

# Forder Community and Conservation Association Environment and Conservation Statement

## Introduction

The Forder Community and Conservation Association (FCCA) has its base situated in the heart of the village, which lies within a patchwork of protected environments, many of which overlap. Forder and its hinterland have County Authority designated Conservation Area status<sup>1</sup>, and lies within the Natura 2000 network<sup>2</sup>, overlaps in part the Lynher Estuary SSSI<sup>3</sup>, the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)<sup>4</sup>, the Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve<sup>5</sup>, and the Tamar Estuaries Complex Special Protection Area<sup>6</sup>. Much of Forder Village is considered vital components of the green and blue infrastructure that provide a wide range of ecosystem services to the communities within and beyond, bringing health and psychological benefits whilst purifying water, air, and providing breeding and resting sites for wading birds and wildfowl.

The FCCA, which unusually in Cornwall has a sustainable income stream and is currently not reliant on grant funding, was formed to protect the Forder Conservation Area for the benefit of the general public and to help to preserve the environment. Through the positive input from committee and members, the various protective designations and environmental benefits are well-known and understood within the majority of the village community. Newcomers receive a welcome pack which outlines the unique attributes of Forder, its history, wildlife and rich tapestry of beneficial habitats. It is extremely important for communities blessed with unique natural resources to be held together by community organisations such as the FCCA, and thereby to be aware of and appreciate its value and appeal to both inhabitants and visitors, as these habitats cannot always be effectively protected by the external agencies who agree and apply the protective designations. Through an annual timetable of events and communications such as the summer fete, Christmas carol service, monthly newsletter, coffee mornings, cinema club, lectures, litter picks, and wildlife monitoring activities, the beauty, tranquillity, and environmental quality of the area are sustained.

## Environmental and Conservation Designations

Forder is part of Natura 2000, one of the largest protected areas of the world for birds and habitats covered by the EU Habitat and Birds Directives, in particular Avocet (*Recurvirostra avocetta*) and Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*). Forder is also part

1. The Forder and Antony Passage Conservation Area can be viewed on the Cornwall Council interactive [mapping service](#)
2. [Natura 2000](#)
3. [Lynher Estuary SSSI citation](#)
4. [Tamar Valley AONB](#)
5. [Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve](#)
6. [Tamar Estuaries Complex Special Protection Area](#)
7. Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019 page 12

of the Tamar Estuaries Complex Special Protection Area covering the Tamar-Tavy-Lynher drowned river complex which has three protective designations: Lynher Estuary SSSI, Tamar Estuary SSSI and St John's Lake SSSI, which are notable for their interconnecting network of saltmarsh and extensive mudflats, and the gradation of fresh water to salt water, providing a rich diversity of habitats for both flora and wading birds and wildfowl in particular. This area is considered nationally important for overwintering populations of Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*), Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), Redshank (*Tringa tetanus*), Turnstone (*Arcenaris interpres*), Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*), Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) and Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*). There are also breeding colonies of Mallard (*A. platyrhynchos*), Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorn*), Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*), - a pair nest in the centre of Forder every year - and Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*).

The majority of Forder sits around the most valuable inter-tidal zone which is considered the most important component of the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), an area of high visual quality, which according to the current Management Plan is "*more vulnerable than ever before*"<sup>7</sup> The AONB is characterised by steep-sided river valleys, criss-crossed by deep, green, lanes with high overhanging hedges and this character extends into the village centre where the transition is made to river and Creekside and associated buildings and moorings. The Tamar Valley is known for its market gardening heritage and fruit orchards - apple and cherry - that were once a common feature much enjoyed by visitors who took boat trips along the valley to admire the blossom in spring time. There are still maintained apple orchards in the Village, two of which were planted by the FCCA in recent times. They contain local heritage varieties and serve as a reminder of the overall intention to sustain and protect the areas rich horticultural history.

### Historic Built Environment

The built environment of Forder Conservation Area also boasts a number of unique residences and historic buildings. Above the village, the Norman motte and bailey Trematon Castle (circa 1070) looks imposingly down over a series of key buildings of note. At the head of the creek; Forder Mill which stopped working in 1899, Forder Methodist chapel (which closed in 1974 and now is a private residence), and the old boat house. Upstream, Apple Tree Cottage, once one of several popular tea and pleasure gardens in the vicinity, whose visitors came via ferry, paddle steamer, or latterly by train to the town of Saltash and then on foot to Forder. Further downstream remnants of the Antony Passage tidal mill can be found.

1. The Forder and Antony Passage Conservation Area can be viewed on the Cornwall Council interactive [mapping service](#)
2. [Natura 2000](#)
3. [Lynher Estuary SSSI citation](#)
4. [Tamar Valley AONB](#)
5. [Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve](#)
6. [Tamar Estuaries Complex Special Protection Area](#)
7. Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019 page 12

Forder is a substantially underdeveloped creek by comparison to others in Cornwall, though its beauty and tranquillity belie its early beginnings when the rivers formed the main transport routes that supported trade and commerce. The quay at Forder which is now maintained by the FCCA, was used to load barges with stone and lime. There being three quarries (Point Field, Lowhill, and Castle Park) and lime kilns, within the conservation area and to an extent still visible. Large quantities of dock dung (a mixture of road sweepings and night soil transported from Plymouth, were deposited at Forder Quay for use on farms and market gardens in the valley.

The combination of declining river-based commerce, closure of tea and pleasure gardens, local public houses, the post office, and shop, together with changing priorities, a changing climate, and the legacy of historic market gardening activity and enrichment and cultivation of the soil with dock dung, have led to Forder and the Forder conservation area being as it is today – a highly-valued protected area. In the absence of other traditional community services, the FCCA support and maintain the equilibrium between sensitive development and careful conservation by monitoring planning applications, upholding tree preservation orders, and most importantly, providing a focal point for the local community of residents and visitors from nearby Saltash. Their attention to communication and interpretation through the village map, newsletter, events, and provision of a community space, village green, and moorings, maintain the unseen connections between local people, local social history, and the protected natural environment and historic built environment.

Through a network of volunteers and enthusiasts, the existence of uncommon species (15 types of rare flora, 22 bird species, 13 butterfly species) are regularly recorded and their details shared by members of the FCCA. This is an important aspect of ongoing conservation during an era of continuous financial cuts the withdrawal of services and the slimming down of national conservation agency staffs. In this regard, Forder is perhaps more fortunate than most other protected areas in that it has a small but sustainable charitable organisation located centrally, that can through its close links to the community, remind local agencies and visitors, and residents of the importance of their environmental endeavours.

Dr Rebecca Pearce

September 2018

1. The Forder and Antony Passage Conservation Area can be viewed on the Cornwall Council interactive [mapping service](#)
2. [Natura 2000](#)
3. [Lynher Estuary SSSI citation](#)
4. [Tamar Valley AONB](#)
5. [Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve](#)
6. [Tamar Estuaries Complex Special Protection Area](#)
7. Tamar Valley AONB Management Plan 2014 - 2019 page 12