

Key

Self-Guided Tour

1 36

Learn more about our Nature Recovery work on the land, please see numbers overlaid. *Odyssey is formed of 5 interconnecting loops:*

Arcadia 6.5km	Alchemy 3.5km	Astral 3km	Ancestral 6km	Anchor 3km
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Heart of the Sanctuary

1 → 4

- Broughton Hall
- Avalon
- Utopia + Walled Garden
- The Chapel

Holiday Homes

5 → 24

- Eden
- Low Lodge
- Middle Lodge
- The Manse
- Top Lodge
- Mill Cottage
- Mill Race
- 2 Sulphur Wells
- Sulphur Wells Barn
- 9 Gargrave Road
- Ivy Cottage
- Redberry House
- Micklethorn
- Poverty Hill
- Pasture House
- The Farmhouse
- Oxenclose
- Barnhouse
- Yellison
- Higher Scarcliffe

Legend

- Roads
- Track*
*not suitable for vehicles with low ride height
- Rivers
- Odyssey Trail
- Public Footpaths
- Contours
- Rest Spots
- Car Parks
- Viewpoints
- EV Charger
- Toilets
- Stone Markers

Place Activation

25 → 38

- Fire Temple, Door of Transformation + Labyrinth
- Yurt
- Sweat Lodge
- Cosmic Garden
- Be An Animal: Burrow
- Banner Hill Barn
- 33 Generations
- Thrones
- Hermit Hut
- Wild Swimming + Sauna
- Moon Baths
- Bronze Age Circle
- Be An Animal: Nest
- Stone Circle

Estate Buildings

39 → 42

- Wyrd Experience
- The Estate Office
- The Bull pub
- Land Rover Experience

Land Use

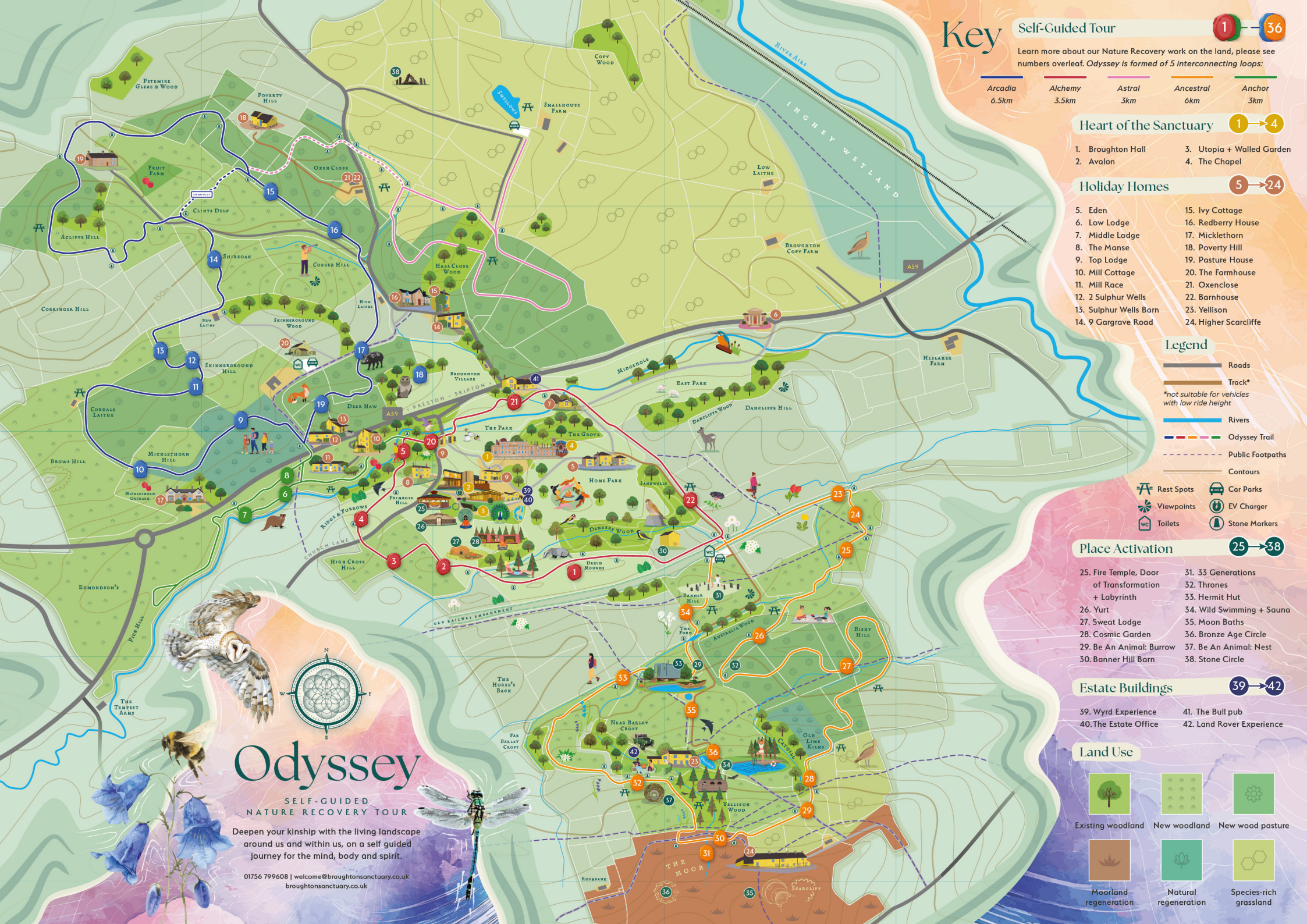
- Existing woodland
- New woodland
- New wood pasture
- Moorland regeneration
- Natural regeneration
- Species-rich grassland

Odyssey

SELF-GUIDED NATURE RECOVERY TOUR

Deepen your kinship with the living landscape around us and within us, on a self-guided journey for the mind, body and spirit.

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1 Railway line

This railway line linked Skipton with Colne but was closed in 1970 as the passenger service had become uneconomic. Since then the railway line route has been rewilded naturally, so much so, that it is now the most botanically rich area on the Sanctuary. Over 80 wildflower species have been recorded here so far, including Common Spotted Orchid, Devil's Bit Scabious, Lady's Bedstraw, Meadowsweet and Wild Strawberry. The old railway route is lined with native trees and shrubs and its sheltered nature means it is also an excellent place for butterfly spotting.

2 Hawk and Owl boxes

Within a year of removing sheep grazing from the areas to be rewilded, we saw a massive increase in Field Voles which began to thrive in the long grass. This in turn has led to an increase in numbers of Kestrels, Barn Owls, Tawny Owls and Buzzards. These species were here before in small numbers but now that there is so much more food available, their numbers are unsurprisingly increasing. There are a few barns and old trees on the Sanctuary which are suitable for breeding, but in 2023, to increase the nesting opportunities, we installed 11 Barn Owl boxes, 9 Kestrel boxes and 2 Tawny Owl boxes in suitable locations. These boxes are being monitored by licensed bird of prey specialist volunteers.

3 Farming at Broughton past and present

Prior to the commencement of our nature recovery programme in 2020, the vast majority of the Sanctuary was intensively grazed by sheep on the higher marginal and non-productive slopes, with a mix of sheep and cattle in the low-lying, more fertile land in and around the River Aire floodplain. So far, we have focused the nature recovery work on the marginal and non-productive areas, through the cessation of sheep grazing, followed by tree planting, wood pasture creation and wildflower meadow creation. In time we will be introducing rare breed cattle into these areas to mimic natural herbivore activity. In the absence of apex predators such as Wolf and Lynx, these cattle will be harvested for high quality meat production. On the more productive parts of Broughton Sanctuary, we will be migrating our intensive practices over to a regenerative agriculture approach. In this way we can optimise food production in combination with significant nature recovery. In these regenerative agriculture areas there will be a focus on restoring hay meadows and encouraging curlew and lapwing to reproduce successfully.

4 Ridge and furrow

Still visible in some of the fields at Broughton Sanctuary, are remnants of a type of agriculture dating back to the medieval times, known as ridge and furrow. This system was adopted as a communal method of farming in which each smallholder would farm a few strips in large open fields. There were also practical advantages in this system in that the ridges increased soil depth and added to the overall surface area that could be farmed. The furrows also increased drainage efficiency.

5 Broughton Mill

The 18th century mill at Broughton is a Grade II listed building and was used for grinding corn. It was refurbished in the 1990's and the buildings are now used as office space for small businesses and as holiday home accommodation.

6 Broughton Beck

The Broughton Beck runs through the centre of Broughton Sanctuary, and flows into the River Aire at the eastern edge, near Skipton. A pair of Otters breed somewhere along the Broughton stretch of the beck and if you are out walking at dawn or dusk you might just be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of one. Dippers, Kingfishers, Gosander and Heron can all be seen along the river corridor and the beck still supports a wild Brown Trout population.

7 Broughton Mill leat

The channel bringing water to the mill from further upstream on the Broughton Beck is known as a "leat". This mill ceased to operate this has steadily silted up and now supports marshy vegetation important for wetland wildlife. Proposals to reinstate the leat have not been pursued because it would require the reconstruction of a major weir on the Broughton Beck, which would not only be extremely expensive but also very damaging to aquatic habitats and fish migration in the beck itself.

8 Broughton Mill pond

Halfway along the mill leat is an old silted-up mill pond. This was used to store extra water in dry periods to help keep the mill wheel turning. We are planning to restore this pond subject to available funding. This will benefit a wide range of wildlife including Moorhens, Water Rails, Kingfishers, frogs, newts and dragonflies.

9 Natural regeneration field

Natural regeneration - trees seeding themselves - should always be the default option for getting trees back into the landscape, but this is very difficult to achieve in thick turf grasslands where there has been intensive sheep grazing for many years and where tree seed sources are very sparse. Fortunately this location near Sulphur Walls was an arable field bordered by scattered mature trees prior to rewilding and so we left it unplanted in the hope that natural regeneration would occur through tree seeds spreading and germinating in the bare ground. This is exactly what has happened, with 7 tree species now recorded in the field, predominantly Sycamore, Ash and Hawthorn. In addition the wide range of wildflowers that now flourish in this field have proved to be a fantastic food source for pollinating insects and seed-eating birds.

10 Hawthorn scrub

This is one of the few areas of Broughton Sanctuary where natural regeneration of native trees has been happening for many years prior to our nature recovery programme. This area of Hawthorn is roughly 20 years old and natural regeneration has been allowed to happen in the absence of sheep grazing on what are fairly steep slopes. The grassland in this area is also of botanical interest, with rare upland hay meadow species such as Dyer's Greenweed and an abundance of Betony and Zigzag Clover still present. This is also a great place to spot the bright red and iridescent dark green, day-flying Burnet moths and butterflies such as the "not-so" Common Blue.

11 Wood pasture

We have planted 130 hectares of wood pasture on the Sanctuary since 2021. Wood pasture differs from the woodland planting carried out elsewhere on the site. With wood pasture, the trees are planted in scattered clumps with the intention of approximately 20% mature canopy cover in the field compartments, whereas woodland planting aims for approximately 80% canopy cover. Once the trees have established after a few years, extensive grazing with small numbers of rare breed cattle will become a feature of these wood pasture areas. This will, in time, provide excellent habitat for birds such as Redstart and Tree Pipit.

12 Wetland

Wetlands were sparse on the Sanctuary prior to rewilding, as a result of historic draining for agriculture, but we are now restoring as many as we can. In a couple of locations on the Sanctuary, including this one, small seasonal streams have been historically culverted (buried underground in pipes) and so we have "daylighted" them, bringing them back to the surface where they can provide marshy habitats for bird species like Snipe and Reed Bunting and superb hunting grounds for Barn Owls and Kestrels.

13 Pendle Hill View

Pendle Hill, 1827 ft above sea level and located 13 miles away in Lancashire, is best known for the infamous Pendle Witch Trials of 1612. Twelve people living in the shadows of the hill were charged with the murder of ten people by the use of sorcery. One of the most important and damning witnesses in the trial was 9 year old Jennett Device, whose evidence led to the execution of ten people, including her own mother, brother and sister.

14 Limestone grassland at Pasture House

The geology at Broughton Sanctuary is a mix of Millstone Grit and Limestone. Here in the Pasture House valley, the limestone is at the surface in two outcrops bisected by the access road. These outcrops are so steep that historic slurry spreading has been very limited here and as a result there is still a good mix of remnant limestone flora including Hanbell, Wild Thyme, Lady's Bedstraw and Small Scabious. This is another excellent location for butterfly spotting with 20 species recorded here so far, including Small Heath, Small Copper and Wall butterfly.

15 Tree planting at Pasture House

This is an excellent location to get a feel for the incredible growth rates of the trees we planted in some of the more sheltered parts of Broughton Sanctuary as part of the major White Rose Forest-funded tree planting programme. These trees were planted as tiny 50 cm "whips" in the winter of 2020/21 and within less than 3 years many of them, especially the Willows and Alders, were already 3 metres high. This meant that the protective tree guards, essential for protecting the young trees from browsing by Roe Deer, Hares, Rabbits and Voles, could be removed intact and used elsewhere on the site and on other projects in the region. You can also see another section of stream "daylighting" in the middle of this Pasture House valley.

16 Leaky Dams

Leaky dams made of tree branches are one of several Environment Agency-funded natural flood management solutions we have implemented at Broughton Sanctuary. In a truly natural situation, tree trunks and branches would naturally fall into streams from riverside woodlands and historically Beavers would also have created dams in lower gradient streams like the one here in the Pasture House valley. However, centuries of land clearance for grazing and the extermination of Beavers back in the 15th century, mean that many watercourses no longer have the natural woody material in them that they once had. The build-up of this woody material not only helps to slow down peak flood flows reducing flood risk to properties downstream, but also creates great habitats for fish such as our resident Bullheads and aquatic invertebrates, including Mayflies and Caddisflies.

17 Wild Explorers

We are delighted to offer free school visits at our Wild Explorers outdoor adventure centre, where children can connect to nature and learn outdoor skills such as wilderness survival, wildlife tracking and nature exploration. The programme is funded by White Rose Forest, and aims to foster a love for the outdoors and instill a sense of environmental stewardship in young minds.

18 Early Purple Orchids

Early-purple Orchids are most frequently seen in ancient broadleaved woodlands, and in the eastern part of Deer Hawk Plantation an impressive display of over 300 can be seen with peak flowering in May. The species can also grow in calcareous grassland so it will be interesting to see if it spreads to nearby woodland pasture areas.

20 Mature woodland flora and fauna

There are pockets of mature woodland scattered around Broughton Sanctuary and some of them still support communities of ancient woodland indicator plants such as Bluebell, Dog's Mercury, Wood Anemone and Yellow Pimpernel. Woodland birds such as Great Spotted Woodpecker, Goldcrest, Nuthatch and Coal Tit are common and Tree Creeper, Woodcock and Firecrest also breed here. These woods are also rich in fungi, mosses, lichens and ferns, many of which will spread out into the recently planted woodlands as they mature.

21 Historic Parkland

Broughton Hall, built in 1597, lies in the centre of Broughton Sanctuary and is a Grade II registered parkland, so we have been limited in what we can do in terms of rewilding here. However, we have sown the meadow in front of the house with wildflower seed to increase its botanical interest, and we are leaving any fallen trees in situ to encourage more fungi and invertebrates back into this part of the Sanctuary.

22 Beavers

Denber's Wood will soon be home to a family of Eurasian Beavers, which, as we know from many other beaver enclosures around the country, will then transform the low lying parts of the woodland into a wonderful mosaic of wetlands and stream channels. We need to keep our Beavers in a large enclosure around the woodland as the Government in England is still not prepared to grant releases into the wild. We are now actively seeking the necessary funding to install this enclosure as soon as possible, but we are certain these charismatic and industrious keystone species will be a huge asset not only in terms of attracting more wildlife into the wetlands they create, but also for helping to reduce flood risk downstream as they slow the flow during rainstorms.

23 Railway Line

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24 Recovering wildflower rich grassland

Decades of intensive sheep grazing and manure and slurry spreading mean that native meadow wildflowers have long since disappeared from the grasslands in Broughton Sanctuary and if there is a seed bank remaining it is buried several inches below the ground. However there are a few areas such as this which have probably had fewer fertilizer applications historically, where pockets of wildflower-rich habitat remains. Here you can find Betony, Great Burnet and Burnet Saxifrage.

25 Tree Planting

The main focus of the nature recovery programme in the first three years since we started in 2020, has been to get more trees back into the landscape. Before we started on this journey, the % tree cover on the estate was about 4%, compared with the UK at 13% and Europe at 33%. Thanks to government tree planting targets and priorities, we have been able to secure significant funding through the White Rose Forest for extensive woodland and scrub planting across 325 ha of the Sanctuary. These trees have had to be protected with tree guards due to the presence of Roe Deer, Brown Hares, Rabbits and Field Voles all of which can kill young trees through browsing and bark stripping. However we are removing and re-using these guards as soon as the trees have grown enough to survive without them.

27 Wildflower meadow creation in wood pasture

To compensate for the paucity of wildflower-rich grasslands at Broughton Sanctuary, we have sown appropriate native wildflower mixes in all of the wood pasture planting areas. This involved power-harrowing of the dense former sheep-grazed turf to create bare areas for seed to germinate. The seed mix we used was all of native provenance and suitable for these soil conditions in this region of the country. There were 19 species of wildflower in the mix, including Bird's foot Trefoil, Ox-eye Daisy, Yellow Rattle, Eyebright and Cowslip.

28 Young woodland at Cat Gill

Here in the narrow valley of Cat Gill you can get a feel for what the young woodland will look like in about 15 years' time in some of the more sheltered areas of Broughton Sanctuary. This woodland was planted 17 years ago and is now flourishing. Not only that, but it is now providing tree seeds to colonise the former sheep-grazed area which we have scarified immediately downwind of the wood - an intervention known as assisted regeneration. Wildflowers found here include Marsh Violet, Square-stalked St John's-wort and Alternate-leaved Golden Saxifrage.

29 Ingleborough View

On a clear day, you can look to the north-west and 25 miles away, you can see the distinctive plateau top of Ingleborough, the second highest mountain in the Yorkshire Dales at 2,372 ft above sea level. In contrast, here at Scarcliffe it is a high point near the southern boundary of Broughton Sanctuary, we are a mere 740 ft above sea level. Apart from being a key landmark, Ingleborough is also significant because the National Nature Reserve there is another key rewilding site. Our specialist adviser, Prof Alastair Davies, who has advised on rewilding projects all over the country, has a personal ambition to help catalyse enough projects to enable at least one major rewilding site to be visible from another.

30 Yellison Wood and ponds

Here at Yellison Wood we will be removing non-native conifers and allowing the natural regeneration of native tree and shrub species to take their place. Along the western edge of the wood there is a good variety of native trees, including some fine English Oak specimens. There are relatively few ponds at Broughton Sanctuary and so in the small valley between the wood and the track, we will be creating two ponds for wetland and aquatic upstream of the wild swimming lake. These ponds and their boggy margins will provide excellent habitat for a wide range of species including dragonflies, amphibians and wetland birds such as Snipe.

31 Moorland

Grouse shooting and moor burning ceased at Broughton some 20 years ago and the moorland is now steadily recovering naturally from that form of intensive management. It is still however drier than it would naturally be, so we have installed a couple of earth and log bunds across one of the large gullies carrying water off the moor near Yellison Wood. This work was funded by the Environment Agency as part of the River Aire National Flood Management programme to help reduce flooding downstream in towns and cities like Leeds. These bunds not only help to slow the flow off the hill but also create small ponds and wetlands for wildlife. Plants present on the moorland include Cranberry, Common Cottongrass, Hare's-tail Cottongrass, Round-leaved Crowfoot, Bog Asphodel and numerous Sphagnum species. Other wildlife to keep an eye for here include cuttlew, peregrine, red grouse, merlin, stone chat and the diminutive green hairstreak butterfly.

32 Yellison Oak Grove

Tucked away here at the northern end of Yellison Wood are arguably the finest trees at Broughton Sanctuary outside of the registered parkland. This is a wonderful grove of English Oaks - probably 3-400 years old - which will become a great seed source for other areas of the estate as the newly planted trees mature. Jays will become more common here as the new young woodland habitat develops and as nature's great acorn plainer, this charismatic bird will then start to carry them into the nearby grasslands and bury them for future consumption. The magical bit is that the Jays never remember where they fall, so some always survive to grow into majestic Oaks of the future. Here you can also see bat boxes on some of the trees. These are being monitored by local specialist volunteers.

33 Thirty three generations!

Remarkably, there have been 33 generations of Ten-spots on this land stretching back to the 10th century. Here on Bonner Hill, the 32nd generational custodian, Roger Tempest, has commemorated every generation with a standing stone laid in a Fibonacci spiral pattern. The 33rd stone is Roger and his partner Paris's daughter Aya.

34 Dead trees

We now have a policy of leaving dead trees in situ where this can be done without compromising safety. We do this because whenever we think about what is appropriate for a rewilding project, we always have to ask ourselves "what would happen naturally? What natural processes would be going on here if man wasn't intervening?" And of course in an English landscape, one of those natural processes is the graceful decay of trees as they become absorbed back into the soil over many decades, as they decay, they continue to contribute to the rich range of food and habitats available for other wildlife - including many rare deadwood specialist invertebrates and fungi.

Rewilding the Spirit

Be More Animal

An invitation to 'get out of your head and into your animal body'. We can become too easily disconnected from our natural way of being as we get lost in the business of our mind-created schedules. But underneath all of our thinking we are largely unconscious and demonstrably animal. Our invite you to explore the similarities between yourself and any other being that you meet along the trail. It can be a humbling reminder to name and feel how you are in nature.

You have hair like a badger. You have teeth like a fox. You have eyes like a fish. You think through the same filamentous connectivity as the fungal networks within the soil. You have feet that can stand on the ground like the roots of a tree. You are 'en-microbed' by the Earth.

Visit our 'Be An Animal' Nest to further explore this idea, see point 31 on the Odyssey Trail overleaf.

Learn more about our Nature Recovery Project here...

