Gallows Hill Nature Area

Management Plan 2023-2028

Prepared by Otley Town Council & Friends of Gallows Hill

March 2023

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Location Plan

Otley Town Council

Gallows Hill Nature Area

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the plan

Gallows Hill Nature Area forms part of the green space designation in the Leeds City Council area. The site is in the ownership of Otley Town Council and it is therefore important to ensure that the site is managed and maintained in accordance with the vision for the site. This document is therefore intended to:

- Assist Otley Town Council to look at the long-term management of the site by setting management priorities;
- Provide continuity through providing a stable management plan and strategy in the event of personnel change (staff, councillors and committee members retire or move on);
- Enable the council to identify significant projects that are presently beyond their financial resources so that additional funding can be sought;
- Provide a sound vision and aims with which to approach other organisations and potential partners with a view to working together to achieve mutual objectives;
- Allow the Town Council and Friends of Gallows Hill to prepare a rolling workplan that will be reviewed annually to manage the site in the medium to long term;
- Enable Otley Town Council and Friends of Gallows Hill to agree on-going enhancement work to be carried out by partners and volunteers;
- Inform all interested user groups and residents of the town about the long-term future of Gallows Hill.

1.2 Life of the Plan

The plan is intended to provide a long-term vision and set of aims for the site but contains a 5-year work plan that will be reviewed annually.

1.3 Vision and aims

It is intended that Gallows Hill continues to be a popular and well used nature reserve, which residents recognise as an important community asset in the district for biodiversity.

Our vision

“To enhance the use of the Gallows Hill Nature Area for quiet enjoyment by the local community while protecting its natural beauty and rich biodiversity”

Our aims

The overall aim is to ensure that Gallows Hill is maintained as a Local Wildlife Site, for the benefit of both wildlife and people.

Site aims:

- Manage the woodland, scrub, orchard, forest garden, wetland, riverside and grassland habitats to increase species diversity and provide suitable habitat for wildlife; and
- Ensure that Gallows Hill retains its landscape character and remains in a favourable condition.

Species aims:

- Manage wetland and terrestrial habitat to ensure amphibian population is sustainable;
- Undertake survey of key taxa (vascular plants, amphibians, birds, insects and mammals) to establish species presence on site and population levels where practical; and
- Ensure habitat creation and management is undertaken in cognisance of the site's position in the landscape and relationship to other sites important for nature conservation in the district.

Community aims:

- Provide opportunities for public enjoyment of the site, for present and future generations of Otley residents and visitors, providing that these do not conflict with nature conservation requirements;
- Develop opportunities for interpretation (identification of species to be seen on site) and encourage educational use;
- Encourage community involvement in the site, and support active involvement in the care and management of the site;
- Assist organisations or individuals with any appropriate scientific research;
- Ensure that Gallows Hill is safe and accessible to all within the natural constraints of the site;
- Ensure that anti-social behaviour is recognised and its impact reduced; and
- Ensure that Gallows Hill is well managed and well resourced, balancing all the various public uses with the wildlife value of the site.

2 Policy and Legislation

This section provides the strategic context within which the management plan has been developed.

2.1 Legislation

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) states that public bodies have a duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions and to promote the conservation of habitats and species listed in Section 41.

In Section 41 are listed Habitats and Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. This Act places a duty on all government departments to have due regard for their conservation and on the Secretary of State to further, or promote others to further, their conservation.

The following Habitats of Principal Importance are present at Gallows Hill Nature Area;

- Hedgerows;
- Ponds;
- Rivers; and
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

In addition the following Species of Principal Importance have been recorded at Gallows Hill Nature Area;

- Common toad;
- Dunnock;
- Bullfinch;
- Song thrush;
- Noctule bat;
- Soprano pipistrelle bat;
- Hedgehog; and
- Otter.

In addition, otter and all species of bats also receive a degree of legal protection as follows.

2.1.1 Bats

All species of bats are legally protected, and as such there is a requirement that measures be taken to ensure that contravention of the relevant legislation is avoided. This may include the adoption of mitigation, including a Natural England licence where appropriate.

Relevant legislation in England is the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended); the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000; the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC, 2006); and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations (2012). The law makes it an offence, *inter alia*, to:

- Disturb a bat or groups of bats in their roost;
- Damage or destroy a bat roosting place, even if there are no bats present at the time;
- Obstruct access to a bat roost; or,
- To capture, injure or kill a bat or possess, advertise, sell or exchange a bat, or part of a bat dead or alive.

The otter is fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. The regulations make it illegal, inter alia, to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill an otter;
- Deliberately disturb an otter in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of otters or the ability of any significant group of otters to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young;
- Damage or destroy an otter holt;*

* In this instance an 'otter holt' includes otter resting sites above ground, as well as those below ground.

The otter is also protected under Section 9(4)(b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This means that, in addition to the provisions of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, it is also illegal under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any otter whilst it is occupying a holt;
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a holt.

2.2 Leeds Strategic Context

The '*Leeds Site Allocations Plan'*, as part of the Local Development Framework draws on the open space audit in the '*Outer North West Housing Market Characteristic Area'* (2011) and the '*Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment'* (2011). These studies identify the Gallows Hill site (is allocated) as natural green space suitable for open space and providing access to the public.

Natural green space is defined as *"woodland, nature reserves and unmanaged green spaces, such as scrubland. It provides habitat for flora and fauna to flourish, thereby contributing to wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness".*

The key priorities emerging within the Local Development Framework include:

- To ensure the protection of natural green space from development;
- To maximise the role of natural green space to increase participation in health and physical activity and to realise educational benefits;

- To facilitate improved access to natural green space through the development of footpath and cycle links.

2.3 Leeds Nature Area

Gallows Hill has been listed as a Leeds Nature Area in the 2017 Site Allocations Plan (see Figure 1). A Leeds Nature Area is a site of local or district-wide importance for the enjoyment, study or conservation of wildlife, geological features and landforms. A Leeds Nature Area is also an area that is rich in wild plants and animals, flourishing close to where people live and work.

2.4 Leeds Habitat Network

The site forms an element of the Leeds Habitat Network providing a vital link and 'stepping stone' for species along the River Wharfe between Otley Wetlands Nature Reserve and Knotford Nook both of which are also Local Nature Areas (see Figure 2).

3 Site Details

3.1 Site name

Gallows Hill Nature Area

3.2 Location and Area

Approximate central National Grid Reference: SE 2132 4603

Area: 5.485 Ha (13.554 acres)

See Location Plan on Page 2. The extent of the site boundary is shown on the plan below.

3.3 Ownership

The site is owned by Otley Town Council.

3.4 Site Description

The Gallows Hill site occupies a strip of land to the east of Otley and on the south bank of the River Wharfe. The site is located just off Pool Road along Gallows Hill Lane and provides both vehicular and pedestrian access.

A small car park can be accessed from Pool Road. Pedestrian access on foot is from Pool Road or from the riverside walk that links from the north and west via the White Bridge, connecting to Wharfemeadows Park and from Pool-in-Wharfedale in the east.

The site boundary extends to include the river bank. The site consists of areas of trees, scrub and nettle beds with two ponds, providing a variety of habitats that are important to mammals, birds, amphibians, butterflies and dragonflies. The site also contains a network of paths covering some 1,300 metres.

3.5 Site History

Gallows Hill gets its name from its use as a site of execution as far back as Anglo-Saxon times. During the reign of Henry I (1100-1135), the Archbishop of York was empowered to judge thieves caught on the Manor of Otley and carry out executions. It was custom to drown women thieves until 1150 and this might have taken place at Gallows Hill. In 1297, Ralph Brum was executed on the site for robbery and later Thomas Teasdaille was hung for stealing. The last person to be hanged on Gallows Hill was John Conyers, a bellman, on June 12th 1614.

By 1980 the Gallows Hill site was redundant sewage works and was in a poor condition. The site was owned by the Yorkshire Water Authority and was being considered for disposal. However, the site was designated as floodplain, as such restricting future uses.

Following a number of years of discussion between Otley Town Council, Leeds City Council and the owners it was resolved in January 1986 that the Town Council would proceed with the purchasing of the site from Yorkshire Water. In September 1988, ownership of the site was conveyed from Yorkshire Water to Otley Town Council.

It was originally intended for the reclamation and laying out of the site to be carried out as a Community Programme project. However, the demise of the Community Programme led to the Town Council inviting tenders. The contract of works was awarded to the Leeds Chamber Training Services under the new Employment Training Programme. Work commenced in March 1989.

Considerable investment took place between 1989 and 1991 in the removal of toxic materials and to 'naturalise' the old sludge beds. This was followed by a programme of development including construction of a pond, extensive tree and hedge planting and paths.

The Friends of Gallows Hill community group was set up in 1995 to assist with the management and maintenance of the site. Given the area is a Nature Area, the intention of the Friends of Gallows Hill is to enable a 'managed wilderness with grass cutting mainly restricted to paths'. The key objectives of the group are to:

- Protect, enhance, maintain and conserve Gallows Hill, its habitats and wildlife;
- Develop the educational and recreational potential of the site, increase the involvement of the local community and others in the site;
- Liaise with all appropriate organisations, groups and individuals to achieve these objectives.

The Friends of Gallows Hill have continued to manage the environmental aspects of the site and more volunteers have become involved.

In the past twelve months a number of significant developments have occurred including:

- The relaying of the public footpaths and car park on the site;
- The re-tendering of the 'grass-cutting' contract and the appointment of a high quality contractor;
- Improved community involvement – largely via more volunteers/members of the Friends of Gallows Hill;
- An Events Programme on the site has been introduced by the Friends of Gallows Hill;
- A notice board has been erected on site to advertise activities and events on the site;
- A continued partnership with 'Open Country', a charity based in Harrogate for disabled adults, who have many years of experience working on similar sites.

4 Habitats & Species

4.1 Introduction

The following provides a summary of the habitat and species diversity that can be found on the Gallows Hill site, a survey was undertaken by Haycock and Jay Associates in February 2016 which has informed this section.

The survey method was based on the Phase 1 habitat survey methodology[1]. Phase 1 habitat survey is a standard technique for obtaining baseline ecological information for areas of land. It is primarily a mapping technique and uses a standard set of habitat definitions for classifying areas of land on the basis of vegetation present.

Within the survey area, distinct habitats were identified and mapped. Features of particular ecological interest were also Target Noted to provide details of the ecological conditions present as well as an approximate location, in the form of an eight figure Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference. In addition, botanical species in each habitat were given an indication of abundance using the DAFOR scale, with each species classified as either Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional or Rare.

The Phase 1 Habitat Map for the site is provided in Appendix 1. The majority of the site consists of broadleaved plantation woodland, interspaced with open areas of tall ruderal vegetation and dissected by a number of gravel and informal pathways. Broadleaved semi-natural woodland, scattered scrub and broadleaved trees, continuous scrub, semi-improved species poor grassland, hedgerows, two ponds and invasive plant species snowberry and Himalayan balsam were also identified.

A description of the habitats recorded within the survey area is given below with their distribution, including Target Notes (TN) indicating the location of features of ecological interest, annotated on the figure in Appendix 1.

4.2 Gallows Hill in the Landscape

The Gallows Hill Nature Area is located in the riparian zone of the River Wharfe and forms part of the river habitat corridor. In our district Knotford Nook and Otley Wetlands Nature Reserve form a similar function and habitats at Gallows Hill provide a link for species moving along the Wharfe through Otley. The Wharfe is an important fly-away for waders and other wetland birds which breed in the Dales and over winter on the coast. Similarly, seasonal movement of otter is facilitated by suitable habitat along the Wharfe and bat species use the river for feeding and commuting between hibernation sites, maternity roosts and swarming areas.

[1] JNCC (revised 2010). '*Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit*'. JNCC.

4.3 Broad-leaved plantation woodland

Three distinct areas of broadleaved plantation woodland are present within the site.

In the western portion of the site is an area of plantation woodland with a dense canopy of abundant mature wild cherry (Prunus avium) standards, with occasional ash (Fraxinus excelsior) and silver birch (Betula pendula) also identified (Photo 1). Towards the western end of the woodland the canopy becomes dominated by semi-mature sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus). Occasional hazel (Corylus avellana), elder (Sambucus nigra) occur with holly (Ilex aquifolium) to form an open understory, and the ground flora is dominated by wood avens (Geum urbanum) and common nettle (Urtica dioica), with occasional bramble (Rubus fruticosus agg). Lords-and-Ladies (Arum maculatum) and lesser celandine (Ficaria verna) are prominent in the early spring. The woodland is bounded by a newly laid hedgerow along its south-eastern and south-western borders, and by planted hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna) and hazel shrubs along its northern, eastern and north-western boundaries.

Within the centre of the site is a larger area of plantation woodland with a canopy dominated in part by Italian alder (Alnus cordata) with frequent common osier (Salix viminalis), sycamore and goat willow (Salix caprea). Both ash and silver birch are occasional in the canopy with wild cherry also represented (Photo 2). The western portion of the plantation is dominated by Italian alder forming a dense canopy, which becomes more open towards the east of the woodland where sycamore and common osier are more frequent. The understory is dense in places, and comprises locally abundant elder; occasional hawthorn; and infrequent rowan (Sorbus aucuparia) and exotic dogwood species (Cornus sp.). A number of large mature elder are present towards the east of the woodland, some of which are fallen or partially collapsed; these represent excellent habitat for epiphytic bryophytes, fungi and some lichens. The ground flora is dominated by common nettle, with locally frequent ground ivy (Glechoma hederacea), lesser celandine, Lords-and-Ladies and Himalayan balsam also identified. The southern boundary of the woodland is bordered by dense snowberry shrubs.

The groundflora indicates that plantation woodland in the east and centre of the site have most affinity with National Vegetation Classification (NVC) community W6 Alnus glutinosa – Urtica dioica woodland which is a widespread floodplain woodland in lowland England.

The following species were recorded in the W6 plantation woodland.

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Urtica dioica	Common nettle	D
Acer pseudoplatanus	Sycamore	LD/F
Geum urbanum	Wood avens	LD/F
Kindbergia praelonga	Common feather-moss	LD/F
Alnus cordata	Italian alder	LD/O
Symphoricarpos alba	Snowberry	LD/O
Ficaria verna	Lesser celandine	LA/F

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Prunus avium	Wild cherry	LA/O
Sambucus nigra	Elder	LA/O
Impatiens glandulifera	Himalayan balsam	LA/R
Glechoma hederacea	Ground ivy	LF/O
Salix caprea	Goat willow	LF/O
Salix viminalis	Common osier	LF/O
Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow parsley	O
Arum maculatum	Lords-and-Ladies	O
Betula pendula	Silver birch	O
Corylus avellana	Hazel	O
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	O
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash	O
Rubus fruticosus agg	Bramble	O
Cornus sp	Exotic dogwood species	R
Galanthus nivalis	Snowdrop	R
Ilex aquifolium	Holly	R
Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan	R

In the south-eastern corner of the site is an area of plantation woodland with a dense canopy of locally abundant ash and sycamore; frequent mature wild cherry and goat willow; and locally frequent common alder (Alnus glutinosa), with scarce field maple (Acer campestre) and Scot's pine (Pinus sylvestris) also present (Photo 3). Frequent hazel with holly, hawthorn, field maple and elder form an open understory. There is a line of large mature elder located at approximate OS grid reference SE 2144 4600 (TN1), along the south of the woodland which form good habitat for epiphytic bryophytes, as well as jelly-ear fungus (Auricularia auricula-judae). The ground flora is grass-dominated in places, with locally abundant rough meadow-grass (Poa trivialis), as well as locally abundant lesser celandine and occasional wood avens, Lords-and-Ladies and common nettle. Several large brash heaps are located along the northern edge of the woodland.

Whilst groundflora evidence is poor, this latter plantation woodland is considered to have most affinity with NVC W8 Fraxinus excelsior – Acer campestre – Mercurialis perennis woodland. This forms on more or less base rich, often clayey soils, in the east of England.

The following species were recorded in the W8 plantation woodland.

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Kindbergia praelonga	Common feather-moss	LD/F
Ficaria verna	Lesser celandine	LA/F
Poa trivialis	Rough meadow-grass	LA/F
Acer pseudoplatanus	Sycamore	LA/O
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash	LA/O

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Corylus avellana	Hazel	F
Prunus avium	Wild cherry	F
Salix caprea	Goat willow	F
Alnus glutinosa	Common alder	LF/O
Sambucus nigra	Elder	LF/O
Auricularia auricula-judae	Jelly-ear fungus	LF/R
Arum maculatum	Lords-and-Ladies	O
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	O
Geum urbanum	Wood avens	O
Ilex aquifolium	Holly	O
Urtica dioica	Common nettle	O
Acer campestre	Field maple	R
Pinus sylvestris	Scot's pine	R

4.4 Broad-leaved Semi-natural Woodland

The northern boundary of the site is fringed by a narrow strip of riparian broadleaved semi-natural woodland, which runs along the southern edge of the River Wharfe.

The canopy is open and comprises frequent sycamore and common osier and occasional ash and crack willow (Salix fragilis), with beech (Fagus sylvatica) and Italian alder also identified. The understory is dominated by dense snowberry shrubs in places, with frequent hawthorn and occasional elder. The ground flora is diverse where it could be viewed above the flood water, with locally dominant common butterbur (Petasites hybridus); locally abundant dog's mercury (Mercurialis perennis), common nettle and raspberry (Rubus sp.); frequent wood avens and cow parsley (Anthriscus sylvestris); occasional cock's-foot (Dactylis glomerata), hogweed (Heracleum sphondylium), dame's violet (Hesperis matronalis), ground ivy, creeping thistle (Cirsium arvense) and bramble; and rare wood dock (Rumex sanguineus) and nipplewort (Lapsana communis). Lesser celandine, red campion (Silene dioica), Lords-and-Ladies and ramsons (Allium ursinum) are also present.

The following species were recorded in the broadleaved semi-natural woodland.

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Symphoricarpos alba	Snowberry	LD/O
Petasites hybridus	Common butterbur	LD/R
Urtica dioica	Common nettle	LA/F
Ficaria verna	Lesser celandine	LA/O
Hedera helix	Ivy	LA/O
Mercurialis perennis	Dog's mercury	LA/R
Rubus sp	Raspberry	LA/R
Acer pseudoplatanus	Sycamore	F
Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow parsley	F

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	F
Geum urbanum	Wood avens	F
Salix viminalis	Common osier	F
Allium ursinum	Ramsons	LF/O
Ranunculus repens	Creeping buttercup	LF/O
Silene dioica	Red campion	LF/O
Arum maculatum	Lords-and-Ladies	O
Cirsium arvense	Creeping thistle	O
Dactylis glomerata	Cock's-foot	O
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash	O
Glechoma hederacea	Ground ivy	O
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	O
Hesperis matronalis	Dame's violet	O
Rubus fruticosus agg	Bramble	O
Salix fragilis	Crack willow	O
Sambucus nigra	Elder	O
Alliaria petiolata	Garlic mustard	R
Alnus cordata	Italian alder	R
Fagus sylvatica	Beech	R
Galanthus nivalis	Snowdrop	R
Lapsana communis	Nipplewort	R
Rumex sanguineus	Wood dock	R

4.5 Tall Ruderal Vegetation and Scrub

Four main areas of tall ruderal vegetation are present within the site.

To the east of the plantation woodland in the west of the site is an open area dominated by common nettle and rosebay willowherb (Chamerion angustifolium), with frequent wood avens; locally frequent ground ivy; and occasional hogweed, cow parsley, common mouse-ear (Cerastium fontanum), cleavers (Galium aparine) and creeping buttercup (Ranunculus repens). A number of scattered trees and shrubs are also present at this location, including London plane (Planatus x acerifolia), hornbeam (Carpinus betulus), beech, hazel, hawthorn, crab apple (Malus sylvestris), ash, yew (Taxus baccata), common lime (Tilia x europaea), silver birch, alder and an exotic cherry species (Prunus sp.). Snowdrops and garden daffodils (Narcissus sp) have been planted beneath some of the trees.

To the south of the woodland in the middle of the site is a large open area of tall ruderal vegetation (Photo 4). The flora is dominated by common nettle, with frequent creeping thistle, cock's-foot and bearded couch-grass (Elymus caninus); occasional bramble and cow parsley; and scarce spear thistle (Cirsium vulgare). A small area of dense bramble scrub fringes part of the western boundary. The area is bisected by a line of planted trees and shrubs, with species including spindle (Euonymus europaea), hawthorn, hazel, common lime (Tilia x europaea), wayfaring tree (Viburnum lantana), guelder rose (Viburnum opulus), blackthorn

(Prunus spinosa), dog-rose (Rosa canina), pedunculate oak (Quercus robur), ash, apple species (Malus sp), and buckthorn (Rhamnus cathartica), with an area of dense snowberry scrub. A number of these trees still have plastic tree-guards which they have out-grown (Photo 5). The tree guards are causing some of the trees to rot and should be removed. A small area has recently been planted with young blackthorn whips, at approximate OS grid reference SE 2131 4598 (TN2: Photo 6). Towards the east the area are many young silver birch trees, as well as rowan, hazel, buckthorn and pedunculate oak. A large mature goat willow tree is present at OS grid reference SE 2144 4600 (TN3).

In the north-eastern corner of the site a small area of tall ruderal vegetation partially surrounds Pond 1, with species including common nettle, lesser celandine, hogweed, wood avens and creeping buttercup.

An open area dominated by dense common nettle is present to the west of Pond 2, with abundant cleavers; frequent cow parsley; occasional hogweed; and lesser celandine.

The following species were recorded in the tall ruderal and scrub vegetation within the site.

Species	**Common Name**	**DAFOR**
Urtica dioica	Common nettle	D
Rubus fruticosus agg	Bramble	LD/O
Symphoricarpos alba	Snowberry	LD/O
Chamerion angustifolium	Rosebay willowherb	LD/R
Ficaria verna	Lesser celandine	LA/O
Galium aparine	Cleavers	LA/O
Ranunculus repens	Creeping buttercup	LA/O
Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	LA/R
Betula pendula	Silver birch	LF/O
Dactylis glomerata	Cock's-foot	LF/O
Elymus caninus	Bearded couch-grass	LF/O
Geum urbanum	Wood avens	LF/O
Glechoma hederacea	Ground ivy	LF/O
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	LF/O
Rhamnus cathartica	Buckthorn	LF/R
Rosa canina	Dog-rose	LF/R
Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow parsley	O
Cerastium fontanum	Common mouse-ear	O
Cirsium arvense	Creeping thistle	O
Corylus avellana	Hazel	O
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	O
Alnus glutinosa	Common alder	R
Carpinus betulus	Hornbeam	R
Cirsium vulgare	Spear thistle	R
Euonymus europaea	Spindle	R
Fagus sylvatica	Beech	R

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash	R
Galanthus nivalis	Snowdrop	R
Malus sp	Apple species	R
Malus sylvestris	Crab apple	R
Narcissus sp	Garden daffodil	R
Planatus x acerifolia	Plane	R
Prunus sp	Exotic cherry species	R
Quercus robur	Pedunculate oak	R
Salix caprea	Goat willow	R
Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan	R
Taxus baccata	Yew	R
Tilia x europaea	Common lime	R
Viburnum lantana	Wayfaring tree	R
Viburnum opulus	Guelder rose	R

4.6 Semi-improved Species-poor Grassland

Two areas of semi-improved species-poor grassland are present within the site.

An open area of grassland is located directly adjacent to the car-park on the west of the site (Photo 7). The sward had been mown short to a height of approximately 5-10cm at the time of the survey, and appeared to be disturbed on the southern and northern boundaries. Species identified include abundant cock's-foot and red fescue (Festuca rubra); frequent creeping thistle, wood avens, cleavers, creeping cinquefoil (Potentilla reptans) and common mouse-ear; occasional cow parsley, yarrow (Achillea millefolium), ragwort (Jacobaea vulgaris), common nettle, creeping buttercup, dandelion (Taraxacum officinalis agg), hogweed, broad-leaved dock (Rumex obtusifolius) and bush vetch (Vicia sepium); and rare self-heal (Prunella vulgaris), spear thistle, lesser celandine, teasel (Dipsacus sylvestris), ribwort plantain (Plantago lanceolata), meadowsweet (Filipendula ulmaria) and a forget-me-not species (Myosotis sp.).

A small area of grassland is also located in the north-east of the site to the north-west of Pond 1 (Photo 8). The sward is tall, rank and unmanaged, with a height of approximately 20-30cm, and grades into tall ruderal vegetation to the east and west. Species include abundant cock's-foot; locally abundant bearded couch grass and creeping thistle; frequent white clover (Trifolium repens); locally frequent common nettle and wood avens; occasional cow parsley, creeping buttercup, cleavers and broad-leaved dock; and scarce perforate St John's wort (Hypericum perforatum). Several agrimony (Agrimonia eupatoria) plants are located at approximate OS grid reference SE 2146 4610 (TN4).

The following species were recorded in the semi-improved species poor grassland within the site.

Species	Common Name	DAFOR

Species	Common Name	DAFOR
Dactylis glomerata	Cock's-foot	A
Festuca rubra	Red fescue	A
Cirsium arvense	Creeping thistle	LA/F
Elymus caninus	Bearded couch-grass	LA/O
Geum urbanum	Wood avens	F
Cerastium fontanum	Common mouse-ear	LF/O
Ficaria verna	Lesser celandine	LF/O
Galium aparine	Cleavers	LF/O
Potentilla reptans	Creeping cinquefoil	LF/O
Trifolium repens	White clover	LF/O
Urtica dioica	Common nettle	LF/O
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	O
Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow parsley	O
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	O
Jacobaea vulgaris	Common ragwort	O
Ranunculus repens	Creeping buttercup	O
Rumex obtusifolius	Broad-leaved dock	O
Taraxacum officinalis agg	Dandelion	O
Agrimonia eupatoria	Agrimony	R
Cirsium vulgare	Spear thistle	R
Dipsacus sylvestris	Teasel	R
Filipendula ulmaria	Meadowsweet	R
Hypericum perforatum	Perforate St John's wort	R
Myosotis sp	Forget-me-not species	R
Plantago lanceolata	Ribwort plantain	R
Prunella vulgaris	Self-heal	R
Vicia sepium	Bush vetch	R

4.7 Ponds

Two ponds are present in the site.

Pond 1 is located in the north-eastern corner of the site, and is approximately 60m x 20m in size (Photo 9). Due to recent heavy rainfall at the time of the survey the pond had flooded its immediate surroundings, and so the true bank could not be accessed. Surrounding vegetation includes purple loose-strife (Lythrum salicaria), great willowherb (Epilobium hirsutum), common alder, grey willow (Salix cinerea), common nettle, wood avens, snowberry, bramble and an exotic dogwood species.

Pond 2 is a small water body approximately 10m x 10m in size, located a few metres west of Pond 1 (Photo 10). Emergent vegetation includes yellow flag iris (Iris pseudacorus), and surrounding vegetation includes goat willow, ash, cow parsley, lesser celandine and an exotic dogwood.

4.8 Scattered Trees and Scrub

A number of scattered trees and shrubs are present in the open areas of the site, with species including ash, beech, common lime, plane, hazel, yew, silver birch,

hornbeam, crab apple, hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose, wayfaring tree, spindle, wild cherry, elder, pedunculate oak, buckthorn, goat willow and rowan.

A line of trees and shrubs fringes part of the southern boundary of the site. Species include pedunculate oak, blackthorn, hawthorn, dog-rose, snowberry, common lime, guelder rose, ash, wild cherry, elder, Scot's pine, hazel, Norway spruce (Picea abies), yew and rowan.

A line of trees and shrubs is also present along part of the eastern boundary of the site, with species including elder, dog-rose, ash, sycamore, pedunculate oak, blackthorn and hawthorn.

Scattered trees and shrubs are present along the western boundary of the site, including elder, silver birch, Scot's pine, hawthorn, sycamore, dogwood, snowberry and Corsican pine (Pinus nigra), with frequent coppiced hazel shrubs along the western edge of the car-park.

A dense area of scattered trees and shrubs is present on the north of Pond 1, with species including sycamore, common alder, wild cherry, bramble, elder, dog-rose and an exotic dogwood. A very large old elder is located at approximate OS grid reference SE 2149 4610 (TN5).

4.9 Hedgerows

A species–rich hedgerow with trees fringes the south-western boundary of the site. The hedge is approximately 4-6m tall and 2m wide, and species include elder, sycamore, silver birch, hazel, hawthorn, snowberry, guelder rose, common lime, holly, bird cherry (Prunus padus), ash, native dogwood (Cornus sanguinea), dog rose and wild cherry.

A young and newly laid hedgerow approximately 80cm high, comprising hawthorn, hazel, elder and common lime, is present along the western and part of the southern boundaries of the plantation woodland in the west of the site.

A short length of snowberry hedgerow approximately 1.5m tall and 0.5m wide is also present towards the south-east of the car-park.

The carpark is enclosed by a mixed species native hedgerow with pedunculate oak, rowan and silver birch standards. This hedge was laid in March 2022.

4.10 Species - Introduction

No species specific surveys have been undertaken, however, there is a long history of monitoring the amphibian population and a number of surveys were undertaken as public engagement events in 2016. Run by experts, these surveys do not, however, represent comprehensive survey of the site. The following text summarises what is known about the site to date.

4.11 Mammals

The following mammals were reported from the site in 2016 as casual records; roe deer, rabbit, weasel, grey squirrel, mink, mole, hedgehog and otter.

The bat walk detected soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle and noctule mainly feeding over the ponds.

A small mammal trapping event in conjunction with Yorkshire Mammal Group recorded good numbers of common shrew, bank vole, wood mouse and field vole.

4.12 Birds

The following list includes records from the dawn chorus walk and incidental site records;

Species	Common name
Turdus merula	Blackbird
Sylvia atricapilla	Black-cap
Cyanistes caeruleus	Blue tit
Corvus corone	Carrion crow
Fringilla coelebs	Chaffinch
Phylloscopus collybita	Chiffchaff
Prunella modularis	Dunnock
Sylvia borin	Garden warbler
Regulus regulus	Goldcrest
Parus major	Great tit
Dendrocopos major	Great-spotted woodpecker
Chloris chloris	Greenfinch
Anser anser	Greylag goose
Alcedo atthis	Kingfisher
Aegithalos caudatus	Long-tailed tit
Pica pica	Magpie
Anas platyrhynchos	Mallard
Turdus viscivorus	Mistle thrush
Gallinula chloropus	Moorhen
Phasianus colchicus	Pheasant
Erithacus rubecula	Robin
Turdus philomelos	Song thrush
Certhia familiaris	Treecreeper
Sylvia communis	Whitethroat
Columba palumbus	Woodpigeon
Troglodytes troglodytes	Wren

4.13 Amphibians

The ponds at Gallows Hill Nature Area are known as an important breeding site for common toads, with numbers peaking at 900 (2008) in late March and early

April. Survey in 2016 did not record such numbers, although an evening survey in conjunction with Yorkshire Amphibian and Reptile Group had a peak count of 84 common toad.

Other amphibians recorded in 2016 were palmate newt and common frog.

4.14 Invertebrates

No invertebrate surveys have been undertaken. In 2016 casual records consisted of a seven-spot ladybird.

4.15 Riverside

The site includes a diverse riparian habitat situated along the bank of the River Wharfe. This habitat offers many benefits to wildlife and the value of riparian habitats is recognised as a Priority Habitat.

The riparian habitat provides an important refuge for wildlife and helps to assist migration by linking with other woodland and related habitats in the wider landscape. They provide travel corridors for the safe movement between habitat types, essential cover for wildlife and serve as significant resting, feeding and staging areas for waterfowl and other migratory birds.

The trees along the riverbank also offer further benefits. The roots of trees and vegetation can strengthen the banks, reducing the risk of bank collapse, erosion and siltation. The woodland canopy casts shade over the water surface, which can help reduce extremes of water temperature that can be damaging to freshwater life and reduce excessive weed growth. Falling twigs, leaves and insects can also provide an important source of food.

A number of bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) are specifically adapted to riparian flood zone and occur on tree bases and deadwood along the river.

5 Community use

5.1 Use by local people

The site is very well used by local people particularly by walkers and dog walkers and provides access for wheelchair and pushchair users. Many of the site visitors drive to it as well as those who walk along the river bank and from Pool Road.

5.2 Educational use

No recent use by schools or youth groups is known to have taken place.

In the past it is reported that occasionally parties of school children have visited the Gallows Hill site in order to view wildlife in their natural habitats. Local primary schools were involved in planting around 800 trees at the site in 1995.

More recently, this link with the local schools has not been maintained. However local Beavers and Forest School groups visited in 2022.

5.3 Work Parties

Volunteer work parties take place monthly (on the first Tuesday) with Open Country and volunteers from Friends of Gallows Hill (FoGH) present.

Through the winter (October to March) FoGH meet on the last Sunday of the month to undertake coppicing and groundflora enhancement in the woodlands and other practical management tasks around the site.

In the past FoGH has also organised a number of work parties to progress the Community Orchard and Forest Garden.

5.4 Events

The Friends of Gallows Hill committee works with other voluntary groups to put on a series of events throughout the year.

5.5 Visitor Facilities

The main function of Gallows Hill has been as a ‘managed wilderness’ therefore facilities are minimal to ensure that they are keeping with the function of the site. Facilities that are available on the site include:

- Welcome Noticeboard
- Car Park
- Paths that are intended to be suitable for disabled access
- 1 Dog waste bin
- Six interpretation boards
- Signage linking the site with Garnett’s Wharfe riverside walk and Wharfemeadows Park.

- Four path spurs are present with benches/resting places, and there is a bench by the ponds.

5.6 Walkers are Welcome

As part of Otley's designation as a Walkers are Welcome town, Gallows Hill is featured as one of the short walks promoted that can be completed from the town centre and the site forms part of a way-marked route.

6 Site management plan

The following section provides a brief overview of current management actions in place on the Gallows Hill site. It then sets out potential management actions required over the coming five years.

Management at Gallows Hill will be organised and carried out by Otley Town Council, Friends of Gallows Hill and other partner organisations.

6.1 Regular Management

6.1.1 Grass cutting

Otley Town Council has appointed Open Country to cut grass on and around the nature area at Gallows Hill. This contract is intended to keep the paths in and around the nature area cut to a width of one metre on each side where bushes, trees, fences allow. Grass cutting also takes place in the orchard. Open Country remove any branches which are found to be obstructing the footpath when the cut is being carried out.

The first cut takes place at the end of May and then continues on 6 weekly cycles (until early October) - a total of 4 cuts per year. All cuts should reduce the grass to a length of 7 or 8cms.

The wildflower areas are also cut at the same time as the final cut in early October. The arisings from wildflower areas are removed in order to reduce levels of soil fertility and disposed of in an appropriate manner in the nearby tree plantations.

6.1.2 Tree Safety

Otley Town Council arrange a regular audit of trees every other year near paths by a suitably qualified contractor to maintain safety. Where necessary trees and limbs will be removed and disposed of neatly as log piles around the site.

6.1.3 Dog waste

Otley Town Council has arranged with Leeds City Council to ensure the dog waste bin and litter bin is regularly serviced.

6.1.4 Car park

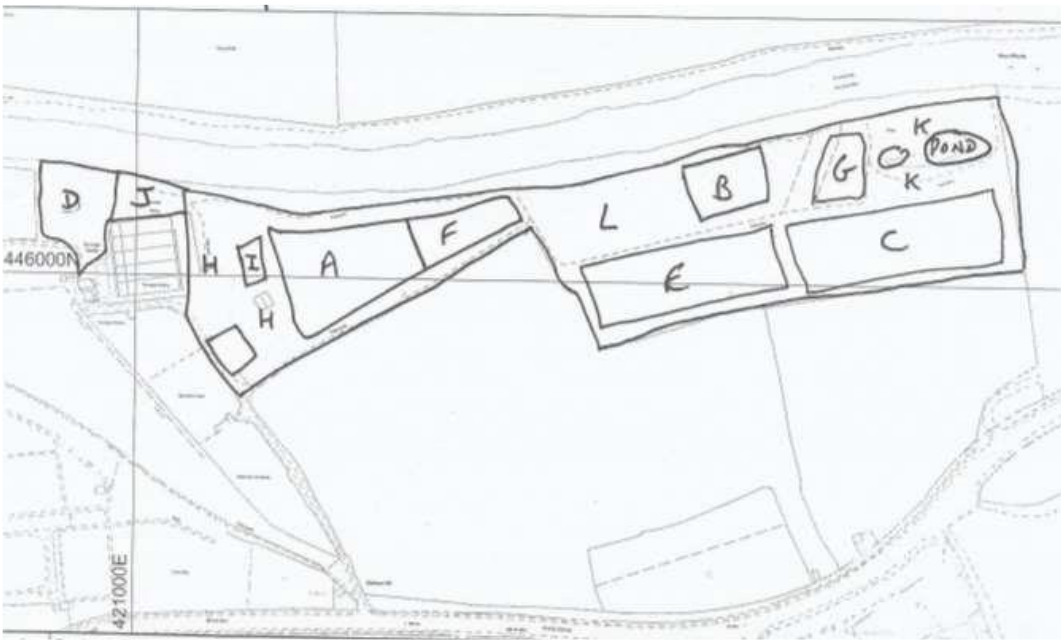
Annual works needed to keep surface in trim. Fence around the car park to be maintained and native hedgerow with standard trees managed appropriately.

6.1.5 Paths

Maintained annually to keep them safe and easy to use by less able visitors.

6.2 Management Overview

In order to inform the Management Plan the site has been divided into management Zones (see below). The following provides a summary of management objectives for each zone.



- **Area A** – Diversify woodland structure and groundflora through selective ring barking, initiating coppice coupes and log piles in this area. Works include: holly planting, selective felling, more cover/under growth and leaf litter inoculation. The hedge should be trimmed and laid. Removal of Himalayan Balsam.

  Maintain hedge through laying to separate the woodland (area A) from the wildflower area (area H/I).

  This woodland has had two coppice coupes created in 2017/18 and 2019/20. Coupes were cleared of trees and hazel planted.

  Spur with bench present.

- **Area B** – This area needs to be left to mature. From an ecological viewpoint this is a good area for bryophytes;

- **Area C** – National Vegetation Classification W8/W10. Diversify woodland structure and groundflora through selective ring barking, initiating coppice coupes and log piles in this area. Plant native woodland groundflora, use leaf litter inoculation and other methods to introduce ecologically relevant groundflora. Hazel coppice coupes established here in 2016/17, 2018/19 and 2022/23. Spur with bench present;

- **Area D** (largely sycamore) – some selective ring barking, holly planting and log piles in this area. Ring barked trees now felled;

- **Area E** – Community Orchard and Forest Garden. Fruit trees and shrubs present.

- **Area F** – Arboretum area with a variety of native and non-native trees and tall ruderal vegetation;

- **Area G** – Tall ruderal vegetation. Two ponds and pond-dipping platform were created in this area February 2018.

- **Area H/I** – The Wildflower area needs to be cut and cleared off site each autumn. Robust wildflower species are being encouraged to compete with nettles.

  Update 2022; Meadow crane's-bill, agrimony, hogweed, rosebay-willowherb and teasel all doing well. Hedge planted around the carpark in 2016 was laid in March 2022. There are also three oak trees (locally grown from Chevin seed) two rowan and a birch in the hedge.

- **Area J** – an invasive snowberry bush managed to stop encroachment onto the footpath. The footpath in this area needs refreshed. Nettle stalks to be taken down in Autumn;

- **Area K** – Cut each autumn and manage as a wildflower meadow. Proposal to develop a dead hedge with cuttings from around the pond to reduce – with some selected gaps. Willow feature bench created in 2020 and now established;

- **Area L** – National Vegetation Classification W6. The woodland is in good condition and should be largely left alone. Consideration to be given to some evergreen cover. Removal of Italian and Grey alder for log piles over time. Hazel coppice coupes established here in 20/21 and 21/22. Spur with bench present;

- **River frontage** – need to thicken some areas with willow, which would make the area more otter friendly. Also, aim to make the river more of a feature – possibly two benches on the river bank;

- **Ponds** – Willow on south and west banks to be pollarded regularly to allow light to penetrate. Consider ways to discourage access to the ponds by dogs.

- **Signage** Interpretation Boards explaining flora and fauna were designed by local artist River Six and installed in 2019. There are six altogether.

6.3 Management Actions

6.3.1 Habitat Maintenance

AIM: *To manage the woodland, scrub, wetland and grassland habitats to increase species diversity and provide suitable habitat for wildlife*

- **Scrub, Wooded Areas, Hedgerows and Grasslands**

The aim of managing wooded areas should be to achieve something approximating more natural woodland, i.e. it has three distinct layers – canopy, understorey and ground layer - consisting of native species. There should also be dead wood on site (both standing and fallen).

All birds and their nests are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is good practice to undertake woodland management outside the bird nesting season (as a guide, the nesting season should be regarded as being between 1st March to 1st September). Similarly, all bats and their roosts are protected and before tree work is undertaken there should be efforts made to assess potential impacts on bats and avoidance measures made.

There are a number of hedgerows around the site lining the paths. These are best for wildlife when allowed to develop into thick and bushy hedgerows producing lots of fruit and seed. However, where hedgerows are adjacent to paths they will need to be cut back. Hedgerow trimming should take place in the winter and one year in three which will allow the hedge to produce fruit and seed.

On a nutrient enriched site such as Gallows Hill diverse wildflower meadows will be difficult to create as they prefer nutrient impoverished sites. However, treatment of the open areas and on-going management will help diversify the grasslands.

Management Plan – Scrub, Woodland, Hedgerows, Grassland						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. To review designations of land within the park, including plantations, meadows, and riparian habitat to inform future management regime	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	OTC / FoGH
2. Coppicing to allow light to reach the woodland floor and ground flora to develop. Felled timber used to create habitat piles	Oct – Mar Area A	Oct – Mar Area C	Oct – Mar Area A	Oct – Mar Area C	Oct – Mar Area A	FoGH

Management Plan – Scrub, Woodland, Hedgerows, Grassland						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
3. After thinning, diversify the woodland through planting hazel and develop the under-storey through planting and/or leaf litter inoculation from other local woodlands	Oct – Mar Area A	Oct – Mar Area C	Oct – Mar Area A	Oct – Mar Area C	Oct – Mar Area A	FoGH
4. To manage and cut back hedgerows and vegetation adjacent to and overhanging paths	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	OTC
5. Hedge lay where appropriate	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	FoGH
6. To cut the wildflower areas annually with arisings removed to increase diversity	Sept - Nov	Sept	Nov	Sept	Nov	OTC
7. Willow coppice – pollard existing osier willow and plant suitable willow variety in between. Harvest willow.	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	FoGH
8. Removal of Invasive Non-native Species as they become apparent.	May / July	May / July	May / July	May / July	May / July	OTC / FoGH
9. Tree safety audit	Oct - Feb		Oct - Feb		Oct - Feb	OTC
10. Tree safety works	Oct - Feb		Oct - Feb		Oct - Feb	OTC

- **Ponds**

There are two ponds in late succession on site with many species reliant on the ponds for food, shelter and breeding. The ponds are an important breeding site for toads and other amphibians during March/April.

It was recognised that it is important to provide continuity of habitat through introducing early succession pond habitat, and two new ponds were created in February 2018. These new ponds were rapidly colonised by amphibians and invertebrates including; palmate, smooth, alpine and great crested newt, common frog and common toad – torchlight survey undertaken annually.

Management Plan – Ponds						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. Pollard willow on southern edge of pond.	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	FoGH
2. To keep approximately one third to a half of the surface area as open water by the removal of vegetation (especially Reedmace and Willow).	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	FoGH
3. To install a pond dipping platform suitable for use by all on new pond in Area E		Nov - Mar				OTC / FoGH
4. To create a further pond in Area E – providing valuable early succession pond habitat for amphibians, dragonflies and damselflies		Nov - Mar				OTC / FoGH

- **Community Orchard and Forest Garden**

The Community Orchard fruit trees (mainly apple but with some plum and pear) have been planted in the period February to March 2017. The Forest Garden has had a number of structural fruit trees planted including peach, quince, plum, medlar and greengage.

Management Plan – Community Orchard						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. Manage growth of grass and tall ruderal vegetation around fruit trees.	May - Sept	May - Sept	May - Sept	May - Sept	May - Sept	FoGH
2. Replace trees which have failed.	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb				FoGH
4. Organise harvest and apple pressing.					Oct	FoGH

Management Plan – Forest Garden						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. Mulch a quarter of Forest Garden area.	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb			FoGH
2. Replace trees which have failed.	Oct - Feb	Oct - Feb				FoGH
3. Complete fruit tree planting	Oct - Feb					FoGH
4. Plant shrub and ground layer on prepared ground.	Oct - Mar	Oct - Mar	Oct - Mar	Oct - Mar		FoGH
5. Maintain Garden through weeding, pruning and training fruit bushes.	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	FoGH

- **Biodiversity Surveys**

AIM: *To monitor the fauna and flora of the site*

In order to ensure that aims and objectives of management are being met it is necessary to monitor key species as biodiversity indicators. In addition a full botanical survey is desirable on a regular basis (every five years).

Key species at this site are considered to be;

- Woodland groundflora
- Amphibians
- Breeding birds
- Bats
- Small mammals
- Butterflies
- Moths

Management Plan – Biodiversity Surveys						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. Woodland groundflora survey		May		May		FoGH
2. Amphibian survey	Mar / Apr	Mar / Apr	Mar / Apr	Mar / Apr	Mar / Apr	FoGH / YARG
3. Breeding bird survey and collation of incidental sightings		May		May		FoGH
4. Bat survey	Jul / Aug	Jul / Aug	Jul / Aug	Jul / Aug	Jul / Aug	FoGH
5. Small mammal trapping survey		Sept				FoGH / YMG
6. Butterfly survey		Mar - Sept		Mar - Sept		FoGH / WNS
7. Moth survey		Mar - Sept		Mar - Sept		FoGH / WNS
8. Full botanical survey of site			May / Jun			FoGH / WNS

- **Access**

AIM: *To maintain footpaths and benches to provide year-round accessibility and which are wheelchair, pram, buggy friendly*

Management Plan – Footpaths						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. Paths and benches inspection	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	OTC
2. Management of path surface and benches as identified during inspection.	Apr / May	Apr / May	Apr / May	Apr / May	Apr / May	OTC
3. Cut vegetation adjacent to paths to limit encroachment	May - Oct	May - Oct	May - Oct	May - Oct	May - Oct	OTC

- **Car Park and Site Infrastructure**

AIM: *To maintain car park and positive image of site.*

Gallows Hill provides a small car park for visitors. Other site infrastructure includes dog waste bin and litter bin and fencing / hedge around the car park.

Management Plan – Car Park and Site Infrastructure						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. Car park surface and fencing inspection	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	OTC
2. Management of car park surface and fencing as identified during inspection.	Apr / May	Apr / May	Apr / May	Apr / May	Apr / May	OTC
3. Liaise with LCC to ensure effective management of dog waste bin.	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	OTC

- **Interpretation**

AIM: *To provide opportunities for interpretation and encourage educational use*
AIM: *To develop links with other significant managed green spaces and nature reserves locally*

There is currently a Welcome noticeboard at the site entrance by the car park (bought and installed with funds from WNS). Information on the Welcome noticeboard includes forthcoming events, work parties and information about Friends of Gallows Hill.

Events are advertised at The Core where posters are displayed.

There is no current leaflet for the site to guide visitors. We have a leaflet dispenser (bought with funds from WNS) which is fitted to the Welcome noticeboard.

Web presence – Friends of Gallows Hill do not currently fund and maintain a website and Facebook group. Gallows Hill Nature Area features on OTC website.

FoGH produce regular articles and input for Otley Matters and Wharfedale Observer and promote the site at Otley Greenfair.

Events – FoGH run a successful events programme each year.

Interpretation Boards explaining flora and fauna were designed by local artist River Six and installed in 2019. The boards also highlight the reserve assets and give context in relation to other significant green spaces and nature reserves locally.

Management Plan – Interpretation						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
1. To design and produce a site leaflet		Dec / Jan / Feb				OTC / FoGH
2. Distribute site leaflet via dispenser		Apr - Mar	Apr – Mar	Apr - Mar	Apr - Mar	FoGH
3. Produce and install interpretation about species and habitats present.		Dec / Jan / Feb				OTC / FoGH
4. Create and maintain Gallows Hill website and Facebook group	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan - Dec	FoGH
5. Promote Gallows Hill on OTC website	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan - Dec	OTC

Management Plan – Interpretation						
Objective	Actions					Responsibility
	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	
6. Run a programme of public events: wildlife walks, identification sessions.	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan - Dec	FoGH
7. Promote a programme of public events: wildlife walks, identification sessions.	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan – Dec	Jan - Dec	FoGH / OTC

6.4 Financial resources

Clearly OTC has a responsibility to maintain this public biodiversity asset in a safe, accessible and attractive condition. Consequently a number of actions sit entirely with OTC with regard to funding.

Friends of Gallows Hill have successfully applied for funding from Wharfedale Naturalists Society and received both in kind and financial sponsorship from local businesses (Haycock and Jay Associates Ltd and Ground Direct Ltd).

This partnership approach to funding projects has been successful; for instance in raising £12,575 to create the new ponds and platform combining funds from OTC with FoGH fund-raising, Wharfedale Naturalists Society, Yorkshire Amphibian and Reptile Group, West Yorkshire Bat Group and Ground-direct Ltd.

FoGH also depends on people (often skilled professionals) giving freely of their time to run events.

Where actions sit with FoGH or there is joint responsibility, FoGH will endeavour to apply for funding to secure these items but will look to OTC to consider any shortfall through their site maintenance budget.

6.5 Delivering the strategy

Responsibility for delivering the strategy will lie with the Environment and Sustainability Committee of Otley Town Council (or a future successor Committee).

Friends of Gallows Hill will assist in drawing up and delivery of the management plan associated with the strategy, and an advisory ‘Steering Group’ will meet quarterly with the following organisations represented:

- Otley Town Council
- Friends of Gallows Hill
- Walkers are Welcome
- Open Country
- Wharfedale Naturalists
- Other bodies and individuals as appropriate