

Bevendean Down Local Nature Reserve

The Bevendean Down Local Nature Reserve is a beautiful and fascinating site located in the north-east of Brighton, on the city's periphery and within the South Downs National Park. It contains chalk grasslands, which are important remaining lowland calcareous grasslands of the city.

Historically, it has been visited by butterfly lovers, being a popular site and well-known during Victorian times due to its sheer abundance, rarities and unusual aberrations of butterflies. Nowadays, its biodiversity continues to be important. Thirty-five butterfly species have been recorded in the reserve. Four of the six butterfly species that are almost restricted to the Downs are present: the Silver-spotted Skipper (*Hesperia comma*), the Small Blue (*Cupido minimus*), the Adonis Blue (*Polyommatus bellargus*) and the Chalk Hill Blue (*Polyommatus coridon*), which form caeca was spotted this year. This richness and biodiversity have been monitored through three transects since 1997.

The chalk grasslands on the reserve have been restored with the help of the Friends of Bevendean Down (FoBD) group. This volunteer organisation has been working in the reserve since 1990, playing an important role in its maintenance. However, their activities ceased as a result of the pandemic.

Different factors, including climate change, have encouraged scrub, brambles and cotoneaster to colonise parts of the reserve that were previously chalk grassland, thereby deteriorating these rich habitats and harming biodiversity. FoBD is now reactivating with new members and volunteers from Butterfly Conservation to continue working on the restoration of this beautiful, biodiverse site.

If you would like some fresh air, spare some of your time for nature conservation, meet people, or just do something different this winter, then here are the work party dates:

Sunday, 15/11/2026

Friday, 11/12/2026

Friday, 08/01/2027

Sunday, 31/01/2027

Sunday, 28/02/2027

Sunday, 14/03/2027

Sunday, 28/03/2027

The Bevendean Down Local Nature Reserve is easily accessible by public transport (Bus 48) or car, with free parking available. The meeting point is the “Bevendean School” bus stop at the entrance to the reserve. Activities start at 10 am. Participants can leave when they wish.

For more information,
contact Maya Rodriguez
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