

# **West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Management Plan First Draft (March 2007)**

*The long term Vision of the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Initiative is to preserve greenspace within the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways area, and to make it accessible for public recreation.*

## **Introduction – The aims and structure of this management plan.**

To support the Vision of the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Initiative, a number of key aims have been set out. These aims intend to secure -

- **Suitable and sustainable greenspace availability**
- **Quality recreational areas**
- **Diverse wildlife habitats**
- **Strong community involvement**

The plan will support this by identifying the key sites which are currently owned or managed by Parks and Countryside, together with the Public Rights of Way within the project area, exploring what makes them special and identifying existing and potential threats, proposing action plans based on consultation and site assessment.

Compartments.

To help facilitate future action plans and projects within the management plan, the Country Park has been broken down into six compartments

- Compartment 1 – Kirkstall.**
- Compartment 2 – Horsforth.**
- Compartment 3 – Calverley.**
- Compartment 4 – Fulneck.**
- Compartment 5 – Farnley.**
- Compartment 6 – Armley.**

The outer boundary of each compartment follows the relevant outer boundary of the Country Park, whilst each separating compartment boundary is defined by a discernable feature on the ground such as a section of road or watercourse as these are rarely subject to change.

Objectives and action plans following on from these will identify appropriate means of conserving and enhancing the key areas in terms of the wildlife habitats they support and the recreational and cultural opportunities they provide.

An integral part of the management plan will be consultation with Stakeholder groups and the use of data collected from household surveys, will ensure that the plan remains relevant to the individuals and groups that make use of the WLCP area, and will also help to resolve conflicts and stimulate support from the user groups that make use of the Country Park. The results gleaned from the various consultations, whilst ground assessment will firm the objectives and develop various action plans.

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# **The West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.**

## **Geographic Location and Range.**

Situated several kilometres to the west of Leeds city centre, the Country Park forms a giant “C” which loops around the west Leeds conurbation, whilst also taking in much of the Green Belt boundary.

Whilst the Trail follows the Leeds and Liverpool Canal towpath directly from the canal basin in the city, the Country Park only picks it up at Dunkirk Hill, some 4 km out. They then follow it for a further 10 kilometres, tracking out to the north west along the scenic green corridor of the Aire Valley before dropping down into the well wooded countryside around Calverley Woodhall, Hillfoot and Pudsey on the Leeds Bradford border.

From there the Country Park and Trail continues south, before eventually turning south east around Fulneck to pick up the steep valley of the Pudsey Beck green corridor between Pudsey and Farnley, and Gildersome and Morley. Beyond this they enter the Farnley Beck Green Corridor following Ring Road Farnley. At this point the Country Park finishes, but the trail continues in to the dispersed greenspace areas of Town End, Armley and Wortley areas, before re-entering the city centre.

## **Ownership.**

Pockets of land within the Country Park boundary are owned and managed by Leeds City Council, and vested with various Council Departments

Of these, some 45 key areas of greenspace, parkland and recreation ground are owned and / or managed by Parks and Countryside alone.

Additionally, there are, also major land holdings which are privately owned, but also have a measure of public access, such as Calverley Woods, Rodley Nature Reserve ( a 30 hectare site leased from Yorkshire Water to a consortium of Ornithological groups), the former Kirkstall Forge site (soon to be developed) and Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve ( 10.7 hectare site leased from National Grid to Yorkshire Wildlife Trust).

## **Ward coverage**

The Country Park and Green Gateways area is incorporated, to varying degrees, within 11 Leeds City Council Local Authority Wards including - Armley, Beeston and Holbeck, Bramley & Stanningley, Calverley and Farsley, Farnley & Wortley, Guiseley and Rawdon, Horsforth, Hyde Park and Woodhouse, Kirkstall Morley North and Pudsey.

## **Area Description.**

The West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways is looped around and through the major west Leeds conurbations of Kirkstall, Hawksworth, Horsforth, Calverley, Farsley, Pudsey, Bramley Armley and Wortley

It covers some 3 889 Hectares, and includes much of the countryside, parkland and greenspace incorporated into the Green Belt for the west Leeds area

This Green Belt is intended to act as a buffer between the two Districts of Leeds and Bradford, in order to control the growth of large built up areas and to prevent the neighbouring districts from merging. It is also intended to help conserve the special character of districts within it and to safeguard the countryside.

There is population of approximately 200,150 people living immediately in and around the Country Park, more than a quarter of the people living in the entire Metropolitan District.

Whilst this brings to bear a pressure of numbers, it also means that a large proportion of these citizens have access to parks and countryside on their doorsteps, and are able to benefit from the opportunities these places can offer.

Informal recreational activities, such as walking, cycling and running help to improve overall health and fitness, whilst being outside is a general boost to wellbeing.

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## **Landscape and Current Land Use**

### **Landscape Character**

In 1994 a comprehensive assessment of landscape in the Leeds District was compiled, which largely corresponded to the Green Belt boundary. This broke the area down into 19 landscape types, each one of which slots into one of five Regional Character Areas (RCA).

The RCA for West Leeds Country Park, is classed as Leeds Coal Measures (LCM). Within this it is subdivided into the following landscape units–

#### **Pastoral Fringe Farmland**

- LCM 1 – Gildersome Fringe.
- LCM 2 – Bradford Fringe

#### **Landscape character**

*The pastoral fringe farmland landscape type is found along the undulating western fringe of Leeds, occurring in two landscape units: the Gildersome Fringe (LCM1); and the Bradford Fringe (LCM2).*

*It is a landscape of actively farmed land, containing a mixture of landscape influences, all dominated by human activity such as housing, industrial areas, quarries, tips, amenity land, recreation grounds, neglected and disturbed land. The farmland tends to consist of mainly small-scale fields of pasture, grazed by sheep, cattle and frequently horses.*

*Throughout, the farmland is under intense public pressure, with urban fringe land uses such as caravan storage, scrap yards and horse grazing common. Often, the structure of the landscape has, or is starting to break down with many hedgerows becoming low cut and gappy, or stone walls in disrepair. Many areas around the farmland are well used by the local community for both authorised and unauthorised recreational uses, providing a valuable amenity resource.*

#### **Pastoral Plateau Farmland.**

- LCM 16 – Rawdon Plateau

#### **Landscape character**

*The pastoral plateau landscape type occurs in four landscape units: Hawksworth Plateau (MGP2); Guiseley Plateau (MGP3); Eccup Plateau (MGP4); and the Rawdon Plateau (LCM16).*

*Found in the north west of the district, mainly on the elevated Millstone Grit Plateau, this landscape type is characterised by medium scale, generally intact fields of pasture, grazed by sheep and cattle. The plateau tops are open and sometimes exposed, with isolated boundary trees and planted woodland strips alongside roads. As the land drops, woodland occurs in small copses and as ribbons of semi-natural cover along streams and becks. A mix of hedgerows and (mainly) drystone walls form the field boundaries, being replaced by wire fencing as their condition begins to deteriorate. Small villages form the main settlements within this landscape type, with the urban edge of North Leeds occurring on the outskirts. Here, urban fringe land uses such as horse grazing and golf courses become more common. Extensive*

*uninterrupted views can be gained over surrounding areas, particularly from the higher plateau tops.*

#### River Valley

- LCM 18 – Calverley Valley
- LCM 19 – Cockersdale Valley

#### *Landscape character*

*The river valley landscape type occurs in two landscape units: the Calverley Valley (LCM18); and the Cockersdale Valley (LCM19).*

*It forms an intact and distinctive river valley, defined by a prominent valley landform. The flat narrow valley floor generally contains a mix of land uses, including pastoral farmland, areas of amenity or recreational use and isolated pockets of industry or public utility works. Woodland, mainly semi-natural, lines stretches of the river banks, forming a strong linear feature alongside communication lines such as railways, canals and roads which can also be present. Woodland is prominent on the steeper valley slopes, providing an important recreational and visual resource and surrounding pockets of intact pasture. These tend to be bordered by drystone walls or a strong pattern of hedgerows.*

#### Encapsulated Countryside.

- LCM 13 – Kirkstall Valley

*The encapsulated countryside landscape type can be found in three landscape units. the Meanwood Valley (LCM12); the Kirkstall Valley (LCM13); and the Wyke Beck Valley (LCM14).*

*It occurs in linear areas or 'fingers' of countryside associated with river corridors, which extend right into the heart of the urban area.*

*The valley sides of the corridors can be steep sided and are generally well wooded, with pockets of scrub and pasture forming a green patchwork in an otherwise built up environment. Urban influences are present, with public utility works, isolated industrial units and occasional housing all in evidence, mainly along the valley bottoms. Views from within these areas are framed by either the development along the edges, or by the dense wooded nature of the semi- natural woodlands which abound.*

*The encapsulated countryside provides a valuable recreational resource for local communities and an important corridor for wildlife.*

#### **Current Land Use**

Contained within the Country Park area are numerous areas of countryside, parkland, allotments and recreation and sports grounds, which not only provide various opportunities for recreational pursuits, such as walking, horticulture, horse riding, sports and cycling, but many of which also form important wildlife habitats, helping to support a rich and diverse biodiversity.

Notable parks, including Armley Park, Farnley Park, Gott's Park and the Kirkstall Abbey Estate, again make provision for recreation, but also provide aspects of

cultural interest and include important buildings and structures, such as the ruin of Kirkstall Abbey, a twelfth century Cistercian monastery and historically one of the most important buildings in Leeds, and Armley House in Gott's Park, a Grade II listed building.

Interspersed with these natural areas, amenity greenspace and parkland, are extensive arable and pastoral landholdings. These are characterised and defined by field boundaries features, such as hedgelines and drystone walls, and are generally located in the more rural outer reaches of the Country Park.

Within inner-city urban areas however, the current demand for centrally placed land with building potential puts great pressure on brown field sites, which are highly desirable and sought after for development. Numerous new areas of housing and shopping have already been established, often with little provision for greenspace.

Recreational access to parks, countryside and greenspace on the periphery of the inner-city as well as in to the wider countryside beyond, should be made for residents in these areas, and to a greater extent, this is something the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateway project is able to achieve.

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## **Recreation and Facilities.**

### **Recreation**

The majority of the Country Park area is regularly used by local communities for quiet, informal recreation, involving activities such as walking, running, cycling and horse riding. These activities are generally enjoyed in the numerous parks and areas of countryside found within the Country Parks, many of which are owned and managed by Leisure Services, through Parks and Countryside.

Much of this recreational activity is also facilitated by the extensive Public Rights of Way network which runs through and around the extensive areas of park and greenspace, as well as additional desire lines, permissive paths and informal tracks. This whole network is used primarily for informal recreation as the routes provide the best means of getting into and around the countryside. They are also simply used as an everyday means of getting from A to B, and by people who wish to boost their physical health and sense of well being, by being out and about in the fresh air of the countryside.

In some instances, a number of PRow within the Country Park have been identified and linked (much in the same way the Green Gateway Trail element of the Country Park has), to create a recognised link or trail.

- The Leeds Country Way.
- The Pudsey Link
- The Calverley Millennium Way
- The Aire Valley Towpath Route

### **Facilities.**

In addition to informal recreational pursuits, there are also other activities and interests which are catered for

#### **Educational**

Museums and visitor centres

Facilities that benefit visitors culturally, by providing an educational experience centred around Leeds history and the past, and also contribute to the principle of Lifelong Learning.

Zoos, aquariums and aviaries.

Again benefit visitors culturally, by providing an educational experience centred around global wildlife and conservation, and also contribute to the principle of Lifelong Learning.

Interpretation.

On site and leaflet based information, aimed at giving a snapshot of the history, wildlife and facilities available in a specific area, as well as encouraging people to visit.



### Horticultural.

#### Allotments.

Positively impact on the physical health and well being of the people who use them, provide a means of exercise and healthy vegetables as an end product.

### Sporting

Recreation grounds, play areas, BMX and skateboard tracks.

Generally appreciated and well used by younger members of the community.

Sports pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and golf courses.

Provide recreational sporting facilities for all ages, at formal and informal levels.

### Amenities

Cafes, restaurants and mobile catering vendors.

Seating and picnic areas.

Conveniences.

Providing facilities within areas of park and greenspace which improve the overall visitor experience and enable visitors to prolong their visits.

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## **Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity.**

### **Wildlife Habitats.**

A wide and diverse mosaic of wildlife habitats are present in the Country Park, ranging from ancient semi-natural woodland through to exposed quarry faces.

Generally these habitats are, as expected for an urban fringe area, heavily influenced by the actions of man.

Activities such as agriculture, building development, industry and forestry, have impacted heavily on the environment, altering the naturalness of the countryside and other areas of greenspace.

Indeed, much of our existing woodland cover is of planted origin, and of the 2650 hectares of woodland in Leeds only 300 hectares, or 11%, is unplanted.

Nevertheless, there are abundant areas of woodland, grassland and wetland providing important habitats for wildlife, including stands of ancient woodland. This is land that has been under constant woodland cover for at least 400 years.

Where surviving established habitat exists, it tends to be confined to steep landscapes, large parkland estates and along waterlogged river valleys.

Generally, these natural places tend to reflect the types of habitat and the mix of species expected in this part of the district, taking in to account physical features such as underlying rock types associated soils and the climate.

Several of the habitats found within the Country Park area are also included in the Habitat Action Plans contained within the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Leeds.

- Reedbed.
- Lowland wet grassland and hedgerow.
- Field margins

### **Phase 1 Habitat Survey.**

In the mid 1980's, Leeds commissioned a Phase 1 survey of wildlife habitats. This is the base standard method of habitat survey in the UK, developed in the 1980s by the then Nature Conservancy Council (now Natural England) for the purpose of auditing and mapping the distribution of terrestrial and freshwater habitats (of which there are around 90 standard types) which are identified according to characteristic vegetation and other environmental features.

The information, drafted onto 1:10 000 maps, gives an overview rather than a comprehensive assessment of specific wildlife habitats, but provides a valuable vegetative appraisal of an area none the less.

## Mapped Phase 1 habitats - West Leeds Country Park

First level hierarchy	Second level hierarchy	Third level hierarchy
<b>Woodland and scrub</b>	• Woodland	➤ Broadleaved ➤ Mixed
	• Scrub	➤ Dense/continuous ➤ Scattered
	• Parkland and scattered trees	
<b>Grassland</b>	• Acidic	➤ Improved ➤ Semi improved
	• Neutral	➤ Unimproved ➤ Improved ➤ Semi improved
	• Marsh / marshy grassland	➤ Lowland
<b>Heathland</b>	• Dry dwarf shrub heath	➤ Acidic
<b>Open water</b>	• Standing water	➤ Mesotrophic
	• Running water	➤ Mesotrophic
<b>Rock</b>	• Artificial rock exposures	➤ Quarry ➤ Spoil tip
<b>Other</b>	• Cultivated land	
	• Boundary	➤ Intact hedge ➤ Defunct hedge ➤ Hedgerow with trees ➤ Fence ➤ Wall ➤ Dry ditch
	• Building	➤ Agricultural ➤ Industrial ➤ Domestic
	• Bare ground	

### Woodland.

There are significant areas of broadleaf woodland in the Country Park, particularly on the steep sides of the Aire Valley. These have survived due largely to topography, as the steepness of the slopes makes the land unsuited to development and agriculture. The majority of these stands are broadleaved secondary natural woodlands. There are also 11 pieces of woodland which appear in the Ancient Woodland Inventory which identifies woodland which has had continuous tree cover since at least 1600 AD. Within this classification, existing woodland is classed as either –

**Ancient semi-natural woodland** - ancient woodland sites that have retained the native tree and shrub cover that has not been planted, although it may have been managed by coppicing or felling and allowed to regenerate naturally.

Nan Whin Woods  
Post Hill (south)  
Swaine Wood  
Calverley Woods  
West Wood

Bill Wood  
Round Wood  
Ravenscliffe Woods  
Cragg Woods (Rawdon)

**Ancient replanted woodland** - ancient woodland sites where the original native tree cover has been felled and replaced by planting, usually with conifers and usually this century.

Hawksworth Woods  
Lodge Wood.

Scrub cover tends largely to be either located on the fringes of existing broadleaf woodland, and is representative of the woody species present within that woodland, which have spread through natural regeneration, or in small pockets of “neglected” land, which has either experienced a cessation of management, such as grazing, or are too wet to use. This enables trees / shrubs to colonise, in particular, in wet areas, willow carr.

Scattered tree cover, such as that found in parkland or large private gardens, generally consists of trees which cover no more than 30% of the total land holding, and often includes large, mature specimens of native or ornamental origin. The major areas of parkland in the Country Park area, such as Armley Park, Horsforth Hall Park, Gotts Park and Farnley Hall Park, hold some mature and historically important trees, some of which were incorporated into Victorian and possibly Georgian planting schemes.

### Grasslands.

The dominant habitat present in the Country Park is lowland grassland, which in west Leeds are generally neutral or acidic in nature depending on specific location. As with many areas of grassland on the Coal Measures, these areas are not particularly ecologically diverse (as compared with the magnesian limestone on the eastern fringe of the Leeds District), and are often associated with damp ground and grazing.

Grasslands situated in valley bottoms, such as along the Aire valley, tend to be neutral and sometimes rather wet, as they are supported by clay and loam based soils which are influenced by a high water table. They are also the most representative type of grassland in west Leeds.

Where the soils are more free draining, the grassland edges towards acidic, and these areas tend to be situated on higher ground, such as that found to the north and west of the Country Park.

In general, the past use of both neutral and acid grasslands has been pastoral rather than arable, resulting in mainly semi improved grasslands, with some improved areas. This means that there has been some human interference, such as ploughing, reseeding, and the application of herbicides and artificial fertiliser. Additionally, there are also some small isolated pockets of unimproved grassland, though such habitats are quite rare, and consequently quite important in nature conservation terms.

In addition to their areas of semi natural grassland, there are also large tracts of amenity and highly improved grassland, such as sports pitches, roadside verges, recreation ground and agricultural land (mostly Grade 2).

### Wetlands.

As expected, these are generally concentrated along water courses, and consist of either areas of running or static open water or their wet, inundated margins and areas of flush.

The River Aire is the most significant stretch of open water in the Country Park, and the water course and its associated floodplain dominates and influences the landscape and ecology of the Upper Aire valley in Leeds.

In recent years the water quality of the Aire has improved, although it still falls between poor – fairly good categories, depending on proximity from Leeds city centre.

The Environment Agency classifies the River Aire as “at risk” under the Water Framework Directive, in terms of pollution, and a biological classification based on various sampling sites. It falls between E - poor biology restricted to pollution tolerant species and F - biology limited to a small number of species very tolerant of pollution.

However, recent sightings of otter and salmon in and close to the city centre would suggest that there is improvement, which is ongoing. The development of tertiary treatment works at Esholt and the consolidation of sewerage treatment at Knostrop has contributed to these improvements.

The River Aire floodplain supports a diverse and important range of wetland habitats, none more so than within the meander which envelopes Rodley Nature Reserve. Here marsh, wet grassland, Phragmites reedbed and open lagoons have been developed and are managed for wildlife by the Rodley Nature Reserve Trust.

There are also a number of smaller watercourses in the Country Park, such as Pudsey Beck, Farnley Beck, Tyersal Beck, Oil Mill Beck and Gill Beck as well as remnant goits and mill races which served pre 20<sup>th</sup> Century industry. These streams are generally characterised by a narrow channel and faster flowing water, but due to an increase in flow, they rarely support vegetation. Their oxygen rich waters however, make these particularly attractive to aquatic invertebrates and vertebrates, which in turn attract water birds such as Kingfisher, Heron, Dipper and Grey Wagtail.

Running parallel with the River Aire is the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Lacking a flood plain, the canal forms an encapsulated watercourse, but is equally as important for wildlife, and a five mile section has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest, as it is the best example of a slow flowing freshwater habitat in West Yorkshire. The canal supports a diverse range of aquatic plant species and communities, and the presence of Hair-like Pondweed (*Potamogeton trichoides*) in the canal is significant as it is scarce and declining in the county, whilst Ridged Hornwort and Arrowhead both have a restricted distribution, but again are present.

## **Biodiversity.**

The wildlife associated with the various habitats contained by the Country Park is often specific to broad habitat types, but where these merge, such as on the edge of woodland or along wetland margins, the range and diversity is increased.

The presence of numerous green corridors, such as along the Aire Valley, are also particularly important to the biodiversity of the Country Park, as they facilitate the spread and help to sustain populations.

Whilst, to some extent, much of the wildlife in the Country Park is not particularly unusual, the presence of some animal and plant species, such as bats (all species), bluebells and kingfishers, which are considered endangered or threatened, means that they receive special protection due to their status.

The principal mechanism set up to afford this protection is legislation set up under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). This contains a number of specific Schedules, under which vulnerable flora and fauna and their habitats receive protection from destruction, capture and disturbance. The Wildlife and Countryside Act is also supplemented by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994

In some cases, where appropriate, this can be mitigated by the issuing of licences from Natural England and / or Defra. These should be sought if habitat / access work is to take place where protected species exist, otherwise the work will be considered to contravene legislation in the Wildlife and Countryside Act, resulting in a fine.

Other legislation affording protection to biodiversity and its habitats includes the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), the Protection of Badgers Act (1992), The Deer Act (1991)

## **Geology and soils.**

### **Solid Geology.**

The west Leeds area, like much of Leeds, is dominated by Coal Measures (Leeds forms the northern limit of the Yorkshire Coalfield), and Millstone Grits of the Upper Carboniferous period

Characterised by alternating strata of sandstones, shales and mudstones and coal seams, which were laid down between 323 and 313 million years ago, these sedimentary rocks are the result of alternate river and marine deposits of sands, silt and mud and organic matter deposited, buried and compressed to eventually form stone.

#### **Millstone Grit.**

The Millstone Grits were laid down between 323–313 million years ago, when much of northern England was covered by a huge river delta. Rivers deposited alternate layers of sand, mud and silt into channels, outwash fans and swamps in the delta, which were compressed by subsequent layers, gradually forming rock.

The resulting sandstones are generally medium to coarse in texture, and often contain pebbles of quartz, so are highly valued for their durability as a building stone. These sandstones were extensively quarried in the Hawksworth, Calverley and Bramley areas, the latter being noted for its Bramley Fall Rough Rock. Kirkstall Abbey, Leeds Town Hall and the Corn Exchange are all constructed from Millstone Grit quarried from the west Leeds area.

#### **Coal Measures.**

The sandstones and coal seams associated with Coal Measures were laid down some 310 million years ago, when Britain sat over the equator and a vast tropical forest had grown over the Millstone Grit deposits of the ancient river delta.

The sandstones associated with the Coal Measures have a fine texture, as represented by the Elland Flags series. Rich in mica, these split easily along regular bedding planes and provide Yorkshire Flagstones, as well as the brick sized building stone characteristic of Bradford. Coal Measure sandstones could also be intricately carved, as can be seen on the exterior of Leeds Kirkgate Market.

The coal seams of the Lower Coal Measures, found in the west Leeds area, were limited and shallow, as compared to those of the Middle Measures in south Leeds. Nevertheless, the remains of bell pits, such as those at Hunger Hills in Horsforth, offer evidence that coal was mined in this part of Leeds.

The shales and mudstones associated with the Coal Measures provided material for making the bricks that largely replaced building stone. Terracotta and ceramic industries also flourished using the same local resource.

### **Drift Geology.**

Following the end of the last Ice Age, some 10 000 years ago, the retreating ice sheets and glaciers dropped the loads that they had been carrying. This material which consisted largely of rock debris ranging in size from huge boulders, or erratics, to very finely ground rock, or till, blanketed the solid rock with varying thickness of

material. As the ice sheets decayed the resulting deluge of meltwater swept along sands, gravels and muds. Where the flow slowed or was impeded to form temporary lakes, this material was deposited to form thick beds of silts, sands and gravels, as can be found along the course of the River Aire.

## Soils

The National Soil Resources Institute has devised a national soil classification system, based on 27 soil types.

The West Leeds Country Park area supports three of these soil types

The course of the River Aire has had a hugely significant impact on the soils adjacent to it's course, and these are classified as Loamy and clayey floodplain soils, with naturally high groundwater. They are representative of high water tables, and have a tendency towards supporting wet flood meadow with carr woodlands. They represent 2.6% of soils in England.

To the south of Pudsey, and in the Calverley / Farsley area, the soils are freely draining, slightly acidic loamy, which tend to underlie neutral and acid pasture and deciduous woodland.

They represent 15.5% of soils in England.

The rest and majority of the area is represented by slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils. These support seasonally wet pasture and woodland, indicate an impeded drainage.

They represent 7% of soils in England.



## **History and Archaeology.**

### Early Prehistoric (Mesolithic – Neolithic)

It is likely that the first people to inhabit the Leeds area would have been nomadic Mesolithic hunter gatherers who, crossed into Britain from Continental Europe some 6 000 years ago.

These migrants were followed by Neolithic settlers, who started to clear tracts of woodland in order to grow crops and keep livestock.

### Late Prehistoric (Bronze Age – Iron Age)

By around 2000 BC Bronze Age migrants, also farmers, had arrived. However, they also operated as traders, and were known to make regular use of the low-lying Aire Valley as a trade route between the Continent and Ireland, importing and exporting commodities such as jet, amber and gold. Cup and Ring carved stones found in Calverley Woods, Rawdon, Cookridge and on Hawksworth Moor are evidence of their presence, though the meaning of these carvings is not fully understood. Additionally, Bronze Age implements have been found at Hunslet, and a beaker at Tinshill.

Iron Age people, or Celts, were established by around 500 BC, bringing technological innovations such as the potter's wheel and rotary querns for grinding grain, examples of which have been found on the northern edge of the Aire Valley, above west Leeds, at Cookridge and Ireland Wood.

### The Roman Period

In AD43 the Romans invaded. Finds, in west Leeds, of Roman coins and other artefacts suggests that whilst they were centrally garrisoned to the north of Leeds, there was also a Roman presence in the surrounding area, probably again making use of the Aire Valley for manoeuvring troops and supplies.

By AD 450 Roman troops returned to Rome defend their home turf. Following this, much of Yorkshire formed the territory of The Brigantes, a Celtic tribe who set up a number of Kingdoms, one of these was Elmet. This was centred on Leodis (Leeds), and although it incorporated much of present day west Leeds, the main defences appear to be around Aberford and Barwick-in-Elmet in the east of the district.

### The Anglo Saxon Period

Edwin, Anglian King of Northumbria invaded in 617 AD, and Elmet was absorbed in to Northumbria. Leeds became Edwin's royal residence, *Leodis*, and it was here that the first Christian church was founded in the north. Many of today's place names in west Leeds were also established at this time. For example, an Anglo Saxon "ley", was a clearing in a woodlands, hence Farnley was a clearing filled with fern; Bramley, a broom filled clearing and Armley, a clearing belonging to a farmer called Erme. In 633 AD, the township of Leodis was taken by the pagan King Penda of Mercia. Penda and his Mercians army was subsequently defeated in 655 AD and Leeds reverted back to the Northumbria.

### The Viking Period.

By 865 AD the Vikings had invaded, and were established in West Yorkshire having set up a wapentake (council) at Morley to administer the villages south of the Aire, including Armley, Beeston, Farnley, Hunslet. It is said they established a fortification at Armley in an area still known as Giant's Hill, though but no archaeological evidence is available to support this.

### The Middle Ages

In 1066. William of Normandy landed in the south, defeated King Harold, and the Norman period had begun. For the first time we get a snapshot of everyday life in Leeds as documented by The Domesday Book, an audit set up by William to set taxes.

After the Conquest, Pudsey, Calverley, Farsley and Bramley, like the majority of Leeds, had been granted to Ilbert de Lacy, a Norman Baron. The Domesday Survey of 1086-7 described all of these land holdings as “waste” the result of the Harrying of the North in 1069. Prior to this, land at *Podeschesaie* (Pudsey) was valued at 40 shillings, while that at *Caverleia* (Calverley) and *Ferselleia's* (Farsley) combined was worth only 20 shillings.

Henry de Lacy, Ilbert's grandson, provided the initial impetus for the founding of Kirkstall Abbey, though it was the Peitivin family who eventually gifted the land on which the Abbey was built. Work on the Abbey started in 1152 and took 30 years to complete, with millstone grit from nearby Bramley Fall being used in the construction. At this time, the Medieval township of Pudsey comprised of a number of small scattered settlements, Owlcote being one of the principal ones. Although this was occupied from at least the 12th it was abandoned in the 1930s. Today the site is registered as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

### The Tudor and Stuart Period

In 1539 King Henry VIII fell out with the Catholic church and Dissolved all the monasteries, including Kirkstall. The monastery's land and resources were seized by the Crown, and sold off, and over the ensuing centuries the Abbey was ransacked for building stone and the grounds used to graze livestock.

The woods and village of Calverley take their names from the Calverley family who lived in the area for some 600 years. Most notorious was Walter Calverley, who lived in the Old Hall, and, in 1604 killed his two young sons. Hauled off to York, Sir Walter was found guilty and pressed to death. However, his restless ghost it was said, still walked the Old Hall carrying a bloodstained knife, or sometimes terrified the locals as it rode the area on a headless horse. Fortunately a Calverley Vicar finally laid the malevolent spirit to rest, and local legend dictates that whilst there is holly growing in Calverley woods, Sir Walter will not reappear.

The Farnley Wood Plot was a gathering of 26 men in Farnley Woods in late 1663. Led by Captain Oates their aim was revolt against the Restoration Government of Charles II - “ to reform all orders and degrees of men, especially lawyers, clergy and magistracy, to restore the Long Parliament, to take York and generally upset the order of things.”

In the event the group disbanded before taking any action, but the 26 participants paid for their actions with their lives.

### The Industrial Revolution.

By the middle of the 1700's, Leeds was a well established woollen manufacturing area, with a reputation for cheap good quality cloths known as 'Northern Dozens' or 'Yorkshire Broadcloths' produced by small scale cottage industry. It was this industry however which spurred on the growth of Leeds in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

Merchants, hoping to expand the market for their cloth by exporting it to America and Africa, needed access to the port of Liverpool. This, and the need to improve the supply of lime and limestone from the Craven district, was the impetus required to initiate the building of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in 1765, though it wasn't completed until 1816.

Around the same time, the first steam woollen mill were introduced at Union Bridge Mill on Roker Road, to the south east of Pudsey, and Benjamin Gott saw the advantages of bringing all the manufacturing processes together under one roof, which he did in 1792 at his new factory, Park Mills.

In Armley too, woollen textiles formed the mainstay of industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. By 1788 the area was had five waterwheels powering eighteen fulling stocks. Fulling is one of the final processes in cloth production, and involved wool being pounded, or felted, with large hammers.

By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the textile industry had begin to decline, and engineering, chemical and leather industries were expanding, as were clothing and footwear manufacture and printing.

Thomas Smith & Sons Crane and Excavator works, at Rodley, were one of the best respected manufacturers of cranes and excavators in the world, providing machinery for projects such as the building of the London Underground and the Assouan Dam in Egypt.

In 1890 Kirkstall Abbey was purchased by Colonel J North, and gifted to Leeds Corporation, who opened it to the public as a tourist attraction. Armley Gaol was built in 1847.

### 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The engineering industry continued to thrive into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and Leeds firms were engaged in manufacturing armaments for use in the 1914-18 war. The clothing industry becomes increasingly important. Between the wars manufacturing industry declines, but the clothing industry, and the new distribution and service industries enable Leeds to survive the worst of the depression. After the war the traditional manufacturing industries continued to decline, and Leeds failed to attract new industries.

## **Policy Context**

### **Influences and constraints acting on the Management Plan**

#### **Stakeholders**

The range of the West Leeds Country Park is extensive, and consequently the number and variety of organisations, groups and individuals who have a vested interest in the project area is considerable too.

This includes Leeds City Council Ward Members and Officers of various departments; national and local organisations, agencies and authorities, such as British Waterways, Bradford City Council, Natural England, Environment Agency and West Yorkshire Police; landowners and land managers, such as Thornhill Yorkshire Estates Company, Rodley Nature Reserve and the various utility companies, and specific user groups, such as walkers, cyclists, local historians, naturalists, anglers, allotment holders and runners etc.

One of the most significant groups is formed by the people who live in or near the Country Park and use it regularly for quiet recreation on a regular basis.

Consultation with community associations, resident's associations and friends of groups etc. will help to involve local people in the planning, care and enhancement of the Country Park and the particular places within it that people value, as well as to help reach a consensus with them in making decisions about what happens in these areas.

- Armley Common Rights Trust
- Bradford City Council
- British Horse Riding Association
- British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
- British Waterways.
- Calverley Millennium Way Group
- Commercial Estate Group
- English Nature
- Environment Agency.
- Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
- Friends of Calverley Woods
- Friends of Farnley Balancing Reservoir
- Friends of Farnley Fishpond.
- Friends of Houghley Gill
- Friends of Western Flatts Park
- Friends of Woodhall Lake
- Groundwork Trust
- Hawksworth Wood Community Association
- Kirkstall Valley Park
- Kirkstall Village Community Association
- Leeds City Council Planning.
- Leeds Cycling Consultation Forum
- Leeds Involvement Project
- Leeds Naturalists
- Leeds Ramblers Association
- Moorside Residents Association
- Moravian Society, Fulneck
- National Grid
- Newlay Conservation Society
- Post Hill Preservation Society
- Pudsey Civic Society
- Pudsey Link Bridleway Group
- Rodley Nature Reserve
- Sandford Residents Association
- Silver Royd Nature Conservation Group
- Wades Trust
- West Leeds Healthy Living Network
- West Leeds Walking Group
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

## Strategic Context.

This section deals with the various constraints and directives impacting on the management plan and the activities of Leeds City Council, at both a national and local level.

## National Strategies, Policies and Plans impacting on the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.

There are numerous national strategies, policies and plans which impact on the Country Park area, encompassing a variety of relevant themes, in particular the environment, local communities, recreation, education, culture, safety, transport and health.

The most significant aims and priorities contained within these have largely been assembled into a raft of strategies, portfolios and plans, collated under The Leeds Initiative banner to dovetail into the long term plan, Vision For Leeds 2004 to 2020.

Key pieces of legislation impacting on the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways -

- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- Disability and Discrimination Act (1995)
- Hedgerow Regulations.
- Weeds Act (1959)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999).
- Occupiers Liability Act (1984)

## Key Aims of Leeds based Strategies, Portfolios, Plans and Visions impacting on the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.

- Vision for Leeds (2004-2020)
- Corporate Plan (2005-2008)
- The Council Plan (2006-2007)
- Learning and Leisure Departmental Plan (2002-2005)
- Parks and Countryside Service Planning Portfolio (2003)
- Leeds City Council's Environment Policy (2002)
- The Leeds Unitary Development Plan (2001)
- The Leeds Unitary Development Review (2006)
- Energy and Water Management Plan (2003-2008)
- Cultural Strategy for Leeds (2002)
- Recreational Strategy (2002)
- The Leeds Healthy School Standard (2006)
- Leeds Local Agenda 21 Strategy (2000)
- Leeds Countryside Strategy (1994)
- Leeds Nature Conservation Strategy (1991)
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2000)

## Designations.

### Public Right of Way Designations.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are designated routes which the Local Highway Authority is bound by statute to protect and also to assert the rights of the public to use and enjoy them.

Within the Leeds District this task falls to the Authority's Public Rights of Way Section within Parks and Countryside.

There are three basic designations -

- **Footpaths** - can be used by anyone travelling on foot from one place to another.
- **Bridleways** - can be used by anyone on foot, bicycle or on a horse to travel from one place to another.
- **Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT)** - can be used by anyone for vehicular access, but is mainly used for the same purpose as a footpath or bridleway.

In addition, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), Open Access was introduced, giving the public the right to roam on certain areas of land.

### Nature Conservation Designations.

A number of LCC sites hold nature conservation designations, including national ones such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserves, which are designated through Natural England, as well as Leeds designations, which include Sites of Geological or Ecological Importance and Leeds Nature Areas, which are outlined in the Unitary Development Plan.

Nature conservation designations are managed through the Wildlife and Countryside section of Parks and Countryside, as well as the Nature Conservation department for Planning. They are intended to help conserve and enhance the areas they protect, in terms of implementing the appropriate management of wildlife habitats (designations highlight those which are particularly valuable for wildlife and / or uncommon examples of these habitats in the Leeds District), as well as the biodiversity these areas support.

### Nature Conservation designations for the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways area –

<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest</b>	
The Leeds and Liverpool Canal	SSSI No.9
<b>Site of Geological or Ecological Importance</b>	
The Leeds and Liverpool Canal	SEGI No.17
<b>Local Nature Reserve</b>	
Farnley Fish Pond	L N R No. 7
<b>Leeds Nature Area</b>	
Bramley Fall Woods / Lower Falls	LNA 20
Hawksworth Wood	LNA 50
Hunger Hills	LNA 55
Kirkstall Wildflower Garden	LNA 67

<b>Leeds Nature Area (cont..)</b>	
Nan Whin's Wood	LNA 79
The Outwood (Newlay Wood and Rein Road)	LNA 86
Post Hill	LNA 88
Silver Royd Hill	LNA 38
Swaine Wood	LNA 102
Woodhall Lake	LNA 112

#### Conservation Areas.

These are designated by Planning in order to help protect the character of the relevant Conservation Area. To facilitate this an appraisal of each area is undertaken in order to evaluate its qualities and to examine proposals for its protection and enhancement.

The designation is intended to manage change in a Conservation Area in order that it protects the special character of that area. As a result permissions are required to undertake certain works, including silvicultural and arboricultural works.

#### Conservation Area designations for the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways area -

<b>Conservation Area</b>	<b>Number</b>
Pudsey : Fulneck	6
Horsforth	9b
Armley Mill	11
Kirkstall Abbey	19
Rodley	20
Bramley Hill Top	21
Farnley Upper Moor Side	30
Central Area: Canal Wharf	40
Horsforth : Newlay	41
Calverley	47
Calverley Bridge	48
Woodhall Hills	49
Pudsey	53
Bramley : Town Street	55
Bramley: Hough Lane	57
Farsley	61

#### Registered Parks and Gardens.

English Heritage maintains the county registers of Historic Parks & Gardens. The terms "historic park" and "historic garden" are drawn widely to include features such as historic cemeteries and they can include the grounds of historic hospitals as well as historic houses.

Registered Parks and Gardens designations for the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways area -

<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Armley House (Gotts Park)	Grade II
Pudsey Cemetery	Grade II

Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Special status and protection given to the oldest sites and structures in the district as designated and strictly controlled by English Heritage. As with listed buildings, works to alter, extend or demolish them need consent as do most works of maintenance.

As well as these scheduled sites, there are many more areas of archaeological importance, which need to be considered when development is proposed, in consultation with the West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service (WYAAS) at Wakefield who will recommend appropriate methods of recording and control to protect archaeological sites.

WYAAS has also identified many additional sites of archaeological importance and these are notified as "Class II" sites.

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## **West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Objectives.**

The general aim of the management plan is to develop the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways, ensuring that there is –

- An appropriate and sustainable availability of greenspace.
- Adequate high quality recreational areas.
- A diverse and appropriate range of wildlife habitats.
- Strong community involvement.

To achieve this goal a rolling list of short, medium and long-term objectives have been produced.

### **Short Term Objectives**

- Examine the feasibility of extending the Country Park and Green Gateways area to include greenspace around the south of New Farnley and in towards Beeston Royds.
- Explore potential routes from Beeston Royd, Post Hill and/or Silver Royd Hill to Armley and the City Centre to create a complete circular route. Route to use existing green corridors and/or greenspaces as “stepping stones”
- Once the route is affirmed produce a standard interpretation board for the Country Park and Gateways scheme. Suggest compartmentalise the Park due to its size so the interpretation boards within each compartment contain a simple generic map of the Park along with a more detailed map for the compartment in question.
- Produce a general leaflet about the Country Park and the Green Gateways. Supplement this with specific leaflets for each compartment within the Park.
- Establish a framework with Bradford so cross-border issues can be discussed and acted upon. This will have particular relevance to the various Public Rights of Way that cross the boundary and in the development of mini circular trails.
- Way mark key routes through the site and spur paths to sites of interest and ensure these are included in the leaflets.
- Set up a consultative forum that will include key stakeholders to discuss issues relating to the development of the Country Park and Green Gateways.
- Organise a number of guided walks through the proposed area using the Countryside Rangers and volunteers.

## Medium Term Objectives

- Organise a number of bigger events with the emphasis on promoting health in all its guises. Orienteering, horse riding, cross-country running, walking, mountain bike rides and conservation work.
- Improve key Public Rights of Way within the site and develop a West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Trail for walkers, horse riders and mountain bike riders.
- Select sites within the Country Park and Green Gateways that would benefit from conservation works e.g. pond construction, wild flower meadow establishment or restoration, hedge planting, tree plantations, fencing and dry stone walling.
- Formal framework with the various stakeholders to implement improvements in the greenspace areas.
- Seek grants to improve or provide facilities to the various greenspaces. For example the installation of seats, picnic tables, steps, ramps and directional signage. Also to include removal of fly-tipped waste and general litter besides installing appropriate barriers to prevent unauthorised access.
- Look at creating mini circular trails within the Country Park & Green Gateways area
- Develop a management plan for the initiative that encompasses the various sites, links, consultation and objectives.

## Long Term Objectives

- Resolve outstanding ownership of various greenspaces that lie within the area of the proposed Country Park and Green gateways.
- Where appropriate open up new public rights of way or permissive ways to provide links between various existing public rights of way and thereby develop continuity in routes through the proposed Country Park and Green Gateways.
- Develop and expand access to new areas of greenspace within the urban and countryside areas that will positively contribute to the initiative.

## Consultation Process.

These are the Key Themes, previously discussed with Stakeholders for the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways initiative, which will be developed to form the basis of Action Plans.

Sections with a white background contain the responses from organisations whilst those with a yellow background are from community groups.

## Strategies, plans, frameworks and partnerships pertinent to the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways Initiative

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
<b>Strategies, plans, frameworks and partnerships pertinent to the WLCP&amp;GG Initiative</b>	Bradford City Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure the forthcoming Local Transport Plan is taken into consideration with regard to the WLCP&amp;GG especially with regard to non-motorised transport, safer routes to school and potential funding</li> <li>2. Link in with forthcoming Public Rights of Way (PROW) Improvement Plan</li> <li>3. In the Apperley Bridge area and where appropriate further downstream along the River Aire implement suitable aspects of the Airedale Master Plan</li> <li>4. Ensure the forthcoming Local Transport Plan is taken into consideration with regard to the WLCP&amp;GG especially with regard to non-motorised transport, safer routes to school and potential funding</li> </ol>
	British Waterways Board (BWB)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that all interpretation material and proposed site facilities are in accordance and allow for the proposed developments within the Leeds Waterfront Strategy.</li> <li>2. Work closely with the Community Safety Partnership to ensure that the scheme does not exacerbate anti-social behaviour endemic in the area between Granary Wharf and Bramley</li> <li>3. Where appropriate support relevant objectives of the Airedale Master Plan especially in the Apperley area of the Aire valley</li> <li>4. Support SORM (State of the River Management Partnership Group)</li> </ol>
	Environment Agency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure suitable aspects of the Airedale Master Plan are adopted within the WLCP&amp;GG initiative</li> <li>2. Where appropriate involve the Leeds Environment City Partnership and Local Strategic Partnership</li> </ol>
	Planning Department, Leeds City Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. WLCP&amp;GG initiative to take on board relevant proposals in the Leeds Waterfront Strategy</li> </ol>
	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure the countryside code is included on interpretation boards, leaflets and distributed to participants attending guided/sponsored walks</li> </ol>
	Friends of Famley Fish Pond	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure the area of the initiative becomes an integral part of the Local Development framework</li> </ol>
	Newlay Conservation Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Link into the Public Rights of Way improvement plan (Part of the CROW act)</li> </ol>

## Suggested improvements, management needs and issues to be aware of for sites

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
<b>Suggested improvements, management needs and issues to be aware of for sites</b>	Armley Common Rights Trust	1. Trusts sites are in dire need of maintenance utilising Community Service teams and/or Parks & Countryside Service
	Commercial Estate Group (Development of Kirkstall Forge site)	1. Intend to resolve the flow problems experienced by the Abbey Mill Race 2. Listed buildings to be preserved and suitably interpreted.
	Leeds Cycling Consultation Forum	1. Look into the feasibility of cycle stands at public houses 2. Develop mountain bike riding areas in conjunction with local communities. Possible site at Esholt , negotiate with Yorkshire Water on suitability
	Leeds Naturalists	1. Whitecote area to be integrated into the area of the scheme
	National Grid (Second Site Property Holdings)	1. Intend to retain land west of the substation at Kirkstall for expansion
	Planning Department, Leeds City Council	1. Pocket Park to be established by Globe Road and upgrade of canal bank on the south side by Globe Road
	Pudsey Civic Society	1. Look at expanding the initiative developed for motorcyclists at Park Wood in Tong to suitable areas within the WLCP&GG area
	Wades Trust	1. Concerned over the condition of Armley House in Gotts Park
	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT)	1. Uncertainty on whether YWT will retain the site even under a lease 2. Any public access would be permissive
	Friends of Farnley Balancing Reservoir	1. "Lay-by" on Tong Lane requires up-grading to provide car parking for Nan Whin Wood
	Friends of Farnley Fish Pond	1. Expand the initiative to cover the area south of New Farnley towards Beeston Royds. Develop a core route through this area 2. Select suitable urban greenspaces to effect the links across Armley, Wortley and Greenside
	Friends of Western Flatts Park	1. Area south of Western Flatts Park to be included in the greenspace 2. Disused railway viaduct from the vicinity of Wortley Recreation Ground to Holbeck to be developed into a walkway. Could be one the key routes to effect a full circle with the core trail 3. Cabbage Hill open space land ownership and public rights of way need to be determined
	Hawksworth Wood Community Association	1. Establish a children's adventure playground at Burley Goit 2. Look at establishing a motorbike scramble area at the back of the YMCA in Hawksworth
	Kirkstall Valley Park	1. In vicinity of the Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve explore the option of developing a white water canoeing course. This would require an Environmental Assessment and public engagement 2. Explore options for motorcycling activities on the driving range site at Kirkstall and also at the back of the YMCA in Hawksworth 3. To develop the Kirkstall Valley Park looking at using the Community Programme (Punishment and Rehabilitation Programme) supervised through the Probation Service. Offenders will receive relevant education and training from Park Lane College. St Anns Mills to provide the base for the scheme, Education/training funded centrally and materials from capital money and grants 4. Growers land at Burley Goit to be developed into an organic vegetable growing enterprise to supply the local organic trade
	Rodley Nature Reserve	1. Include Nan Whin Wood 2. Expand initiative into the Farnley area ensuring links with Whitehall Road 3. Existing toilets to be marked on the maps 4. Expand the initiative towards Rawdon to include the paths in this area
	Sandford Residents Association	1. Ownership of land adjacent to the Leeds Bradford Road and between the "Turner " building and Bramley Falls 2. Reinstate stone wall on the north side of the Leeds Bradford Road in the vicinity of Monkswood
Silver Royd Nature Conservation Group	1. Protect existing semi-natural ancient woodland in the Silver Royd area 2. Determine land ownership in the Silver Royd area	

## Suggested improvements, management needs and issues to be aware of for routes

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
<b>Suggested improvements, management needs and issues to be aware of for routes</b>	Armley Common Rights Trust	1. Utilise some of their sites as urban greenspace "stepping stones" to help effect the link between the countryside in the Farnley area with Armley Park and the Leeds Liverpool Canal
	Bradford City Council	1. Look at developing continuity in the bridleways in the Apperley area (Continuation of the Pudsey Link Bridleway trail) 2. Continuity required from Tong Village to Oakwell Hall in Kirkstall in relation to bridleways (Continuation of the Pudsey Link Bridleway trail). 3. Allow for the Airedale Way which uses part of the WLCP&GG area
	British Horse Riding Association	1. More concerned with linking existing bridleways to get continuity and length in routes 2. Accept the fact that sections of the core route through the scheme area will not be suitable for horse riding (e.g. Leeds Liverpool Canal towpath) 3. Where appropriate develop circular routes at the end of spur bridleways 4. Where appropriate provide suitable crossing points on busy main roads
	British Waterways Board (BWB)	1. Liase closely with BWB over legality issues concerning the usage and access to the towpath 2. Have finite resources for towpath maintenance. 3. Horse riding not an option on the Leeds Liverpool Canal towpath
	Commercial Estate Group (Development of Kirkstall Forge site)	1. Will be looking at creating footpath links to Kirkstall Abbey and Pollard Road. Rein Road connection may be considered. 2. Allowances will be made for cyclists so they can use the linking route to Kirkstall Abbey 3. Proposed railway station to include a bridge over the line giving access to Lower Falls.
	English Nature	1. Will be assessing suitability of a new path adjacent to the Leeds Liverpool Canal within the Kirkstall Industrial Estate
	Leeds Cycling Consultation Forum	1. Include safer routes to schools in initiative
	Leeds Ramblers Association	1. Ensure that different routes are developed to cater for groups with varying physical abilities 2. Speed up the sorting of paths that are not on the definitive map but have been walked for over 20years 3. Knowledge of state of paths to be used in the initiative
	Moravian Society, Fulneck	1. Pig Lane overgrown; is it a public right of way that requires attention by Access Services?
	National Grid (Second Site Property Holdings)	1. May consider the metalled road running parallel with the canal as a permissive right of way 2. Kirkstall Marina has right of way on the metalled road running parallel with the canal for access. Required to bring in narrow boats on trailers and articulated lorries
	Planning Department, Leeds City Council	1. Disused railway line from Holbeck to the vicinity of Beeston Royd has potential to be opened up as a pedestrian route 2. Bridge to link Central Leeds Nature Reserve and Globe Road area 3. Intend to use disused railway viaduct in the vicinity of Wellington Road to allow pedestrian crossing of the canal and river 4. Aiming to extend the riverside footpath with the development of the Arla Foods and Yorkshire Chemicals sites
	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT)	1. Carefully monitor usage of routes to ensure vegetation erosion and general vandalism does not become a problem
	Armley Lodge Residents Association	1. Ensure good crossing points on busy roads
	Friends of Calverley Woods	1. Ensure parts of Calverley woods are left wild with no new routes developed in these sections 2. Devise measures to ensure mountain bicycles stay on the designated routes.
	Friends of Western Flatts Park	1. Public rights of way within the West Leeds urban area need to be highlighted
		1. Limit motorbike access onto bridleways
Friends of Woodhall Lake	2.	

		3. Ensure route maintenance is kept low
	Hawsworth Wood Community Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feasibility of a horse trail on national grid land and by the railway line in the Kirkstall area</li> <li>2. Explore the option of using electric wheelchairs on the canal towpath</li> </ol>
	Kirkstall Valley Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. With the closure of Arla Foods and Yorkshire Chemicals options arise for the expansion of the riverside routes for pedestrians and cyclists</li> <li>2. Explore cycle/pedestrian routes from Leeds Industrial Museum to Redcote Lane</li> <li>3. In vicinity of Redcote Lane resurrect iron bridge on site of former bridge. Base supports still present</li> <li>4. Develop a riverside footpath/cycle way from Burley Goit to St Anns Mills</li> <li>5. Develop a cycle/pedestrian route along Kirkstall goit from the Kirkstall Wild Flower Garden through the Abbey grounds and then along the riverside to the Kirkstall Forge site</li> <li>6. Examine the feasibility of creating a pedestrian underpass by the side of Oil Mill Beck to access Hawsworth Wood from the Kirkstall Forge site</li> <li>7. Assess the possibility of developing a horse trail from Gotts/Armley Park through National Grid land and onto Bramley Fall</li> </ol>
	Kirkstall Village Community Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appraise option of using canal barges for bussing people along the Aire Valley</li> </ol>
	Pudsey Link Bridleway Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resolve the Bradford Road crossing issue with Bradford City Council</li> <li>2. Bridleway in the Fulneck Valley area needs maintenance, erosion from heavy passage of horses</li> </ol>
	Rodley Nature Reserve	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure clarity of link routes in the City area and where routes cross the busy Stanningley road and Ring Road</li> <li>2. Spur paths linking interesting sites to the core route to be shown</li> <li>3. Elucidate good links between urban greenspaces and the main area of the initiative</li> <li>4. Spur paths into Bradford area to be shown south and west of Pudsey and west of Woodhall and Calverley</li> </ol>
	Sandford Residents Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure access for disabled people to and through the area of the initiative</li> </ol>
	Silver Royd Nature Conservation Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish suitable mountain bike trails</li> </ol>
	West Leeds Walking Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Edwardian Garden with its steps and paths in Armley Park should be restored</li> <li>2. Steps at the back of the West Leeds Working Mens Club are in a poor state and require refurbishment</li> </ol>

## Requirements and suggestions in regard to signage, way marking and interpretation

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
Requirements and suggestions in regard to signage, way marking and interpretation	British Horse Riding Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Way marking for the initiative must distinguish between horse trails and pedestrian only routes</li> <li>Develop leaflets for the various horse trails and distribute to the various liveries</li> </ol>
	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Booklet of walk leaflets</li> </ol>
	British Waterways Board (BWB)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of signage and interpretation material for the Sustrans Cycle route and other trails that use the Leeds Liverpool Canal towpath</li> <li>Ecological Survey of Canal by Planning useful for interpretation purposes</li> <li>All literature concerning cycling refer to cycle routes and not mountain bike routes since the latter is often synonymous with fast cycling</li> </ol>
	Groundwork Trust	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have been developing maps to guide people living in dense residential areas (Bramley area) to the Aire Valley green corridor using urban greenspace as "stepping stones". Part of an initiative is to get sedentary members of the community active and to improve their health</li> </ol>
	Leeds Cycling Consultation Forum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure WLCP&amp;GG way marking scheme does not clash with that of other trails</li> <li>Special attention to clarity of way marking especially at turns in the route</li> <li>Liase closely with Highways over the way marking</li> <li>Include cycle routes on interpretation boards and leaflets</li> </ol>
	Leeds Involvement Project (Disability Group) for West Wedge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise some form of symbolisation to denote public houses that are accessible for the disabled</li> <li>Look at the feasibility of developing an audio facility for the blind and those with reading difficulties. Could include Braille</li> <li>Ensure bus routes are on the leaflets or link in with the metro website for bus routes as this is kept up to date</li> <li>Develop a CD-ROM for the initiative and also ensure the walks/routes are available on the internet, through Tourist Information and Libraries</li> <li>Expand 4 above to include copies of the CD-ROM, Braille and audio formats at Shire View (Disabled Centre in Headingley)</li> </ol>
	Leeds Ramblers Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all paths are marked on the maps that are integral to the interpretation boards and leaflets</li> </ol>
	Pudsey Civic Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have developed the Pudsey Boundary Walk and Country Walks in the Pudsey Calverley and Farsley areas</li> <li>Have a tradition of looking for new walks</li> <li>Developing a Ginnel Awareness Initiative</li> </ol>
	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the trust's logo goes on any interpretation boards on the reserve or directional signage leading to the site</li> <li>Possibility of information about the YWT within the WLCP&amp;GG leaflets</li> </ol>
	Calverley Millennium Way Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for updating and reprinting their brochure for the trail. Provides opportunity to publicise WLCP&amp;GG initiative.</li> <li>WLCP&amp;GG signage to link in with existing signage used on the Calverley Millennium Way</li> </ol>
	Friends of Calverley Woods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look into the feasibility of publicising Friend's groups on interpretation boards and/or leaflets. Could be a council contact number to provide the aforementioned information</li> <li>Have website specifically on Friends groups.</li> <li>Develop route leaflets for cyclists and horse riders.</li> </ol>
	Friends of Famley Fish Pond	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the routes are publicised on the website</li> <li>Utilise public houses and social clubs to distribute leaflets</li> <li>Develop a simple way marking symbol for the core route</li> </ol>
	Friends of Western Flatts Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public rights of way within the West Leeds urban area need to be highlighted</li> </ol>
	Friends of Woodhall Lake	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use simplistic signs for way marking</li> <li>Leaflets to cover natural areas and not wards</li> <li>Toilet provision and refreshments through cafes, petrol stations and public houses which can be marked on the maps.</li> </ol>

Kirkstall Village Community Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Progress and general article about the initiative can be publicised in the Kirkstall Matters</li> <li>2. Ensure directional signage is utilised to help new visitors</li> <li>3. Publicity an important element in developing the initiative</li> </ol>
Moorside Residents Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Routes are clearly marked</li> <li>2. Possibility of a leaflet for Bramley Falls</li> </ol>
Newlay Conservation Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bus numbers and timetables on web site to assist in walk planning</li> <li>2. Consider using the Arthur Gemmell style of map to portray the routes as they are of a descriptive nature</li> </ol>
Post Hill Preservation Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public Houses and doctor's surgeries could be used for distributing leaflets</li> <li>2. Ensure a range of walks are developed in respect to distances</li> <li>3. Way marks to have a distinctive logo and number to pinpoint them on the maps</li> </ol>
Pudsey Link Bridleway Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Importance of way marking</li> <li>2. Leaflets for horse riders showing the various trails and loops</li> <li>3. For events involve the Long Distance Horse Riding Association and develop the "Trek" an orienteering event for horse riders</li> </ol>
West Leeds Walking Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produce a leaflet for Bramley Fall showing all of the facilities along with information on it's history and wildlife</li> <li>2. Ensure mini circular trail leaflets are produced as well</li> </ol>

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## Requirements and suggestions concerning communication and liaison work

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
Requirements and suggestions concerning communication and liaison work	Bradford City Council	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bradford would like the minutes of the consultative forum to be sent on a regular basis. Any issues that arise meetings can be arranged to discuss appropriate solutions</li> <li>Useful if somebody from the WLCP&amp;GG working group could attend the Bradford Right of Way Forum to deal with any cross border issues</li> <li>Liase with Sustrans and their volunteers over any cycling events they may stage in the WLCP&amp;GG area</li> </ol>
	British Horse Riding Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notify the various liveries about forthcoming conservation projects linked to horse trails and surrounding areas</li> </ol>
	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attends the Leeds Walking Festival and can act as a conduit for information to various walking groups about the initiative</li> </ol>
	Leeds Cycling Consultation Forum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liase and consult with the North Leeds Mountain Bicycle Forum</li> </ol>
	Leeds Involvement Project (Disability Group) for West Wedge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise new walks through the Leeds Involvement Project</li> </ol>
	West Leeds Healthy Living Network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideal group in West Leeds for disseminating information on all aspects of the WLCP&amp;GG</li> <li>Has good rapport with the Armley Common Rights Trust</li> </ol>
	Post Hill Preservation Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater public consultation especially over effective barriers to control access</li> </ol>

## Labour force and volunteers

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
Labour force and volunteers	Groundwork Trust	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a design team and a labour force which could implement projects for the WLCP&amp;GG but for a fee</li> </ol>
	Leeds Involvement Project (Disability Group) for West Wedge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look into the feasibility of disabled volunteers auditing selected routes and providing appropriate funding for this purpose</li> </ol>

## Important group functions

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
Important group functions	British Waterways Board (BWB)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BWB are a statutory consultee on developments within 150m of the waterways.</li> </ol>
	Environment Agency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware that the Environment Agency are concerned with big commercial fly tipping misdemeanours and pollution incidents</li> <li>Ensure planning permission is sought where relevant for the various projects connected with the scheme</li> </ol>

## Nature Conservation Issues

<b>KEY THEME</b>	<b>COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION</b>	<b>CONCERNS/IDEAS</b>
<b>Nature Conservation Issues</b>	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can provide a volunteer work force for conservation projects for which there is a charge. Can also do design work for schemes.</li> <li>2. BTCV can provide insurance cover and training in conservation and associated aspects such as preparing risk assessments.</li> </ol>
	Commercial Estate Group (Development of Kirkstall Forge site)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Potential for fishing from the bankings</li> </ol>
	English Nature	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will be assessing the management of the Leeds Liverpool Canal in relation to the protection of its wildlife as it is a SSSI</li> <li>2. Coal barge mooring site adjacent to the Leeds Liverpool Canal and near Redcote Lane to be scrutinised in relation to compliance with section 106 agreement. Worries over demise of aquatic life on a designated SSSI</li> </ol>
	Environment Agency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Record of pond locations would represent a good community exercise</li> <li>2. Look at establishing fish passes at weirs along the River Aire</li> <li>3. Start at collating ecological data for the whole area of the initiative so future access or improvements projects are not at the expense of the wildlife</li> </ol>
	Leeds Naturalists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wildlife must be safeguarded such as through the development of quality footpaths that prevent the loss of adjacent vegetation</li> <li>2. Apply suitable management to all greenspace sites connected with the initiative to protect the indigenous wildlife</li> <li>3. Need a suitable and experienced voice to support the interests of wildlife in the scheme</li> <li>4. Ecological assessments required on sites that are likely to be improved to aid access and/or have increased visitation</li> </ol>
	Moravian Society, Fulneck	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In vicinity of Sisters Wood by Pudsey Beck presence of moist meadows that are floristically rich and may be prime candidates for SSSI protection</li> </ol>
	Wades Trust	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide help in the form of grants for specific projects and land acquisition under the terms of their remit. Has to be either within the old 1974 Leeds boundary or up to 1 mile outside</li> <li>2. Would consider the purchase of the Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve for the council however the latter require assurances that there is no toxicity in the fly ash from the former Kirkstall Power Station</li> </ol>
	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assurances required that nature conservation is taken into account and sites of ecological importance are not made vulnerable by measures to improve access and associated increased visitation</li> </ol>
	Armley Lodge Residents Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look into the feasibility of establishing Salmon jumps by the weirs</li> </ol>
	Calverley Millennium Way Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intend to do extensive conservation works (large woodland, pond and wetland area) on farmland in the vicinity of the Calverley Millennium Way</li> </ol>
	Hawsworth Wood Community Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As the river Aire becomes cleaner resolve outstanding fishing licences in areas suitable for fishing</li> <li>2. Look into the feasibility of establishing Salmon jumps by the weirs</li> </ol>
	Kirkstall Valley Park	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fish passes by weirs on the River Aire</li> </ol>
Post Hill Preservation Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conservation works required in Post Hill to include litter clearances, path refurbishment, better site lines on the paths, beck clearance and re-establishment of picnic area on the north side of the beck</li> </ol>	

## Grants, funding, charitable activities and sustainability

<b>KEY THEME</b>	<b>COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION</b>	<b>CONCERNS/IDEAS</b>
<b>Grants, funding, charitable activities and sustainability</b>	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)	1. Will support community groups in their quest for grant aid
	Environment Agency	1. Public art should be an integral part of the scheme. Can involve the local communities and receive local heritage funding from the Countryside Agency 2. Public art also funded through Arts Council and Lottery and could involve artists to develop gateways to sites, viewpoints, character seats habitat artwork. Also involve Education Leeds Curriculum Development Team and also Education Business Link in Pudsey
	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	1. Source of funding for conservation improvements on agricultural land. Important to hit key targets for funding application such as public access, proximity to SSSIs, improve habitats for nesting birds and also overwintering habitats. Also includes restoring ponds, hedgerows and walls
	Pudsey Civic Society	1. Run the Pudsey Plod, a Rotary initiative to raise money for own charities concerned with the people of Leeds 2. Concerned with the funding and long term sustainability of the WLCP&GG initiative
	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT)	1. Concerned over systems in place to assure continuity of the scheme
	Friends of Calverley Woods	1. Require funding assistance to purchase suitable motorbike barriers on routes into Calverley Woods
	Friends of Woodhall Lake	1. Look for sponsorship from the breweries if advertise their tied public houses on the leaflets
	Moorside Residents Association	1. The scheme is properly funded and maintainable
	Post Hill Preservation Society	1. Seek funding particularly section 106 for site improvements

## Elements for inclusion to the WLCP&GG initiative

<b>KEY THEME</b>	<b>COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION</b>	<b>CONCERNS/IDEAS</b>
<b>Elements for inclusion to the WLCP&amp;GG initiative</b>	Environment Agency	1. Consider including allotments in the initiative
	West Leeds Walking Group	1. Feasibility of including allotments and playing fields

## Contentious issues and safety measures

KEY THEME	COMMUNITY GROUP/ORGANISATION	CONCERNS/IDEAS
Contentious issues and safety measures	Leeds Naturalists	1. Ensure risk assessments are done for the walks
	Leeds Ramblers Association	1. Cyclists to have bells on their bicycles and encourage a more user friendly way of cyclists warning pedestrians of their approach
	Moravian Society, Fulneck	1. Issues over horse riding through the main thoroughfare within the settlement as it is not a designated bridleway
	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT)	1. Toxic elements from fly ash buried under the ground at the Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve appears to be a sticking point in renewing the lease with National Grid
	Friends of Farnley Balancing Reservoir	1. Car parking at a number of locations could be a problem. At Farnley Balancing Reservoir there are no car parks and the roads surrounding the site are extremely busy
	Friends of Woodhall Lake	1. Develop systems to minimise the potential friction between horse riders and pedestrians 2. Dog control essential in the presence of stock. Ensure the countryside code is displayed for information.
	Kirkstall Valley Park	1. Careful monitoring of canal towpath required as it is heavily used and there is a likelihood of undesirable interactions between different user groups
	Moorside Residents Association	1. Motorbike issues and other miscreant activities are kept under control
	Newlay Conservation Society	1. Need to monitor car parking areas (e.g. Rodley Marine, Railway Inn at Calverley Bridge) as these could become popular with the success of the initiative and cause problems in the locality 2. Resolve drug dealing activities at the bottom of Pollard Lane by Newlay Bridge 3. Fishing sites need to be resolved along the River Aire especially as the water quality improves. Illegal access onto private land to fish is a growing problem
	Post Hill Preservation Society	1. Concerned over developments in greenspace areas especially in the Post Hill area 2. Be aware that some areas of the initiative are not serviced by buses 3. Better control over motorbike activities
	Rodley Nature Reserve	1. Safety issues for walkers in the Ravenscliffe and Upper Moor Plantation areas with regard to miscreants

## Swot Analysis for the areas of greenspace within the West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.

### **Strengths**

- From Rodley down to North Burley there are numerous parks and greenspaces on each side of the Aire valley adjoining the various residential areas.
- In the Calverley, northwest of Woodhall, Bramley, Hawksworth and Post Hill areas there are large areas of accessible woodland.
- A comprehensive network of footpaths covers countryside areas from Horsforth to Apperley Bridge and likewise west, south and east of Pudsey. Within the urban areas towards the city centre various ginnels and roads provide good access to the various greenspaces and Parks.
- Leeds Liverpool Canal accessible the whole length of the green corridor.
- 23 allotments located at fairly regular intervals within residential areas that bound the project area.
- 36 Playgrounds, 22 bowling greens and 23 allotments located adjacent to and within key residential areas that adjoin the project area.
- 51 outdoor pitches for cricket, rugby and football located within various parks and recreation grounds within the project area and adjoining residential areas.
- Scattered woodlands – Calverley area (West Wood, Calverley Wood, Bill Wood, Round Wood and Ravenscliffe Wood), Rawdon area (Cragg Wood), Bramley (Monks wood, Bramley Fall), Hawksworth area (Hawksworth Wood, Little Hawksworth Wood), Pudsey area (Post Hill, Black Carr Wood, North Wood) and New Farnley (Nan Whin Wood).
- Wetland areas - Rodley Nature Reserve, Farnley Pond, Farnley Balancing Reservoir, River Aire and Leeds Liverpool, Tyersal Beck, Pudsey Beck, Oil Mill Beck and Farnley Beck. Includes Kirkstall, Burley and Kirkstall Forge goits
- Wild grassland/wild flower habitats (Dunkirk Hill, Newlay Meadow, Bramley Woods, Hawksworth Wood, Calverley Lane Picnic Site, Kirkstall Wild Flower Meadow, Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve, Calverley Gas works).
- 17 Leeds Nature Areas (Planning statutory rulings) protect important wildlife sites present in the project area and within adjacent residential areas. 1 Site of Ecological and geological interest (SEGI) and 1 Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) protect via English Nature statutory rulings the fauna and flora associated with the Leeds Liverpool Canal.
- There are 16 conservation areas and 7 Scheduled Ancient monuments within the project area and surrounding residential areas.
- 8 of the public open spaces have community involvement - Horsforth Hall Park, Calverley Woods, greenspaces in Newlay area, Silver Royd, Farnley Pond, Farnley Balancing Reservoir, Rodley Nature Reserve, Woodhall lake.
- Excellent walking and cycling route along the towpath by the Leeds Liverpool Canal. A65 has cycle lanes to promote safe cycling in and out of the city.
- Several bus services either run along section of the project area or cross it.

## Weaknesses

- Parks with facilities catering for youths are far and few between. There are only 5 multi use games areas (MUGA) of which 3 have skate board parks also as seen in Horsforth Hall Park, Pudsey Park and Becketts Park.
- Only one active cemetery and crematorium at Rawdon.
- Within the Aire Valley, the railway line, Leeds Liverpool Canal and the River Aire limit access to the various Parks and greenspaces within and adjacent to the green corridor. Going from the northwest to the southeast, crossing points are at Apperley Bridge, Calverley Bridge, Newlay Bridge, Bridge Road at Kirkstall and Canal Road Bridge and Redcote Lane at Armley and finally Wellington Road and Whitehall Road bridges in the City Centre.
- Not all Parks and Greenspaces have Friends groups or resident associations interested in their management and possible future development.
- Insufficient resources to bring all the Parks and greenspaces to an acceptable level of upkeep which meets local community needs.
- Towards the City end and within the West Leeds residential areas the number of public open spaces with associated recreational facilities are dispersed.
- The river Aire can only be accessed at a few location along the Kirkstall Valley e.g. Central Leeds Nature Reserve, Kirkstall Valley Nature Reserve, Burley Goit, Morrisons at Kirkstall, Kirkstall Park, Rein Road, Rodley Wetlands Nature Reserve, Calverley Lane Picnic Site, Calverley Gas Works Site and near Apperley Bridge.
- Access via public transport is limited crossing the City from either the east or west to reach the project area. The general rule is to catch a bus into the City centre and then select from one of a number of services that run out to the area of visitation.
- Train services are poor with only two lines with few stops. One route has stops at Leeds City, Burley and Headingley stations and thereby covers at least the southern half of the Aire Valley. The other route stops at Leeds City, Bramley and New Pudsey stations. The latter two stations give access to the east and northeast sections of the project area but a fair walk is entailed.
- There are few bridleways throughout the project area to provide suitable horse trails and mountain bike rides.
- To achieve a complete circle for the project area there is difficulty in finding an ideal green route to link the Silver Royd Hill area with the city centre going through Armley and Wortley. Will entail hopping from one greenspace to another using available ginnels and roads.

## Opportunities

- Create more youth provision at strategic locations up and down the green corridor. Locate in existing Parks and/or greenspace that support large adjacent residential areas. Park size and location within is critical to avoid potential noise nuisance.
- Through local community involvement develop a clearer picture on needs for the various Parks and greenspaces thereby ensuring a more efficient and effective use of available resources.

- Depending on the level and type of recreational use look at allowing appropriate greenspace sites to be developed into nature areas with decreased levels or changed management format.
- Future restructure will enable Wildlife & Countryside, Ranger Service and Parks Operation teams to work closer together, be more flexible and have clearly defined roles.
- Appropriate interpretation through signage and leaflets to develop the recreational potential of the project area.
- Develop a trail through the project area and ensure that details of various linking trails are mentioned such as the Leeds Country Way, Leeds Liverpool Canal towpath and Calverley Millennium Way.
- Improve the ecology of the project area through various conservation projects involving volunteer groups and local community groups.
- The formation of more Friends groups for various greenspace sites would help to consolidate and improve the quality of the project area.
- Develop a more comprehensive number of routes for cycling and horse riding throughout the project area.
- Opportunity to work closely with the British Waterways Board to develop a scheme for the use of electric scooters by disabled people along the canal towpath.

## Threats

- The need for more building land.
- Extensive residential developments at the northern end of the Aire Valley green corridor and beyond has put pressure on the existing roads in particular the A65 to cope with the increased traffic to the City of Leeds. The development of a trunk road down the green corridor would ease the traffic congestion and rat run areas in the various suburbs that flank the green corridor.
- Further developments in the project area may create further constriction points such as at Bridge Road, Kirkstall and along Bradford Road, Woodhall. These situations would interfere with the movement of wildlife up and down the corridor.
- Increased vandalism (arson, general damage), poaching, dumping, graffiti, various forms of pollution and anti-social behaviour especially in public open spaces showing signs of neglect.
- Uncertainties of future funding for Parks & Countryside especially as many of the services are not statutory.
- Inability to enforce bylaws due to insufficient resources and lack of empowerment.

## West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways. Management Compartments.

### Compartment 1 – Kirkstall Valley.

#### Site Description.

#### **Geographic Location and Range.**

The Kirkstall Valley lies approximately 1.75 kilometres north west of Leeds city centre, and straddles the course of the River Aire for some five kilometres out as far as Pollard Lane, just upstream of Newlay Locks. It is bounded by Burley, Kirkstall and Hawksworth to the north east, and Wortley, Armley and Bramley to the south west.

#### **Ownership**

Approximately 75% of the land within compartment 1 is either owned by or leased to Leeds City Council, and for the most part is vested with Learning and Leisure and managed by Parks and Countryside.

The largest private land holding (22 hectares) is the former Kirkstall Forge, formerly owned by Dana Spicer, which was sold in 2003 to Commercial Estates Group and for which development proposals are currently being drawn up, including 1 385 new houses as well as office space, restaurants, shops and a hotel.

The other major land holding is Kirkstall Nature Reserve, leased to the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust by National Grid. This linear reserve, bounded by the River Aire and the Leeds Liverpool Canal, is a mix of grassland and scrub and covers around 10.2 hectares. It was formerly the site of the fly ash lagoons for the Kirkstall Power Station.

#### **Landscape Character.**

This is the most urban compartment of the Country Park, the south eastern tip of which falls outside of the Green Belt boundary, but within 3 km of central Leeds. The River Aire and Leeds and Liverpool Canal run through the length of the compartment, as does the Leeds Bradford railway line.

However, the LLA landscape classification of the Kirkstall Valley as *Encapsulated Countryside* reflects the largely natural feel much of the valley possesses. To a greater extent it has resisted development and road building, whilst retaining large areas of parkland and woodland and open grassland, which now contribute to form a significant green corridor which reaches deep into the heart of the city.



This compartment also carries many significant historical sites, in particular the dramatic ruins of Kirkstall Abbey. This medieval Cistercian monastery, situated in the estate grounds on the edge of the River Aire, is freely open to the public.

To the north west of the Abbey are the woodlands of Hawksworth and Bramley Fall, both on the fringes of densely populated districts of Leeds, providing an easily accessible recreational resource for local people, though at the same time suffering from pressures and issues brought about by this close proximity to the urban fringe. Pressures include building development, recreational demands, fly tipping and the growth of areas of horse grazing, some of which has caused the land to become degraded with run down structures and over grazed land.

### **Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity.**

The dominant wildlife habitat in this compartment is broadleaf semi natural woodland, as represented by Bramley Fall Woods and Hawksworth Woods at the north western end of the compartment. These are also the largest blocks of woodland in the compartment, though there are also several smaller pockets, which would benefit from planted tree cover to create links between them in order to enable wildlife to spread and colonise.

Although there are many areas of amenity grassland, such as the playing fields around the Kirkstall Abbey Estate and Craggside Recreation ground, which are of limited benefit to wildlife, there are also a variety of open grassland sites, such as wildflower meadows and wet grassland which are of importance. Kirkstall Wildflower Garden, Abbey Mills Wildflower Meadow, Kirkstall Nature Reserve and Newlay Meadow provide a better range of habitats.

Wetland habitats are dominated by water courses, including the River Aire, Leeds Liverpool Canal and a series of goits and other small streams.

The canal from Armley Park to beyond the boundary of compartment 1 is a SSSI based on it being considered the best example of a slow flowing freshwater habitat in West Yorkshire. The presence of Hair-like Pondweed (*Potamogeton trichoides*) in the canal is also significant as it is scarce and declining in the county, whilst Ridged Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) and Arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*) both have a restricted distribution, but again are present.

### **Recreation.**

Much of the greenspace in this compartment is owned and / or managed by Parks and Countryside for a number of quiet recreational activities.

The Definitive PRoW network facilitates the use of the area by pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists, with an additional permissive bridle route, including a section for galloping, around Bramley Fall Woods.

The Aire Valley Towpath Route for cyclists runs along the entire length of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal towpath in this compartment, and there are several Doorstep Walks within this area also (Farnley Park, Kirkstall Abbey and Bramley Fall Woods).

A variety of sports grounds, allotment holdings, play areas, trim trails and picnic and seating areas serve this compartment.

In terms of cultural heritage, all of the Leeds City Council owned museums to be found in the Country Park are contained in this compartment . This includes the Kirkstall Abbey Estate, a 21.5 hectare site housing Kirkstall Abbey itself, as well as a separate visitor centre to interpret the Abbey and its history. Nearby is Abbey House Museum, which explores Victorian life and is housed in a former gatehouse to Kirkstall Abbey.

Leeds Industrial Museum, based in Armley Mills near Dunkirk Hill, was the site of the world's largest woollen mill, and was also once owned by Benjamin Gott. It is now a museum telling the history of textiles and engineering in Leeds.

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## **Compartment 1.**

### **Key sites owned and managed by Parks and Countryside**

#### **Dunkirk Hill - 2.1 Hectares**

A small triangle of scrub and grassland, skirted to the east by Canal Road, to the north by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and Armley Mills, and to the south by the Leeds Bradford railway line.

Access can be reached from Canal Road or at the end of the access road to Armley Mills.

The western point of the site has a good covering of scrub and more mature tree cover, whilst the eastern side is more open with a wild flower meadow. Its elevated position offers good views of this end of the Kirkstall Valley.

- Land owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Formerly managed by the Kirkstall Valley Ranger with assistance from the Park's staff.
- Facilities include seats and picnic tables.
- Picnic benches and park benches on the hill top.
- Protected as Greenspace and protected open land under the UDP guidelines.

#### **Armley Park - 13.6 Hectares**

The park is bounded to the south by Stanningley Road and to the north by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Gotts Park butts up to its entire western edge, whilst Armley Lodge Road skirts the eastern side of the park.

Access can be achieved at various points from all sides.

This historic site, has several grade II listed features including, The gate piers at the entrance on Stanningley Road, the War Memorial and The Fountain and associated plaques.

Armley Park is comprised of formal gardens, bowling greens, playground and sport pitches. There are also areas of scrub and woodland in Pasture Hills which is on the northern slope facing the canal.

- Land owned by LCC Learning & Leisure Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Playground has recently been refurbished.
- Old playground site and disused bowling green earmarked for skate park area.
- Protected as Greenspace, integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor and protected open land under the UDP guidelines.
- Part of Leeds and Liverpool Canal SSSI (No. 9) & SEGI (No.17).
- Stakeholders - Armley Lodge Residents Community Association.

#### **Gotts Park - 37.8 Hectares.**

The park is bounded to the south by Stanningley and Armley Ridge Road, and to the north by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Armley Park runs down its eastern flank, and the sports pitches for the LAZER Centre to the west.

Access can be achieved from various points along all sides except the western edge. Gotts Park became home to industrialist Benjamin Gott when he bought the manor of Armley in 1804. The estate included Armley House (now a Grade II Listed

Building), built by Thomas Woolrick in 1781. Humphry Repton landscaped the estate in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and Robert Smirke, designer of the British Museum, remodelled and enlarge the house in 1816. The estate listed in the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks & Gardens.

Wild areas of mature and semi-mature woodland exist on north slope facing the canal.

- Land owned by LCC Learning & Leisure Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Protected as greenspace, integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor and protected open land under the UDP guidelines.
- Part of Leeds and Liverpool Canal SSSI (No. 9)

#### Burley Growers Land and allotments - Hectares

The north western edge of the site is bounded by Kirkstall Road, whilst the River Aire envelopes much of the rest of the site. Burley Goit runs west to east across the northern corner, dividing the allotments to the south from the wooded area to the north.

Accessed by bridge across Burley Goit from Kirkstall Road by Lowe Engineering. A mix of allotments, growing predominantly vegetables and run by the Community Service (Probation Service), and wilder areas dominated by trees, shrubs and a rank field layer along the River Aire and Burley Goit banks.

Burley Mills Allotments are grade one agricultural land and are used by trainees undergoing Enhanced Community Punishment.

- Land owned by LCC Development Department
- Protected as Greenspace, integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor, protected open land and essential washland for river flood purposes under the UDP guidelines.
- Grade one agricultural land
- Stakeholders – Probation Service

#### Kirkstall Wild Flower Garden - 0.8 Hectare

The site is runs from south east to north west, slopes fairly steeply down to the west and is sandwiched between the goit and Kirkstall Road. An electricity pylon is located in the northern section.

Access can be reached from Kirkstall Road, Commercial Road and Bridge Road.

The garden is located on the edge of Kirkstall Road and consists of two sections which are separated by a car sales garage, but linked by a goitside path.

Facilities include cement seating, gravel path network, comprehensive directional signage, interpretation boards and patio area. Various habitats including boggy areas by Kirkstall Goit, semi-mature woodland and a wild flower meadow.

- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Protected as Greenspace under UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No. 67
- Stakeholders -Kirkstall Village Community Association.

### Abbey Mills Wild Flower Meadow - 0.2 Hectare.

The meadow lies to the west of the BHS car park, from which it is separated by a high chain link fence, and to the west of a goit linked to Abbey Mills.

Access can be achieved from Kirkstall Abbey and from Abbey Road by a pedestrian bridge across Kirkstall Goit and also from Bridge Road using the access road to Clough House.

Facilities include a light railway line with associated engine shed (no formal tenure), gravelled access road to Clough House and comprehensive directional signage.

Various habitats including scrub, young woodland, wetlands (Kirkstall Goit) and a wild flower meadow.

- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Protected as Greenspace and integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines.
- Stakeholders -Kirkstall Village Community Association.

### Kirkstall Abbey Estate -

Vesper Fields 8.0 Hectares

Abbey and grounds 11.1 Hectares

Abbey House Museum grounds 2.4 Hectares

Situated to the south of the Vesper's housing estate, and to the west of Morris Lane, the estate runs south east to north west, and is bounded to the south west by the River Aire. Abbey Road runs through the middle of the estate.

Access can be reached from Bridge Road, Abbey Road, Vesper Lane, Abbey Walk, Morris Lane and Spen Lane.

The Abbey and it's immediate grounds are located on the flood plain of the River Aire, so are flat and low-lying, but Abbey House museum and grounds and the Vesper field behind the car park are land that gently slopes down to the south west.

Extensive amenity grasslands used for large events, scattered mature trees and semi-mature trees and riverside vegetation.

Facilities include tarmac and gravel paths, seating, directional signage, formal gardens, historical Kirkstall Abbey and associated visitor centre, Kirkstall Abbey Museum, car park, sport pitches, playground, bowling green, tennis courts and Park's Depot.

Heritage Lottery Bid money at present being used to refurbish the Abbey and grounds.

Future possibilities to establish riverside footpath from Kirkstall Abbey to Dana Spicer works. Latter manufacturing plant closed and expected to be redeveloped with provision for greenspace included especially alongside the river.

- Owned by LCC Learning & Leisure Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service
- Protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines. Most of the site is a protected Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- Stakeholders -Kirkstall Village Community Association and the Friends of Kirkstall Abbey have a consultative role on the site.

### Monkswood - 3.1 Hectares.

Woodland is bounded to the north east by the Leeds-Bradford Road, and to the south west by Broadlea Terrace and Bramley's Broadlea Estate.

It can be accessed from the Leeds Bradford Road or Broadlea Close.

A thin strip of oak woodland with associated other tree species. Also has rough grassland areas, with some bracken.

There has been recent SRB/Forestry Commission funded works include fencing and hedgerow establishment on the Broadlea Close side with extensive clearance of rubbish throughout the site. Project also included thinning of oak tree stands to promote field layer, shrub layer and understorey tree development.

- Owned by LCC Learning & Leisure and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No 53
- Stakeholders – Sandford Residents Association.

### Fields between the Leeds Bradford Road and the Leeds Liverpool Canal - 15.5 Hectare.

This triangular piece of land runs down from the eastern edge of Bramley Fall Woods, and is bounded to the south west by the Leeds Bradford Road, and to the north west, by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The land holding does not include the property at the point of the triangle No management of area at present.

There is no formal access point, though the site can be access by climbing over the low wall on the edge of the Leeds Bradford Road, and there are various desire lines through the site

It contains a disused BTCV tree nursery, capped landfill site and abandoned school playing pitches and there is extensive regeneration of vegetation leading to semi-mature trees, scrub, rough grass and also bog areas close to the canal. It is Illegally grazed by travellers' horses and there are problems with Japanese Knotweed.

- Owned by LCC Learning & Leisure Services.
- Accessed from Leeds & Bradford Road and Bramley Fall Wood.
- Part of Leeds and Liverpool Canal SSSI (No. 9).
- Protected as Green Belt, Leeds Nature Area 053 and 020 and an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No 20.
- Stakeholders - BTCV

### Bramley Fall Woods - 39.4 Hectares.

This extensive piece of woodland is bounded by the Leeds Bradford Road to the south, and by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal to the north. Pollard Lane runs along its western border.

Access can be reached from several points along the Leeds Bradford Road and Pollard Lane, as well as canal towpath.

The site slopes down to the north, where it joins the canal at Newlay Locks.

Up until around the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the site operated as a millstone grit quarry, though the old quarry workings have now largely been covered a dense covering of oak/birch woodland. Some stands show evidence of former coppice, with old multi stemmed oak trees.

Since the mid 1960s new planting has been carried out in and around the woodland, and a number of new species introduced. The wood now contains varying ages of oak, sycamore, birch, western red cedar, Japanese larch, Lawson cypress, beech, pine, western hemlock, Norway maple, field maple, whitebeam, rowan and wild cherry. Under a Woodland Grant Scheme thinning of the woodland and removal of poor quality beech plantations has taken place. The latter are being replaced with native tree and shrub species indigenous to the area.

Existing on site facilities includes benches, a picnic area by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, trim trail and permanent set of orienteering posts. Recent SRB/Forestry Commission funded works have increased the facilities available with a horse trail, refurbishment of gravelled paths, comprehensive directional signage, and interpretation boards.

- Largely owned by LCC Learning & Leisure and managed by Parks & Countryside Service
- Allocated Section 106 monies to fund new replacement car park by Leeds Bradford Road.
- Part of Leeds and Liverpool Canal SSSI (No. 9).
- Leeds Nature Area No.20 (combined with Lower Falls)
- Protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, and an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines.
- Stakeholders - Moorside Tenants and Residents Association

#### Lower Fall - 4.0 Hectare.

Situated on the opposite bank of the canal to, and overlooked by Bramley Fall Woods, Lower Fall is bordered to the south west by the canal, and to the north east by the Leeds – Bradford railway line. On it's western edge is situated the former site of Parks and Countryside's saw mill, which closed in the mid 1990's.

Access can be reached from the canal towpath.

Lower Falls includes the now disused LCC Bramley Sawmill and active Scout Camp 'Hunters Greave' in its western section, and these can still be accessed via a rough tarmac road from Pollard Lane.

In the eastern section there is extensive unmanaged semi-mature woodland (Goat Willow and Birch predominantly), scrub and also small patches of rough grassland which will disappear shortly through succession. This section is accessed via vague desire lines that originate from the Leeds Liverpool Canal and the defunct LCC Bramley Sawmill.

- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Part of Leeds and Liverpool Canal SSSI (No. 9).
- Protected as Green Belt, and an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No. 20 (combined with Bramley Fall Woods)

### Hawksworth Wood - 19.2 Hectares.

This rectangular piece of woodland is bounded to the south by Abbey Road, to the north west by Oil Mill Beck, which flows south and runs parallel to Hawksworth Road, and to the north by Butcher Hill. Cragstone Recreation ground runs along the south eastern flank of the woodland, the two being separated by a newly planted hedgeline.

Access can be reached from Hawksworth Road by crossing the beck at certain points, Butcher Hill and Abbey Road.

Additionally, there are also several routes in from the recreation ground.

The site was formerly quarried for millstone grit, and within the wood there are disused quarry workings, an abandoned brick lined water reservoir and scattered sandstone channels once used to divert spring water to a mill.

Since quarrying finished in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century, woodland and scrub has colonised the old quarry floor and spoil heaps. The cover is predominantly oak and sycamore, with an understorey of rowan, hazel, holly and guelder rose.

Small relic pockets of heather can also be found, covering the lobes of quarry tops, but due to the closed woodland canopy, these tiny remnant pieces of lowland heath are declining.

In addition there is a wild flower meadow, a long length of hedgerow, and scrubland. Wetlands are present and include springs, a pond and a section of Oil Mill Beck and Abbey Mill Race.

In recent years, the woodland has received a light thin to encourage greater structural diversity and to promote the development of the understorey and ground flora.

Recent SRB/Forestry Commission funding had been used for signage, interpretation boards, path refurbishment, removal of dangerous railings and trees on the banking facing Abbey Road (A65).

- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Under UDP guidelines protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, and is an integral part of a Green Corridor which links in with the Aire Valley Green Corridor.
- Leeds Nature Area No.50
- Stakeholders – Hawksworth Residents Association.

### Cragstone Recreation Ground - 2.8 Hectare.

This piece of open space runs adjacent to Hawksworth Woods, which forms its north western boundary, and is bounded to the south east by Cragstone Walk and the Hawksworth housing estate. Abbey Road runs along the southern edge of the site, and Butcher Hill to the north.

Access can be achieved Accessed from Cragstone Walk, Hawksworth Wood and Vesper Road.

The site consists of amenity grass with a few dispersed trees on the periphery. The ground undulates in places, as most of the site is a quarry that has been landfilled and capped.

Facilities include a school sports pitch, playground and benches.



- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Under UDP guidelines protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, and is an integral part of a Green Corridor which links in with the Aire Valley Green Corridor.
- Leeds Nature Area No 31
- Stakeholders – Hawksworth Residents Association.

Newlay Meadow - 1 Hectare.

This small strip of open ground is bounded to the west by Pollard Lane, and to the south by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The access road to the former Lower Fall Saw Mill runs along the northern and eastern edge of the site.

Access can be reached from Pollard Lane and the canal towpath, though a well established hedgeline follows the access road, making access difficult here.

Newlay Meadow comprises a wild flower meadow, scrub and semi-mature woodland.

Facilities include a picnic table, benches and comprehensive directional signage.

- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Part of Leeds and Liverpool Canal SSSI (No. 9).
- Protected as Green Belt and an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines.
- Stakeholders - Newlay Conservation Society

**West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.**  
**Management Compartments.**

**Compartment 2 – Horsforth.**

**Site Description.**

**Geographic Location and Range.**

A significant element of this compartment is formed by the township of Horsforth (population 21 825 in 2001 Census ), which lies some eight kilometres north west of Leeds City centre.

The southern edge is, to a greater extent, bounded by the River Aire (including the large meander which envelops Rodley Nature Reserve) and its associated flood plain, whilst the northern western corner abuts the districts of Rawdon and Yeadon and to the north east, lies Tinshill and Cookridge.

Hawksworth, including Hawksworth Woods, and Newlay lie to the east, and to the west, the open farmland which lies to the east of Calverley.

**Ownership.**

In sharp contrast to compartment one, much of the land ownership within this section is private, and those owned or managed by LCC are scattered.

The most significant of the Authority's land holdings is Horsforth Hall Park (15.5 hectares), with Hunger Hills, just to the north, the second largest (6.4 hectares).

Rodley Nature Reserve (30.4 hectares) forms one of the largest private land holdings, and is owned by Yorkshire Water, but managed by the Rodley Nature Reserve Trust

The reserve was originally a sewerage farm, which opened in 1910, and processed the raw sewage whilst continuing to operate as a agricultural farm. Yorkshire Water converted the site to a pumping plant, transferring the sewage treatment to Knostrop, east of Leeds. The reserve, which was opened in 2000, is leased from Yorkshire Water PLC for sixty years at a peppercorn rent.

**Landscape Character.**

Much of the eastern side of this compartment, incorporating the Horsforth area, sits outside of the Green Belt boundary, whilst that to the north, around Hunger Hills, and to the west, to the south of Rawdon, is situated within the Green Belt.

These are largely areas of pastoral farmland, based on an elevated millstone grit plateau, and is generally more rural in character.

The landscape consists of generally intact fields, as can be seen to the west of West End Lane. These are regularly bounded by a mix of hedgerows and (mainly) drystone walls and are grazed by sheep and cattle.

Woodland occurs in small copses and as ribbons of semi-natural cover along streams and becks, such as that following the course of Gill Beck.

Extensive uninterrupted views can also be gained over surrounding areas, particularly at Hunger Hills, where there are spectacular view across the Leeds District and beyond.

The river valley element of this compartment, which follows the course of the River Aire and the canal, is extensive, with the south eastern side of the compartment being largely defined by the deep river meander, which envelops the wetland site occupied by Rodley Nature Reserve.

Along the valley bottom there is a mix of land uses, including pastoral farmland, areas of amenity or recreational grassland, such as Rodley Sports Ground and isolated pockets of industry or public utility works, as found on the outside edge of the meander near Rodley.

This wide flood plain is skirted to the north and south by steep valley sides which support areas of woodland, such as Swaine Wood, Lodge Wood and Cragg Wood. Wooded cover also follows the line of the Leeds – Bradford railway line, as well as the River Aire.

### **Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity.**

Grassland forms the dominant wildlife habitat in this compartment, the majority of which is located to the north and west of Horsforth, and consists of improved or semi improved pasture, and associated hedgerow and scattered tree cover. The latter is likely to be remnant woodland cover, as there has been a steady removal of woodland to created agricultural land and for development.

Within the Aire valley bottom in particular, where there is a high water table, wet pasture proliferates, and this provides valuable wintering habitat for waterfowl and waders.

Amenity parkland, such as that at Horsforth Hall Park, and sports pitches and recreation grounds, such as that at Rodley and Hawksworth, are of limited conservation value as the regular mowing throughout the spring and summer suppresses wildflower growth. Where less frequently cut margins exist, the value increases, though low intervention management will eventually lead to scrub cover becoming established.

The main areas of woodland within the compartment are located on valley sides, such as Hunger Hills, Swaine Wood and Cragg Wood (Rawdon). The latter two stands also appear on the Ancient Woodland Inventory, as Ancient Semi Natural woodland so are important as they contribute to the 300 hectares of woodland across the Leeds District which is unplanted (total area of woodland – 2650 hectares, 1991). It is likely that the topography of these woodlands has rendered them unsuited to development or agriculture, so they have been retained as woodland.

The wetland areas in this compartment are generally located in the Aire Valley, along the valley bottom. They are central to the green corridor which runs right in to the heart of the city, and the waters and margins of the river and canal enable the spread of wildlife.

Although the water quality of the Aire is not particularly good, it still provides an important habitat for a variety of wildlife species, in particular invertebrates. The canal is of a high enough quality to be classified as a SSSI as far out as Lodge Wood, but even from this point to its western extremity in the Leeds District, it has been classified as a Site of Geological and Ecological Importance.

The 30 hectare Rodley Nature Reserve site is of particular importance to wildlife, and supports an excellent range of habitats types, from open water to hedgerow.

## **Recreation.**

Although this compartment only contains pockets of parks and greenspace managed by Parks and Countryside, the PRoW network is quite comprehensive, and is particularly well served by definitive footpaths.

A 6.5 km stretch of the Leeds Country Way runs through the compartment, from just above Trinity and All Saints College, through Hunger Hills, and across the open countryside to the west of Horsforth, before dropping down to follow the River Aire. The Aire Valley Towpath Route for cyclists runs along the entire length of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal towpath in this compartment, and the Horsforth Doorstep walk also passes through, just to the north of Horsforth.

Horsforth Hall Park provides a very good selection of recreation facilities, with gardens, a restaurant and toilets and a large children's play area, with adjacent Hippo play area (Horsforth Integrated Play Project), a specially designed outdoor integrated play facility allowing disabled and able bodied children under the age of eight to play together.

A skateboard park to the south of the park serves older children, and there is also a cricket pitch and pavilion and bowling green in the same area.

The newly installed bandstand is a venue for brass band concerts in the summer.

Rodley Nature Reserve is open to the public three days a week (Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday), and provides good facilities for wildlife watching.

In addition, there are a variety of other recreational facilities across the compartment, including sports pitches and recreation grounds and allotment holdings.

## **Compartment 2.**

### **Key sites owned and managed by Parks and Countryside**

#### **Cragg Wood, Horsforth – 1.3 Hectares.**

The woodland is bordered by Wood Lane to the north west and Wood Way to the south east. Additionally, there are a number of open fields and amenity pitches bordering the woodlands to the west and east.

Access can be achieved from various points along Wood Lane and Woodway.

This piece of woodland, together with Hawksworth Wood and Little Hawksworth formed a complex of woodlands in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century, which were quarried for sandstone, today they have been somewhat fragmented by development and road building.

Predominantly a broadleaved woodland containing oak and sycamore, with an understory consisting of rowan, hazel, holly and guelder rose.

- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Under UDP guidelines protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, and is an integral part of a Green Corridor which links in with the Aire Valley Green Corridor.
- Leeds Nature Area No. 31
- Stakeholders – Hawksworth Residents Association.

#### **Little Hawksworth Woods – 1.7 Hectares.**

The woodland is bordered by housing to the north and west, whilst Abbey Road runs along its southern edge. Hawksworth Woods still borders it to the east, though Hawksworth Road runs between the two.

The woodland can be accessed from various points off Abbey Road, Craggside Close and Butcher Hill.

Once part of the much larger Hawksworth Wood complex, Little Hawksworth Wood has largely stayed intact as compared to the 1851 OS map.

It too is broadleaved woodland containing mostly oak and sycamore, with an understory consisting of rowan, hazel and holly.

- Owned by LCC Development Department and managed by Parks & Countryside Service
- Under UDP guidelines protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, and is an integral part of a Green Corridor which links in with the Aire Valley Green Corridor.
- Leeds Nature Area No 50 (combined with Hawksworth Woods)
- Stakeholders – Hawksworth Residents Association.

#### **The Outwood (Newlay Woods and Rein Road) - 2.22 Hectares.**

This small parcel of woodland lies adjacent to Rein Road, which runs around its eastern and southern edge, with the former Yorkshire Water Horsforth Sewerage Works, (now dismantled), also bordering its eastern edge.

To the north west is the Newlay Woods housing estate, whilst New Road Side runs along its northern boundary.

Access can be achieved from Newlay Lane, New Road Side and Newlay Wood Close.

The Outwood was once incorporated in the Hawksworth Wood complex, and is predominantly mature Birch/Oak woodland with a mix of other understory species present. A spring emanates from within the woods and flows into Kirkstall Forge Goit. Woodland of mixed tree species and age is also present on each side of Rein Road and Kirkstall Forge Goit.

Facilities include a gravelled track (Rein Road) which links New Road Side (A65) with the Newlay Lane and acts as a riverside walk. There are also benches along the track in the vicinity of the river. In Newlay Woods there is a flagged path linking Rein Road with Newlay Wood Close.

- Owned predominantly by Leisure Services and managed by Parks & Countryside Service. Controversy still surrounds the ownership of the Kirkstall Forge Goit. Land between Rein Road and the river Aire and west of and including the old piggery site is owned by Echo Halt Ltd.
- Protected as Green Belt, and an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No 86
- Stakeholders – Newlay Conservation Society.

#### Horsforth Hall Park – 15.5 Hectares.

This well used park is bounded to the east by Fink Hill and to the north by Hall Lane. The Broadway (Outer Ring Road) runs parallel to the southern edge, whilst the Park housing estate borders the western edge.

All boundaries are buffered by well established shelter belts.

Access can be gained from Fink Hill, Hall Lane and Ring Road – Horsforth (Broadway) and Park Drive.

There is also vehicular access from Hall Lane as well as the main gates by the Ring Road.

The old stable block (built 1707) next to the Japanese Garden is the only remains of the Stanhope's Horsforth Hall, built in 1699. Much of the present day park was a deer park. The ha-ha which separated the garden from the Park can still be seen, and the bridge that crossed it is still in use.

The park and house was gifted to the township in 1932 by the Mathieson family.

Facilities include tarmac paths, seating, bandstand, restaurant and toilets, car parking, skateboard park, cricket pitch, bowling green, main children's play area and Hippo (The Horsforth Integrated Play Project) play area, horticultural planting and beds and Japanese Garden and water feature.

Mature shelter belts of trees planted on perimeter of the park and adjacent to paths, including Beech, Sycamore Scot's Pine, Rowan, Oak, Lime, Cherry, Hornbeam, Holly, Horse Chestnut and Ash. Shelter belt adjacent to Fink Lane has Bluebells in the ground flora.

- Owned by LCC Learning & Leisure and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Stakeholders – Friends of Horsforth Hall Park and Friends of Hunger Hills.

#### Hall Lane Field – 0.5 Hectares.

This small piece of open space is bordered on three sides by housing, with the main point of access from Hall Lane.

Access can be reached from Hall Lane and footpath to the south of Hunger Hills.

The northern end of the site is very damp, making access from the footpath to the north difficult due to water logging.

Issues with the tipping of garden cuttings, and unauthorised cutting of trees from some adjacent households.

Section 106 funding has been earmarked (2007) for access and landscape improvements, including paths works, tree and wild flower planting.

- Owned by LCC Learning & Leisure and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Public Open Space.
- Stakeholders – Friends of Horsforth Hall Park.

#### Hunger Hills – 6.4 Hectares.

Hunger Hills is bordered to the south by West End Drive and associated housing estate, but all other edges are bounded by open fields, which are contained by hedgelines and occasional drystone walls.

Access to the woodland can be achieved from a network of definitive footpaths, (including part of the Leeds Country Way), which feed into the site from multiple points.

Set on high ground which provides a good view point overlooking Horsforth and Leeds beyond, this wooded hill also forms a significant feature in the landscape. The site now has approximately 50% more woodland coverage than shown on the 1851 OS map, due largely to natural regeneration to the east and some planting. Under the Open Access element of the Countryside and Rights Of Way Act (2000), Hunger Hills became Common Land.

- Owned by LCC Learning & Leisure and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Leeds Nature Area No 55.
- Stakeholders – Friends of Hunger Hills.

#### Rodley Sports Ground – 6.3 Hectares.

Predominantly sports pitches which are bounded to the east by the River Aire and to the west by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. The rest of the site is surrounded by open fields, segregated by hedgerow and young trees, with a water course running across the northern edge of the site, flowing from west to east.

Access can be achieved Rodley Road via Moor Bridge Road that crosses the Leeds Liverpool canal.

Facilities include a cricket pitch and benches and two rugby pitches.

Vegetation comprises amenity grassland, young trees on the periphery and rank field layer on the riverside banking.

- Land owned by LCC Learning & Leisure and managed by Parks & Countryside Service.
- Protected as Green Belt, Protected Playing Pitch, an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor and partly act as Washland for river flooding under the UDP guidelines.

### Swaine Wood – 2.4 Hectares

Bounded to the west by the Outer Ring Road - Broadway (A6120) and the campus of Airedale and Wharfedale College, and to the south by the Leeds to Bradford railway line, just to the south of which is the River Aire.

Access is achieved from the Broadway via a public footpath and similarly from Newlaithes Road and Victoria Crescent.

The remainder of the site is surrounded by open fields, bounded by largely fragmented hedgerow.

The woodland appears on the Ancient Woodland Inventory as ancient semi natural woodland, and consists largely of oak/birch woodland, with associated understory tree species. Additionally at the top of the ridge there are small areas of scrub and rough grassland.

The western section of the woodland is unregistered ownership though claimed by Horsforth Motorcycling Club, and suffers extensive damage from motorcycling activity with scant ground and field layers.

- Old landfill present within LCC section and extensively excavated for vintage bottles.
- Protected as Greenspace, Green Belt, Leeds Nature Area 102, an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor under the UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No 102

### Calverley Lane Picnic Site – 4.1 Hectares.

Calverley Lane Picnic site East – 2.7 Hectares.

Calverley Lane Picnic site West – 1.4 Hectares.

The triangular shaped eastern end of the site is bounded to the west by the Outer Ring Road (A6120), and to the south by the River Aire. The Leeds to Bradford railway line forms the northern boundary and converges to the east with the railway line.

Access can be achieved from the Ring Road, or along the river side path from the western end of the site.

The eastern end of the site is bounded to the east by Outer Ring Road (A6120) and to the south by the River Aire. Calverley Lane runs along the northern edge of the boundary, and down towards the river.

Access can be achieved from Calverley Lane, from Calverley Bridge over the river or from the Outer Ring Road.

The combined sites are reclaimed landfill sites which now form extensive wild flower meadow with hedgerows, a number of plantations of young trees on the bankings and a rank field layer with dispersed trees on the riverside bankings.

Facilities include benches, picnic tables, comprehensive directional signage, interpretation boards, grass paths and riverside gravel paths.

- Owned by LCC Highways Department.
- Protected as Greenspace, Green Belt and an integral part of the Aire Valley Green Corridor (only eastern section for latter designation) under the UDP guidelines.



**West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.**  
**Management Compartments.**

**Compartment 3 – Calverley**

**Site Description.**

**Geographic Location and Range.**

This compartment lies along the western edge of the Metropolitan District of Leeds, and is some 10 kilometres to the north west of Leeds city centre. It is bounded by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal to the north, and the boundary of the Leeds Metropolitan District to the west, beyond which is Bradford. To the south and east lie the districts of Farsley and Rodley, and within the very middle of the compartment, sits the village of Calverley (population in 2001 census) .

**Ownership.**

Thornhill Estates own extensive elements of greenspace within this compartment, in particular the complex of woodland running to the south of the canal and down along the western boundary of the Metropolitan District of Leeds, which totals some 82.4 hectares.

Within this complex there is –

Mudge Bank Woods  
Lodge Wood  
Calverley Woods  
West Wood  
Bill Wood  
Round Wood  
Ravenscliffe Woods

At present there is consultation between Leeds City Council and the Thornhill Estate to renew the lease for the woodlands, which ran out in 2003.

To help facilitate this, the Forestry Section has drawn up a Management Plan to contribute to a management agreement with the Estate.

The current Parks and Countryside managed land holdings in compartment 3 is rather modest, the largest of which is Woodhall Lake (4.8 hectares), leased by the Authority from Bradford City Council.

**Landscape Character.**

The northern section of this compartment (land to the north of the village of Calverley) falls within the River Valley landscape type, as set out in the Leeds Landscape Assessment.

Within the valley bottom, field boundaries, including fragmented hedgerow and drystone walls, define areas of pasture, through which the River Aire flows from north west to south east. The course of the river is shadowed by that of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and between the two runs the Leeds to Bradford railway line.

The valley sides rise moderately steeply, and are cloaked to the south by the extensive woodland cover of the Calverley Woods complex.

South of the village of Calverley the landscape is to some extent dominated by a plateau, to the west of which the ground drops steeply down in to the Fagley Beck valley. Again, the valley side on the Leeds flank is heavily wooded, forming a buffer against the Bradford district, which is fairly built up.

Much of the plateau top, between the eastern edge of the woodland belt, across to Woodhall Road, is filled by the privately run Woodhall Hills Golf Course and beyond this, up to the eastern edge of the compartment, the landscape gives way to fields, dotted with some larger properties.

### **Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity.**

The dominant wildlife habitat particularly in the north and west of the compartment is woodland, just about all of which is Ancient Semi-natural Woodland as set out in the Ancient Woodland Inventory for West Yorkshire.

Much of this is dominated by an Sessile Oak / Silver Birch mix, with some concentrations of Sycamore, Beech and Rowan. There are also as well as scattered stands of Goat Willow, Hawthorn and Elder, and small pockets of Wych Elm, Ash, Lime, Sweet Chestnut and Horse Chestnut.

There is evidence of former management in the form of coppice, with multi stemmed Oak particularly to the south of the quarried area.

The quarried areas have largely been colonised by Silver Birch and Goat Willow, but there are also patches of Heather.

The Leeds and Liverpool Canal, which forms the northern boundary for the compartment, is designated as a SSSI to the east of Lodge Wood. To the west of this point, and up to the Leeds / Bradford District boundary, it is classified as a SEGI. These designations are based on the canal forming one of the best examples of a linear wetland habitat in West Yorkshire, supporting a diverse range of aquatic plant species and communities

The canal sustains a good community of submerged and emergent vegetation, and there are several large stands of Arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*) at various points along the canal to the north of Calverley Woods. This is a species which has a restricted distribution in the West Yorkshire, and also provides important cover for aquatic invertebrates such as Dragonflies and Damselflies as well as fish fry.

Additionally, Fagley Beck runs along the western edge of the compartment, through much of the woodland

The most significant area of standing water in the compartment is Woodhall Lake, which covers 0.9 hectares, and support some marginal cover in the form of a small bed of Phragmites along its south eastern flank.

This, together with a Salix swamp to the south of the island, provides good cover for aquatic invertebrates and fish fry, which is particularly important as the water body is used for angling.

Much of the grassland in this compartment is dominated by amenity facilities, the most widespread of which is Woodhall Hills Golf Course, which covers around 46 hectares. The course, though extensive, does hold some favourable wildlife habitat, including some well established planted tree cover and rough grassland areas.

Much of the rest of the grassland cover in the compartment is pastoral acidic / neutral grassland, with associated field boundaries of hedgerow and drystone wall. Whilst not particularly unusual floristically, it does provide good cover for birds such as waders, particularly the wetter areas on the valley floor. Additionally, it contributes to maintaining a continuous green corridor through this part of the Aire Valley.

### Recreation.

In terms of informal public recreation, the Calverley Woods complex probably forms the most significant area for local people wishing to engage in walking, cycling and running.

To this end, the Calverley Millennium Way Group have established a route which encircles the village of Calverley, running through the surrounding countryside including the Calverley Woods complex and the canal.

In addition, a section of the Leeds Country Way follows the eastern boundary of the compartment.

At the southern tip of the compartment is Woodhall Lake, which is leased by Leeds City Council from Bradford City Council, and is well used and valued by local people who generally use it for walking and running.

In addition, the fishing rights for the lake are currently held by the Bramley Ward Angling League.

In terms of more formal sporting provision, there are two private golf courses (Woodhall Hills Golf Course and the Calverley Golf Club Course) in the southern half of the compartment, both situated on the plateau to the east of the Fagley Valley, and a number of adjacent sports pitches, close to Woodhall Lake, associated with Bradford University.

In addition, there are also several Recreation Grounds and an allotment holding. Within the village of Calverley, but just outside of the Country Park boundary is Victoria Park.

### **Compartment 3.**

#### **Key sites owned and managed by Parks and Countryside**

##### The Calverley Woods Complex.

Mudge Bank Woods (1 hectare)  
Lodge Wood (5.7 hectares)  
Calverley Woods (41.6 hectares)  
West Wood (10.1 hectares)  
Bill Wood (5.9 hectares)  
Round Wood (5 hectares)  
Ravenscliffe Woods (13.1 hectares)

An extensive complex of woodlands, which are bounded to the north by the Leeds And Liverpool Canal, to the west by the Leeds / Bradford Metropolitan District boundary, and to the south and east by Woodhall Hills Golf Course and the Calverley Golf Club Course.

There are multiple access points to all of these woods.

The majority of the woodland is owned by Thornhill Estates, though part of West Wood is owned by the Woodland Trust.

Negotiations are ongoing between Parks & Countryside and Thornhill Estates to formulate a lease to retain public access. The lease will operate on the basis that part of the maintenance costs will be met by the landowners, with support from Forestry Commission grants, and Parks & Countryside will provide the labour element in kind, as well as advising and supervising local community groups wishing to become involved in the management of the sites.

The woodlands support a number of species, most widespread of which is a mix of Sessile Oak and Silver Birch. There are also concentrations of Sycamore, Beech and Rowan, as well as scattered Goat Willow, Hawthorn and Elder, and small pockets of Wych Elm, Ash, Lime, Sweet Chestnut and Horse Chestnut.

Fagley Beck runs down the western edge of the woodlands, and as it provides a boundary between the Metropolitan Districts of Leeds and Bradford, any future developments are quite likely to require joint initiatives.

The Friends of Calverley Wood have already provided funds through the Local Heritage Initiative, which were used to repair access points to Calverley Woods, and the group are now actively involved in repairing dry stone walls around this wood. In addition they have funded an archaeological survey for Calverley Wood, which is now complete with report in preparation.

- Protected as Green Belt, Urban Fringe Priority Area and Special Landscape Area under the UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No. 23 (Lodge Wood, Calverley Wood and West Wood).  
Leeds Nature Area No.15 (Round Wood, Bill Wood and Ravenscliffe Wood).
- Stakeholders –Friends of Calverley Woods & Calverley Millennium Way Group.

### Woodhall Lake 4.8 hectares

Bounded to the east by Woodhall Lane, and to the south by Bradford Road, the remainder of the site is skirted by playing fields and sports grounds belonging to Bradford University.

Access can be achieved from Woodhall Lane and also from several points leading in from surrounding greenspace.

The site is owned by Bradford City Council, leased to Leeds City Council's Learning & Leisure, and managed by Park & Countryside.

Facilities include comprehensive directional signage, gravel paths, tarmac paths boardwalk and benches. Recent Section 106 monies and Green Leeds Limited grant funding has enabled mature trees to be surveyed with essential safety works carried out. Additionally, a disabled fishing platform has been installed, and funds will also cover the forthcoming refurbishment of the gravel paths.

The Friends of Woodhall Lake have funded the fabrication and installation of an interpretation / notice board at the main Woodhall Lane entrance

Fishing rights for the lake are by licence, which at present is held by the Bramley Ward Angling League.

In consultation with the Environment Agency, the pond was dredged in 1999 to increase its amenity, fishing and wildlife value.

The site comprises of a 0.9 hectare lake, which is surrounded by a mixed broadleaf woodland, hedgerows, ditches, wetland area, rough grassland, scrub and areas of rank herbal vegetation.

Some areas of the woodland are vigorously regenerating and small scale thinning and other management operations have been carried out to promote a more diverse understorey.

New planting will be carried out to create a graded edge to the woodland, which will help to diversify and increase habitats for a number of species of birds and small mammals.

As part of the management scheme, native black poplar will be planted, which will help to conserve this naturally disappearing tree species.

Protected as Green Belt, Urban Fringe Priority Area and Special Landscape Area under the UDP guidelines.

- Protected as Green Belt, Urban Fringe Priority Area and Special Landscape Area under the UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No. 112.
- Stakeholders –Friends of Woodhall Lake, Bradford University and Bradford City Council

### Brookfield Recreation Ground – 3.5 hectares

Bounded to the east by Farsley Ring Road and to the south by Calverley Lane, the remainder of the site is skirted by open ground.

Access is achieved from Brookfield Gardens.

Farsley Recreation Ground – 2.0 hectares

Skirted to the west by Farsley Ring Road, the remainder of the site is bounded by a number of different roads which terminate at the recreation ground.

Access is achieved from several points.

Farfield Recreation Ground – 4.0 hectares

Bounded to the west by Farsley Ring Road, and to east by Coatfields Avenue, Westway and Farsley Cricket Ground. The northern end of the site is bordered by Priesthorpe Road and Wadlands Drive.

Access can be achieved from several points.

Two PRoW cross the site, but are bisected by the Farsley Ring Road.

Gatescroft Allotments – 1.03 hectares

Bounded to the south by Carr Road and to the West by Pearson Street. Calverley Woods skirts the northern edge, whilst to the east runs Wood Lane.

Access can be achieved from Carr Road.

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**West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.**  
**Management Compartments.**

**Compartment 4 – Fulneck**

**Site Description.**

**Geographic Location and Range.**

Much of this compartment wraps itself around the west, south and east of Pudsey town, which itself lies some 7.5 km west of Leeds city centre.

It is effectively sandwiched between Holme Wood and Tong, in the Metropolitan District of Bradford to the south and west, and the township of Pudsey in Leeds to the north.

Tong Road forms its eastern boundary, beyond which is Farnley and Park Spring.

**Ownership**

The land holdings within this compartment are predominantly agricultural and privately owned. In addition, there is also the Moravian settlement at Fulneck, founded in 1744, which is situated to the south of Pudsey.

Parks and Countryside own and/or manage a handful of sites in the area. The largest of these is Post Hill, an extensive area of mainly secondary natural woodland, which lies between Pudsey and Farnley, but which has only recently (2002) come into Parks and Countryside management.

**Landscape Character.**

Falling, as it does, within the valley's associated with Pudsey, Tyersal and Farnley Becks, much of this area is characterised by steeply sloping valley sides, running down to small fast flowing streams.

There are a number of patches and strips of woodland associated with these valleys and watercourses, which cling to steep sloping valley sides. The most extensive of these, in this compartment, being Post Hill.

In contrast, there are also numerous areas of agricultural land, some of which, particularly in the Troydale area, are arable, which is relatively unusually for this part of Leeds.

In pastoral areas field boundaries tend to be somewhat fragmented, particularly hedgerows.

**Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity.**

Much of the land within this compartment is agricultural, with a mix of pastoral and arable farming, particularly along the lines of Pudsey and Farnley Becks. Although of limited nature conservation value, there are features, such as hedgerows and

associated large over mature boundary trees, which provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species, as well as helping to facilitate its mobility and spread by helping to maintain continuous green corridors.

In particular, bats find these habitats helpful, as linear habitats enable them to reach feeding areas, whilst avoiding wide open spaces, where they are vulnerable to predation. In addition, fissures and holes in old trees provide roosting opportunities and offer places to hibernate.

Strips of woodland, which follow the line of water courses, are of value for the same reasons.

The more extensive woodland cover of Post Hill, which is largely dominated by a Sessile Oak / Siler Birch mix, together with other associated canopy and shrub species, including Field Maple, Sycamore, Rowan and Ash; Hawthorn, elder, Holly and Hazel.

Along the course of Farnley Beck, where the water table is higher and ground conditions wetter, Crack Willow and Alder can also be found.

The watercourses themselves tend to be narrow and fast flowing, and prone to spate conditions and flooding following prolonged rain.

Due to their being fast flowing, they also tend to be well oxygenated, and populated with aquatic invertebrates such as Caddis Flies, Stone Flies and Alder flies, which are predated on by freshwater fish. Waterside birds such as Kingfishers and Grey Wagtails are subsequently also present due to the availability of food.

## **Recreation.**

There is a reasonable PRow network within this compartment, with a number of bridleways and footpaths running up and down the valley sides, as well as a stretch which follows Pudsey Beck.

A stretch of the Leeds Country Way tracks around the south of Pudsey for some 6 km, largely following the watercourses, whilst the Pudsey Link cuts across Troydale, dropping down in to the valley from Pudsey, before crossing over close to the northern edge of Nan Whin Wood.

To the west of Pudsey, is Tyersal Lane Park, which has a football pitch with changing rooms, a children's playground, two tennis courts, a kick about area, and a bowling green and pavilion.

Roker Lane Recreation Ground, to the east of Pudsey, offers public open space suitable as a kick about area.



## **Compartment 4.**

### **Key sites owned and managed by Parks and Countryside**

#### **Upper Moor – 4.3 hectares.**

Bounded to the east by Waterloo Road and to the south by Tyersal Lane, the remaining north and western edge of Upper Moor is largely skirted by Tyersal Beck. Access can be achieved from several points, including Gibraltar Road to the north and Smalewell to the south. Additionally a Definitive Footpath runs around the western edge of the site, linking the two access points.

The site is owned by Leeds City Council's Learning & Leisure, and managed by Parks & Countryside, and consists mainly of a mixed species woodland through which a number of desire lines run

- Protected as Greenspace and Protected Open Land under the UDP guidelines.

#### **Tyersal Park – 2.8 hectares**

Bounded to the west by a road called Tyersal Park and to the north by Tyersal Road, the rest of the park juts out into open ground to the north of Tyersal Lane.

Access can be achieved from Tyersal Road.

The park is owned by Leeds City Council's Learning & Leisure, and is managed by Parks & Countryside.

Facilities include a football pitch, playground, two tennis courts, a kickabout area, bowling green and a pavilion which also contains changing rooms. Additionally, there is also and a Health Care Screening Clinic.

Additionally, there are extensive areas of amenity grassland, shrubs, a formal garden area and scattered semi-mature parkland trees.

- Protected as Green Belt, Greenspace, Urban Fringe Priority and Protected Open Land under the UDP guidelines

#### **Post Hill – 29.4 hectares**

Bounded to the north by Pudsey Road, Post Hill runs parallel to Farnley and Pudsey Becks which flow along its western flank. The site then runs due south, down towards the point where Troydale Lane and Tong Road converge.

Access can be achieved from Pudsey Road, Troydale Lane and Tong Road.

Post Hill is owned by Leeds City Council's Learning & Leisure, and is managed by Parks & Countryside.

Facilities include a number of gravelled paths, desire lines and a bridge to cross Farnley Beck at one point.

There still exists a very steep motorcycle scramble track and associated course, which dates back to the late 1920's when organised motorcycle events were regularly held on the site. Prior to this the site was used to test tanks. Today Post Hill is still used, occasionally, for formal, supervised motorcycle events which are organised by the local motorcycling club to organise who also try to control the illicit use of the site by unauthorised motorbikes.

Recent works by Parks & Countryside in 2006 have included the installation of motorbike access barriers at the main entrance points to the site.

The semi natural woodland is mainly dominated by a mix of Sessile Oak and Silver Birch, together with other associated canopy and shrub species, including Field Maple, Sycamore, Rowan and Ash; Hawthorn, elder, Holly and Hazel.

Crack Willow and Alder can also be found, growing along the course of Farnley Beck, where ground conditions are wetter.

Additionally, there are also some rocky outcrops, as well as areas of grassland and scrub, particularly along the watercourses.

- Protected as Green Belt, Greenspace, Urban Fringe Priority and Protected Open Land under the UDP guidelines.
- Leeds Nature Area No. 88.

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**West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.**  
**Management Compartments.**

**Compartment 5 – Farnley.**

**Site Description.**

**Geographic Location and Range.**

**Ownership**

**Landscape Character.**

**Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity.**

**Recreation.**

**West Leeds Country Park and Green Gateways.**  
**Management Compartments.**

**Compartment 6 – Armley.**

**Site Description.**

**Geographic Location and Range.**

**Ownership**

**Landscape Character.**

**Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity.**

**Recreation.**

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