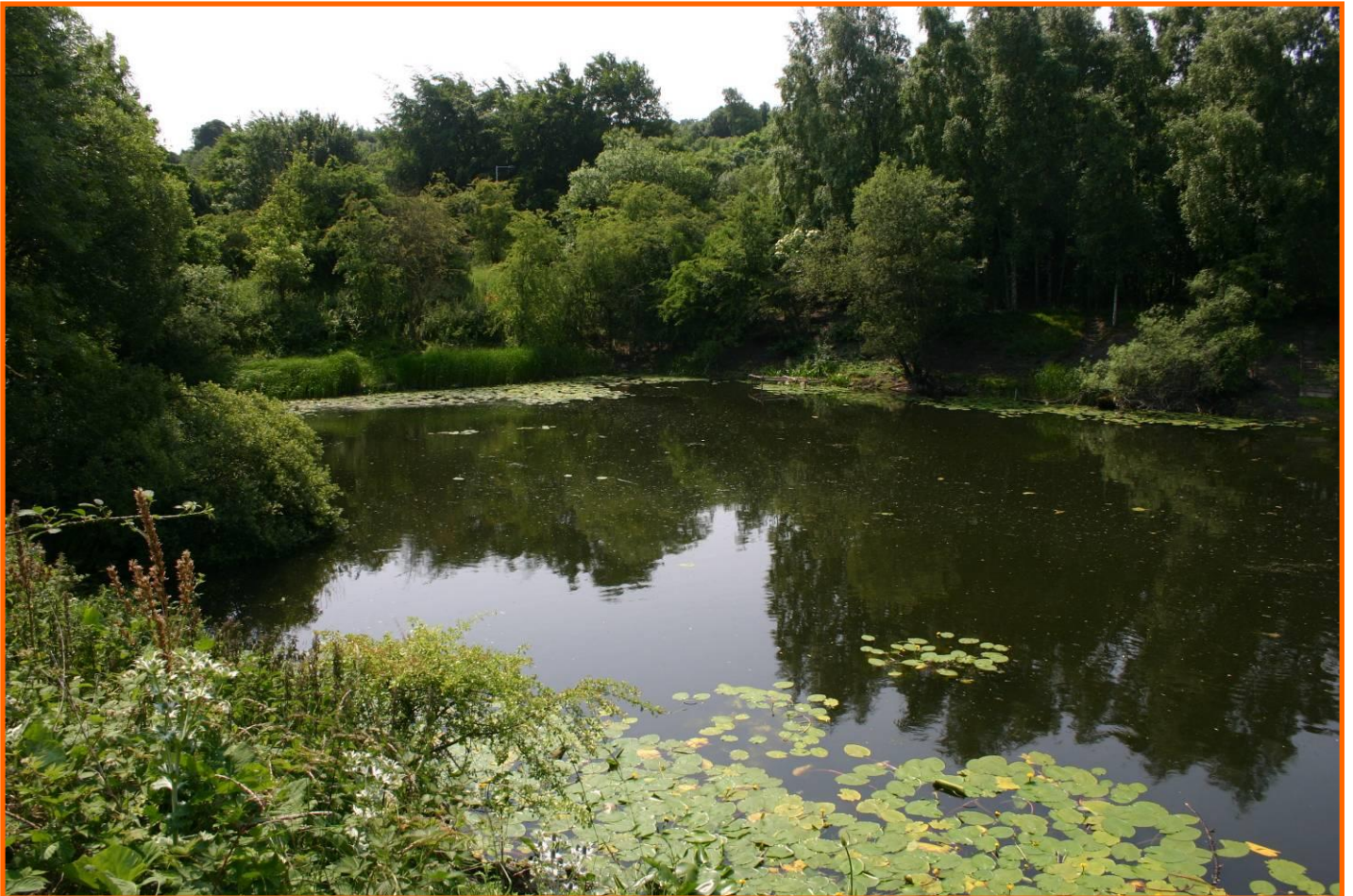


# Ben Rhydding Gravel Pits Nature Reserve

## Management Plan Agreement



**8 May 2013**

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

[www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)

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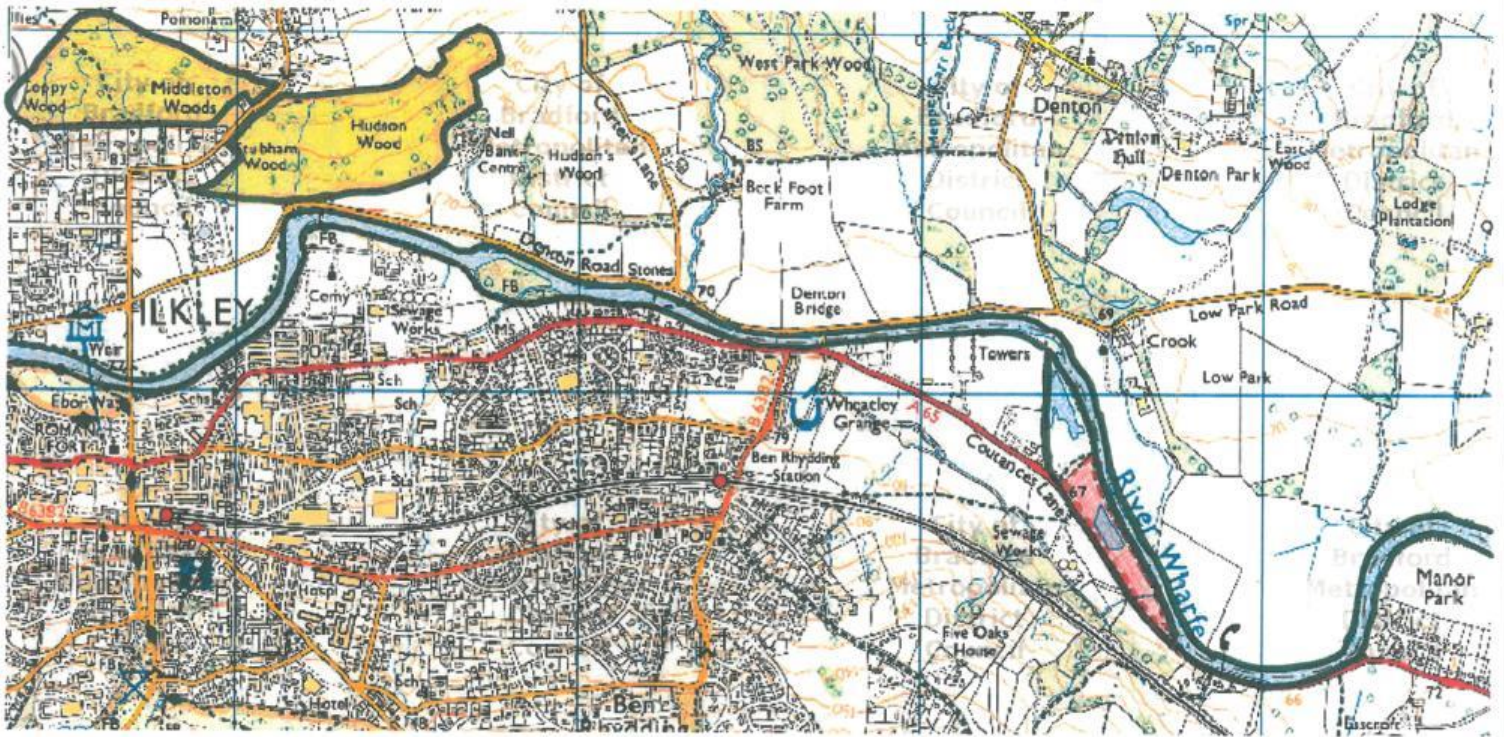
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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BOG</b>	Bradford Ornithological Group
<b>CBMDC</b>	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
<b>FOB</b>	Forest of Bradford
<b>IAA</b>	Ilkley Angling Association
<b>NVC</b>	National Vegetation Classification
<b>SEGI</b>	Site of Ecological/Geological Importance
<b>WNS</b>	Wharfedale Naturalists Society
<b>WYE</b>	West Yorkshire Ecology (syn. West Yorkshire Ecological Advisory Service)
<b>WYEAS</b>	West Yorkshire Ecological Advisory Service (now WYE)

# Ben Rhydding Gravel Pits Local Nature Reserve

## LOCATION PLAN



Proposed LNR



Current SEGI Sites



## **1. PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Ben Rhydding Gravel Pits Reserve is managed by the Wharfedale Naturalists Society (WNS) in partnership with City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC). The Management Plan identifies the aims for the reserve and sets out management objectives and practical tasks necessary to achieve these aims. The purpose of the plan is to provide a systematic and objective framework to give predictability, stability and continuity to management actions. The plan is based on the assumption that much of the work on the site will be undertaken by volunteers, but with support from the Council, who will undertake the major tasks (specifically identified in the plan eg that will require machine input).

All the plans of this nature reserve need to be re-visited from time to time. This is particularly the case here given that whilst WNS have been monitoring the site for many years, they have only recently been actively involved in managing the site.

WNS and CBMDC have agreed it would be beneficial for the site to be declared a Local Nature Reserve.

## **SITE DETAILS**

Name: Ben Rhydding Gravel Pits Nature Reserve  
Grid reference: SE 144477  
Location: The site is located approximately 2km east of Ben Rhydding bordered between the A65 (Coutances Way) and the River Wharfe.

## **2. HISTORY OF THE SITE**

The site is largely artificial, originating from former gravel pits. The river gravels were of good quality and represented an important local source for the construction industry. The pits ceased to be worked in 1970's and flooded. Ownership reverted to Ilkley District Council who in filled the lagoons in the early 1970's (prior to the formation of CBMDC in 1974). Tipping was widely encouraged. Infill materials came from across the district. A variety of materials have been used: building rubble (including the former railway bridge from Bridge Street – parts of which are visible on the edge of the eastern lagoon), soil and treated sewage residues from the treatment plants at Menston, Otley and the adjacent Ben Rhydding site. Plant materials and soil from parks, gardens and building sites will have added to the sites bio-diversity. Tipping was eventually

stopped. CBMDC took over ownership of the eastern site in 1974. There is a lagoon which Ilkley Angling Association (IAA) lease from the council. The site is managed by the Trees & Woodland Team of the Dept of Culture, Tourism and Sport with consultative support from Countryside and Rights of Way team.

The site has been well recorded by WNS over the years and despite their artificial origins developed considerable botanic diversity. CBMDC commissioned West Yorkshire Ecological Advisory Service (WYEAS), now known as West Yorkshire Ecology (WYE), formerly in June 1997 and then again May 2003 to survey the site. With over 300 vascular plant species and the varied nature of the habitats helping to support good faunal diversity, the site<sup>1</sup> was designated a Site of Ecological or Geological Importance (SEGI). The designation recognizes the regional importance of the site and gives it protection from development. Other CBMDC SEGI's locally are Middleton Woods and the River Wharfe which adjoins the site immediately to the north.

The site's biodiversity deteriorated since the 2003 survey, with an infestation of weeds in particular Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed. Bramble, hawthorn and willows have grown to the detriment of ground cover. The once extensive orchids for which the site was famous declined to a few flowering plants. The site has also lost many of the interesting "occasionals" which failed to establish themselves. Concerned by this in May 2007 WNS started to work with CBMDC on the management of the site largely the form of regular volunteer working parties.

The diverse habitats support over 60 bird species – many of which breed on the site or nearby including scrub warblers. The site is also a good view point for the River Wharfe for monitoring waders, waterfowl and the sand martin colony on the opposite river bank. The deterioration of the site has impacted on the variety and numbers of butterflies and dragonflies recorded by WNS. The management plan has specific actions aimed at improving the habitat for flying insects.

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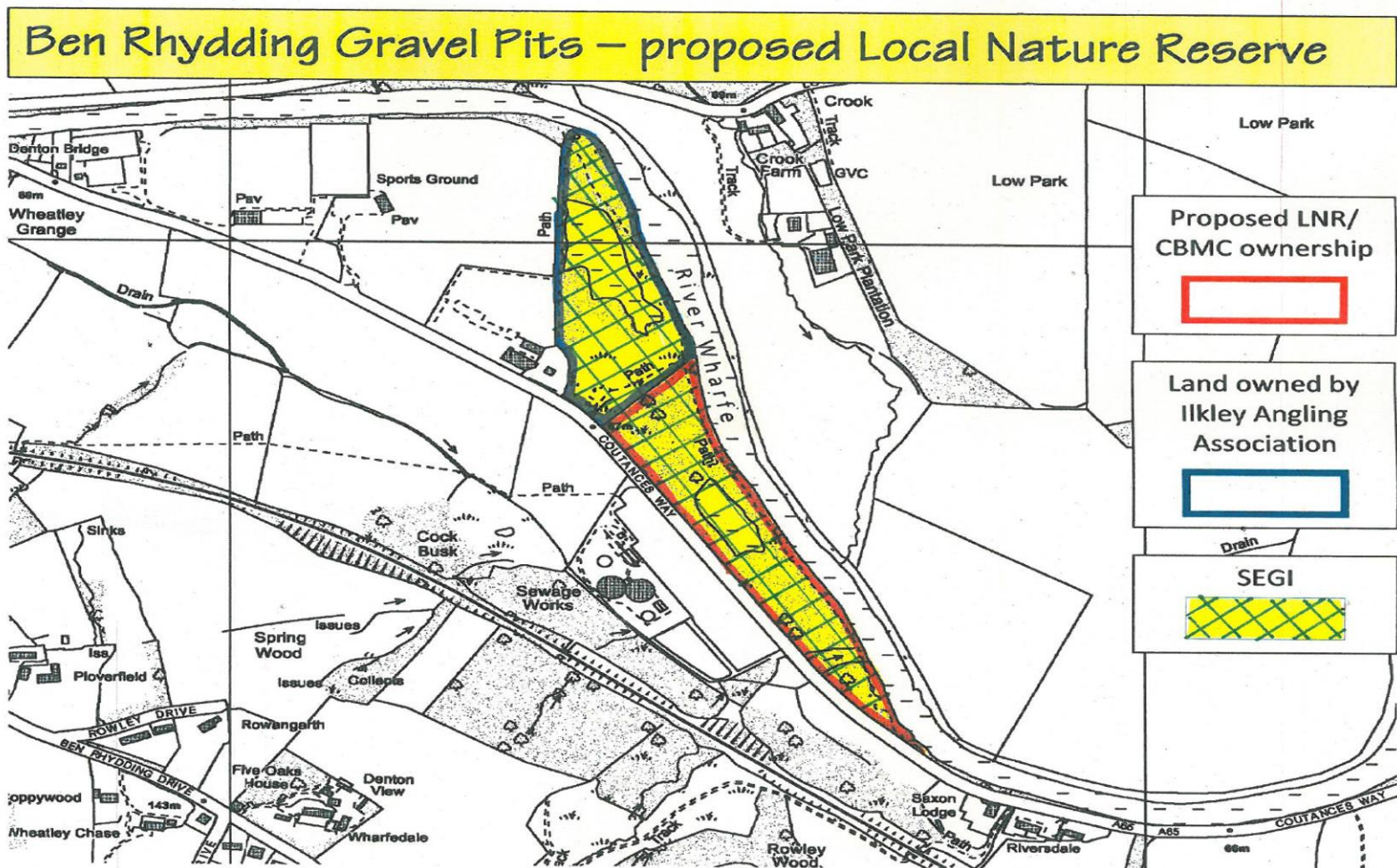
<sup>1</sup> Note – the SEGI Citation also covers neighbouring land owned by Ilkley Anglers this also formed part of the original gravel pits. WNS also work with the Anglers to help manage the biodiversity of their site which is of a very similar nature.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The reserve is in on the middle reaches of the River Wharfe on level ground. The site is roughly a very elongated triangular in shape.

The area of the reserve is approximately 4.5 hectares, (note - with the neighbouring IAA site the total area of the SEGI is 8.8h).

The site is accessed from a public footpath on the IAA site that runs from the road down to river at the site of a former river crossing. There are no designated public footpaths on the site itself but informal paths and tracks. The site is regularly visited by dog walkers, anglers and people who want to observe the wildlife. The lay-by on the busy A65 makes it easy for people to visit the site by car.



The southern boundary is a hedgerow running for approximately 600m along the verge/footpath along the A65. The hedge was properly laid in the early 2000s by a local conservation group and in the winter of 2008, the large gaps that had developed over a number of years were filled in by the Forest of Bradford with mainly hawthorn – supplemented by hazel and holly in the shaded areas. This work was funded by CBMDC and carried about at the request of WNS.

The lagoon covers an area of 3200m<sup>2</sup> and is shallowest at the eastern end where it is wadeable with care. The height of the water varies by several metres depending on height of the river with water seeping through the banks; there are no water courses feeding directly into it. The sides are steep and, in many areas, unstable. Access to the water is possible at about 10 points where steps have been constructed by angler/council to create fishing ‘pegs’. Trees and scrub surround most of the top of the banks.

There are 3 drainage ditches at the eastern end of the site. The new (main) ditch was constructed in recent years to take water from the railway line on the hillside. It is straight along its length and 4m wide at ground level. The ditch effectively cuts the far southern end of the site from the main site (passable by the roadside hedge where the pipe runs under the road. A few metres to the north is a 2<sup>nd</sup> smaller (old) drainage ditch, with 2 outflow pipes (at different heights) which are piped as they run under the riverside path. A 3<sup>rd</sup> minor drain is at the very far southern end where it runs for only a few metres.

The habitats on the site have been greatly influenced by its former status as gravel pits that have largely been in-filled. The tipped material has been compacted and drainage is severely impeded. The soil that capped the infill is very thin ranging from 5 -15cm. There are a number of areas that were more recently tipped with hardcore that are devoid of soil. The soils on the river banks are fine silt and sand and host rabbit warrens.

To the north and south of the lagoon are 2 large grassy areas – known as the “North lawn” and “South lawn” – these are marshy due to only a thin capping of soil onto hardcore/tipped material. Tree/shrub species will not establish here due to the lack of soil and rabbit grazing.

The public access the site via the public footpath on the IAA site – either by the road or at the riverside. The riverside footpath is popular for dog walkers and people wishing to observe the wildlife in the Reserve and on the Wharfe. IAA anglers occasionally fish the lagoon.

## 4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the Reserve are as follows:

- a) To promote the conservation, creation and management of all natural history aspects of the Reserve and thereby contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of appropriate biodiversity within the Reserve boundaries and adjacent areas beyond.
- b) To progress the restoration of the habitat zones of the Reserve on the basis of its original SEGI designation whilst recognising that succession has taken place (it being a brownfield site).
  - Minimise where practical further succession and loss of ephemeral populations.
  - Maintain condition of communities that are performing well.
  - Counter adverse impacts of invasive weed species.
  - Increase the biodiversity of the site through seed dispersal and planting according to the following criteria – appropriate to habitat, not to detriment of other key species, already found elsewhere in the SEGI (including IAA site) or previously recorded/no longer present.
- c) To liaise and consult with CBMDC and IAA as and when necessary for the furtherance of the above objectives.
- d) To work with other interested groups to encourage and develop both voluntary input and appreciation of the natural history value of the site.
- e) To communicate by all suitable means with local interested groups and individuals using the site for legitimate purposes (consistent with responsible public access) and thereby develop an appreciation of the wildlife value of the site and the need to utilise it with respect, in furtherance of the above objectives.

## 5. HABITATS

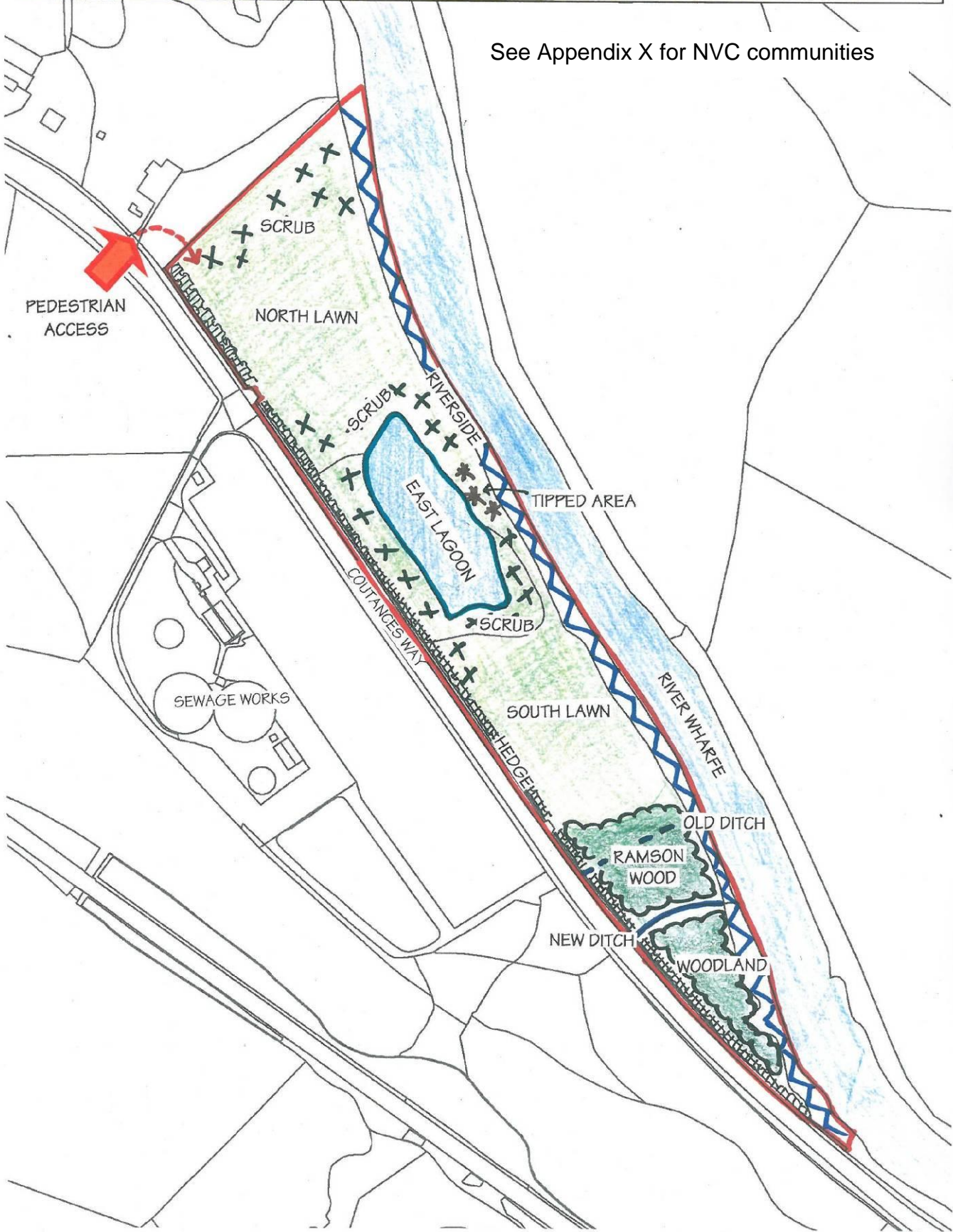
The site includes a variety of habitats including neutral grassland; marshy grassland; scrub and open water lagoon. Some of these habitats have developed on old tip material and does not easily fit into any NVC type, other habitat zones have also been described (see Appendix X)





# Management Plan – Habitat Zones

See Appendix X for NVC communities



## Grassland

**North Lawn** is now dominated by fine grasses and springy lawn-moss – *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*. However due to heavy grazing by rabbits the grasses are barely visible. The sward contains few herbs and indeed not much grass. There was an extensive cover of changing forget-me-not *Myosotis discolor* in 2007 and silverweed – *Potentilla anserina* are a notable feature along with creeping buttercup – *Ranunculus repens* and rushes, *Juncus, sp.* Biting stone crop *Sedum acre* grows on a couple of patches of bare rock/stone near one of the small mounds.



north lawn edge

On the North Lawn are 3 small mounds that have proved attractive for flowers; however one of these is now largely overgrown by bramble. Rushes have become increasingly dominant in the marshy areas on the South Lawn. The regionally rare grass vetchling - *Lathyrus nissolia* has not been recorded for 5 years.

In the 2003 SEGI report it was noted that some grassland fits into recognizable NVC types. There are tall areas of rank grassland with false-oat grass - *Arrhenatherum elatius*, cock's foot - *Dactylis glomerata*, Yorkshire fog- *Holcus lanatus*, broad-leaved dock - *Rumex obtusifolius*, cleavers, *Galium aparine*, common hogweed - *Heracleum sphondylium*, teasel - *Dipsacus fullonum*, forming a MG1 community. The report also noted more species rich MG1 grassland, including oxeye daisy- *Leucanthemum vulgare*, bush vetch – *Vicia sepium*, tormentil – *Potentilla erecta* and square stalked St. John's wort – *Hypericum tetapterum*. This forms mosaics with bramble- *Rubus fruticosus* and Yorkshire fog on the riverbank.

Lower growing MG6 sward also occurs in both North and South Lawns, supporting crested dog's-tail, *Cynosurus cristatus*, red fescue, *Festuca rubra*, knapweed, *Centaurea nigra*, tormentil, *Potentilla erecta*, yellow rattle, *Rhinanthus minor*,



south lawn

fairy flax, *Linum catharticum*, kidney vetch, *Anthyllis vulneraria*, meadow cranesbill, *Geranium pratense*, devil's-bit scabious, *Succisa pratensis* and lady's bedstraw, *Galium verum*.

**South Lawn:** At the time of the SEGI designation the site, the South Lawn in particular had an excellent reputation for its diversity and number of orchids (common spotted-orchid –



*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, southern marsh-orchid – *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* and various hybrid orchid, particularly –CSO x SMO. By 2006 numbers had dramatically reduced and by 2009 there was only 1 clump of 3 southern marsh-orchids. However following a succession of wet summers, balsam

control and possibly the increase in sedges the number of flowering spikes increased to 10 in 2010, 40 in 2011 and 110 in 2012. The majority of plants have been in the wetter patches where they have been protected from rabbit damage by the surrounding sedges. Fine grasses and springy lawn-moss otherwise dominated.

## Wetlands

**East Lagoon:** The 2003 Survey showed (A8) fringed water lily- *Nymphoides peltata* and yellow water lily - *Nuphar lutea*(A7) white water lily- *Nymphaea alba* (A15) Canadian waterweed *Elodea canadensis* dominated (A5) Spiked water milfoil- *Myriophyllum spicatum*, curled pond weed - *Potamogeton crispus*, fennel pondweed *Potamogeton pectinatus* and rigid hornwort - *Ceratophyllum demersum* were also present

The lagoon has not been thoroughly surveyed since, however the white water lily was been absent for a number of years. The yellow water lily and fringed water lily were well established. However in 2007 it was felt by the anglers that the fringed water lily was impeding their ability to fish the lagoon waters (which they rent). In May CBMDC employed specialist contractors to



chemically control the fringed water lily and Canadian pondweed. Whilst the contractors are believed to have worked to Environment Agency guidelines virtually all plant growth at the surface was killed. The yellow water-lilies and rigid hornwort had partially recovered by 2009 it

is not known what impact it had on other open water, submerged and marginal species.

(The West lagoon is within the area owned by the Ikley Angling Club)



lagoon edge

**Lagoon edge:** The sides of the lagoon are steep so marginal habitats are largely limited to the eastern end of the lagoon where the banks are gentler sloping and the waters shallower.

In this more diverse habitat in 2003 rare sea club rush - *Bolboschoenus maritimus* was recorded and is still present. Bottle sedge - *Carex rostrata* was recorded in 2008. The status of several regionally rare species is unclear – narrow leaved water plantain- *Alisma lanceolatum*, tubular water dropwort - *Oenanthe fistulosa* (1986), greater spearwort - *Ranunculus lingua* (2001) bog bean- *Menyanthes trifoliata* (1988) and need to be validated.

### Woodland/Scrub Areas



roadside scrub

Tree communities were not recognised in the 2003 survey. Uncontrolled succession has resulted in them becoming dominant along the riverside zone, around the lagoon, and south of the New Ditch and Ramson wood. Scrub grows around the peripheries mainly comprising of bramble and hawthorn (see Habitat Zones map)

### Ramson Wood

A small area of woodland lies between the road, the southern edge of the South Lawn and the Old ditch. This comprises of ash, elder, silver birch and hawthorn. This supports a good show of ramsons - *Allium ursinum* and dog's mercury - *Mercurialis perennis* in the spring and a solitary solomon's seal – *Polygonatum x hybridum* of garden origin.



Ramson Wood

## Tipped Material Area Habitat



There are 2 areas of what appear to be more recently tipped materials which provide distinctive habitats. Here soil formation has been limited - on the top bank of the lagoon this is largely due to its steepness and lack of stability. They support a tall community dominated by bramble, nettle, hogweed, but also include regionally rare: fennel *Foeniculum*

*vulgare* (2001) and large flowered evening primrose - *Oenothera glazioviana*, sickle leaved hares ear- *Bupleurum falcatum* (1992) and the Tall eryngo (sea holly) – *Eryngium giganteum*, a plant known only at sites in the extreme south of England. Adjacent to this is a wych elm *Ulmus glabra*, one of four on the site.

## Riverside Zone



This covers the riverbank and land adjacent to the riverside path. The river bank is dominated by a number of mature crack willow - *Salix fragilis*, at the water's edge. Ash -*Fraxinus excelsior*, sycamore - *Acer pseudoplatanus*, grey willow - *Salix cinerea*, goat willow - *Salix caprea* and to a lesser extent penduculate oak- *quercus robur* and wych elm- *Ulmus glabra* (2 trees that support white-letter hairstreak

butterflies) are interspersed with elder- *Sambucus nigra* and hawthorn -*Crataegus monogyna*.

The riverside area has had very dense infestations of himalayan balsam along the whole length of the site with encroachment from the river bank across the path and into the neighboring habitats often mixed with bramble and nettle. By 2012 the extent of the balsam had been significantly reduced, through regular annual clearance work by the WNS volunteers, to the steep river banks

and the scrub area along the road side hedge.

The River Wharfe brings in a variety of interesting plants to this bank (and also takes them away) New finds in 2009 include one spike of the parasitic toothwort – *Lathraea squamaria*, two good colonies of moschatel – *Adoxa moschatellina*, primrose – *Primula vulgaris* and hard shield fern – *Polystichum aculeatum*



### **Other Zones/Habitats**

#### **Old Ditch**

The banks of this ditch (and adjacent areas) had been taken over by Himalayan balsam, thistle and nettle. Of more interest here are weld – *Reseda luteola* and common figwort - *Scrophularia nodosa*. Marsh marigold – *Caltha palustris* has been introduced and there is potential to develop the habitat with the reduction of nettle and rose-bay willow herb.

#### **Woodland South of the New Ditch**

This area is dominated by trees and shrubs and was until 2011 very heavily colonized by Himalayan balsam - *Impatiens glandulifera*. It is effectively cut-off from the rest of the site by the New Ditch (accessible at the head of the ditch where the pipe runs under the road). Dense shrubs / willows on the river bank make it an attractive site for breeding coots (2007). There are large areas of lesser celandine- *Ficaria verna* and an area of ramsons. As the balsams are being removed the variety and extent of other flowering species appears to be improving.

#### **Other Interesting Areas**

There are several other small areas/glades that are interesting botanically (including species such as meadowsweet, oxeye daisy) and attractive to butterflies and other flying insects (see map)

## 6. HABITAT MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

### Grassland

**Control bramble growth** on grass mounds to prevent further crowding out of flowering plants/herbs (WNS)

**Prevent further encroachment by bramble around the edges of grassland habitat.** The informal footpath that runs along the edge of the northern lawn parallel to the hedge forms a limit to scrub encroachment (WNS)

**Improve conditions for orchids.** It is not clear why the orchid numbers declined so much and have now started to pick up. It's believed the dry/hot summer of 2006 had a significant impact. Whilst there was no recovery in the wet spring/summers of 2007/8 there was in 2011/12. The high rabbit population also plays a part. In 2012 the grass swathe was the longest it had been for 5 years – so there was plenty of food for the rabbits to eat (other than orchids) In other years heavy grazing has contributed to the increasing dominance of the springy lawn moss. Over the years rabbit droppings will have increased soil fertility which may also be of detriment. The South Lawn is increasingly been dominated by sedges which are common on local moors/areas of restricted drainage. Orchids are growing between the sedges – and are undoubtedly getting some protection from rabbits here.

**Ragwort** - *Senecio jacobaea* is present on the site, but not in great numbers and not increasing.. It is important for flying insects (particularly during drought when other less tolerant flowering plants die). It is not close enough to pastures to represent a threat to livestock. No control is planned. Monitor on an ongoing basis and remove plants if they become too invasive. (WNS)

### East Lagoon

There are healthy numbers of yellow water-lily, However Canadian pondweed – *Elodea Canadensis* – a good pond oxygenator and New Zealand pygmy water weed – *Crassula helmsii*, a schedule 9 weed are believed to be present will continue be monitored and if they look like they could become a problem. Any physical control would need to be agreed between land owner and site manager (WNS/CBMDC).

### **Lagoon edge**

Surveying the lagoon edge is very difficult given the steep and unstable banks. A full survey needs to be completed prior to agreeing any detailed action plans. To be done properly a small dinghy and appropriate safety equipment/supervision would be needed. However given the steepness of the bank sides there is little opportunity to establish more marginal species or create a reed bed. At the request of WNS, CBMDC removed large sycamores in 2011 to bring in light in the south east corner.

There are steps in the banks to 10 IDAA fishing pegs which they maintain and keep clear of brambles. WNS have highlighted to them the need to do this with sensitivity particularly with regard to the tall *Eryngo* colony around the top of one set of steps. (WNS, IAA, CBMDC)

### **Himalayan Balsam**

Balsam removal started in 2007 and has been the main focus for WNS work groups from May – Sep ever since. Hand-pulling and brush-cutting will continue to prevent re-colonization from the river banks (where it will never be cleared completely due to the steepness of the banks and new seed being washed in from further upstream. The other large infestation is on the road side hedge/scrub area and will be the main focus. (WNS)

### **Japanese Knotweed**

Currently present in three locations, this has been treated by CBMDC over a number of years and whilst still present is significantly reduced. WNS now takes responsibility for its treatment with weed killer until it is eradicated completely. This will be done in a manner that's sympathetic to neighbouring species. (WNS)

### **Woodland/Scrub Areas**

Bramble/scrub will be controlled to prevent further encroachment of other habitats. Existing areas around the lagoon and adjacent to the A65 hedgerow form an important habitat for scrub warblers so need to be maintained. Woodpiles will be created for the benefit of small mammals in all wooded areas. (WNS)

### **Small Glades**



A number of small glades exist around the edges of the lawns comprising of small hawthorns and bramble these have proved attractive to butterflies and other flying insects particularly during windy conditions. These will be managed so they don't become overgrown. In Nov 2007 ten alder buckthorns *Rhamnus frangula* were planted across three locations to create new glades/attract brimstone butterflies. In 2011/12 new glades were created by clearing hawthorn. (WNS)

### **Ramson Wood**

Little maintenance is required, except rubbish removal, repair to the hedgerow (see below) and prevention of any further encroachment of trees on to the old drain area. Himalayan balsam will need managing to prevent encroachment particularly from the south side. Some of the trees are shading out the (replanted) hedgerow and may restrict regrowth. WNS have created dead hedges where re-growth has struggled. (WNS)

### **Riverside Zone**

Mature crack willow trees and boughs fall into the river – particularly at the north end of the site where the river is narrowest/fastest and the bank undercut. The fallen boughs provide a useful habitat for young fish and river invertebrates, as well as otter spraint spots and potential couching areas, so shouldn't be removed, as long as they don't impede the flow of the river and/or increase flood risk. WNS will cut back low growing branches of willows, ash, sycamore and elder and hawthorn bushes to stop them blocking the riverside path/shading out ground species. (WNS)

### **Riverside Path**

Up until 2011 CBMDC cut a broad swathe of the riverside path 2 or 3 times a year. In 2012 WNS took over responsibility for this using a brush-cutter and a narrower more sympathetic cut. There was a noticeable improvement in flowering plants as a consequence! (WNS)

### **Old Ditch**

This ditch empties into the river via three drainage pipes that run under the riverside path into the river. The pipes sit at two different levels and locations, the pair of smaller 20cm iron pipes run next to each other - about 15cm lower than the larger 40cm pipe. There is the opportunity for the ditch to hold water by blocking the pair of smaller pipes (they are partially blocked at the moments where the bank has collapsed) and create a valuable habitat. This would not cause a

flooding risk as after any significant rainfall the level the water would simply run out of the large pipe higher up. WNS would complete this work following approval by CBMDC. (WNS)

### **Boundary A65 Hedgerow**

To continue to be managed by CBMDC on annual basis – replanting gaps and trimming with the aim of creating a thick and healthy hedge along the whole length – at 600m long hedgerow this is an important habitat for the site. Gaps were planted with c 200 hawthorn plants by the Forest of Bradford in the winter of 2008. In the more wooded/shaded areas holly and beech were used.

(CBMDC/FOB)

### **CBMDC Tree Removal**

A number of large sycamore have been cut down by CBMDC in 2011 at the request of WNS to bring light into areas. WNS will highlight any further trees that it merits worth removing to CBMDC. (CBMDC)

### **Nest Boxes.**

WNS have erected bird boxes in conjunction with BTCV and BOG and will maintain nest boxes on the site. These have now been mapped using GPS to make them easier to relocate for record keeping/maintenance. Bird surveys with BOG were conducted in 2008 and recordings made most months. (WNS/BOG)

### **Bats**

Ten bat boxes were erected in 2010. It's proposed to conduct bat surveys in the future.

(WNS/West Yorkshire Bat Group)

### **Otter Holt**

WNS constructed a log day holt at the far end of the reserve in 2010 which will eventually need some maintenance. There has been no evidence of use to date, though there are regular prints and spraints in the vicinity. (WNS)

## **OTHER MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

### **Access**

**Boundary Fence/Main Gate** CBMDC will continue to responsible for the maintenance of the boundary fence and the two entrance gates from the IAA site as well as the Main Gate. WNS renewed two rotten fence posts at the roadside entrance gate in Feb 2013. The kissing gate by the river is rotten and needs replacing. **(CBMDC)**

CBMDC will retain the soil barrier (in addition to the Main vehicle gate itself) which will prevent unauthorized vehicles entering the site, but allow access for maintenance vehicles. Should larger vehicles need to enter the site then the soil barrier would be temporarily moved. **(CBMDC)**

**Disabled Access** – Whilst the site is not accessible for wheelchair users, those with limited mobility could visit much of the site, as it is relatively level, though after heavy rain, pathways, particularly by the river, become difficult to walk. On the worse stretch WNS dug a small ditch and removed some hawthorns in 2012 but the problem remains and would benefit from advice/possibly groundwork from CBMDC. Vegetation would need to be cut back from the entrance and some ground levelling on the IAA site (since the footpath and gate are on their land). The site managers (WNS and CBMC) will endeavour to consult Disability Bradford in due course, to look at ways of improving the disabled access and facilities on the site. The Ilkley Anglers Association have been looking at providing disabled parking within their part of the site and an agreement might be reached to allow disabled visitors to the LNR to use this facility.

### **Signage/Notice boards.**

It was agreed that it would be appropriate to erect road side signage once the site has been designated a LNR. A small sign also needs to be placed just inside the entrance directing people from the footpath into the site. Whilst there is a risk of a vandalism WNS believe it is important to construct a notice-board at the entrance to the site. This will include a map of the site, “What wildlife to see now” (updated seasonally), high level objectives/plan, details of volunteer work days, advice on respectful use of the site “Please do not damage or remove plants” “Please clean up after your dog” “No littering” etc. CBMDC to fund the purchase of the notice-board, once LNS has been obtained. WNS are happy to construct it and maintain it. **(CBMDC/WNS)**

## **Amenity**

In 2011 WNS worked with YWT to construct a large wooden bench by the ditch with materials provided by CBMDC. WNS will maintain this as appropriate. (WNS)

## **Education and Community Involvement**

Ben Rhydding Gravel Pits presents a valuable local resource for involving local residents in learning about the variety of habitats and species which the site supports. The WNS regularly features articles in the Ilkley Gazette and Wharfedale Observer and the site will be promoted more widely to the local community. The WNS will also endeavour to organise both open days, in addition to regular work parties, and also facilitate school visits to undertake vegetation community mapping for example, as an interactive part of the school curriculum. The environmental education centre at the nearby Nell Bank centre will also be invited to visit the site on a regular basis, although they have no transport facilities available and activities tend to take place on site.

## **Litter**

WNS to be responsible for clearing litter from the site (CBMDC to provide support in event of fly-tipping) (WNS/CBMDC)

## **AGREEMENT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Steve Parkes** \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Bob Thorp** \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 20<sup>th</sup> August 2013 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ 20<sup>th</sup> August 2013 \_\_\_\_\_

The Wharfedale Naturalists Society

City of Bradford District Metropolitan Council