



## PLAYHOUSE SLOPE CONSULTATION – WE WANT YOUR VIEWS

The global Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the areas around the River Wharfe in Ilkley becoming essential for people’s mental and physical wellbeing. Members of Climate Action Ilkley’s Land and Nature Group have identified the site shown below, north of the Playhouse and Castle Road Allotments, as an area that could be enhanced as a community asset for people and wildlife. We are liaising with a range of stakeholders, including Ilkley Town Council, the Friends of Ilkley Riverside Park, the Playhouse, Wharfedale Naturalists Society and City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council Parks department. We intend to consult residents and allotment tenants on an ongoing basis and now want your views on the project objectives and initial ideas.



The group’s current objectives, subject to the results of this consultation, are as follows:

- to realise the full potential of this site as a haven for wildlife and an amenity for local people and visitors
- to help connect local people and visitors with the natural world
- to demonstrate that public open space is compatible with rich biodiversity
- to showcase ways to improve biodiversity which could then be replicated in other spaces, such as people’s own private garden
- to have features of all year-round interest, and
- to raise awareness of issues related to loss of biodiversity and climate change



The ideas we'd like your views on, which include both short-term and longer-term, more ambitious proposals, are as follows:

### ***Short-term ideas***

#### *Northern slopes*

- A woodland garden interspersed with open areas
- Light, airy planting with small, native trees (eg birch, willow, hazel, rowan, holly), shrubs (eg wild roses, honeysuckle, dogwood), woodland bulbs and wildflowers (eg bluebells, primroses, ramsons, wood anemones and foxgloves)
- Layered planting with different but connected micro-habitats
- A winding footpath, including improved access down to the main path at the eastern end
- Benches and picnic areas
- Wood piles, bug-boxes, bird boxes and bat boxes
- Shrubs to screen out the derelict toilet block
- Information boards and improved views of the river

#### *Amenity area*

- Beds with a mixture of shrubs, bulbs and insect-friendly, scented plants
- Potential for a few small trees
- Covid memorial features (benches, plaques etc).
- Benches, picnic areas and information boards

### **Longer-term more ambitious proposals**

- Shallow terracing of the slope east of the steps to improve access and amenity
- A terraced, grass amphitheatre area for outdoor learning and productions (c. 30 people)
- A green roof on the toilet block, which could be refurbished or repurposed
- Ground level lighting of the footsteps and path
- Opening up ("daylighting") of Mill Ghyll to form a cascade, with a bridge on the footpath.
- A small-scale hydropower demonstration facility housed in the old toilet block

To provide ideas, comments or feedback please email [landnature@climateactionilkley.org.uk](mailto:landnature@climateactionilkley.org.uk). To obtain details of how to join Climate Action Ilkley<sup>1</sup>, join our Slack Group, sign up for our newsletter or get involved with our projects go to [www.climateactionilkley.org.uk](http://www.climateactionilkley.org.uk).



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<sup>1</sup> Climate Action Ilkley is a registered charity, our charity number is 1189801.