

# THE DELL

## Woodland Management Plan

Improving The Dell for wildlife and the people of  
Cullingworth

2012

Cullingworth Village Council

And Bradford Environmental Education Service

Reviewed and Updated May 2013



## The Dell, Cullingworth

### Woodland Management Plan

It has always been the intention of Cullingworth Village Council to hand over the management to a Friends of The Dell group. This process was started in April 2013 with an Open Day. Support and advice is being sought from Bradford Council's Parks and Landscapes Service. This management plan aims to guide the newly formed Friends group with the on-going improvements in The Dell.

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#### **1. Introduction**

The Dell is a small area of woodland in Cullingworth, adjacent to the footpath of the same name, leading from Dellside Gardens to Victoria Street. Although small, it is a relatively diverse woodland with plants species that indicate it has existed for several hundred years. It shows outward signs of neglect and misuse which limit its attraction as a community resource. Simple measures could be undertaken to improve access and the wildlife value of the wood. Specific survey work could ascertain presence of bats and butterflies, and more general environmental education sessions will enable the local community to increase knowledge and understanding as well as take positive action in their neighbourhood.

The Dell offers great potential as a rich wildlife space for the Cullingworth Community. It already contains many wild plants and attracts a good mix of birds. With relatively little input The Dell could be vastly improved for local people.

#### **2. Background**

In 2010 Cullingworth Village Council (formerly Parish Council) began the process of formalising ideas for improvements to The Dell. Support has been given throughout the process by Shipley Area Coordinators Office.

In May 2010 BEES, Bradford Environmental Education Service (part of Bradford YMCA), undertook an initial survey of The Dell on behalf of Shipley Area Office. The aim was to ascertain the current biodiversity status of the wood and to highlight potential management tasks that would be needed in order to make the woodland more accessible and potentially richer in wildlife.

Cullingworth Village Council continued to work with the village community and Bradford Council to generate further interest and ideas for improving the woodland structure of The Dell and to increase its use by the people of Cullingworth. The land is Council owned and falls with the management of Asset Management. Permission is being sought from Asset Management to implement initial access improvements.

This management plan aims to set out a clear management rationale for The Dell and an action plan that will set out necessary tasks in order to achieve the agreed improvements. The plan will enable a consistent approach to management of The Dell and it will be monitored and evaluated by Cullingworth Village Council and other interested parties to ensure management of The Dell results in a valued and diverse community woodland.

### 3. Biodiversity



**nuthatch**

The tree cover is dense and the canopy is closed in most areas, casting deep shade and limiting ground flora in some parts of the wood. The damp conditions have resulted in the ground becoming muddy and slippery underfoot. There are several mature oak and sycamore trees and the number of young wych elm trees is notable. Many of the elms are reaching an age when they will be prone to infection by Dutch elm disease. This is a fungal disease that is transmitted by beetles and results in the death of the tree. Other tree species include holly, horse chestnut and poplar.

The ground flora is mixed with areas dominated by nettle, cow parsley and ivy, but also a good range of other woodland flowers. There are several species of flowering plant that are indicators of ancient woodland – a classification that indicates the woodland has not been disturbed for over 400 years providing a very rich wildlife resource. However, approximately ten species need to be recorded in unison to indicate ancient woodland and this survey lists five. A study of ordnance survey maps back to 1894 shows continuous woodland cover, but in all likelihood there has been some felling in the past.



**robin**

In order to increase the biodiversity and the aesthetic of the wood, The Council's Woodland Team applied for permission under the Tree Preservation Order guidelines, for a programme of selected tree work which was approved and commenced in March 2012. This has focused on increasing light levels within the wood by removing selected mature trees. Sycamore, considered a semi native by the Forestry Commission, has been removed.

Some felled timber will be left on site to create habitat for small mammals, invertebrates and fungi. The creation of these habitat piles will be limited so the original objective of opening up the woodland floor is not compromised. It is also planned to leave some standing deadwood as a vertical habitat which is attractive to insect eating birds such as woodpeckers and tree creepers. It may also be attractive to bats if slots are cut into the end of protruding branches to create potential roosting sites.

The elms should be managed by coppicing to encourage new regrowth. The tree is only susceptible to Dutch elm disease once its bark begins to fissure around 10-12 years old. This management will allow the elm to thrive creating a potential habitat for the white letter hairstreak butterfly which relies on elm for its larval food plant. In addition, it is thought that sooner or later UK elms will become resistant to Dutch elm disease and re-establish themselves, and these trees in The Dell might just be amongst the trees that have the genetic makeup to do that.

The ash, a native tree, in the western end of the wood should undergo a thinning programme to benefit both the ash saplings and the woodland in general. A general pruning regime on many of the trees to remove branches up to 2 or 3 metres from the ground will further contribute to the increase in light levels and also help upward growth. Some of the prunings should be stacked in habitat piles, though these should be limited to reduce risk of vandalism and fire.

There is elder present which, whilst beneficial to biodiversity, may be monopolising the woodland floor. Selective removal may be necessary, particularly at the eastern end adjacent to the farm. The large mature horse chestnut is susceptible to the disease *Phytophthora ramorum* and will need monitoring.

There is an opportunity to increase the woodland species present by planting new trees and woodland flowers. Trees could be used to form a hedge in parts of the wood as well as understory planting in chosen sections.

#### **4. Vision**

The vision for the Dell is that it will become known as a tranquil wildlife haven with people coming together to look after it, taking pride in not only their own contribution but the achievements of the village to care and protect this small but important area of ancient woodland.

It is envisaged that the area will be made secure around its perimeter to enable it to develop as an 'open air classroom' for the schools and uniformed groups, become a venue for those with an interest in wildlife and an area to hold organised family events.

#### **5. Management Action Plan**

The aim of the action plan is to enable a consistent approach to the management of The Dell. It



identifies the timings of the key management tasks the resources needed and training requirements of volunteers.

Some work has been carried out to fill the gap in the wall by erecting a fence. The wall building will be completed at a later date.





By thinning selective trees and pruning low branches more light will reach the woodland floor enabling flowers to grow.

Increased use of the woods, and increased litter patrols will lead to less accumulation of litter.

## 6. First stages of action

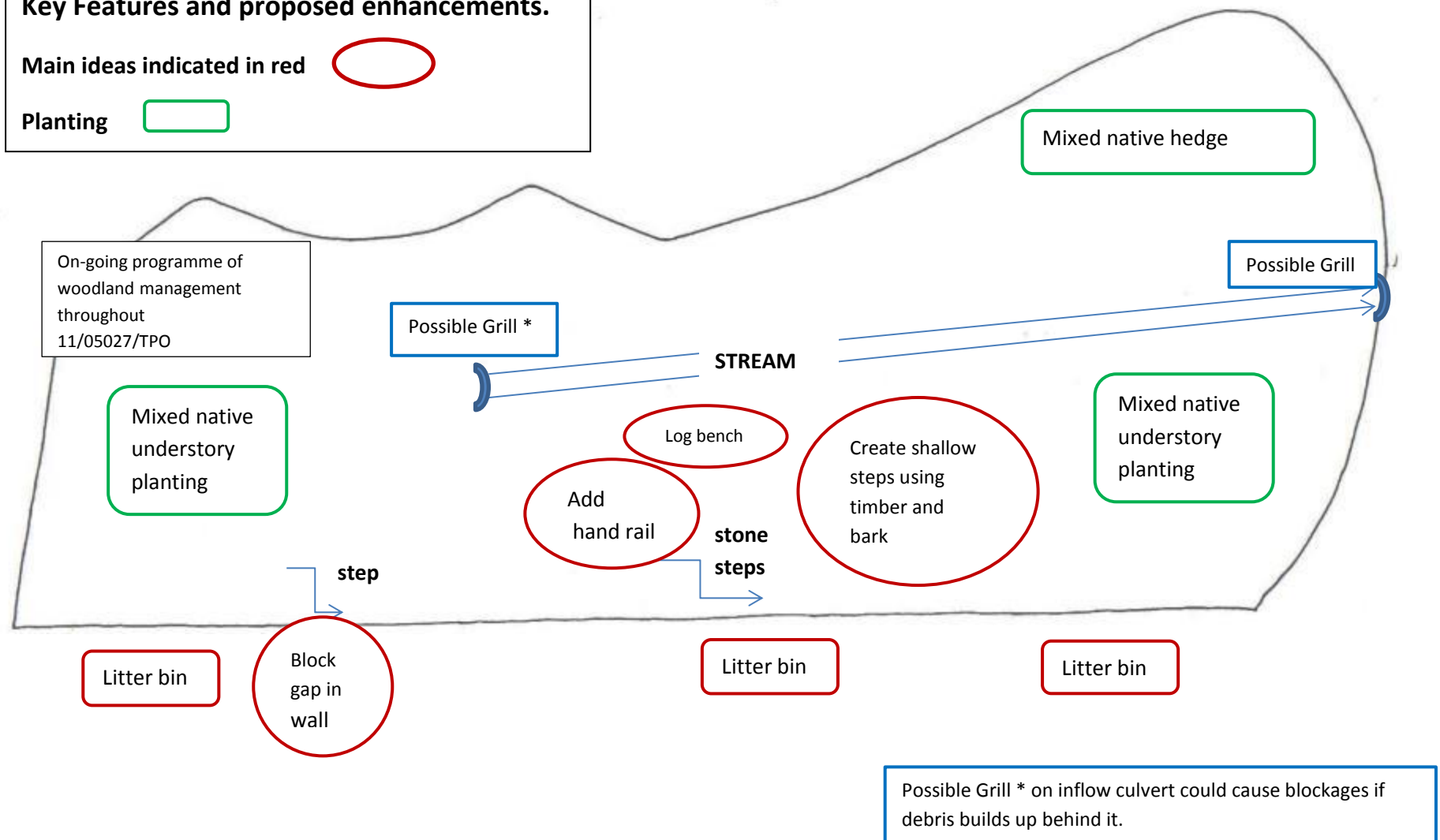
Through the summer, and early winter of 2012 the first stages of implementing the plan have been undertaken. This has created an opportunity for local people to interact with The Dell, both joining in with practical tasks and learning about the wildlife.



**The Dell; Cullingworth**  
**Key Features and proposed enhancements.**

Main ideas indicated in red

Planting



## 5.1 Action Plan 2012

TASK	WHEN	WHO and RESOURCES	NOTES; restrictions, completion, follow up etc
<b>Woodland management</b>			
BMDC Woodland Team identified a programme of works for winter 2012. This included thinning some trees and crown lifting others to allow more light to reach the woodland floor.	MARCH 2012 - DEC 2013	Contractor  Payment by BMDC and grants	Trees all covered by TPO. Work programme agreed by BMDC Tree Team.  This work started in March 2012. BMDC is devising a plan to complete the work by Dec 2013.
Ensure all broken or damaged trees are pruned appropriately to prevent suggestion of misuse	ongoing	CVC	Need to clarify if this needs approval with relation to TPO
Monitor mature Horse Chestnut for signs of the disease <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i> , it should be inspected annually for any signs of this disease, which include; peeling bark, dieback, and gummy substances leaking from wounds in the bark.	ongoing	CVC/FOD  BMDC Tree team	Report concerns to Trees and Woodlands Team BMDC.
Monitor ash for ash dieback disease <i>Chalara fraxinea</i> and keep abreast of appropriate action	ongoing	CVC/FOD  BMDC Tree team	Information can be found at <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara</a> And <a href="http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/about-us/faqs/your-woods/Pages/ash-dieback.aspx#.UOwvHOTtTnU">http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/about-us/faqs/your-woods/Pages/ash-dieback.aspx#.UOwvHOTtTnU</a>
Planting a hedge to improve boundaries as well as creating wildlife habitat	Nov/Dec 2012 – Feb 2013	BEES with CVC/FOD	Suggested species include; blackthorn , hazel, crab apple, alder, holly, <i>viburnum opulus</i> , bird cherry, dog rose and willow  Planting started in Dec 2012 and completed in March 2013 with the involvement of schools.  Source trees from local nursery e.g. Beardsworths <a href="http://www.beardsworths.co.uk">www.beardsworths.co.uk</a>
Under story planting to increase diversity of tree species in woodland	Nov/Dec 2012 – Feb 2013	BEES with CVC/FOD	Suggested species include; alder, birch, oak, rowan, willow and field maple  Planting started in Dec 2012 and completed in March 2013 with schools.

			Source trees from local nursery e.g. Beardsworths <a href="http://www.beardsworths.co.uk">www.beardsworths.co.uk</a>
<b>Access improvements into The Dell</b>			
Gap in wall (access/step) to be filled in. Wall to be mended to replace and secure coping stones	2012	To be identified	Fence has been constructed on the pathside of the wall. Stone work to be completed at a later date.
Hand rail to be secured to wall of central steps	2013		One completed. Second in progress
Gate on central entrance	2013		Completed in April 2013
Shallow steps to be created from step entrance towards stream	SUMMER 2012	BEES	The steps have been constructed; supported by Community Space Challenge All Ages funding. This is a cabinet office Social Action Fund Project funded by Social Investment Business.
Wooden Benches to be installed	WINTER 2012/13		Two have been installed by volunteers using onsite felled timber.
Grills to be secured to inflow and outflow of stream		CVC/FOD to liaise with BMDC	Advice from BMDC drainage team autumn 2012 that grills would risk causing a blockage so they will not be installed.  Identified that the wall where the water enters The Dell will need repair in the future. Assessment is needed in 2013
Repair Boundary walls and fences		Local volunteers or contractors	This may not be a priority for 2012; review at end of year and consider appropriate programme of work
Monitor stability of stream bank and take remedial action if necessary	On going	CVC/FOD	No action is anticipated in 2012 but monitoring should inform plan for future years.
<b>Litter Clearance</b>			
Work with pupils from Parkside Secondary School and Cullingworth Primary School to generate ideas about how to reduce litter in The Dell	Spring 2012	CVC/FOD with school councils	Cullingworth Primary undertook litter clearance at the same time as tree planting.  Council warden is active with various initiatives.
Install 3 litter bins along footpath	June 2012	Suggestion of Shipley Area Office or Parks and Landscapes	Action completed, plus two further bins have been installed. These have been sponsored by Co-op and Ellison's Butchers.
Community Litter Pick	Summer 2012		Risk Assessment needed to ensure site safe for community litter pick.



			Support from BMDC Cleansing Team to collect gathered litter would be desirable. Cleansing may also be able to offer litter pickers.
Regular litter collection to be undertaken by community groups – schools, scouts, community warden. Rota to be organised by CVC/FOD and warden.	monthly	CVC/FOD, schools community groups	Undertaken monthly.
<b>Habitat enhancement</b>			
Control invasive species eg Spanish Bluebell	Spring and Summer	CVC/FOD with volunteers	No action appropriate
Introduce plug plants of native woodland flora e.g. red campion	Summer 2012		Only a small amount of this should be undertaken this year as it will more successful once further woodland work has been completed.
Make and install bat and bird boxes	Summer and autumn.		Bat boxes made with Guides, Cubs and their families in Nov 2012. BEES to install 2013

## 6.2 Action Plan 2013 – 2017

TASK	WHEN	WHO	NOTES; restrictions, completion, follow up etc
Identify training needs for Friends of The dell volunteers	Summer 2013	CVC/FOD to identify needs	Work with BMDC Parks and Landscapes Service to support development of the group and identify possible training
<b>Tree management themes</b>			
Undertake Programme of Woodland Management	December – March each year	To be arranged by BMDC and CVC/FOD; Done by contractors and vols	<p>Tree management to be devised by BMDC. Programme of work needs to be decided beyond the scope of the current TPO licence ( 11/05027/TPO). After Dec 2013 require new licence from BMDC re TPO.</p> <p>Volunteer involvement could be appropriate for some of the tasks.</p> <p>Control number of habitat piles to reduce risk of vandalism/fire. An alternative may be to investigate the use of mesh gabions (see <a href="http://www.gabion1.co.uk">http://www.gabion1.co.uk</a> as an example)</p> <p>Felled timber could be sold locally.</p>

Ensure all broken or damaged trees are pruned appropriately to prevent suggestion of misuse	ongoing	CVC/FOD	Need to clarify if this needs approval under TPO restrictions
Monitor mature Horse Chestnut for signs of the disease <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i> , it should be inspected annually for any signs of this disease, which include; peeling bark, dieback, and gummy substances leaking from wounds in the bark.		CVC/FOD BMDC	Report concerns to Trees and Woodlands Team BMDC
Monitor ash for ash dieback disease <i>Chalara fraxinea</i> and keep abreast of appropriate action	On going	CVC/FOD BMDC	Information can be found at <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara</a> And <a href="http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/about-us/faqs/your-woods/Pages/ash-dieback.aspx#.UOwvHOTtTnU">http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/about-us/faqs/your-woods/Pages/ash-dieback.aspx#.UOwvHOTtTnU</a>
Monitor for squirrel damage	On going	Support needed from BMDC	Option to undertake Squirrel control measures if the increased footfall does not displace them
<b>Understory and ground flora</b>			
Monitor and control other garden plants that may appear amongst woodland flora eg cotoneaster and snowberry	Spring and Summer	CVC/FOD Volunteers	
Control spread of bramble and raspberry that will quickly colonize newly-lit bare ground before any ground flora can re-establish	All year round	CVC/FOD Volunteers	
Monitor ground flora to decide if further planting is desirable. Introduce plug plants of native woodland flora e.g. red campion	Spring and Summer	CVC/FOD Volunteers	Seeds or plug plants should be purchased from sources that can ensure local provenance e.g. Heritage Wildflowers <a href="http://www.heritagewildflowers.co.uk/">http://www.heritagewildflowers.co.uk/</a> or BEES
Monitor need for any further shrub/understory planting. Limit use of blackthorn to prevent	Winter	CVC/FOD Volunteers	Consider inclusion of downy birch, sessile oak (suited to soil conditions), hawthorn and wild honeysuckle (cannot recommend a supplier at this stage)

problem with suckers.			
General site maintenance including litter etc.			
Monitor stability of stream bank and take remedial action if necessary	On going	CVC/FOD	Cullingworth footpath group may be suitable volunteers for this job.
Litter Removal	Monthly	Schools CVC/FOD	
Dog Fouling: removal and consideration of bins	Monthly	Warden BMDC	
Removal of garden waste, scrap metal and rubbish in water course	Twice a year	Warden BMDC	Volunteers, and local residents, can support this, supported by appropriate risk assessment.
Access and educational themes, including enhancing and monitoring habitats.			
Environmental Education Sessions	All year round	Schools, scouts etc.	Groups could sign up to Nature Detectives, part of the Woodland Trust, to receive free down-loadable nature activity charts. <a href="http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/">http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/</a>  Could resources be kept at a central location?
<b>Species surveys.</b> Trees Birds Flora Bats Water invertebrates Butterflies	Spring and Summer	CVC/FOD With help of BUWG, RSPB, BEES	Keeping these records helps increase knowledge and engagement with the woods, but also helps monitor change.
Monitor habitat boxes. All boxes should be numbered for future monitoring. Ideally bird boxes should be cleaned in the autumn – old nest removed and the box rinsed with boiling water	Spring – look for activity  Autumn - cleaning		Risk assessment needed for undertaking this task on a ladder using hot water.
<b>Monitor and review Action Plan</b>	<b>Annually , each Autumn</b>	<b>CVC/FOD</b>	<b>Adjust Action Plan as appropriate in response to actions completed and new situations and ideas that arise.</b>
Interpretation Boards	Any time		Financial resources will be needed, the amount will vary on the size, detail and design work. £1-2,000 is a realistic outlay.
Art work such as woodcarving	Any time		

## 7. Species lists - survey 19 May 2010

### trees and shrubs

<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	sycamore
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	horse Chestnut
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	ash
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	holly
<i>Populus agg.</i>	poplar hybrid
<i>Quercus robur</i>	oak
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	elder
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	wych Elm

### flowers and grasses

<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	garlic mustard
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	cow parsley
<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	wavy bittercress
<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>	rosebay willowherb
<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>	enchanter's nightshade
<i>Cotoneaster</i>	cotoneaster
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	cocksfoot
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	foxglove
<i>Endymion/hyacinthoides hispanicus</i>	spanish bluebell
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	broad leaved willowherb
<i>Galium aparine</i>	cleavers
<i>Geranium columbinum</i>	herb Robert
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	wood avens
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	ground ivy
<i>Hedera helix</i>	ivy
<i>Lonicera nitida</i>	Wilson's honeysuckle
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	honeysuckle
<i>Meconopsis cambrica</i>	welsh poppy
<i>Montia sibirica</i>	pink purslane
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	rough meadow grass
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	meadow buttercup
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	lesser celandine
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	creeping buttercup
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	bramble
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	raspberry
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	broad leaved dock
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	ragwort
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	hedge woundwort
<i>Symphoricarpos alba</i>	snowberry
<i>Taraxacum officinale agg.</i>	Dandelion
<i>Tellima grandiflora</i>	fringe cups
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	nettle
<i>Vicia sepium</i>	bush vetch

### birds

<i>Prunella modularis</i>	dunnoch
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	robin
<i>Turdus merula</i>	blackbird
<i>Pica pica</i>	magpie
<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	chaffinch
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	collard dove
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	wren

### ferns

<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	lady fern
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	broad buckler fern
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	male fern
<i>Phyllitis scolopendrium</i>	hartstongue fern

## 8. Notes

### 7.1 Further information

1. The Dell Grid reference; 406948 436854
2. Application for alteration for trees with a Tree Preservation Order  
[http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/appPDF/Help031\\_england\\_en.pdf](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/appPDF/Help031_england_en.pdf)
3. Bradford's Local Biodiversity Action Plan  
<http://www.bradford.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8D3547E2-FA86-4390-A74D-A335F3086B9F/0/BRADFORDBIODIVERSITY.pdf>
4. White-letter Hairstreak  
<http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/Butterfly/32/Butterfly.html?ButterflyId=52>
5. Ancient woodland,  
P Glaves et al (2009), A Report to the Woodland Trust, Field Surveys for Ancient Woodlands: Issues and Approaches, Sheffield Hallam University.

### 7.2 Organisations

**Cullingworth Village Council;** Cullingworth Village Council meets on the first Wednesday of each month, at 19:30 in Cullingworth Methodist Chapel. There is a 15 minute public session at the beginning when residents have an opportunity to voice concerns.

**Contact;** [contact@cullingworth-village.co.uk](mailto:contact@cullingworth-village.co.uk).

**Bradford Environmental Education Service;** BEES have been delivering a broad range of environmental education projects in the Bradford District since 1985. The focus is to enable people to make a positive contribution to their local environment; developing practical and decision making skills to manage places for wildlife and for people.

**Contact;** BEES, YMCA, Culture Fusion, 125 Thornton Road, Bradford BD1 2EP. 01274 371303.

[www.bees-ymca.org.uk](http://www.bees-ymca.org.uk)

**Bradford Metropolitan District Council Trees and Woodland Team;** responsible for all woodland on Council owned land.

**Contact;** Tree & Woodland Manager, Department of Environment & Sport  
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council - 950 Bolton Road, Bradford BD2 4BX  
01274 431712, [bob.thorp@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:bob.thorp@bradford.gov.uk), [www.bradforddistrictparks.org](http://www.bradforddistrictparks.org)

**Bradford Metropolitan District Council TPO;** Simon Keenan, Arboricultural Officer Department of Regeneration and Culture.

**Bradford Urban Wildlife Group** [buwg.btck.co.uk](http://buwg.btck.co.uk)

### 7.3 References

**Management Planning for Nature Conservation,** A Theoretical Basis & Practical Guide; Mike Alexander (Springer 2008)