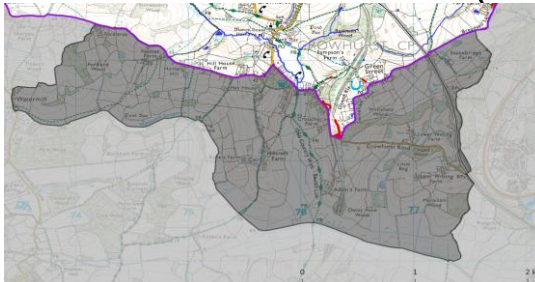
There are about 70 ponds in the parish according to the AONL plans.⁴²

There are about 90 ponds according to the ESCC plan.⁴³ Neither plan includes garden ponds, so the total for the parish would be over 100 ponds.

There are ca. 40 ponds⁴⁴ in that part of the AONL within Crowhurst parish as shown in the following AONL plan. There are 30 ponds in the parish that are not within the AONL, giving a total of ca 70 ponds in the parish except residential ones.



High Weald AONL, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. (retrieved 08 Feb 2020)



High Weald AONL, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. (retrieved 08 Feb 2020)

⁴² <http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/parish-information.html>

⁴³

[file:///C:/Users/John/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1_Crowhurst_Landscape%20Character%20Maps%20\(1\).zip/Crowhurst_Geology,%20Landform,%20Water%20Systems%20&%20Climate.pdf](file:///C:/Users/John/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1_Crowhurst_Landscape%20Character%20Maps%20(1).zip/Crowhurst_Geology,%20Landform,%20Water%20Systems%20&%20Climate.pdf)

⁴⁴ marked as dark blue and 3 field ponds not marked as dark blue, but light blue instead (missed in cartography) = 40.

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Ponds & Springs ... continued



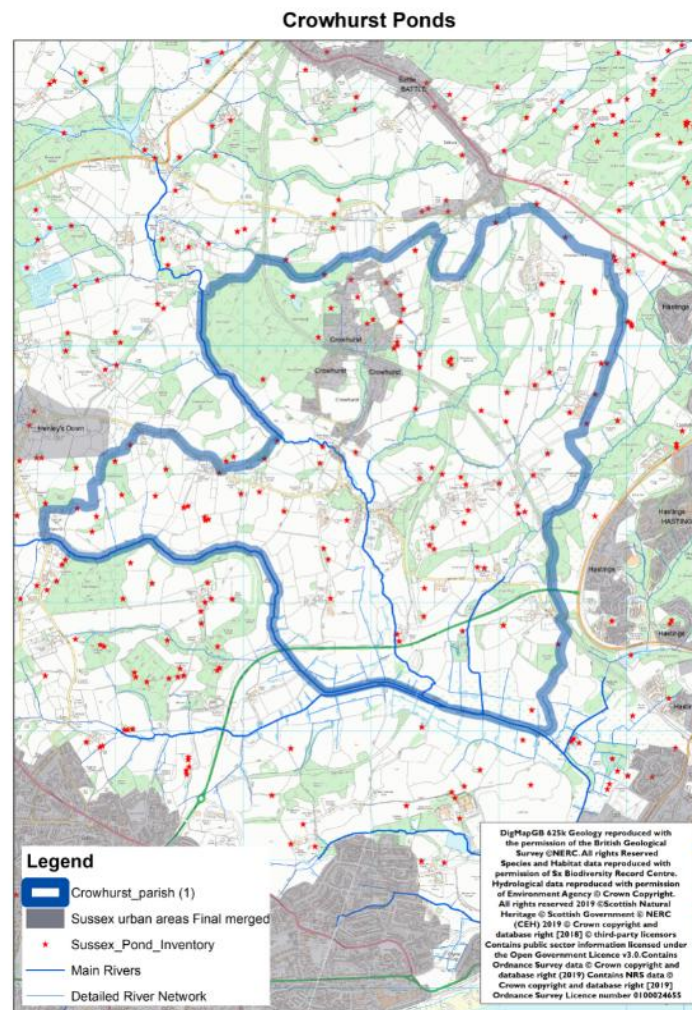
© John Feltwell The Long Pond in Quarry Wood Nature Reserve (over 100m long)



© John Feltwell Private pond beside 'Public Footpath Crowhurst 9' at TQ574545 111767

01 Dec 2025

Ponds & Springs, continued.....



© NERC, © CEH, © Sussex Wildlife Trust © High Weald AONL, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077.

According to the ESCC plan above there are about 90 ponds marked in red, including 11 that are on the boundary.

Named Ponds

There is currently no Village Pond, and no knowledge of there being one.

One pond has a name 'Circle Pond' which, curiously straddles the Parish Boundary in Crowhurst Park (NE of parish and not on a footpath) and is shown on OS maps.

Decoy Pond Wood is inside the parish to the SE but outside the AONL. The pond was historically built to lure birds.

Springs (7) and 'Pond Bays'

01 Dec 2025

There are seven springs marked on these maps, in and out of the AONL.

The number of lost ponds is not known.

There are three historic '*Pond Bay*'s shown on the map that were once flooded.

Crowhurst Environment Group – Pond Survey, 2023

1. Do you have any outside source of water that could be used by wildlife?
 - a. Yes (tick all that apply and complete survey for each one)
 - i. Bird bath ☒
 - ii. Water feature ☒ (e.g. fountain) ☒
 - iii. Pond ☒
 - iv. Rill ☒
 - v. Stream ☒
 - b. No ☒
2. What is the approximate size?
 - a. Less than 1m³ ☒
 - b. Between 1m³ and 4m³ ☒
 - c. Between 4m³ and 36m³ ☒
 - d. Larger than 36m³ ☒
3. Is it natural?
 - a. Yes ☒
 - b. No ☒
4. Does it contain still or running water?
 - a. Still ☒
 - b. Running water ☒
5. Do you add anything to keep the water clean?
 - a. Yes
 - i. Chemicals ☒
 - ii. Barley Straw ☒
 - iii. Oxygenating plants ☒
 - b. No
 - i. Do you remove excess weed/algae ☒
 - ii. No intervention ☒
6. Does it contain plants?
 - a. Yes
 - i. Introduced species e.g. waterlilies ☒
 - ii. Native species ☒
 - b. No ☒
7. What proportion is open water in summer?
 - a. Less than a third ☒
 - b. More than a third ☒
8. Does it contain fish?
 - a. Yes
 - i. Introduced species ☒
 - ii. Native species e.g. stickle backs ☒
 - b. No ☒
9. Is it used by newts?
 - a. Yes
 - i. Common Newts ☒
 - ii. Great Crested Newts ☒
 - b. No ☒
10. Do you have any problems with your pond?
Free text field
11. Would you like some advice to make your pond more wildlife friendly?
 - a. Yes ☒
 - i. Please add your name and phone number in the free text field to Q12
 - b. No ☒
12. Please add any further interesting information
Free text field

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Streams

All six streams in the parish flow generally south to the Combe Valley. Streams in Crowhurst (c 8km).

1. **Powdermill Stream.** The main stream is Powdermill Stream (previously known as Asten Stream) which defines part of the parish boundary in the west, and which flows through the centre of the village. It is the stream around which Crowhurst has grown. It is the stream that made Crowhurst. It enters at the west corner of Fore Wood, at the boundary with Catsfield and Battle, and is the boundary of Crowhurst Parish for ca 1.300metres. It then cuts across fields, across the main road below the Church and Manor House then through Cinderbrook where it meets the Rackwell Stream from the north-east. . It then goes under the main road outside The Plough (1,080m) and continues south past Adam's Farm where it goes under the Combe Valley Way, joining the Combe Haven at the southernmost part of the Crowhurst parish (1,700m). Powdermill Stream is therefore ca. 4,080m
2. **Watermill Stream** is part of the parish boundary in the southwest, and then joins the Powdermill Stream at the weir (see Fish section). It arises in Catsfield parish and flows southeast issuing into the Combe Valley. It is ca 3,100m long. Water pollution issues in Crowhurst are likely to arise with future large developments upstream in Catsfield.
3. **Brokes Gill** flows south and west of the houses on the west side of Station Road. It joins the Powdermill Stream.
4. **Decoy Stream** flows south, past Decoy Wood, and joins the Combe Valley streams draining south. It flows through Little Bog Wood.
5. **Rackwell Stream** flows from about 100m west of Queensway, passed through Rackwell Wood, and joins the Powdermill Stream at the south of Cinderbrook and then flows south. It is approximately 957m long. Known by residents to have sewage waste entering the Powdermill Stream (2025).
6. **There is a (un-named) stream** that also flows from Brake's Coppice and joins the Powdermill Stream.

01 Dec 2025



© John Feltwell The Powdermill Stream (somewhat canalised) as it flows away from the main road through the village, southwards. This is the stream around which the village has historically developed.



© John Feltwell The Powdermill Stream flowing south to the centre of the village. 25 January 2015.

01 Dec 2025



©

John Feltwell The Watermill Stream marking the SW boundary of the parish, and looking west towards Watermill Lane, over the once-flooded water meadows which are now grazed by sheep. The sturdy brick sluice gates are in situ close to where the photograph was taken. The photograph was taken on Public Footpath 'Crowhurst 9'.



© John Feltwell Flood of 6 March 2020, looking north

01 Dec 2025

Flooding issues, continued...



The Flood Attenuation Pond, 8.8.25 © John Feltwell

The Flood Attenuation Pond is on the north side of the Link Road in the SW of the parish; Hillcroft Farm is just visible in the bottom right of photo. Like most attenuation ponds along main roads, this pond was built to control flood waters associated with the Link Road. It is on ESCC-owned land and is managed by EA, and is believed to be a self-contained body of water with no connection to any other water body. Like the other water bodies on the south side of the Link Road it is beginning to attract waterbirds and wetland plants, and goes some way in mitigating and biodiversity compensation for the loss of land of the Link Road. It is understood that carp were introduced to the pond in 2023 (or earlier). Turbulence and silt would be a major issue. During 2024 toxic blue-green algae bloomed across its surface, and this has been mentioned as a danger on the internet by walkers and cyclists. Currently (Oct 2025) there was talk about turning the pond into a fishing pond for an angling club, and making a pipe connection to the Powdermill Stream, but this is matched by other opinions for keeping it as it is a Flood Attenuation Pond to control flooding. ESCC have stated that the pond is only suitable as a Flood Attenuation Pond and would not allow this.



01 Dec 2025

The Secretary of CEG says (Nov 2025):

Crowhurst Flood Attenuation Pond Angling Club permission refused !

Concerns had been raised by the Crowhurst Environment Group (CEG) about a proposal to turn the flood attenuation pond into a licenced Angling Club. Much more worryingly, the plan also aims to connect the pond (which is to the right of the footpath between the Crowhurst Recreation Ground and the footpath bridge under the link road) to the Powdermill stream by an 80 foot pipe, in order to aid oxygenation. The pond was created as part of the Combe Valley Link Road project on land owned by East Sussex County Council. The pond was illegally stocked with carp some time ago, resulting in the loss of native wildlife and illegal fishing. Does anyone remember the area being alive with the sound of frogs? Carp are not a native species and have a significant negative impact on freshwater ecology. A few years ago, grants from The Sussex Ornithological Society and the Combe Valley Countryside Park funded the safe removal of the carp. At the time, the carp were stunted and unhealthy. Unfortunately, not all were able to be removed and the waste they produce has elevated the nutrient levels, hence the 2025 algae bloom. Further removal of the carp at intervals would allow the invertebrates and wildlife to return, with possible grant funding.

Citizen Science Projects

Water Testing Project. Started in 2025 at the confluence of the Powdermill Stream and Rackwell, working with Strandliners as part of their Rother Community River Watch Project starting at the end of July 2025. This provided the village with equipment and training to test the water quality of our watercourses.



Target watercourses include the Powdermill Stream and the Rackwell.

01 Dec 2025**Hedge planting in early 2021**

Planting a native hedgerow along the east side of the waterway forms part of the aim to increase biodiversity on the Recreation Ground as it was a stated aim in the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan (2019).

The new hedgerow comprised the following native species: 160 x Hawthorn, 80 x Field Maple, 80 x Crab Apple, 80 x Hazel, 80 x Common Beech, 80 x Blackthorn, 80 x Hornbeam, 80 x Dog Rose, 80 x Common Dogwood

The hedge was positioned where Environment Agency (EA)⁴⁵ deem it is permitted; being about 8m back from the centre of the waterway. The distance from the waterway is to ensure that EA have free vehicular access at all times to deal with flooding events (clearing blockages etc).



Planting of native hedgerow species on 20 February 2021

⁴⁵ EA contract is Dan Sargent (Feb. 2021)

01 Dec 2025

The Crowhurst Community Map at Crowhurst Railway Station



The Crowhurst Community Map was created in March 2023 by local artist Emily John with John Cole (photographer) and Audrey Koop (design & production). It shows footpaths, natural and historical conservation and wildlife recovery areas. It was funded by Southeast Communities Rail Partnership CIC, Crowhurst Parish Council and Rother District Council Community Grants.

RECOVERY

– after the man-made decline – comes the recovery – if not too late.

An initiative by 'East Sussex and Brighton & Hove' seek to get everyone on board with bringing back habitats and wildlife – which fits in with a national aim.⁴⁶ The initiative is based on having a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The CEG responded to this as we have gone to press with this Biodiversity Audit.

by

⁴⁶ East Sussex and Brighton & Hove' October 2025. Sussex Nature Recovery, Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Statement of Biodiversity Priorities. Part 1 – Context & Description of Strategy Area. Draft for Consultation. Part 2 Priorities, Measures.. Part 3 Priority Species, Part 4 Technical Methods.

01 Dec 2025

The Powdermill Stream has such an adverse environmental impact on the village that Management Considerations have been tabled (below) for on-going reassessment

Crowhurst declared the Stream DEAD in 2025

POWDERMILL STREAM, CROWHURST, EAST SUSSEX within Combe Valley Countryside Park Management Considerations



By
Dr John Feltwell FRSB of Wildlife Matters
Chartered Biologist
Chartered Environmentalist



on behalf of:

Crowhurst Parish Council

01 Dec 2025

Background

A small part of the Powdermill Stream lies within the Combe Valley Countryside Park (CVCP) – that is from the Crowhurst Road / Recreation Ground southwards (as shown in the interpretive board above in dark green).

This report does not seek to replace or contradict any Management Plan that the CVCP has for the Powdermill Stream (if any exists).⁴⁷ It would appear that there is no current Management Plan of this part of the CVCP into the parish, as the last visual plan of the conservation is dated 2012-2015.

Exhaustive enquiries have shown an alarming fact – that the Powdermill Stream through the village actually has no management plan. The EA do not have a plan, (other than a generic nationwide plan for all waterways, and no specific plan, though they take water samples) and the CVCP do not have a plan that runs northward into the parish.

The Powdermill Stream is completely without any specific Management Plan (which has implications regarding ecology and flooding).

There are various reports that include the portion of CVCP that extends into the parish of Crowhurst, and it is clear from the 2007 and 2008 documents that this extension into the parish is illustrated in the maps as a continuum of the SSSI on the south side of the Link Road. This makes the stream a very important complimentary habitat for the SSSI, and thus very important for biodiversity interest of the parish.

I am grateful to Dr Kristina Sodomkova, formerly of Rother District Council (Environment & Policy Manager Acquisitions, Transformation & Regeneration) for providing these important links:

East Sussex County Council. (2007). Pebsham Countryside Park Project Development Strategy:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/Data/Economy,%20Transport%20and%20Environment%20Scrutiny%20Committee/20070918/Agenda/STE18Sept07item7App1and2.pdf> (accessed 09 Feb 2021).

PLB Consulting Ltd. and Acorn Consulting Partnership Ltd (2008). Pebsham Countryside Park Project Implementation Plan:

<https://consult.eastsussex.gov.uk/file/2294984> (accessed 09 Feb 2021).

Hastings Borough Council ? (2012, Version 6.2). Development strategy review and implementation plan (2012-2015):

https://www.hastings.gov.uk/content/planning/planning_policy/adopted_local_plan/dmp/doclist/HBC-PS-89.pdf (accessed 09 Feb 2021).

Aim of this report

- To assess the ecological importance of the stream.
- To see how the ecology of the watercourse informs its management.
- To recommend enhancements.

⁴⁷ Information on their management plan was sought from the rangers on 3 Feb 2021, and any further results will be incorporated into this report.

01 Dec 2025**Note on usage**

This report is simply for general interest, a stand alone report for the parishioners of Crowhurst. It also covers a lot more of the ecology of the Powdermill Stream upstream.⁴⁸

The report can be circulated freely to others, and if it has implications or factual information of use for any consideration for any downstream development that might affect flooding or wildlife issues upstream in Crowhurst then that is fine.

In February 2021 there were plans in Bulverhythe for new housing in this watershed where winter flooding was the norm, as per Hastings Borough Council's planning application HS/FA/20/00966.⁴⁹ This application was withdrawn.

General Importance

The stream is one of six streams in the parish⁵⁰ and is the most important stream simply because the village had grown up around it.

It arises to the northwest, as two 'issues' to the south of the Squirrel Pub (Battle parish) in Tellis Coppice, with another issue to east of Starcroft Farm (Catsfield parish). By the time Powdermill Stream reaches Crowhurst it has flowed about 7km. It empties into Combe Valley and thereafter the sea at Bulverhythe.

The stream is likely to have had three names:

- i) Today it carries the name of Powdermill Stream only because of its importance in the 18th century for its use in Battle (upstream) for the hammer ponds etc.
- ii) Previously it was called the Asten Stream; Asten being a name still adopted for a residential area of Battle. Five of the seven mills which produced Battle gunpowder were situated on the Asten Stream.
- iii) Prior to that it was presumably the stream around which the village of Crowhurst was established.

The centre of the village has changed over time. The ancient village centre with the manor ruin, St Georges Church and the ancient yew is where the village hall and school are now located. At the lower part of the village is the Plough Pub (1805) and Recreation Ground. There was also a shop, garage, petrol pump and PO / Telephone Exchange between the two locations until the late 1990s.

⁴⁸ This report is being circulated, via Crowhurst Parish Council, to Combe Haven Sub Group which comprises CIC, EA, NE., Ornithologists (incl. Cliff Dean), Friends of Combe Valley and Catsfield Environment Group (CEG) – and ideas resultant from the above will be incorporated in due course.

⁴⁹ Bulverhythe plans <https://www.hastings.gov.uk/new-homes/bulverhythe/>

⁵⁰ Crowhurst Biodiversity Audit, 2020 [Crowhurst Biodiversity Audit 2020 – Crowhurst Parish Council \(crowhursttpc.co.uk\)](https://crowhursttpc.co.uk)

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The Plough is situated above the flood level of the stream

The present day Recreation Ground may have been a regularly flooded area that had never been drained by villagers. It was originally called the King George's Fields and given to the village in the mid 20th century.

An altered watercourse

The Powdermill Stream has been straightened in the past ('canalisation') as it is unusually straight after the bridge outside the Plough Inn. In contrast, the stream upstream follows its usual curves and sits more naturally in the countryside.

Wildlife Importance

At the current time (February 2021) no serious ecological appraisal of the stream has been carried out. Fish have only been surveyed; flora and other fauna awaiting surveying.

Flora

A standard baseline for the stream includes the basic species which would be associated with most streams in the parish, and includes the following.

Table WM05 Angiosperms (Wild Flowers) recorded from site

DAFOR is a way of indicating abundance, for instance D is for Dominant, A Abundant, F Frequent, O Occasional and R is for Rare. Rare does not mean the species is rare, i.e. endangered; it just means it is rare on site (for instance there might only be a single dandelion on site, therefore it is noted as Rare).

SPECIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	Tree	DAFOR RATING	NOTES Ornamental and introduced plants (that contribute little for biodiversity are shown in green)
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder, Common	T	O	
<i>Bambusa sp.</i>	Bamboo		R	Invasive species
<i>Buddleia davidii</i>	Buddleia		O	Invasive species
<i>Rubus complex</i>	Bramble		F	
<i>Rumex sp.</i>	Dock		F	
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Nettle		F	
(survey to be continued)				

Fauna

Seven species of fish were noted in the Biodiversity Audit.

Powdermill Stream flows through the centre of the village. The Watermill Stream flows to the west of the parish and joins the Powdermill Stream at the Weir which is south of the Link Road. The weir is an important physical barrier for fish species.

01 Dec 2025

The streams of Crowhurst can thus be separated into the upper reach stream of the Powdermill Stream in the village, and the 'lower reaches' below the weir. The fish are different either side.

Fish in the upper reaches are Brown Trout, Eels, Brook Lamprey, Stone Loach and Bullhead. Surveys have indicated 'significant numbers' of these species.

Table WM06 Fish recorded from Crowhurst

Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species	Observations
<i>Anguilla Anguilla</i>	Eel	BAP species, RED list	SX last seen 2013
<i>Barbatula barbatula</i>	Stone Loach		
<i>Cottus gobio</i>	Bullhead		
<i>Lampetra planeri</i>	Brook Lamprey		SX last seen 2013 'Sussex Rare'
<i>Rutilus rutilus</i>	Roach		
<i>Salmo trutta</i>	Trout, Brown	BAP species	SX last seen 2014 'Sussex Rare'
<i>Scardinius erythrophthalmus</i>	Rudd		

SX = Information from Sussex Biodiversity Record

Evidence suggests that the waters around Adam's Farm are Brook Lamprey and Trout nursery areas. These are thus important areas for fish species, and their importance become relevant if there are any pollution incidents that might affect the fauna of these waterways.⁵¹

Pollution (potential)

The greatest long-term threat to the waterway is pollution as run-off from marginal agricultural land along its course through the countryside north of the Recreation Ground. This is manifest in either silt (which kills smaller animals in the food chain), or agricultural chemicals that can kill or disrupt breeding of aquatic animals. Veterinary products used for dogs and cats can also disrupt wildlife, so too various drugs used by humans. So we are all to blame. And need to be vigilant.

Visual evidence of pollution is seen in the greening over the stream by vegetation especially by algae, some of which can be toxic in hot weather. The run-off of nitrogen applied to fields increases the nutrients in the water which makes plants grow faster. This is a common phenomenon, seen widely, not just in the Powdermill Stream.

Other causes of pollution include one off accidents or spillages from the road or households. Remember that the Powdermill Stream drains the southwest side of present day Battle where there are various industries and countryside activities, but it is a while since the stream likely ran red with blood in 1066.

⁵¹ Basil Dean, Environment Agency, Pevensey office, personal comm. 3 March 2020

01 Dec 2025

MOTION ‘Rights of Rother Rivers’ (carried 15 Sept. 2025)

Rights for Rother Rivers (carried by Rother District Council 16 September 2025)

Motion submitted by Councillor Burton, seconded by Councillor McLaren

Proposed Motion: A) B) C)

This Council supports the growing global movement for rights for nature in general and for rivers in particular, as a framework for rethinking the relationship between human beings and the natural world.

This Council supports the introduction into law of the following rights for rivers¹: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

1. the right to flow;
2. the right to perform essential functions within their ecosystems;
3. the right to be free from pollution;
4. the right to feed, and to be fed by, sustainable aquifers;
5. the right to native biodiversity;
6. the right to regeneration and restoration; and
7. the right to have an articulated voice in the community.

This Council therefore: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. supports the above rights (1-7) in relation to Rother rivers and water courses;

supports the creation of ecologically sound management plans for particular water courses;

will respond positively to proposals from community groups and organisations as they develop and enhance their management plans based on these rights;

will consider how to reflect this motion in its Revised Local Plan;

will update the Council’s Climate Action Plan to reflect this motion; and

will inform local residents and inform press/media of this decision.

01 Dec 2025

Rother gives nature a boost

Listen ▶

Nature protection in Rother has been given a boost following decisions by the district council.

The authority recently approved two notices of motion to protect the rights of rivers and trees – bolstering support for nature conservation in the area.

The notices were brought by Rother councillors Sue Burton and Nicola McLaren. They called on the Council to give its backing to the growing global movement for rights for nature, and to protect rivers and trees in Rother.



Receiving approval from full council, the notices introduce into policy certain rights that safeguard biodiversity and ecosystems and seek to keep areas protected from pollution.

Cllr Kathryn Field, lead portfolio holder for the environment at Rother District Council, said: "I am delighted that the Council adopted these notices of motion. They recognise the vital role that rivers and trees play in our district – sustaining life, culture, and ecosystems.

"There is a growing global movement to recognise the legal rights of nature. Countries such as Spain, Columbia, New Zealand, and Uganda have already passed national legislation enshrining nature's rights in law.

"The time has come for the UK to explore similar frameworks, beginning at the local level and I am very pleased that Rother District Council is playing its part to push this initiative."

Ends

Published: 1st October 2025

Un-picking the Rother Press Release

As Cllr McLaren confirms Rother have not given any rights to any trees or rivers (pers.comm,10.25) and Rother confirm this by saying above that they ***back the rights of nature to protect rivers and trees in Rother***, rather than giving any rights.

This contrasts with the following from the same press release; as they will ***introduce into policy certain rights that safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem***. (without saying what 'certain' those rights are, and into which policy they have or will introduce them).

By saying that they 'approved' rights of nature (RON) above, they had given tacit approval of the 'Proposed Motion' (subtly different from 'The Council therefore welcomes'..) where they, the Council, 'supports' *decisions affecting trees to have regard to the trees' rights*. The Council then confirmed (also on 8.8.25) when they addressed the Motion where they say 'This Council therefore ...welcomes..... SIX items where (decision makers) will have regard to the trees' rights... Still not giving any of these six notions any specific rights.

1. exist and grow;
2. have their own mycelium (underground fungi) protected;
3. access to their adjacent root-wide-web;
4. have their wellbeing protected for future generations;
5. not to be wilfully injured or damaged;
6. not to be killed;
7. not to be polluted with poisons;
8. have an articulated voice in the community;
9. and hold polluters and vandals accountable.

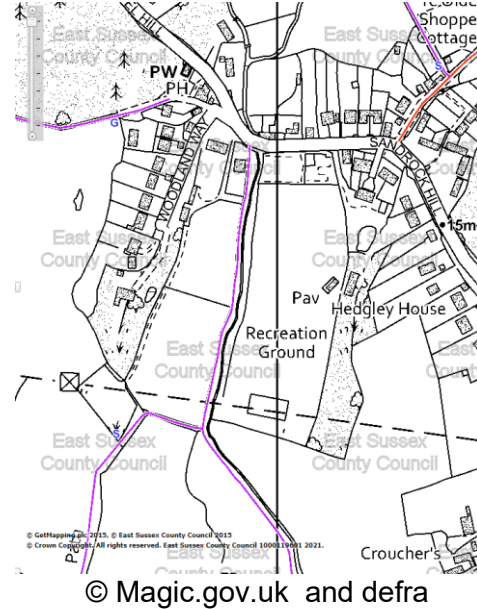
The onus then is on the CPC, where Motion A) states that (the Council) 'welcomes the decision of the CPC) to support 'personhood status' for the 1066 Yew tree. This might be the opportunity of the CPC to confer rights on the Yew as well.

Conclusion: Rother has not given ANY RIGHTS, but WILL INTRODUCE in the future some unspecified RIGHTS INTO some unspecified POLICY into unspecified LAW, whilst always (them or others i.e. *those taking decisions*) having due regard to the rights of trees. Clear!

01 Dec 2025

Public enjoyment of waterways - footpaths

Enjoyment of the waterway and the Park can be had not only from the Recreation Ground but from the Public Footpath (PF) (numbered Crowhurst 16a). This indicated by a finger post at the junction with the main road.

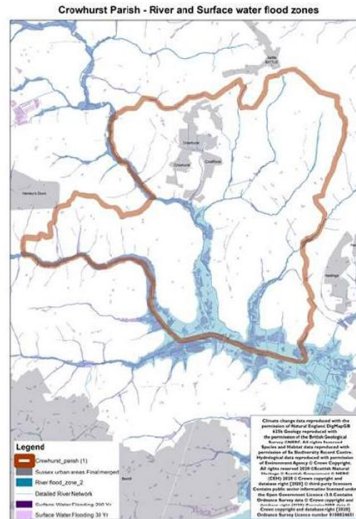


Powdermill Stream showing erosion by the car park (taken from the FP).

01 Dec 2025

Climate Change issues with waterways – Flooding in Crowhurst

Powdermill Stream has become a major physical feature in the consideration of climate change in the parish of Crowhurst. Flooding is a regular event in the parish and houses get flooded. The following map shows the 'river and surface water flood zones'.



The above plan shows the outline of the parish (in brown) with the three major watercourses flowing into the Combe Valley (in blue).

Flooding events have occurred in 1974, 1984, 1994, 1995, 2001, 2009 (twice), 2010 (twice), 2020. Further details are given in the Biodiversity Audit, 2020.



Powdermill Stream looking south on 6 March 2020



Looking south 11 December 2020

01 Dec 2025

Ownership of the stream re management

The EA have to seek permission from the CPC for access to carry out their 'Flood Risk Maintenance Works'.⁵² The question of ownership was discussed at a late 2020 CPC meeting. Houses along the Powdermill have riparian ownership half way across the stream (as indeed residents up Chapel Hill) with the other side belonging to the Diment family where farmed. The Parish Council Trust probably own alongside the Recreation Ground, but is unclear about the other side and further down the stream to Combe Haven.

Classification of the stream

According to the EA Powdermill Stream is classified as a Main river, where red in the map below indicated Main River Status.⁵³



Management responsibility of the stream

EA's roles

The Environment Agency (EA) take responsibility for the waterway and the EA are guided by their FB&G Team (Fisheries, Biodiversity and Geomorphology). The EA's Public Liability Insurance, as of 1 April 2020 is shown below.

⁵² Email from Luke Ball to Crowhurst PC dated 18 November 2020.

⁵³ Email from Abbie Philpott, Planning Advisor, for Kent, South London and East Sussex Area EA, to John Feltwell. kslplanning@environment-agency.gov.uk

01 Dec 2025



Public Liability Insurance

1st April 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY INSURANCES – PUBLIC LIABILITY

The Environment Agency as a Public Body and in accordance with Government policy in these matters is self insured for public liability risks.

I confirm that we will consider any claim against us for which we are legally liable, subject to the proviso that we will not be legally responsible for any loss, damage or third party claim arising out of your wilful act or negligence.

Yours faithfully

Kevin Sykes
National Finance Manager - Risk and Compliance
Environment Agency

If you have any queries regarding insurance, please contact email us at claimsteam@environment-agency.gov.uk.



www.gov.uk/environment-agency

In carrying out their work, the EA do respect habitats and wildlife, as Luke Ball stated in email of 16 November 2020 referring to an interactive map, viz:

‘This map is interactive and should have all the information you need. It’s worth noting that locally, after discussions with our FB&G Team (Fisheries, Biodiversity and Geomorphology) we do change our maintenance to be as effective as possible with as little disturbance to the environment and thus the map is not 100% correct as we take local decisions to cut/not cut where we believe it will have the best result.’

The EA currently direct enquiries about maps of the area to their interactive web site as indicated below.⁵⁴

CPC's roles

Riparian owners are responsible for their side of the stream being kept clear. As part of their Duty of Care for the environment the CPC do have to obtain a license from the EA to carry out any works on or close to the waterway within 8 metres of the middle of the stream.

Toxic algae

EA also have their own Duty of Care with regarding the safeguarding people who may be associated with the waterway. A poster was displayed on the noticeboard by the car park dated 14 August 2020 which stated:

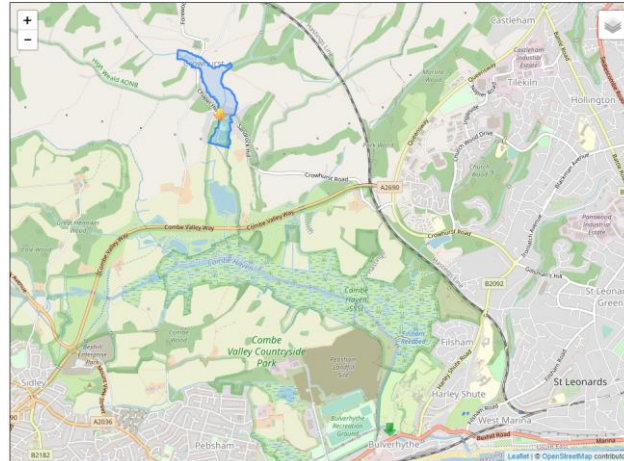
- This water body may contain levels of potentially toxic algae.
- These algae may cause illness in humans and animals, including pets.
- Keep away from the water's edge.
- Keep pets away from the water's edge
- Avoid contact with water or scum.

⁵⁴ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/asset-management/index.html?element=http%3A%2F%2Fenvironment.data.gov.uk%2Fasset-management%2Fid%2Fasset%2F379880&layer=all-assets>

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Flood Warnings

Flood Warnings can now be received on mobile phones from Sussex Live,⁵⁵ or from Riverlevels.uk/flood warnings.⁵⁶ A typical flood alert was for January 202 as per:



The area marked in blue is the Powdermill Stream in the centre of Crowhurst. It represents 'the area where there the risk of flooding in any year is greater than 1% ' which follows the 'hundred year' flood risk.

Management Considerations

The management of the stream has to be balanced between

- i) the conservation of fish,
- ii) the conservation of other wildlife and protection of habitats along its lengths,
- iii) the needs of the community with regard to flooding.

A pragmatic solution is required to address all issues. In principal, it is best to keep waterways open so that water flows away from the ground quicker, thus reducing the effects of flooding.

Timing is important though, since fish spawning times need to be respected. Thus clearing out the stream has to be done whilst respecting all of the above constraints.

From the EA's point of view they like to have open waterways so that they can monitor the state of the water and access the waterway at any time to deal with any blockage. Thus they like to clear out waterways and are not keen on riverside planting.

⁵⁵ <https://www.sussexlive.co.uk/news/sussex-news/live-sussex-flooding-updates-river>

⁵⁶

? https://riverlevels.uk/flood-warning-crowhurst#.X_X-vdj7SUK

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EA worker taking measurements 11 Dec 2020

Level indicator erected by EA who also **monitor** the stream as well as our Flood Warden who updates (informally) when flooding occurs

The point should also be made that the management of the Powdermill Stream is ultimately the result of an integrated approach that delivers the aims of the Combe Valley Countryside Park, the EA and the locals.



Flooding of the Recreation Ground 6 March 2020 © John Feltwell

Enhancements

It is evident that along most of its path in the parish that the Powdermill Stream is often a bare waterway with a general lack of vegetation grown on its banks. Although the EA would like to see open banks for flood control, the biodiversity aims of the community would like to see vegetation that encourages wildlife. A compromise is always necessary. EA permits planting adjacent to waterways, with certain conditions.

01 Dec 2025**Further planting and projects**

There are many other opportunities to plant native trees and shrubs along the waterway:

- 1) The Powdermill Stream past the Recreation Ground is in effect a linear nature reserve of good quality for the parish. It could easily be made an unofficial linear nature reserve for the parish, to augment the roadside verges already designated. The gaps in vegetation along the FP can be planted up with native trees and shrubs according to EA regulations.
- 2) There are opportunities within the village to plant up alongside the Powdermill Stream.
- 3) Further upstream much of the Powdermill Stream is bare of vegetation and would benefit for biodiversity, and assist flood control, as the following photographs indicate.



Powdermill Stream, upstream from the village in 2015



Powdermill Stream, upstream from the village in 2021

01 Dec 2025

Footpaths and 'Important hedgerows'

The parish is well furnished with Public Footpaths (PF) as shown on this map produced by ESCC in their Definitive Map of Rights of Way of East Sussex.

The only two areas not served with PF are in the NW and SE.

Hedgerows, some of them are 'ancient' and 'Important' according to The Hedgerow Regulations 1976 support much of the biodiversity of the parish, especially if they are on the parish boundary.

Hedgerows are an important aspect and landscape feature of the English countryside, albeit a man-made one that has integrated into the environment and has a rich biodiversity. Regulations introduced in 1997 made it an offence to remove a hedge which is over 30 years old and longer than 20 metres without local authority consent.⁵⁷

The age of hedgerows is conventionally assessed by using the hedgerow dating field criteria proposed by Pollard et al (1974).⁵⁸ This relies on the relative abundance of woody species in 30 yard sections of hedgerow. Interpretation is that for every woody species this would be 100 years that it would take to be established.

There are three sections of the parish boundary which are coincident with roads (where there is public access), and where the hedges need to be checked for longevity (i.e. to carry out a hedge-dating exercise):

- Crowhurst Road from White Cottage to Hunter's Hill, TQ74481227 (ca1000m)
- Breadsell Lane from Brickyard Shaw to Breadsell Farm, TQ74811205 (ca1390m)
- Along Watermill Lane - a very short length that is now a garden hedgerow.

⁵⁷ Department of the Environment, 1997a. The Hedgerows Regulations 1997, 1997 No., 1160. 16pp. Department of the Environment, 1997b. The Hedgerows Regulations Your Questions Answered. Leaflet.

⁵⁸ Pollard, E., Hooper, M.D., & Moore, N.W. 1974. Hedges. New Naturalist Series, Number 58. Collins. 256pp.

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The following table records the number of woody species in the Crowhurst Road:

Table WM07 Woody Species within 30m sections of the hedgerow
(sections sampled from west of Nashe's Farmhouse down through the sunken road to Nashe's Wildflower Verge)

Latin name	Common Name	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	X				
<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	Hornbeam			X	X	X
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	X	X	X	X	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	X		X	X	X
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	X		X	X	X
<i>Lonicera periclymenon</i>	Honeysuckle	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Sloe/Blackthorn					X
<i>Quercus robur</i>	English Oak			X		X
<i>Rubus sp.</i>	Bramble		X	X	X	X
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's Broom	X	X			X
<i>Ulex europaeae</i>	Gorse					X
Total number of woody species		7	5	8	7	10
Average number woody species = 7.4						

Average number of woody species per 30 yard section = 7.4

But that includes sections 1 and 2 which are west of Nashe's Farmhouse.

However, sections 3, 4 and 5 are from Nashe's Farmhouse downhill (eastwards) through the bends to Nashe's Wildlife Verge.

The average here is $25 / 3 = 8.3$ species.

Thus the hedgerows through this sunken lane are about 800 years old.

This is backed up with other flora on the banks, such as two species of fern (Bracken and Polypody) and indicator species⁵⁹ of bluebell, yellow archangel, wood sage and dog's mercury.



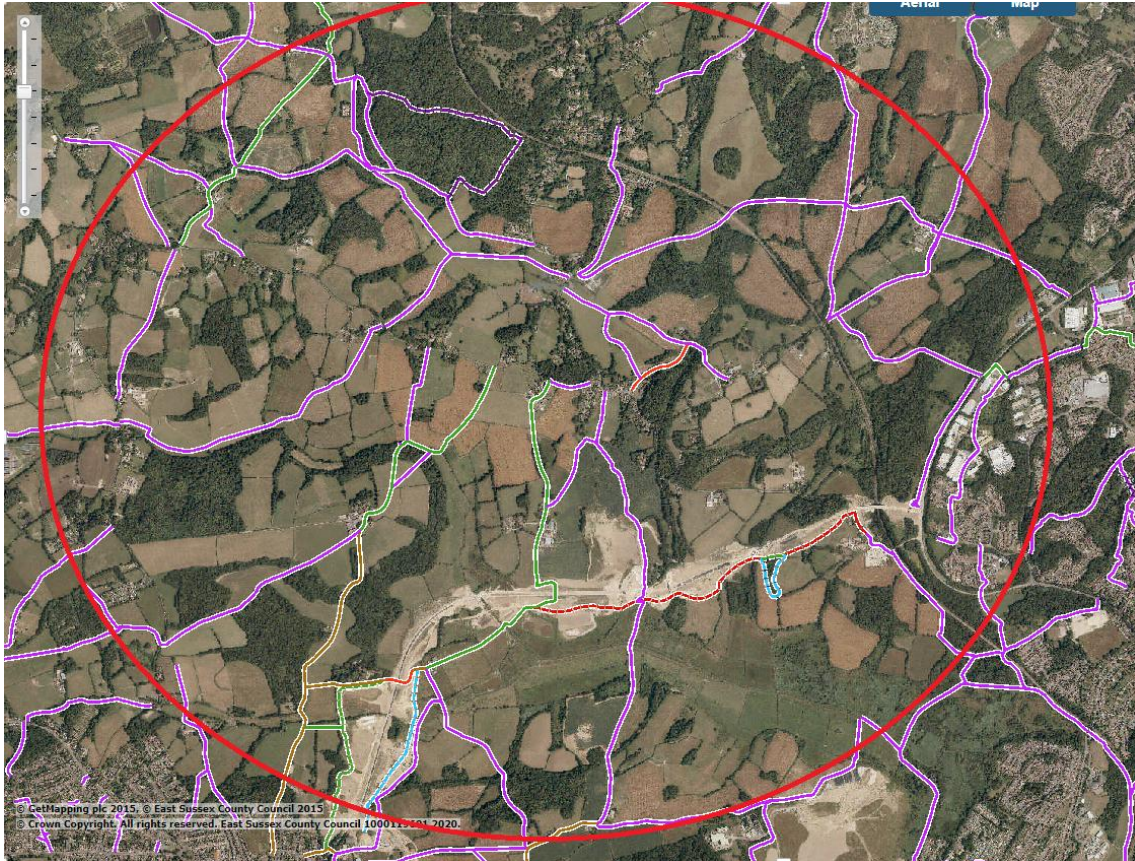
Note that this is a biodiversity hot-spot of the parish.

⁵⁹ Indicator species are species that indicate an ancient habitat

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The following plan is taken from the ESCC Definitive Rights of Way:

Footpaths in purple



© Getmapping plc © East Sussex County Council, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. (retrieved 08 Feb 2020). The red circle includes most of the parish.

See also the footpaths in the Combe Valley Countryside Park at the end of this audit.

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Possible 'Important Hedgerows' in the parish

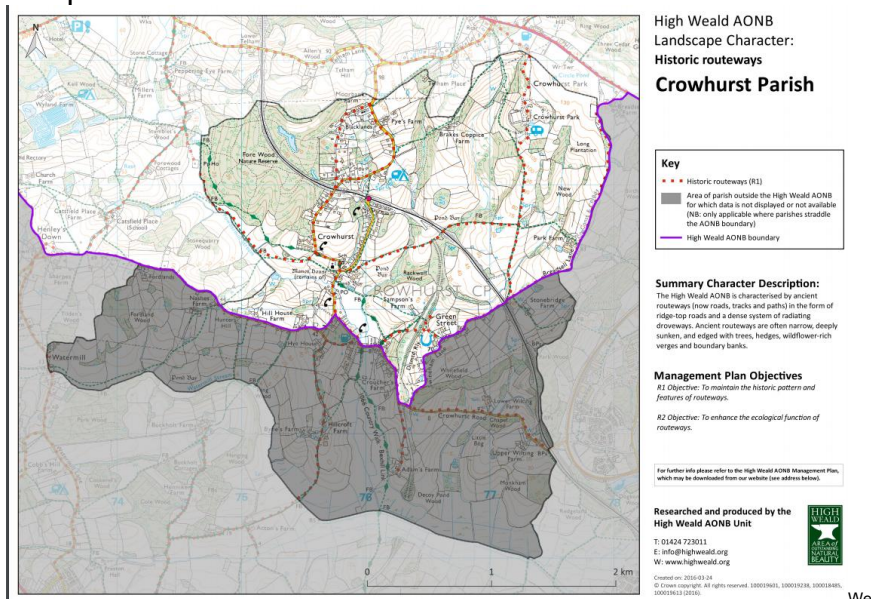
© John Feltwell Crowhurst Road at Nashes Farm, showing old hedgerows
6 March 2020. Public footpaths branch north and south from this road at this point.



© John Feltwell Battle Ramblers tackling flooded Breadsell Lane, 19 Oct 2019; notice the hedgerows either side of the lane. Enjoyment of the biodiversity is greatly appreciated by walkers and ramblers using the footpaths and lanes of the parish, in all weathers.

01 Dec 2025

The historic routeways, at least only in the AONL part of the parish are shown on this following AONL plan. The routeways do not all correlate with today's footpaths. This needs to be looked into, as any paths not registered by 2026 will be lost forever as public paths.



© High Weald AONL, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. (retrieved 08 Feb 2020)

Should parishioners wish to 'beat the hedgerows'⁶⁰ following a traditional manner, then these two hedgerows are accessible from the public highway.



© John Feltwell Drone footage, looking north, Autumn 2019. Crowhurst does not have any pavements or street lighting all of which is a benefit to biodiversity.

⁶⁰ Boundaries in Landscape History, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boundaries_in_landscape_history (retrieved 7 April 2020)

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SPECIES ASSETS

- **Angiosperms**
- **Fungi**
- **Ferns**
- **Avifauna**
- **Reptiles**
- **Amphibia**
- **Invertebrates**

Data Collection

The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC) provided this author with an up to date (25 March 2020) data search for habitats, flora and fauna of Crowhurst Parish.

They logged a total of 5,386 species records of 53 species which have international designations, 151 species with National designations and 353 species of 'other designations' present in the parish.

There are 34 known species of invasive plants in the parish.

As the copyright data of the records belongs to those who collected it, either alive now, or dead, their collective permission cannot be obtained.

The long list of species ever found in the village runs to 111 pages and is NOT reproduced here, only the summary which is shown on the following page.

Therefore a snapshot of all the species records can only be given in the Biodiversity Audit.

In contrast, this Biodiversity Audit which contains data from many data collectors, will be available to all in a fully transparent way.

01 Dec 2025



Ecological Data Search SxBRC/19/917 - Summary Report

An ecological data search was carried out for land at Crowhurst parish on behalf of Dr John Feltwell Feltwell (Dr John Feltwell) on 25/03/2020.

The following datasets were consulted for this report:

	Requested	Radius/buffer size
Designated sites, habitats & ownership maps	Yes	Site only
Protected, designated and invasive species	Yes	Site only

Summary of results

Sites and habitats

Statutory sites	3 SSSIs / 1 AONB / 1 LNR
Non-statutory sites	4 LWS / 1 LGS / 2 Designated Road Verges
Section 41 habitats	6 habitats
Ancient and/or ghyll woodland	Present

Protected and designated species

International designations	53 species	442 records
National designations	151 species	3,274 records
Other designations	353 species	4,802 records
Total	381 species	5,386 records
Invasive non-native	34 species	145 records

The report is compiled using data held by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) at the time of the request. SxBRC does not hold comprehensive species data for all areas. Even where data are held, a lack of records for a species in a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that the species does not occur there – the area may simply not have been surveyed.

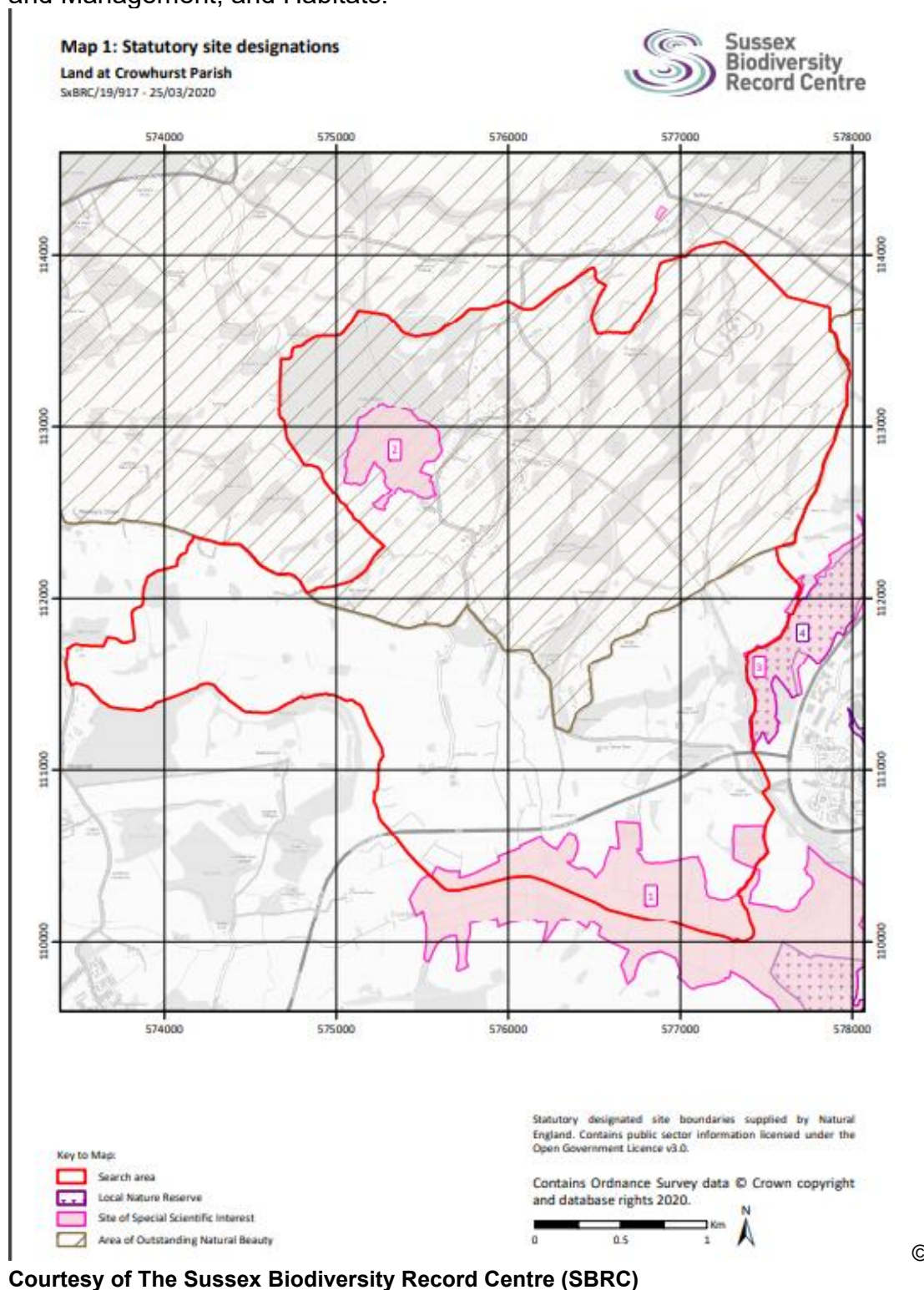
This summary page may be published.
The full report and maps may not be published or otherwise shared.

The data search report is valid until 25/03/2021 for the site named above.

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The following four plans are reproduced © Courtesy of The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC) on Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations, Ownership and Management, and Habitats.

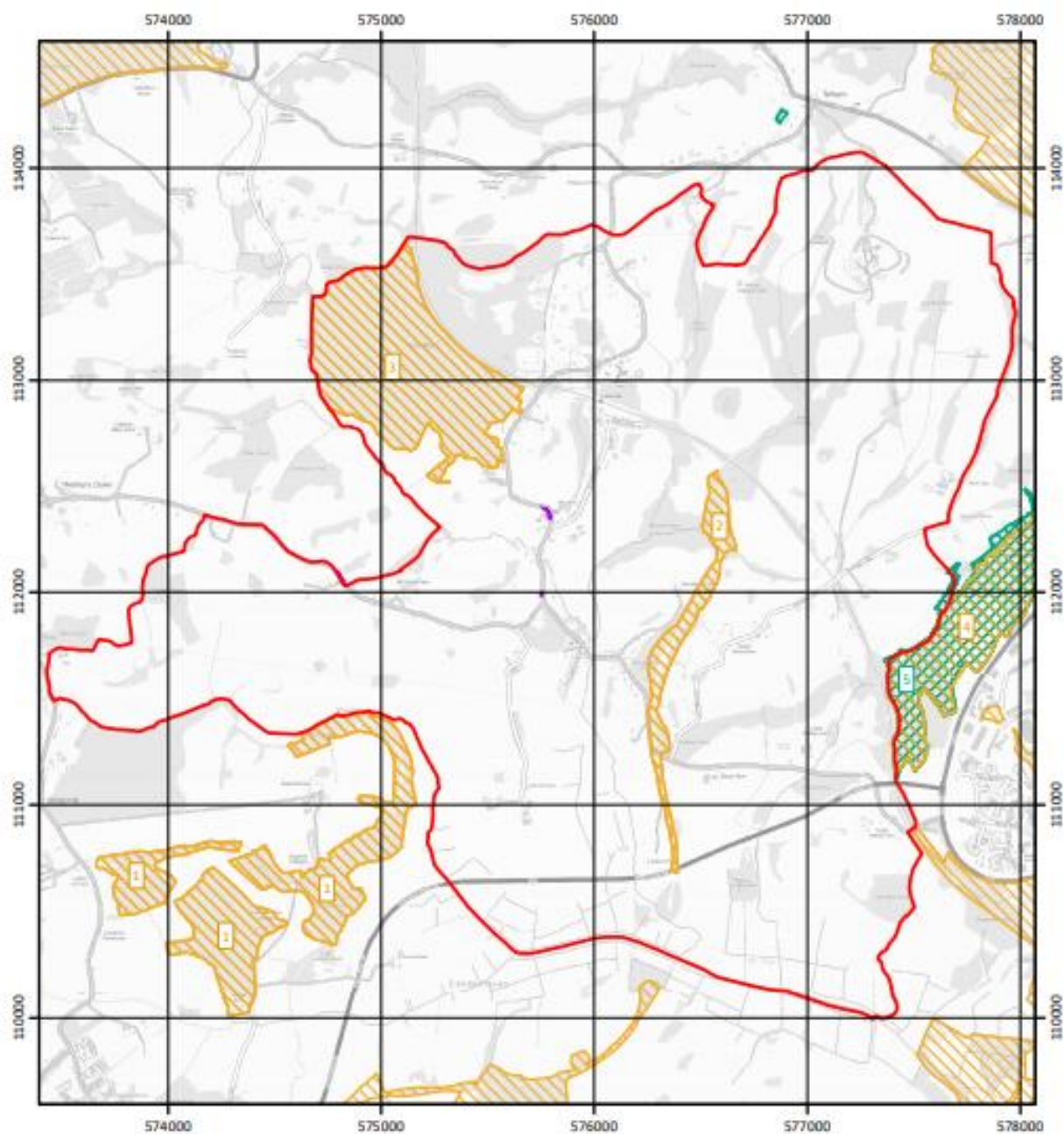


Courtesy of The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC)

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Map 2: Non-statutory site designations**Land at Crowhurst Parish**

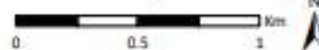
SxBR/19/917 - 25/03/2020

**Key to Map:**

- Search area
- Local Wildlife Site
- Designated Road Verge
- Local Geological Site

Local Wildlife Site and Notable Road Verge data provided by local authorities. Local Geological Site data created by SxBR/19/917 in partnership with Sussex Geodiversity Group.

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database rights 2020.



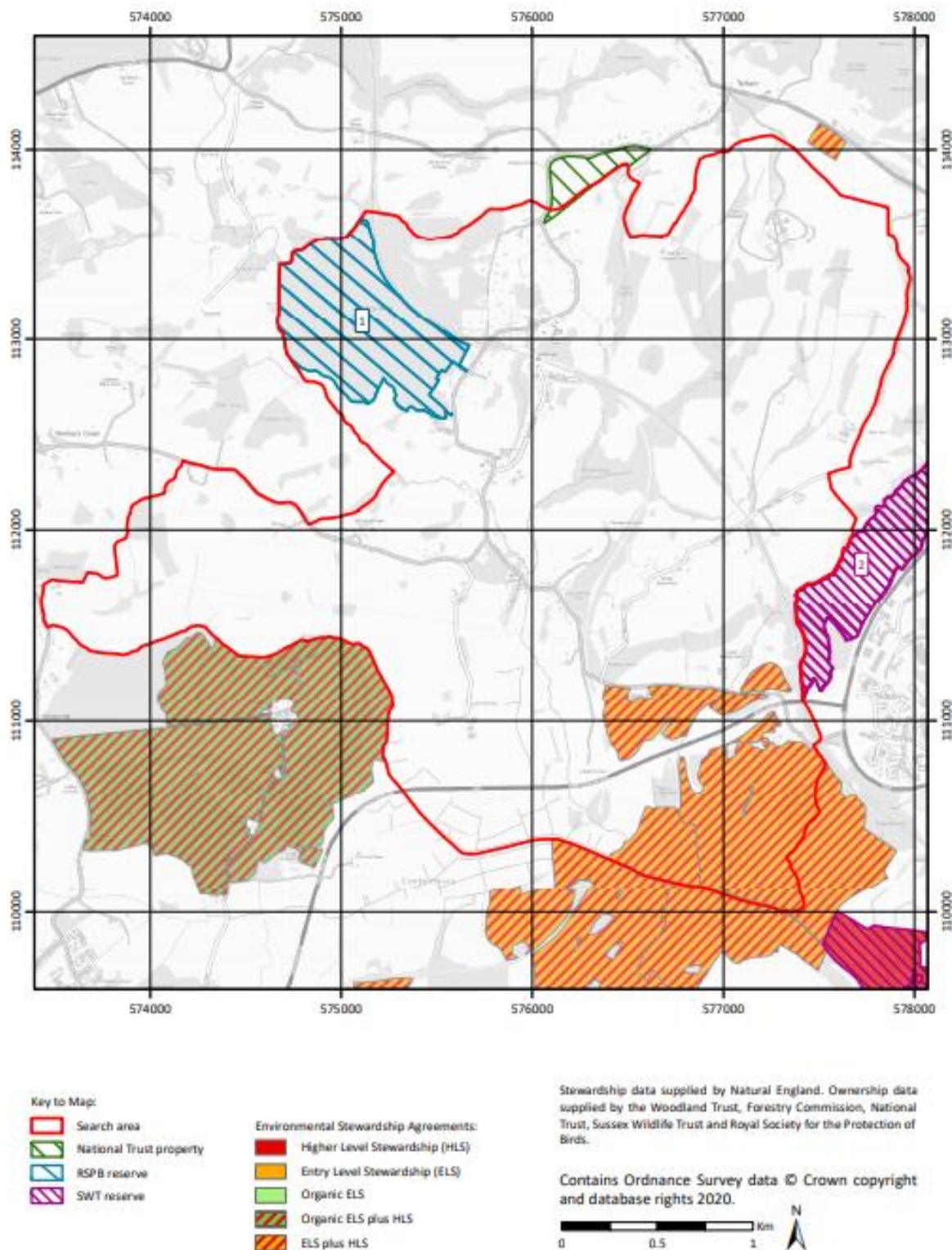
© Courtesy of The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC)

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Map 3: Ownership & management

Land at Crowhurst Parish

SXBRC/19/917 - 25/03/2020

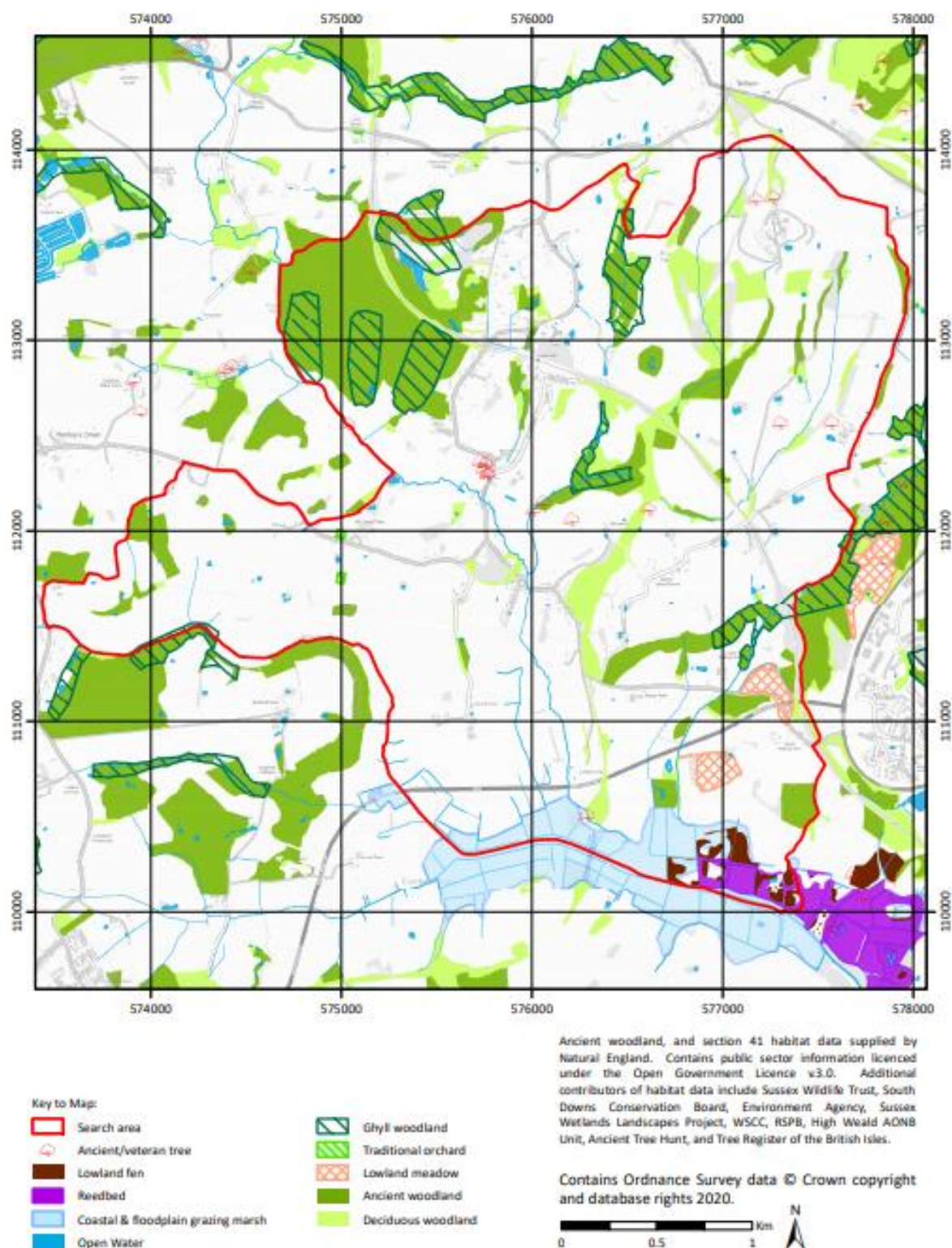


© Courtesy of The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC)

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Map 4: Section 41 habitats and other**Land at Crowhurst Parish**

SxBR/19/917 - 25/03/2020



© Courtesy of The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC)

01 Dec 2025**Angiosperms (Flowering Plants)**

Nearly 200 species of flowering plant have been found in the parish (Table WM05).

The only UK protected species in the parish is the native Bluebell.

A dozen species of tree are listed below.

There are a number of introduced / alien species present, and these include sycamore (widespread in the parish), buddleia, Spanish Bluebell, Kerria, Grape Hyacinth and Daffodil. Some of these are at the Millennium Garden Verge and have been introduced for visual effect, not for nature conservation.

Planting any of these introduced species within the parish should be resisted in future as they displace native species. Japanese knotweed has been in the parish – opposite the church gate (2018) but was removed (but has re-occurred). Himalayan balsam is well established along the Powdermill Stream.

There are several tree species that are present throughout the parish and contribute part of the ancient woodlands; these include hornbeam (once used for the Powdermill furnaces), sweet chestnut (a major component of coppice woodlands, with hornbeam), and ash, silver birch and hazel within hedgerows. Pines, eucalyptus and Leylandii are found in gardens and some of the latter dominate landscapes.



© John Feltwell Churchard trees in winter, 10 March 2018

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TREES IN THE PARISH

The parish is rich in woodland and has a good range of Ancient Woodlands. On 15 September 2025 a Motion was carried whereby Rother District Council (RDC) supported the concept of Rights of Nature, and supported *‘the introduction into law of legislation which would require those taking decisions affecting trees to have regard to the trees’ rights’*.

MOTION ‘Rights of Rother TREES’ (carried 15 Sept. 2025)

Rights of Rother Trees

Motion submitted by Councillor McLaren, seconded by Councillor Burton Proposed motion: A) B) C) D)

This Council supports the growing global movement for rights of nature as a framework for rethinking the relationship between human beings and the natural world.

This Council supports the introduction into law of legislation which would require those taking decisions affecting trees to have regard to the trees' rights to: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

10. exist and grow;
11. have their own mycelium (underground fungi) protected;
12. access to their adjacent root-wide-web;
13. have their wellbeing protected for future generations;
14. not to be wilfully injured or damaged;
15. not to be killed;
16. not to be polluted with poisons;
17. have an articulated voice in the community;
18. and hold polluters and vandals accountable.

Protection should be prioritised for trees that can be considered as a “heritage and/or cultural asset¹”, an important example being the Crowhurst 1066 Yew Tree² which stands as a living link for our community with our history going back more than 1,300 years. It is an ancient native tree, an iconic landmark and an important local natural monument.

This Council therefore:

1. welcomes the decision of Crowhurst Parish Council to support “personhood status³” for the 1066 Yew tree and invites them, together 1 Point 34 of Sentencing Remarks in relation to felling of Hadrian’s Wall Sycamore Tree 9 May 2025 refers to the tree as a “heritage and/or cultural asset” and refers to the tree’s status as “part of our natural heritage”.
2. Forestry Journal Trees of the world: The 1066 Yew | Forestry Journal
3. The provision of rights to natural assets such as rivers is sometimes referred to as “personhood”. For further information World Economic Forum on Environmental Personhood c250915 – Motion – Rights of Rother Trees with the community of Crowhurst, to take on guardianship of the 1066 Yew Tree to protect it for future generations; 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.
4. will consider how to reflect this motion in its revised Rother Local Plan; will update the Council’s Climate Strategy Action Plan to reflect this motion;
5. will continue to work in partnership with local environmental organisations to utilise this motion to support their work;
6. will support proposals from community groups and organisations for similar declarations in respect of other Rother trees that can be considered as a “heritage and/or cultural asset”¹; and
7. will inform local residents and inform local press/media of this decision.

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Trees on The Tree Register:

(details supplied by Dr Judy Clark)

Crowhurst parish church**1. Yew: *Taxus baccata* TQ7574812321**

S of church, female. The fragments of the hollow trunk are sagging outwards to slightly exaggerate the diameter. Meanwhile on the south side the loss of a quarter of the tree has almost healed over (reducing the recordable diameter). The railings were put up in 1907. 1680 John Aubrey; 1835 Horsfield; 1879 C S Greaves.

Height :12.00 m

Diameter: 289 cm

Girth: 908 cm

recorded 2006

Girth County Champion of East Sussex**2. Yew: *Taxus baccata* TQ7572312360**

NW, leaning and very slightly hollow.

Height :13.00 m

Diameter: 160 cm

Girth: 503 cm

recorded 2001

Remarkable tree of East Sussex**3. Yew: *Taxus baccata* TQ7577812326**

SE, with short clean bole

Height :14.00 m

Diameter: 151 cm

Girth: 474 cm

recorded 2001

Remarkable tree of East Sussex

The 1066 Yew Tree in July 2025, at St George's Churchyard

01 Dec 2025

Crowhurst

1. Blue Gum: *Eucalyptus globulus* (planted) TQ772120

Largest in a dense young group in the garden of Stonebridge Oast, Swainham Lane. Estimated.

Height :22.00 m

Diameter: 40 cm

Girth: 126 cm

recorded 2014

Girth & Height County Champion of East Sussex

2. Red Ash *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* (planted) TQ758123

Verge outside church, opposite village school. Much broken by 2020, but with a good bole.

Height :14.00 m

Diameter: 46 cm

Girth: 143 cm

recorded 2020

Remarkable tree of East Sussex**Fore Wood**

Hybrid Black poplar *Populus x canadensis* 'Florence Biondi' (planted) TQ756128

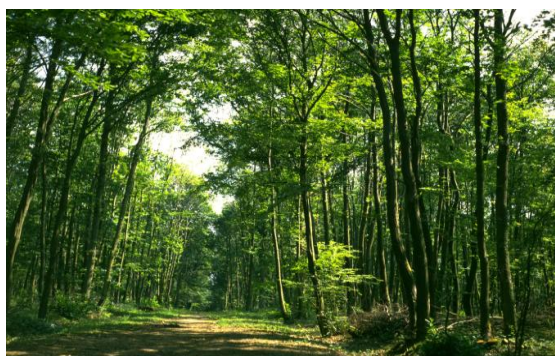
Largest in remnant plantation in RSPB Forewood; W side of main track from vehicle gate in Forewood Lane.

Height :27.00 m

Diameter: 75 cm

Girth: 236 cm

recorded 2021

Girth & Height County Champion of East Sussex

01 Dec 2025

A legal review of ;Material Considerations'

The 'nature and wildlife' case for Material Consideration of The 1066 Yew tree and The Powdermill Stream, Crowhurst.

The government's Planning Portal lists 14 issues that may be considered as 'material considerations' amongst which two are relevant to this Crowhurst case: 'Government Policy' and 'Nature Conservation'.

Government Policy is applicable in UK law as the tree and the stream fall under issues such as the NPPF (2025), WCA (1981), AONL, and several gov.uk docs which promote 'conserve and enhance' (nearly all gov.uk and local authority docs).

Government Policy also include Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans approved by the local authority (as legal documents), in the Crowhurst case including this comprehensive Biodiversity Audit. The government also have policies for joining up habitats and having 'stepping stones' habitats across the countryside.

It is clear that the Powdermill Stream is an important green corridor that joins up two SSSIs. And at tree level, there are available TPOs governed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, upon which some limited (to zero) reliance can be had.

With the stream the Control of Pollution Act 1974 is also applicable regarding agricultural run-off (demonstrated by citizen science) and sewage releases (ditto). Other material considerations include 'Amenity and Public Health' (Considerations relating to well-being of residents –this ticks RDC aims and NP aims) and 'Community Impact' (overall effect on the community) and Heritage and Conservation (impact on conservation areas, and other historic features).

RSPB is correct in stating that in general 'planning is intended to protect the public interest', and in this case a material consideration for both the tree and the stream are applicable.

The Yew tree is Ancient, Historic, and an Amenity and a living national monument. Then there is the obligatory Duty given to Local Authorities to conserve nature which brings us to the second issue that the Planning Portal states is a Nature Conservation.

Nature Conservation is applicable in UK law through originally the Countryside Act 1968, WCA 1981, and then a prolific slew of guidances (not all Acts or laws) such as the Environment Act 1995, NPPF, Crow 2000, Environment Act 1995, (some lawyers will tell you that as NPPF is 'not an Act, it is thus not law').

Clearly the 'nature conservation' element that the Planning Portal says that the NPPF is applicable, covers many policies that assist with the legislation for nature conservation under this heading –thus a major overlap of policy and nature conservation. Councillors of local authority planning applications have discussions which revolve around the interpretation of certain paragraphs of the NPPF, since that is embedded in the how applications are determined, giving weight to certain issues. In particular it is clear that 'protected species' are always material considerations, especially badgers, bats, but also including all birds, great crested newts, snakes, hazel dormice, hares and otters.

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This brings us into the realms of UK protected species, as BAPs, and Action Plans, and EU laws which were seamlessly swept over into UK law on Brexit.

All material considerations. Biodiversity 2020 reminds us that '*where (action plans) can be clearly demonstrated as being of relevance to a local plan then these should continue to be a material consideration*'.

Priority Habitats and Priority Species, all protected under Section 41 lists of the NERC Act 2006 and remain material considerations. So in the case of the Powdermill Stream it plays host to EU protected species as well as UK protected species. If ever there was a case for offering guardianship to the waterway that is The Powdermill Stream. This is particularly relevant right now, as the locals have declared in August 2025 the stream to be Dead.

Now is the time to confer community guardianship as UK environmental law is wanting.

Dr John Feltwell, Dip EC Law john@wildlifematters.com 8 Aug 2025

**Table WM08 Tree Survey in Christian Healing Centre, 3rd June 2025
Carried out by Diane and Joel Burnham**

Tree No	Longitude	Latitude	Species	Girth (m)
1	50.89024	0.50279	Oak	3.57
2	50.89017	0.50339	Oak	3.48
3	50.89016	0.50332	Laburnum	0.28 (main of 3 stems)
4	50.89008	0.50326	Wild Cherry	0.69
5	50.89012	0.50331	False Acacia	1.28, 1.8 (double stem)
6	50.88992	0.50329	Oak	1.75
7	50.88984	0.50329	Oak	1.83
8	50.88974	0.50303	Oak	2.75
9	50.88976	0.50278	Wild Cherry	1.6
10	50.88960	0.50286	Deodar Cedar	1.48
11	50.88968	0.50320	Oak	3.15
12	50.88977	0.50322	Common Yew	1.58
13	50.88966	0.50326	Oak	2.50

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14	50.88950	0.50330	Honey Locust	0.40 approx
15	50.88986	0.50287	Oak (by pond)	3.00 approx
16	50.88932	0.50371	Field Maple x 2	1.00 and 1.50 approx
17	50.8880	0.50387	Wild Cherry	1.79
18	50.8871	0.50357	Deodar Cedar	1.78
19	50.88762	0.50362	White Willow/ Golden Weeping	1.94 nearish railway line
20	50.88863	0.50329	Weeping Willow	1.96 nearish railway line
21	50.88862	0.50313	Northern Red Oak	1.64 nearish railway line
22	50.88870	0.50307	Korean Fir	0.74
23	50.88874	0.50316	Almond Willow	0.40 average of long line of trees
24	50.88863	0.50273	Pedunculate Oak	3.65 hollow trunk and lots of ivy
25	50.88870	0.50270	Ash	Several dead ash trees
26	50.88886	0.50263	Horse Chestnut	1.29
27	50.88886	0.50243	Black Poplar (F) / Cottonwood	1.70 Near railway line corner/ Twitten
28	50.88924	0.50224	Oak	2.50 approx railway/Twitten
Number of species			20 species	

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Map of area around the Christian Healing Centre (taken off [Trees Outside Woodland](#) website – North is to the top of page), showing the green area (the Healing Centre – at 9 o'clock) which is where trees 1-16 are located roughly located around the car park, cafe seating area and towards the pond. The rest were down along the walk and along parallel to the railway line.

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Table WM07 Vascular Plants recorded from Crowhurst

- 1 = Churchyard⁶¹
 2 = Muriel's Meadow (MM)⁶²
 3 = Triangle on Ballard's Hill⁶³
 4 = Millennium Garden Verge⁶⁴
 5 = Church verge
 6 = Village Hall verge (= MUGA)
 7 = Nashes Farm verge
 8 = Records from SBRC: dates of 'last seen'
 T = tree

Blue - an introduced species

Green – a protected species

RED – A 'Red-Listed' plant species by SXBRC

Table WM09

SPECIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	T	1 Cya	2 MM	3 Tri	4 Mill	5 ChuV	6 Mug	7 Na	8
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	T							x	
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	T	C	x						
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow		C					x	x	
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Elder, Ground							x		
<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	Agrimony		C							
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent		C							
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent		C							
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Bugle		C	x			x			
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic Mustard		C							
<i>Allium vineale</i>	Wild Onion		C							
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow Foxtail		C							

⁶¹ Recorded in St George's Church, Crowhurst by Judy Clark, Ellen Campbell and Jacqueline Rose on 14.02.2017, 18.04.2017 and 15.09.2017. up to 2019 (114 spp)

⁶² Recorded by David Horne 1 June 2019

⁶³ Recorded by Frances Royston and Sonia Plato 11 May 2019

⁶⁴ The following wildflowers were planted on the Millennium Garden Verge on 11 May 2019: foxgloves, evening primrose, cranesbill, ox eye daisies, viper's bugloss, wild angelica and cowslips, donated as native plants from plants from Julia Desch. Arisings for wildlife recovery verges and Muriel's Meadow were donated from the wildflower meadows at Great Dixter and also donated by Ian Donovan, Crowhurst horticulturalist

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<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel		C							
<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	Wood Anemone		C				x			
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow Parsley		C	x	x	x	x		x	
<i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i>	Thale Cress		C							
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat Grass		C							
<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Wild Arum/Lords-and-Ladies		C	x		x	x		x	
<i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i>	Wall-rue		C							
<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>	Hart's-tongue Fern		C							
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy		C		x		x	x		
<i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>	Wood False-brome grass		C							
<i>Brassica nigra</i>	Mustard, Black							x		
<i>Buddleia davidii</i>	Buddleia					x				
<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	Wavy Bittercress		C							
<i>Cardamine hirsute</i>	Bittercress, Hairy			x						
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	Cuckoo Flower		C	x						
<i>Cardamine sp.</i>	Bittercress					x				
<i>Carex divulsa</i> subsp. <i>divulsa</i>	Grey Sedge		C							
<i>Carex pendula</i>	Pendulous Sedge		C							
<i>Carex sp.</i>	Sedge						x	x	x	
<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	Wood Sedge		C							
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Chestnut, Sweet	T								x
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Knapweed		C	x					x	
<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>	Greater Knapweed			x			x			
<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>	Sticky Mouse-ear		C							
<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>	Rosebay Willowherb		C							
<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>	Enchanter's Nightshade			x						
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Convolvulus, Bindweed							x		
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	T								x
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	T				x			x	
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard		C							
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Thistle, Creeping		C		x			x	x	
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Thistle, Spear		C							
<i>Cyclamen hederifolium</i>	Sowbread		C							
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>	Ivy-leaved Toadflax		C							
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot grass		C							
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Carrot, Wild								x	

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<i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i>	Tufted Hair-grass		C							
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Willowherb			x				x	x	
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	Broad-leaved Willowherb		C	x						
<i>Equisetum sp.</i>	Horsetail			x					x	
<i>Erysimum cheiri</i>	Wallflower		C							
<i>Euphorbia peplus</i>	Petty Spurge		C							
<i>Fagus sylvestris</i>	Beech (seedling)	T					x			
<i>Festuca rubra</i> agg.	Red Fescue		C					x		
<i>Ficaria verna</i>	Lesser Celandine		C							
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Strawberry, Wild			x			x			
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	T	C							x
<i>Galanthus elwesii</i>	Greater Snowdrop		C							
<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>	Snowdrop		C			x	x			
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers		C	x		x	x			
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill		C							
<i>Geranium pratense</i>	Meadow Crane's Bill			x						
<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>	Hedgerow Crane's Bill			x						
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb Robert		C	x					x	
<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i>	Geranium, Round-leaved				x		x	x	x	
<i>Geum sp.</i>	Avens					x	x		x	
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood Avens		C	x			x	x		
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground Ivy		C	x	x			x	x	
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy		C				x	x	x	
<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>	Bristly Ox-tongue		C							
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed		C	x	x	x	x		x	
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog grass		C							
<i>Hottonia palustris</i>	Water violet									2003
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	Bluebell		C	x			x			
<i>Hyacinthoides x massartiana</i>	Hybrid Bluebell		C			x				
<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>	Frogbit									2011
<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Tutsan		C							
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	St John's Wort			x		x				
<i>Hypericum tetrapterum</i>	Square-stalked St John's-wort		C							

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<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Cat's-ear		C								
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly		C								
<i>Iris foetidissima</i>	Stinking Iris			x							
<i>Juncus artictus</i>	Rush			x							
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft-rush		C								
<i>Kerria japonica</i>	Kerria					x					
<i>Lamium album</i>	White Dead-nettle								x		
<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	Red Dead-nettle		C						x		
<i>Lapsana communis</i>	Nipplewort		C								
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling		C								
<i>Lathyrus sp.</i>	Vetch					x	x	x	x		
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Ox-eye Daisy		C	x					x		
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Rye grass		C				x	x			
<i>Lonicera periclymenon</i>	Honeysuckle								x		
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot Trefoil		C	x							
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	Field Woodrush		C	x							
<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>	Creeping Jenny		C								
<i>Malus pumila</i>	Apple (domestic)		C								
<i>Medicago arabica</i>	Spotted Medick		C								
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick		C								
<i>Melampyrum pratense</i>	Common cow wheat										2012
<i>Mentha arvensis</i>	Corn Mint			x							2007
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	Dog's Mercury		C	x			x		x		
<i>Muscari armeniacum</i>	Grape Hyacinth		C								
<i>Myosotis sp.</i>	Forget me not					x			x		
<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>	Wood Forget-me-not		C								
<i>Myriophyllum verticillatum</i>	Whorled Water-milfoil										1995
<i>Narcissus agg.</i>	Daffodil		C		x	x	x	x	x		
<i>Oenanthe crocata</i>	Hemlock Water-Dropwort			x							
<i>Papaver somniferum</i>	Opium Poppy		C								
<i>Picris echinodes</i>	Bristly Ox tongue							x			
<i>Pilosella officinarum</i>	Mouse-ear Hawkweed		C								
<i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	Burnet-saxifrage		C								
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain		C				x	x	x		
<i>Plantago major</i>	Greater Plantain		C		x	x	x				
<i>Platanus hybrid</i>	London Plane	T									x
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual Meadow Grass		C			x	x	x			
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Rough Meadow		C								

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	Grass									
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	Knotgrass		C							
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	Tormentil		C							
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping Cinquefoil		C							
<i>Potentilla sterilis</i>	Barren Strawberry		C							
<i>Potentilla sp.</i>	Potentilla					x				
<i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip			x						
<i>Primula veris x vulgaris</i>	False Oxlip			x						
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Primrose		C				x	x		
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Self-heal		C	x						
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Cherry	T	C							
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Sloe/ Blackthorn	T					x	x		
<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	Fleabane			x	x			x		
<i>Quercus cerris</i>	Turkey Oak	T				x				
<i>Quercus robur</i>	English Oak	T	C			x				
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup		C		x					
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	Celandine, Lesser		C	x	x	x	x	x	x	
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup		C	x	x	x	x	x	x	
<i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i>	Celery Leaved buttercup		C	x						
<i>Ribes sp.</i>	Raspberry								x	
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog-rose		C	x					x	
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble		C	x		x	x	x	x	
<i>Rumex acetosa</i> subsp. <i>acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel		C	x						
<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>	Wood Dock		C							
<i>Rumex sp.</i>	Dock				x	x	x	x	x	
<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	Procumbent Pearlwort		C							
<i>Salix capraea</i>	Sallow	T							x	
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	T	C							x
<i>Scorzonoides autumnalis</i>	Autumn Hawkbit		C							
<i>Sedum album</i>	White Stonecrop		C							
<i>Sedum rupestre</i>	Reflexed Stonecrop		C							
<i>Senecio erucifolius</i>	Hoary Ragwort		C							
<i>Senecio jacobaeae</i>	Ragwort						x			
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	Groundsel		C				x			
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Campion								x	
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	Nightshade, Woody					x				
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Prickly Sowthistle		C			x	x	x		
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sowthistle		C							
<i>Spergula arvensis</i>	Corn Spurrey RED									2008

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<i>Stachys arvensis</i>	Field Woundwort									2011
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Stitchwort, Lesser		C							
<i>Stellaria holostea</i>	Stitchwort								x	
<i>Stellaria media</i>	Chickweed				x					
<i>Stratiotes aloides</i>	Water soldier RED									1990
<i>Tamus communis</i>	White bryony								x	
<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>	Feverfew								x	
<i>Taraxacum</i> agg.	Dandelion		C		x 1	x	x	x	x	
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew	T	C							
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover		C		x		x		x	
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover		C							
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse		C				x		x	
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle		C		x	x	x	x	x	
<i>Utricularia australis</i>	Bladderwort 'Sussex Rare'									2003
<i>Veronica arvensis</i>	Wall Speedwell		C							
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander Speedwell		C							
<i>Veronica filiformis</i>	Slender Speedwell		C							
<i>Veronica hederifolia</i> subsp. <i>hederifolia</i>	Ivy-leaved Speedwell		C							
<i>Veronica persica</i>	Common Field-speedwell		C							
<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>	Thyme-leaved Speedwell		C							
<i>Veronica</i> sp.	Veronica					x	x			
<i>Vicia hirsute</i>	Hairy Tare		C							
<i>Vicia sativa</i> subsp. <i>segetalis</i>	Common Vetch		C							
<i>Vicia sepium</i>	Bush Vetch		C							
<i>Viola odorata</i>	Sweet Violet		C							
<i>Viola riviniana</i>	Common Dog-violet		C							
<i>Viola</i> sp.	Violet						x		x	
	Pyramidal orchid CDA 2.7.24									
	Autumn Ladies Tresses CDA 8.9.14									
	Broad-leaved Helleborine CDA 4.7.20									

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Although there are 14 tree species listed above, there are many other tree species within the parish, particularly those in the working woodlands, such as Sweet Chestnut, Hornbeam and Silver Birch. Gorse and Broom are widespread in the parish. Invasive species include *leylandii* and *rhododendron*.

A modest review of some of the trees of the parish was completed in 2017 (see Technical Appendix WM02) and a review of the trees around the Recreation Ground in 2019 (see Technical Appendix WM03).

BRYOPHYTES (Mosses and Liverworts)

On 3 Feb 2024 we were honoured to have a visit by bryophytologists to survey the area for mosses and liverworts. They started on the churchyard and recorded 64⁶⁵ species. A quote from their write-up is as follows: (very few these species have an English Common name.

The common species included the thallose liverwort *Lunularia cruciata*, plus mosses of turf and banks: *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*, *Brachythecium rutabulum*, *Plagiomnium undulatum*, *Fissidens taxifolius*, *Calliergonella cuspidatum* and *Mnium hornum*. On the damp shady wall of the church were *Neckera complanata* and *Tortula marginata*, and a variety of species on more exposed walls. In all, we found 37 different species in the churchyard, which is a very respectable number. Sue tells me that Tom also found *Didymodon vinealis* on the church wall in 2015 but that was the only thing we missed. However, we added *Bryum dichotomum*, *Pseudocrossidium revolutum*, *Weissia controversa* and *Barbula convoluta* to the tetrad total, which now stands at 134 taxa, an astonishingly high number. In Sussex it is only the High Weald that is likely to have over 100 bryophyte species in a 2x2 km square, and only sites such as Eridge Rocks and the best of the other sandstone outcrops have 140 or more. (with thanks to Brad Scott and the BBS SE Group⁶⁶ field meeting.

To read the whole of their survey report go to

<https://sussexbryophytes.wordpress.com/2024/04/01/crowhurst/>



Bryophytologists members in the churchyard in 2024

Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) in Crowhurst

There are seven TPOs, the latest being the 1066 Yew tree in 2024.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Hoping to get this up to 80 species next time

⁶⁶ British Bryophyte Society, Southeast group (BBS SE Group)

⁶⁷ Rother District Council, <https://www.rother.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/online-mapping/> (retrieved 30 March 2020)

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Table WM10

Number	Location	Description
1	The Firs	Row of 6 trees, + 26 scattered trees
2	Beside Station entrance (The Oaks, Badgers Holt, The Haven)	Two blocks of trees
3	Southmead, Swainham Lane	Two blocks of oaks, and a single oak
4	Adj Sandrock Hill	Large woodland area
5	Land adj Sabon Gari, Chapel Hill	Woodland, S41 woodland
6	Land adj Woodland Way	
7	Churchyard, The 1066 Yew tree	New TPO 1 Nov 2024

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Three TPOs shown on this map © Ordnance Survey, © RDC

This shows a ghost TPO on Galley Hill (still present on RDC website, 2.11.25)

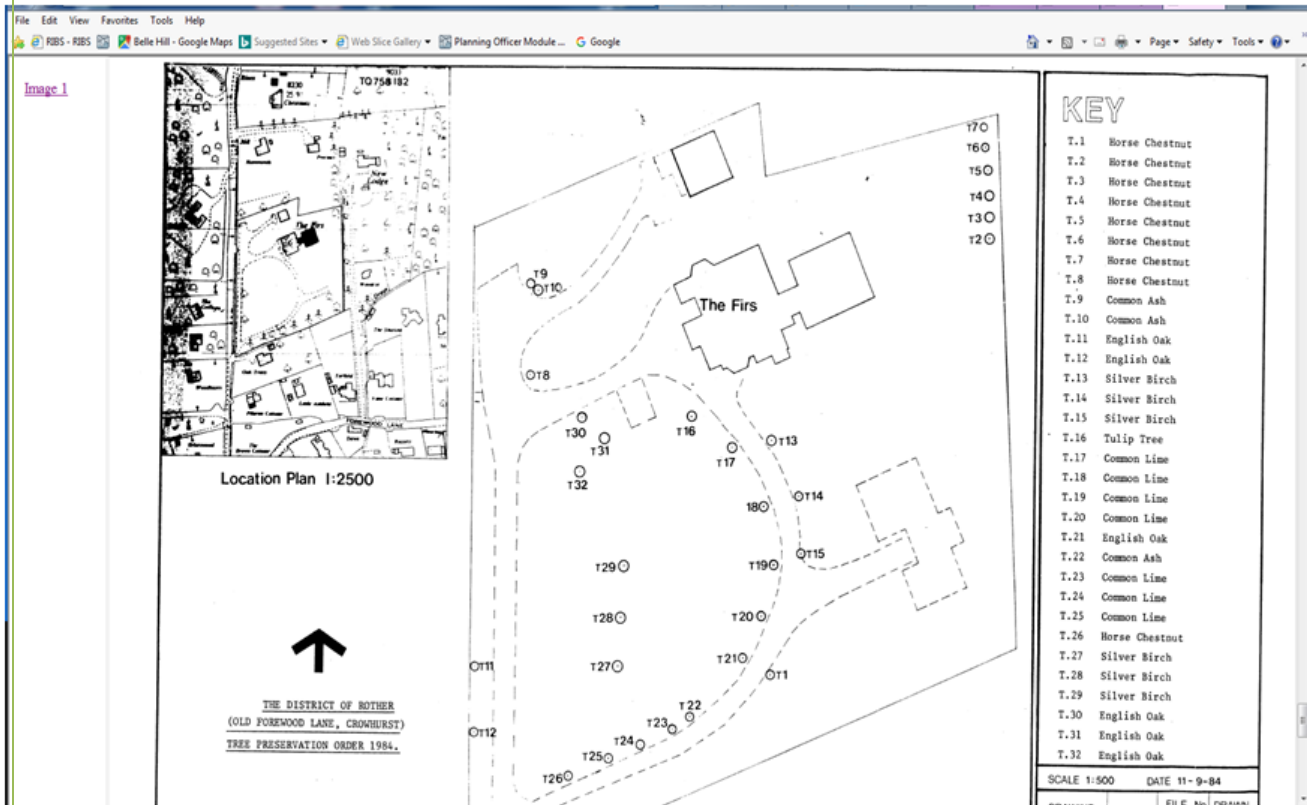
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Tree Protection Orders (TPOs), continued...

The plan below is headed:

'The Rother District (Old Forewood Lane, Crowhurst) Tree Preservation Order 1984.
At scale of 1:2500

No. 1 Forewood Lane



© Ordnance Survey, © Rother District Council

The three TPO details:

1. Land at The Haven, Station Road, Crowhurst 1999, Reference no. TPO 186.
2. Sabon Gari - land adj., Crowhurst, 2018, Reference no. TPO 380.
3. Land at Blacksmith Field, Sandrock Hill, Crowhurst, 1995, Reference no. TPO 150.

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No. 2 Ballards Hill - a case for TPO

The case for TPO'ing the woodlands around Chapel Hill and Ballards Hill
Area to be TPO'd: within the red line. Not included is the garden of Sabon Gari which has had permission to be removed (January 2021).

Reasons: part of it (dark green) is already a Priority Woodland protected by Section 41 of NERC (2006). However, RDC Planning have permitted removal of some of this protected woodland. Therefore the remainder needs to be protected as NERC (2006) and TPO provision has failed to protect the woodland. This block of woodland is near the centre of the parish and has a landscape and nature conservation value. It also has good connectivity, via hedgerows with other parts of the village, which needs to be protected from fragmentation.



KEY

Green (Lemon): SOUTH SIDE Chapel Hill Broadleaf Woodland = 2.26 ha
 Green (Lemon): NORTH SIDE Chapel Hill Broadleaf Woodland = 0.63ha
 Green (Dark): 'Priority Habitat Inventory', Deciduous Woodland' 0.63ha
 No colour (in centre) : 'Conifer woodland' = 0.51ha

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No. 3 Swainham Lane

A new TPO in 2022

A temporary TPO (No. 416) was issued by RDC, dated 2 January 2022, for 12 Oak trees along Swainham Lane at Land at Southmead, where some other mature trees had already been felled during 2021.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

The Rother District Council (Land at Southmead Swainham Lane Crowhurst TPO416) Tree Preservation Order 2022

The Rother District Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on them by section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 make the following Order

Citation

1. This Order may be cited as the **Rother District Council (Land at Southmead Swainham Lane Crowhurst TPO416) Tree Preservation Order 2022**.

Interpretation

2. (1) In this Order "the authority" means the Rother District Council.
(2) In this Order any reference to a numbered section is a reference to the section so numbered in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and any reference to a numbered regulation is a reference to the regulation so numbered in the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012.

Effect

3. (1) Subject to article 4, this Order takes effect provisionally on the date on which it is made.
(2) Without prejudice to subsection (7) of section 198 (power to make tree preservation orders) or subsection (1) of section 200 (tree preservation orders: Forestry Commissioners) and, subject to the exceptions in regulation 14, no person shall—
(a) cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage, or wilfully destroy; or
(b) cause or permit the cutting down, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of, any tree specified in the Schedule to this Order except with the written consent of the authority in accordance with regulations 16 and 17, or of the Secretary of State in accordance with regulation 23, and, where such consent is given subject to conditions, in accordance with those conditions.

Application to trees to be planted pursuant to a condition

4. In relation to any tree identified in the first column of the Schedule by the letter "C", being a tree to be planted pursuant to a condition imposed under paragraph (a) of section 197 (planning permission to include appropriate provision for preservation and planting of trees), this Order takes effect as from the time when the tree is planted.

Dated this 24th day of January 2022

.....
Executive Director, Rother District Council

.....
Member of the Rother District Council



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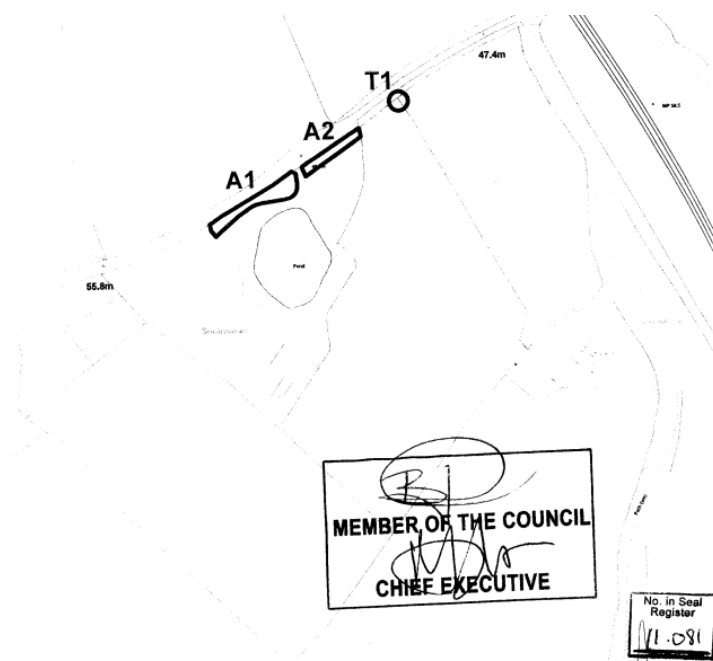
Specification of trees

Trees specified individually (encircled in black on the map)

Reference on map	Description	Situation
T1	OAK	The mature oak tree is on the roadside at Southmead, on the south side of Swainham Lane.

Trees specified by reference to an area (within a dotted black line on the map)

Reference on map	Description	Situation
A1	6 OAK TREES	The mature oak trees are on the roadside at Southmead, on the south side of Swainham Lane.
A2	5 OAK TREES	The mature oak trees are on the roadside at Southmead, on the south side of Swainham Lane.



01 Dec 2025

The TPOd trees outside Southmead



T1 Oak tree at entrance to property



01 Dec 2025

No. 5 TPO No. 380 Chapel Hill, opp The Plough Public House

TPO No. 380 was put on the block of woodland opposite the pub by Rother District Council (RDC) in 2018.

The reasons for the TPO were that it was triply protected as a i) 'Priority Woodland (on RDC's website as such), and ii) 'irreplaceable' woodland and was in the iii) High Weald Natural Landscape (formerly the AONL), and was under threat of development.

Crowhurst villagers pride themselves in having a very wooded parish.

Villagers were confident that Rother were fulfilling their Biodiversity Duty under the Environment Act 2021, having signed up to the Climate Emergency in 2019.

So it was a surprise that Rother approved planning for two semi-detached buildings on half the site.

Timeline: A planning application for the TPO site was submitted in 2020 despite it being a TPO. The Case Officer Mr T. Hardwick said in his Officer's Report (14 Jan 2021) he had to weigh up the need to build more houses. Of course the ca £87,185 CIL money (officer's calculation) that Rother would receive for these four new houses would have been an important consideration as Rother have a current £3.8m deficit (Cllr Chas Pearce, CPC). Trees started to be felled from early November 2023.

The Crowhurst Parish Council (CPC) were appalled and sent the following motion to Rother:

The parish council deplore RDC's decision to permit any new building within any TPO, within any part of the AONB and within any Section 41 NERC woodland, all of which Rother seek to conserve as shown as maps on their website. This is the case for the TPO/AONB/S41 NERC habitat land adjacent to Sabon Gari on Chapel Hill – all now gone. Crowhurst only has 4 TPO's and now has lost one from Rother giving planning permission for houses. The only worst scenario is Rother permitting development within any of the three SSSI's which we would also deplore. As Rother signed up to the Climate Emergency in 2019, which contained an obligation to protect biodiversity, we would like to register our disappointment of their shortcomings (Minutes of CPC Meeting, Monday 18th December 2023). The CPC also stated that 'Rother had now admitted that they made a mistake' and 'The remains of an Oak tree have been noted but this alone would not be considered to be an offence that would justify the cost of any prosecution.' (Sarah Shepherd, RDC, 5 December 2023).

Rother have been approached for their comment to the motion, but to date, no response.

The following was put in Crowhurst News: **RIP TPO380 5 years 10 months.**


Enjoy the woodland amenity!

- This is woodland on Chapel Hill, protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO 380)
- This is in the High Weald AONB
- This is a Woodland Habitat protected by Rother, under Section 41 (NERC)
- Part of it was permitted to be removed under Planning Permission RR/2020/945/P.
- The remaining part was to be conserved, but it has been destroyed.
- A part of the parish's finite Natural Capital has been lost, a Nett Loss registered.
- Your Parish Council wish to see a conviction.

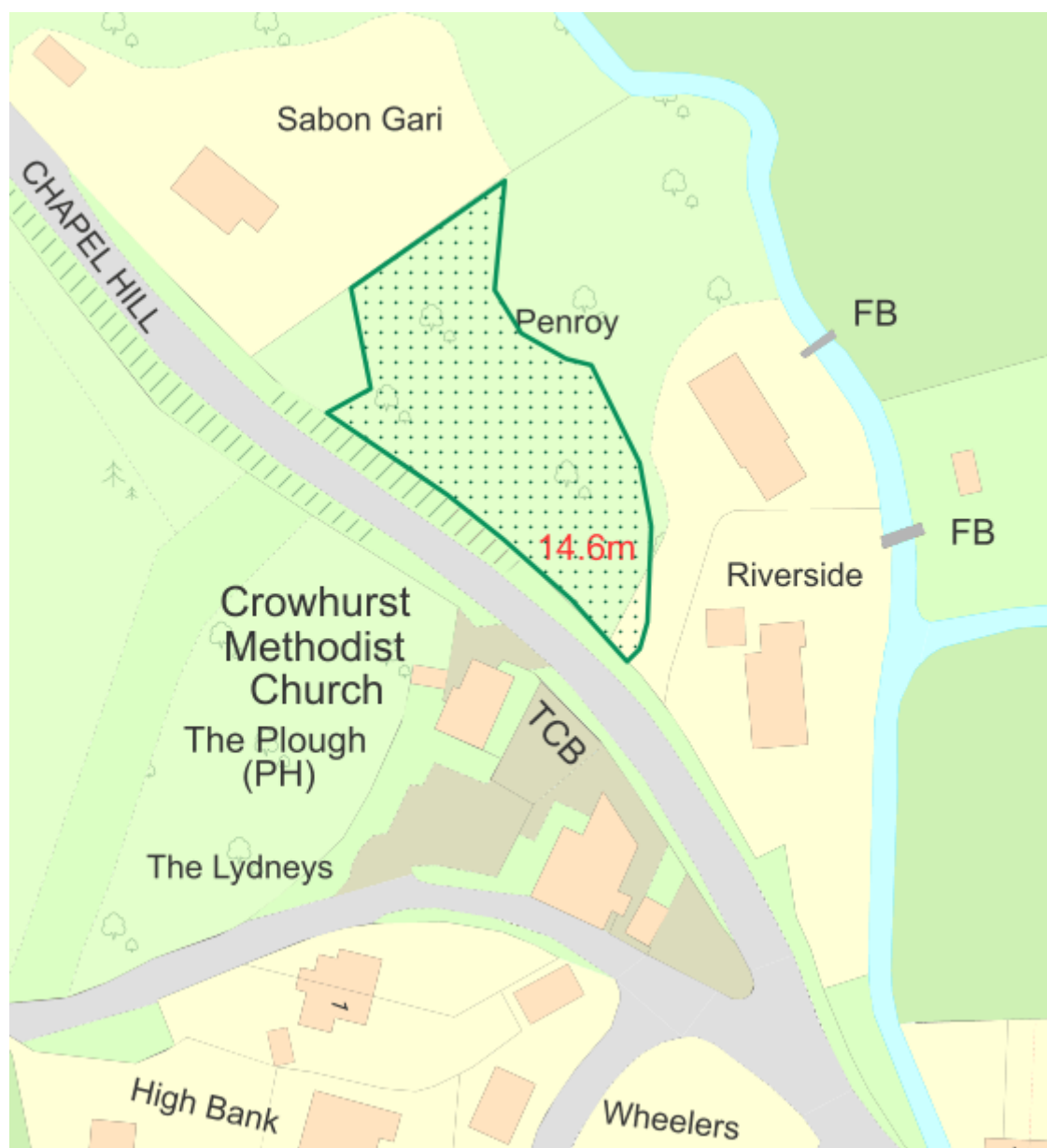
Your Tree Warden apologises for not being able to conserve the woodland other than having a TPO placed on it in January 2018.

R.I.P. TPO 380 5 years, 10 months

Dr John Feltwell, Crowhurst Tree Warden



History of the LOSS of TPO (No.380) on Chapel Hill



(‘Land adjacent Sabon Gari’)

01 Dec 2025

The demise of TPO390 **The evidence**

It is sad to report that Rother overturned a TPO that they created eight years earlier.

- The TPO was made in January 2018
- The TPO was overturned in November 2023 via Application RR/2020/945/P

R.I.P. TPO 5 years, 10 months (Notice in Crowhurst News Dec 2023, p. 8)

The woodland was 'Priority' 'irreplaceable' woodland are Section 41 habitats as in NERC Act. The TPO was overturned since Rother approved four dwellings on the site. This represents a green asset that has now been permanently removed, and cannot be replaced. It is doubly sad as the site has been cleared of trees, and now after two years has not been built-out and now (Oct 25) looks like a derelict site. A waste of finite green space.

Many of the trees in the parish had already been assessed for their value, using a approved methodology used by Councils and Highways for assessing amenity value of trees in the UK. The calculation is based on CAVAT (CAPITAL ASSET VALUATION of AMENITY TREES).

This Biodiversity Audit of Crowhurst details the information on CAVAT (on page 167, available on the CPC website), and lists the various trees already assessed, the amenity value being £3m. This data had been available on the CPC website for the last two years.

The loss of any amenity TPO trees within the parish that are removed for any reason other than planning permission are liable to be charged for their amenity value according to CAVAT. This bill is for a single tree lost. CPC reserve the right to add further CAVAT value to invoices for other trees lost.

The CPC decided to calculate the value of a nominal healthy oak tree that Rother agreed had been felled, amongst the many others felled on the site. The value of that tree (circ 204cm) with a value of £64,255. Cllr Sonia Plato said.....'CPC have been asked for a response to the invoice, but to date there is no response to this either.'⁶⁸

The Chair of the Crowhurst Environment Group (CEG) - and Tree Warden - Dr John Feltwell said ... *'It is astonishing that Rother would allow this development inside a TPO, inside a Priority Habitat and inside the HWNB, in the centre of the village, thus breaking up the continuity of habitats along Chapel Hill.'* The response from authorities was disappointing. The Police registered the incident and sent a 'do not reply' acknowledgement, the Environment Agency said it was '*not their remit*' and the Rother Tree Officer (Brian Griffiths) was conspicuously silent on all requests for clarification.

⁶⁸ Minutes of Crowhurst Parish Council, 20 December 2023

No. 5 Crowhurst Road

IMPORTANT - THIS COMMUNICATION MAY AFFECT YOUR PROPERTY

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (TREE PRESERVATION)(ENGLAND)
REGULATIONS 2012**

**THE DISTRICT OF ROTHER (LAND KILBARRY, CROWHURST ROAD,
CROWHURST- TPO415) TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 2021**



ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL

To: Mr J De Bruxelles
Kilbarry
Crowhurst Road
Crowhurst, Battle
East Sussex TN33 9AR

THIS IS A FORMAL NOTICE to let you know that on 15th November 2021 the Council made the above Tree Preservation Order.

A copy of the Order is enclosed. In simple terms, it prohibits anyone from cutting down, topping or lopping any of the trees described in the Schedule and shown on the map without the Council's consent.

The Council have made the Order because the trees are a prominent feature in the landscape visible from Crowhurst Road, Sandrock Hill, Crowhurst Recreation Ground and public footpath 16a (1066 Country Walk).

The mature trees on the western boundary of the paddocks to the rear of Kilbarry form the boundary with the adjacent property known as Oakleigh. Various site clearance and earth moving works have been carried out on this adjacent land.

The Council are concerned that owners of the adjacent land may cut back overhanging branches on the boundary with the paddocks and that this would have a serious detrimental effect on the safety, health and longevity of these boundary trees.

The Order took effect on a provisional basis, on the date the Order was made. It will continue in force on this basis for a further 6 months or until the Order is confirmed by the Council, whichever first occurs.

The Council will consider whether the Order should be confirmed, that is to say, whether it should take effect formally. Before this decision is made, the people affected by the Order have a right to make objections to other representations about any of the trees, groups of trees or woodlands covered by the Order.

If you would like to make any objections or other comments, please make sure we receive them in writing by 16th December 2021. Your comments must comply with regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012, a copy of which is provided overleaf. Send your comments to Mrs. K. Newton, Wealden and Rother District Council's joint legal service, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 3JX – karen.newton@wealden.gov.uk. All valid objections or representations are carefully considered before a decision on whether to confirm the Order is made.

01 Dec 2025

The Council will write to you again when that decision has been made. In the meantime, if you would like any further information or have any questions about this letter, please contact Mrs. K. Newton, Wealden and Rother District Council's joint legal service, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 3JX (tel. 01424 787843).

Signed:

Dated: 15th November 2021

on behalf of Rother District Council
Town Hall
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex TN39 3JX

KEN/9/5/380

NOTE**COPY OF REGULATION 6 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (TREE PRESERVATION)(ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012****6.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), objections and representations—****(a) shall be made in writing and—**

(i) delivered to the authority not later than the date specified by them under regulation 5(2)(c); or

(ii) sent to the authority in a properly addressed and pre-paid letter posted at such time that, in the ordinary course of post, it would be delivered to them not later than that date;

(b) shall specify the particular trees, groups of trees or woodlands (as the case may be) in respect of which such objections and representations are made; and

(c) in the case of an objection, shall state the reasons for the objection.

(2) The authority may treat as duly made objections and representations which do not comply with the requirements of paragraph (1) if, in the particular case, they are satisfied that compliance with those requirements could not reasonably have been expected.

01 Dec 2025

GREEN SPACES

Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Local Greenspace Description reviewed Nov 2023

In 2018 the landowners, as keen environmentalists, felt that they were no longer able to manage the meadow and asked that the Crowhurst Environment Group (CEG) take on its management and develop it as a traditional wildflower meadow able to be enjoyed as a community resource by local people.

It is bequeathed to Sussex Wildlife Trust by the landowner to ensure it remains as a community wildlife asset and will continue to be managed by local volunteers until that time.

In 2022, Sussex Wildlife Trust agreed to take on the long term management of the Meadow due to its ecological value as a restored wildlife meadow and richness of its wildlife. The landowner has given consent to the Meadow being designated as a Local Green Space as part of our revised Neighbourhood Development Plan

Value as a community wildlife asset:

In 2019, CEG, an unincorporated voluntary group, was formed made up of local residents seeking to fulfill a key aspiration of the Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019) to conserve, enhance and monitor the natural environment and assets of the Parish.

Following the 2019 Climate & Ecological Emergency Resolution of Crowhurst Parish Council, the CEG gained designation wildlife status of local verges (that included Muriel's Meadow) as important wildlife habitats. Although not a verge it is adjacent to a lane.

A Sussex Lund grant was awarded for the purpose of returning the land to traditional wildflower meadow to be used as a community resource of environmental significance which would be managed by local volunteers.

Over the past 4 years the Meadow has continued to be managed as a wildflower meadow, using traditional meadow management by groups of local volunteers who have learnt traditional skills in order to do so, such as scything.

The Meadow has now achieved a high level of biodiversity. Although a small site it is rich in biodiversity and getting richer the more it is managed and surveyed.

New hedging was also planted by resident volunteers as part of the i Dig project. Sheep from a Crowhurst animal rescue centre graze the meadow in the autumn and winter months which rescue donkeys had grazed before.]

A butterfly survey is carried out 3 times a year by RSPB Fore Wood volunteers. Regular wildlife surveys also take place by Dr John Feltwell, local ecologist and members of CEG.

The Meadow has special significance to the local community due to its beauty, peaceful location, richness of wildlife and as a shared community space. Its community value also lies in the involvement of local people in its restoration and ongoing management as a traditional wildflower meadow in the High Weald.

An information board has been installed adjacent to the Meadow with information for local residents with regular updates to Crowhurst villagers in the monthly newsletter. It is a community asset at the heart of one of the quieter places of the parish.

01 Dec 2025

Proposed New Local Green Spaces as shown on CNDP Map 3a.

Muriel's Meadow - Breadsell Lane, Crowhurst, East Sussex TN38 8EB Grid Reference OS 772122

The meadow is 0.595 hectares and is bordered by three Public Rights of Way CRH/4/2. CRH/21/4. CRH/20/4, stream and typical Wealden deciduous woodland. Registered as a wildlife asset in the Crowhurst Biodiversity Audit, it lies in the High Weald AONB and is typically characteristic of lowland meadows. The meadow is currently privately owned and was purchased approximately 30 years ago. 2023

Local Green Space Description and Evidence, as shown in CNDP Map 3 and 3a – Local Green Space

Proposed New Local Green Spaces as shown on CNDP Map 3a.

Muriel's Meadow - Breadsell Lane, Crowhurst, East Sussex TN38 8EB Grid Reference OS 772122

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The NP has 4 Local Green Spaces (LGS) designated and we have identified another one to take forward to our updated submission stage. These are:

1. RSPB Fore Wood Nature Reserve
2. St Georges Churchyard
3. Crowhurst Recreation Ground
4. Crowhurst Nature Reserve (Quarry Wood)
5. New - Muriel's Meadow

Information about the LGSs can be found on the Parish Council website at [Local Green Space Description and Evidence reviewed Nov23.doc \(live.com\)](#). I have also attached the document to this email. Since 2019 a further 60+m of native hedgerow has been planted along the western boundary of the Recreation Ground to improve the wildlife corridor and biodiversity. Please note that we have decided not to pursue Cinderbrook as an LGS.

The Parish also has wildlife verges that have been designated with East Sussex:

1. Verge outside St Georges Church
2. Next to the MUGA at the village hall
3. Opposite Nashes Farm

The evidence does not describe the biodiversity in detail so I have also attached some further information that may be helpful. Biodiversity Audit - This is regularly updated by Dr John Feltwell and is an excellent document identifying habitats and flora/fauna in the Parish . [Crowhurst Parish Council \(crowhurstpc.co.uk\)](#) 2023 Butterfly survey of the Wildflower verges and Muriel's Meadow Quarry Wood website link with further information on its biodiversity - [tales from quarry wood](#)

Crowhurst places a great importance on its Environment and the Environment Group which was set up after this was identified during surveys while creating our Neighbourhood Plan. There are regular surveys around the village (butterflies/moths, birds, mosses, light pollution etc).

01 Dec 2025

Muriel's Meadow

Local Green Space Description and Evidence, as shown in CNDP Map 3 – Local Green Space

Proposed New Local Green Space as shown on CNDP Map 3.

Muriel's Meadow - Breadsell Lane, Crowhurst, East Sussex TN38 8EB Grid Reference OS 772122

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Registered as a wildlife asset in the Crowhurst Biodiversity Audit, it lies in the High Weald AONB and is typically characteristic of lowland meadows.

The meadow is currently privately owned and was purchased approximately 30 years ago.

Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Local Greenspace Description submission Oct 24 P1



Muriel's Meadow, scything in autumn 2025

01 Dec 2025

Cinderbrook

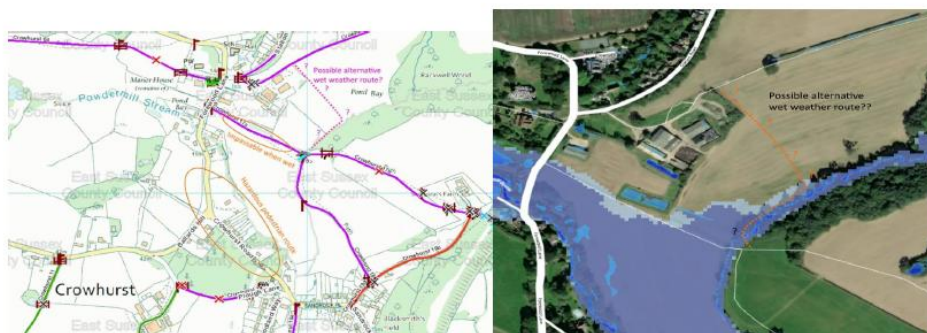
Cinderbrook (TN33 9AL, 50.88N, 0.499E)

Cinderbrook is an existing prominent open space in the centre of the Village. Until recently a grazing field, it is now arable land but crossed by a public right of way. It is enclosed by extensive hedgerows, which form important wildlife corridors and habitats, providing essential linkage for flora and fauna. It is crossed by two important watercourses, the Rackwell and Powdermill Streams, the latter draining from the historic 1066 battlefield. It is a tranquil area, rich in biodiverse aquatic invertebrates and birdlife, owing to the streams.



The area is crossed by a significant footpath, part of the historic 1066 Country Walk, a unique PRoW.

This footpath also serves to connect the two key village hubs and their adjacent residential areas. The community hub to the north west comprises the school, village hall, church and ancient ruin. To the south is the recreation ground, youth club, preschool and pub. This footpath is both a distinctive feature of the landscape and an important connection between the two village centres. This substantial green space perfectly connects the two halves of the community; residents of both halves constantly criss-cross the green space for getting about and recreation.



It is the intention as part of this Plan, to strengthen the footpath route, thus enhancing the walking experience of pedestrians. Because the land is low-lying, it is liable to become muddy and it is proposed to either relocate the footpath or provide an additional alternative footpath across the higher ground in the northern part of this space. This would increase the usage of this route and make its value as a communication channel between the two parts of the Village even more important. It would strengthen the ability of residents from the northern part of the Village to access the recreational and other facilities on the southern side and residents on the southern side to more readily access the church, school and village hall, without having to drive, thus saving carbon emissions. It would also enable walkers to avoid the road, which links the two centres and which, in places lacks footpaths, thus increasing safety.

Cinderbrook also has an important function in separating the two village centres and settlement areas. Retaining this separation is an essential component in maintaining the rural character of Crowhurst, as described in the Crowhurst Parish Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2023). It is readily accessible to the village community and is in immediate proximity to the community it serves. Its open aspect affords attractive views of the heritage centre and adjoining woodland, which overlook it.

Cinderbrook's setting in the surrounding High Weald landscape, within the High Weald AONB makes it a distinctive village focal point. For these reasons, Cinderbrook is special to the community and of great local significance.

01 Dec 2025**Tree planting**

800 mixed native species saplings were planted 1 January 2021 as part of the 'I Dig Project' to create a new hedge at the Recreation Ground, parallel to the Powdermill stream. This was in line with Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan's aspiration (2019) to protect and enhance biodiversity and the rural nature of the Village.



Black Poplar has also been planted on the Recreation Ground – this was part of the RHS Wisley / Environment Department Project.

01 Dec 2025

Table WM11 Pteridophytes (Ferns) & Bryophytes (Mosses and Liverworts)

A feature of the parish part of the AONL is the Sussex ghylls. These are often deep, steep and shaded and provide ideal habitat for pteridophytes and bryophytes. The following species have been recorded in the parish.

The following species were recorded in Quarry Wood Nature Reserve in October 2008 by members of the South-East Regional Group of the Pteridological Society and details were posted by the warden Paul Johnson on line.⁶⁹

SPECIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	NOTES
PTERIDOPHYTES (FERNS)		
<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>	Hart's Tongue	QW Oct 2008; In the Churchyard, 2019
<i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i>	Wall Rue	In the Churchyard, 2019
<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	Lady Fern	QW Oct 2008
<i>Dryopteris aemula</i>	Hay-scented Buckler Fern	'Regionally important (Atlantic species) RSPB Management Plan, 2016
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Scaly Male Fern	QW Oct 2008
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	Broad Buckler fern	QW Oct 2008
<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	Soft Shield Fern	QW Oct 2008
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Male Fern	In the Churchyard, 2019
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	QW Oct 2008
SPECIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	NOTES
MOSESSES		
<i>Bryum dunense</i>	(moss)	'Nsc' RSPB Management Plan, 2016
<i>Fissidens exiguus</i>	(moss)	'Near-threatened' 'Restricted to one deep Ghyll rockface' RSPB Management Plan, 2016
<i>Fissidens rivularis</i>	(moss)	'Nsc, Restricted to the ghylls'. RSPB Management Plan, 2016
<i>Leucobryum juniperoideum</i>	(moss)	'Nsc' RSPB Management Plan, 2016

⁶⁹ Tales from Quarry Wood, by Paul Johnson, warden of Crowhurst Nature Reserve. Fabulous Ferns. October 2008.

<https://talesfromquarrywood.wordpress.com/previous-articles/2008-9/fabulous-ferns-oct-2008/> (retrieved 27 Feb 2020).

01 Dec 2025

Table WM12 FUNGI recorded from site See photographs taken in Quarry Wood ⁷⁰

SPECIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	RECORDER
Marline Valley Wood (SSSI)		
<i>Agaricus arvensis</i>	Horse mushrooms	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Agaricus campestris</i>	Field mushrooms	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Boletus edulis</i>	Cep, Penny Bun	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Calvatia excipuliformis</i>	Puff-ball	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Cantharellus cibarius</i>	Chanterelle	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Coprinus comatus</i>	Shaggy ink cap	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Craterellus cornucopioides</i>	Horn of plenty	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Fistulina hepatica</i>	Beefsteak fungus	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Hydnum repandum</i>	Hedgehog fungus	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Imledia badia</i>	Bay bolete	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Laccaria amethystea</i>	Amethyst Deceiver	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Lactarius deliciosus</i>	Saffron milk cap	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Laetiporus sulphureus</i>	Chicken of the woods	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Leccinum scabrum</i>	Birch bolete	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i>	Puffball	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Macrolepiota procera</i>	Parasol	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Pleurotus ostreatus</i>	Oyster mushroom	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Psilocybe semilanceata</i>	Psilocybe fungus	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Sparassis crispa</i>	Cauliflower fungus	Clare Van Moppes 2019
Fore Wood		
<i>Amanita citrina</i>	False death cap	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	Fly agaric	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Amanita pantherina</i>	Panther cap	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Amanita phalloides</i>	Death cap	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Amanita sp.</i>	Destroying angel	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Boletus satanoides</i>	Satan's bolete	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Daldina concentrica</i>	King Alfred's Cakes	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Hygrocybe conica</i>	Conical wax cap	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Mutinus caninus</i>	Dog stink horn	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Oudemansiella mucida</i>	Porcelain fungus	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Phallaceae</i>	Stink horn	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Russula sp.</i>	Russula	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Scleroderma citrinum</i>	Common Earth ball	Clare Van Moppes 2019
<i>Strobilomyces strobilaceus</i>		'Vulnerable' 'Chestnut coppice close to main ghyll' RSPB Management Plan, 2016
Crowhurst (Sussex Records)		
<i>Leccinum scabrum</i>	Brown Birch Bolete	SX last seen 2016. RED list
<i>Pseudocraterellus undulatus</i>	Sinuuous Chanterelle	SX last seen 2017 'Sussex Rare'
<i>Trametes hirsute</i>	Hairy Bracket	SX last seen 2016 'Sussex Rare'
<i>Tremella foliacea</i>	Leafy Brain	SX last seen 2017 'Sussex Rare'

⁷⁰ cf Tales from Quarry Wood Fungi Trail 11.10.15.

<https://talesfromquarrywood.wordpress.com/tags-events/fungi-trail-11th-oct-2015/>

01 Dec 2025

Birds recorded from Crowhurst

© Chris Davidson - Green Woodpecker is a typical woodland edge bird of the AONL, and of the parish, that frequent forages in gardens

The following list of birds have been recorded from the parish.

The foremost woodland bird habitat is Fore Wood RSPB reserve in the north, whereas the foremost wetland habitat is in the south of the parish.

The Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS) maintains a list of the species for the area as a whole, and for Fore Wood it has a list of 97 species.⁷¹ Other bird species are known from the rest of the parish in tetrads.⁷²

- Twelve species are known only from one record: White-fronted Goose, Mute Swan, Bewick's Swan, Mandarin Duck, Water Rail, Coot, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Osprey, Long-eared Owl, Skylark, Common Redstart and Brambling.
- Largest numbers of records are for Great Spotted Woodpecker (36 records), Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (35), Woodpigeon (35), Green Woodpecker (34), Robin and Wren (30 each) reflecting the characteristic woodland habitats in Fore Wood.
- BAP bird species include 30 species, past and present, as shown below in the following table.

Although nearly 100 species have been identified from RSPB Fore Wood, the following are the important bird species for RSPB Fore Wood, as stated in the Management Plan dated 2016.

F

⁷¹ Extracted information from list supplied by SOS March 2020

⁷² TQ7411, TQ7511, TQ7512, TQ7513, TQ7611, TQ7612, TQ7613, TQ7711, TQ7712, TQ7713

01 Dec 2025

Swift NB. Moved from Amber-listed to RED-listed in December 2021

One bird species, the swift, has a local society devoted to its conservation: The Hastings and Rother Swift Society.⁷³ Although the species was not on the Fore Wood list of birds, here is the list for the rest of the parish as supplied by the Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS):

2237728	TQ71 10km (Battle)	Common Swift	01/06/1991		PS
871386	Crowhurst	Common Swift	16/07/2006	8	X
1015550	Crowhurst	Common Swift	17/06/2007	3	X
5041063	Crowhurst	Common Swift	17/06/2018	1	X
871147	Crowhurst	Common Swift	11/06/2006	1	X

Other bird species not at Fore Wood, but in the parish included Little Egret, Wood Duck, Red Kite, hoopoe, Bearded Tit and Roller.

Table WM10 Birds recorded from Crowhurst

The bird species listed below mostly come from two sources, i) the SOS database for birds from Fore Wood, and ii) from the on-line species mentioned for Quarry Wood.

KEY

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)'s Lists:

Red List	Species that are Globally Threatened, for which there is high conservation concern. The designation is according to the criteria of the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature). Represents a population decline in the UK during 1800-1995 with 50% decline over last 25 years.
Amber List	Species showing a moderate decline in the UK over the last 25 years. (from: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, 1996. <i>Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man</i> . Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, leaflet.). Often a rare breeder with 1-300 pairs in the UK, or rare non-breeder with less than 900 pairs.
Green List	Species that occur regularly in the UK but do not qualify under any of the above criteria.

WCA 1981

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Recorders:

CD: Cliff Dean for records from Combe Valley SSSI

JF: John Feltwell

MW Martin White

SOS Crowhurst

SOS Fore Wood

SX Sussex Biodiversity

CDa Chris Davidson, photos

Table WM13

Scientific Name	Common Name	W&CA, 1981	Importance	RSPB	Notes
	Duck, Wood				SOS Crowhurst
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	Goshawk			Notable	SX last seen 2010
<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Sparrowhawk			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, OS Fore Wood CDA window casualty 24.8.20
<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	Warbler, Sedge			Green	2018 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Aegithelos caudatus</i>	Tit, Long-tailed			Green	CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Aix galericulata</i>	Duck, Mandarin			No status	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Skylark		BAP Species of	RED	SOS Fore Wood

⁷³

The Hastings and Rother Swift Group <https://www.swift-conservation.org/Local%20Swift%20Groups.htm> (retrieved 28 Feb 2020)

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			Principal Importance		
<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Kingfisher	Sch. 1 Part 1		Amber	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	Partridge, Red-legged			No status	Introduced gamebird SX last seen 2010
<i>Anas acuta</i>	Pintail			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19
<i>Anas crecca</i>	Teal			Amber	CD 21.03.18 (50*) SOS Crowhurst
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Mallard			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Anas strepera</i>	Gadwall			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19
<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Goose, White-fronted			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Anser anser</i>	Greylag			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19
<i>Anser hybrid</i>	Goose, hybrid			No status	CD 12.01.19
<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Pipit Meadow			Amber	CD 29.12.19, CD 21.03.18 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	Pipit, Water			Amber	CD 12.01.19 2012 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Pipit, Tree			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Apus apus</i>	Swift			RED	2018 SOS Crowhurst Moved to Red DEC 21
<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Heron			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Asio flammeus</i>	Owl, Short-eared			Amber	1990 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Asio otus</i>	Owl, Long-eared			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Athene noctua</i>	Owl, Little	introduced		No status	JF 13.10.17 Bryne's Fm, SOS Fore Wood MW 30 March 2020
<i>Branta bernicla</i>	Brent Goose			Amber	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Goose, Canada	introduced		No status	CD 21.03.18, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>	Stone curlew			Amber	SX last seen 1984
<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Buzzard			Green	CD 21.03.18 (4), CD 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Dunlin			RED	CD 21.03.18 Moved to Red DEC 21
<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Nightjar			Amber	SX last seen 2008
<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>	Redpoll, Lesser		BAP	RED	SOS Fore Wood 2011 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Linnet, Common		BAP Species of Principal Importance	Red; SAP	CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	Goldfinch			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	Greenfinch			RED	CD 21.03.18 SOS Fore Wood CDA 11.4.21 Moved to Red DEC 21 (from Green)
<i>Carduelis flavirostris</i>	Twite			Red	
<i>Carduelis spinus</i>	Siskin			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	Treecreeper			Green	CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Cettia cetti</i>	Warbler, Cetti's			Green	CD 21.03.18, CD CD 29.12.19 CD 12.01.19
<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Black-headed gull			Amber	CD 12.01.19, 29.12.19
<i>Chrysolophus pictus</i>	Pheasant, Golden	introduced		No status	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	Stork, White				Seen 2019 Combe Valley, escapee Knepp Estate
<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	Black Stork			vagrant	CDA 28.8.15
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Marsh Harrier			Amber	SX last seen 2018

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<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Hawfinch			RED	SOS Fore Wood CDA 8.2.18 window casualty
<i>Columba livia</i>	Dove, rock, feral pigeon			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Columba oenas</i>	Dove, Stock			Amber	12.01.19 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Woodpigeon			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	Roller				1790 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Raven			Green	CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Corvus corone</i>	Crow, Carrion			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Rook			Green	CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Corvus monedula</i>	Jackdaw			Green	12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Crex crex</i>	Corncrake				SX last seen 2003
<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Cuckoo		BAP	Red	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Tit, Blue			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>	Swan, Bewick's			Amber	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Swan, Mute			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Martin, House			RED	SOS Fore Wood Moved to Red DEC 21
<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Great Spotted Woodpecker			Green	12.01.19, SOS Fore Wood CDA 16.5.21
<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>	Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	Woodpecker, Great Spotted			Green	CD 21.03.18
<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Egret, Little			Green	CD 21.03.18, SOS Crowhurst
<i>Emberiza citronella</i>	Yellowhammer		BAP	Red	CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Bunting, Reed			Amber	CD 21.03.18
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Robin			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, RSPB Fore Wood
<i>Falco columbarius</i>	Merlin			Red	SX last seen 2015
<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	Hobby			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Kestrel			Amber	12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	Flycatcher, Pied			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Chaffinch			Green	CD 21.03.18, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Brambling	Sch. 1 Part 1		Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Fulicia atra</i>	Coot			Green	CD 21.03.18 (34), CD 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Snipe			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19
<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Moorhen			Green	CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Jay			Green	Migrant, CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Swallow			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Swallow			Notable	SX last seen 2018
<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	Wryneck			Notable	SX last seen 2000
<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Gull, Herring		BAP	Red	CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Larus canus</i>	Gull, Common			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19

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<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Lesser Black Backed gull			Amber	CD 21.03.18 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	Mediterranean Gull			Amber	SX last seen 2017 Circus aeruginosus
<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Gull, Black-headed			Amber	CD 21.03.18 (23) CD 12.01.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Locustella naevia</i>	Warbler, Grasshopper			RED	1980 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	Crossbill, Common			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Woodlark			Notable	SX last seen 2002
<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	Nightingale			RED	SOS Fore Wood , JF 2019 on Link Road SP 2019 on Chapel Hill
<i>Mareca penelope</i>	Wigeon			Amber	CD 21.03.18 (52 seen) CD 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19
<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Red kite	Sch. 1 Part 1		Amber	SOS Crowhurst
<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Wagtail, Pied			Green	CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Wagtail, Grey			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Yellow wagtail			Notable	SX last seen 2018
<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Flycatcher, Spotted		BAP	Red	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Numenius arquata</i>	Curlew			Amber	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Wheatear			Green	JF 2019
<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	Golden Oriole			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey			Amber	SOS Fore Wood Sx last seen 2000
<i>Panurus biarmicus</i>	Tit, Bearded			Green	1982 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Parus major</i>	Tit, Great			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Sparrow, House			Red & Defra's Red	BAP CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Passer montanus</i>	Sparrow, Tree			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Periparus ater</i>	Tit, Coal			Green	CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	Cormorant, Great			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	Pheasant			No status	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19 SOS Fore Wood
<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Black redstart			RED	SX last seen 2018
<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Redstart, Common			Amber	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Chiffchaff			Green	Migrant, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Warbler, Wood			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Warbler, Willow			Amber	Migrant, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Pica pica</i>	Magpie			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Picus viridis</i>	Woodpecker, Green			Amber	CD 21.03.18, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood CDA frequent 2021
<i>Poecile montanus</i>	Tit, Willow			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Poecile palustris</i>	Tit, Marsh			RED	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Duncock			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	Parakeet			No status	From 1 January 2010 it can be shot if it is being a nuisance SX last seen 2000
<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Bullfinch			Amber	BAP, SAP CD 21.03.18, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	Rail, Water			Green	CD 21.03.18,

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					SOS Fore Wood
<i>Regulus ignicapillus</i>	Firecrest			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Goldcrest			Green	2014 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Sand martin			Notable	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Whinchat			Green	SX last seen 2018
<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	Stonechat			Green	2017 SOS Crowhurst
<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Woodcock			RED	CD 21.03.18
<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Nuthatch			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	Shoveler				SX last seen 2017
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Turtle dove		BAP	Red	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Dove, Collared			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Strix aluco</i>	Owl, Tawny			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Starling		BAP	Red & Defra's Red	2019 Chapel Hill SP, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Blackcap			Green	12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Sylvia borin</i>	Warbler, Garden			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Whitethroat, Common			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	Whitethroat, Lesser			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Grebe, Little			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Sandpiper, Green			Amber	CD 21.03.18
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Wren			Green	SOS Fore Wood
<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Redwing			Red	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Turdus merula</i>	Blackbird			Green	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Song thrush		BAP Species of Principal Importance	Red	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Fieldfare	Sch. 1 Part 1		Red	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Thrush Mistle			Amber	Migrant, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Tyto alba</i>	Barn Owl			Amber	CD 21.03.18, 12.01.19, CD 29.12.19, SOS Fore Wood
<i>Upupa epops</i>	Hoopoe			Not assessed	SOS Fore Wood, JF 13.10.17 pellets at Bryne's Fm
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Lapwing			Red	1968 SOS Crowhurst
					CD 21.03.18 (66 seen), CD 12.01.19 2 at Nashe's Farm, 14.2.21 (S.Plato)

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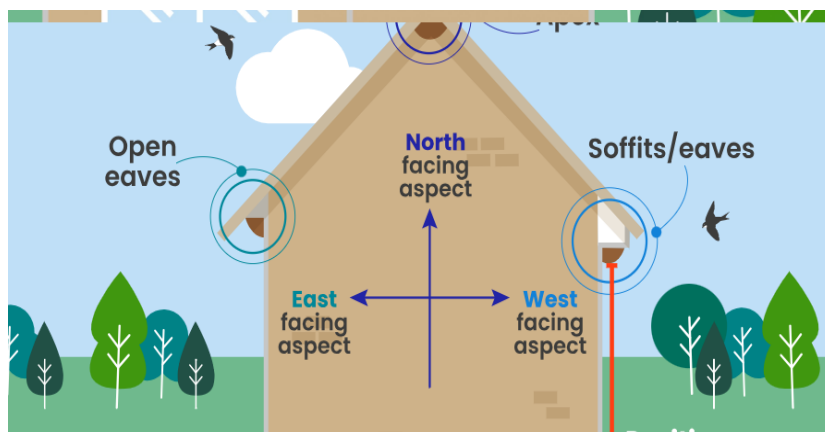
The House Martin Conservation UK & Eire (HMCUK&E); - developers take note!

CROWHURST is the birthplace of The House Martin Conservation UK & Eire (HMCUK&E); with resident Ian Donovan as a founder member. The author of this Bio Audit is a Trustee of the Charity.

<https://housemartinconservation.com/>



House Martins have suffered a 47% decline in numbers between 1970 and 2014 which means they now have a conservation status of 'Red'. There is much that developers of Allocated Sites in Crowhurst can do, and that is to erect House Martin Nests on all houses, something that Hastings Borough Council have started doing.

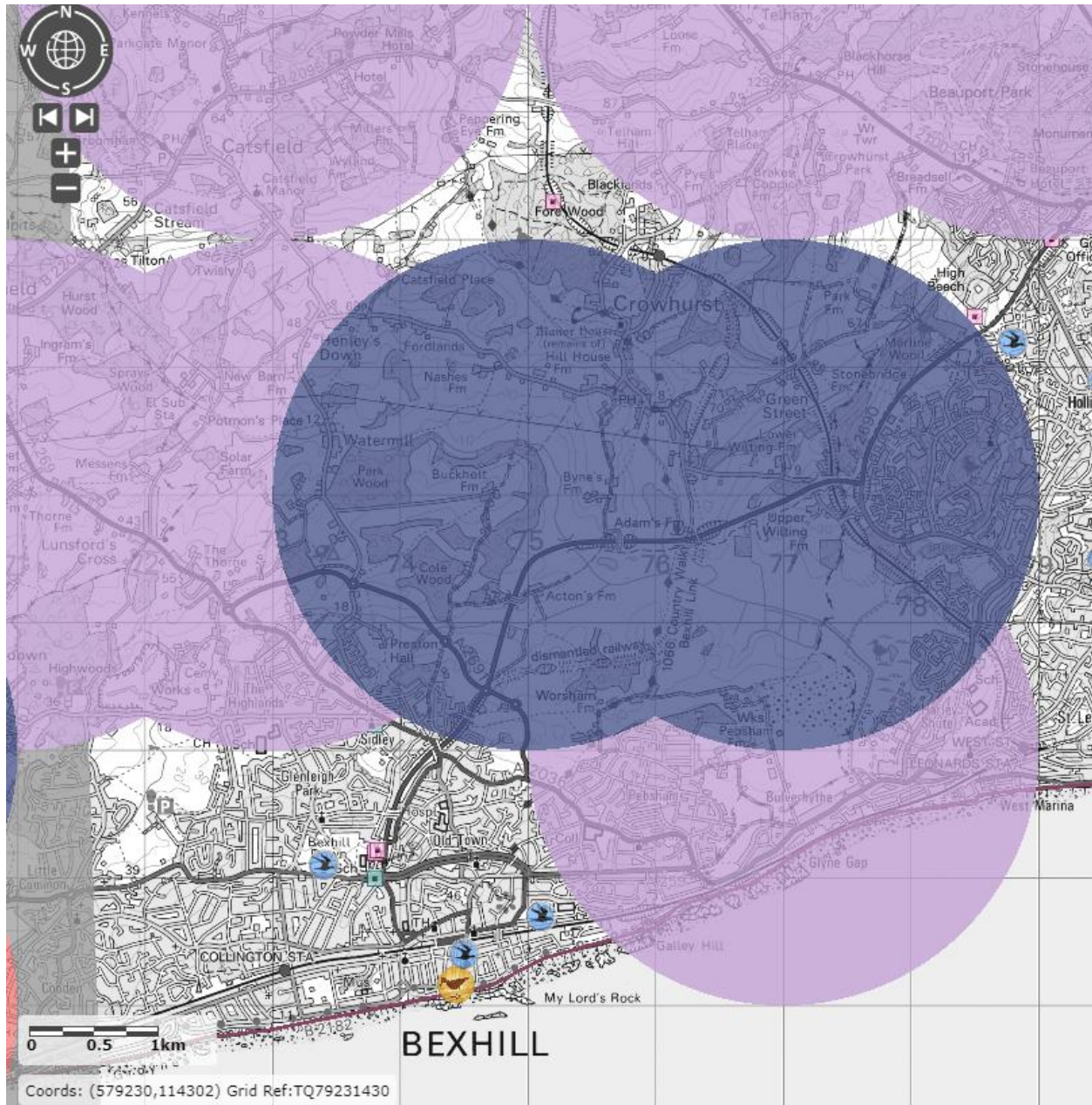


Where to erect House Martin Boxes

SWIFTS. Do not forget to put up SWIFT BOXES and SWIFT BRICKS as swifts are also declining: 58% in just 25 years. see Hastings and Rother Swift Conservation Group <https://e-voice.org.uk/hastingsandrotherswifts/>

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Information from magic.gov.uk draws our attention to the possibility that two important species, lapwing and turtle dove may be in our area, as the coloured circles indicate (blue for lapwing, and pink for turtle dove). These maps are generated so that planners and potential house builders will be aware of any threatened or rare species in the area. Both species are found in Crowhurst.



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MAMMALS IN CROWHURST



© Chris Davidson Fecund rabbits in a garden habitat in Crowhurst

Twenty-five species of mammal are known to be present in the parish, of these nine species are bats whose records have been collated from ecological surveys carried along the south of the parish (2005-2006) for the purposes of the Link Road construction. Other data used is from the Quarry Wood Nature Reserve species lists on-line (thus 'QW2013' etc).

Mammals in danger include all bat species which are protected by UK and EU law. There are three Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species present:

- Hedgehog and
- Hazel Dormouse (declining according to the Sussex Wildlife Trust.⁷⁴
- Pipistrelle bat



Badger casualty on Ballards Hill 08 Oct 2021 © John Feltwell

⁷⁴ Sussex Wildlife Trust, The last dormouse in Sussex?

<https://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/news/the-last-dormouse-in-sussex> (retrieved 28 Feb 2020)

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Two other BAP mammals have become not known from the parish:

- Brown Hare and
- Water Vole - 'Britain's fastest declining mammal'⁷⁵ and is likely now to be extinct in Crowhurst.

Badger is common in Crowhurst and a number of badger setts exist. Unfortunately badger mortality is regular on roads, but it does not seem to adversely affect badger numbers. In parts of the community there are more badgers than people. Badgers live in a matriarchal society, and perhaps sows keep boars away from the young cubs over winter, thus more males cross roads then, and that contributes to their highest mortality in February.

Hazel Dormouse



© Chris Davidson. Present in the village in 2011

October 2021 from Fore Wood

During our October survey, 13 active dormice were found, of which 7 were adults, and 6 were juveniles. 7 were female, of which 2 were adults and 5 were juveniles, 6 were male of which 5 were adults and 1 was a juvenile. The juveniles ranged from 9.5 to 14 grams, the adults ranged from 16 to 23 grams. The Dormice were located in 4 different compartments within the woods. (data kindly supplied by Sophie Streeter with approval of RSPB.)

⁷⁵ Water Vole <https://watervole.org.uk/> (retrieved 28 Feb 2020)

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Table WM14 Mammals recorded from the parish (25 spp, was 26spp)

CLASS MAMMALIA (Mammals)

Latin / Specific Name	Common Name	Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species ('registrations' = sound recordings)
<i>Apodemus sylvaticus</i>	Mouse, Field	Presumed to be present Chapel Hill 2019 SP
<i>Arvicola terrestris</i>	Vole, Water BAP	LIKELY TO BE EXTINCT IN PARISH 'There are no known populations of water voles in your Parish, and not for some time now' ⁷⁶ SX = last seen 1997
<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	Deer, Roe	QW 2013
<i>Clethrionomys glareolus</i>	Vole, Bank	Chapel Hill 2019 SP
<i>Dama dama</i>	Deer, Fallow	Stonebridge Farm, TQ77291204 2018 by ID
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	Serotine bat	Nine recorded, Nr. Upper Wilting's Farm, , Crowhurst Lane, Decoy Farm Pond, Adam's Farm, Acton's Farm, ⁷⁷
<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	Hedgehog BAP	Presumed to be present. Craig Close 'regularly' 2020 Seen at night crossing Station Road, and Fore Wood Lane in 2019. ⁷⁸
<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	Hare, Brown BAP	Last seen in Combe Haven, 1980 (SP)
<i>Meles meles</i>	Badger	Throughout the parish QW 2013
<i>Microtus arvalis</i>	Vole, Common	Presumed to be present
<i>Mus musculus</i>	Mouse, House	Presumed to be present. CDA 24.7.16 photographed
<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	Hazel Dormouse BAP	Named as an important species in RSPB Fore Wood; its population size being 'unknown' and it is 'not monitored'. It is a 'BAP priority regionally important species' RSPB Management Plan 2016. Known to be present in adjacent Parish of Catsfield in 2019. ⁷⁹ SX = last seen 2019 Seen in garden by CDA, photographed, confirmed 25.7.11
<i>Mustela erminea</i>	Stoat	Stonebridge Farm, TQ77291204 2018 by ID
<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Daubenton's bat	Three seen at Decoy Wood Farm, only place along the route. Seen 2005 and 2006.
<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	Whiskered bat	Flood plain near Hillcroft Farm, two near Adam's Farm.
<i>Myotis mystacinus / Brandtii</i>	Brandt's bat	(as above – difficult to separate)
<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Natterer's bat	'the commonest of the Myotis bats', at Upper Wiltings Farm, Adam's Farm, Acton's Farm, railway cutting west of Glover's Farm. Roosting in Hillcroft Farm in Aug 2005.
<i>Neosciurus carolinensis</i>	Squirrel, Grey	Presumed to be present
<i>Neovison vison</i>	Mink, American	Seen in Powdermill Stream summer 2019, by Robin Young. ⁸⁰ RSPB Fore Wood 2019
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Noctule bat	18 registrations along the route of the scheme, Upper Wilting's Farm, Decoy Farm Pond, Acton's
<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	Rabbit	QW 2013
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Pipistrelle bat BAP	47 registrations along the link route, including Acton's Farm, Adam's Farm. Also present on Chapel Hill
<i>Pipistrellus sp.</i>	Pipistrelle bat (45 kHz)	103 registrations, highest at Upper Wilting's Farm, Acton's.
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Long-eared bat	Eight registrations Upper Wilting's Farm, Acton's and Adam's Farm.
<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	Rat, Brown	Presumed to be present
<i>Sorex araneus</i>	Shrew, Common	Presumed to be present

⁷⁶ Fran Southgate, Sussex Wildlife Trust, email to Sonia Plato, 2 March 2020.

⁷⁷ ESCC (undated) but 2005. Environmental Statement, Chapter 12. Nature Conservation and Biodiversity. Appendix 12D. Mammals. Bexhill to Hastings Link Road.

[file:///C:/Users/John/Documents/REPORTS%201300-1350/LINK%20ROAD%20WM%201317/WM1317%20ESCC%20\(undated\)%20Chapter%2012%20Nat%20Con%20&%20Biodiversity.pdf](file:///C:/Users/John/Documents/REPORTS%201300-1350/LINK%20ROAD%20WM%201317/WM1317%20ESCC%20(undated)%20Chapter%2012%20Nat%20Con%20&%20Biodiversity.pdf) (retrieved Feb 2020)

⁷⁸ Robin Young email to Sonia Plato, 2 March 2020

⁷⁹ Hazel Dormouse in the Catsfield churchyard in 2019 (Feltwell).

⁸⁰ Robin Young, email to Sonia Plato 2 March 2020

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<i>Talpa europaea</i>	Mole	Throughout the parish
<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	Fox	Throughout the parish, QW 2013

Table WM12 Reptiles – Amphibians – Fish recorded from Crowhurst



Reptiles recorded from Crowhurst

CLASS REPTILIA (Reptiles)

Table WM13

Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species	Observations
<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	Slow worm	BAP	Chapel Hill 2019 SP, Seen in compost 2019 ⁸¹ CDA 31.5.20
<i>Natrix natrix</i>	Snake, Grass	BAP	Chapel Hill 2019 SP CDA 6.8.16 photographed
<i>Viper berus</i>	Adder	BAP	SX = last seen 2013 Sunbathing on Station platform (N bound) each year. Dog killed by adder in Fore Wood about 2010. SP
<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	Lizard, Viviparous	BAP	SX = last seen 2017
<i>Lacerta agilis</i>	Lizard, Sand	BAP	SX = last seen 1992

Amphibian recorded from Crowhurst

CLASS AMPHIBIA (Amphibians)

Table WM14

Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species	Observations
<i>Bufo bufo</i>	Toad, Common	BAP	SX = last seen 2018 Chapel Hill 2019 SP Stonebridge Farm, TQ77291204 2018 by ID
<i>Rana temporaria</i>	Frog, Common		QW 2013 (photos) Chapel Hill 2019 SP
<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	Newt, Great Crested	BAP	SX = last seen 2013 Stonebridge Farm, TQ77291204 2018 by ID
<i>Lissotriton helveticus</i>	Newt, Palmate	BAP	SX = last seen 2017
<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>	Newt, Smooth or Common	BAP	SX = last seen 2017 CDA 22.5.20 photographed

⁸¹ Robin Young, email to Sonia Plato 2 March 2020

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Table WM15 Fish recorded from Crowhurst

Seven species of fish are known from the streams of Crowhurst. The main stream is Powdermill Stream flowing through the centre of the village and around which the village has historically developed. The Watermill Stream flows to the west of the parish and joins the Powdermill Stream at the Weir which is south of the Link Road.

The streams of Crowhurst can thus be separated into the upper reach stream of the Powdermill Stream in the village, and the 'lower reaches' below the weir. The fish are different either side.

Fish in the upper reaches are Brown Trout, Eels, Brook Lamprey, Stone Loach and Bullhead. Surveys have indicated 'significant numbers' of these species.

Evidence suggests that the waters around Adam's Farm are Brook Lamprey and Trout nursery areas. These are thus important areas for fish species, and their importance become relevant if there are any pollution incidents that might affect the fauna of these waterways.⁸²

SX = Information from Sussex Biodiversity Record**Table WM15**

Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species	Observations
<i>Anguilla Anguilla</i>	Eel	BAP species, RED list	SX last seen 2013
<i>Barbatula barbatula</i>	Stone Loach		
<i>Cottus gobio</i>	Bullhead		
<i>Lampetra planeri</i> ,	Brook Lamprey		SX last seen 2013 'Sussex Rare'
<i>Rutilus rutilus</i>	Roach		
<i>Salmo trutta</i>	Trout, Brown	BAP species	SX last seen 2014 'Sussex Rare'
<i>Scardinius erythrophthalmus</i>	Rudd		

⁸² Basil Dean, Environment Agency, Pevensey office, personal comm. 3 March 2020

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Table WM16 Invertebrates recorded from site



Purple Hairstreak © Will Kemp



White Admiral © John Feltwell

CLASS INSECTA

ORDER LEPIDOPTERA (BUTTERFLIES and MOTHS)

Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Observations
<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>	Orange tip butterfly	Fore Wood transect 2019 ⁸³
<i>Apatura iris</i>	Purple Emperor	SX = last seen 5.5.2005 'Sussex Rare'
<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>	Ringlet	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	Fritillary, Silver-washed	Fore Wood transect 2019. Peak of 35 in survey of 2015.
<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>	Pearl-bordered Fritillary	BAP SX = last seen 2017
<i>Celastina argiolus</i>	Holly Blue butterfly	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	Small Heath	BAP SX = last seen 2019
<i>Erynnis tages</i>	Dingy Skipper	BAP SX = last seen 2010
<i>Favonius quercus</i>	Purple Hairstreak	Fore Wood transect 2019 Photographed in Catsfield by Will Kemp in 2023.
<i>Hipparchia semele</i>	Grayling	BAP SX = last seen 2011
<i>Inachis io</i>	Peacock butterfly	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Lagoda camilla</i>	Admiral, White	BAP Fore Wood transect 2019; peak of 4 in 2015 survey, Population 'stable' in 2015 (RSPB Management Plan).
<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	Wall	BAP SX = last seen 2015
<i>Ochlodes venatus</i>	Skipper, Large	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	Speckled Wood butterfly	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	Large white butterfly	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Pieris rapae</i>	Small White Butterfly	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Pieris napi</i>	Green-veined white butterfly	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Polygonia c-album</i>	Comma	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>	Grizzled skipper	BAP SX = last seen 2012
<i>Pyronia tithonus</i>	Gatekeeper	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Satyrion w-album</i>	White-letter hairstreak	BAP SX = last seen 2010
<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	Red Admiral	Fore Wood transect 2019
<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	Painted lady	Fore Wood transect 2019
EXPECTED BUT NOT RECORDED		
<i>Aglaia urticae</i>	Small Tortoiseshell butterfly	
<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	Brimstone	
<i>Lycaena phaeus</i>	Small Copper	
<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	Brown, Meadow	
<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	Blue, Common	
<i>Thymelicus flavus</i>	Skipper, Small	
<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>	Skipper, Essex	

⁸³ Terry Anderson and Sophie Streeter (volunteers), 2019. Fore Wood Butterfly Survey

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Fore Wood Butterfly Survey

RSPB Volunteers Report by Terry Anderson and Sophie Streeter

Each year a butterfly survey is conducted in Fore Wood to record the species of butterfly present and the numbers of each species seen.

When a vacancy arose this year to conduct the survey, we jumped at the opportunity to improve our butterfly identification and general knowledge.

The survey method is via a transect, whereby a set route is walked around the wood each week from April to October to provide a representation across the wood. This route is split up into 10 sections and a description of each section is recorded to understand the type of habitat and woodland being walked (you may have seen our numbered orange post around the woods marking these sections out). The butterflies seen on each section are recorded as we walk the route. We also record information about weather conditions at the start of each walk.

The route remains the same each year to enable comparisons and analysis to be made on the data recorded, and enables RSPB to assess the impact of creating new habitat for wildlife through its woodland management plan. The data is included on the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme to aid UK wide analysis.

Over the course of the year, we saw a total of 765 butterflies, and 20 different species during our surveys. Our highlight of the year was being able to add the Small Heath to Fore Wood's species count, for the very first time. The Small Heath is typical to dry grassland, but may visit grassy woodland rides.

It was also encouraging to see the positive impact for butterflies from opening up woodland rides and creating scallops, as there was a marked increase in butterflies this year on 4 sections where this type of work has been undertaken in recent years; (areas along the 1066 footpath, and the footpath from the bench above the pond to the bench on the top ride).

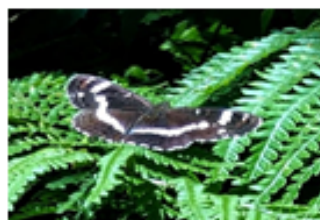
This year saw an increase of Meadow Browns (292), the highest annual count so far recorded at Fore Wood, and the butterfly most frequently seen. The Silver-washed Fritillary was the second most seen butterfly with an annual count of 101 across the survey period. White Admirals (20), and Gatekeepers (80), had the highest count since 2014, with Gatekeepers having a substantial increase from just 19 in 2018.

There was a notable absence of Green-veined White and Purple Hairstreak on the count this year; the latter being particularly elusive high up in the tops of oak trees.

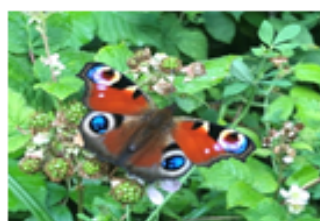
We have really enjoyed doing the weekly surveys, and as butterflies have different flight periods, we were thrilled each time we were able to add a species to our annual list. It has been an excellent way to observe butterflies and improve our knowledge.



Silver-washed Fritillary



White Admiral



Peacock



Gatekeeper – mating pair

Species List and Count:













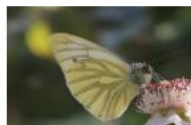




Meadow Brown 292, Silver-washed Fritillary 101, Gatekeeper 80, Speckled Wood 80, Peacock 36, Large White 30, Red Admiral 24, White Admiral 20, Brimstone 18, Comma 16, Small White 14, Ringlet 11, Large Skipper 10, Painted Lady 10, Holly Blue 9, Orange-tip 6, Purple

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Fore Wood Butterfly Survey 2020

Butterfly species observed May 27th – Sept 22nd 2020
(Including **Numbers seen** and **Flight Period**).

 Large Skipper 10 Jun - Aug	 Silver-washed Fritillary - 88 June-Sept	 Peacock 25 Feb - Oct	 Large White 112 Apr - Oct	 Brimstone 2 Feb-June/Aug-Oct	 Red Admiral 24 May - Oct
 Meadow Brown 211 May - Nov	 Comma 25 Feb - Oct	 Holy Blue 29 Mar-May/Aug-Nov	 Small White 34 Mar - Nov	 Purple Hairstreak 7 Jul - Aug	 Gatekeeper 29 Jul - Sept
 Green-veined White 6 Apr - Nov	 Speckled Wood 53 Mar - Nov	 Ringlet 10 June-Sept	 Small Tortoiseshell 1 Feb - Oct	 White Admiral 16 June-Sept	

Total Annual Count: 682

© Terry Anderson and Sophie Streeter ⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Terry Anderson and Sophie Streeter (volunteers), 2020. Fore Wood Butterfly Survey
<file:///C:/Users/John/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/N7DXKUGD/Fore%20Wood%20Butterfly%20Survey%202020.pdf> (13pp).

01 Dec 2025

Fore Wood Butterfly Survey 2021

RSPB Volunteers Report by Terry Anderson and Sophie Streeter

There was a slow start to the butterfly year in 2021 due to the inclement weather in early spring. This caused a delay to many activities in the natural world, including butterfly emergence, and did seem to have an impact on some of our survey data for butterfly species with an early flight period. Also, unfortunately, we were only able to conduct 18 out of 26 survey weeks, so this too has had some impact to the data count of some butterfly species across the survey weeks.

Despite the weather, the count for **Peacock** butterflies – 54 was the highest count since 2016, and **Red Admirals** - 49 was the highest count since the Fore Wood records started in 1987 (25 was the second highest count in 2019). This is particularly impressive as both species have long flight periods and can be seen from February/March right through to October/November if the conditions are right, so even with the weather issues at the beginning of the year, both species did well.

Silver-washed Fritillaries, seemed to maintain good levels this year, and although we only had a count of 60, we missed 3 survey weeks in August which is a prime flight period for this species. We are confident the numbers would have been at least on par with last year's count of 88, if they had been fully surveyed through August.

Unfortunately, there was a marked decrease in the count for **Meadow Brown** in 2021 with only 52 counts across the survey period. In the last couple of years, we have typically reached numbers above 200. Whilst one of the reasons for the low count will be the missed survey weeks, the weather at the beginning of the year is less likely to have been an issue since their flight period starts at the very end of May/June.

The spring weather did seem to impact the count for both **Speckled Wood** and **Comma**. Speckled Wood can be seen from March, through to November, but are more widely seen mid-April to mid-October, however we didn't see our first Speckled Wood until late May. After seeing just 1 Comma in the first week of April, we didn't observe them again on a survey until early June, yet they are usually widely seen from February through to early October. We had a count of 40 Speckled Wood in 2021, compared to 53 in 2020, and only 9 for Comma, compared with 25 in 2020.

After a really good year for the **Large White** in 2020 (with a count of 112), this year we only had a count of 17. Large White butterflies have a long flight period from April to September, but usually with an absence for part of July, so the drop in sightings is a concern.

We were really pleased to add **Small Skipper** to the species list in 2021, they had been absent from survey recordings since 2016 (we had seen 1 in 2020, but not during a survey, so we couldn't formally record it!).

When conducting the survey, we also record any moth or dragonfly/damselfly species we can identify; the latter being much harder as they skitter past at speed. 2021 was a good year for dragonfly and damselfly, there were weeks when over the course of our survey walks we would encounter numbers into hundreds scouting rides or over the pond at various heights of flight. One week in June, we counted 338 Damselfly around the pond (believed to be Azure Damselflies). Most were in their mating pair egg laying, where the male guards the female by gripping behind her head with claspers at the tip of its abdomen, and standing vertical whilst the female lays their fertilised eggs on vegetation below the waterline. This behaviour by the male is to ensure that no other rival male can mate with the female before his fertilised eggs are laid.

We look forward to what the butterfly season holds for Fore Wood this year in 2022, and whilst we survey; endeavouring to hone our dragonfly identification skills!



Peacock



Red Admiral



Comma



Silver-washed Fritillary



Small Skipper

Species seen & count

Silver-washed Fritillary 60; Peacock 54; Meadow Brown 52; Red Admiral 49; Speckled Wood 40; Small White 34; Gatekeeper 22; Large White 17; White Admiral 12; Purple Hairstreak 8; Brimstone 7; Comma 9; Large Skipper 3; Orange Tip 3; Small Skipper 2; Ringlet 2; Green-veined White 1.

© Terry Anderson and Sophie Streeter

01 Dec 2025**Butterflies in Crowhurst Meadows**

Sophie Streeter and Terry Anderson surveyed Crowhurst Meadows in June, and August 2025 and here are the results below. Four new species were added to the list (Holly Blue, Peacock, Small Heath, and Green-veined White in 2024). Small Heath is a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species because of its declining numbers so it is of conservation importance.



The large number of butterflies reflect the effort to manage the sites, especially Muriel's Meadow. This makes butterflies a significant contributor to the rich biodiversity of the parish.

30 th June AM – hot & sunny	14 th August PM – sun/cloud warm
<u>Church verge 9:15</u>	<u>Church Verge 15:24</u>
No butterflies observed. The verge was in full shade	Large White 2 Common Blue 1
<u>Community Centre 9:25</u>	<u>Community Centre 15:28</u>
Large Skipper 2 Meadow Brown 3 Large White 4 Small White 1	None recorded
<u>Memorial Garden 9:35</u>	<u>Memorial Garden 15:36</u>
Meadow Brown 3 Speckled Wood 2 Small Skipper 1 Large White 2 Small White 2	None recorded
<u>Nashes 9:55</u>	<u>Nashes 15:44</u>
Ringlet 2 Large Skipper 4 E Small Skipper 8 E Small White 1 Large White 2 Gatekeeper 3 Meadow Brown 10 E E = estimated	Meadow Brown 1 Large White 1 There was surprising little activity here on this visit
<u>Muriel's 10:10</u>	<u>Muriel's 16:39</u>
Ringlet 1 Meadow Brown 20 E Large White 5 Small White 4 Common Blue 2 Small Skipper 30 E Large Skipper 15 E Green-Veined White 2 Gatekeeper 1	Small Copper 6 E Common Blue 15 E Large White 8 Small White 2 Green-veined White 2 Holly Blue 1 Speckled Wood 2 Meadow Brown 3 2 Silver Y moth were also seen

Highlights of 2025 was the first of a new species for the parish: the Brown Argus, and the total of the Silver-washed fritillaries in a week was 44. The year was also memorable for the large numbers of Small and Large Whites.

01 Dec 2025

Table WM17 Butterflies species recorded in Fore Wood, 2025

Week	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Total
Date	Mar 04	Mar 11	Mar 18	Mar 25	Apr 01	Apr 08	Apr 15	Apr 22	Apr 29	May 06	May 13	May 20	May 27	Jun 03	Jun 10	Jun 17	Jun 24	Jul 01	Jul 08	Jul 15	Jul 22	Jul 29	Aug 05	Aug 12	Aug 19	Aug 26	Sep 02	Sep 09	Sep 16	Sep 23	Sep 30	Oct 07	Oct 14	Oct 21	
Small Skipper					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					5
Large Skipper					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	1	5	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					11
Grizzled Skipper					0		0	0	0	3	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					3
Brimstone					1		1	1	0	0	1	0	0		0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					6
Large White					1		1	8	5	10	2	1	1		3	5	47	75	65	17	26	1	17	14	1	24	0	4		0					328
Small White					1		2	3	5	1	1	0	0		1	3	33	25	5	7	4	1	2	5	1	2	1	1		0					104
Green-veined White					0		2	1	0	2	0	0	0		0	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0		0					12
Orange Tip					1		1	3	1	1	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					7
Purple Hairstreak					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	1	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					9
Small Copper					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		0					2
Brown Argus					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		0					1
Common Blue					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					3
Holly Blue					0		0	1	0	1	0	0	0		0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		0					5
White Admiral					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	4	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					11
Red Admiral					1		0	0	0	4	0	1	0		5	3	5	9	4	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1					41
Painted Lady					0		0	0	0	4	0	0	1		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					6
Peacock					11		7	5	0	1	0	0	1		0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	0		0					32
Comma					1		1	2	0	0	0	0	0		2	1	9	9	5	3	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	1		0					38
Silver-washed Fritillary					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	16	23	44	41	24	16	5	4	0	1	0	0	0		0					175
Speckled Wood					0		1	3	2	2	1	2	4		1	7	6	1	6	8	3	2	4	3	1	0	0	1		0					58
Gatekeeper / Hedge Brown					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	4	11	16	60	32	14	1	1	0	0	0	0		0					139
Meadow Brown					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	6	30	49	29	27	24	15	3	1	1	0	0	0		0					185
Ringlet					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	1	4	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					13
Small Heath					0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0					1
Total (Summary)	0	0	0	0	17	0	16	27	13	29	5	4	7	0	14	48	176	233	185	161	117	39	33	27	8	28	2	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	1197

01 Dec 2025

BEWARE ASIAN HORNETS (AH) - an invasive species - will devastate apiaries.

Asian Hornets, or Yellow Legged Hornet (YLH) first arrived in France in 2004 from Asia. It has spread through Europe and is on the brink of invading the UK. The last few years AH has been found in SE England, even as close as Westfield. There was almost a six fold increase in AH nests found and destroyed by NBU⁸⁵ since 2024.⁸⁶ They are predatory hornets that eat mostly honeybees. Local beekeepers will find their livelihoods curtailed as the norm is for AH to kill all the bees in a hive. So beware. They are darker than the European hornets, and have these yellow legs, thus YLH.



All © John Feltwell



⁸⁵ NGU National Bee Unit

⁸⁶ BBKA October 2025 British Beekeepers' Association

01 Dec 2025

Table WM18 Insects recorded in Crowhurst (multiple sources)

CLASS INSECTA

ORDER LEPIDOPTERA : HETEROCERA) Moths

Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Observations
<i>Autographa pulchrina</i>	Beautiful Golden Y	QW 2016
<i>Crocallis elinguarina</i>	Scalloped Oak	QW 2015
<i>Eupithecia dodoneata</i>	Oak tree pug	Nb Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Gandaritis pyraliata</i>	Barred Straw	QW 2016 ⁸⁷
<i>Geometra papilionaria</i>	Large Emerald	QW 2015
<i>Habrosyne pyritoides</i>	Buff arches	QW 2015
<i>Lithophane social</i>	Pale pinion	Nb Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Lomaspilis marginata</i>	Clouded Border	QW 2016
<i>Lomographa temerata</i>	Clouded Silver	QW 2016
<i>Lymantria monacha</i>	Black arches	QW 2015
<i>Mitochrista miniata</i>	Rosy Footman	QW 2015
<i>Opisthograptis luteolata</i>	Brimstone moth	QW 2015
<i>Paracolax tristalis</i>	Clay fanfoot	Na Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Parectropis similaria</i>	Brindled white spot	Nb Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Schrankia taenialis</i>	White-line snout	Na Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>	White ermine	QW 2016
<i>Spilosoma lutea</i>	Buff Ermine	QW 2016
<i>Synanthedon vespiformis</i>	Yellow-legged clearwing	Na Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Tethea or</i>	Poplar lutestring	Nb Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Tetheella fluctuosa</i>	Satin lutestring	Nb Population size unknown RSPB Fore Wood Management Plan 2016
<i>Timandra comae</i>	Blood vein	QW 2016
<i>Tortrix viridana</i>	Green Oak Tortrix	QW 2016

CLASS INSECTA

ORDER HYMENOPTERA (BEES, WASPS, ANTS)

CLASS INSECTA Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Observations
<i>Diplolepis rosae</i>	Rose bedeguar gall, or Robin's pincushion, or Moss gall	JF Trust land Feb 2020
<i>Osmia pilicornis</i>	Fringe Horned Mason Bee	Nationally notable A – RSPB reserves priority. Recorded at NW end of compartment 19 in 2015. RSPB 20-16 Management Plan

OTHER ARTHROPODS

CLASS CRUSTACEA (Crabs and woodlice)

Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Observations
<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>	Native Crayfish	'No known populations of native crayfish left in Sussex (though not everywhere has been surveyed) – widespread American signal crayfish throughout Sussex. ⁸⁸

CLASS INSECTA

ORDER COLEOPTERA (BEETLES)

CLASS INSECTA Latin / Specific Name	Common English Name	Observations
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⁸⁷⁸⁸ Fran Southgate, Sussex Wildlife Trust, email to Sonia Plato, 2 March 2020.

01 Dec 2025

	Glow worm	CDA 15.6.20 photographed in garden. Recorded in Swainham Lane by the author in 2024.
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In-parish CONSERVATION

The Crowhurst Nature Reserve Trust Land Muriel's Meadow

Verges

- Nashe's Farm verge
- Village Hall (MUGA)
- Churchyard verge
- Millennium Garden Verge
- Triangle, Ballard's Hill

Community Solar Farm (as nature reserve)

01 Dec 2025

The '30 by 30' Campaign

This is 30% of 'new land in England will be designated and protected' by 2030.⁸⁹

The Prime Minister (Boris Johnson) in September 2020, committed to protect 30% of the UK's land by 2030. He said that existing National Parks, AONLs and other areas comprise about 26% of land in England, and that an additional 4% or over 400,00ha will be protected to support the recovery of nature. COP27 & Wildlife Trusts also promote 30 by 30⁹⁰.

The Prime Minister signed the UN's Leaders **Pledge for Nature**⁹¹ '*committing to put nature and biodiversity on a road to recovery by 2030.*' He called for '*immediate action*', since we had to '*act now to reverse devastating biodiversity loss and prevent more species from being lost forever, with a 68% decline in global wildlife populations since 1970 alone*'.

So how much of Crowhurst is already designated and protected? Do we need any more? Nothing extra appears to have been added to Crowhurst or E. Sussex to date (January 2023); I asked the then MP Huw Merriman on 24 October 2022, but he did not reply. The present MP is Dr Kieran Mullan MP who has yet to be approached.

How do the numbers stack up? There is a lot of overlap of protected areas. First of all, the AONL amounts to about 61% of the parish⁹². So that is a good start. Ancient Woodlands represent about 15% of the parish, but most of these are in the AONL, so they are already protected. Fore Wood RSPB is an already important nature reserve, but it is all in the AONL. It is also a SSSI which is also inside the AONL.

The Maths: We can add Ancient Woodland not in the AONL (22.79ha), 4 x RDC Registered Verges + Muriel's Meadow + Trust land (est. 1ha), Combe Valley SSSI within the parish south of the Link Road (50.36ha) = 51.36ha. Therefore **AONL** (542ha) + Combe Valley (50.36ha) + Verges etc (1ha) = 602ha or 69% of the parish is already protected. To this could also be added the settling lake north of the Link Road (5.01ha) which is protected (possibly) under the Combe Valley Country Park north of the Link Road (but not in the SSSI). Priority Habitats (S41) have not been added at this stage.

Summary

Over 70% of the parish is theoretically already protected as AONL, SSSI, Ancient Woodlands etc via various UK and EU law and local policies. Basically Crowhurst appears to be alright with so much of the parish protected for nature conservation. However it is the failure to uphold the law that is eating away at the quality of the protected areas. If Huw Merriman MP has any ideas to protect more habitat in Crowhurst we will listen. This would undoubtedly include ELMS⁹³ farming projects to enhance the environment.

⁸⁹ Press Release. 28 September 2020. PM commits to protect 30% of UK land in boost for biodiversity. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-commits-to-protect-30-of-uk-land-in-boost-for-biodiversity> (accessed 24 October 2022).

⁹⁰ Wildlife Trusts <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/30by30> (accessed 02 January 2023). [@30by30](https://twitter.com/30by30)

⁹¹ Leaders Pledge 4 Nature. <https://www.leaderspledgefornature.org/> (accessed 03 January 2023)

⁹² As measured on magic.gov.uk, where the AONL in the parish is 542ha, and the Parish is 877ha.

⁹³ Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-63029266>. (accessed 03 January 2023).

01 Dec 2025

There are NO EU protected sites in the parish

Under EU law there are no EU designated sites in the parish, such as SPA, SACs, Ramsars or WHS.

However, there are EU protected species within the parish, such as bats, GCNs and Hazel Dormouse.

Table WM19 showing statutory sites and proximity to site:

STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS*	Notes
UK LAW	
SSSI	
Combe Haven (SSSI)	Partially in the parish
Fore Wood (SSSI)	Partially in the parish
Marline Valley Woods (SSSI)	Only a few metres in the parish
LNR	
Marline Valley Woods (LNR)	Only a few metres in the parish
NNR	
None	
AONL	
High Weald (AONL)	The north part of parish is in the AONL
COUNTRYSIDE PARK	
Combe Valley Countryside Park	
Non-Statutory sites:	
LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES	
CR01 - Woodland Complex at Buckholt Farm	
CR18 - Disused Railway, Crowhurst	
CR29 - Fore Wood	
Ha31 – Marline Valley Woods	
DESIGNATED & Undesignated ROAD VERGES	
Church Verge and Forewood Lane	
Nashes Farm Verge	
Millennium Garden Verge	
School verge MUGA	
Triangle	
LOCAL GREEN SPACES	Policy CF3 is applicable in the Neighbourhood Plan for the sites listed below
Fore Wood	
St George's Churchyard	
Crowhurst Recreation Ground	
Crowhurst Nature Reserve (= Quarry Wood)	

The following are the CITATIONS for the three SSSIs that Crowhurst are fortunate to have in the parish. The citations list the important factual information, habitats and flora and fauna.

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1. FORE WOOD SSSI

COUNTY: EAST SUSSEX SITE NAME: FORE WOOD

DISTRICT: ROTHER

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authority: ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Reference: TQ 753128 Area: 21.5 (ha.) 52.6 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheets 1:50,000: 199 1:10,000: TQ 71 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1966 Date of Last Revision: 1973

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Fore Wood SSSI forms part of the larger Royal Society for the Protection of Birds reserve.

Reasons for Notification:

The interest of this particular area is twofold; it includes one of only 5 East Sussex examples of ghyll woodland (a habitat which is otherwise restricted to the Atlantic coast of Britain) and it contains a rich breeding community which includes hawfinch, woodcock and greater woodpecker.

The wood itself is rather variable and much modified in places. Areas of neglected pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* with hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* coppice also contain ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and birch *Betula pendula* above a sparse ground flora of ivy *Hedera helix* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus*. Some areas have been thinned and shrubs, particularly hazel *Corylus avellana* encouraged. Systematic clearing of old sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa* coppice has also taken place in order to promote oak high forest. In these thinned and cleared areas bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*, enchanters nightshade *Circaea lutetiana* and honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* form a dense ground flora.

The wood contains examples of Sussex ghylls. These steep ravines have been created by the vigorous down-cutting of streams into the sandstone. Alder *Alnus glutinosa* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior* trees form a closed canopy and help create an unusual micro-climate which is more typical of the western shores of the UK. Thus several 'Atlantic' plant species are found here including 3 rare mosses and the hay-scented buckler fern *Dryopteris aemula*. Greater woodrush *Luzula sylvatica* and hard fern *Blechnum spicant* are more common 'Atlantic' species. In addition to the modification of woodland type and the planting of trees and shrubs to attract birds, several glades and a pond have also been

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created. As yet the birdlife is not of exceptional quality but can be expected to improve considerably. At present

breeding birds of note include hawfinch, sparrowhawk, woodcock, cuckoo, tawny owl, greater spotted woodpecker, nuthatch and willow tit.

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WOODS2. **MARLINE VALLEY
SSSI**

COUNTY: EAST SUSSEX SITE NAME: MARLINE VALLEY WOODS

BOROUGH/DISTRICT: HASTINGS, ROTHER

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authority: HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL, Rother District Council

National Grid Reference: TQ 780122 Area: 55.0 (ha.) 135.82 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheets 1:50,000: 199 1:10,000: TQ 71 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1965

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 Date of Last Revision: 1989

Other Information:

Part of this site is a reserve of the Sussex Wildlife Trust.
This site was formerly known as Marline Wood.

Reasons for Notification:

These ancient woodlands on Wadhurst Clay and Lower Tunbridge Wells sandstone are dominated by a nationally uncommon woodland type. A valuable feature of the site is the steep sided stream valley (ghyll) which contains plants that have an 'Atlantic' distribution. The site also includes an area of species-rich unimproved grassland, a nationally declining habitat.

The nationally uncommon pedunculate oak-bornbeam (birch-hazel variant) woodland type dominates the woods. There is some variation in composition due to local differences in drainage, soil type, slope and management. There is a history of management under the coppicewith-standards system. The ghyll has been created by vigorous downcutting of the stream through the soft sandstones which underlie the Wadhurst clay. It has a moist and warm microclimate which favours 'Atlantic' plants, now restricted in Britain to the Weald and the west of the country.

Standards of pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* are widespread throughout above coppice of hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and, less commonly, hazel *Corylus avellana* or sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*. There are scattered stands of birch *Betula pendula*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, field maple *Acer campestre* and beech *Fagus sylvatica*. Alder *Alnus glutinosa* occurs discontinuously along the stream valley and in small flushes which drain into the stream. Occasional stands of alder coppice are present. Active coppicing has generally reduced the shrub layer but holly *Ilex aquifolium* is locally common and two shrubs associated with ancient woodland are present: butcher's-broom *Ruscus aculeatus* and midland hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*. The ground flora varies with the current state of management, but honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, enchanter's-nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and wood avens *Geum urbanum* are often

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2. MARLINE VALLEY WOODS SSSI, continued....

abundant. The stream valley and lateral flushes support a flora of pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*, yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* and opposite-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*. Two wide rides have been cut through Marline Wood and are dominated by tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* with bramble *Rubus fruticosus*.

The stream valley supports 61 species of bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) including 3 uncommon 'Atlantic' species: *Fissidens rivularis*, *Tetradontium brownianum* and *Metzgeria furcata*. Other plants of the ghyll area include soft shield fern *Polystichum setiferum* and broad buckler fern *Dryopteris dilatata*.

The agriculturally unimproved pasture supports a species-rich neutral grassland flora, dominated by lesser knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* and common bent *Agrostis capillaris*. Other species adding to the interest of the pasture include adder's-tongue fern *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, quaking grass *Briza media* and common spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*.

3.

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3.COMBE HAVEN SSSI

COUNTY: EAST SUSSEX

SITE NAME: COMBE HAVEN

BOROUGH/DISTRICT: HASTINGS; ROTHER

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Local Planning Authority: HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL; ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL

National Grid Ref: TQ 770102

Area: 156.1 (ha) : 385.7 (acres)

Ordnance Survey Sheets 1:50,000: 199

1:10,000: TQ 71SE TQ 70NE

Date notified (under 1949 Act): -

Date of last revision: -

Date notified (under 1981 Act): 1985

Date of last revision: -

Other Information: This site lies within the High Weald Natural Area. Filsham Reed Bed is a Local Nature Reserve declared by Hastings Borough Council and managed by the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation.

Reasons for Notification:

This extensive site contains a rich diversity of habitat types. Alluvial meadows dominate much of the site and a nationally uncommon grassland type is present. Filsham reed bed is the largest reed bed in East Sussex and carries a rich community of breeding birds. Blocks of ancient woodland add to the site's interest. The range of habitat types is responsible for the wide diversity of plant, invertebrate and bird life at the site.

The alluvial meadows and the drainage ditches which dissect them are the remnants of a once much more extensive marshland which developed on river alluvium over Ashdown sandstones. Filsham reed bed has colonised poorly drained, ungrazed marsh and a small lagoon is present within the bed. Two areas of mixed tall fen communities are also present within the site. Woodlands have developed on higher ground over Wadhurst Clay and support several unusual plants. The whole site, but particularly the reed bed, is valuable for breeding, wintering and passage birds. The invertebrate fauna includes two notable dragonflies and important butterfly populations.

ALLUVIAL MEADOWS The meadows vary in composition and most are poorly drained. Reed sweet grass *Glyceria maxima* dominates large areas and its association with reed canary grass *Phalaris arundinacea* and marsh bedstraw *Galium palustre* is a nationally uncommon grassland type. Tussock grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, rushes *Juncus* species and creeping bent grass *Agrostis stolonifera* occur commonly in the sward but corky fruited water-dropwort *Oenanthe pimpinelloides* and common meadow rue *Thalictrum flavum* are two unusual species. The ditches dissecting the meadows have a rich flora which includes several uncommon plants such as marsh violet *Hottonia palustris*, arrowhead *Sagittaria sagittifolia*, frogbit *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae* and flowering rush *Butomus umbellatus*.

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3.COMBE HAVEN SSSI, continued..

FEN COMMUNITIES Common reed *Phragmites australis* dominates Filsham reed bed although open water and ditches within the bed are richer in plant life. Two areas of mixed tall fen (at TQ 777095 and TQ 778103) contain common reed, reed sweet grass, gipsywort *Lycopus europaeus*, yellow flag *Iris pseudacorus* and purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*. Alder *Alnus glutinosa* and willow *Salix cinerea* fringe parts of the reed bed and the tall fen community.

WOODLAND Variation in past management and in local drainage conditions have resulted in a range of woodland types. Redgeland Wood consists of hazel *Corylus avellana* coppice below standards of ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*; notable plants of the shrub and ground layers include butcher's broom *Ruscus aculeatus*, Midland hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata* and bird's-nest orchid *Neottia nidus-avis*. Marsh Wood is another oak-hazel-ash wood but with field maple *Acer campestre* present above a ground flora which includes wood speedwell *Veronica montana* and goldilocks *Ranunculus auricomus*. Monkham Wood is coppice-with-standards woodland with oak and ash standards above coppiced hazel, hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*. Decoy Pond Wood has developed on wet ground around a pond which is drying up; white willow *Salix alba*, crack willow *Salix fragilis*, alder *Alnus glutinosa* and willow *Salix cinerea* occur above a ground flora of cyperus sedge *Carex pseudocyperus*, wood bittercress *Cardamine flexuosa*, yellow flag *Iris pseudacorus* and purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*. Ash, oak and English elm *Ulmus procera* occur on the drier margins of this wood and early purple orchid *Orchis mascula* and twayblade *Listera ovata* occur in the ground flora.

RAILWAY EMBANKMENT A dense scrub of hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, gorse *Ulex europaeus*, broom *Cytisus scoparius*, oak and willow dominates much of this area. Open patches include fenland species such as the purple small-reed *Calamagrostis canescens*, and species associated with the chalk substrate used in the construction of the embankment; the latter group includes mullein *Verbascum thapsus*, bladder campion *Silene vulgaris* and wild mignonette *Reseda lutea*.

FAUNA Breeding birds associated with the reed and fen include reed warbler, moorhen, coot, sedge warbler and water rail. Other breeding birds from the whole site include grasshopper warbler, yellow wagtail and cuckoo. Wintering birds such as lapwing, teal and snipe are found on the alluvial meadows and the site is important for passage birds including large flocks of thrushes, finches, warblers and buntings. There is also a rich dragonfly fauna which includes the uncommon species *Coenagrion pulchellum* and *Brachytron pratense*. A good variety of butterflies are present including orange tip, holly blue, red admiral and purple hairstreak.

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Combe Valley Countryside Park (CVCP)

The northern part of the park, and especially the northwards projection of lake and wetlands is within the Crowhurst Parish. The north part of the Park actually follows the curve of The Link Road from the intersection on Queensway through to the west where it joins the Bexhill bypass. This area was previously known as Combe Haven (locally known as The Marsh).

This map shows the availability of footpaths, several within Crowhurst, which are in addition to those defined by Ordnance Survey on their Definitive map of East Sussex.

Footpaths



Combe Valley Countryside Park, 2019.

<http://combevalleycountrysidepark.com/footpaths> (retrieved 4 May 2019)

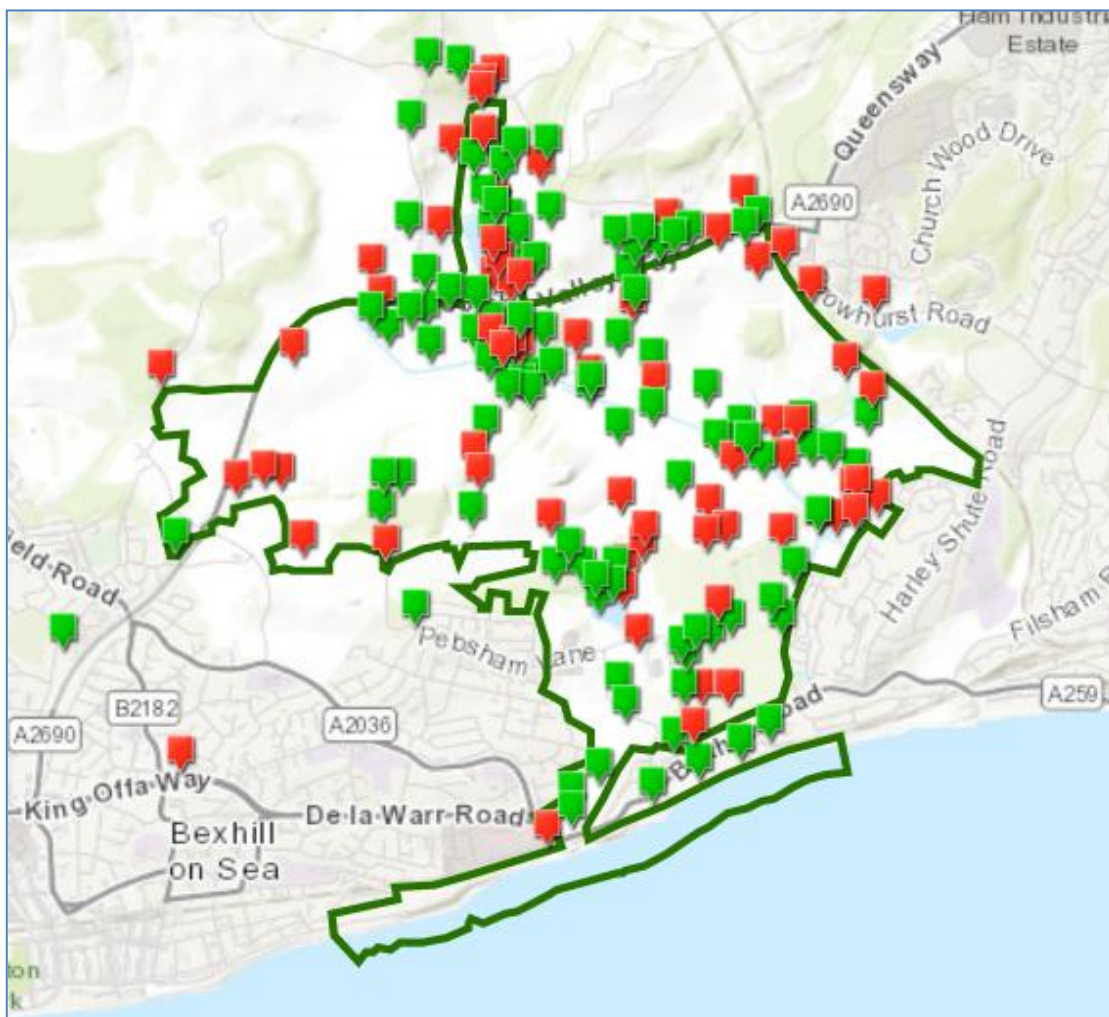
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CVCP have a 5 year 'activation' and fundraising plan 2020-2025⁹⁴

Combe Valley Countryside Park. The greater part of the Park is outside Crowhurst parish south through St Leonards on Sea and part of the marine environment. This is a park for three things, only one of which is nature.

'Combe Valley Countryside Park is a Park for People, a Park for Health and a Park for Nature.'

- A Park for People
- A Park for Health
- A Park for Nature



⁹⁴ Community Interest Company, 2020. 5 year 'activation' and fundraising plan 2020-2025, dated September 2020. 30pp

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CVCP do say in their literature that the following measures to monitor their progress and they will follow specific local and national strategies, as per:

We will look to increase the environmental performance of the Park, future improvements will consider:

- **Biodiversity enhancement and monitoring**
- **Carbon sequestration**
- **Flooding management**
- **Connecting habitats within the park and more widely**
- **Accessibility and legibility of nature**

As a Park for Nature, the CVCP will identify ways to support specific local and national strategies including:

- **Rother DC Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Plan Green Infrastructure Study**
- **Hastings BC Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Plan Green Infrastructure Study**
- **Sussex Wildlife Trust Biodiversity and Planning strategy**
- **[Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services](#)**
- **Natural Capital Investment Strategy from Sussex Local Nature Partnership**
- **National 25 year Environment Strategy**

However, they do not publish what they have already (i.e. ecological surveys, impact assessments) which they need to do to set a quantitative baseline of what they have already which is needed before they start to conserve anything.

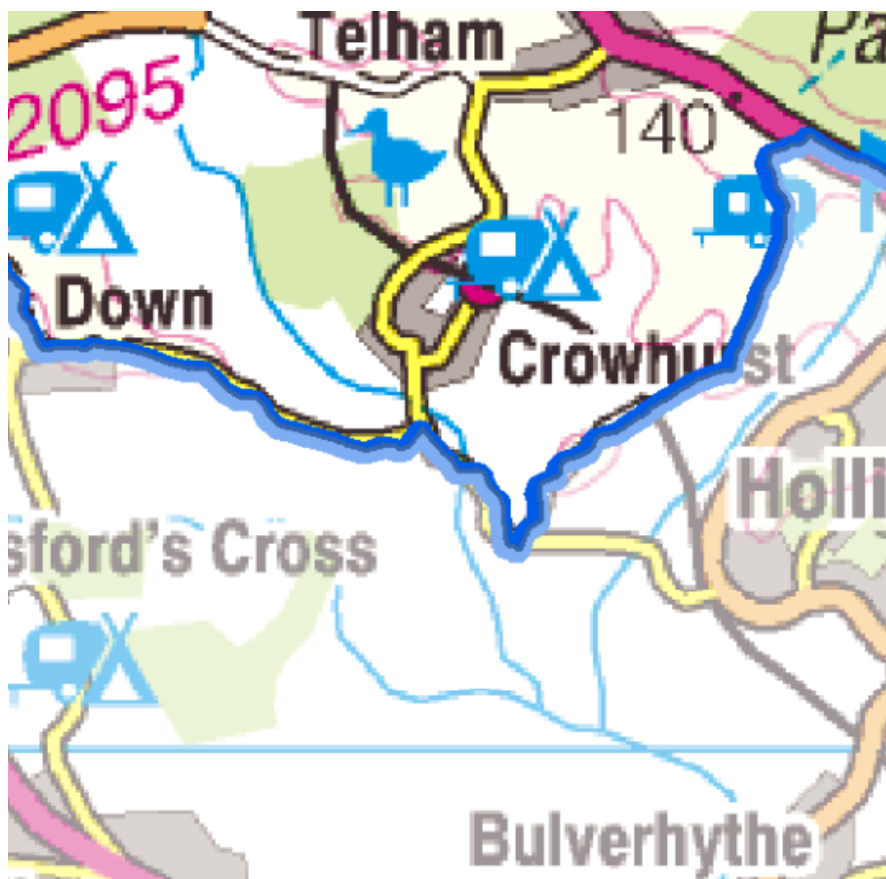
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The High Weald Area of Outstanding National Landscape (AONL)

The north of the parish is within the AONL whilst the southern part is not. An approximate length of the parish boundary in the north is 11,260m, whilst the slightly smaller southern part is 19,881m. The north part of the AONL is roughly bounded by the Crowhurst Road eastwards to Queensway.

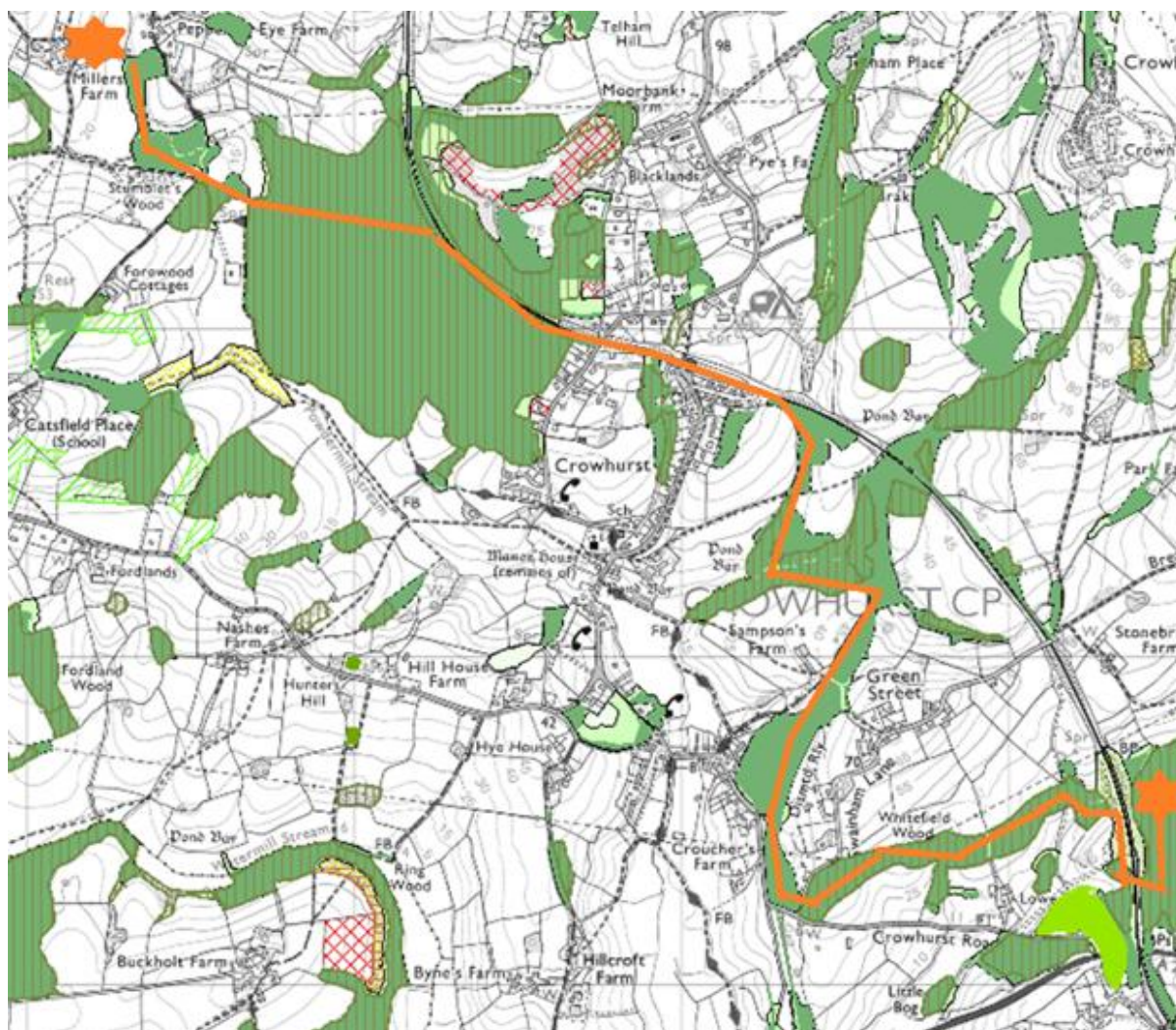
The landscape characteristics of the AONL are rolling countryside and ghylls, typically found in the north of the parish, whilst the southern part of the parish outside the AONL has many more low-lying wetland habitats.

Fore Wood (RSPB), Quarry Wood Nature Reserve are within the AONL, so too the following woods: Brake's Coppice, Rackwell Wood, Long Plantation, New Wood and Crowhurst Park's woodlands.



© Weald AONL, © Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). All rights reserved. Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077. (retrieved 08 Feb 2020). Note: not updated with Link Road

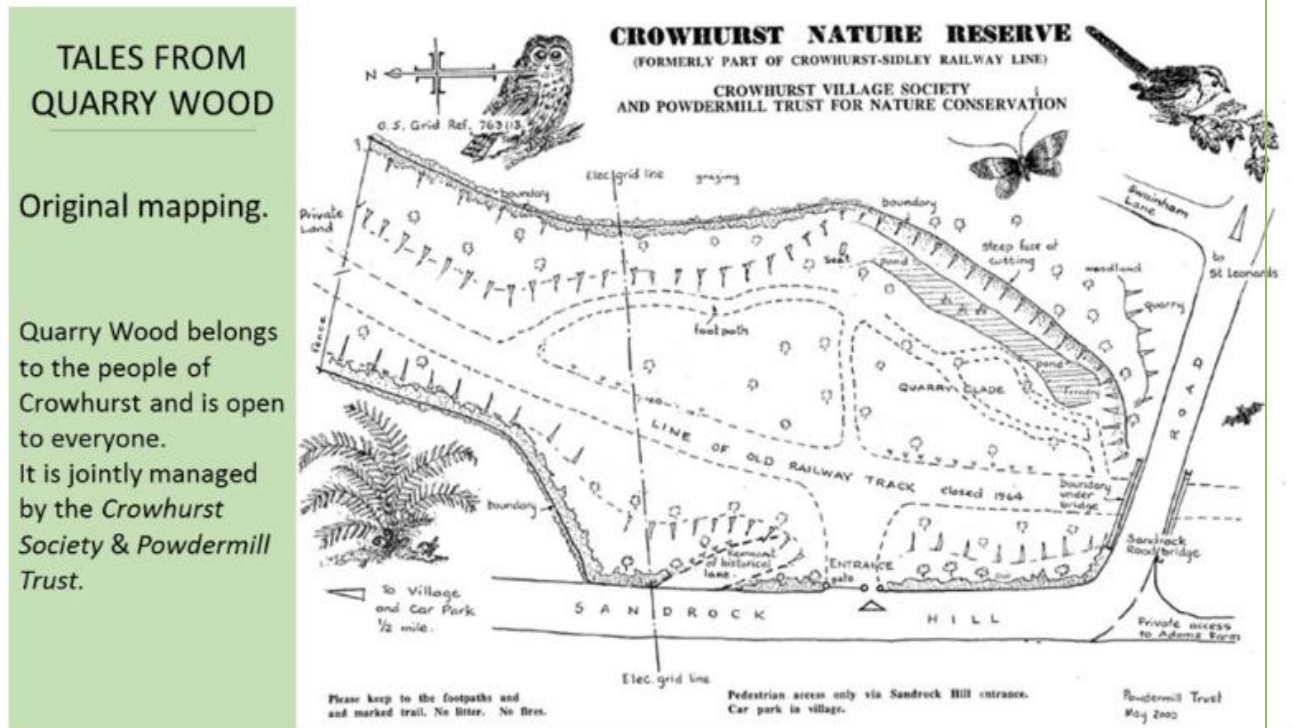
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The Crowhurst Nature Reserve (4.5ac) also known as Quarry Wood TQ76291131

Purchased by the village in 1999. It is established on part of the railway line that was constructed in the early 1900s.⁹⁵ It is run by the Crowhurst Society & Powdermill Trust. Species lists are posted on the website.



Species lists are often published in Crowhurst News

⁹⁵ Tales from Quarry Wood, The Story of Crowhurst Nature Reserve.
<https://talesfromquarrywood.wordpress.com/tags-events/the-story-of-crowhurst-nature-reserve/> (retrieved 27 Feb 2020).

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TQ76051144

Trust Land (ca 0.6ha).

(Not to be confused with National Trust land)

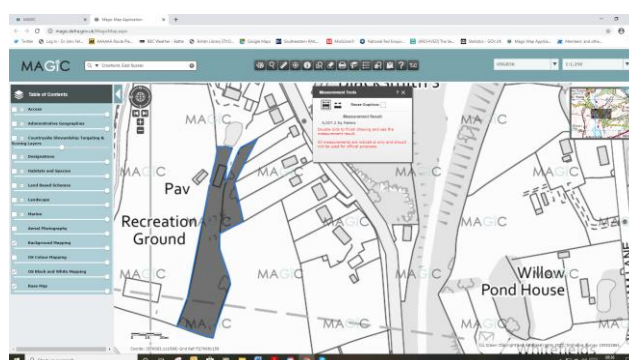
Situated on the east side of Recreation Ground, a long strip of land with a small section on higher ground (to be confirmed with deeds). Owned by the Trust, managed by the Parish Council on their behalf.

Ecologically, the oldest parts of the site are the two hedgerows running north-south containing large oak trees. The central body of the site has self-set trees (sycamore, willow and alder) indicating that the site was once open, perhaps originally grazed.

The Biodiversity value is Medium to Low, but the wet woodland can be improved by clearing out much of the scrub and allowing the sunshine to penetrate the site.



As seen from the Recreation Car Park. 12 Feb 2020 (outlined in red)

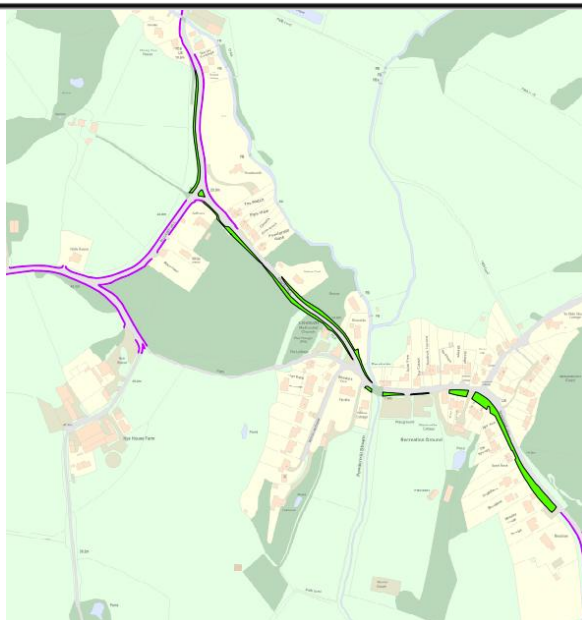
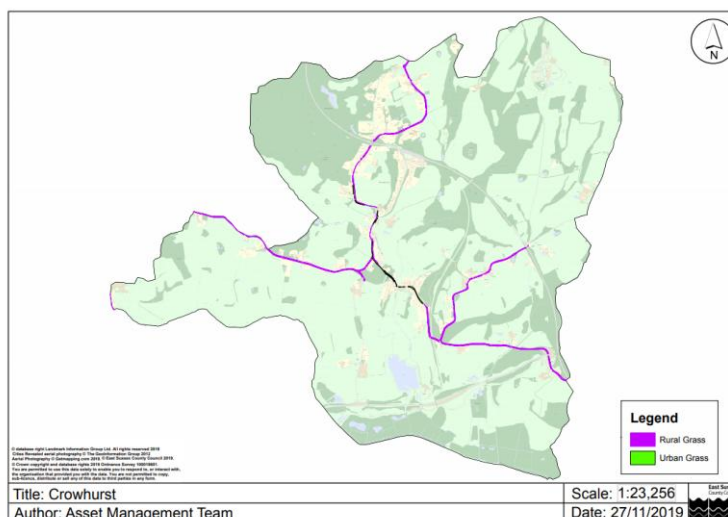


A note on the extent of the Trust land as shown above: the little piece of land that extends in a NE direction, uphill beyond a ditch and is at the end of various back gardens, may not actually be part of the Trust land.

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Verges in Crowhurst

The verges in the parish represent a wildlife corridor or linear nature reserve; three of them were made official verge reserves in 2019. A fourth verge (MUGA) is on Parish Council Trust land. The fifth (the triangle) was confirmed in early 2020. There is continuity of verge habitat east and west and northwards. The following map from ESCC shows the designated verges (up to 27 Nov 2019) and how they are linked in the middle of the village by a section that ESCC says is 'Urban Grass' (shown in green in following cropped plan).



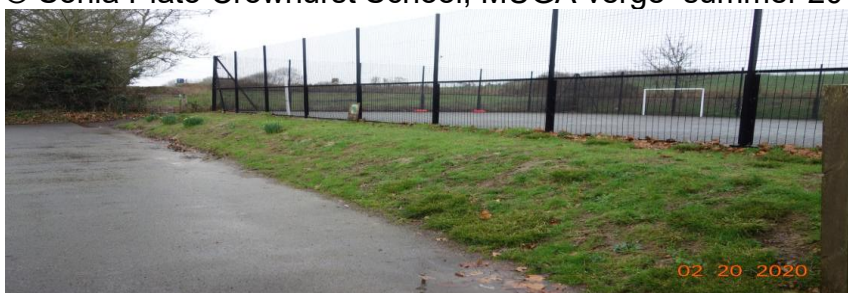
This is an enlarged version of the above

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Wildflower Verges (5) and a Meadow



© Sonia Plato Crowhurst School, MUGA verge summer 2019 TQ75811240



© John Feltwell Crowhurst School, MUGA verge 20 Feb 2020, TQ75811240



© John Feltwell Crowhurst Church Verge: TQ75791236



© John Feltwell Millennium Garden Verge TQ7574129

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© John Feltwell Nashe's Farm, verge, 2019 TQ74811205



© John Feltwell Nashe's Farm, verge, 2020 TQ74811205



© Will Kemp Muriel's Meadow (private location)



© Sonia Plato 2020 TQ758119

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Muriel's Meadow – Hedge planting in 2021

Planting a mixed native species hedge along the boundary with the railway, by the Crowhurst Environment Group (CEG) volunteers.

Management Plan for Crowhurst Verges⁹⁶

- The verges are cut with hand scythes normally in September in a spell of dry weather (but can be from July - September) & the arisings left to dry on the surface for 3-7 days.
- The arisings are then raked up & either composted, spread elsewhere or used a mulch. The reason this process happens is to allow the seeds in the arisings to settle on the sward below by drying & dispersal by raking.
- The sward is then kept to 50mm in height from September - April allowing any finer seeds the space to germinate without getting blocked by the growth of coarse grasses.
- From early - mid April, the verges are allowed to grow again until September when the process is repeated.

Note: this management is currently in negotiation with ESCC.

⁹⁶ Provided by Ian Donovan, 7 April 2020

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The Crowhurst Community Solar Farm

The Crowhurst Community Solar Farm (CCSF) was approved by Rother District Council (RDC) in 2025 after 800 days.⁹⁷

It was approved to be within five fields off to the east of Swainham Lane.

Discussions with the community resulted in the reduction in the size of the SF to five fields instead of six. It was also reduced on landscape grounds to hide visibility from the south-east representing an overall 28% reduction.



The SF will be neatly tucked away to the west of Queensway and west of the railway line (between the old and the new railway lines), and will not be visible from the road through the village to the junction with Queensway. The photo below shows the fields west of Queensway.

When completed the SF will effectually be a nature reserve of ca 13ha.

With the overnight cessation of agricultural practices, flora and fauna will invade the location and thrive.⁹⁸ With enhancements proposed, such as seeding with native wildflower seed and new hedgerows of native trees and shrubs its biodiversity will increase exponentially.

Management by sheep is a frequent way of management the grass and wild flowers and will take place on the SF.

The solar farm off Swainham Lane will provide good linkage across the parish and into Marline Valley SSSI, which is what government promotes, as a 'stepping stones'.

⁹⁷ Planning Application RR/2023/1201 Received 05.06.23, Validated 16.04.24.
Approved: Case Officer: James Laibach.

⁹⁸ Feltwell, John. 2023 Solar Arrays – what's the problem?.
<http://wildlifematters.com/?p=645> (accessed 17 Jan 2023).

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Aerial Photograph of the original six fields for the solar farm, showing Queensway (top right), Rackwell Wood to the south of the six fields, and the Link Road (right hand side joining Queensways= top right). The pond can be seen in Field 2. Field 3 was removed from the eventual plans. Taken 8.8.2025 © John Feltwell

How will the Community actually actually benefit:

The community will benefit directly from a **COMMUNITY FUND**. This will receive money from the company that sets up the Solar Farm, starting from year one. After Planning Permission is granted there are two options: **First Option:** We will contact, for instance 'Energy4All : Supporting Renewable Energy Co-ops in the UK' (<https://energy4all.co.uk/>) who specialise in raising funds needed for projects to go forward. At the present time there are four companies who are being approached (18 Oct 25). They go to shareholders to raise the ca £6 million needed to build out the infrastructure. For doing this they take about 6% from the electricity earned to repay the shareholders, probably over a six year period. Energy4All have stated that they will pay the Community Fund £30-40K annually from year one and take none for themselves as they are a **NON-PROFIT COOP**. After the construction costs have been repaid after a few years all the money earned will go into the Community Fund. The farmer who has loaned the fields for the solar farm receives a nominal rent. Money received in the Community Fund can be spent by the community how they think fit, for instance on Climate Change projects, charging points, batteries, fuel poverty...**Second Option:** we go to say Octopus or EDF and they offer villagers electricity at a favourable community discount. All villagers are offered the deal and they can sign up as they wish. Some money is kept back to pay for the annual running costs of ca £250,000.

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Table WM20 The COMMUNITY SOLAR FARM (RR/2023/1201) IN NUMBERS –

THE SOLAR FARM	
Number of fields	6 (5 with PVs)
Size of fields (hectares)	12.32
How many solar panels (reduced 28% for Application)	10,752
Reduction in size of solar farm to address local concerns (the solar farm could be seen from 10 homes)	28%
How many string converters?	Every 4-6 metres
NATURE CONSERVATION	
How much of the site available for nature conservation	All
Area for wildflower meadows	All
How many ponds to be restored	2
New hedgerows to be created	1km
How many hedgerows to be gapped up	All
How much land returned to Crowhurst after 40 years (ha)	12
How many species of native tree and shrub to be planted	16
How many badger flaps in perimeter fence	Every 500m
How many wildlife boxes	47
Biodiversity Net Gain	919% gain
ENERGY OUTPUT	
Output in MW (Megawatts)	5MW
'All fossil fuels' emissions statistic (tonnes per GWh)	432
MEETING NET ZERO	
How much CO2 offset, in tons, per year?	1,420
(conforms with Rother's Climate Change Policy 2024)	
COSTS	
Application Fee to Rother (£)	33,000
Discount from Rother as Community Project (£)	0
(who paid for fee? – Energise Sussex Coast) = thank you!	-
Cost for construction (£ millions)	6-6.5
(Who is providing the cash? Energise Sussex partners)	-
Includes: Connection costs to grid / industry / railway (£)	850,000
Includes: Fencing, landscaping, CCTV (£)	50,000
Includes: Financing (£)	100,000
Annual running costs (£)	240-300,00
CROWHURST BENEFITS	
How many households will benefit (approx.) cheaper electricity..	2,532
f100% transfer of solar farm by landowner for Parish Ownership	100%

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Alternative Energy Sources in Crowhurst

This has been addressed in general terms in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

The parish is open to other measures to generate electricity, such as wind turbines and anaerobic digesters (ADs), even floating solar farms (on lakes).

Wind turbines do have an adverse environmental effect on birds especially migratory birds, and bats, so they should be sited away from fly-ways and tops of hills.

Both wind turbines and ADs need to be assessed for their visual effect on landscape.

When considering ADs the village routes that regularly bring large vehicles with vegetation for digestion should be a traffic consideration.

RDC Climate Emergency in 2019

Since RDC declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 they have produced an *Environment Strategy* as a means of addressing it. In it they specifically state that 'well-being' is part of it.⁹⁹

Solutions are available to build resilience and transform our energy supplies, creating new opportunities for a low-carbon economy. Technology is improving and the cost is reducing. Many solutions provide additional benefits from enhancing biodiversity, improving health and wellbeing to providing a driver for economic renewal which has the potential to localise our economies.

RDC made this specific pledge on well-being:

PLEDGE:

- We will work with partners to take forward initiatives enabling Rother to become a 'smart digital district' contributing to carbon neutrality with the added health and wellbeing benefits that this will bring.

Warmer Crowhurst - and Air Pollution

⁹⁹

Rother District Council, Environment Strategy, 2020-2030
<https://rdcpublic.blob.core.windows.net/website-uploads/2020/11/RotherEnvironmentStrategy2020-2030-VersionSept2020.pdf>
 (accessed 18 January 2023).

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Statements from this group are expected soon. However, suffice it to say the quantitative study into the present usage of energy needs of households in the parish will show continued dependence on gas boilers.

The relevance to this Biodiversity Audit is a question of Air Pollution and Well-being, i.e. living in a healthy and greener environment. As Well-being is an important factor in the Climate Change discussion of the results of the carbon footprint in the parish will be included here.

All of us breathe in particulates and they are not good for us. This is what the Office of National Statistics say ¹⁰⁰:

Particulate Matter (PM) is everything in the air that is not a gas and as such it is made up from a huge variety of chemical compounds and materials some of which can be toxic. Due to the small size of many of the particles that form PM some of these toxins may enter the bloodstream and be transported around the body, lodging in the heart, brain and other organs. Therefore, exposure to PM can result in serious impacts to health, especially in vulnerable groups of people such as the young, elderly and those with respiratory problems. As a result, particulates are classified according to size. The UK is currently focused on measuring the fractions of PM where particles are less than 10 micrometres in diameter (PM10) and less than 2.5 micrometres (PM2.5) based on the latest evidence on the effects of PM to health.

The particulates that affect Crowhurst are the PM 2.5 ones that come out of wood burners. There is not a lot that parishioners can do on a national scale, but with regard to wood burners in the parish, that quantum has yet to be done and any mitigation discussed.

The Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution's amended Gothenburg Protocol (CLRTAP) and the National Emissions Ceiling Regulations (NECR) require the UK to reduce emissions of PM2.5 by 30 per cent compared to emissions in 2005 by 2020 and in each subsequent year until 2029. The NECR also requires the UK to reduce emissions by 46 per cent compared to emissions in 2005 by 2030. The UK has seen a 28 per cent reduction in PM2.5 emissions between 2005 and 2021. Therefore, in 2021, the UK did not meet the 30 per cent emission reduction commitment required between 2020 to 2029 as set out in the NECR and the CLRTAP.

¹⁰⁰ National Statistics. Updated 22 Feb 2023. Emissions of air pollutants in the UK – Particular matter (PM10 and PM2.5)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/emissions-of-air-pollutants/emissions-of-air-pollutants-in-the-uk-particulate-matter-pm10-and-pm25> (accessed 26 Feb 2023).

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The Crowhurst Environment Group (CEG) made the following presentation in October 2019, which included

Presentation to Crowhurst Parish Council by Crowhurst Environment Group

Why Crowhurst Parish Council need to declare a Climate Emergency (SONIA)

Rother District Council declared a Climate Emergency on 16th September 2019, Wealden on 24th July, Hastings on 13th February and Eastbourne on 10th July.

Rother District Council has pledged to become zero carbon by 2030, after becoming the latest local authority to declare a climate emergency.

The pledge was made at a full council meeting on Monday (September 16), as councillors unanimously passed a motion put forward by the Rother Alliance – the council's cross-party leadership group.

Cabinet member for environment and transport Kathryn Field (Lib Dem) said: "We as councillors and the council are in a very good position for influencing the rest of the community. We are role models and we can take people with us.

"The government has a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2050, we believe that actually we should aspire to being carbon neutral by 2030. We have been told we have 11 years before the damage to the climate of this planet is irreversible.

"I think 2030 is a very reasonable target and it should be at the forefront of our minds to work hard for that goal.

"We can't do this on our own. We must involve the community, we must take them with us and not do it to them.

Now we are asking Crowhurst Parish Council to follow their lead and work with them.

We ask that Crowhurst Parish Council make a commitment to tackling climate change and to pass the resolution as follows:

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‘Crowhurst Parish Council declares a climate and ecological emergency and aspires to be carbon neutral by 2030 taking into account both production and consumption emissions (v)’

FIVE YEARS TO GO !

And to achieve this by the following:

‘Crowhurst Parish Council will develop a policy to achieve the above aim which will:

- Set out a workable strategy to set realistic, achievable and measurable targets
- Set out an evolving action plan
- Aim to encourage and support the community of Crowhurst to increase biodiversity
- Work in partnership with Rother District and East Sussex County Council to provide the support and resources to make the 2030 target possible.
- Agree to work with local people and groups and with local authority organisations such as neighbouring town and parish Councils to determine and implement best practice methods to limit global warming to less than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels
- Agree to continue to work with partners across the district, county and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans
- Agree to place this issue on Parish Council agendas and agree strategies and action plans
- Agree to report to residents, the actions the Council will take to address this emergency within six months
- Agree to set up a working group, accountable to the Parish Council, to achieve these objectives made up of both parish council and resident members

We hope that you will take this emergency seriously and move swiftly to pass this resolution for the following reasons:

1. The global scientific consensus is that humans have already caused irreversible change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports that human activities are to have already caused 0.8-1.2°Celsius of global warming above pre-industrial levels.
2. To reduce the chance of runaway global warming and limit the effects of climate breakdown, it is imperative that we as a species significantly reduce our CO₂ (carbon equivalent) emissions to less than 2 tonnes per person per year as soon as possible. Carbon emissions result from both production and consumption.
3. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure, etc., to make low carbon living easier and the new norm.
4. Current plans and actions are not enough. The world is on track to overshoot the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit before 2050.(i)
5. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in November, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause, compared to a 1.5°C. However, limiting global warming to 1.5° C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities.(ii)
6. Local Councils around the world are responding by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing resources to address this emergency.(iii)

Crowhurst Environment Group, Climate Change Working Group October 2019

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References:

- I. World Resources Institute: <https://www.wri.org/blog/2018/10/8-things-you-need-know-about-ipcc-15-c-report>
- II. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °s Celsius: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/>
- III. For example Bristol and Manchester City Councils: <https://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/3066475/bristol-andmanchester-unveil-fresh-plans-to-tackle-climate-emergency> Also US cities, Berkley: <https://www.theclimatemobilization.org/blog/2018/4/25/hoboken-resolves-to-mobilize> And the C40 cities: <https://www.c40.org/other/deadline>
- IV. ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, provides many examples of good practice, models and toolkits for Climate Change Adaptation and Urban Resilience: <http://iclei-europe.org/topics/climate-change-adaptation-urban-resilience/>
- V. Scope 1,2 and 3 of the Greenhouse Gas protocol explained: <https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/faqs/services/scope-3-indirect-carbon-emission>
- VI.



Crowhurst News is often a source of historical and natural history facts

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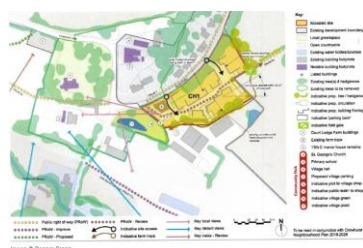
Habitat Loss in the parish – quantum (Threats to greenspace)

Allocated Sites - **developers take note!**

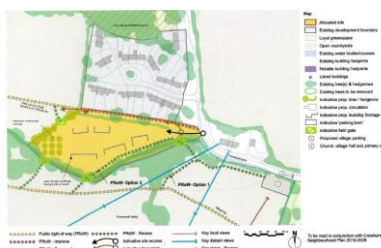
There are three 'Allocated Sites' (allocated for housing) proposed for the village, as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan ¹⁰¹ and the Design Plan ¹⁰² These are:

Table WM20

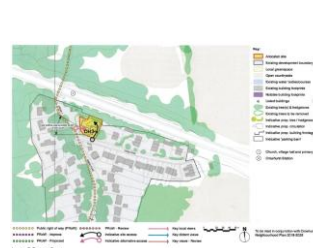
SITE	Current greenfield usage	Size	Proposed usage
CH1	Agricultural grassland	0.62ha	12 units
CH2	Un-managed woodland	0.74ha	6 units
CH3	Agricultural grassland	0.086ha	12 units



CH1 © Deeper Green



CH2 © Deeper Green



CH3 © Deeper Green

Adverse Environmental Impact

Each of these sites is currently greenfield, and once developed will become built-up environments even with their enhancement gains (on and off the sites).

All three sites are in full view of the public, two of them have Public Footpaths through the sites, and CH1 is fully open to the public's view as it is adjacent to the station car park. All three sites, once developed, will be seen from the main road through the village. They will thus have a significant landscape impact upon the community.

Developers must assess the significant environmental impact that their development will have on the village. Although they will have to comply with BNG and make it a better place for biodiversity, their buildings will have a detrimental impact upon the community, will deny the village the green space it previously had on the development site, and will likely have a profound impact on the landscape of the area.

The next section deals with the impact of the BNG in more detail.

¹⁰¹ Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan, 2025

¹⁰² Design Plan, 2021

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Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculations ¹⁰³

It is mandatory for builders to find a 20% net gain to compensate for the biodiversity loss. This is a higher requirement of Rother compared to the national mandatory 10% gain.

Without any mitigation there would be a finite and permanent net loss of 1.44ha of these sites, where the average footprint of a house in England is 656 sq ft. ¹⁰⁴

Although on paper there will be a 20% gain in biodiversity (either on-site, off-site in the parish, or purchased elsewhere in the country) there will still be a permanent loss of greenfield land in the parish.

So with the 20% gain in biodiversity in Crowhurst, or elsewhere, the biodiversity quantum will be greater than that of the land lost, the area of greenfield land in Crowhurst will have shrunk by 1.44ha permanently – never to be replaced.

Where biodiversity is the only measure of 'natural wealth', the parish will be theoretically better off for biodiversity, but worse off with its greenfield space. Such is the measure of UK nature conservation in the face of nationwide development.



CH1 off Station Road



CH3 Land adjacent to Railway 19.11.21

The Natural Capital of the County of Sussex has been appraised in recent years ¹⁰⁵ and the Sussex Local Nature Partnership (SLNP) stress the need 'to hold the line' against habitat loss.

It is important to be aware of habitat loss in the village, especially with respect of the Environment Act 2021 which deals with net gain. The following table lists the various activities in the village which have resulted in a quantifiable net loss of green space in the village. If the allocated sites are built upon there will be a net loss of 1.56ha unless mitigation and compensation are carried out. CH1 would be loss of brownfield (though now the site has greened itself up to form a wood), and CH2, and CH3 would be loss of greenfield land.

Table WM21 Tally of Habitat Assets lost in Crowhurst Village

¹⁰³ Courtesy of The Environment Act 2021.

¹⁰⁴ David Wilson Homes, 2021. <https://www.dwh.co.uk/advice-and-inspiration/average-house-sizes-uk/>

¹⁰⁵ Sussex Local Nature Partnership, 2019. Natural Capital Investment Strategy for Sussex 2019-2024. Sussex Local Nature Partnership December 2019. Final Version (Adopted by Sussex LNP October 2019).

http://sussexlnp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Natural-Capital-Investment-Strategy_ADOPTED_Final_Dec2019.pdf 73pp (accessed 10 Dec 2021)

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(Tally commenced since initial audit of parish from May 2019)

Date	Location	OS Map Ref.	Area destroyed	Reason for removal of asset
2019	Oak View formerly 'Sabon Gari', Chapel Hill	TQ75911181	Ash tree removed, despite CPC objections to RDC	Private development
2019	Oak View formerly Sabon Gari', Chapel Hill	TQ75911181	Unsuccessful request to RDC for TPO on oak at entrance	Tree remains but not TPO'd
2020/21	Southmead, Swainham Lane		Felling of 10 mature oak trees. Reported to CPC and RDC. No response from RDC up to 16.12.21	
Jan 2021	Land adjacent to 'Sabon Gari' Chapel Hill	TQ75911181	c. 2,437 sqm woodland removed	Permitted development under RR/2020/945/P
16 Feb 21	'Oak View' Chapel Hill		23m x 1m of native hedgerow removed	Replaced with non-native laurel
01 Nov 21	Woodlands Way	TQ75871157	Garden with badgers bulldozed including extensive unauthorised woodland and soil removal.	Police Incident No SXP 20210927-0416 Enforcement action by Rother District Council
TOTAL Loss of greenspace 19-21			2460 sqm of habitat lost 11 trees lost,	
Upcoming loss	Allocated Sites		Size	
CH1	(Station Rd)		0.74 ha,	
CH2	(Forewood Rise)		0.64 ha,	
CH3	(Station CP)		0.086ha	
UPCOMING	TOTAL		1.44ha	

Developments in adjacent parishes can affect the ecology of Crowhurst.

Another example (other than the **Link Road**), was the controversial **Normanhurst** proposal to create 211 lodges in AONL TPO woodland in Catsfield (RR/2023/217/P). It was thrown out unanimously by Rother District Council in September 2023. The problem for Crowhurst was that Normanhurst is on higher ground at the top of the watershed that drains down through Crowhurst so all manner of materials could pass through the parish and thus out to sea. (further information see Crowhurst News, October 2023).

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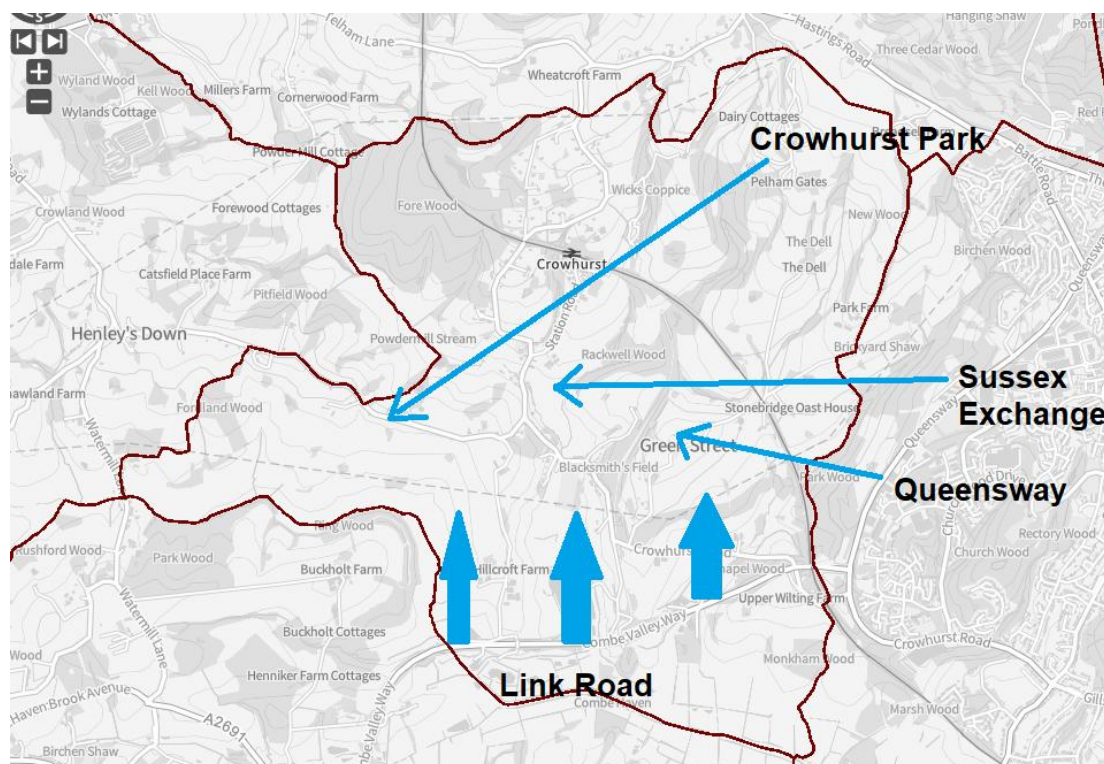
Dark Skies – countering the effects of Light Pollution

There are emerging Dark Sky Policies from RDC and the AONL Unit and both were said to be formalising their policies by 2023. South Downs National Park has one, and also villages such as Burwash and Lamberhurst.

Crowhurst village is a very dark village at night with no pavements and no street lighting, even along Station Road (a very rare occurrence for an East Sussex village). The only light pollution, in the village, is at the station (below). The rest of the village is very dark, especially around the church ¹⁰⁶ (a few lights) and school (no lights at all at CH1) and very few lights around The Plough Pub.

Despite this Crowhurst is negatively impacted by light pollution from inside the parish and outside (mostly) from the NE and E.

The worst source of light pollution in the parish is Crowhurst Park which as shown on magic.gov.uk has over 200 caravan pitches. It is in the AONL (as is the north part of the parish) and was given planning permission by RDC. Its lights penetrate well into the east of Catsfield as the Park is on one of the highest spots in Crowhurst (ca. 130m above sea level),.



Light Pollution from inside and outside Crowhurst parish. In some case light pollution is accompanied with Noise Pollution.

¹⁰⁶ A few years ago, the church were given a bequest to light up the church from two ground-based spotlights in the graveyard. These are on every night and have been for a number of years.

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Cinderbrook is a very large expanse of greenspace in the centre of the village. At night it is completely dark, and only a few specks of light can be seen from the church of the houses gathered along the stream east of the Plough. However, this dark space in the village has light spillage from the Sussex Exchange on Queensway (outside the parish) that is visible across the valley. Now that the Link Road is complete, there is light from road traffic that spills over into the south of the parish.



Crowhurst station at night



The Plough at night

The parish wish to be less subject to light pollution and have dark skies that everyone can enjoy, and that wildlife do not become adversely impacted.

There is a law that protects against a nuisance from artificial light: namely Section 102 of the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 which amends section 79 of The Environmental Protection Act 1990.

This aim of the parish fits in nicely with two objectives of the High Weald AONL (in which at least half of Crowhurst sits).¹⁰⁷

Objective OQ4 *To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value. Rationale. To ensure that the special qualities people value, such as tranquillity, dark skies, sense of naturalness and clean air, are recognised and taken account of in AONL management. Indicators of Success i. No loss of dark skies or tranquillity: HWJAC: CPRE tranquillity data and citizen science sky quality meter reading*

¹⁰⁷ The High Weald AONL – Management Plan 2019-2024

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Objective OQ2 To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONL. Run citizen science projects to gather data on AONL heritage e.g. dark skies.

The High Weald AONL describe themselves as ‘*intrinsically a dark landscape*’ where dark skies can be expected¹⁰⁸ where the call is to ‘*minimise lighting and glare from windows to protect dark skies and reduce energy use.*’

The CPC’s have already set out their wish to reduce lighting in the village, in their CPCs Design Guide (May 2021 –updated 2024) where it states

- *No streetlights in order to maintain optimum dark*
- *Exterior domestic lighting to be down-lighters only to maintain dark skies and conform to bat friendly guideline*



Chapel Hill at night showing external illuminated pillars – really not required in a village

The next iteration of this Bio Audit will include a map of the parish and the places where measurements have been made. In the meantime take a look at the results to date for the UK – and you may be able to zoom in on Crowhurst.

https://www.nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/?_ga=2.100888833.1437024492.1537789736-320654422.1537789715

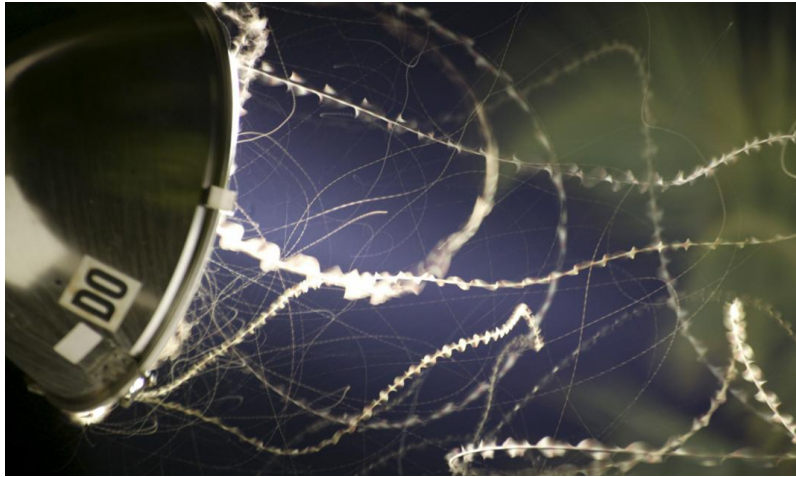
Light pollution on wildlife - decline, decline, decline...the Anthropocene

Light pollution has a profound negative effect on wildlife. Wildlife generally is experiencing a massive decline mostly due to habitat loss¹⁰⁹ but light pollution is a factor in that decline. Currently there is a 41% decline in all species in Britain, as stated in *The State of Nature* report of 2019. Butterflies are suffering from a 80% decline, moths (41%) birds (42%), amphibians (36%) and reptiles (31%). The losses attributed to light pollution are 65% of hedgehogs prefer dark areas than lighted areas, caterpillars (of moths and butterflies) decline in lighted areas, and toads have a 25% decline in their ability to find mates and to find food in lighted areas.

¹⁰⁸ The High Weald Design Guide

¹⁰⁹ Feltwell, J. 2022. The Anthropocene – is anybody listening. *The Linnean*. Vol 38(2) October 2022. 36-40.

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Insects are drawn to street lights, and bats are drawn to catch insects: causing an un-natural balance of nature, and disrupting the behaviour of many animals. ¹¹⁰



Goodbye hedgehogs – we may never see you again

STOP PRESS. A dead hedgehog was found in the road in Crowhurst on 29 Nov. 2025 (FR record), so they are now around having been scarce for a while.

Hedgehogs are Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species because of their declining numbers; they need conservation.



Dead adult badger at Crowhurst Station

¹¹⁰ Feltwell, J. 2003. Light pollution – are we still in the dark. Buglife- The Invertebrate Conservation Trust. *Buglife Update*, Autumn p. 11.

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Q. What are RDC doing for Crowhurst on Climate Change?

A. restoration of habitats and healthy waterways



**Rocks on the beach at Glyne Gap to prevent erosion;
Galley Hill in the distance to the west**

Rother Climate Change Update March 2024 to March 2025

This is a summary of Rother's activity which contributed to the objectives of their Climate Strategy.¹¹¹

Biodiversity and Land Use

Objective 4: Nature will be in recovery across the district.

- **We worked with partners to improve the health of water environments and land management practices**

The Council is a formal partner of the South East Rivers Trust's Rother and Romney Catchment Partnership, including the Combe Valley Catchment sub-group, and the Cuckmere and Pevensey Catchment Partnership. These partnerships deliver projects to conserve and improve the health of the water environments and protect, restore and create wildlife habitats. The Council also sits on the working group for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) as a supporting authority. (A public consultation on the draft LNRS is expected to open in the Summer of 2025 ahead of it being adopted later in the year.)

In February 2025, the Council attended Strandliner's annual Love Our Rother event, with the theme this year being water quality. The Council also supported local biodiversity groups with advice on writing and funding biodiversity plans.

- **We audited and improved Council owned land for nature**

¹¹¹

<https://www.rother.gov.uk/climate-emergency/what-were-doing-as-a-council/what-weve-achieved-so-far/our-climate-action-april-2024-march-2025/>

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RDC's Climate Strategy (adopted 18 Dec 2023).

One major works that RDC have done is to prevent sea erosion and flooding at Glyne Gap (as illustrated above).

Second, they now have a **Climate Change team** (= **Directorate of Place and Climate Change**) at our disposal as follows (currently July 23) as per Councillor's letterheads:

- **Peter Dijkhuis**, BLArch, MCPUC, TRP(SA), MRTPI,
Principal Planning Officer – Development Management,
Directorate of Place and Climate Change
For and on behalf of Rother District Council
- **Kemi Erifevieme**, Development Manager Directorate of Place & Climate Change
- **Ben Hook**, Director of Place and Change
- **Mr. Jeff Pyrah** BSc(Hons), MA, MRTPI. Planning Policy Manager and Directorate of Place and Climate Change. 01424 787610.
- **Mrs S Shepherd** MRTPI, BA(Hons), Development Management Team Leader Directorate of Place and Climate Change 01424 787610.

RDC also have a **Climate Change Steering Group (CCSG)** which met 10 times during the to year to April 2023¹¹² Comprising Councillors:

- K.M. Field (Chair),
- S.J. Coleman,
- P.J. Gray,
- L.M. Langlands,
- P.N. Osborne
- S.M. Prochak, MBE.

The following attended CCSG meetings in the last year: Councillors

- J. Barnes,
- Mrs V. Cook,
- P.C. Courtel,
- B.J. Drayson,
- C.A. Madeley,
- A.S. Mier,
- G.F. Stevens,
- H.L. Timpe
- J. Vine-Hall.

The CCSG completed 5 projects: i) Emmissions Baselineing, ii) Tree planting in Bexhill, iii) Tree planting Strategy Bexhill, iv) Urban Forest 1066, v) Couch to Carbon Zero. They also have 5 on-going projects, i) Village Halls Energy Project (Crowhurst involved), Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP), iii) Biodiversity Audit across the

¹¹² RDC **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**. Date 24 April 2023.

<https://rother.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s7429/Climate%20Change%20Steering%20Group%20Update.pdf> (accessed 14 July 2023)

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County Estate, iv) Parish and Town Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration (Crowhurst has been offered assistance) v) Bexhill's bedding plants to be replaced with perennials.

So, of ten projects only two have filtered down to Crowhurst, neither completed. Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) are not yet in the parish (not to Oct 25).

- The Youth Club was given £3K for insulation for more efficiency.
- The solar farm off Swainham Lane was Approved by Rother in 2025 (but not financed by Rother; financed by the community).

The solar farm team worked with with **Dr Lucie Bolton** (Environment Strategy Officer – now left Rother) and **Elize Manning** (Projects Officer Environment) of RDC to find ways to work together to link the projects to help individuals, parish and districts work together to meet the climate challenges.

It is worth reflecting that whilst the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is now updated (2024) it will have the following three village policies on Renewables, Biodiversity and Dark Skies.

a) Crowhurst's Renewables Policy

The parish is open to all means of renewable energy in the light of the man-made climate change. That includes solar panels (and farms), wind (turbines), anaerobic digesters (ADs), air-source heat pumps and ground-source heat pumps. Advice must be sought from the Catsfield Parish Council with regard to any updates from their Warmer Crowhurst initiatives, before any works are commenced or applications submitted to Rother District Council (RDC). Solar farms must be only on Grade 4 land (and no higher) so as not to decrease any potential to grow crops of higher grade land (this is often called BMV Land or 'Best and Most Versatile Land' – keep off them). Solar farms and ADs must be in areas screened from public view, or screened with native trees and shrubs to be so. As innovation gathers apace, the installation of batteries to store energy from solar farms is encouraged (and to be screened), and these can be at some distance from the solar farm or ADs (1-5km via underground trenches) so as to benefit smaller communities within the parish. The impact of any renewable energy project will avoid any adverse environmental impact on ancient woodlands, protected areas, protected species, and people. The impacts to be avoided with renewables is noise pollution (especially wind turbines, lesser extent inverters on solar farms), water pollution (especially from ADs – not to be sited next to a watercourse), air and light pollution. Wind turbines must always be sited well away from edges of woodlands and hedgerows (at least 20m) to avoid any interaction with bats that use wood edges and hedgerows as commuting and foraging routes. Policies and guidances which must be followed include those promulgated from RDC, the Local Plan, NPPF (2021) and Catsfield Parish Council. The current codes of best practice must be followed for all the types of renewable energy, using issued by Natural England.

b) Crowhurst's Biodiversity Policy

All proposals and projects within the parish must have a tangible and visible biodiversity element. As the country is currently experiencing a serious (and catastrophic) man-made decrease in wildlife due to habitat loss and the use of chemicals, every proposal must be accompanied by a significant gain in biodiversity.

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That gain must be calculated using the latest Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) software which is currently version 3.1 (as of 11 March 2023). It becomes obligatory in November 2023. The gain, be it, trees or shrubs, need not be within the proposal site. It can be locally, but definitely within the parish boundary, and consultation with the Parish Council must be sought and the location agreed with the parish before applications are submitted. Any new habitats to be created must be in line with the concept of linking habitats that have been removed in the past, i.e. promoting 'connectivity' which is good for the dispersal of flora and fauna. These 'links' are part of the 'Stepping Stones' of habitats promoted in government literature to boost biodiversity. All species planted must be native species, and of local provenance, and must not include any native species that have been imported from outside the UK (to limit any disease transfer). All plantings must be accompanied with a 5-year monitoring programme to ensure establishment, and these matters must be expressed at the planning stage prior to any application being submitted. Rabbit guards must be biodegradable. When wildflower seed is introduced to create meadows then all the sourced seed must come from local Wealden seed sources, from local provenance and absolutely no imported seeds (which happens), to maintain veracity of native wildflower species. Where enhancements include wildlife boxes, then these are to be encouraged, for instance for bats, birds (including owls), hedgehog homes, insect hotels. Log piles and buried buckets of wood chippings for beetles are encouraged, so too scrapes in banks to encourage solitary bees to breed. Policies which are expected to be followed are the NPPF (2021), National Pollinator Policy, B-Lines and British Standards: Biodiversity 2020.

c) Crowhurst's Dark Skies Policy

Crowhurst is a very rural and wooded community and residents enjoy relatively dark skies, providing them an environment for healthy living. However, the parish is being impacted by light pollution from the Link Road (from the south), Queensway (west), St Leonards (south) and Crowhurst Park (north east). It is doubtful if any policy for light suppression can be actioned outside the parish, but light suppression of major lights in the parish could be accomplished in Crowhurst Park. One of the most noxious aspects of light pollution is external lights, particularly on roadsides, put up by residents. All lights must face down. LED lights must be used, particularly ones with the blue element missing, as this is injurious to insects. Light pollution also affects UK protected mammals such as bats, badgers, hedgehogs, and diminishes biodiversity overall in the parish. Residents can assist with light reduction affecting the environment by i) not having external lights in the garden (except for safety reasons), ii) turning lights off when not in use, iii) pulling curtains after dark, iv) using LED lights. There is currently no street lighting in the parish, but where safety is an issue, such as the train station or the church, the parish is negotiating for reducing lights and timings. Policies. Both Rother District Council and the AONL Unit have emerging Dark Skies policies, so developers and private individuals need to follow the recommendations made by both groups. The AONL Management Plan (to be updated soon) also needs to be consulted to note their wishes for the community.

WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE FOR THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HABITATS AND SPECIES IN THE PARISH?

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The following habitats and species are now listed with evidence, where available (however, there is precious little evidence)

Table WM22 Climate Change evidence:

HABITAT	EVIDENCE OF CHANGE FROM CLIMATE CHANGE
Wetlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Temperatures will continue to rise¹¹³ ii) Frost-free season (and growing season) will lengthen iii) Changes in precipitation patterns iv) More droughts and heat waves v) Hurricanes will be come stronger and more intense vi) Sea levels will rise 1-4 feet by 2100 	<p>None of this has been charted for Crowhurst ??</p>
Ancient Woodland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current projections suggest that areas of south, central and eastern England will have drier and warmer summers, resulting in increasingly severe soil moisture deficits which will reduce tree growth – particularly on shallow, south facing slopes, and sandy-textured, freely-draining soils. ¹¹⁴ <p>Changes in the seasonality of rainfall have occurred gradually over the past century, and this trend is projected to continue and to strengthen in the future. The resulting wetter autumn and winter periods will cause greater water table fluctuations, limit rooting depth, and reduce tree stability on exposed sites.</p> <p>Changes in the wind climate are highly uncertain but, with reduced anchorage on wet sites, the risk of windthrow will increase.</p>	<p>Evidence is lacking in deficits in tree growth</p> <p>Evidence is lacking in tree stability</p> <p>Evidence is lacking in windthrow</p>

¹¹³ The effects of Climate Change. <https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/> (retrieved 4.3.2020)

¹¹⁴ Ray, D., Morison, J., & Broadmeadow, M. 2010. Climate change impacts and adaptation in England's woodlands. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/695127/Climate-change-impacts-adaptation-English-woodlands.pdf (retrieved 4.3.2020)

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incidence and severity of tree disease and pest outbreaks will increase. A warmer climate and, particularly, warmer winters will allow tree pests and pathogens to extend their range. • Drier and warmer summers will heighten the risk of fire 	<p>Some evidence that Ash Dieback disease is more prevalent today.</p> <p>Warmer, yes, but no fires (only arson in reedbeds in 2019)</p>
Medieval Field Systems	No evidence of change
Meadows (managed)	No evidence of change
Hedgerows	No evidence of change
Sandstone Outcrops	No evidence of change
Medieval Field Systems & meadows	No evidence of change
Hedgerows	No evidence of change
Streams	No evidence of change, though increased flooding, see below
Ponds	No evidence of change
Springs	No evidence of change
Bogs	No evidence of change
SPECIES	
Flowering Plants	Flowering early
Trees	No evidence of change
Mammals	Water vole possibly extinct
Reptiles	No evidence of change
Amphibians	No evidence of change
Birds	No evidence of change
Fish	No evidence of change
Invertebrates :	Native crayfish possibly extinct

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FLOODING – an issue of climate change? Yes, of course.

Flooding was always an opportunity to refresh 'water meadows' with nutrients, and so flooding in Crowhurst was probably used and arranged in various low lying areas, eg. Cinderbrook field.

However, even though the village is built around the Powdermill Stream there are other social issues considered with flooding.



The Flood Marker by the roadside in the centre of Crowhurst. © John Feltwell
Residents will be reminded that there is a weather centre for Crowhurst which provides day to day weather information.¹¹⁵



© Frances and Stephen Royston

¹¹⁵ Crowhurst SW – IBATTLE3, forecast for Battle, GB
<https://www.wunderground.com/dashboard/pws/IBATTLE3> (retrieved 9.3.2020)

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Table WM23 Known Flood years have been:

Flood	Notes
November 1974	Noted in Flood Report, 2010 ¹¹⁶
16 December 1984	'my diary records that it was the first flood since 1977, and that several houses opposite the recreation ground were seriously flooded, in addition to Hunters Moon and Springfield. ¹¹⁷
December 1984	Before Christmas, Hunters Moon Farm flooded, Springfield Tea Rooms flooded ¹¹⁸ — see photo below
09 December 1994	'my diary records that there was "a little flooding" at Springfield.'
26 January 1995	'my diary records that the flooding was worse than in 1984. I made a VHS video of the flooding, which we still have.'
02 February 2001	my diary records that the flooding was the worst since 1995 and that most of the houses opposite the recreation ground were flooded, along with two properties near Cinderbrook Field.
February 2009	Noted in Flood Report, 2010
July 2009	Noted in Flood Report, 2010
February 2010	Noted in Flood Report, 2010
05 March 2020	Reached +9 on marker (flooded 7 houses) 'villagers have said that this was the first significant flooding since 2001, although there have been a number of "near misses".'
16 January 2023	Houses flooded



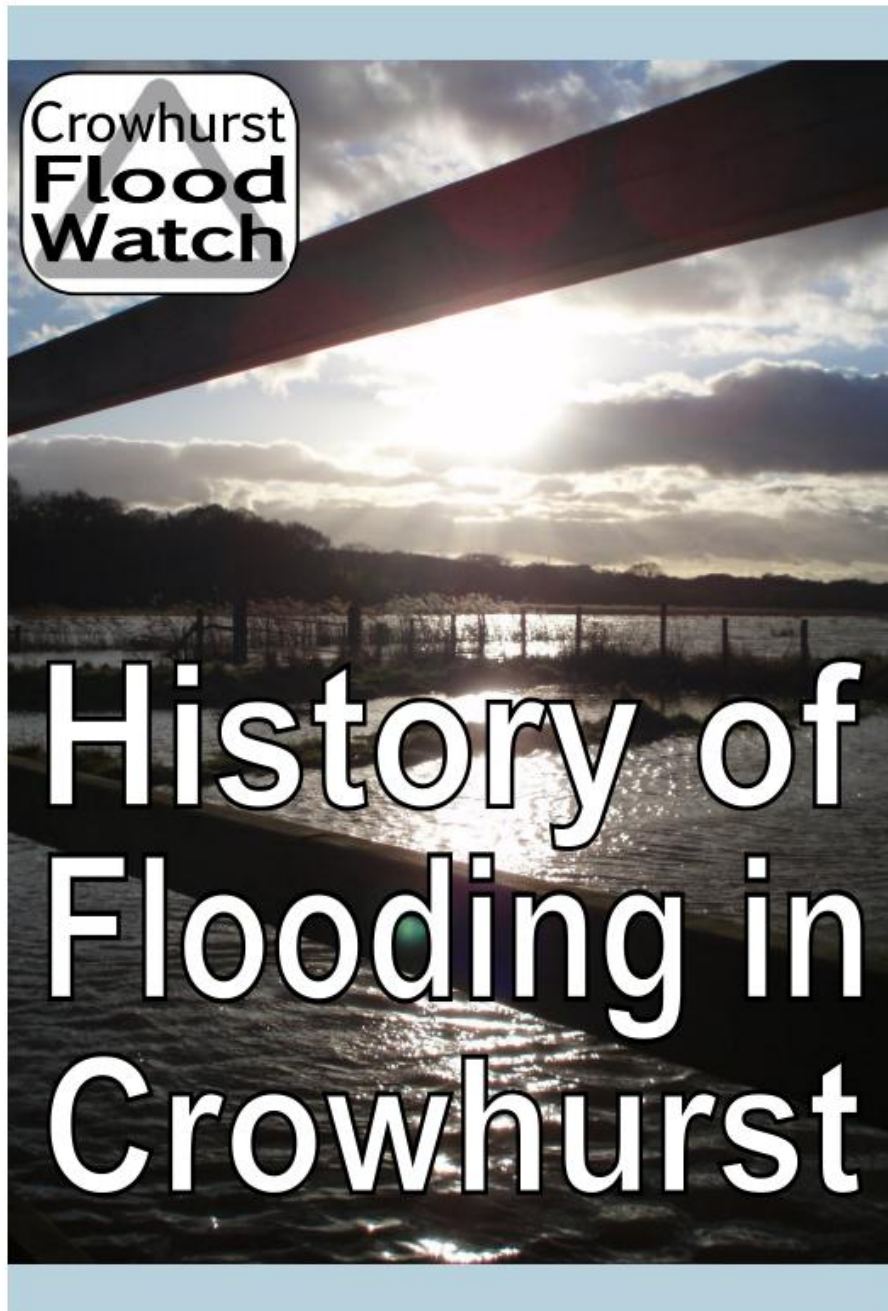
© Sonia Plato. View northwards over Cinderbrook Field 5/6 March 2020

¹¹⁶ Published by Crowhurst Flood Watch in April 2010, it runs to 16pp and collates floods since 1974. These have been Nov 1974, Dec 1984, Jan 1995, Feb 2001, Feb 2009, July 2009 and Feb 2010.

¹¹⁷ Diary notes, courtesy of Stephen Royston, dated 9.3.2020

¹¹⁸ Sussex Express 21.12.84 Heroes of flood save horse.

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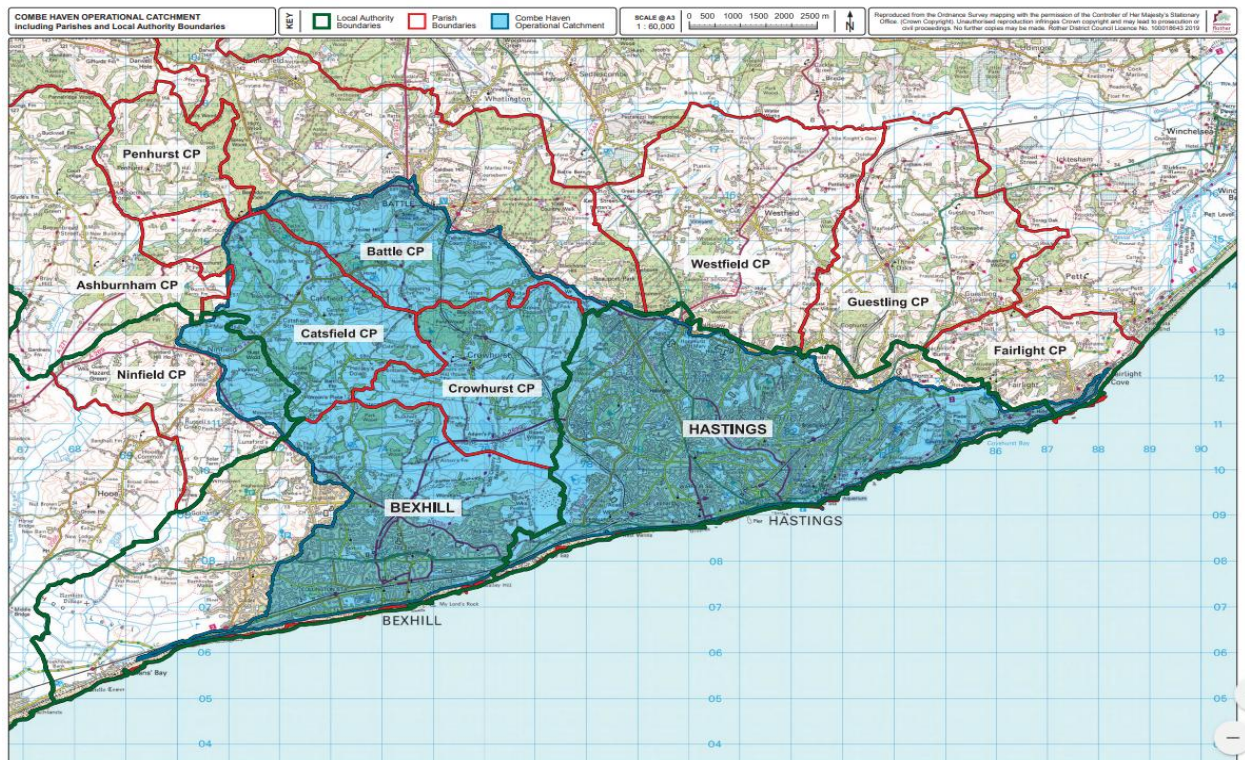
It states: "It can easily be seen that the locally quoted frequency "once in ten years" is no longer accurate. Even excluding the atypical July 2009 floods, the average over the whole period is one in six years, but more worryingly, one in three years during the last decade. Introduction There are two main areas of flood risk - the Springfield area, marked in pink, and the Sampsons area, marked in yellow."

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© John Feltwell 6 March 2020 Looking south from the Crowhurst Road to low lying fields, flooding adjacent to the Powdermill Stream, on the Crowhurst parish boundary at ca. TQ 75411128. Notice the red lorry along The Link Road.

Crowhurst Parish is part of the catchment of five parishes as the following plan shows.



© Ordnance Survey and © Rother District Council. Combe Haven Operational Catchment.

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© John Feltwell Looking southwest, from close to bridge by Quarry Wood, flooding in the SSSI, just in the Crowhurst parish, and beyond. The water is encouraged to lay up in this northern part of the Combe Valley Countryside Park.



Flooding of the Recreation Ground 4 Dec 2020

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FLOOD MAPS

The parish are very grateful to Fran Southgate (Sussex Wildlife Trust) for especially preparing the following flood maps for Crowhurst. They were created from a Natural England layer on potential climate change impacts in March 2020. The notes about how the model was created and what it means are copied below:

“With thanks to Sarah Taylor, Senior Adviser - Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change is one of the key future parameters which will exacerbate existing pressures on biodiversity and which will bring new challenges in terms of enabling sites, species, humans and habitats to adapt to a changing landscape. Adaptation to climate change is therefore a priority for conservation and environmental management, and it was deemed important to include a measure of climate change adaptation in the ARC HPM. The best available electronically represented data on climate change at the time of the creation of the new ARC HPM, is a model created by Natural England. This model has been used to generate some initial assumptions around what may happen to wetland habitats in the ARC project area, if climate change proceeds as predicted. As with the whole HPM model however, specialist knowledge is essential in interpreting how this information can be used on the ground.

Natural England (NE) Climate change model

In 2013, Natural England developed a model that allows non-specialists to assess the vulnerability of areas of priority habitat to climate change based on widely accepted principles of climate change adaptation for biodiversity. They produced two versions of a National Biodiversity Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (NBCCVA) model. The NBCCV Assessment provides a high level indication of the relative vulnerability of priority habitats to climate change in different places. It identifies why areas are vulnerable and which possible interventions can have the biggest impact in increasing resilience in a changing climate. This is intended to inform the prioritisation of adaptation actions and assist in the development of adaptation strategies for biodiversity both within Natural England externally.

The Aims of the National Biodiversity Climate Change Vulnerability Model (NBCCVM) are :-

- to provide a spatially explicit assessment of the relative vulnerability of priority habitats, based on established climate change adaptation principles;
- to create a suite of map-based GIS outputs at a variety of scales, which can be used (in conjunction with other relevant spatial data) to target action to build biodiversity resilience;
- and to provide a flexible, GIS based, decision support tool that allows the user to incorporate locally specific datasets and select how adaptation principles are combined to reflect local circumstances and priorities.

The NBCCVM uses a GIS-based 200 x 200m grid to assess areas of priority habitat for their:

- Intrinsic Sensitivity to Climate Change; the model assigns high, medium or low sensitivity to direct climate change impacts – reflecting the habitat itself on the basis of expert judgement and scientific literature.

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- Adaptive capacity; a range of different local factors can increase or decrease the ability of the habitat to adapt to climate change – to reflect this the model includes measures of fragmentation, topographic variation and management and condition.
- Conservation Value; this assigns a relative value to (i) priority habitat only, (ii) priority habitat within a national designation, or (iii) priority habitat within an international designation – with the latter valued highest.

These elements are then added together to produce an overall assessment of vulnerability. Key outputs are maps showing the results for individual and combined metrics and the range of relative vulnerability, giving a visual representation of the areas vulnerable to climate change.

Version 1 of the data includes four of the five metrics used in the assessment – sensitivity to climate change, habitat fragmentation, topographic heterogeneity and management and condition. This first version is the ‘Overall Vulnerability’ (sensitivity + fragmentation + topography + management) for the All Habitats dataset. Where all priority habitats are included in the run, and when 2 or more habitats are found within a 200m grid square the most vulnerable habitat overall gives its score to that square.

Version 2 includes a fifth metric of ‘conservation value’ which helps those using the model to prioritise action to mitigate potential climate change effects. As the assessment is one of relative vulnerability the scores change depending on the metrics included. The addition of the ‘conservation value’ metric (sensitivity + fragmentation + topography + management + value) alters the overall vulnerability scores attributed to each of the modelled habitats.

The following habitats modelled using the Natural England NBCCVA were extracted for Sussex use:-

CGM – Coastal Grazing Marsh

FGM – Floodplain Grazing Marsh (Merged with CGM)

LF – Lowland Fen (the ARC HPM Base Rich and Base Poor fen data can be merged to

LMD – Dry Lowland Meadows

LMW – Wet Lowland Meadows

SM – Salt Marsh

PMG – Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture

DW – Deciduous Woodland (covers wet woodland)

RIV – Rivers (a proxy data set, see the report)

RB - Reedbed

There were no appropriate layers to match to our species poor tussock grassland layer, but by merging the NE CGM/FGM layers, the ARC HPM data could be compared, and by merging the ARC HPM fen layers, they could be integrated with the NE NBCCVA model. It was decided that the rivers (RIV) layer and the Dry Lowland Meadows layer (LMD) could not be appropriately matched with the ARC-HPM data and so these were excluded.

NE classify the data within the NBCCV Assessment in 3 ways. These classification types are a) 1/2/3 or H/M/L, b) 1/3 or Y/N and c) Quartiles (breaking the data in to 5 sections) using Natural Breaks. The assessment and the classifications created using the method in c) are relative and as such they change when you change the area of data you are classifying (i.e. the natural breaks in the data identified by the GIS software will be slightly different when looking at the national dataset to when looking at the more local cut of the data, as there is a different spread of data). Both of these relative classifications are relevant and valid, but need to be used appropriately depending on the model purposes.

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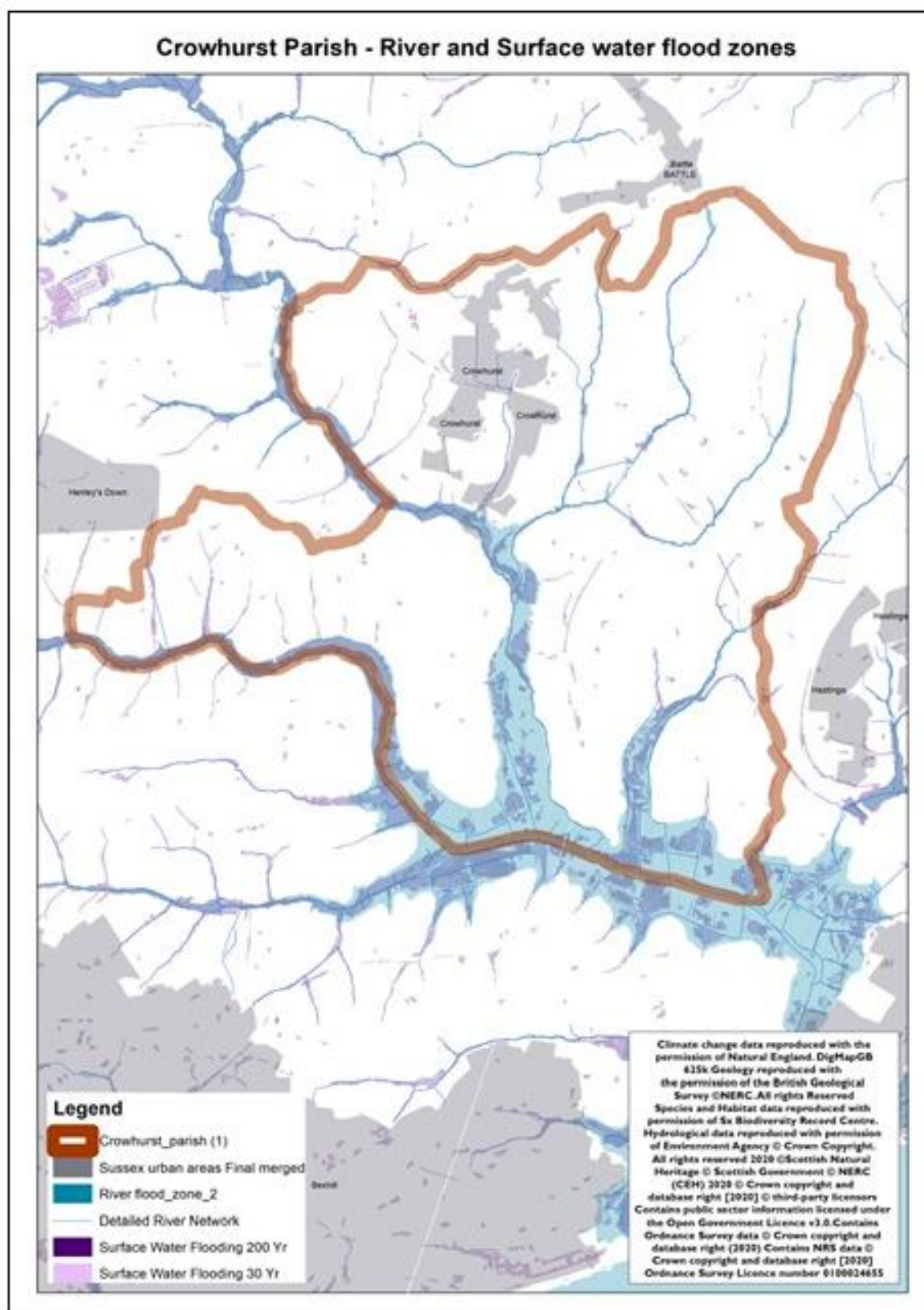
The natural break values representing the national spread of data (the natural breaks values identified when looking at the whole dataset for England) are detailed in a separate spreadsheet. These enable us to see how the vulnerability data for the Sussex area looks in the national context. When creating the display (symbolology in the maps) for the Sussex cut, this provides relative local values, creating the ability to look at relative vulnerability across the area of data you have. The classes and therefore the maps will look exactly the same for Sensitivity, Management & Condition and Conservation Value as these are not relative values (they are H/M/L or Y/N etc). However, the values for Habitat Fragmentation, Topographic Heterogeneity and the 2 versions of MaxVuln (overall vulnerability and overall vulnerability plus conservation value) are relative and will therefore be slightly different for national and local data cuts.

A full manual explaining the NE climate change model can be found here
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5069081749225472>

Taylor, S; Knight, M; and Harfoot, A; (2014). Natural England Research Report NERR054. National biodiversity climate change vulnerability model. “

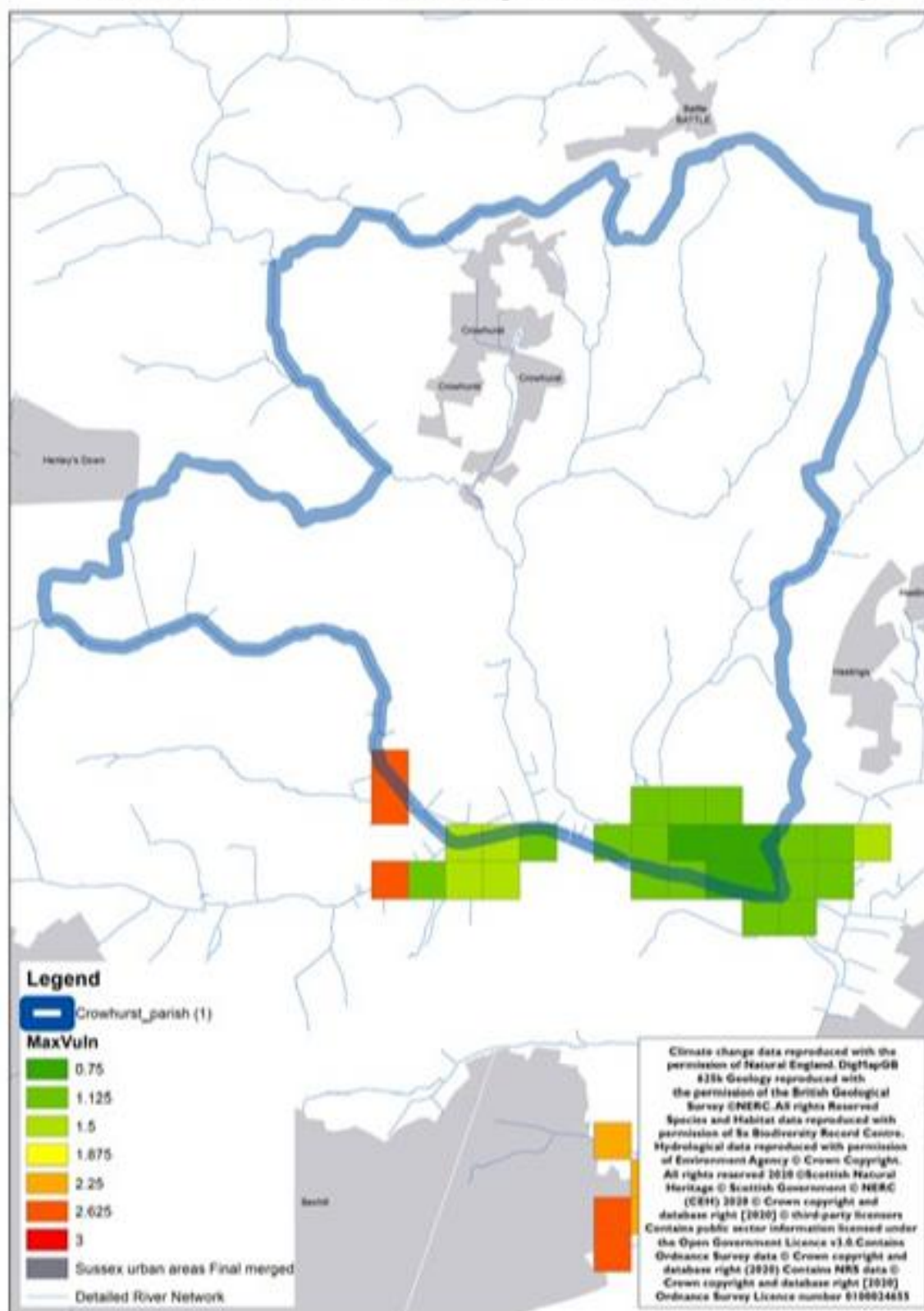
The following four self-explanatory maps follow:

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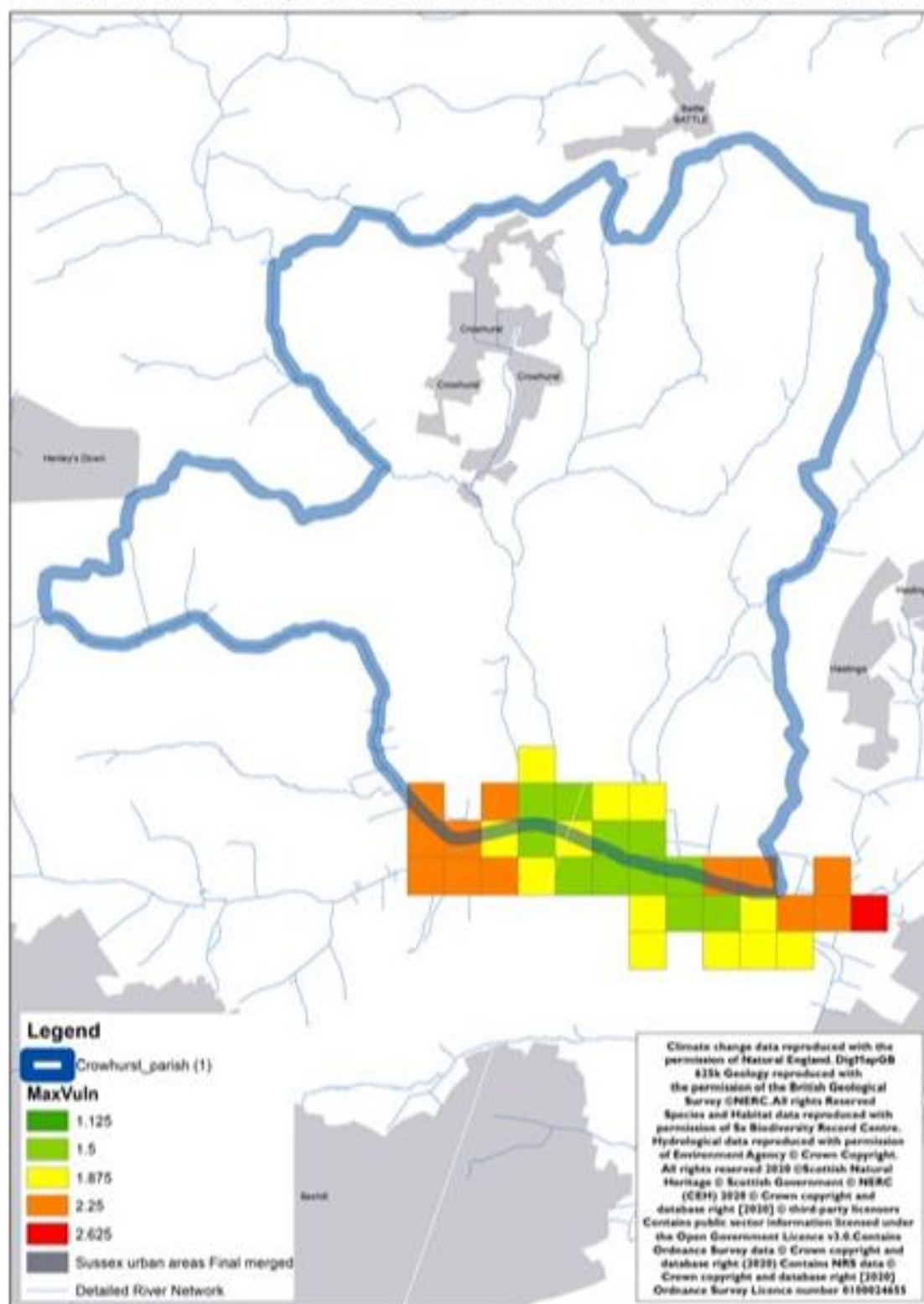
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Crowhurst Parish - Coastal Grazing Marsh - Climate Vulnerability



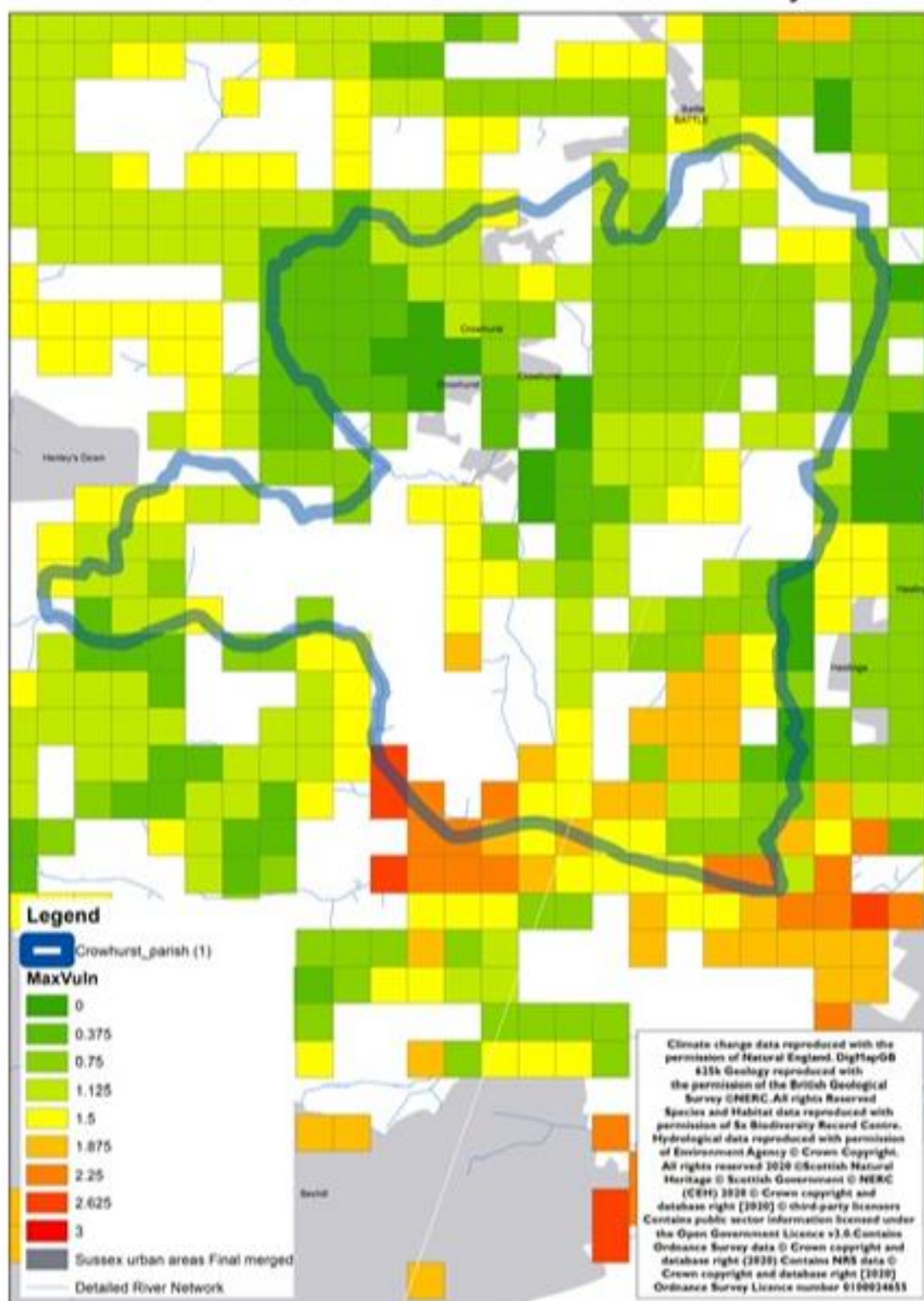
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Crowhurst Parish - Purple Moor Grass & Rush Pasture - Climate Vulnerability



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Crowhurst Parish - Overall Climate Vulnerability



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Powdermill Stream Management

Water Framework Directive, 2020

APPENDICES

Appendix WM01 The Link Road environmental impact

Appendix WM02 Twenty measured trees

Appendix WM03 Trees of Recreation Ground

Appendix WM04 CAVAT of some Crowhurst trees

Appendix WM05 Ash survey of Crowhurst

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Appendix WM01

The Link Road environmental impact

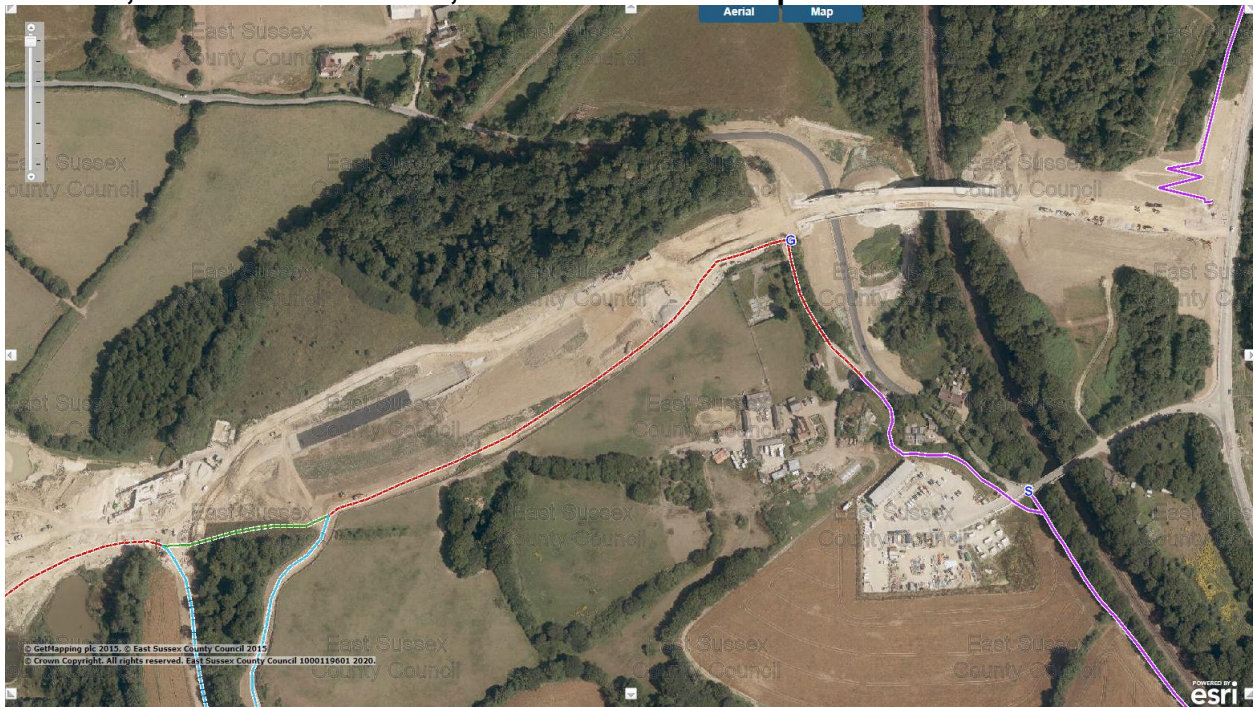
NB. This is just a two page description of the Link Road.

See the last part of this Biodiversity Audit for a fuller review on page 212 ...

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Technical Appendix WM01

The following sequence of 'snips' are taken from the 'Definitive Rights of Way of East Sussex', and each follows on, westwards from the previous one.



© Open Government Licence.

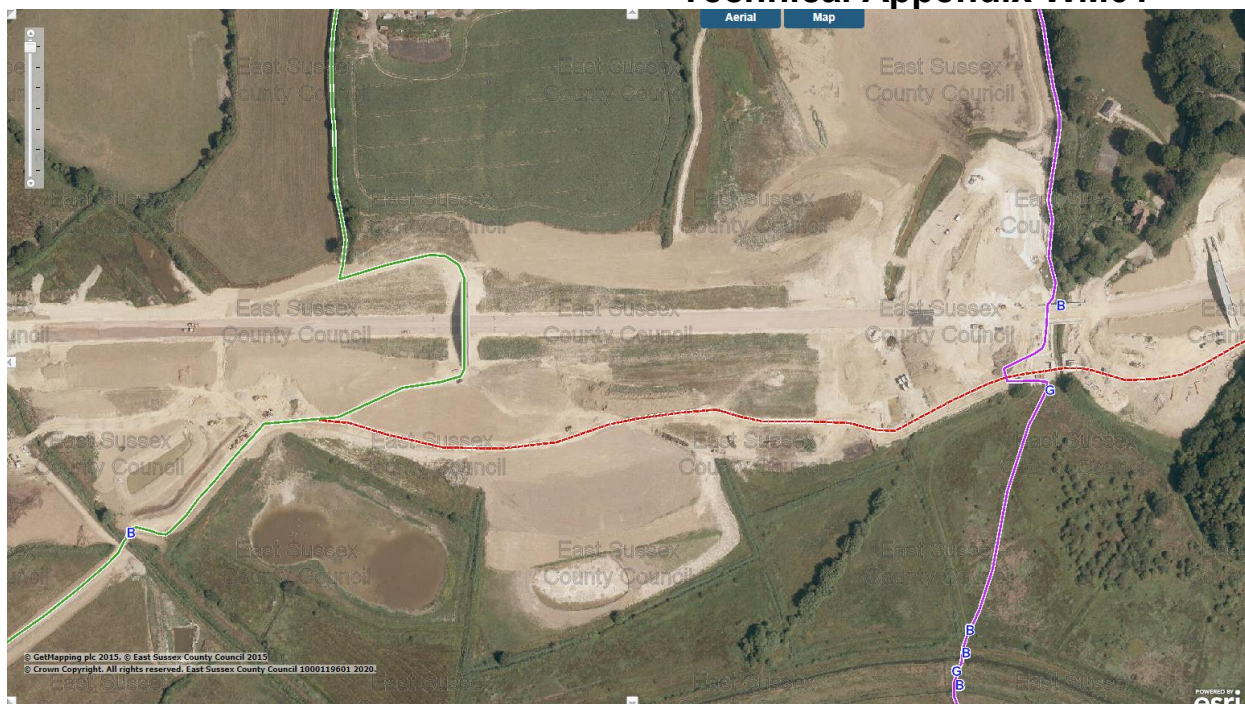
So the first, above, is the junction with Queensway showing the temporary 'Site Compound' of the development. It also shows Chapel Wood and the smaller Little Bog wood to the west.



© Open Government Licence.

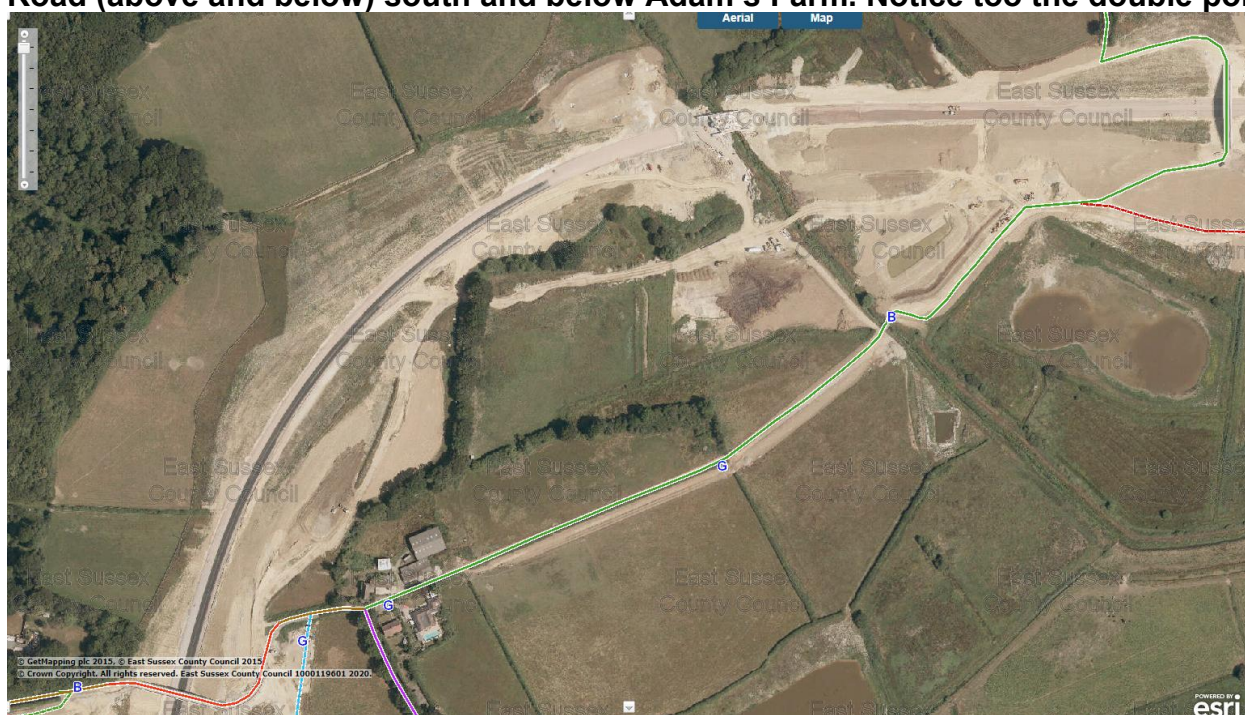
This carries on from the above, westwards, showing the intact square Decoy Pond Wood whilst the route has gone through the disused railway line woodlands. Note that the continuity of the woodlands flowing south from Little Bog Wood has also been broken.

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Technical Appendix WM01

© Open Government Licence.

This is just to the west of the dismantled railway line. Notice the new bridge over the Link Road (above and below) south and below Adam's Farm. Notice too the double ponds.



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Appendix WM02 Twenty measured trees

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Technical Appendix WM02

Crowhurst Trees, originally circulated 22 Sept 2017

Table WM24 The following 20 trees were measured in 2017

Trees around the Church and Primary School

Number	English Name	Latin Name	Map Ref	Circ (cm)	Notes
1	Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	TQ757123	920	The Historic Yew
2	Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	TQ757123	530	
3	Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	TQ757123	495	By main gate
4	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ757123	212	Just o/s c/yard by gate to north
5	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ757123	228	
6	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ757123	204	4,5,6 are in a row (old h'row)
7	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ757123	500	
8	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ757123	390	
9	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ757123	316	Just outside churchyard
School					
	Trees				
10	LondonPlane	<i>Platanus</i>	TQ758123	405	
11	LondonPlane	<i>Platanus</i>	TQ758123	388	
12	Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	TQ758123	230	Next to old part of school
13	Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>	TQ758123	330	
Station					
	Road				
14	Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	TQ758122	160	Bottom of road, southside
Cinderbrook field					
15	Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	TQ759120	300	#5
AboveCinderbrook					
16	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ761120	400	#6
Sampsons Farm					
17	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ763199	?	On private land, but ?300cm
Along Sampsons Lane					
18	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ764119	210	Close to entrance to Sampson Farm
19	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ763118	249	Opposite to 'Private Woodlands'
20	Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	TQ762118	300	In 'Private Woodland'

:

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Technical Appendix WM02

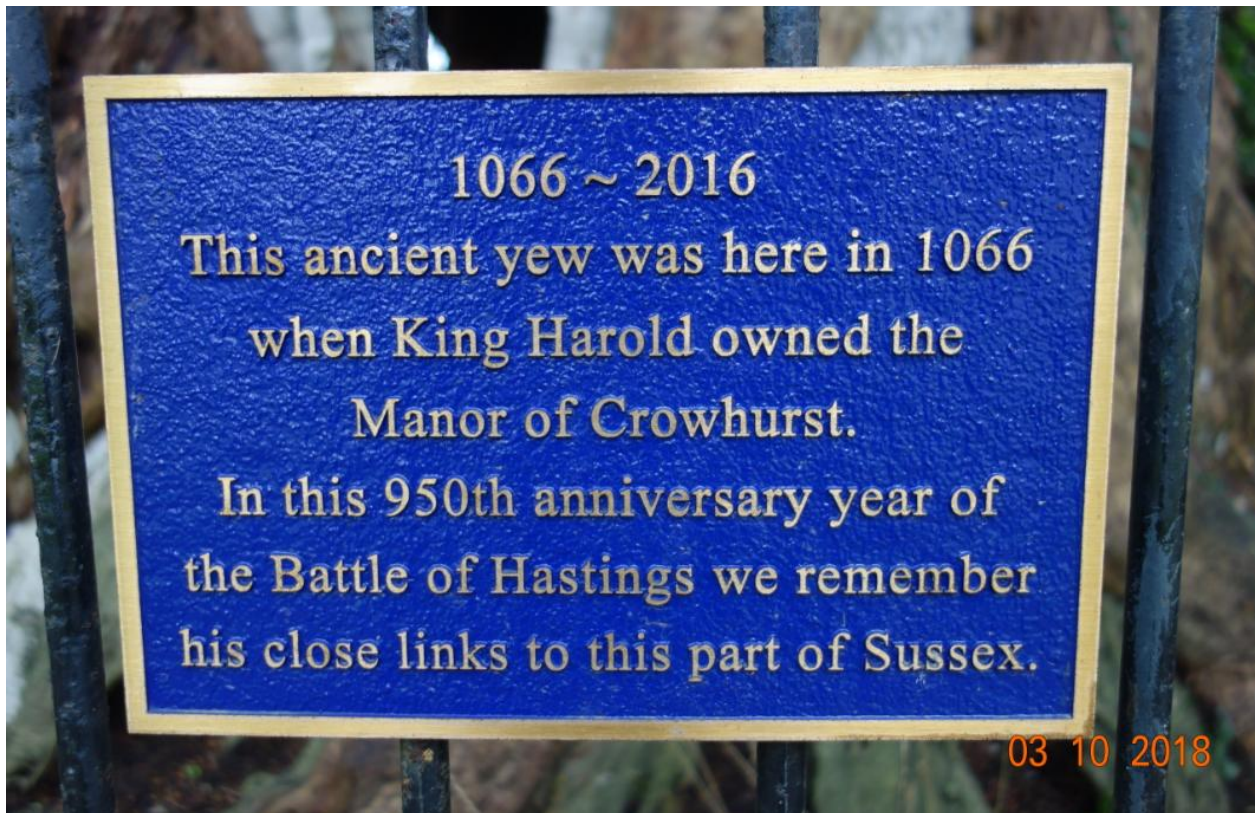
Crowhurst Trees, originally circulated 22 Sept 2017



St George's Village Church at Crowhurst (above and below)



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The churchyard yew

It is worth noting what East Sussex resident and tree expert Owen Johnson says of this tree in his *'The Sussex Tree Book'* (1998). He regards it as the second largest yew in Sussex, after Coldwaltham. It was measured in 1680 by John Aubrey with a diameter of 262cm, now 289cm in 1998. The southern part which is sagging away may well be shed in future, without trace, leaving another part to retain the enigma of its real age.



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1 (yew) east



2 Yew (west)

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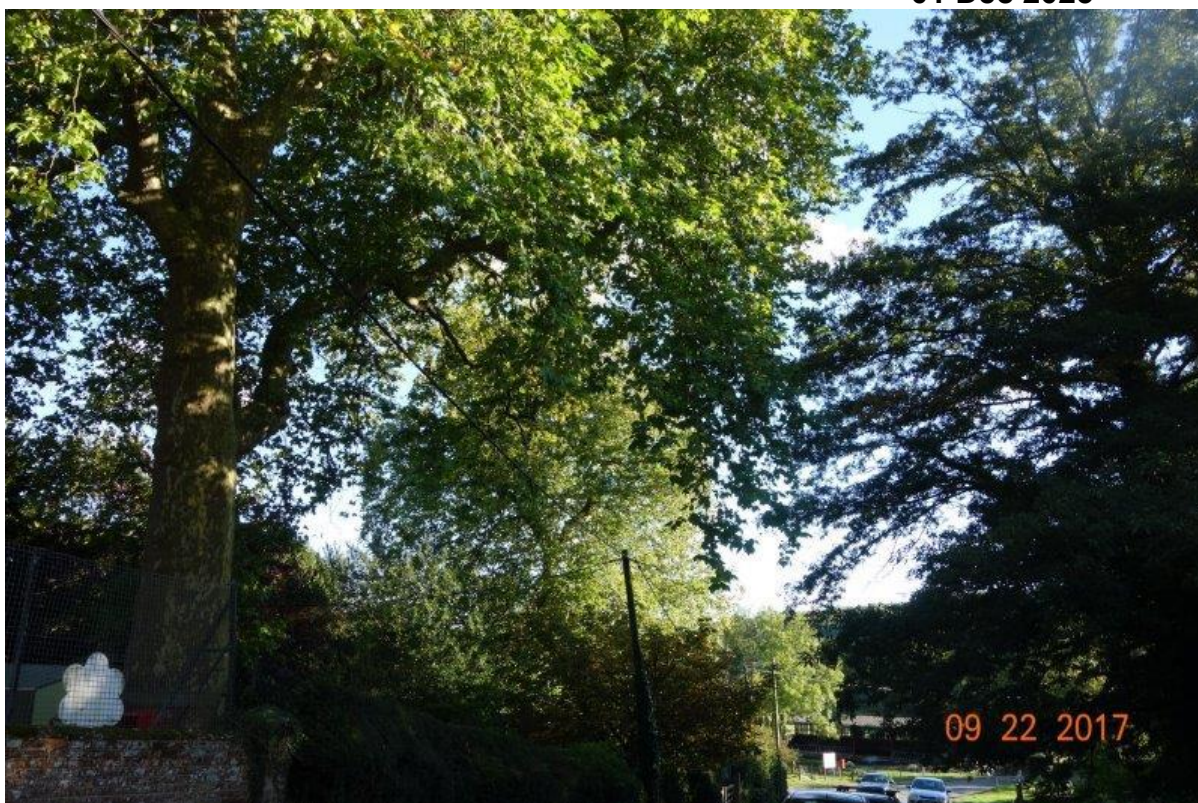


3 Yew (roadside)



4,5,6 oaks in a row (from the north)

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10 (left) and 11 (below) London Planes in School Grounds



11

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12



13

01 Dec 2025

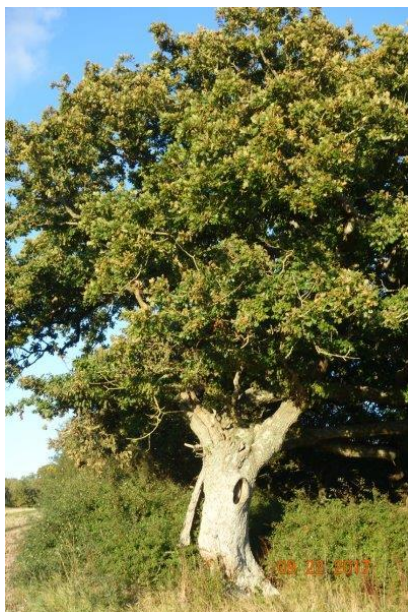


14 at entrance to Station Road



16 Ancient oak on Footpath

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15,16 Ancient oak on Footpath



17 on private land at Sampson's Farm



An ancient Field Maple, *Acer campestre*

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Appendix WM03

Trees of Recreation Ground

01 Dec 2025
Technical Appendix WM03

Crowhurst Recreation Ground Tree Survey



Crowhurst Pavilion with a backdrop of trees (2 July 2018)

**Dr John Feltwell (Tree Warden for Crowhurst), assisted by (then) Keith Robertson
(Secretary to Crowhurst Parish Council)
April 2019**

Aim

- To assess the state of the trees on the property with regard to the use of the site by the general public.
- To identify any tree that may become an issue in the future.
- To register the fact that the parish have given some consideration with regard to the juxtaposition of the trees and the public.
- To identify any trees for which management is recommended.
- To set out a plan to safeguard the trees.
- To register the trees as part of the 'Natural Capital' of the parish.

Limitations

This report is a 'snapshot' assessment of the trees of the Recreation Ground as of 4 April 2019.

This report is not a professional assessment of the trees, but it has been prepared by local persons.

Site Visit

The site visit was made on the 4th April 2019, and all the trees were assessed in a clockwise fashion from the northeast of the site. The trees are numbered from the northeast.

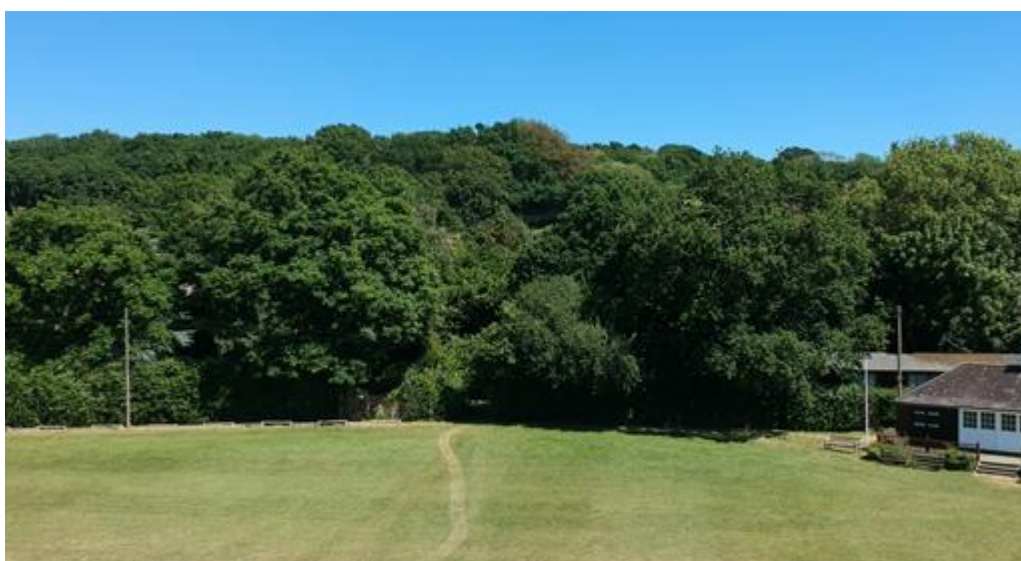
Photographs

The following photographs are screen grabs from a drone video taken by one of the authors (JF) on 2 July 2018). The other photographs were taken by KP on the site visit.

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© John Feltwell View of north end of Recreation Ground (2 July 2018)



© John Feltwell View of east curtilage of the site (north of pavilion)
(2 July 2018)

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© John Feltwell View of east curtilage of the site (south of pavilion) (2 July 2018)



© John Feltwell View of south curtilage of the site (2 July 2018)



© John Feltwell West curtilage of the site (north end) devoid of trees
(2 July 2018)
(following course of Powdermill Stream)

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Trees on and adjacent to the site

The following Table WM01 shows the trees on or around the site.

- 18 trees actually on site (includes one group of 3, one of 2)
- 07 trees on neighbouring properties but limbs affecting site
- 02 trees on boundary (shared ownership)

Table WM25 Tree Survey at Crowhurst Recreation Ground 04 April 2019:

Index	On site	Type	Notes
101	NO	Oak	Has decay. Needs some boughs removed and inspection. 4m overhang into rec. On private land.
100	NO	Oak	Good Cond. 3m overhand into rec. On private land.
102	NO	Oak	Good Cond. On private land.
103	NO	Oak	Good Cond. Private land
104	NO	Oak	Good Cond. On private land. Overhang into rec
105	Yes	Oak	Some decay. OK for now.
106	Yes	Oak	OK cond. needs Ivy removed. I bough to cut
107	Yes	TBA	OK. Tidy and Pollard is an option
108	Yes	Oak	OK Cond
109	Yes	Oak	leaning in toward rec. Cut overhanging boughs
110	NO?	oak	on border to private land. OK
111	NO?	oak	on border with private land. OK
112	Yes	Oak	Good Cond. Needs Ivy removed
113	Yes	Oak	Good cond. needs ivy removed. Overhang 7m
114	Yes	Oak	Two smaller trees. OK
115	Yes	Oak	OK cond.
116	Yes	Poplar	Good Cond
117	Yes	Cracked Willow	Remove tidy loose boughs or cut down to regrow
118	Yes	Leylandii x3	Row of 3 .keep or cut down. Cond Ok
119	Yes	Oak	Oak. OK
120	Yes	Oak	Cut down, dying
121	Yes	Oak	OK Cond. trim one dead bough
122	Yes	Alder	1 of 2 x Alder trees near bridge - good cond.
123	Yes	Alder	2 of 2 x Alder trees near bridge - good cond.

Notes:

The Leylandii (#118) are a group of three trees

The two small oaks (#114) are numbered as one.

The locations of the above numbered trees are shown in the following Figure WM01:

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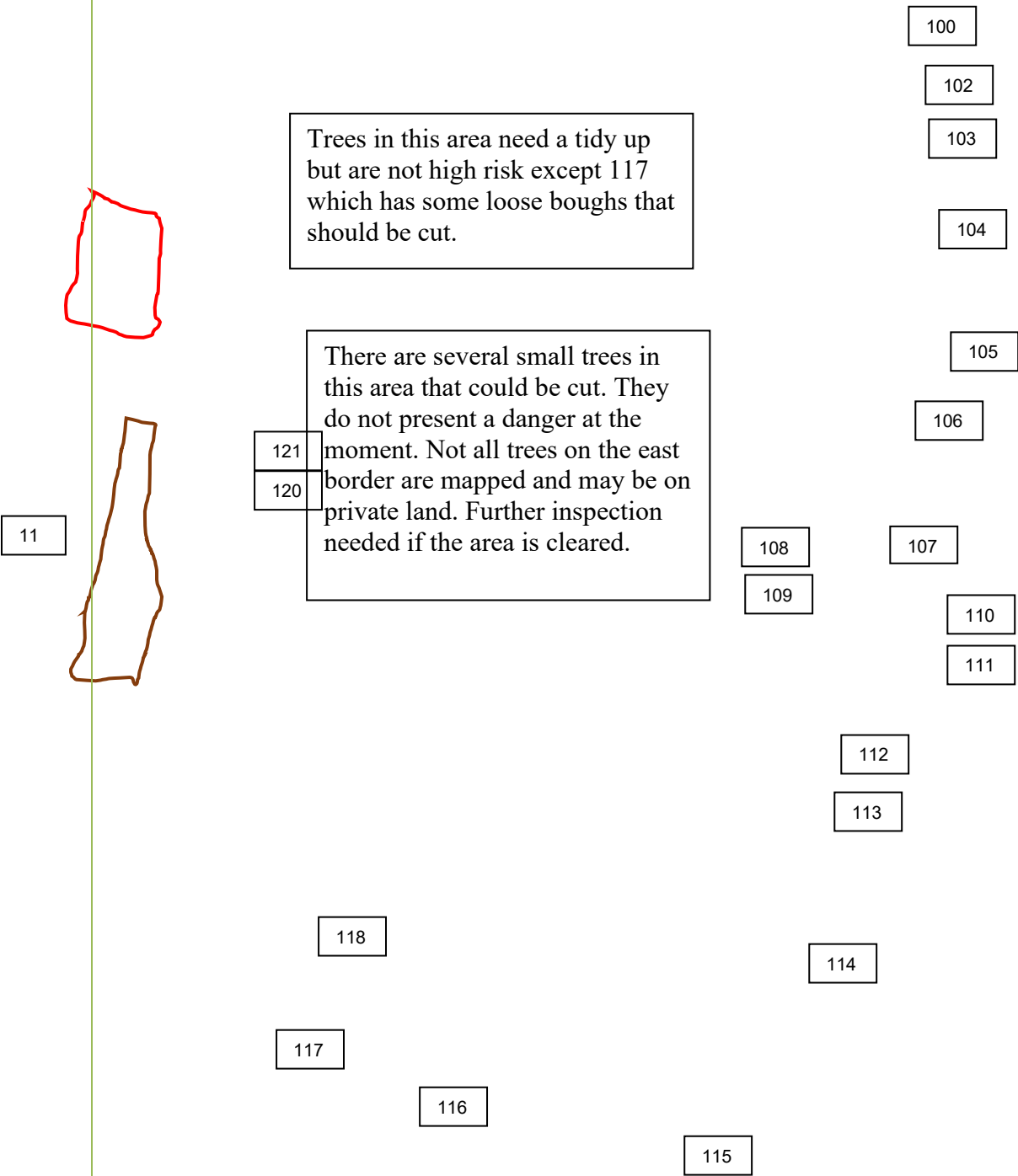
Figure. 01 WM01 Plan of site; north to top of

plan

01 Dec 2025

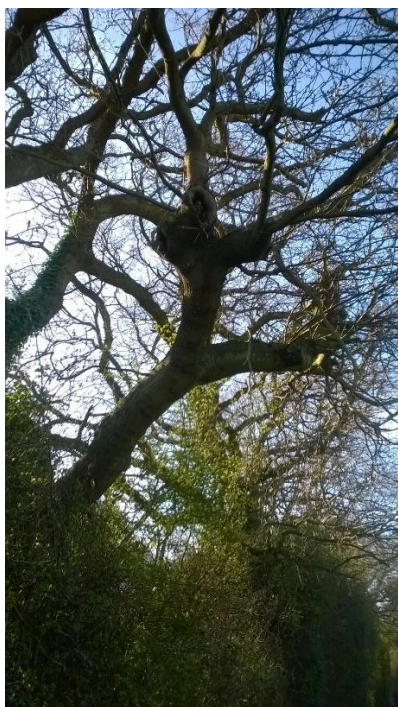
Action list for trees on site

The following plan and photographs indicate which trees need to be managed.



01 Dec 2025

Tree 101. Decay. Dead bough.



Tree 109 Leaning



Tree . 106 Ivy & dead bough
Tree 117 Tidy /Cut



01 Dec 2025**General comments**

The Recreation Ground hosts a good number of trees some of which have been there for over 200 years.

Due consideration should therefore be made in conserving the tree heritage of this part of the parish.

The Parish therefore has a duty to look after the trees.

The Parish is conscious that the mature trees on site, and off-site on neighbouring properties, need to be regularly checked as there is plenty of interaction between members of the public using the Recreation Ground.

This report thus demonstrates unequivocally that the parish has considered the trees on the Recreation Ground and has set out management that should be considered and taken place were necessary.

Responsibilities

The limit to the Parish's responsibility lies with the 18 trees that it looks after on the Recreation Ground.

The Parish is aware that there are some mature trees (along the east curtilage) that affect the site in two ways i) overhanging branches from trees on neighbouring properties, and ii) trees that are on neighbouring properties but have roots that penetrate below the actual Recreation Ground.

The two alder trees on Powdermill Stream bank may be the responsibility of the water authorities.

01 Dec 2025**Decisions and Actions**

1. Discussion needs to be had with the neighbouring properties (2) on the east curtilage before any works take place.
2. The tree work as indicated in Table WM01 needs to be actioned between Sept 19 and 1 Feb 2020 (outside bird-nesting period). Advise RDC Tree Officer that works will take place.
3. The three *Leylandii* under the pylons,
 - i) do not add to the biodiversity of the area,
 - ii) do not compliment the landscape of the area, and
 - iii) are under the pylons and are a threat. Consider contacting the authorities that have a requirement to keep 'wayleaves' open under all their pylons. Cracked Willow (# 117) would also benefit from coppicing.
4. Consider on-going works on the Scouts Hut woodland (below).

Youth & Playgroup Hut

The Hut is at the northern end of a block of woodland that has been partially cleared and had a former open habitat. The various scrubby vegetation needs to be cleared so that groups can access the greater area.

A phased approach over three years is recommended.

Year one (autumn 2019) clear a circuitous path along the middle of the whole length from the hut to the southern curtilage.

Year Two (autumn 2020) clear half of the distance from the hut southwards.

Year Three (autumn 2021) clear the remainder.

Updating this tree survey

Recommended every three years.

**John Feltwell
Keith Robertson**

01 Dec 2025

Appendix WM04

CAVAT of some Crowhurst trees

01 Dec 2025

CAPITAL ASSET VALUATION of AMENITY TREES (CAVAT)

IN

CROWHURST, EAST SUSSEX

By
Dr John Feltwell FRSB of Wildlife Matters
Chartered Biologist
Chartered Ecologist
Chartered Environmentalist



on behalf of:

**Crowhurst Parish Council,
Crowhurst,
East Sussex**

Dated 17 Dec 2021

01 Dec 2025

1.0 Executive Summary

- Twenty-nine trees in the village of Crowhurst were surveyed.
- Their total CAVAT valuation was £3,087.98
- The most valuable trees were the yews in the churchyard which are valued at over a quarter of million pounds each.
- This CAVAT study demonstrates that it is tool that can be successfully used to assess the biodiversity asset of trees in the parish – for inclusion into a Biodiversity Audit, and to value trees that are threatened by development.

2.0 What is CAVAT?

CAVAT is a scientific method for calculating the monetary value of an amenity tree. It uses evidence from the tree itself (measurements, health, amenity value, longevity) its value in the community, via a suitable algorithm, to calculate a pecuniary value for any amenity tree.

3.0 Scientific basis for CAVAT

It is a technique developed by Christopher Neilan (Epping Forest District Council) over several years. Background information can be found in this 2018 publication.¹¹⁹

4.0 Purpose of CAVAT

It is a useful measure used by local planning authorities to establish the capital value of their tree.

CAVAT has also traditionally been used in courts to establish value of loss, usually where a developer has removed a tree. CAVAT was successfully used in a Swansea court case to fine a housing developer and contractor.¹²⁰

By measuring the value of a tree beforehand, puts local authorities in a good position to manage their stock and re-coup monies for any loss, whether deliberate or accidental.

Since the Climate Emergency was announced in 2019, many local authorities have encouraged parishes to audit their biodiversity assets. The use of CAVAT is an obvious tool to assess tree assets in any community, which has been done here.

5.0 Aims of this survey

¹¹⁹ Doick, K.J., Neilan, C., Jones, G., Allison, A., McDermott, I., Tipping, A., 2018. CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees): valuing amenity trees as public assets. *Arboricultural Journal. The International Journal of Urban Forestry*, Vol. 40, 2018, Issue 2. 67-91.

¹²⁰ BBC, 15 October 2019. Illegal tree felling: Fiorenzo Sauto and Enzo Homes fined £300. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-50061303>

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- To provide biometric data, and pecuniary value to some of the important trees along the main road through the village, so that it can be incorporated into a future Biodiversity Audit.
- To alert villagers to the landscape and amenity importance of the trees in the parish, and to indicate that these are mostly old trees, and that not many young trees are being planted for the future.
- To provide East Sussex Highways with a valuation of the trees in Crowhurst.
- To provide scientific evidence in case any tree is accidentally or deliberately damaged or removed.

6.0 The parameters

Data is collected by a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE) on each tree, for instance the diameter of its trunk at 1.3m from the ground, the human population density of the area where the tree is growing, its accessibility to the public, how it is growing, its canopy growth, its amenity value and how long it is likely to live.

The methodology followed is that published by LTOA (London Tree Officers Association), as published by Christopher Neilan in 2018, with the pecuniary value of trees updated each year.¹²¹ The seven parameters used to calculate the CAVAT are listed in Technical Appendix WM01.

7.0 Parameter

The Population Density of Crowhurst is 1,342 /sq km (13/ha).

It is populated by 906 residents in 2020.

These figures are required to go into the CAVAT algorithm that calculates the value of trees.

8.0 The surveyor

The CAVAT survey was carried out by Dr. John Feltwell who is a PhD in Botany, and Life Member of the International Dendrological Society (IDS). The author has been Tree Warden of Crowhurst for a number of years.

9.0 Survey Area

The areas surveyed included the road from Catsfield to Crowhurst, known as the Crowhurst Road, Ballards Hill, Chapel Hill, the Recreation Ground and the churchyard and environs.

10.0 Results

The results are shown in Table WM26

¹²¹ Neilan, C., 2018. CAVAT Full Method – A Guide to recent updates. Summary of changes applied to the CAVAT Full Method, April 2018. Available on people <https://www.ltoa.org.uk/resources/cavat> (accessed 12 Feb 2021).

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Tree Nos	Species		Circum. (cm)	Diameter (cm)	Growth factor	Age ca (yrs)	VALUE (£)
CHURCHYARD							
T1	Yew		920	294	2.5	735	242,162
T2	Yew		530	169	2.5	422	242,162
T3	Yew		495	158	2.5	395	242,162
T4	Oak		212	68	1.88	128	64,266
T5	Oak		228	73	1.88	137	77,411
T6	Oak		204	65	1.88	122	64,255
T7	Oak		500	159	1.88	298	242,162
T8	Oak		390	124	1.88	233	192,340
T9	Oak		315	100	1.88	188	109,974
SCHOOL GROUNDS							
T10	London Plane		406	129	2.5	322	192,340
T11	London Plane		388	124	2.5	310	192,340
T12	Yew		230	73	2.5	182	77,411
T13	Yew		330	105	2.5	263	148,284
T14	Ash	Beware developn	180	57	2.75	495	19,471
CINDERBROOK							
T15	Field maple	Best example	300	95	2.5	238	82,480
T16	Oak	large cavity	400	127	1.88	239	144,255
T17	Oak		300	95	1.88	179	109,974
T18	Oak		210	67	1.88	156	54,266
T19	Oak		249	79	1.88	149	77,411
T20	Oak		300	95	1.88	564	109,974
RECREATION GRD							
T21	Oak	small tree	83	26	1.88	49	7,300
T22	Oak	forked oak	286	91	1.88	171	82,480
T23	Oak		134	43	1.88	81	19,630
T24	Black Poplar	on Recreation				1	215
T25	Black Poplar	in Broadfields'				1	215
T26	Walnut					1	215
FOOTPATH CRH/18/1							
T28	Oak	Cinderbrook	426	135	1.88	253	181,621
T29	Oak	Cinderbrook	355	113	1.88	212	111,213
TOTAL£							3,087,989

Notes. Three Black poplars planted on Recreation Ground in March 2021. Two died during the year.

NB. The data above relies on measurements made of the trees in the churchyard, school and Cinderbrook in 2017. The recreation ground trees were measured in 2021.

01 Dec 2025**11.00 Discussion**

The overall value of the trees is within normal limits for a small village, even though it is over three million pounds.

These 29 trees only represent a small fraction of trees in the parish. If, or when, other trees are assessed the figure will more than double.

The importance of having a value to the trees is that it is assessed well before any damage may occur to the tree, such as vehicle damage to the roadside tree, or from housing development.

The assessment is according to methodology used by county councils for assessing their natural capital.

For Crowhurst the CAVAT value is useful in quantifying the tree assets in the parish, that informs the Biodiversity Audit (where this report resides).

In the case of one of the allocated sites (CH3) at the bottom of Station Road, the solitary ash tree is valued at about £20K, and should thus be protected and conserved whatever development occurs in that area.

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Technical Appendix WM01 CAVAT parameters

The following table outlines the parameters that are used to assess each tree. It all starts with the measurement of the circumference, and then, using a growth factor for each tree species, the age of the tree is calculated. Then the situation of the tree is assessed, for instance in a churchyard which is lower risk to damage than a tree in a farmer's field, and this is fed into the algorithms to produce a value that also takes into consideration the interaction with people – the relative population of the village, the state of the tree and its predicted longevity.

Table WM27 CAVAT parameters

#	Parameters	Further details																								
1	BASE VALUE. UVF	The DIAMETER of trunk at 1.3m from the ground in cm. This is used to produce a Unit Value Factor (UVF)																								
2	CTI	<p>COMMUNITY TREE INDEX (CTI) value. This is a parameter that calculates the potential impact of the public on the amenity tree, using the Population Density of the community.</p> <p>Most areas fall into 100, inner cities into 250 factors.</p> <table><tr><th>Population Density (ha)</th><th>CTI Factor (%)</th><th>CTI Band</th></tr><tr><td>>20</td><td>100</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>20-39</td><td>125</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>40-59</td><td>150</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>60-79</td><td>175</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>80-99</td><td>200</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>100-119</td><td>225</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td><119</td><td>250</td><td>7</td></tr></table>	Population Density (ha)	CTI Factor (%)	CTI Band	>20	100	1	20-39	125	2	40-59	150	3	60-79	175	4	80-99	200	5	100-119	225	6	<119	250	7
Population Density (ha)	CTI Factor (%)	CTI Band																								
>20	100	1																								
20-39	125	2																								
40-59	150	3																								
60-79	175	4																								
80-99	200	5																								
100-119	225	6																								
<119	250	7																								
3	LF	LOCATION FACTOR The CTI factor is adjusted to reflect whether the tree is fully accessible for public enjoyment in its location.. The amount of depreciation is increased.																								
4,5	FCV1 FCV2	<p>FUNCTIONAL CROWN VALUE. It is in two parts.</p> <p>Part 1 Structural Framework (FCV1) is about how it measures up as fully expressing ‘the characteristic growth patterns of its species.’ If perfect it scores 100%.</p> <p>Part 2 is Canopy Completeness and Condition (FCV2)</p>																								
6	AV	AMENITY VALUE the tree is assessed for its contribution as a species, its setting, its habitat and heritage characteristics.																								
7	LIFE EXPECTANCY	<p>As per the table below, following BS5837-2012</p> <table><tr><th>Life Expectancy</th><th>% Value retained</th></tr><tr><td>>80</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>40-<80</td><td>95</td></tr><tr><td>20-<40</td><td>80</td></tr><tr><td>10-<20</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>5-<10</td><td>30</td></tr><tr><td><5</td><td>10</td></tr></table>	Life Expectancy	% Value retained	>80	100	40-<80	95	20-<40	80	10-<20	55	5-<10	30	<5	10										
Life Expectancy	% Value retained																									
>80	100																									
40-<80	95																									
20-<40	80																									
10-<20	55																									
5-<10	30																									
<5	10																									

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Appendix WM05

Ash survey of Crowhurst

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ASH SURVEY OF CROWHURST PARISH, East Sussex, TN33

17 Dec 2021



The Church & dead ash, as seen from Ballards Hill 8 Oct 2021

By

Dr John Feltwell, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 9BN
(Tree Warden of the parish¹²²)

Executive Summary

- 70 trees from the Ballards & Chapel Hill area were assessed.
- At least 40% of the ash trees are dead or dying.
- several dead trees are close to roads.

Reason for survey

Many of the ash trees in the parish are dying, and the reason for the survey was to see what extent this was. Crowhurst clearly has a visual / landscape problem with dead and dying ash trees.

Ash dieback disease

The disease is caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (previously *Chalara fraxinea*). It attacks the trees and quickly kills the tree. The effects of the dieback in the parish area now quite evident. Symptoms are brown scarring on the bark, dead twigs at the top of the tree, brown leaves and eventually the whole trees die, sometimes then overwhelmed by ivy.

¹²² Contact: john@wildlifematters.com

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The National Problem

The National Trust is set to fell 40,000 trees this year (2020), and The Woodland Trust believes that 80% of the UK's ash trees will die.¹²³ Gloucestershire have 27,000-32,000 dead trees to fell.¹²⁴ The national outbreak is predicted to cost £15 billion to address.¹²⁵ A recent scientific paper, published in August 2020 indicated there is never 100% mortality of ash trees, and that some degree of genetic resistance to ash dieback occurs.¹²⁶ It may well be the case that some ash saplings today will create the ash trees of the future, and it will continue to play host to many animals, fungi and lichens as a native British species. Currently there is no prevention or treatment available.

Responsibility for the ash trees

This report apports no responsibility onto anyone who has an ash tree on their property, and inclusion of a tree in this report affords no liability. Most of the ashes listed are on private land, on verges, or road islands, or owned by the authorities, or in hedgerows, or wood edges. Owners will manage them as they wish, as and when, or not at all. There are of course safety issues regarding highways and footpaths.

Importance of survey

The survey is just a statement in time (October 2021) as to the state of ash in this parish of East Sussex. East Sussex prides itself in being one of the most wooded counties in England, and much of the parish is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONL). Many of the trees are in the AONL and contribute to its landscape and beauty – the very reason why it has been designated. This ash assessment is therefore a useful note on the contribution of ash in the greater part of the AONL, at a time when ash is becoming hit by the disease nationwide. It is noted that there is a general decline of ash in the UK at the present time and that large areas now have to be rid of the dead ash, causing pecuniary, legal and logistical problems, thus impacting on landscape going forward.

Extent of survey

The survey was limited to Ballards Hill, Chapel Hill, Crowhurst Road and Breadsall Road.. Nearly all the tall ashes visible along the hedgerows or very obviously close-by in woodlands were noted. For the most part all the ash listed have been photographed. They have mostly been photographed in the direction of travel along the section of road stated, and have been photographed with easier to identify locations. The survey was carried out near the end of October 2021 as leaf-fall was starting to occur, and the leaves of ash were sometimes changing from green to pale orange. It is clear that not all smaller ash were counted, especially those in hedgerows.

¹²³ The Times, October 2 2020 p.16.

¹²⁴ <https://www.wiltsglosstandard.co.uk/news/18730905.ash-dieback-trees-across-gloucestershire-felled/>

¹²⁵ <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/a-z-of-british-trees/ash/>.

¹²⁶ Beardon, E. 2020. Out of the Woods. *The Biologist* Vol 67, No. 4, 20-23.

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Ash in the parish

Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) is a constituent part of the wooded environment that makes up the countryside with the parish. It is a native tree, along with English oak, Hornbeam and Field Maple that frequent our woods and hedgerows. Sycamore is also prominent in the parish, but that is not native and does not sit well with conservationists as it excludes native trees.

Pre-Norman ash

Ash would have been in the parish before William the Conqueror arrived in 1066. It was always a native of the Wealden forests and hamlets, and it would have been cut down to make handles for woodsman's and gardener's tools, as it has shock-proof properties and is a pliant timber. When many of the hedgerows were created in the Enclosures several hundred years ago, ash would have been planted alongside other native species. Equally it would have migrated from the woods and copses into the hedgerows all by itself, which is why it is present today. So ash has a great historical origin that predates the conquest, and its genes go back pre-conquest. Crowhurst was mentioned in the Domesday Book.

What about Crowhurst's ashes?

What can be learnt from walking the village roads about our ashes? They seem to occur in clusters. There are roads with no ashes, and then patches where they can be abundant. There are plenty of ash between The Plough pub and Ballard's Hill. They are not like elm that suckers along a hedgerow and one gets rows and rows of different aged elms radiating out from the central 'mother' elm. It is likely that natural selection will allow some ash to regenerate and be free of the disease.

What happens when the ash trees disappear from the parish? Loss of Biodiversity

- i) There will be a change in the typical views of some roads and lanes. Landscape will change. English oak and Field Maple will continue to survive in the hedgerows and may even fill the gap made by dead ash.
- ii) There will be a decrease in biodiversity in the parish, as ash supports a wide range of wildlife. At least 112 invertebrate species will be lost.¹²⁷ Another view, is that *'more than 950 other species rely on ash....12 birds, 28 mammals, 58 bryophytes, 68 fungi, 239 invertebrates and 548 lichens.'* (Beardon, 2020)

Limits of the survey

The survey was only of the roadsides and environs of the roadsides. The public footpaths were not surveyed. This could easily double the ash trees in the parish. There are many ash trees within the hedgerows of the parish. Where these are tall and distinctive they have been included. A not surprising number of tall ash are by telephone poles as they have escaped the hedge cutting blades. If all hedgerows in

¹²⁷ Biological Records Centre database of Insects and their Food Plants
<http://www.brc.ac.uk/dbif/hostsresults.aspx?hostid=2329>

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the parish were not cut for two years, then the population of ash in the parish could double again, as they are a permanent constituent part of Crowhurst's hedgerows and grow particularly fast in the clay. After ten years a hedgerow ash can be tall enough to make a substantial young tree.

Conclusion

About 40% of the ash trees in the parish are dead or dying.

As the disease accelerates through the parish it is likely to cause a greater problem.

There are several tall and diseased trees on higher ground behind The Plough Pub, and along Chapel Hill that will need some attention.

Ash Dieback symptoms**Brown staining on bark****Dead trees****Part-dead canopies****Dead bark, scarring, staining, dead leaves**

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Table WM28 ASH TREES IN THE PARISH

# Ash	Road
	Crowhurst Road (eastbound) to top of Ballards Hill
1	N side of road
2-6	Both sides of road
7	N side of road by Hill House
8-9	South side of road
10	N side of road
	The Plough clockwise to The Plough again via Ballards Hill (around 'island')
11-17	Behind The Plough
18-19	Behind The Chapel
20-31	Path up behind The Plough
	Down Ballards Hill,
32-33	West side
34-47	Down the hill
	Down Chapel Hill
48-65	
	Sampsons Lane
66	Besides footpath and farm gate
67	Behind shed, covered in ivy
68-70	In field, beside lane

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Crowhurst Road (from Catsfield, eastbound)



No. 1 Ash on north side of Crowhurst Road (eastbound)



No. 2-6 On both sides of the road past the 'Crowhurst' sign

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No. 7. Overhanging road from north side near Hill House

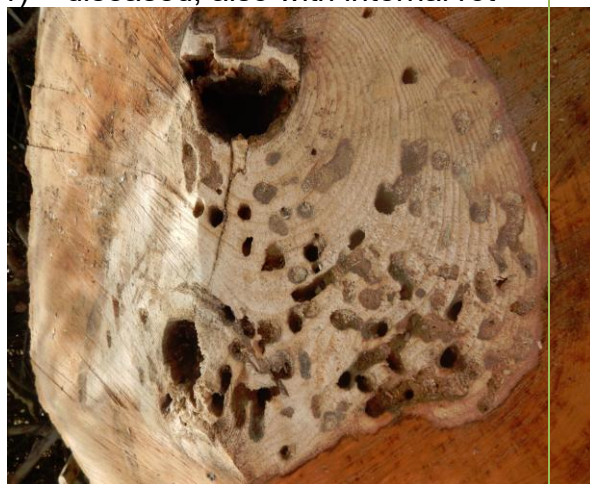


No. 8 On south side of Crowhurst Road

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No. 9 On south side of Crowhurst Road (Oct 21) – diseased, also with internal rot



Felled in January 2022 – holes likely due to larvae of Stag Beetles
At least 94 tree rings

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No. 10 On north side of Crowhurst Road

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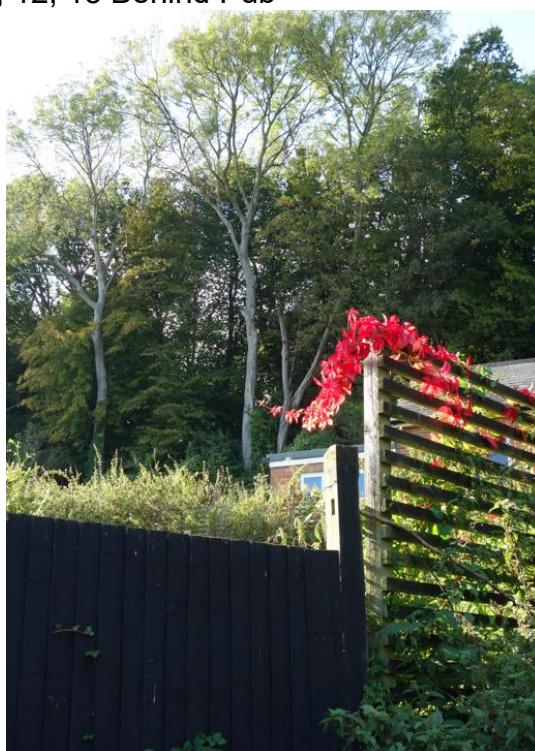
BALLARDS HILL (CLOCKWISE ROUND ISLAND, PAST PUB)



No.11, 12, 13 Behind Pub



No.14,15 Behind Pub



No.(15 again),16,17 Behind Pub

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No18,19



No. 20,21

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No. 22,23,24,25

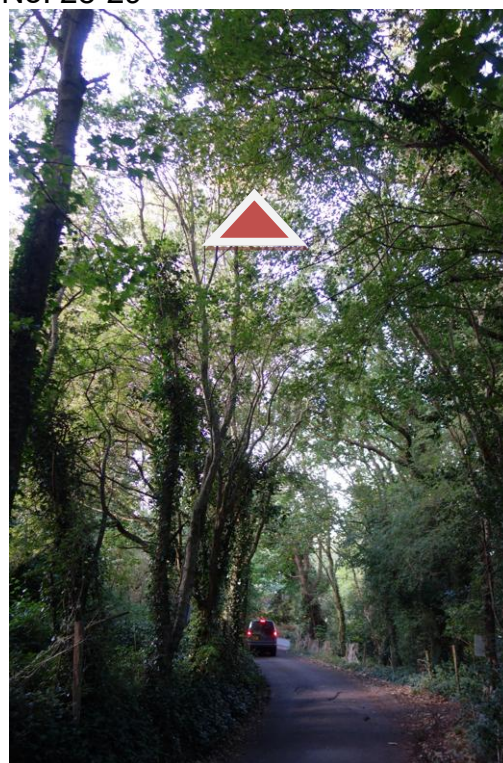


No. 26-27

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No. 28-29



No. 30 Left side of track No 31 route onto road

Down Ballards Hill

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No.32 Top of hill, west side

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No.33 Top of hill, looking back to Catsfield

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No.34, 35,36 Looking down Ballards Hill

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No.37, 28,39 Looking down Ballards Hill

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No.40,41 Looking down Ballards Hill

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No.42,43,44 Looking down Ballards Hill



No.45, 46, 47 as seen through garden on east side of Ballards Hill

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Down Chapel Hill :



No.48 in garden

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No. 49, 50.. in garden north side of Chapel Hill

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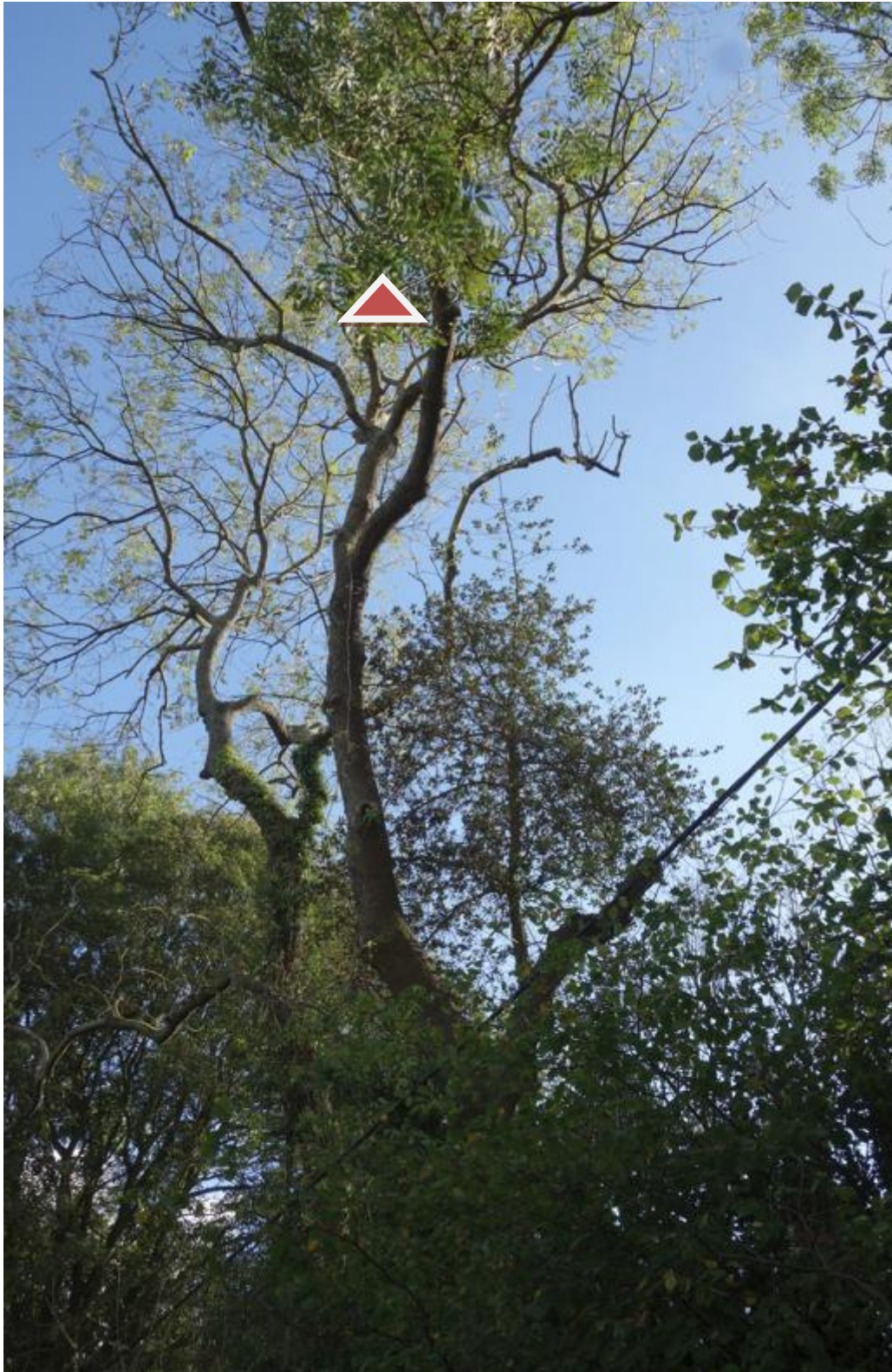
No. 51 South side of Chapel Hill

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No. 54 South side of Chapel Hill

01 Dec 2025



No. 55 South side of Chapel Hill

01 Dec 2025



No. 56 North side of Chapel Hill

01 Dec 2025



No. 57 North side of Chapel Hill

01 Dec 2025



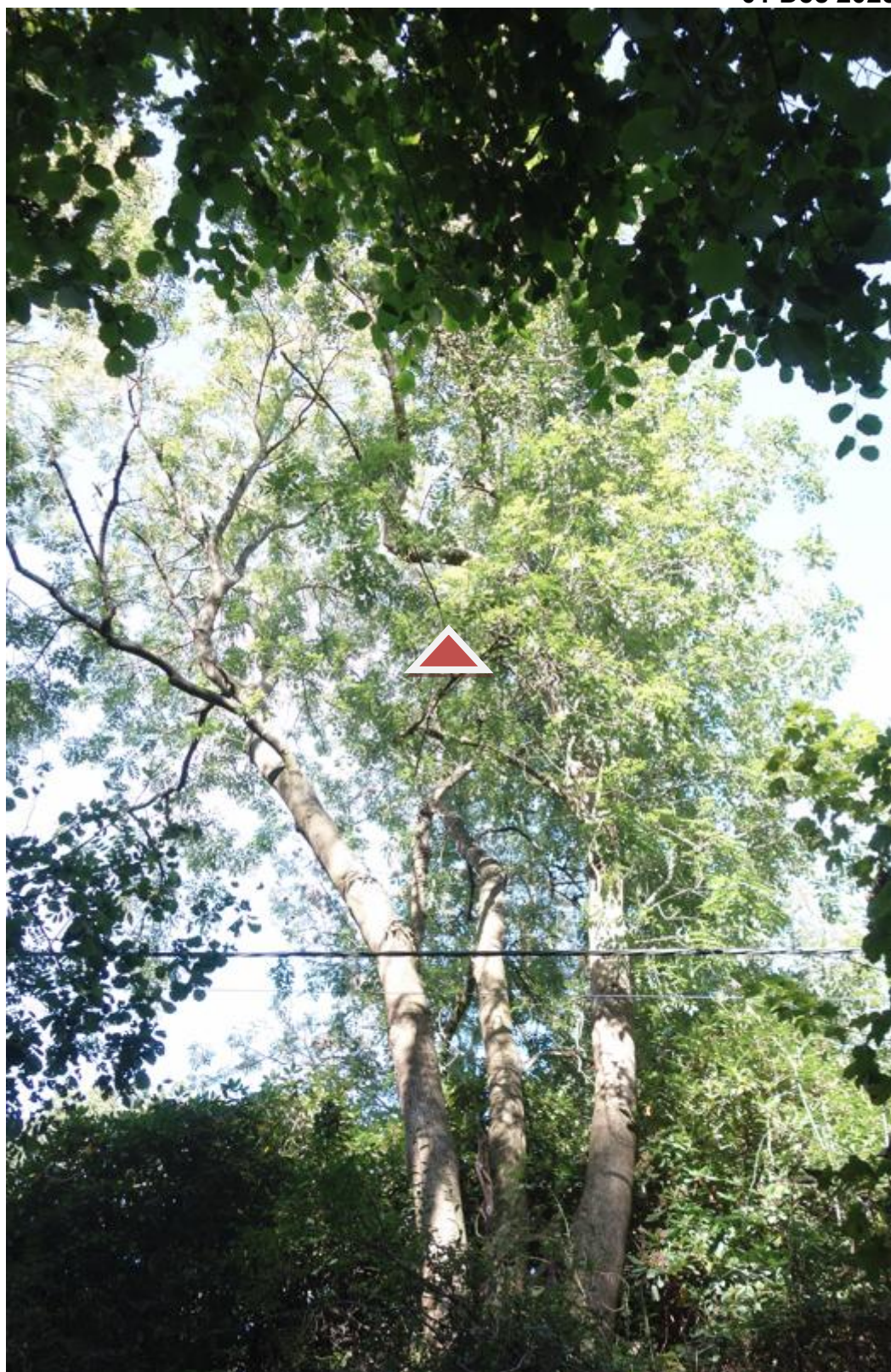
No. 58 North side of Chapel Hill

01 Dec 2025



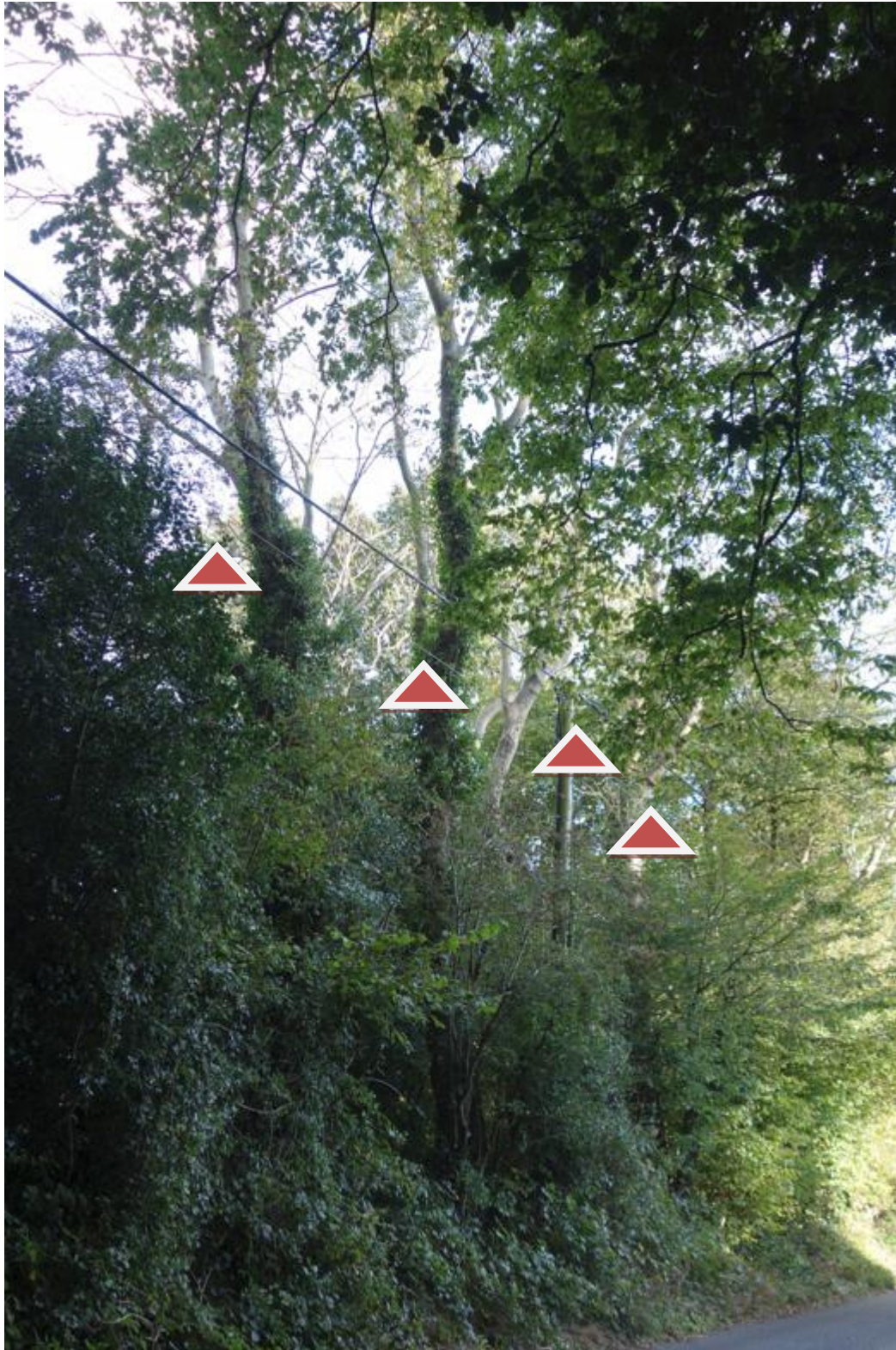
No. 59 South side of Chapel Hill

01 Dec 2025



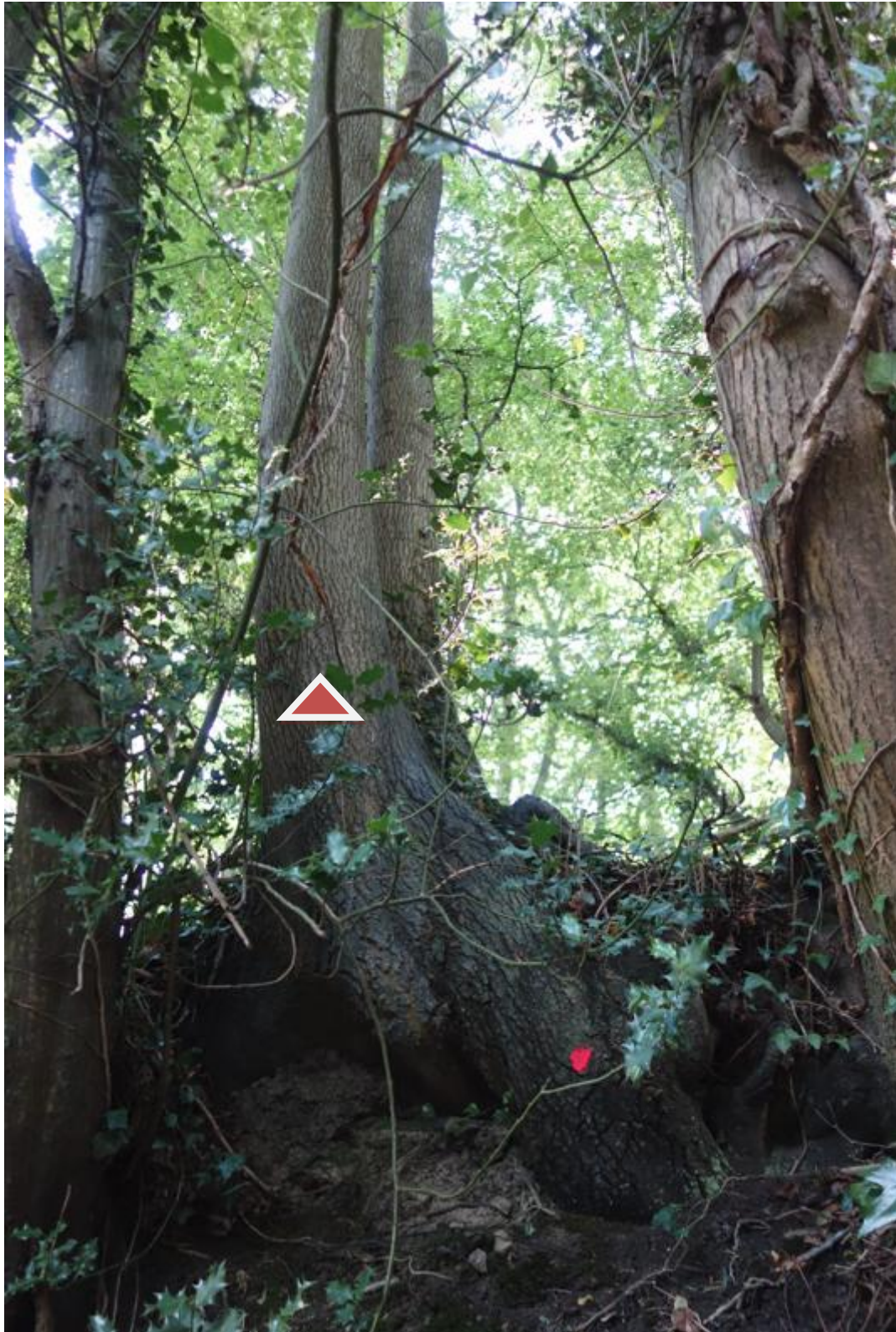
No. 60 North side of Chapel Hill

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No. 61-64 North side of Chapel Hill

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No. 65 South side of Chapel Hill

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SAMPSON'S LANE



No.66 In hedgerow along Footpath

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No.67 Ivy clad behind building



No.68, 69, 70 In the landscape

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Projects to Consider / Food for thought

This Biodiversity Audit is a baseline for what is present in the parish. Some topics are deficient in data. It is clear that this audit has not produced much scientific evidence on the effects of climate change.

There are other views on climate change.¹²⁸

Table WM29 Projects for the future

PROJECT / TOPIC	Notes
Climate change	Evidence is mostly lacking on many fronts.
Ancient Meadows	There must be many ancient meadows in the parish, on private land, but a concerted effort needs to be made to map them and then survey them.
Ponds	There is no data or review of private ponds in the parish.
Hedgerows	Plenty missing, and plenty to replant
Butterflies	EXPECTED BUT NOT RECORDED: Small Tortoiseshell, Brimstone, Small Copper, Meadow Brown, Common Blue, Small Skipper, Essex Skipper.

Further Information

Bexhill to Hastings Link Road ES – Chapter 15B: Social and Community Effects
2245458/30/A Bexhill to Hastings Link Road Chapter 15B: Social and Community Effects. 64pp

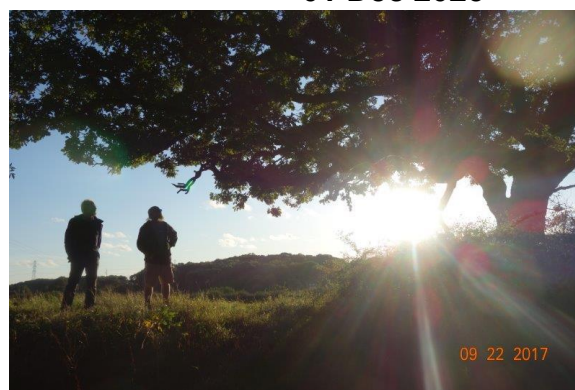
Crowhurst Environment Group <https://www.crowhurstenvironmentgroup.uk/wildlife-meadow>

Crowhurst 2019. Crowhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan

Final version - May 13 2019 <https://www.crowhurstneighbourhoodplan.org/>

¹²⁸ **Lomborg, B. 1998.** *The Skeptical Environmentalist, Measuring the Real State of the World.* Cambridge University Press. 515pp. See also the much hailed: **Stern, N., 2007.** *The Economics of Climate Change. The Stern Review.* Cambridge University Press. 692pp. Also see. **Al Gore, 2013.** *The Future.* W.H. Allen. 558pp. **Prof John Houghton, 1994.** *Global Warming.* A Lion Book. (many current updates).

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Crow---hurst

Community Initiative and Acknowledgements

This report has been produced by Dr John Feltwell on a pro bono basis, and can be circulated freely. The following have been very helpful in providing information, and they have all agreed that their data can be used, and be used on-line on the Crowhurst web site, and thus usage to the wider world.

Organisations such as RSPB, SWT, EA, ESCC, AONL Unit and biological societies have been very helpful including Sussex Botanical Recording Society Churchyard Project, Powdermill Trust and the British Pteridological Society.

- Anderson, Terry - butterfly records of Fore Wood
- Battle Wildflower Meadows Group – for contributions and collaboration
- Burnham, Diane and Joel – species lists of wild flowers and trees
- Burton, Sue, Cllr – analysis of water entering Crowhurst from Battle
- Campbell, David – SOS records for Fore Wood (and Audrey Wende, Richard Cowser)
- Crowhurst Environment Group (CEG) – Verges & Muriel's meadow management¹²⁹
- Clark, Dr Judy, Ellen Campbell & Jacqueline Rose – for Sussex Botanical Recording Society Churchyard Project
- Day, Rosalyn – Crowhurst – statistics
- Davidson, Chris - co-ordination with NP
- Dean, Basil – Fisheries & Biodiversity Officer, at Environment Agency – fish data
- Dean, Cliff – Pett - bird lists – <https://rxbirdwalks.wordpress.com/>
- Desch, Julia – Crowhurst – donation of wildflower plants
- Dinsdale, Andy – assistance from Strandliners
- Donovan, Ian – Crowhurst – horticulturalist for help and work on wildlife verges and meadows
- Feltwell, Dr Tom – Newcastle, technical and copyrights
- Garrett, Fergus – Michael Wachter, Great Dixter – advice/help with verges and meadows
- Henderson, Phil – Assistant Warden, RSPB Fore Wood - documents
- Hoad, Tracy – Flood Warden for flood records and flood report
- Horne, David – botanical surveys for Fore Wood and Muriel's Meadow
- Ingrams, Andrea – TPO Officer, Rother District Council, 2020
- Johnson, Paul – Volunteer Warden of Quarry Wood Nature Reserve – for fungi lists
- Kemp, Will – Photograph of Purple Hairstreak
- Koop, Audrey – many parish project, including WARMER, CEG groups
- Lavender, Jason – High Weald AONL Unit, Flimwell – maps and plans
- Neville, Lorna – Volunteer Quarry Wood Nature Reserve
- McLaren, Nicola, Cllr. - liaison with RDC, 2025
- Newmarsh, James – ESCC for advice and support for wildlife verge designation
- Plato, Sonia & Dave – Chapel Hill, Crowhurst – co-ordination, contacts and species records

¹²⁹ The CEG is also responsible for monitoring recommendations of the Neighbourhood Plan and environmental concerns. The CEG was a contributor and proposer of the CCEWP Resolution to the PC.

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- Young, Robin – for local Crowhurst species accounts
- Robertson, Keith – Clerk to Crowhurst Parish Council
- Royston, Frances and Stephen – Crowhurst – old photographs and species records
- Scott-Wood, Muriel and Lindsay – for loan of Muriel's Meadow and Woodland as a wildlife recovery area.
- Sodomkova, Kristina, Dr. – formerly of RDC in 2020-21
- Southgate, Fran – Sussex Wildlife Trust, - emails to Sonia Plato, various to March 2020
- Streeter, Sophie – butterfly records of Fore Wood
- Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC) – supplying biodiversity records
- Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) – information
- Van Moppes, Clare – Crowhurst – fungi lists
- Weller, Kerry – facilitating meetings
- Woolley, Pam – Crowhurst – Footpath Warden for footpath data; meadow data
- Wisley / Environment Department – hedge-planting

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ACRONYMS

AONL	Area of Outstanding National Landscape (formerly ANOB)
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CAVAT	Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees
CCEEWP	Crowhurst Climate & Ecological Emergency Working Party
CEG	Crowhurst Environment Group
CPC	Crowhurst Parish Council
CVCP	Combe Valley Countryside Park
EA	Environment Agency
EU	European Union
ESCC	East Sussex County Council
GCN	Great Crested Newt
IRZ	Impact Risk Zones
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategy
MAGIC	Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside
MUGA	Multi-use Game Area
NP	Neighbourhood
NT	National Trust
QR	Quarry Wood Nature Reserve
Ramsar	An international wetland site; a place in Iran where the wetland conference was held
RDB	Red Data Book
RDC	Rother District Council
RHS	Royal Horticultural Society
RoN	Rights of Nature
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SBRC	Sussex Biological Records Centre
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SBRC	Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
SWT	Sussex Wildlife Trust
TOW	Trees Outside Woodland
TPO	Tree Protection Order
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Document Audit trail

Revision	Date	Report Description	Prepared by
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01 Dec 2025

WM1,385	27 January 2022	Bio Audit of Crowhurst	Dr John Feltwell
WM1,385.4	22 February 2022	Bio Audit of Crowhurst , updated	Dr John Feltwell
WM1,385.5	25 Feb 2023	Bio Audit of Crowhurst , updated	Dr John Feltwell
WM1,385.6	17 July 2023	Bio Audit of Crowhurst , updated	Dr John Feltwell

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Dr John Feltwell, BSc, PhD, FLS, FRSB, FLLA, Dip AFE, Dip EC Law
Wildlife Matters Consultancy Unit,



01 Dec 2025

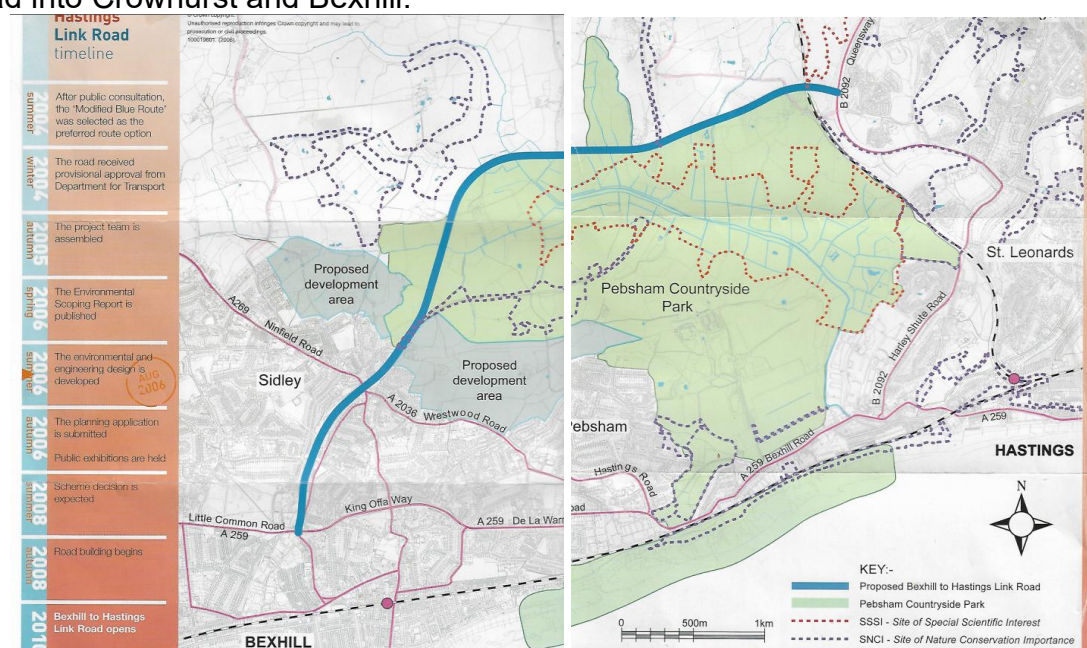
An Assessment of the Ecological Delivery of the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road (BHLR), and North Bexhill Access Road (NBAR), East Sussex, TN33 9BY

27 February 2023

How the route was chosen – and how the names changed.

Of the seven possible routes north of Bexhill the most northern one was approved by English Nature (now Natural England) (East Sussex County Council, 2009)¹³⁰. The following plan was released in 2006 showing how the 'Hastings Link Road' (in blue) which would run from Queensway to Bexhill (Belle Hill) and it then became the 'Combe Valley Way' and was also called 'Bexhill to Hastings Link Road' (BHLR). It used the existing Crowhurst Railway Trackbed. A side branch to the west became The North Bexhill Access Road (NBAR) was added- to connect to Ninfield Road. Collectively it is all generally called 'The Link Road' which is dealt with here.

Within this initial great arc was the 'Pebsham Countryside Park' which would itself become the 'Combe Valley Countryside Park' (CVCP) extending north of the link road into Crowhurst and Bexhill.



'The Hastings Link Road' © ESCC 2006

¹³⁰ East Sussex County Council, 2009. Alternative Route Proposals.

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/bexhillhastingslinkroad/otherroutes/> (retrieved 18 Nov 2019). Each route can be downloaded from this site

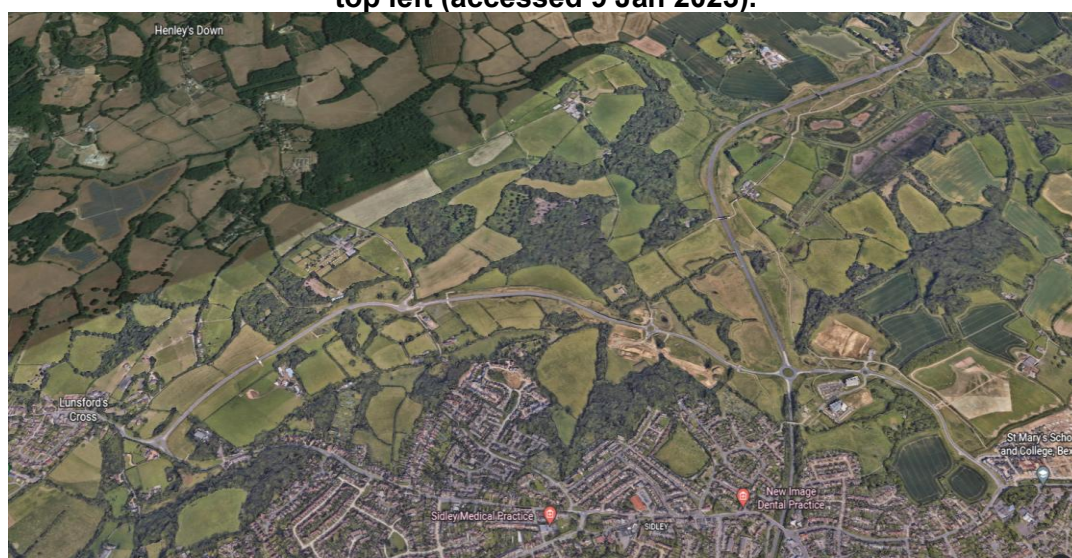
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As a Crowhurst villager voice stated: Crowhurst campaigned against the development of the link road over a number of years, in an effort to protect the village and 'Marsh' from development. Early campaigns involved the Parish Council with the Crowhurst Society. Despite these representations, the route chosen of the three outlined was the one that cut across Crowhurst. Crowhurst villagers and the Parish Council were first made aware that road construction was beginning, when lorries started driving through the village causing consternation and dismay. A group of villagers set up the Road to Nowhere Group to lead the campaign. This held packed public meetings in the Village Hall and took on the fight against the depredations caused by road building in terms of the environment and historical heritage of the parish. Residents of Bexhill also affected by the development joined the group. Combe Haven Defenders from Hastings raised the stakes through direct action and were supported in their protests by many villagers.'

The Link Road as it is was in 2023



View of the eastern end of The Link Road © Google Earth, showing Queensway in the top left (accessed 9 Jan 2023).



Continuation of The Link Road to the west, showing Bexhill to the south, © Google Earth (accessed 9 Jan 2023).

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Aim

The aim of this report is to put together an account of how The Link Road was created and how the ecology of the site was appraised and mitigated. This appraisal compares the works done on site with the ecological principles, UK and EU laws and guidances at the time, when 'net gain' was drawing some interest nationally as a measure of conservation success (it is still not mandatory in early 2023), and where the National Planning Policy Framework was still in its infancy. It is now on NPPF, 2024. The overall consideration is that as the development was a major infrastructure development it was subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) the point of which is that it is always open to public scrutiny. The author of this Biodiversity Audit report is an ecological and wildlife consultant with experience in over 1,400 sites in England and Wales.

Background

The main issue for the route (from the bottom of Queensway through to Bexhill) was to avoid two SSSIs, the Marline Valley SSSI and the Combe Haven SSSI. There were a number of Priority (Biodiversity Action Plan) BAP Habitats en route to be avoided or lost and mitigated. As the route was across a wetland a wide range of protected species were present.

There were objections from 'The Hastings Alliance', 'The Combe Haven Defenders' and in Crowhurst 'The Road to Nowhere Group'¹³¹, (below) but the Public Inquiry in Hastings went ahead and a Compulsory Purchase Order of the land was then issued.



© Crowhurst



© Hastings Alliance

¹³¹ **Combe Haven Defenders 2011. Dated 11 February 2011.**
<https://combehavendefenders.wordpress.com/2013/02/11/villagers-take-stand-against-link-road/> (accessed 10 Jan 2023) Photographs of locals are to be seen in this link.

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The flooded valley challenge

The Combe Valley is well known to be subject to flooding, and the following photographs were taken by this consultant on 3 October 2000. The approximate route of The Link Road (Combe Valley Road) is overlaid over this photograph in red. The ecological challenge for the developer was to construct a single-carriageway across the wetland whilst conserving the wildlife and avoiding two SSSIs.

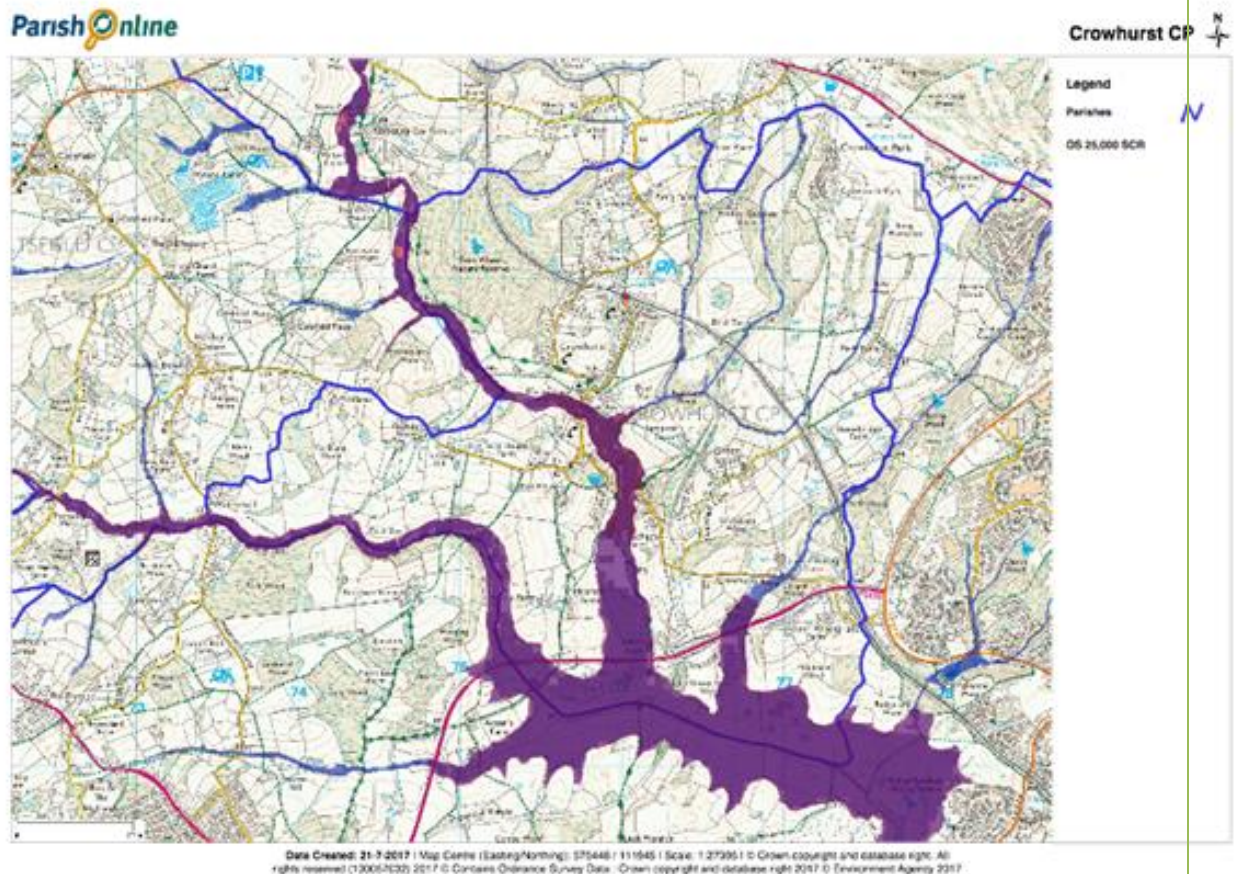


Crowhurst is to the north (top) © John Feltwell



Queensway is to the top right of the photograph © John Feltwell
The sweep of Queensway is top left

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Parish Online Map Centre 575446/111945, Sussex Biodiversity Report 2017.

The above map shows the main drainage channels across which the Link Road is drawn as a red line.

The following shows the areas permanently lost for each parish that the Link Road crossed.

Table WM01 Greenfield lost to parishes

Parish	Link boundary (m)	X width of 22.5m	acres	X £5K/ac
St Leonards	198	44.55	0.01	55
Crowhurst	2184	49,140	12.14	60.700
Bexhill	3818	85,905	21.27	106,350
TOTAL			66.83	167,105

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Executive Summary

- Generally speaking the large project accomplished the mitigation it was supposed to do, but there were some big omissions and mistakes.
- Wildlife did not suffer unduly, although badgers probably suffered more than any other group.
- Invertebrates (the largest group of animals) were not addressed comprehensively so there is no base line to assess damage.
- Habitats lost included Priority Habitats from the Combe Valley Countryside Park (CVWP), but all were avoided in the last section to Ninfield Road in the west.
- Some habitats were quietly removed from magic.gov.uk
- Combe Valley SSSI was avoided, with minimal impact in the buffer zone.
- Marline Wood SSSI had a small piece of habitat lost.
- 17 of 97 badger setts were permanently stopped-up.
- **Greenfield permanently lost**
- A finite amount of greenfield was lost to the road: 66.83 acres.
- Crowhurst parish lost 12.14 acres valued at £60,700
- Bexhill lost 21.27 acres valued at £106,350
- Hastings lost 0.01 acres valued at £55
- **Mitigations**
- 117 nest boxes for Hazel Dormice erected
- 103K trees were planted (two for every one lost).
- Great Crested Newt (GCN) mitigation did not include set back drains to stop entrapment.
- Generous settling ponds doubled-up as GCN breeding ponds.
- 8 bat species were recorded. There were complaints of trees for bats having been lost.

Un-resolved issues

- Two cross-over areas were planted up to allow bats to cross on 'flyways'.
- 3 new woods were meant to have been created in Crowhurst
- 5 woods in Brede were meant to have been enhanced by way of off-setting
- It is not clear that these new woods have been created yet.
- The Link Road is was not connected to the A21 until 2025.

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Parishes and names

The link road goes through three civil parishes, from east to west: St Leonards on Sea, Crowhurst and Bexhill. The St Leonards on Sea sector is only a few hundred metres along Crowhurst Road from the railway line to Queensway. The west end of the link is the roundabout to Ninfield Road (but it is not in Ninfield, it is in Bexhill). The distance from the Ninfield roundabout to Queensway is 4.48 miles as walked along the gravel pathways; it is slightly shorter by the route for horses (which goes straight up a steep hill at the Queensway end).

The opened sections

Bexhill-Western Hastings Bypass (BHWB)

Overall the Scheme is 5.6km long from the junction from the A259 in Bexhill to its junction with the B2092 Queensway in Hastings. The first part of the 3.5 mile (5.6 km) Link Road opened on 17 December 2015 with the connection to the A21 finally made in 2025.¹³²

Bexhill Connection

The 'Bexhill Connection' 1.4km along the bed of the abandoned railway line opened in 2013 providing an estimated £1 billion of economic benefits to the local area.

The North Bexhill Access Road (NBAR)

The North Bexhill Access Road (NBAR), from Ninfield Road to Watermill Lane opened on 11 March 2019 (Sea Change, 2019).¹³³ The section from Watermill Lane to the Bexhill roundabout opened in spring 2019. The Ninfield end of NBAR was provided with fencing in February 2020.

¹³² [Taylor Woodrow, 2013. East Sussex County Council, Bexhill to Hastings Link Road. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan. Ref. B1297001-PH2/3000.06a/0004. Revision 9 March 2013. 101pp. 59. https://taylorwoodrow.com/News-and-Downloads/news_article.asp?articleid=118 \(accessed 7 Jan 2023\).](https://taylorwoodrow.com/News-and-Downloads/news_article.asp?articleid=118)

¹³³

? [Sea Change, 2019 North Bexhill Access Road opens — connecting Combe Valley Way to Ninfield Road Posted on: March 11, 2019.https://www.seachangesussex.co.uk/north-bexhill-access-road-opens-connecting-combe-valley-way-to-ninfield-road/](https://www.seachangesussex.co.uk/north-bexhill-access-road-opens-connecting-combe-valley-way-to-ninfield-road/)

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Table WM02 Facts and Figures of the Link Road

Facts	Detail	Further information
Planning Application	R/2374/CC (EIA)	
Public Inquiry	Nov & Dec 2009 ¹³⁴	Held in Hastings
Constructions companies	Taylor-Woodrow, Hochtief,	
Construction period	2009-2016	
BHWB Bexhill-Western Hastings Bypass	first part of the 3.5 mile (5.6 km)	Opened on 17 Dec 2015
BC Bexhill Connection	1.4 km	
NBAR The North Bexhill Access Road		11 March 2019 (Sea Change, 2019
Total length	4.48 miles	4.8m (7.71m) as walked (Ninfield Rd to Queensway)
Cost	£96m ¹³⁵ £120 million ^{136, 137}	To deliver 2,000 new homes and 3,000 new jobs
Combe Valley Way (CVV)	3,615m	
B2691 (east) to Wrestbourne Rd	845m	
B2691 (west)	1,389m	Opened in spring 2019
Haven Brook Avenue	957m	
CVWP To Belle Hill, Bexhill	554m	
Ecology survey started	from 1990 – on-going mitigation	
SSSIs avoided	Combe Valley and Marline Wood	
Parishes involved (4)	Hastings	198m boundary
	Crowhurst	2184m boundary
	Bexhill	3818m boundary
Badger setts	97 of which 17 were stopped	
GCNs	8 ponds in two metapopulations	
Reptiles	3 species	
Birds	60 species, of which 8 red-listed	
LOSS ACCOUNT		
Crowhurst section of Link Road	2,184m long	With average of 22.5m wide
Crowhurst's lost greenfield land with Link Road	12.14ac (4.92ha)	Value £60,000 (2017)
Hedgerows lost (NBAR)	5 (0.5km)	
GAINS ACCOUNT		
Trees planted	103,000 by 2015	'two for every one removed'
Ponds created	ca. 10	

¹³⁴ <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roads-transport/bexhill-hastings-link-road> (accessed 06 Jan 2023)

¹³⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9121/decision-letter.pdf (accessed 06 Jan 2023)

¹³⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9121/decision-letter.pdf (accessed 06 Jan 2023)

¹³⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-120-million-bexhill-hastings-road-opens-to-boost-east-sussex-economy> (accessed 06 Jan 2023)

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These are facts posted by Rother on Dec 17 2015

Bexhill-Hastings Link Road opens

Posted on: **December 17, 2015**

The Bexhill to Hastings Link Road, which is designed to boost the economy of East Sussex and cut congestion, opens to traffic for the first time today (17 December).

The Link Road, now named Combe Valley Way, will bring an estimated £1 billion of economic benefits to the area and deliver up to 2,000 new homes and 3,000 new jobs.

The East Sussex County Council highway – built at a cost of £120 million, including £56 million from the Department for Transport – is also expected to reduce congestion on the A259 by up to 40 per cent.

The opening comes after Glovers House, the new 25,000 sq ft business centre developed by Sea Change Sussex on land opened up by the Link Road, welcomed its first tenant, Park Holidays UK.

The route through the East Sussex countryside

The Link Road goes through three parishes, St Leonards on Sea, Crowhurst, and the longest section Bexhill,

The single carriageway cuts through existing farmland and wetland, skirted the Combe Haven SSSI to the north, and passes close to Ancient Woodland. The whole area was once an inlet of the sea that became silted up. It has a history of being flooded. The route also passed to the south of the Marline Woods (SSSI) cutting off a little of its southern sector.

The route not only goes through Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and areas for BAP species but through populations of Great Crested Newts (GCNs) and Hazel Dormice (both protected by EU and UK law), through habitats for badgers (UK protected only) and localities for bats (UK and EU protected) and reptiles (UK protected).

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Ecological Surveys

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Pre-constructions – ecological surveys

Typically, for an infrastructure development of this size several ecological reports were produced

- Phase 1 Habitats Survey
- Environmental Strategy (ES)
- Landscape and Environmental Management Plan (LEMP)
- Hydrology (ESCC, 2006).¹³⁸

Ecological surveys along the route started in the 1990s with surveys carried out by The Highways Agency and Chris Blandford Associates for the A259 Bexhill-Western Hastings Bypass (BHWB) (ESCC, (undated)).¹³⁹

An Environmental Statement was published by ESCC (undated) which surveys for all groups of flora and fauna, and assessed the habitats that the route would pass through. European protected species (EPS) were found on site, and the EU regulations necessitated that EPS Licences had to be obtained before any movement of Great Crested Newts (GCN) and Hazel Dormice were translocated. For those who like to delve into the planning history of this project then ESCC published their Chapter 1 Introduction to the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road, Environmental Statement (ES) (undated!). 23pp, which can be read at ¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ [East Sussex County Council, 2006. Bexhill to Hastings Link Road, Timeline. Map, published by ESCC. Ref. 100019601 2006\).](#)

¹³⁹ [East Sussex County Council \(undated\). Bexhill to Hastings Link Road, ES – Chapter 11 Nature Conservation and Biodiversity. 123pp. Ref. 224548/030/A.\(NB. This is also stated on the front cover as being Chapter 12\).](#)
<https://apps.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications/register/documents/dataawright%20saved%20documents/scannedinfo/rr2474cceia/chapter%2012%20nature%20conservation%20and%20biodiversity/section%201/bh1r.ch12natconbiod.vol1.pdf> (accessed 15 November 2019)

¹⁴⁰ <https://apps.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications/register/documents/dataawright%20saved%20documents/scannedinfo/rr2474cceia/chapter%2001%20introduction/bh1r.ch1introduction.pdf>

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1.1 Context

1.1.1 This Environmental Statement has been prepared for the proposed Bexhill to Hastings Link Road (BHLR) promoted by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) in compliance with the requirements of the European Community Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by Directive 97/11/EC on, *The assessment of certain public and private projects on the environment* and the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) Regulations 1999.

1.1.2 The Environmental Statement reports the findings of the environmental impact assessment for the Scheme and forms part of a detailed planning application for the Scheme prepared by ESCC Transport and Environment Department. The following documents have been submitted to the Development, Minerals and Waste Group of ESCC in their capacity as the determining authority for the Scheme under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992:

- Environmental Statement;
- Non-Technical Summary (NTS);
- Traffic and Transport Report;
- Regeneration Statement;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Project-level Sustainability Appraisal;
- Waste Management Strategy; and,
- Scheme Design Drawings and associated supporting information.

The ES, as they stated above was a requirement of EU Directive 85/337/EC.

The LEMP (Landscape and Environmental Management Plan) was published by Taylor Woodrow in May 2013 (Taylor Woodrow, 2013). It addressed four Planning Conditions, viz 5, 7, 14, 23, and each had an ecological commitment.

The ecological issues pertaining to each of these included are summarised here:

- The watercourses beneath the bridges should have '*a bank width of 3 metres, and a soft bank solution beneath....with shade tolerant planting*'... (Condition 5.)
- A scheme for the free passage and/or protection of animals by means of highway underpasses, bridges and any other means has been submitted...before development commences (Condition 7).
- Hard and soft landscaping must be approved beforehand (Condition 14).
- 'Development cannot start until and 'Environmental Statement and subsequent addenda, for mitigation and compensatory habitat creation/restoration (including connectivity between habitats)' has been approved. (Condition 23).

On 5 May 2005 a meeting was convened to discuss what sorts of wildlife should be surveyed. Six attended, Kristoffer Hewitt (NE), three from ESCC, one from SWT and Philip Masters (PM). Topics included botanical (including rare and uncommon submerged plants), Badgers, Bats, Dormice, Water Voles, Water Shrews, Otters, Birds, Reptiles, Amphibians, Invertebrates (Wildlife Issues, 2005).¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Wildlife Issues (2005). Notes on Surveys for ES for Bexhill-Hastings Link Road 2005. Note of meeting of 10.5.05. (3pp)

<https://apps.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications/register/documents/datawright%20saved%20documents/scannedinfo/rr2474cceia/appendix%20i/appendix%20i.3/notes%20of%20a%20meeting%20of%2010%205%2005%20-%20surveys%202.pdf>

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Planning condition reference	LEMP section reference
Planning condition 5: Notwithstanding the details already submitted, no development shall commence, except mitigation and compensation works and archaeological evaluation, until details of the design and materials for the construction of the railway crossing and all under-bridges and over-bridges, including railings, parapets, surface finishes, fencing together with the reuse of any materials salvaged from the demolished existing railway bridges, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning. Bridge structures over water shall include a clear span, with abutments set back from the watercourse on both banks to provide a bank width of 2 metres beneath the bridge, and a soft bank solution beneath the bridges with shade tolerant planting, as outlined in the submitted Figure 3 Indicative sketch of soft bank engineering solution Revision A dated September 2008. The bridges shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Head of Planning.	3.3, 3.4.1, Appendix A - Appendix B - Appendix C - Appendix D - Appendix E -
Planning condition 7: Development shall not commence until details of a scheme for the free passage and/or protection of animals by means of highway underpasses, bridges and any other means has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning and the link road shall not be brought into public use until the approved scheme has been fully implemented unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Head of Planning.	3.3, 3.4.1, Appendix A - Appendix B - Appendix C - Appendix D - Appendix E -
Planning condition 14: Before the commencement of each phase of the development, plans and full details of both hard and soft landscaping works, substantially in accordance with the details shown on planting plans 208:31:21; 208:31:22; 208:31:23; 208:31:24; 208:31:25; 208:31:26 and 208:31 :27 dated April 2007, shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning. These details shall include:	3.64, Appendix B - Appendix J -
Planning condition 23: Development shall not commence until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning a detailed scheme, to include the proposals in the Environmental Statement and subsequent addenda, for mitigation and compensatory habitat creation/restoration (including connectivity between habitats) and these works shall be carried out as approved. The details of the scheme shall include:	

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Assessment of potential impact on UK & EU protected species.

Surveys indicated that the following UK and EU protected species were present along the route: a summary follows.

Table WM03 Protected Species found along the route

Species	What was found
Bats	At least eight species were identified along the route, and that a roost was identified in Adams Farm (had to be demolished; it was moved to other side of the farmhouse to allow room for the new road) and Ninfield bridge had been a roost site as early as 2008 and possible 2012.
Hazel Dormice	Known localities for this species, or ancient woodland and hedgerows, as well as foraging areas would have to be removed and severing potential dispersal routes
Water voles	No evidence of them.
Badgers	97 setts were recorded along the route and 17 of these had to be stopped because they were in the line of the route. Permanent loss of foraging area was believed to be addressed by comprehensive habitat creation.
GCNs	Eight ponds were identified in surveys carried out from 2005-2012 which carried small populations of GCNs, in two separate metapopulations.
Reptiles	Three common reptile species were found in 2008 to existing in small populations. Their habitat would be lost by the development.
Birds	Sixty bird species were found along the route corridor, 11 of which are on the IUCN Red List of threatened species, and 13 are on the IUCN Amber list. It is recognised that The Combe Haven Valley is a regionally important site for spring and autumn birds of passage.
Fish	Ten species of fish were recorded in the watercourses crossed by the route.
Invertebrates	The native White-Clawed crayfish was not recorded in watercourses crossed by the route. Fifteen species of dragonflies and damselflies (Odonata) were recorded in 2005, with 17 species considered to have bred within the study area and Combe Haven Valley since 1988. It would appear that invertebrates, other than crayfish, and Odonata were not surveyed for. This amounts to most of the faunal species of the UK.

Pre-construction assessment of potential Impact on habitats

The ESCC (2006) scaled 'timeline map' (as shown on page one) clearly showed that the route would be passing through

- i) a small part of Marline Woods (SSSI)
- ii) Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- iii) Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)
- iv) Pebsham Countryside Park

The red dot (in the roadway plan) in the following plan shows how the road was proposed to go through the most southerly part of the Marline Woods SSSI, as shown below; the reasons for going through the SSSI were not given, even though there appeared to be potential for bringing the road to the south a few metres.

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Impact on Habitats

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Construction and delivery

The construction company Hochtief delivered the 5.6km single carriageway between 2009-2016 for £96 million '*spanning both greenfield and urban environments*' with '*17 structures, 6 overbridges, 7 underbridges, 2 underpasses, and 2 box culverts.*' This included 10km of drainage as well as sustainable drainage. In contrast, the ESCC (2006) scaled 'timeline map also showed that the route would miss the northern part of Combe Valley SSSI.

A greenway for walkers, cyclists and equestrians was created together with substantial environmental mitigation works, extensive planting and habitat creation and landscaping and ground improvement, according to their on-line statement (Hochtief, 2019). They also stated:

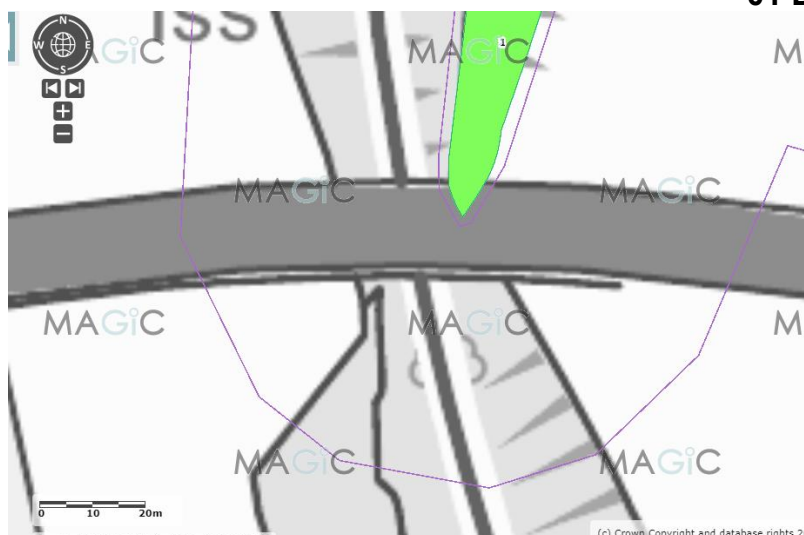
As the link road passes through green belt land with diverse ecology, it initially attracted strong opposition. In response, we developed environmental mitigation measures, including providing new wildlife habitats, that eased fears about the contract and led to a successful Public Inquiry outcome. We worked hard to minimise the scheme's impact on the countryside, managing 47 environmental consents and creating a green corridor for walkers and cyclists.



The Link Road joining Queensway with Marline Valley SSSI shown as red dots (left)
The Link Road passing the Combe Haven SSSI (right)

Another way of looking at the loss of 40m over the Marline Wood SSSI, is by the following from *magic.gov.uk*.

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(accessed 15 November 2019)

At the time NE were more concerned with maintaining the microclimate of this part of the SSSI, and maintaining connectivity with habitat, whilst not opposing the bridge over the SSSI at this point.

<p>5.0 Confirmation that the Additional Comments raised by Natural England have been addressed</p>	<p>5.1 Marline Woods SSSI:</p> <p>5.1.1 Shading –</p> <p>At the point where a bridge is proposed over the southern tip of Marline Woods SSSI, NE would like to see shading contours to show the extent of the shading from this bridge. MM will produce an illustrative Figure to show the bridge with extent of shading in relation to plant communities present.</p> <p>NE concerned that alterations to the microclimate caused by the bridge will affect habitat connectivity. Mitigation may include introducing another link elsewhere in the Scheme or by replacement habitat. The under-bridge planting should also be reviewed. In addition the connectivity of the woods in general and mitigation for that connectivity will be reviewed (where this is not addressed elsewhere this will be addressed).</p> <p>MM will therefore explore alternative ways to provide linking habitat and maintain the ecological functionality of the corridor. Cross reference to mitigation elsewhere in the Scheme will be made, such as existing plans for linking habitat across the road. Whilst NE reserve their position until they review the final submission, NE expressed agreement to this approach.</p>	<p>MM</p> <p>MM</p>
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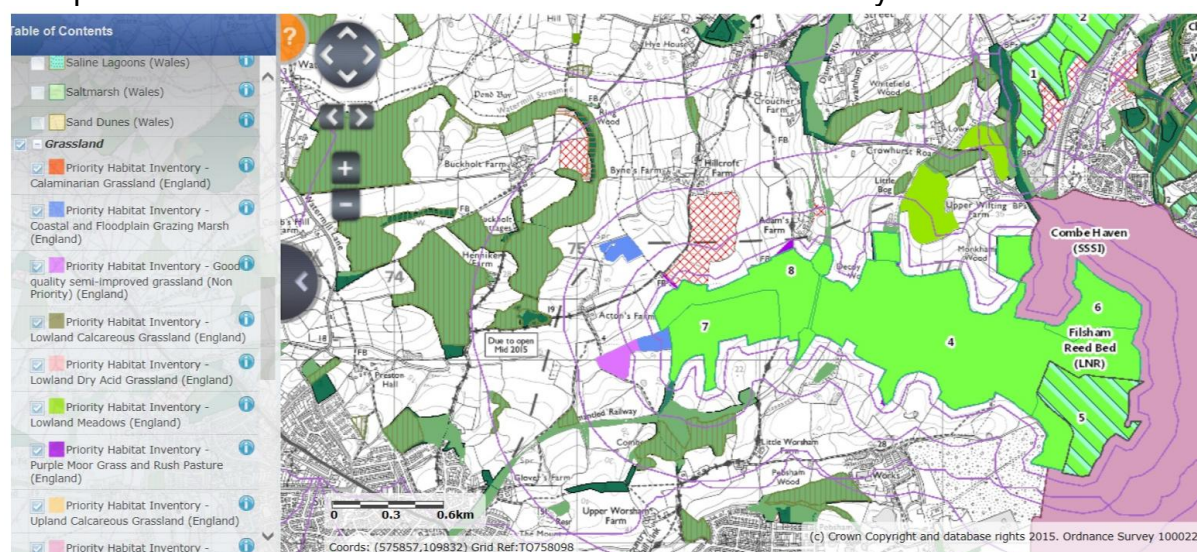
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The BAP habitats crossed and lost

BAP habitats and BAP species, refers to both habitats and species that have been noted for their biodiversity, as in Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), or BAPs.

The Link Road was proposed to go through a number of BAP habitats that were present in the valley. These included various UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats such as those listed in [Table WM02](#).

The situation in May 2015 (see plan below) showed the route of the Link Road indicated with a dashed line. Each of the different colours are protected habitats. Note, that from the Queensway it goes through i) a small patch of light green ii) a larger patch of light green, iii) a triangle of purple, iv) a patch of hatched pink, v) a blue patch. These are listed below with a note on whether they were retained or not.



HISTORIC SCREENSHOT!

The was the disposition of protected habitats BEFORE the Link Road was constructed (accessed May 2015). Note the different coloured habitat areas that the dashed line is proposed to go through (and did go through). These are Priority Habitats that have now gone.

The Blue, Red Hatched and light Green BAP habitats have now gone.

Table WM04 BAP Habitats through which the Link Road crossed

	BAP Habitat	Size	Area lost
i)	UK Priority Lowland Meadows		All removed
ii)	UK Priority Lowland Meadows		Apparently still present with the Link Road through it.
iii)	Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture		All gone
iv)	(hatched)		All gone
v)	Coastal and Floodplain grassland	Blue	UK Priority Lowland Meadows

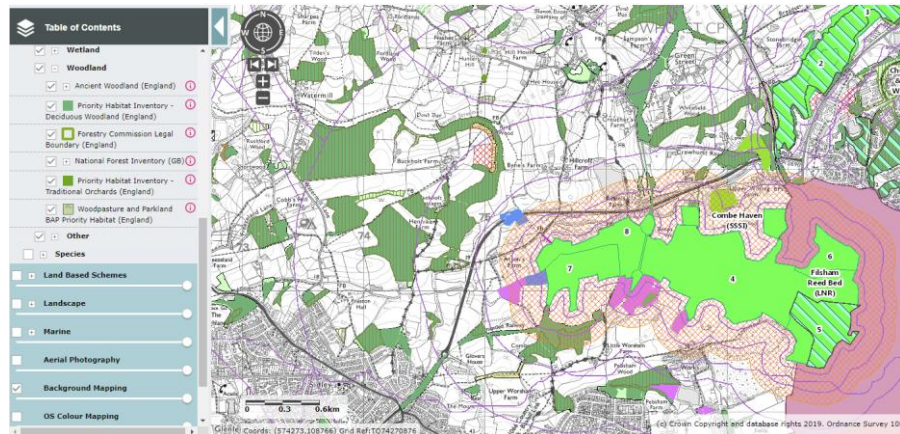
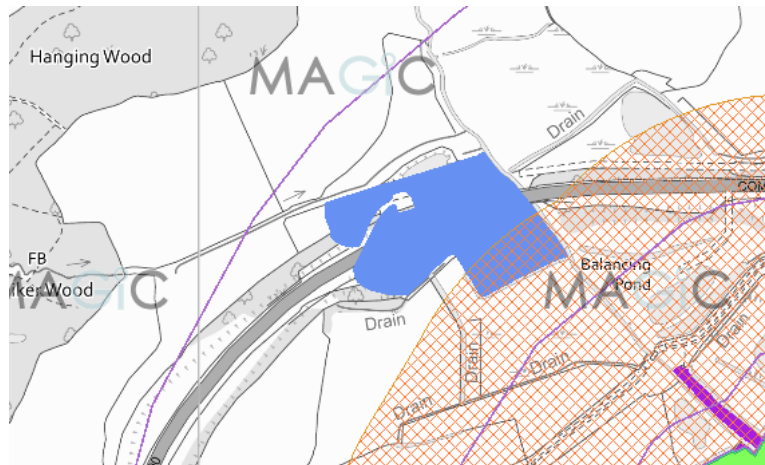
It is clear that, at least in Crowhurst, various sections of UK BAP habitats have been lost.

The Link Road works were carried out before National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 and before its conservation role was strengthened by the updated 2019 edition.

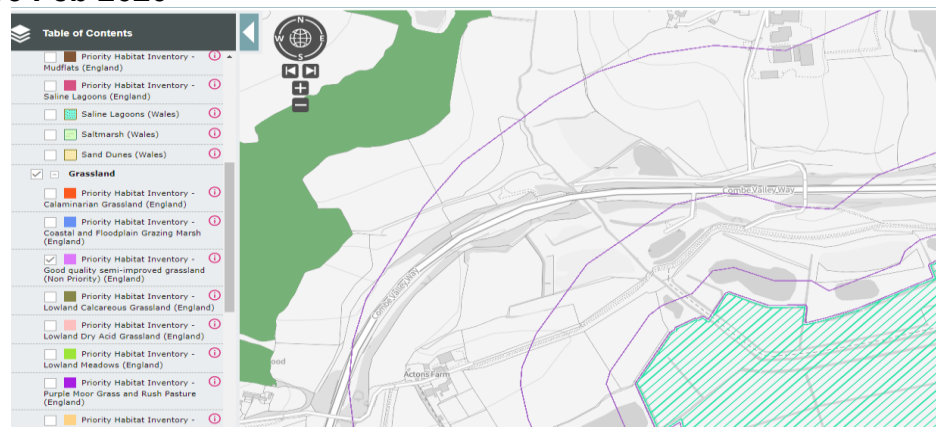
The following screen-shot is four years later (2019) when the route of the Link Road is shown as a continuous black line (the link to Ninfield has yet to be added). Notice how some of the ecological features are not in shown on the plan of protected area.

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Notice also how the route goes through the blue area (Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh) and how a lot of the new route skirting the north of the SSSI is now within a buffer area.

**HISTORIC SCREENSHOT!****HISTORIC SCREENSHOT!**

Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh (England)
Accessed 16 Feb 2020



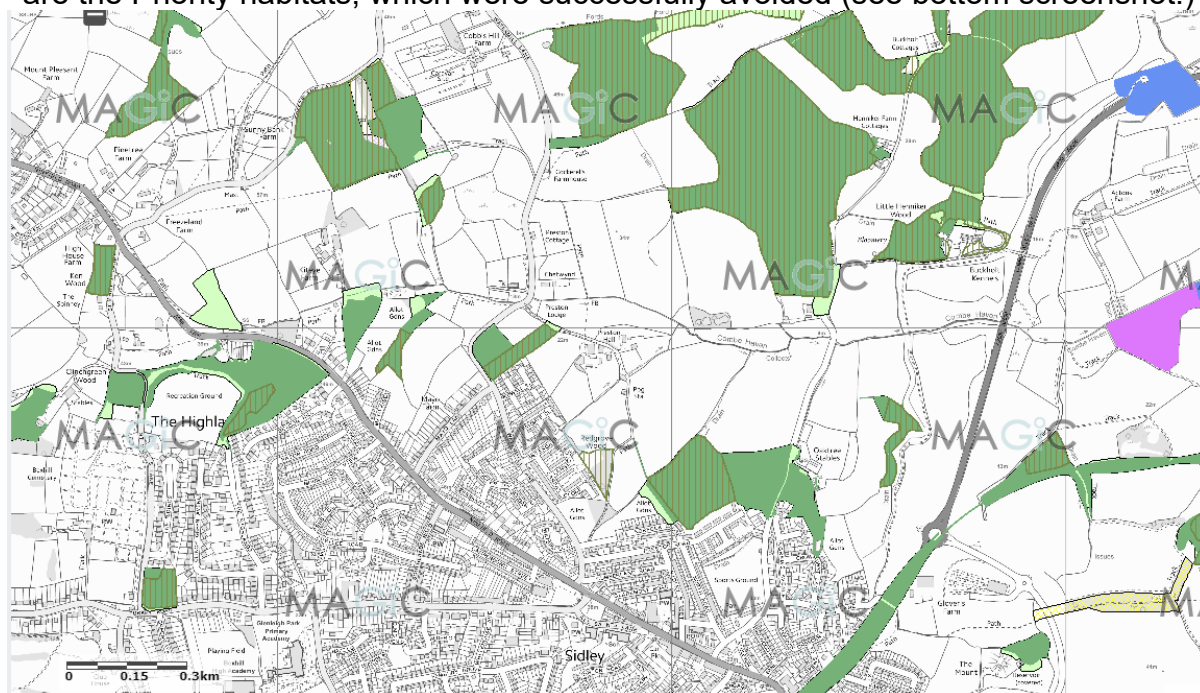
The Priority Habitat (blue) has now been removed
(accessed 3 January 2023)

AFTER the Link Road was constructed. (accessed 11 Nov 2019)

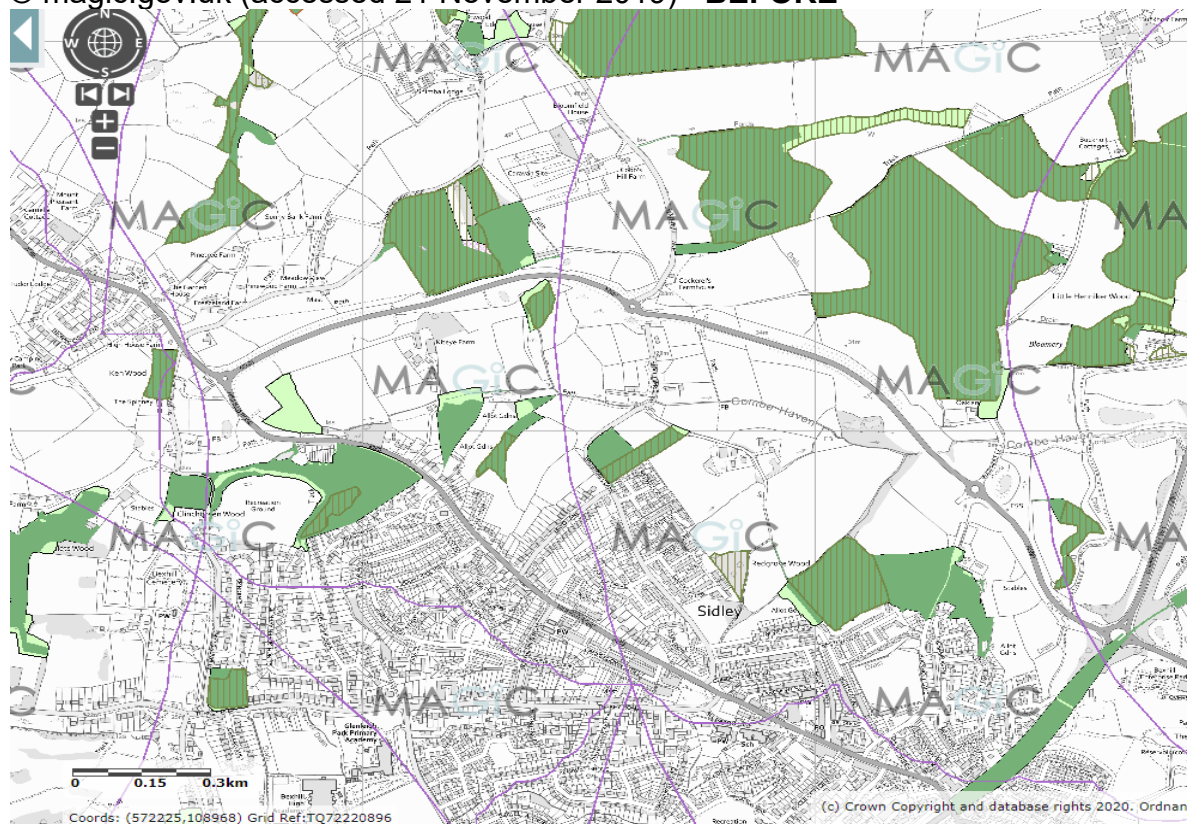
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Successful avoidance of Section 41 Priority Habitats¹⁴²

The following two screenshots from magic.gov.uk show before and after the Bexhill Link was constructed through to the Ninfield road (2019 – 2020). The green areas are the Priority habitats, which were successfully avoided (see bottom screenshot.)



© magic.gov.uk (accessed 21 November 2019) **BEFORE**



© magic.gov.uk (retrieved 16 Feb 2020)

AFTER

¹⁴² S41 Priority Habitats are afforded protection through lots of Biodiversity legislation and NERC 2006.

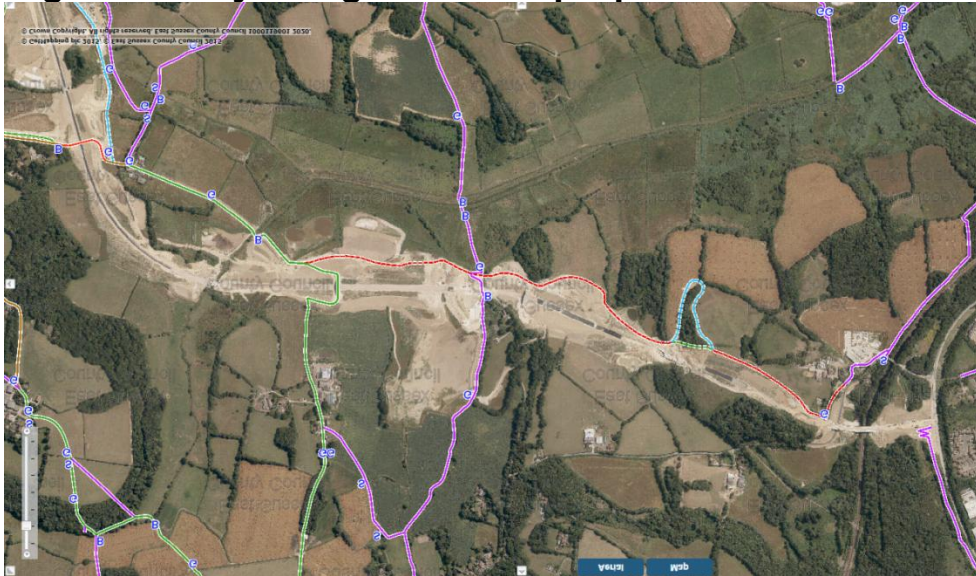
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Construction phase (by satellite)

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Environmental Impact – short-term environmental impact

The following satellite photographs, dated 2015, are from the ESCC definitive rights of way website. They show the various construction works for most of The Link Road, and the Public Rights of Way being shown as purple. East to West sequentially:



©ESCC 2015 ©Getmappingplc Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). ©Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077

The Link Road in Crowhurst parish, between Queensway (top right) and off to Bexhill (bottom left). The FP in the middle is the #1066 Country Walk. Where it crosses The Link Road it is at TQ76311067.



©ESCC 2015 ©Getmappingplc Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). ©Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077

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Queenway and railway (top right), showing a large amount of impact abutting Chapel Wood and directly also abutting Little Bog wood.



©ESCC 2015 ©Getmappingplc Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). ©Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077

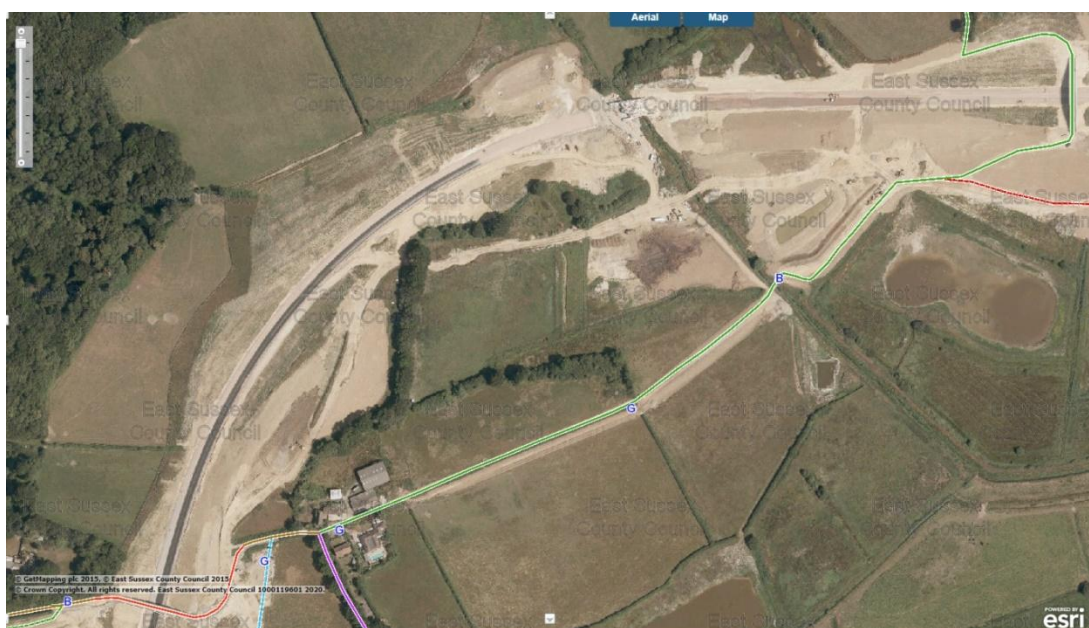
A very wide section of land excavated to make way for the Combe Valley Way at TQ76431075. The works are dangerously close to the Decoy Pond Wood (the rectangular parcel of woodland) which is all within the Combe Valley SSSI. Adam's Farm is towards the left of the photo. A large pond midway between Little Bog and Decoy Pond Wood was filled in. By way of mitigation four other ponds were created (see Mitigation later in this report)

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© ESCC 2015 © Getmapping plc 2015, © East Sussex County Council 2015. © Crown Copyright (2005). © Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077

Above: Adam's Farm (top right at TQ75821066) Road bridge over the Link road under construction (shown in green).



© ESCC 2015 © Getmapping plc 2015, © East Sussex County Council 2015. © Crown Copyright (2005). © Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077

TQ75281044 with Hanging Wood (in Catsfield) to the top left.

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©ESCC 2015 ©Getmappingplc Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). ©Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077

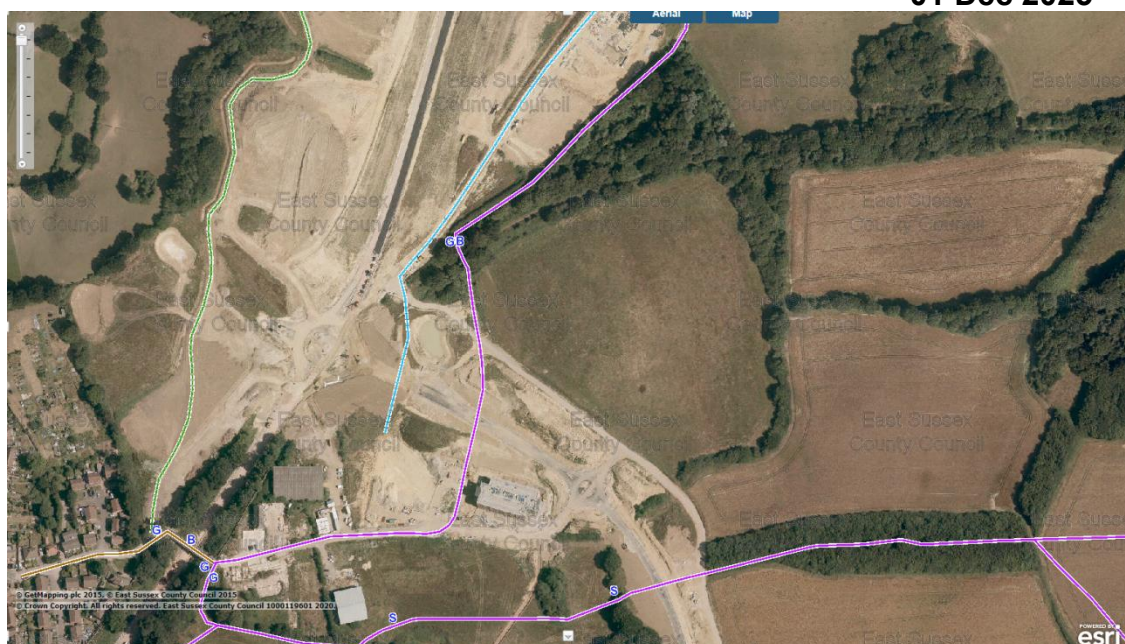
The large area under excavation is the lake to the east of Adam's Farm, adjacent to the footpath shown in purple. The large lake is actually a 'settling pond' to take excess water off the road, and it doubles-up as for nature conservation, e.g. avifauna. The dark vegetation shows the course of the old railway line coming down from the north, and continuing in the bottom of the photograph.



©ESCC 2015 ©Getmappingplc Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright (2005). ©Wildlife Matters Licence Number 100002077

Excavation works to the south of the wooded hamlet of Little Henniker at TQ74771002

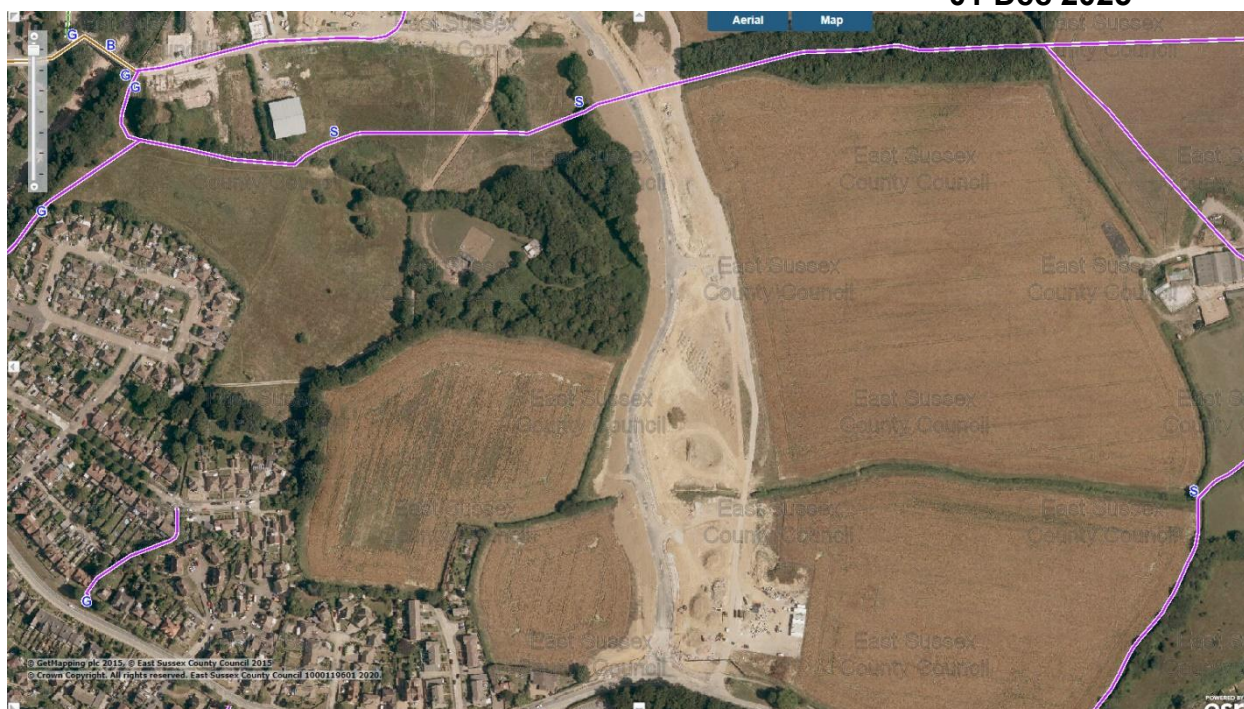
01 Dec 2025



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TQ74640952 location of the four-way roundabout connecting Haven Brook Avenue (W) with Mount View Street (W) and Combe Valley Way (N&S). nr. Glover's Farm. Note the curved railway line from bottom left to top right showing dark vegetation.

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TQ74099110 This is the spur road from the roundabout, across arable fields: location as seen below.



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LINK ROAD

Construction phase (on the ground)

Before and After photographs

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Looking west



‘Combe Valley Way’ (TQ76311067) on bridge looking west, 2015



‘Combe Valley Way’ (TQ76311067) on Road / Footpath bridge looking west 21 January 2016 Looking west

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‘Combe Valley Way’ (TQ76311067) on bridge looking WEST

02 May 2019



‘Combe Valley Way’ (TQ76311067) on bridge looking WEST

18 Jan 2015 Looking east

01 Dec 2025



'Combe Valley Way' (TQ76311067) on bridge looking EAST

17 April 2015



'Combe Valley Way' (TQ76311067) on bridge looking EAST

07 August 2015 Looking east

01 Dec 2025



Combe Valley Way' (TQ76311067) on bridge looking east 21 Jan 2016



**Combe Valley Way' (TQ76311067) on bridge looking WEST towards
18 Jan 2015**

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Mitigation for the Link Road

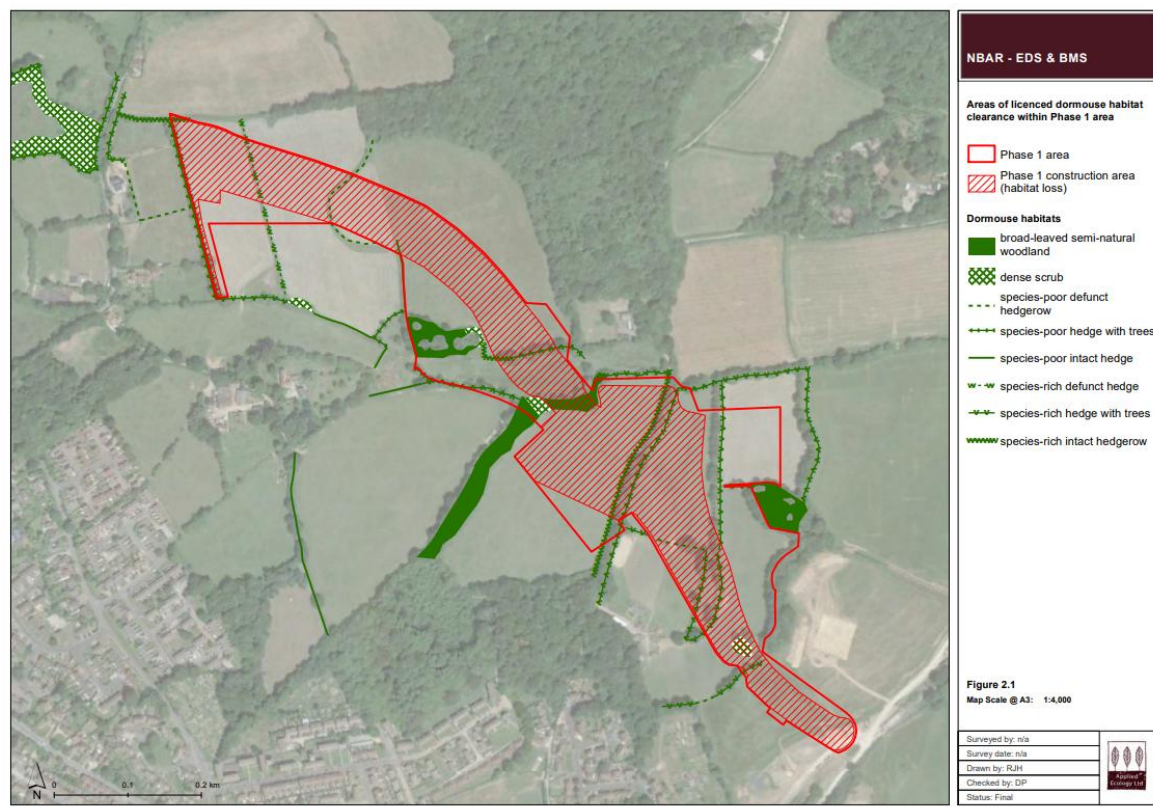
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North Bexhill Access Road (NBAR)

This is the section from the roundabout to Bexhill to the Sidley-Ninfield (A269). It is made of two parts, Phase 1 from the roundabout to Watermill Lane, and Phase 2 from Watermill Lane to the A269.

Habitats Lost by the NBAR

The habitats that Phase 1 & 2 went through were woodlands, hedgerows, scrubland and agricultural fields, as shown below



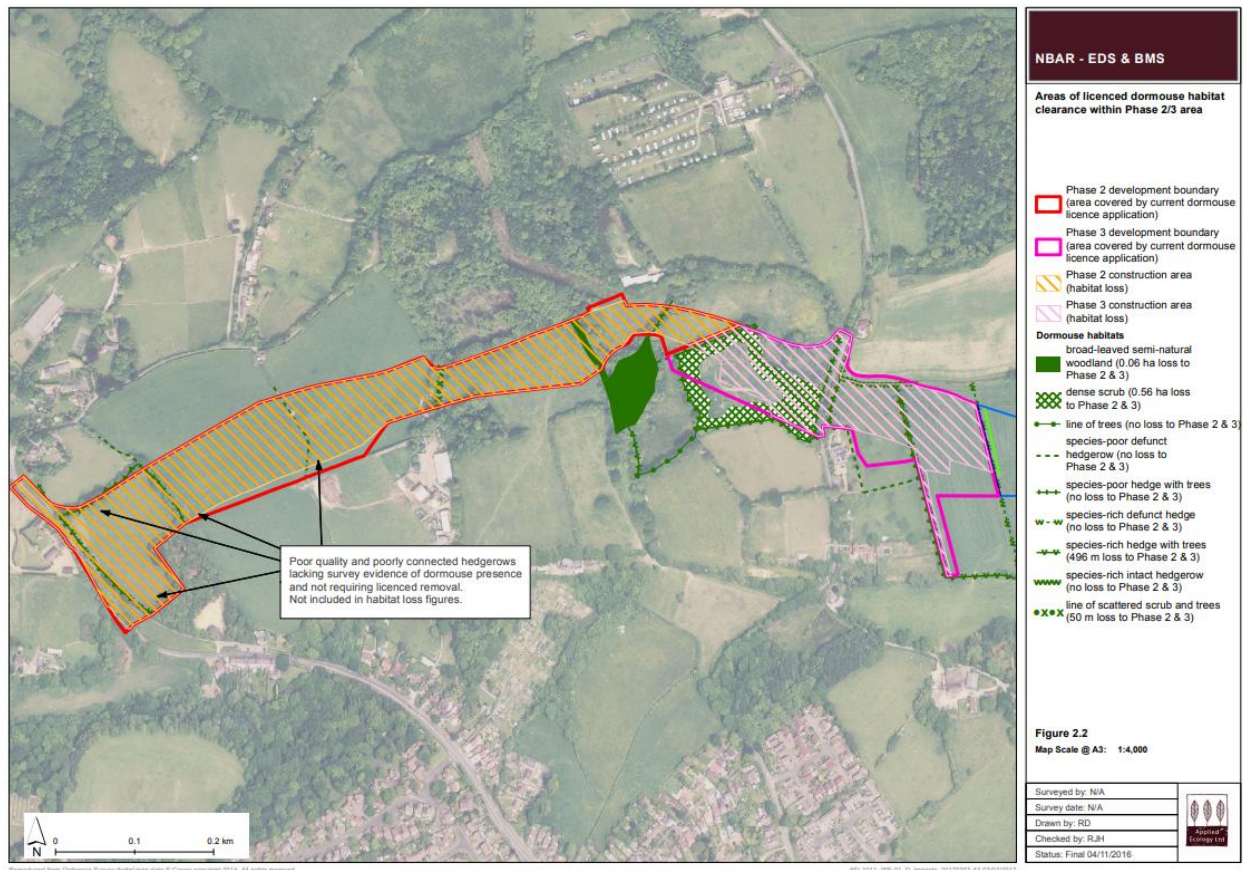
© Applied Ecology 2017 © Ordnance Survey

Ten sections of hedgerows were removed, and one block of broad-leaved semi-natural woodland was removed (see above plan).

In Phase 2/3 areas (above) Five hedgerows (as shown above) of ca.0.5km in length were removed. These were described as 'species-poor defunct hedgerows' (defunct hedgerows are not in the glossary – there is no glossary).

The caption above states that these hedgerow lost were '*not included in the habitat loss figures*'. One small piece of woodland connecting woodland to the north with woodland to the south was lost (0.06ha). The large area with orange hatching was also lost, but its area is not given.

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© Applied Ecology 2017 © Ordnance Survey

Species Impacted by the NBAR

The species that the route went through included Hazel Dormice, GCNS, Bats and reptiles. The first three animals listed are European Protected Species (EPS) and licences were issued on 26 Feb 2016 and 29 Nov 2016 for hazel dormouse work on the Phase 1 and 2 mitigation areas.

Hazel Dormice

Phase 1. Before the route was cleared 60 dormouse nest-boxes were put in 'unaffected areas of woodland' within and adjoining the Phase 1 area so that any emerging dormice in spring 2017 could find them. In the Phase 2/3 areas 30 dormouse nest-boxes were installed in Feb 2017 and having progressed clearance no dormice were found.

The dormouse license allowed for two dormouse crossings, i) a wide and open bridge for the Combe Valley stream to pass through 'to enable re-instatement of a continuous woodland / scrub corridor' for easy movement of dormice and ii) a dormouse bridge at the eastern end of the NBAR.

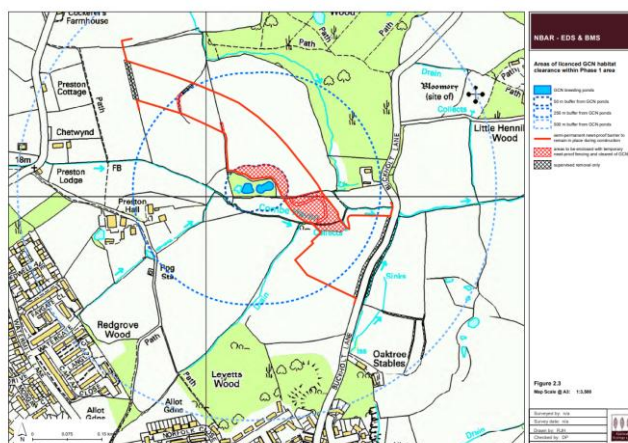
A retro-fitted dormouse cage would be fitted to the wall of a below road culvert. Another 62 dormouse nest boxes will be installed....*'following sufficient establishment'*. Monitoring of the 112 nest boxes will occur annually for five year. Covert cameras would monitor the dormouse crossing. No dormice were found in the Phase 1 clearance.

Great Crested Newts (GCNs)

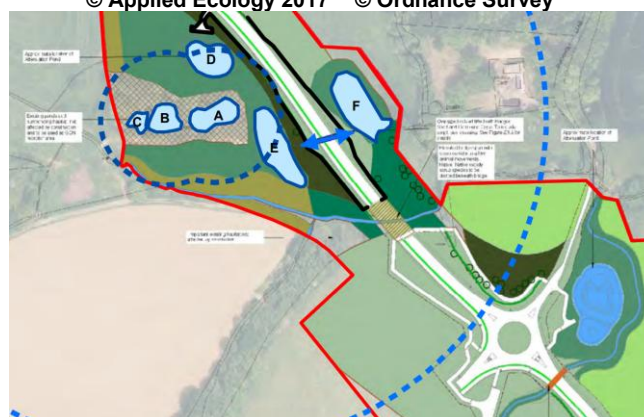
GCNs were found in ponds to the east of Preston Farm off Watermill Lane. Dedicated ponds were created and close to the Link Road carriageway, whose

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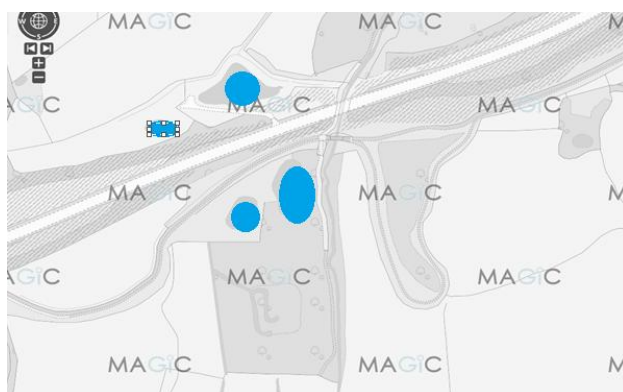
areas were cleared of GCNs before construction. New GCN ponds were created either side of the road and an 'amphibian tunnel' was constructed under the road.



© Applied Ecology 2017¹⁴³ © Ordnance Survey



© Applied Ecology 2017 © Ordnance Survey



Left: Four new waterbodies were created for the loss of one at this location. Annotation by the author.

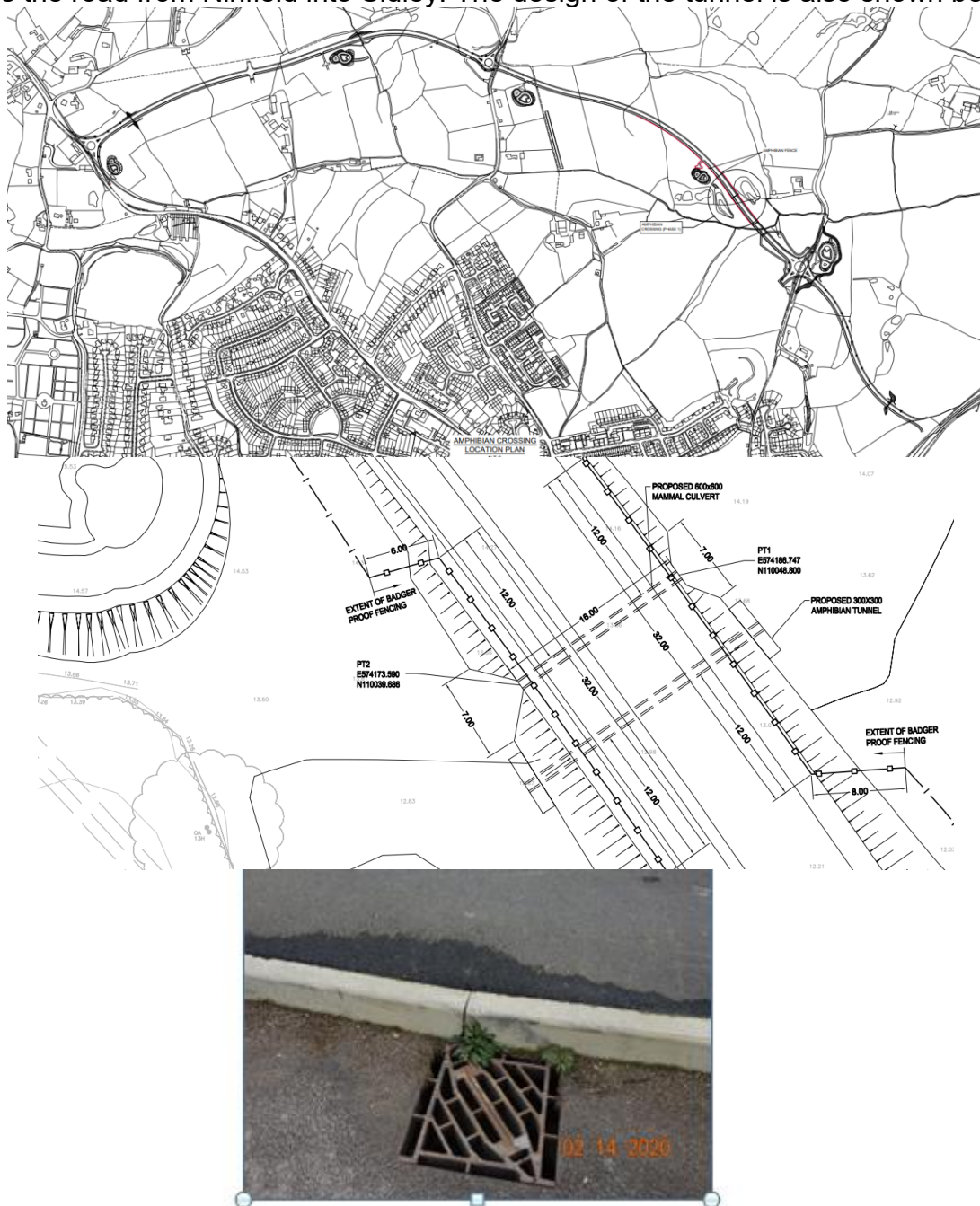
Amphibian tunnels

Four amphibian tunnels were to be integrated into the NBAR route, as shown in the following plans: The plan below shows the western end of the Link Road where it

¹⁴³ Applied Ecology Ltd., 2017. North Bexhill Access Road, Ecological Design Strategy & Biodiversity Monitoring Strategy. March 2017. 48pp. This is on the RDC website, RR/2015/2260/P.

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joins the road from Ninfield into Sidley. The design of the tunnel is also shown below.



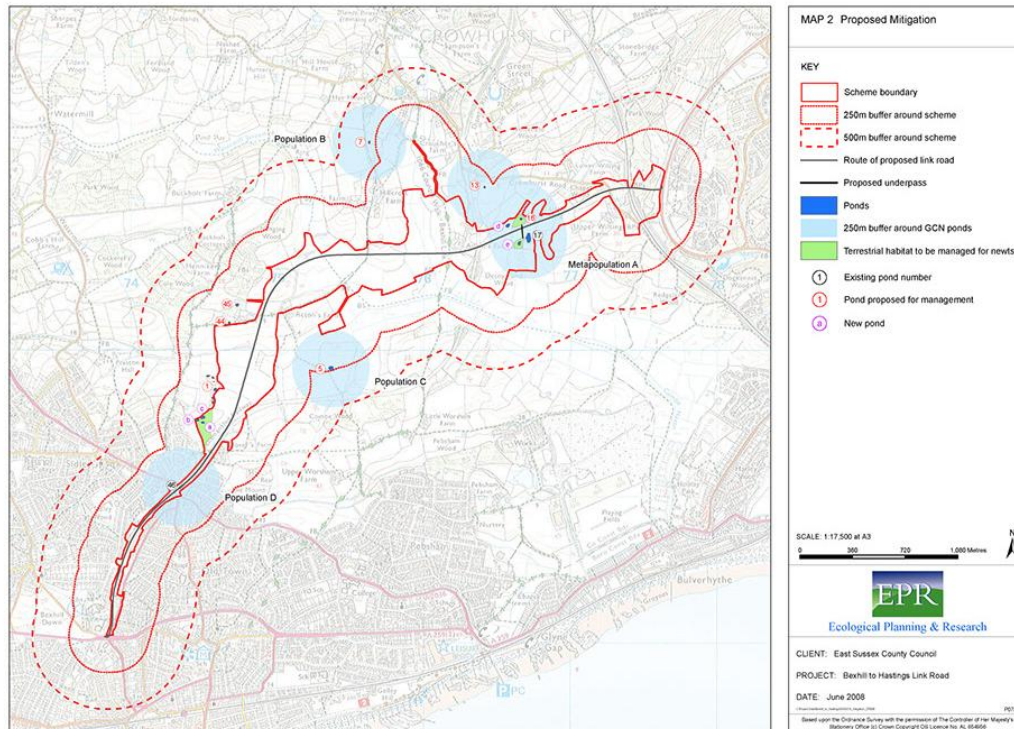
The Link Road verges and ponds play host to a large population of GCNs. What the mitigation omitted was dropped kerbs (to allow GCNs to cross, and not face a high kerb keeping them in the carriageway), Also it is customary to have the drains set back 5cm from the edge so that GCNs can walk along the kerbside without falling into the drains. Both omissions means avoidable mortality of GCNs.

The ecology company EPS were commissioned by ESCC to carry out various surveys along the route so that this could inform the ES (Environment Statement) as well as assist in detailing mitigation packages to obtain protected species licences (EPS, 2019).

With regard to GCNs, the company identified four populations of GCNs (A,B,C,D – one of which was a metapopulation) as shown in their map. The map below shows

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the route of the Link Road with juxtaposition of the GCN ponds and the relative distances from these breeding ponds, so as to inform mitigation.



© EPS

It was considered that the construction of the Link Road would *not be significant*.

It was regarded that there would be *minor disturbance* to various wildlife and that overall there would be an ecological gain. GCNs and badgers would have to be moved and hazel dormouse accommodated.

The principle of twice as many trees to be planted as removed was adopted resulting in 108,000 trees to be planted by April 2015.

2.1.9 It is anticipated that the combination of open water and marginal mosaic of habitats grading into adjacent wet grassland communities around the perimeter would not only be of wildlife benefit. The existing arable fields which are of low biodiversity status would be improved by increasing UKBAP habitat types of high biodiversity value. This would encourage UKBAP species such as the bittern to potentially inhabit the locality.

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COMPENSATION & OFFSETTING

**for lost habitats along
The Link Road**

**Not currently delivered
(even in late 2025)**

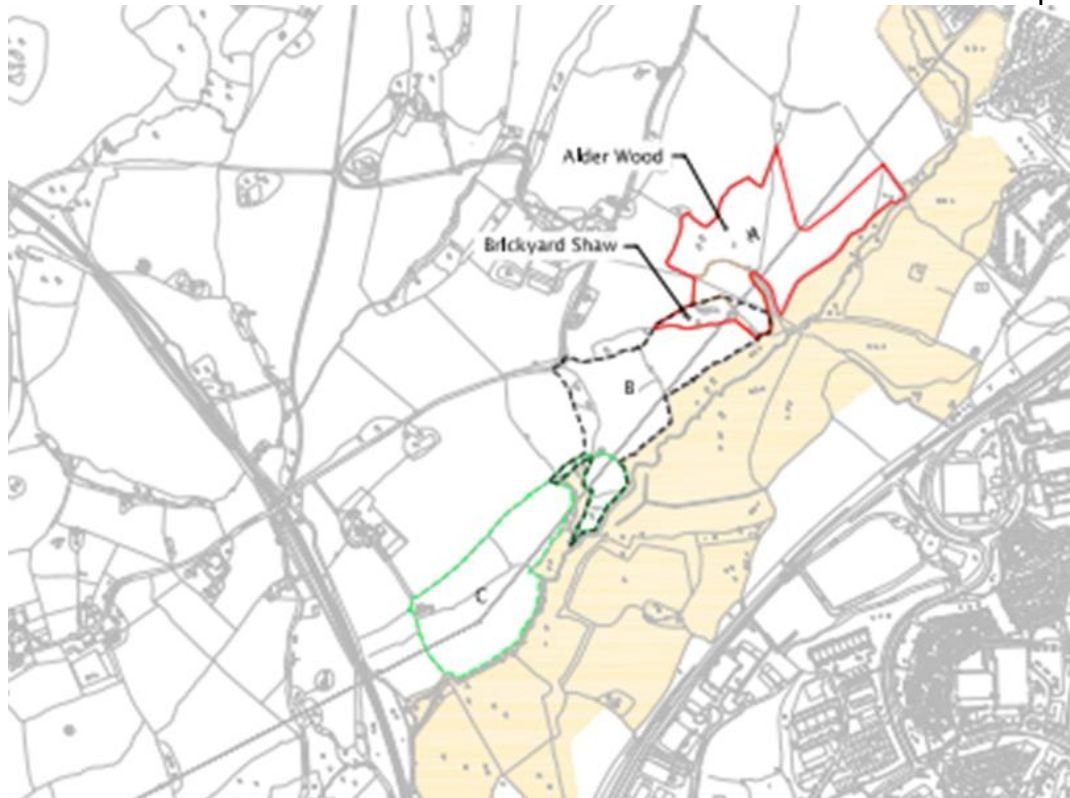
01 Dec 2025

Compensation

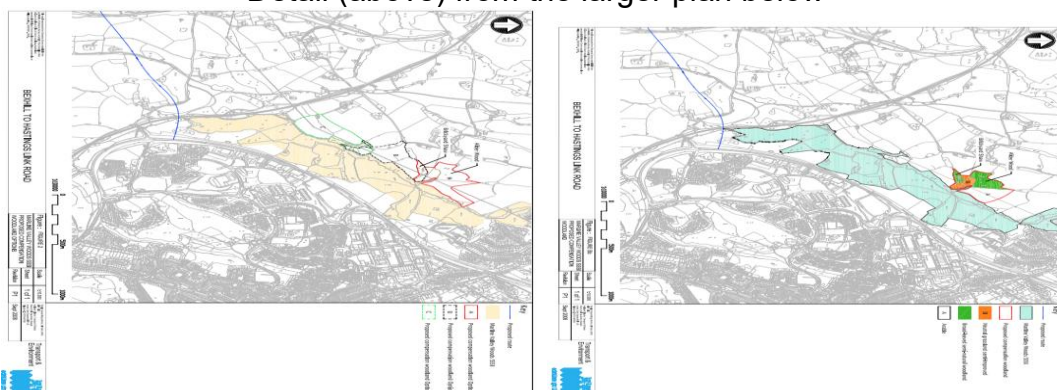
It is customary to compensate for the loss of habitats either on site or off-site. It is often the case that compensation is done locally, such as this one where three areas adjacent to the Marline Valley SSSI were chosen, as shown in the map below.

- Alder Wood
- Brickyard Wood
- Un-named Wood

These are all woodlands that are to the east of Beardsall Lane in Crowhurst parish.



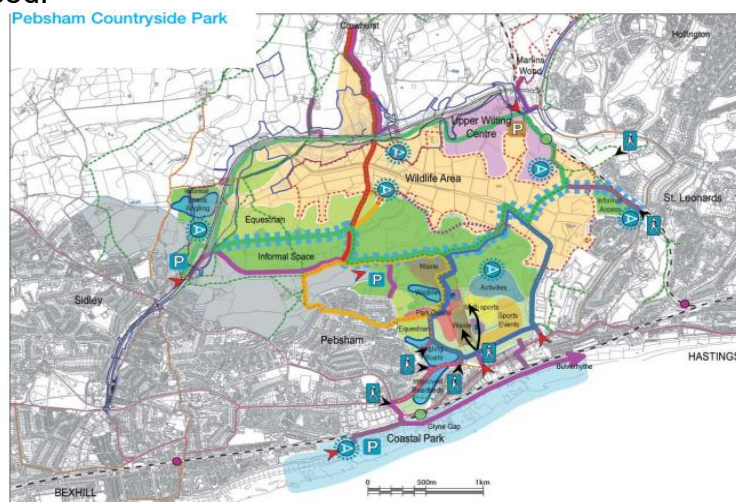
Detail (above) from the larger plan below



The existing ecological details of the woods are shown below: The outline of the areas concerned cover areas that do not currently have woodlands, so it is presumed that tree-planting will take place.

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The creation of the Combe Valley Countryside Park was originally proposed as the Pebsham Countryside Park with lots of wildlife interest as shown by their early plan. The Combe Valley (Combe Haven) always had plenty of wildlife interest before any works commenced.



The scheme would avoid direct impact upon the Combe Haven Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Marine Valley Woods SSSI but there would be some impact upon wildlife habitats.

Consequently, the scheme incorporates areas of habitat creation (on the ratio of 2 for 1) as replacement of those areas to be lost.

Footpaths



Combe Valley Countryside Park, 2019. <http://combevalleycountrysidepark.com/footpaths> (accessed 4 May 2019)

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Off-setting

ESCC announced in the autumn of 2014 that Paul Cobb (an independent farm environment advisor) would liaise with 12 landowners and farmers in the Brede Valley to advise on farm habitat creation and improvement works (ESCC, 2014), to co-ordinate the Brede Valley Farm Habitat Project.



BEXHILL TO HASTINGS LINK ROAD

Additional offsetting environmental and biodiversity measures set out in Annex 11 of the Final Funding Bid (December 2012)

Progress Update 30th September 2014

Landscape Partnership Scheme

Paul Cobb, an independent farm environment advisor has been contracted to co-ordinate the Brede Valley Farm Habitat Project and work with landowners and farmers in the Brede Valley to advise on and implement farm habitat creation and improvement works. Individual projects can be simple one-off actions, more complex improvements or even a series of linked works and although the overall aim is to encourage the conservation and improvement of habitats, works that support local species populations will be looked on very favourably e.g. tree sparrow, turtle dove, barn owl, water vole, brown trout, and bumblebees.

Paul Cobb's role to date has been to contact 12 individual landowners and farmers within the Brede Valley offering to undertake farm visits to discuss potential project ideas, to help with the application for a grant towards the works, and generally guide the farmer through the process. So far four farms have submitted a completed application form and a project budget requesting funds to support habitat improvement works and these works have been approved (with some changes) by a grants award panel and it's expected that the approved works will be completed by next spring.

Four further farms have expressed an interest in the Project and Paul Cobb is due to visit these and discuss their ideas before the end of September.

Design of the "Green Bridge" – Structure S13 Adams Farm Overbridge

The design of the "green" bridge has been completed and documents submitted to and approved by Planners pursuant to Planning Condition 5.

The drawings have been progressed to Construction Issue and construction of the Green Bridge structure commenced in March 2014 with earthworks excavations for the structural foundations for the abutments as planned.

Delivery of the bridge deck beams from the fabrication yard in Chepstow, Gwent was undertaken during July with the load being taken along the A27 and through the A259 Belle Hill junction site access and along the haul road through the site.

The current situation is that each of the abutments are nearing completion sufficient to lift in the braced pair of steel bridge beams onto their bearings during October. Deck construction will follow thereafter.

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BEXHILL TO HASTINGS LINK ROAD

Additional offsetting environmental and biodiversity measures set out in Annex 11 of the Final Funding Bid (December 2012)

Progress Update 31st March 2015

Landscape Partnership Scheme

Paul Cobb, an independent farm environment advisor contracted to co-ordinate the Brede Valley Farm Habitat Project made contact with 12 individual landowners and farmers during the late summer of 2014 to provide 'hands-on' advice on the implementation of habitat creation and improvement works. Five farms submitted an application requesting funds to support habitat improvement works and following approval by the grants award panel, just over £35,000 of grant money was awarded. The conservation works were completed during the winter 2014/15 and include wetland and ditch restorations, pond restoration, and the enhancement of a wildflower grassland.

A further five applications have been received in March (three of which are new applicants and two are previous applicants proposing new works) and these will be assessed by the grants award panel on the 20th March.

Design of the "Green Bridge" – Structure S13 Adams Farm Overbridge

The design of the "green" bridge has been completed and documents submitted to and approved by Planners pursuant to Planning Condition 5.

Construction of the Green Bridge structure commenced in March 2014 and is now almost structurally complete. Remaining works comprises the northern wing wall extensions, bridge deck waterproofing, metal parapets, class 6N structural backfill to abutments and wing walls and other minor finishes. The planting across the bridge deck will be undertaken during the next landscape planting season which starts in Autumn 2015.



<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/2450/150331-dft-progress-reports-annex-11-additional-biodiversity-measures.pdf> (retrieved 16 Feb 2020)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eE_jFqmaGK8

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Mott MacDonald, Highways Agency, 2008. Bexhill Link Road, Extended Phase 1 Ecological Assessment. October 2008. 31pp

5.1 Conclusions

The site comprises a mosaic of habitats to include ancient semi-natural woodlands and species rich hedgerows which are of high ecological value in terms of the connective corridors, areas for shelter and an abundant source of food they provide for wildlife. The poor semi-improved grasslands field margins exhibit increased grassland species richness and areas of scattered scrub which are of moderate value for invertebrates, reptiles and birds.

The site walkover has identified that badgers are likely to utilise the site as evidence was found within the broadleaved woodland copses. Records suggest that dormice are present within the semi natural ancient woodland and the native species rich hedgerows have high potential for dormice to utilise as wildlife corridors. Previous surveys have identified great crested newts in the nearby ponds and the wet woodlands provide ideal terrestrial habitat for these species. The veteran trees, semi-natural ancient woodland copses and hedgerows provide ideal habitat for bat roosts and the linear features would be used for foraging and navigation. Therefore it can be concluded that this site is of high ecological value in terms of locally important habitats and protected species.

The Marline Valley Woods SSSI designated for its nationally uncommon woodland type and its steep sided stream valley (ghyll), contains plants that have an Atlantic distribution including a number of rare and important bryophytes.

The semi-improved grassland throughout the site is of varying quality although a number of meadows represent a slightly species rich neutral sward and therefore a key ecological feature for invertebrates.

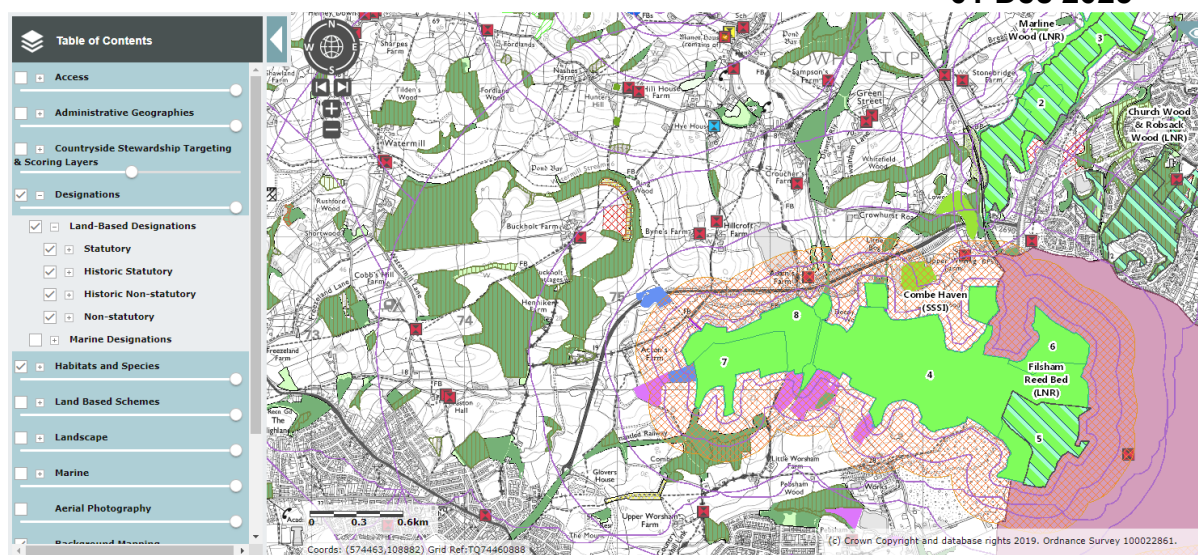
The connecting hedgerows throughout the site are native species-rich with veteran trees and provide connective corridors, shelter and foraging habitat for a variety of species which may include dormice. The majority of hedgerows on site would be considered important under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

[Planning application RR/2474/CC\(EIA\) at A259 Belle Hill, Bexhill on Sea to B2092 Queensway, St Leonards on Sea. \(Known as Link Road\) – East Sussex County Council](#)

All the documents related to the BHLR are available here: [Planning application RR/2474/CC\(EIA\) at A259 Belle Hill, Bexhill on Sea to B2092 Queensway, St Leonards on Sea. \(Known as Link Road\) – East Sussex County Council](#)

It's quite difficult to find what you want I'm afraid, but the Addendum to the Environmental Statement Vol 1 (attached) refers to the 2:1 compensation at paragraph 12.5.25. My predecessor was involved in the agreeing the mitigation ratio.

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Background from Taylor Woodrow 2013.

The Bexhill to Hastings Link Road (BHLR) aims to improve access to and within Hastings and Bexhill and to open up the north Bexhill and Hastings area for development, boosting the local economy and promoting regeneration.

The Scheme is 5.6 km long from its junction with the A259 in Bexhill to its junction with the B2092 Queensway in Hastings. The first 1.4km of the road (the Bexhill connection) will be located along the bed of an abandoned railway line passing through the built up area of Bexhill, constructed to a single two lane carriageway standard. The remainder of the road will be constructed to a wide two lane single carriageway standard.

The BHLR is seen as part of a “green” access corridor between Bexhill and Hastings and will be accompanied by a Greenway to accommodate recreational activities such as cycling, walking and horse riding. This has been designed as a fenced and gated corridor with a hard surface cycle way/footpath and a soft horse track plus safety margins running along the south side of the Main Scheme.

The BHLR is seen as a ‘green’ access corridor between Bexhill and Hastings’ and is accompanied by a ‘Greenway’ (Taylor Woodrow, 2013.)

To FP.....

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Tree and shrub planting



21 January 2015



The Green Bridge carrying a Public Footpath (above and below)



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WILDLIFE CROSSINGS AND CORRIDORS

The following crossings and corridors were proposed by Applied Ecology 2017.

- **Below bridge animal corridor** - a wide span bridge will be provided over the Combe Haven stream (within the Phase 1 development area) in order to allow the planting of native woody scrub beneath the bridge crossing and reinstate habitat continuity along the Combe Haven stream. However, the feasibility of delivering this bridge is currently under discussion, and other potential options are being considered.
- **Dormouse crossings** – three dormouse bridges will be provided, and a below road culvert will be fitted with a wall mounted dormouse cage walkway. Details of the dormouse bridge crossings are provided in **Appendix 4**.
- **Badger crossings** – three culverts will be designed with badger shelves and two below road badger pipes will be provided combined with appropriate badger guide fencing in line with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Mitigating against effects on badgers). Details of the badger crossings are provided in **Appendix 5**.
- **Amphibian crossing** – a below road amphibian crossing will be provided within the Phase 1 area combined with appropriate amphibian guide fencing. Details of the amphibian crossing are provided in **Appendix 6**.
- **Bat crossings** – two locations will be designed as bat hop-overs (one within the Phase 1 area) with minimal lighting and planting of roadside semi-mature oaks.

Crossings	Delivered or not
Wide span bridge over the Combe Haven stream	Yes
Dormouse bridges (x 3)	One seen
Dormouse below road culvert	Yes
Dormouse: wall mounted dormouse cage walkway	Yes, see below
Badger crossing, culverts (x3)	Yes
Amphibian crossing (x1) in Phase 1 area	Yes
Bat crossing fly-overs (x2) in Phase 1 area With minimal lighting, and roadside semi-mature oaks.	Needs to be checked

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Technical Appendix WM03 Bridges over streams



02 May 2019

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Hazel Dormouse bridge specifications:



02 May 2019 The 'dormouse bridge' underneath the carriageway (above)



The 'dormouse bridge' underneath the carriageway (above)

- Substantial new habitat creation, where possible designed to connect retained and newly created habitats will be provided, including new woodland, scrub and hedgerows.
- The current licence includes the provision of a high and wide span bridge over the Combe Haven stream to enable reinstatement of a continuous woodland / scrub corridor allowing movement of dormice and other species beneath the bridge. However, the feasibility of delivering this bridge is currently under discussion, and other potential options are being considered.
- A dormouse bridge will be provided at the eastern end of NBAR. As an additional measure a retro-fitted dormouse cage will be fitted to the wall of a below road culvert.
- A further 62 dormouse nest boxes will be installed in new woodland / scrub post-construction following sufficient establishment.
- Post-development dormouse monitoring (112 nest-boxes) will be undertaken annually while development is on-going and for 5 years after completion of habitat clearance.
- Dormouse crossings will be monitored using motion sensitive wildlife cameras.

2.13 The first stage winter clearance of dormice habitats within the NBAR Phase 1 area was undertaken in February-March 2016. Fifty dormouse boxes were installed in agreed locations in May 2016, and summer clearance of areas not subject to GCN mitigation followed in May 2016. Areas subject to GCN mitigation were cleared in late July-early August 2016 following completion of the GCN translocation. No dormice were found during the licenced works undertaken within the Phase 1 area.

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Badger Underpasses and Amphibian Underpasses

Badger underpasses were to created at the following locations: Ch780, Ch1200, Ch1550, Ch2900, Ch4300, Ch5100 (p66 in TWood..)



02 May 2019

01 Dec 2025

Badger One-Way gates – escape routes

Badger one-way gates were to be integrated into the fencework every 500m along the road, as per:

- One way badger gates will be installed within the badger fencing to allow badgers to exit (but not enter) the road corridor in the unlikely event that they find themselves on the road side of the badger fencing. These gates will be spaced at 500m intervals along the fence line;

Here is one closest to the Queensway end on the north side of the



road.

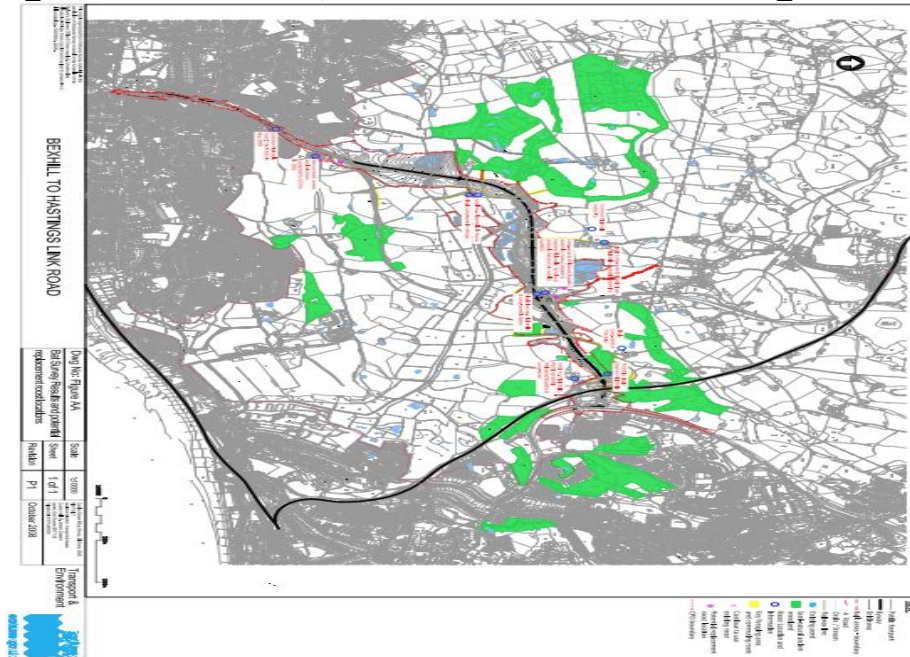
However, badgers still get onto the carriageway. Their chance of finding an escape route via a one-way gate is slim. Furthermore there are fences close to the bridges (as well as on top of the embankments) and they are trapped in a killing zone.



This badger was killed (14 Feb 2020) 45m from a badger tunnel, apparently hemmed in by sheep netting and reptile fencing with no escape

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Bat mitigation – boxes, and two road crossings overhead



The plan above shows the survey data of the activity of bats along the route (shown in red). The mitigation included bat boxes, and two road crossing where the vegetation (green) either side of the road was use as a sort of 'vegetation bridge' to allow bats to commute over the road. This was to be reinforced with plantings of reasonably large trees and shrubs. One of these places was by Kiteye Wood in the west. © East Sussex County Council.



**A bat box on the bridge near to Queensway.
The new built environment is a far cry from a sheltered hollow tree for bats.
Let's hope that bats do not roast in the searing sunshine**

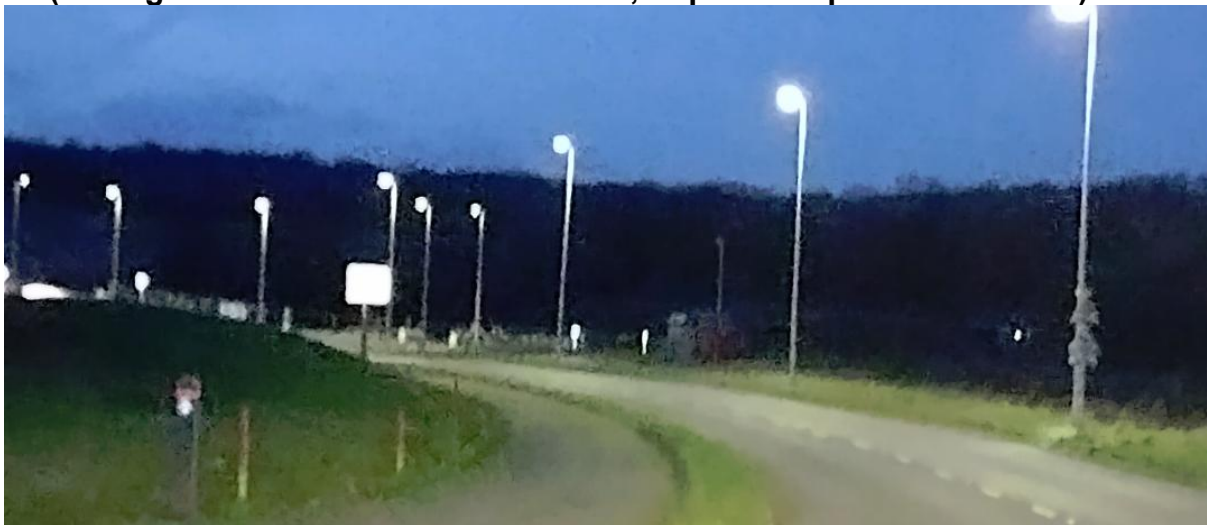
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Light pollution

RDC's Dark Skies Policy is emerging during early 2023, so it was doubtful whether any restrictions on light pollution were in place for the Queensway to Ninfield Road. Photographs taken in January 2023 (below) confirms that lights are present at the six intersections, and that lighting is along much of the carriageway between roundabouts in the central part. No detail of light mitigation can be found.



**Light pollution on the Link Road at the Bexhill junction
(not a great contribution to Dark Skies, or peaceful place for wildlife)**



Carriageway lights between roundabouts

It would be a bold ecologist who would say this level of light pollution would not have a negative and persistent environmental impact on wildlife.

Crowhurst now holds annual Dark Skies events.

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Noise pollution

Potential noise pollution was dealt with in the EIA¹⁴⁴. For pedestrians it was stated that the further one was away from the road the quieter it would be (!) as per:

Public footpaths and bridleways

11.6.70 The area of the route which passes through the river valley is traversed by the 1066 Country Walk and other footpaths and bridleways. Currently users of these routes are remote from the noises and activities associated with road traffic. With the implementation of the Scheme the users of these paths would become subject to traffic noise from the new road, the level of traffic noise being dependant on distance from the new road and the degree of attenuation offered by any incorporated mitigation. Figure 11.31 shows the traffic noise level contours for the Scheme. The effects are discussed in detail in Chapter 15A: Pedestrians, Cyclists and Recreational Users.

I have not aware of any mitigation for noise reduction.

However, the noise from the Link Road can be heard along the Crowhurst Road in Crowhurst parish, at the nearest place in the AONL, being 480m from the Link Road, and the rush of traffic (particularly motorbikes) can be heard over 2km away from the new Haven Brook Road in the AONL at Henley's Down, Catsfield.

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<https://apps.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/planning/applications/register/documents/datawright%20saved%20documents/scannedinfo/rr2474cceia/chapter%2011%20noise%20and%20vibration/section%201/bh1r.ch11noise.vib.vol1.pdf> (accessed 23 Jan 2023)

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Settling ponds double up as Amphibian breeding ponds



Small pond south side of Ninfield roundabout

03 May 2019



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Great Crested Newt (GCN) ponds on site (west to east)



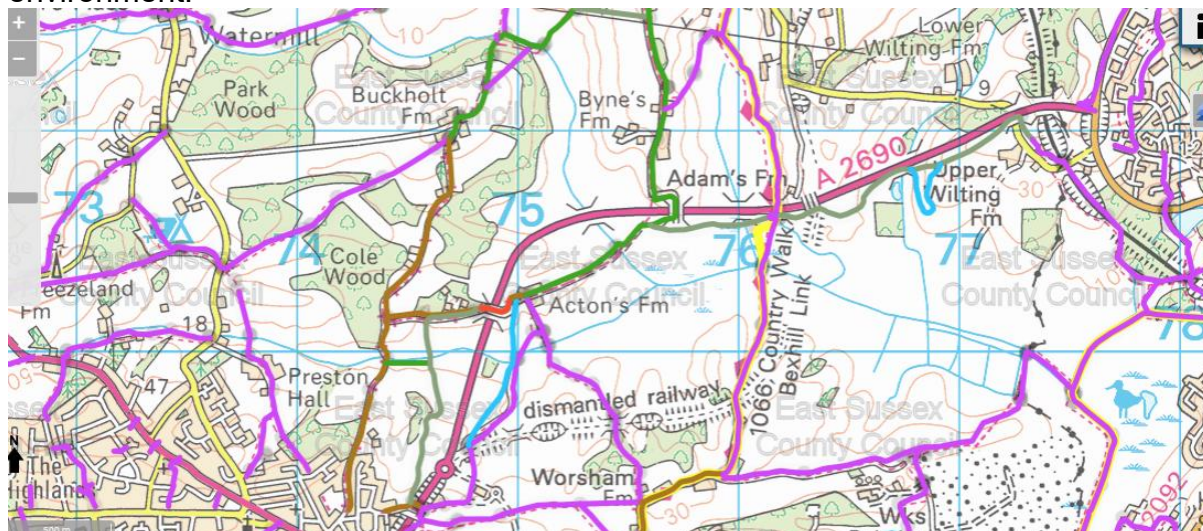
Pond on south side of Link Road



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Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

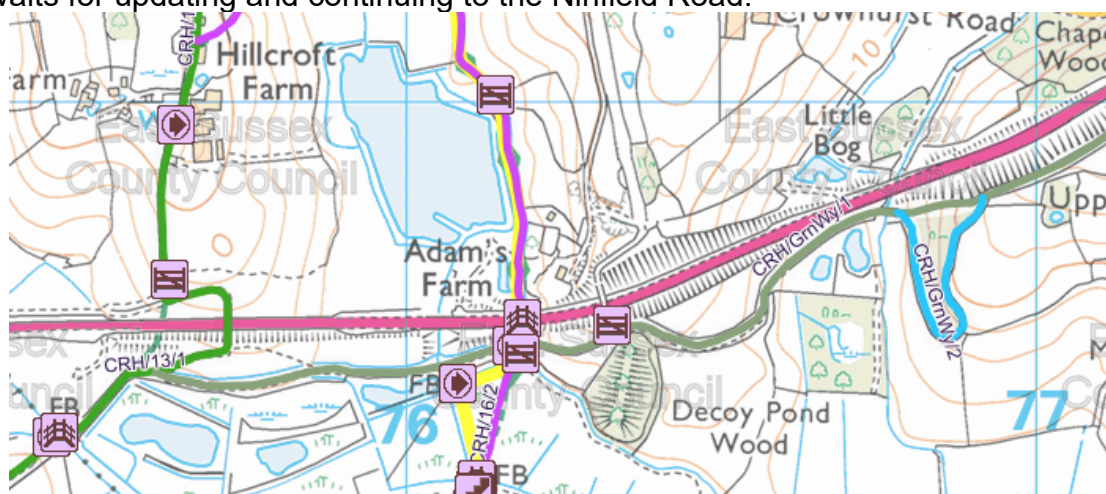
This section deals with the PRoW and how they have been affected by the construction and whether the rights of pedestrians on PRoW have been inconvenienced to such an extent that they cannot continue to enjoy the environment.



The above map needs to be updated with the Bexhill to Ninfield Road extension amongst others; it only shows the Link Road. (accessed 10 Jan 2023)

The '1066 County Walk Bexhill Link' is the PRoW which cuts north-south over the Link Road to the east of Adam's Farm. It is BEX/1/1 south of the large watercourse south of the Link Road, and CRH/16/2 going north up to Crowhurst.

The Greenway #GRH/GmWy1 becomes CRH/GmW/2 as it progresses eastwards around a small hill (shown in blue). To the west it progresses south to Bexhill whilst it waits for updating and continuing to the Ninfield Road.



See notes on Noise Pollution re. walkers in previous section.

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The 'Greenway to Hastings' is a part tarmac, part gravel path and is used by walkers, cyclists, dog-walkers and horses. It is mostly on south side of the Link Road, from the Ninfield Road to Queensway.

There is a middle section which is from the large Roundabout via a long loop away from the road which then crosses over the Link Road and progresses as the **'Greenway to Hastings' from Actons Farm.**



Greenway No. 'Bexhill GrnWy/1' with water splash – a rare section that is not adjacent to the Link Road, and which has nature conservation borders

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Greenway No.'Bexhill GrnWy/1' under construction. 18 January 2015



Bexhill 16/2 02 May 2019



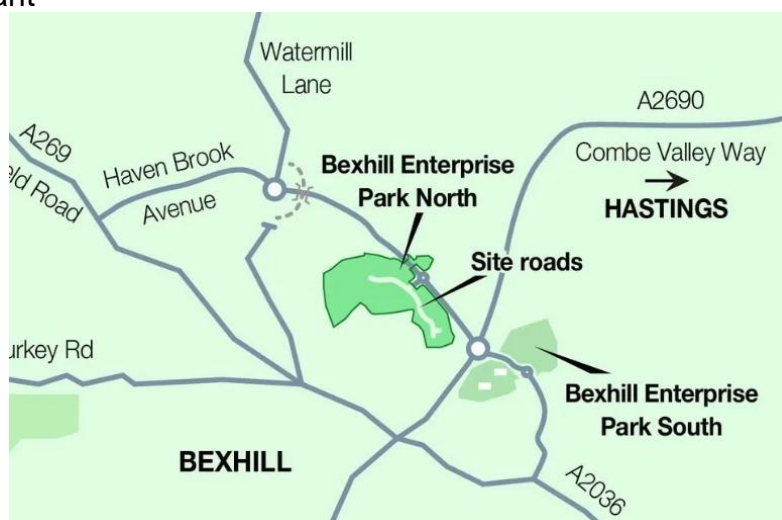
Battle Ramblers were not deterred south of the Link Road during construction at CRH/13/1

Summary: Walkers were generally not adversely affected by the construction. Footpaths near Watermill Lane were closed for a period, but the main north-south footpath over the central part of the Link Road was kept open, and made good viewpoints to view progress. Signage was good.

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The Future

Sea Change¹⁴⁵ are developing Enterprise areas either side of the B2691 with a £1.9million grant¹⁴⁶



Sea Change used to be called Sea Space until 2011. According to their website their 'development programme focuses on the Hasting, Bexhill and Eastbourne areas of East Sussex', and 'our programme builds on the initiative regeneration company Sea Space.' They are 'undertaking commercial development through five main schemes, one of which affects the new road system.'¹⁴⁷ They are an investment company, an un-elected company and a not-for-profit company. They reside in the High Weald House seen in a few of the photographs in this report, where they are currently (Jan. 2023) hoping to recruit 6,000 new jobs.

Sea Change in their Economic Fact Sheet¹⁴⁸ are correct in that the Link Road does not cross the AONL, but it does adversely affect the 'natural beauty' of the AONL with noise pollution. It does however cross a small piece of SSSI (Marline Valley) and Section 41 BAP Priority habitats.

Environmental aspects: The Link Road route and associated business sites have been carefully chosen to respect the environment:

- These are the only potential business development sites not affected by statutory designations
- The Link Road route is similarly unaffected by statutory designations: it does not cross areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB), sites of special scientific interest (SSSI), designated ancient woodland nor designated sites of historic interest

References

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.seachangesussex.co.uk/our-programme/> (accessed 23 Jan 2023).

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.seachangesussex.co.uk/1-9m-government-funding-set-to-extend-bexhill-business-park/> (accessed 9 Jan 2023).

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.seachangesussex.co.uk/our-programme/> (accessed 23 Jan 2023).

¹⁴⁸ Bexhill-Hastings Link Road - Economic Fact Sheet <https://www.seachangesussex.co.uk/our-programme/bexhill-hastings-link-road/> (accessed 23 Jan 2023).

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Acronyms

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BC	Bexhill Connection
BHLR	Bexhill to Hastings Link Road
CVCP	Combe Valley Countryside Park
EPS	European Protected Species
ESCC	East Sussex County Council
HLR	Hastings Link Road
NBAR	North Bexhill Access Road
NE	Natural England
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework, 2021
PCP	Pebsham Countryside Park
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
RDC	Rother District Council
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance



View westwards from the Queensway end of the Link Road

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ENDS