FINDERN PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2026

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF FINDERN AND HIGHFIELDS

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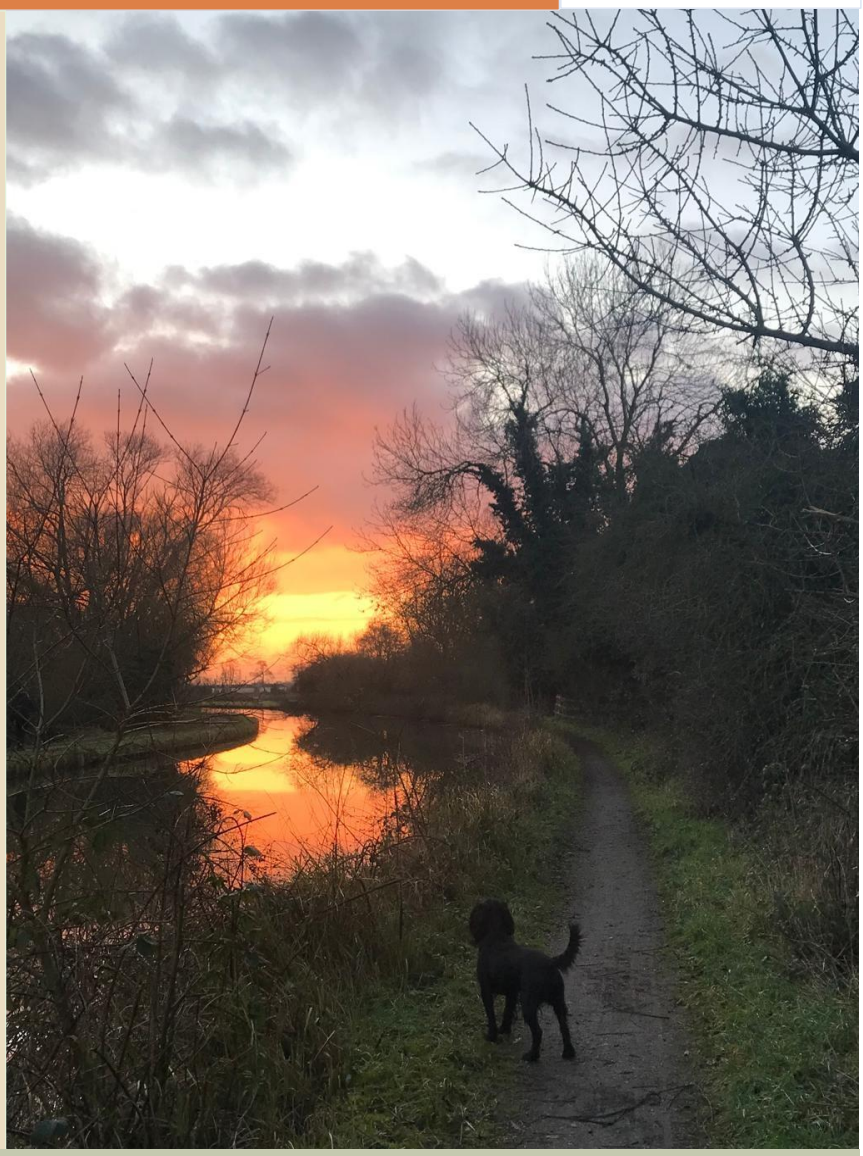
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PARISH ROOMS,
THE GREEN,
FINDERN
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Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Findern Parish Council newsletter.

As always, we hope you enjoy catching up on what has been happening across our parish, what is coming up, and issues that may affect our residents.

Local Government Reorganisation

It is now over a year since the first reports of Local Government Reorganisation began to circulate. Following months of consultations and decisions, we thought we knew what the future held, with the Government's proposal to replace Derbyshire's county, district and borough councils with two new unitary councils.

A timetable had been established, but on 7 September the Government announced that the reorganisation process had paused. While this would not have changed what we do at Parish Council level, it would have meant a period of building relationships and lines of communication with the new unitary authority. You can read more about this on **Page 10**.

For now, it is very much business as usual.

Looking Ahead

The Parish Council will continue to focus on projects and improvements around the parish, supporting residents and bringing the community together through events.

Our next big events are the **Christmas Tree Light Switch-Ons** – see **Page 4** for details. Following a disappointing attendance at last year's **Findern event**, we have made a few changes. The children's grotto and gifts will remain, but this year there will also be Disney characters for photo opportunities, whilst singer, Jayne Darling will entertain us as we enjoy mulled wine and mince pies. At **Highfields**, we will once again meet on Stafford Park, with the fabulous Derby Serenaders providing the entertainment.

This year's **Party in the Park** was another great success, with beautiful weather, fantastic bands and a wonderful atmosphere. Numbers did drop later in the evening as people headed home to watch England play in the World Cup at 10pm – something we certainly could not have anticipated! The night ended well, with England beating Norway 2-1, and reaching the semi-finals!

Planning for next year has already begun, with the date set for **10 July 2027** – put it in your diaries! Thankfully, there is no football clash next year!

The raffle held at the event raised an excellent **£734.50 for local charity Hannah's Hope**. See **Pages 12 and 13** for more about this fantastic charity.

Making Our Parish Greener

The planters in Findern looked beautiful throughout the summer, while the new tiered planters at Highfields have been warmly welcomed. Both areas will soon receive their winter planting.

A **Community Bulb Planting** event is planned for Highfields on **Friday, 30 October** – see **Page 7**. Also, on **Pages 6 and 7**, you can read about the five-year plan to improve biodiversity on the Highfields Public Open Space.



Highfields Planter, June 2026

The Parish Council are also seeking permission to install additional dog waste bins and benches on the Public Open Space. These will be paid for by the Parish Council, so there will be **no additional cost to Highfields residents through their Greenbelt service charge**. We would like residents' views on where these bins and benches would be most useful. **Please email clerk@findernparishcouncil.gov.uk or telephone 07444 085807 to send us your suggestions.** We would also welcome ideas from Findern residents about improvements around the village.

Planning Matters

The Parish Council has recently responded to several large-scale projects which could affect our parish.

The **Castle Way Energy project** proposes solar farms across South Derbyshire. Although none are planned within Findern parish, a possible route for connecting the generated power to Willington may cross our parish. We responded to the consultation to ensure our interests were considered.

Councillors also attended a consultation on the proposed **South Mickleover development** between the A516 and A38. Although outside our parish, it could have significant implications for our roads, particularly the A38 interchange, Rykneld Road junctions and routes into Derby. We subsequently met with the developers' consultants to discuss concerns including traffic, road capacity and access to GP surgeries and schools. We have been assured that Findern Parish Council will be kept informed as the proposals progress.

We were disappointed to learn that the outline application for **350 houses off Moorways Lane** has been approved by Derby City Council. The Parish Council had objected, reflecting residents' concerns about the loss of the green wedge around Millennium Wood and Heatherton Pond and the potential impact on traffic along Moorways Lane, Bakeacre Lane, and its junction with Doles Lane.

Our Neighbourhood Plan

South Derbyshire's emerging Local Plan currently contains **no significant development earmarked for our parish**.

Our own **Neighbourhood Plan**, started in January 2025, is progressing through the adoption process. It identifies Significant Green Areas which we want to protect, helping maintain the green wedge between Derby City and Findern.

The Plan is now with the District Council awaiting independent examination. Subject to the examiner's recommendations, it will eventually go to a referendum, when residents will vote **Yes or No** on whether it should be adopted. We will keep you updated as this important work progresses.

As always, thank you for your continued support and involvement in our parish. Please keep your ideas and suggestions coming – **your Parish Council is here to listen and help make Findern and Highfields even better places to live.**

Councillor Tammy Brown
Chairman of Findern Parish Council


FINDERN PARISH COUNCIL
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON
Join us for mulled wine and mince pies.
There will be musical entertainment, and we
will be joined by Elsa & friends at both events.
And of course, each child may visit
Santa's Grotto and receive a gift from Santa.
HIGHFIELDS
Friday 20 November at 5.30pm to 7.30pm
Gather at Stafford Drive/Tutbury Avenue Park
FINDERN
Friday 27 November at 5.15pm to 7.30pm
Gather at the Village Green, Findern
We hope you will join us - ALL WELCOME!

What's On at Findern Village Hall

The Village Hall is at the heart of Findern; a committee of Trustees manages it.

Below is the Autumn programme going forward into the new year. There are still places available on most groups and a warm welcome is given to new members. Contact the group tutor of the relevant activity for cost and details.

For hall hire enquiries contact findernvillagehall@outlook.com Both the main hall and the smaller meeting room are available for hire for one off events or new regular bookings.

Regular events run throughout the year; these can be viewed on the Findern Village Hall Facebook page, e.g., the quarterly Glass Workshop is very popular, with brilliant creations made; and a Gold Event is also held twice yearly.

Findern Village Hall

Autumn Programme

as at 1st September 2026

Monday			
13.45 – 16.00	Indoor Bowls	01283 702884	
16.30 – 17.30	Rainbows	07368 340943	Term time
17.30 – 19.00	Brownies	07833 493790	Term time
19.00 – 21.00	Guides	01283 702531	Term time
Tuesday			
10.30 – 11.30	Fitsteps	07969 650732	
12.00 – 14.00	Warm Welcome	07932 331110	
18.00 – 19.00	Pilates	07841 865693	
19.00 – 22.00	W.I.	01332 511948	3rd Week of Month
Wednesday			
11.30 – 13.00	Net and Natter	07783 548576	Term Time
14.00 – 16.00	Pain Management		
17.15 – 20.30	Karate	07794 860585	
Thursday			
10.00 – 11.00	Beginners Line Dancing	07851 351011	Returns 17/09/2026
11.30 – 12.30	Line Dancing	07851 351011	
13.45 – 16.00	Indoor Bowls	01283 702884	
18.00	Broadway Boogies	07969 650732	
19.00 – 19.45	Fitsteps	07969 650732	
20.00 – 21.00	Common Collective Choir	07944 423819	Term Time
Friday			
09.00 – 13.00	DCCT		
09.30 – 10.45	Tai Chi	07960 125386	
10.45 – 12.00	Tai Chi		
Sunday			
19.00 – 22.00	Sunday Quiz	07761 001662	

A Greener, Wilder Highfields 🌳

If you've walked around Highfields Park recently, you'll know that it's already a much-loved space for walking, exercising, meeting neighbours and enjoying a bit of fresh air.

But what if we could make it even better — for people **and** for wildlife?

That's exactly what Findern Parish Council is working towards.

Over the next five years, we're developing an environmental enhancement programme with Greenbelt Group, who manage the open space at Highfields. Together, we've been looking at what we can do to make the park greener, more colourful and much richer in wildlife. **There will be no additional cost to residents as the project will be funded by the Parish Council; from the precept and with grants that we are able to apply for.**

And there are some really exciting ideas!



Figure 1 – On site pooling of water.

🐸 A new home for amphibians

In the south-west corner of the site, there Is already an area where water naturally collects. We're looking at turning this into a dedicated **wildlife pond**, with suitable planting around the edges.

It could become a great habitat for frogs, newts, insects and other pond life — and another little corner of Highfields for residents to discover.

🦉 Look up — you might spot a barn owl!

We've heard reports of **barn owls** flying around Highfields, so we're exploring the possibility of putting up barn owl boxes in some of the mature trees.

We're also looking at smaller bird boxes for species such as swifts and sparrows. And, if it's practical and suitable, we'd love to install a camera on one of the owl boxes so residents and local schools can follow the nesting activity.

🐝 A bug hotel and a Butterfly Walk

We're hoping to create a large **community bug hotel**, potentially with the help of the local school. Children could get involved in designing and building it, while learning about the important role insects play in our environment.

Another particularly colourful idea is a **Butterfly Walk**, with plants chosen to provide food for butterflies, bees and other pollinators. Think lavender, knapweed, bellflowers, ivy and flowering trees — **adding colour to the park while giving nature a helping hand.**

🌳 More trees, more colour

We're also looking at opportunities for **additional tree planting** across the open space. We'd like this to be something the community can get involved with, so there may be opportunities for residents and local schools to take part in planting days.

And you may already have noticed some of our first steps. Flower planters have been introduced around Highfields, with plants selected to provide food for bees and other pollinators.

We're also looking forward to getting **5,000 daffodil and narcissus bulbs** into the ground, thanks to a generous donation from Greenbelt. Once established, they should bring a wonderful splash of spring colour to the park each year.

🌿 This is your park too

For us, this project is about more than trees, ponds and bird boxes. It's about creating somewhere that feels like a real part of the community.

Highfields is home to more than 1,000 households, and we want residents to feel connected not only to their immediate surroundings, but to the wider Findern community too.

There will be opportunities to get involved through planting days, wildlife projects, children's activities, community events and wildlife monitoring.

We're only at the beginning of the journey, but by working together with Greenbelt, local schools, potential partners and — most importantly — **Highfields residents**, we can create a park that is better for people, better for wildlife and something we can all enjoy for years to come.



So next time you're out for a walk, take a closer look. You might be surprised at what's already living on your doorstep — and there's plenty more to come!



Community Bulb Plant

FRIDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2026 at 11.00AM

A family friendly activity for Half Term Week

Gather on greenspace at the entrance to Highfields from Rykneld Road

Bring gardening gloves, bucket, trowel and a plastic bag to kneel on!

UPDATE from Findern Footpaths Group...

As a voluntary group dedicated to maintaining our public footpaths and conservation areas, we have had an incredibly busy and rewarding six months. We are immensely proud of the spaces we develop, and the conservation work we do across the parish.

A major highlight over the last six months has been the continued success of our EcoGarden in Stanhope Hole, which officially opened in July 2024. This wonderful space allows us to cost-effectively grow from seed fruits, vegetables and herbs, which this year we made available on our stall at the Village Summer Fete. Also, we grow pollinator-friendly plants, which we then transplant out across the different areas to help provide 'food' for the bees and butterflies. It also serves as a safe space to promote and encourage environmental education and it is always a pleasure to welcome the children from The Old Forge Day Nursery, who helped us plant a variety of vegetables and fruits. We were also delighted to have the Willington Cubs join us again to lay chippings, helping us to keep the garden's paths beautifully maintained.

Looking ahead, we are in the process of creating a 'sensory garden' in this area. Designed to engage all five senses, this space will include heavily textured plants like lamb's ear for touch, rustling grasses for sound, vibrant blooms for sight, and deeply aromatic herbs like lavender, rosemary, and mint for taste and smell. Sensory gardens can offer wonderful therapeutic benefits, providing a calming, inclusive, and stimulating environments for all ages to connect with nature.



Photo by Findern Footpaths Group

However, this year's exceptionally hot and dry summer presented us with a massive challenge. Keeping our newly planted whips, shrubs, herbs and fruit and vegetable planters hydrated required an immense amount of effort. Developing and executing a strict watering plan to conserve resources while saving our plants became a daily test of endurance.

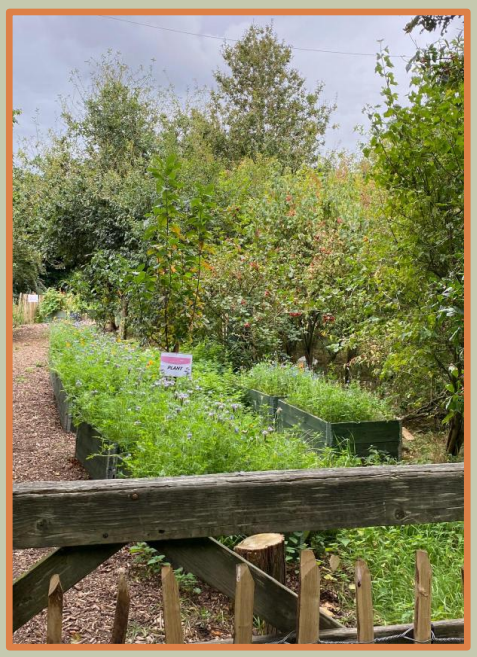
Fortunately, relief came in the form of incredible community support. Thanks to a generous donation by Severn Trent and with the help of the Parish Council we were able to purchase a water bowser system and as a result our watering efficiency has been completely transformed. This bowser system allowed us to transport and distribute water far more efficiently across all our conservation sites, ensuring our hard work didn't dry up during the height of the heatwaves. Regular weeding, nettle clearance and, most importantly, timely watering has kept everything growing well.

We are only a small group, and we are so grateful for our Group Members, volunteers and everyone who continues to support our green spaces, it really is a wonderful community effort; however, we are always ready to welcome new volunteers. If you would like to get involved or simply volunteer some of your time to help us maintain and enjoy the wonderful outdoor and wildlife areas of the parish, please feel free to get in touch.

For further information, please drop us a message from our Facebook page www.facebook.com/FindernFootpathsAndConservation or email us at findernfootpaths@outlook.com

Mike Barber

Secretary Findern Footpaths Group



Eco-Garden



Our New Water Bowser

Photos by Findern Footpaths Group

Update on Derbyshire County Council's Mobile Library Service

Our local Mobile Library service has been re-introduced after several months of suspension of service.

New vans have replaced 2 old HGVs that were in poor condition and often off the road for repairs, which regularly impacted the service. The new vans will be more reliable, economical and efficient to run.

The new vans will offer the opportunity for browsing and carry a good range of stock. Users can also reserve books online. As in all Derbyshire libraries, readers can request books from across the county.



Findern on Friday

23 October 2026 : 20 November 2026 : 18 December 2026

Lower Green Car Park - Arrives at 10:30am and departs at 12:30pm

Hillside (nr. Playing Fields) - Arrives at 1.15pm and departs at 3.30pm

Willington on Thursday

8 October 2026 : 5 November 2026 : 3 December 2026

Oaks Road / Beech Avenue - Arrives at 2:15pm and departs at 2:45pm

Trent Avenue - Arrives at 2.50pm and departs at 3:20pm

For further information call Ask Library 01629 533444 www.derbyshire.gov.uk/libraries

Local Government Reorganisation in Derbyshire

Residents may have heard about plans to reorganise local government in Derbyshire. Theproposals would replace the existing county, district and borough councils with larger **unitary councils**, each responsible for most local council services.

What was proposed?

In July 2026, the Government announced that Derbyshire would be reorganised into **two new unitary councils** – one covering the north of Derbyshire and one covering the south, including Derby city. The intention was for the new councils to replace the existing 10 councils from **1 April 2028**.

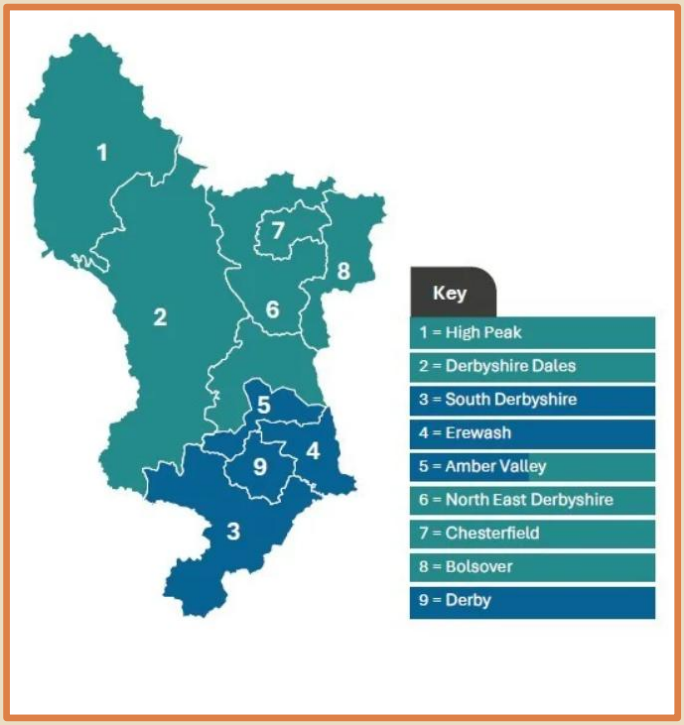
Under the July decision, elections for the new councils were expected to take place in May 2027, with the new authorities then being established in advance of taking over services in 2028.

What has changed?

On **7 September 2026**, the Government announced that it was carrying out a **review of the Local Government Reorganisation programme**. Derbyshire is one of 14 areas affected.

As a result, work on implementing the July decision has been **paused** while the Government reviews the proposals. The Government has said the review will consider whether the reorganisation process is robust, legally sound and consistent with its wider plans for local government and devolution.

This means that, **for the time being, the two new Derbyshire councils are not going ahead as originally planned**. However, the Government has not said that reorganisation is permanently cancelled. The outcome of the review is still awaited. Derbyshire councils have confirmed that they do not yet know how long the review will take or what the eventual arrangements will be.



What does this mean for residents?

There are **no immediate changes to council services**. Existing councils will continue to provide services such as bin collections, planning, housing, roads, social care and other local services.

Importantly, the Government has also confirmed that **local elections in May 2027 will take place using the existing council boundaries** while the review is underway.

The situation is therefore currently **on hold**, rather than settled. The Parish Council will continue to monitor announcements and keep residents informed as the Government's review develops.

Know the Location of your nearest Defibrillator!

Would you know where to find your nearest defibrillator if someone in Findern or Highfieldssuffered a cardiac arrest? Knowing the location of these lifesaving devices could make a vital difference in an emergency.

Findern is fortunate to have **five publicly accessible defibrillators**, all available **24 hours a day**:

A - Co-operative shop, Tutbury Avenue, Highfields, DE23 3AT – on wall outside the shop.

B - Dobbies Garden Centre, Burton Road, Findern, DE65 6BE – on wall at the entrance.

C - Findern Village Hall, Castle Hill, Findern, DE65 6AL – on the external wall.

D - Findern Methodist Church, Lower Green, Findern, DE65 6AD – on the external wall.

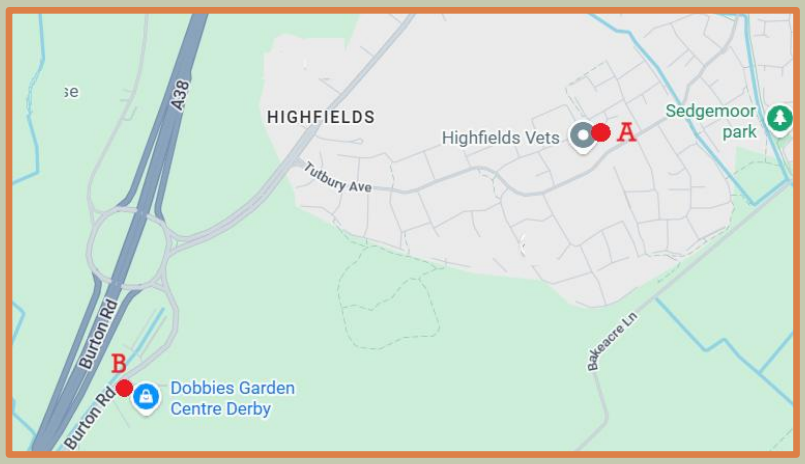
E - Findern Primary School, Heath Lane, Findern, DE65 6AR – on the external wall.

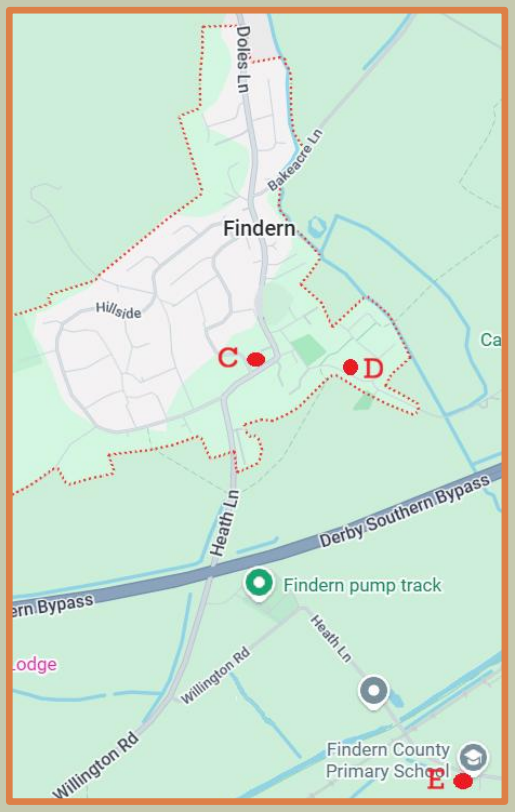
If someone collapses and is not breathing normally, **call 999 immediately**. Tell the emergency call handler what has happened and they will provide instructions, including the access code for the nearest defibrillator. You do not need to know the code in advance.

The defibrillators are designed to be used by members of the public. Once switched on, the device provides clear instructions and will guide you through what to do.

You cannot accidentally give a shock when one is not required.

Maps from Google Maps





Why not take a moment to identify which of these five locations is closest to your home, workplace or usual route through the parish? It is information that you may never need, but in a cardiac emergency, knowing where to find a defibrillator—and acting quickly—could help save someone's life.

Please remember in an emergency, call 999 first and follow the call handler's instructions.

Hannah's Hope

Each civic year, the Parish Councl decides upon a charity to support, with any donations or funds raised at the summer and Christmas events going towards that charity.

This year, the Council chose Hannah's Hope – a local charity based at Willington. The Hannah's Hope Teenage Cancer Respite Retreat at Mercia Marina offers dedicated support to teenagers and young adults facing the unimaginable challenge of a cancer diagnosis.

Read more about what the charity does on their website https://www.hannahs-hope.co.uk/

The Parish Council would like to thank all of the local businesses who kindly donated prizes to the raffle that was held at this year's Party in the Park in July. **A total of £734.50** was raised for Hannah's Hope through the sale of tickets, with prizes ranging from evening meals and afternoon teas; hampers; beauty treatments; plants; and even a child's play veterinary set from Highfields Vets on Tutbury Avenue.

THANK YOU TO OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES FOR DONATING PRIZES TO THE RAFFLE...

...AND THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO BOUGHT TICKETS!

central coop

Twenty Two Hair & Beauty



dobbies garden centres



Picasso HAIR STUDIO

Findern Village Stores Ltd

Find

TOYOTA

TOAST
COFFEE HOUSE ON THE GREEN
WILLINGTON

CANAL BOAT
BOAT ST.
CAFE & TRIPS

PRETTY LITTLE Beauty

NAILS BY TAMMY



HIGHFIELDS VETS



Narcissus Poeticus Plenus Odoratus

Findern Parish Council Logo

Findern Primary School Logo

HISTORY CORNER...

The Fynderne Flower - A Living Link with Findern's Past

Few villages can claim a flower as closely connected with their history as Findern can. The flower has long been regarded as one of the most distinctive symbols of our village and is woven into the stories of Findern's medieval past.

The story of its origin has been passed down through the generations. The flower is Narcissus Poeticus Plenus Odoratus; its identity has been verified by the Royal Horticultural Society as a bulb of the Mediterranean area.

The legend says that Sir Geoffery de Fynderne went off to fight in the Crusades in the Holy Land in the 12th century. Sir Geoffery's manor house was on the site of the village hall, and the surrounding land included Castle Hill and Mill Close.

On the return journey from the Holy Land, Sir Geoffery collected some bulbs and brought them back to Findern. They grew well in his garden, and some still flowered after the manor was demolished in 1712. None of these remain now, but some people in the village have sourced a nursery selling the bulbs and planted them in their gardens The bulbs grow and flower for some years successfully, but other years they produce buds which just wither and die.

The flower emblem lives on; you can see it on the village sign on the village green, on Findern Primary School jumpers and the Parish Council logo.

For the people of Findern, the flower is therefore much more than a wild daffodil. It represents tradition, continuity and the stories that connect today's village with the people who lived here centuries ago.

With thanks to John Hawkins book "A History of Findern" and Findern Historical Society for help with this article.

Findern Historical Society - Programme 2026/2027

ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE METHODIST CHAPEL, LOWER GREEN, FINDERN

Meetings start at 7.30pm and finish around 9pm.

Annual membership £10, each meeting £2 members, £4 visitors

Contact 01332 510382 for more information.

Dates for the diary...

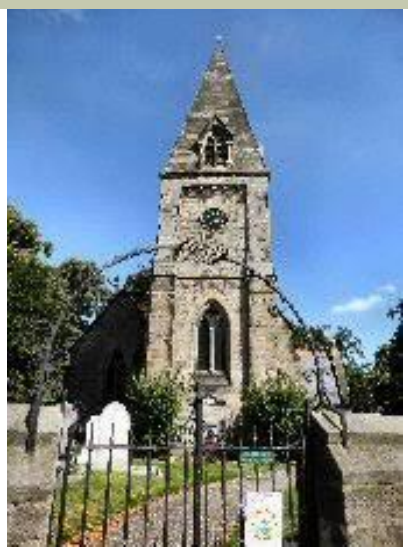
2026

- **OCTOBER 19TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker -- Simon Nicholson "Scary stories, the history and archaeology"
- **NOVEMBER 16TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker -- Gay Evans "History of the postcard"
- **DECEMBER 14TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker -- Stephen Flinders "Curiosity Box 5"

2027

- **JANUARY 18TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker – Shirley Horton "Open Your Eyes, History is all Around You"
- **FEBRUARY 15TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker – Tim Coltman "World War One"
- **MARCH 15TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker –Robert Mee "A Derbyshire Railway Outing"
- **APRIL 19TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker-- Dot Morson "South Derbyshire Treasures"
- **MAY 17TH 7.30pm**
  Speaker – Danny Wells "Lord Curzon of Kedleston"





FINDERN PARISH COUNCIL has 10 Members, who are all volunteers. The Council meets usually once a month to discuss issues in the parish and seek resolutions; also, to progress planned projects across the parish. Members are elected every 4 years in local elections; although, from time-to-time, vacancies do occur and the Council will seek to recruit new Members on to the Council.

Members of the Parish Council: -

- Councillor Tammy Brown (Chairman) F
- Councillor Mike Ratcliffe (Vice-Chairman) F
- Councillor Yasmin Carty H
- Councillor Graham Cooke H
- Councillor Baldip Dosanjh F
- Councillor James Hawke H
- Councillor Simon Holmes F
- Councillor Christine Smith H
- Councillor Antonio Tantalo F
- Councillor Martin Woodhouse F

F = Village resident H = Highfields resident

Clerk to the Parish Council: Kate Sharpe

For all matters related to the Parish Council, contact the Clerk in the first instance on: -
Email: clerk@findernparishcouncil.gov.uk Mob: 07444 085807

The Parish Council meets the 2nd Thursday of each month, with no meeting in August.
The venue for all the meetings is Findern Methodist Hall, Lower Green, Findern, DE65 6AD

Meeting dates for the next 6 months are as follows: -

8 October 2026	14 January 2027
12 November 2026	11 February 2027
10 December 2026	11 March 2027

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS
for Willington & Findern Ward

COUNCILLOR MARTYN FORD
Party: Conservative
Ward: Willington & Findern
Email: martyn.ford@southderbyshire.gov.uk
Telephone No: 01283 701627
Mobile Telephone No: 07751548603

COUNCILLOR IAN HUDSON
Party: Labour
Ward: Willington & Findern
Email: ian.hudson@southderbyshire.gov.uk
Mobile Telephone No: 07764430641

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR
For Etwall and Repton Division

COUNCILLOR MARTYN FORD

Party: Conservative
Division: Etwall and Repton
Email: martyn.ford@derbyshire.gov.uk
Telephone No: 01283 701627
Mobile Telephone No: 07748920132