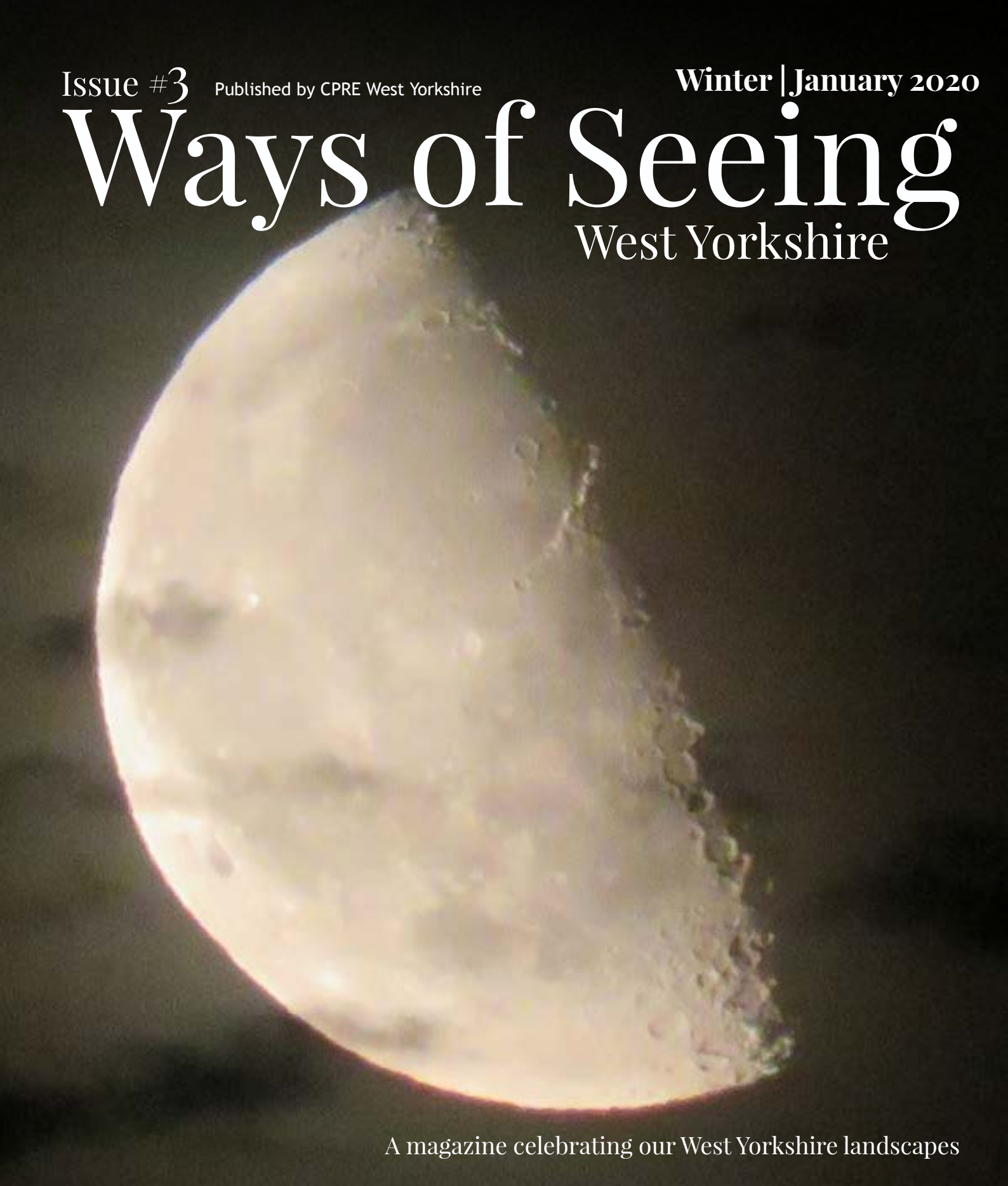
Issue #3 Published by CPRE West Yorkshire

Winter | January 2020

Ways of Seeing

West Yorkshire



A magazine celebrating our West Yorkshire landscapes

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Editorial

This edition of our magazine reflects the season. At a time of year when it is tempting to hunker down with a mug of cocoa and a good book, we are taking a peek at what we can learn to love about the dark winter nights. Celebrating the joy of dark night skies, warm scarves and the chill breeze, this issue also embraces the opportunities for new resolutions. It explores how, by continuing to love the countryside around us, we can provide better stewardship of our natural environment for the benefit of future generations.

This issue embraces darkness and light, and the benefits of being cooler (certainly in the wider environmental sense). It also celebrates the geography of the landscape and visions for a future based on grand engineering of the past. Our contributors have been getting out and about for us, getting splattered with mud, investigating cutting edge science, and understanding how memories of the past can guide us in choices for our future.

This edition of Ways of Seeing has been guest designed by Meg Irwin Evans, a local designer who is passionate about the countryside. Thanks to Meg for her time, talent, and commitment to the project.

I hope that you enjoy these Ways of Seeing West Yorkshire and that they inspire you to get outside and get involved in these cold winter months – there is so much to discover.

Robert Bamforth
Trustee | CPRE West Yorkshire

Queensbury Tunnel:
a ride into heritage

by Dr Norah McWilliam

The campaign to turn Queensbury Tunnel into a cycleway is all about avoiding a long slog up the horribly busy A647 for cyclists who commute between Bradford and Halifax. Well, not quite. It's about much more than that.

Bradford city centre lies in a bowl, from where you can see a broad patchwork of green expanses on the surrounding Pennine hills, even as the old hilltop villages grow and creep nearer to each other. Queensbury village is set on a wide ridge midway between Bradford and Halifax at 1,100 feet where the Black Dyke Mills once produced first class mohair cloth for a world-wide trade and employed virtually the whole village in spinning, weaving and associated occupations. At Hole Bottom in a steep-sided valley below the village three railway lines met at a six-platform station built in the 1870s at the joint behest of local mill owners to carry the coal that fed their furnaces and move their raw materials and processed goods. Deep under Queensbury, a tunnel was needed to bring the Halifax line to meet with lines extending to Keighley and to Bradford. The story of the tunnel's construction is one of bold enterprise, unimaginable hardship and bleak tragedies, hardly known by present day residents of the area above and around it. Though the station has now completely disappeared, Queensbury Tunnel endures – testament to the astonishing ambition of Victorian industrialists and the conviction that they were building for the future. This is so-called Brontë country and open moorland is close. Sheep and cattle graze alongside busy roads and deer venture into gardens from their hideaways in copses that disguise all traces of the lines that once crossed on the valley floor. Lying in one of Bradford's many beautiful rural pockets, the Great Northern Railway Trail takes you away from traffic over the spectacular Thornton viaduct, passing blackberry and rosehip, hawthorn and rowan to the northern portal of Queensbury Tunnel – an adventure beckoning, an invitation to marvel at past engineering, to imagine men with pick axes and shovels, iron bars and hammers, toiling in darkness barely penetrated by smoking tallow candles, with constant risk of accident and injury. The tunnel offers an adventure into a history that melded rural landscape with monumental industrial structures and, as the inheritors of all that, we belong in that story. It's up to us to keep the adventure alive.

Dr Norah McWilliam is leader of the Queensbury Tunnel Society. A former Senior Lecturer in Education, she maintains a passionate belief that inner-city families need to connect with countryside – preferably on bikes!

Queensbury TUNNEL SOCIETY

Children need adventure, perhaps now more than ever, as society becomes increasingly risk averse and urbanised. Children need opportunities to explore their environment in ways that bind them to it so that they carry a sense of belonging into adulthood. My strong attachment to the dry stone walls of Yorkshire started with scabbed knees and knuckles and bicycles heaved over; my admiration for Victorian stonework began by tracing fingers along the great dimpled blocks at the base of a dizzying chimney on the way to school, and I'll never forget the terrified delight of a smoking funnel belching and hissing furiously out of a black cavernous tunnel.

As children in the 1950s we rode our bikes around Lister's Mill in Bradford, excited by the deafening clatter of weaving machines, dodging men unloading huge sack-wrapped wool bales at gateways hung with oily chains on which we swung, sniffing lanolin and sweat until we were chased away and scarpered off to Frizinghall Station to watch engines pulling countless trucks of coal and mysterious canvas-covered lumps that we dared each other to spit at.

We were scruffy little tykes, into mischief sometimes bordering on vandalism, tearing along cobbled snickets and tarred pavement flags, roaming all summer day long with a jam sandwich tucked in a pocket and a

vague understanding that we'd better get home before dark or else, from the fields and farmland that butted up to the post-war landscape of sooty streets and mill yards with trees to climb, dens to build, horses to stroke, streams to dam… half a century ago … so many adventures to be had.

We can't turn back the clock for inner-city children to explore in quite the same free ways, but as we look today at ways for urban expansion to avoid upsetting rural ecologies, we are becoming more aware that community well-being depends on a strong 'sense of place' that turns history into a living heritage to be cared for. We owe future generations the protection of their right to adventure; we have a duty to nurture their connection with their historical landscape.

Queensbury Tunnel offers more than just a flatter alternative to the A647, it offers adventure and belongingness all rolled into one gloriously exhilarating ride into heritage for our children and our children's children.

All images courtesy of Queensbury Tunnel Society ©.

Planning Status Update:

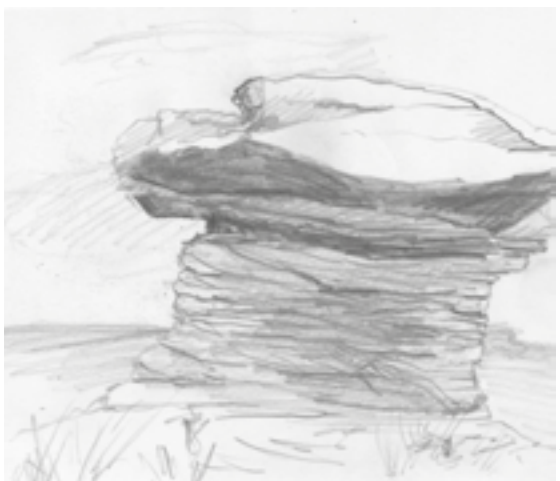
Whilst Bradford and Calderdale Councils are actively negotiating with the DfT to prevent the destruction of Queensbury Tunnel, HE's Historical Railways Estate are perversely continuing to claim that the tunnel is a risk to public safety. The application to seal the tunnel has received over 5,200 objections so far. Please add your objection to the planning application at www.tiny.cc/TunnelPlans. You can follow and share the Queensbury Tunnel Society campaign on Facebook.

Looking at the Land

by Nancy Stedman

I moved to Yorkshire from London in 1986 to take up the post of Landscape Conservation Officer (1) at the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. How could I fail to love the landscape of the Dales! That was, until over 20 years later, I was seconded from my role as a landscape specialist at Natural England to work with Pennine Prospects (2). My task was to prepare the Watershed Landscape bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund under their Landscape Partnerships programme.

Whilst I had become familiar with some of the South Pennines, very quickly I had to become much better informed about the area, which was an exciting and eye-opening experience. Like the Dales, so much can be seen by simply looking - the different habitats arising from underlying geology, soils and climate, and the subsequent management of the land over centuries. It's a very legible landscape - it reveals so much whether I look as an ecologist, an historian, a geologist, or an artist.



Doubler Stone
by Nancy Stedman

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Earl Crag 1 (above) and Somewhere Else (right) by Nancy Stedman

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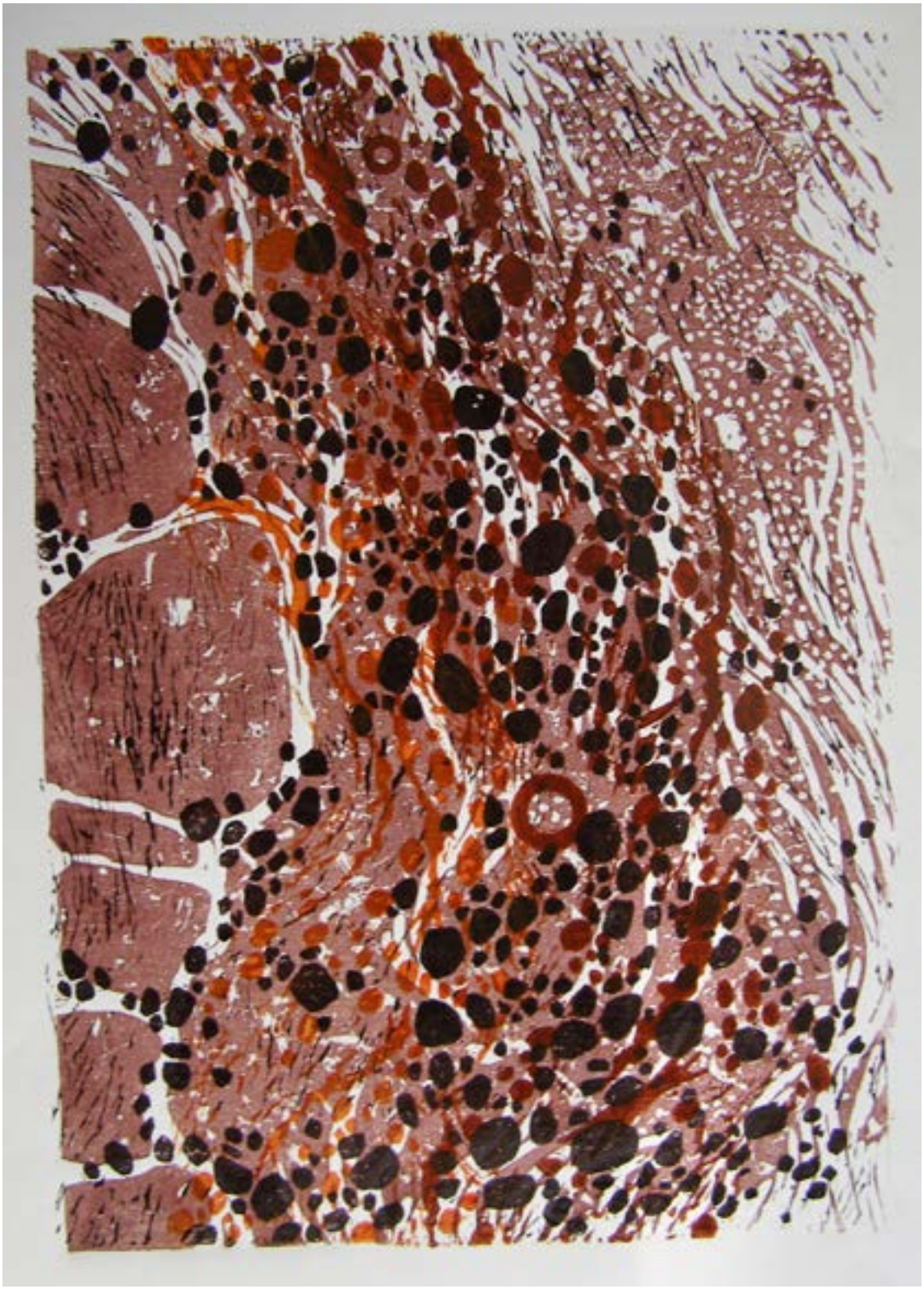
But what so impressed me about the South Pennines is its time depth - the ways in which there is evidence stitched into the landscape from just about every period of our history, working down the moorlands from prehistoric and medieval, through the centuries to the more recent inhabitation of the valleys with roads, railways, canals, mills, factories and houses. There is a logic to where things occur - mills by fast flowing streams, woodlands on steep slopes, farmsteads by springs on level plateaus close to fields to cultivate and pastures for grazing. The historic artefacts also reveal how our lives changed with the developments in technology, for instance from home weaving to large mills employing thousands.

What increasingly fascinates me is the persistent impact of the underlying geology, the subsequent landforms, and how we have adapted and used the land over time. Most obvious are the quarries from which came the stone that gives such a strength and uniformity to the buildings and drystone walls. Just look at Hebden Bridge with its houses clinging tightly to the steep slopes, and the stoutly built stone chapels revealing the strength of the non-conformist movements. And against the backdrop of the moors are the reservoirs, the water held by the impervious rock below, each capturing the wind and the light in their own way.

Clockwise from above, artwork by Nancy Stedman: Earl Crag 1 (close up); Strand; Skin of the Earth; Island 2; Island 1.



All of this I absorb - walking, looking, and sketching. Rather than re-presenting views of the landscapes, I develop images based on geomorphological processes or imaginary landscapes, often using map formats or aerial views - these are good for revealing connections. I love working with different materials and media, constructing collagraphs and building up images, giving visual form to my ideas, and in some way replicating the geological and cultural processes that go to create the landscapes around us.

From left to right, artwork by Nancy Stedman: Field; Rockface; Untitled Collage.

2. Pennine Prospects was set up in 2005 as a rural regeneration company to champion the South Pennines. My task for them was to prepare a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund under their Landscape Partnerships programme for the Watershed Landscape Project.

I am pleased to say that the Heritage Lottery bid was successful, and that the Watershed Landscape Project ran from 2010-2013. It was a project designed to celebrate, share and protect this unique landscape, working with national and local organisations and community volunteers. It has created lasting markers of its own, with improved moorland pathways and repaired drystone walls, but also in the hearts and minds of the communities around it. The Watershed Landscape is the upland area of the South Pennines where east meets west. It provides us with drinking water, with wild spaces and has inspired artists and writers for generations.

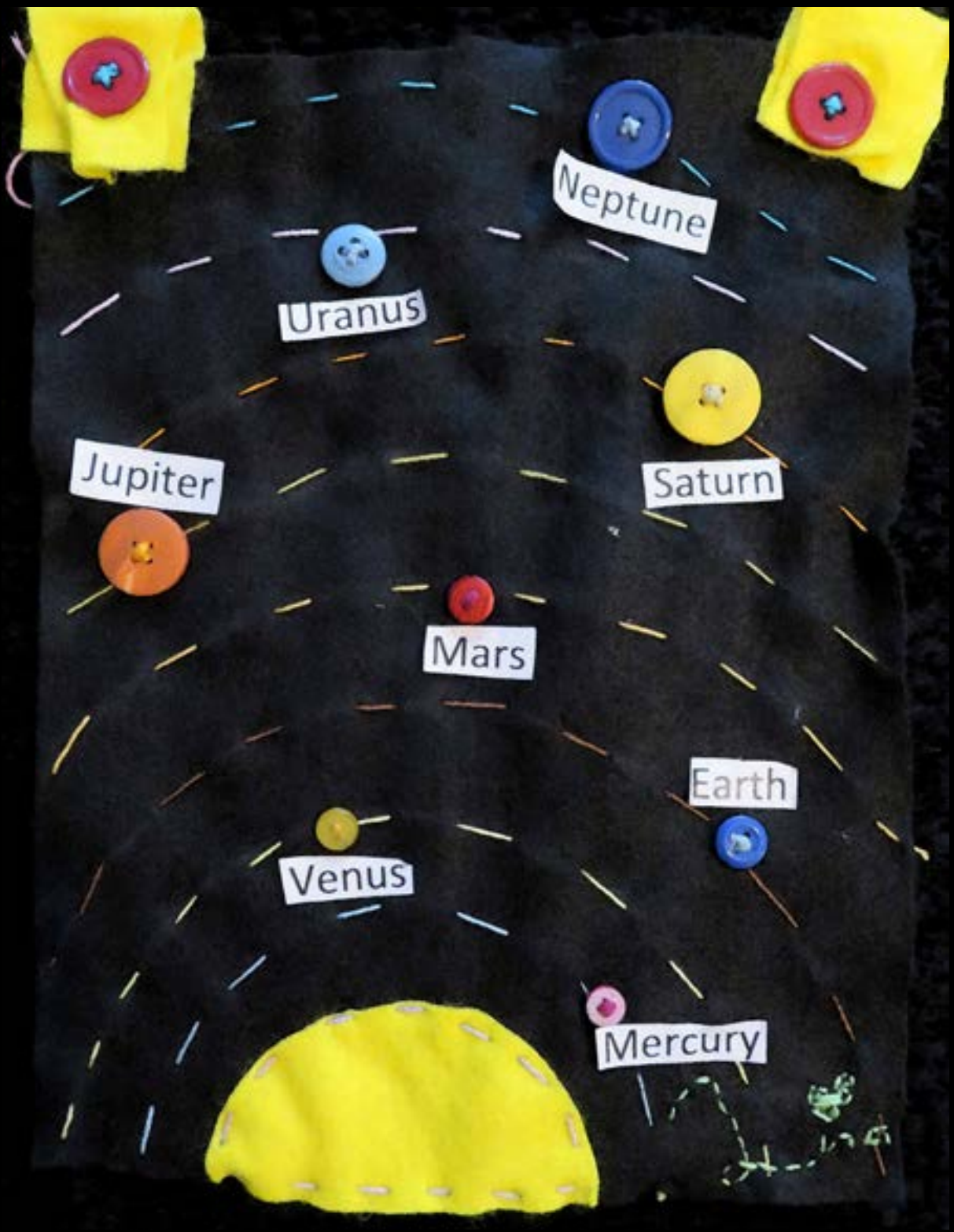
STAR PEOPLE

CPRE's Andrew Wood took his daughter Lina to the Young Astronomer's Evening at the West Yorkshire Astronomical Society (WYAS) in Carleton, Pontefract. Andrew met some of the enthusiastic astronomers, and Lina looked at the stars.

It had rained all week. Possibly the week before too. It was one of those phases when you begin to suspect there is no sky beyond a thousand feet up, and some cruel deity is just pouring water on you for kicks. Then, on the day that was scheduled for the Young Astronomer's Evening, the skies cleared and we were set up for a cold, starry night.

Tucked away behind the Grange Club Community Centre, the Rosse Observatory is virtually invisible to the untrained eye. But that didn't deter almost fifty children, plus their families, from turning out on a chilly night from far and wide to enjoy a guided tour of the building, the telescopes and the sky. The Trustees of WYAS, who were running the evening, were full of boundless passion for their hobby. As a parent, I can vouch that the best way to enthuse children is not to talk down to them, but to expound, to involve them in what makes you tick. If that happens to be a dark sky, pinpricked with stars, that will make their eyes widen literally as well as metaphorically.

By a wonderful coincidence, my daughter Lina was learning about space, stars and planets at school this term, so it's only right that I should hand over to her to explain what the evening was like.



LINA'S SOLAR SEWING

LINA'S STARGAZING

"We were slightly late in arriving so it was just us and another family that we had a chat with while we were waiting and it turned out that they were from Bradford. After our talk, a lady came out from a room to sign us in with some badges for kids whilst the adults just paid!

Then we travelled up some steps (like in a ship) up to the observatory dome. The dome was fairly big, holding a very interesting and fancy telescope. The dome twisted in order to see alternative places in the sky and all the different stars/constellations. The guide told us about many different subjects; phases of the moon, finding North using The North Star and two others, asterisms (the Plough for example is an asterism not a constellation) and Andromeda (our nearest galaxy). Moving around the dome also meant moving around the telescope. Now, to do this was as easy as could be because instead of moving it by hand, we typed in some details; date, time and place then told it which star or constellation we wanted to look at. On this particular occasion, we wanted to look at Andromeda. When we pressed enter it impressed the whole room as the telescope had twisted into place without even being touched by anyone or anything! And, as if no-one believed it, we all queued up to look through it. It worked!

Then we went outside. There were more telescopes of different shapes and sizes out there but, as we were lower down on the ground, it was harder to see much for the line of atmosphere. When we were in the dome it was easier to see because we were looking straight (or nearly straight) up.

The colour of stars can indicate their approximate heat. As odd as it may seem, if a star is blue, then it means that it is younger and hotter. If it is orange, it is older and just in the process of dying. If it is white in its colour, it will be in the approximate middle of its life and has billions of years left.

We would happily come back here in the later winter, when it is easier to see planets!"

It fills me with joy that Lina was so thrilled by seeing the night sky as shown to her by these unstoppable enthusiasts. But she was only dimly aware of the light pollution that prevented her from seeing so much more. Colin Daley, Chair of WYAS, is on a mission to set up a second base – a planetarium and teaching centre at Wintersett Reservoir, about nine miles away but with a much darker sky. One of the volunteers tells me that the Rosse Observatory has been gradually surrounded by housing developments, and several hundred more houses have just got planning permission in adjacent fields. The street lighting may be carefully designed, but there will be no accounting for movement-sensitive garden floodlights.

The Rosse Observatory is so charming, so…well… suburban, and Colin assures me that they will continuing to use it as well as the Wintersett site. But as I shield my eyes from a car's headlights manoeuvring in the car park, and drink the homemade soup from the mug I'm hugging, I can be sure of one thing: my daughter was captivated by the wonderful, knowledgeable people who showed her what's in the sky, and a return visit is certain.

STAR PEOPLE

Seeing in the

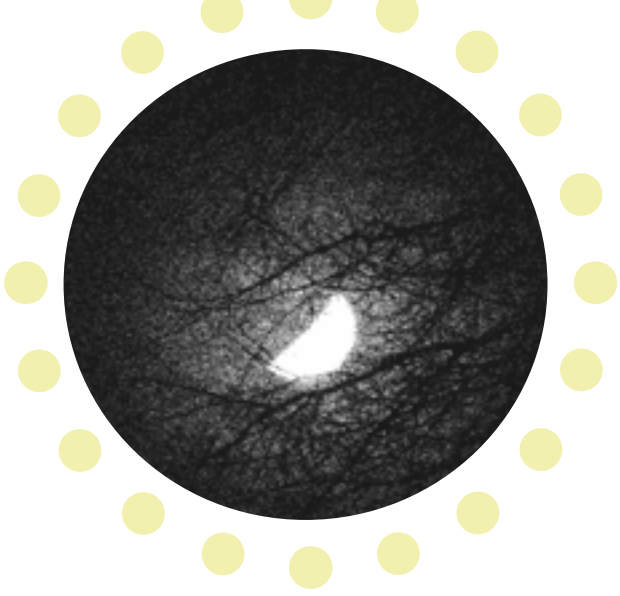
Dan Lister is an Associate at ARUP and a Fellow of the Society of Light and Lighting. As a consultant engineer specialising in urban and public realm lighting, his portfolio includes the Neville Street installation beneath Leeds rail station, the Bradford City Park, the Hepworth Gallery, Wakefield and the Olympic Park, London. He recently contributed to a new set text for lighting designers – Urban Lighting for People: Evidence-based Lighting Design for the Built Environment. In this article, Dan explores the relationship between lighting design and our experience of the night-time in town and country.

The story of street lighting can be summed up as 'public service and amenity versus environment and energy'. Local authorities provide street lighting as a public service. It's a tough job – they have to weigh up whether somewhere needs to be lit against the safety risks of it not being lit. Too much lighting is waste of energy and money, not enough lighting creates risks. If you've identified a risk, you need to show how you've assessed it and responded to it. Are we over-lighting as a result? Probably yes, but if we want to diverge from standard practice then we need to show good reasons, so as to avoid liabilities.

Street lighting has evolved so much. Going back to the 1970s we had low-pressure sodium lamps. They were cheap to run and had a very wide spacing, but you could see them from the Moon! These are the characteristic orange lights that twinkle across a cityscape at night. More recently came high-pressure sodium lamps, which are smaller, more controllable and more efficient, but they have a narrow spectrum, which impairs colour rendering – everything looks brown. Now we've moved towards much whiter light for better colour rendering. We're also much

Dark

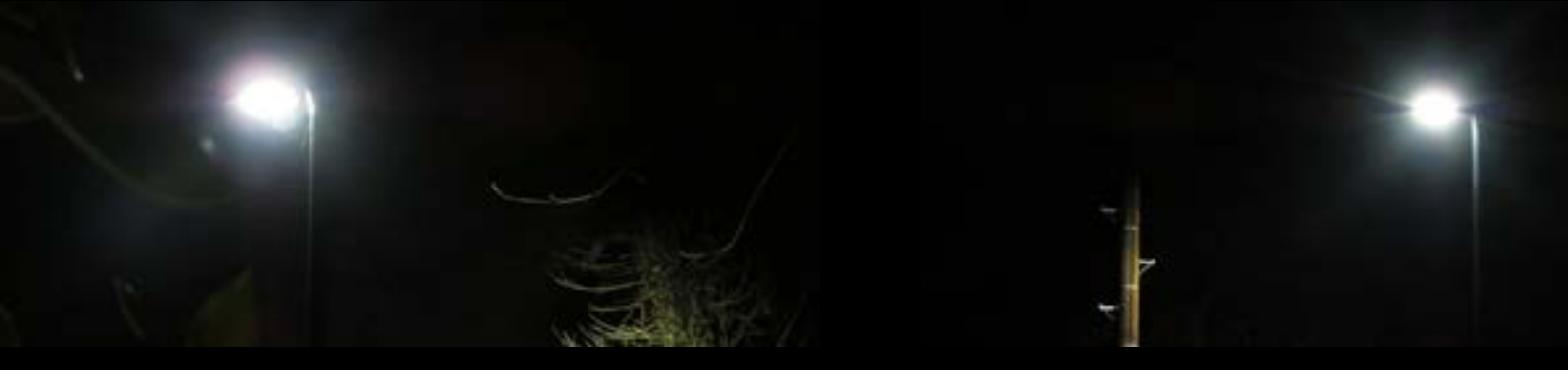
by Dan Lister



more conscious of the environment, of limiting upward spill, reducing obtrusive light and saving energy.

The problem is that changing the lamps requires a change to the infrastructure – the columns need different heights and spacings, which also means digging up the street to move the power distribution. This means a new lighting scheme affects different people, so Mrs Higgins' doorstep is no longer lit by the street light, and she needs to install an outside light, while Mr Hodgson finds he now has light in his garden where he used to like the darkness.

Obtrusive lighting is a statutory nuisance. The worst offenders tend to be the 500W floodlights from the DIY shop that light three back gardens every time a cat walks past the sensor. Lighting schemes that fall within the planning process, such as sports pitch lighting, are often contentious, but because there is regulatory oversight then problems can usually be resolved. Because street lighting is a public service it's exempt from the statutory nuisance law, but in my experience local authorities will usually try to fix a problem if they can. Nine times out of ten, a problem lamp is either not designed correctly or not aimed correctly.



The key measures for the environment are limiting upward spill, for dark skies, and maintaining dark corridors for bats to forage. Early LED street lights had a very blue-white colour, to minimise energy consumption. LEDs have negligible UV content, so they're not supposed to draw insects to them (and therefore shouldn't impact on bats) but judging by the huge spiders living on each lamp in the Olympic Park, the insects do like them! There's also emerging evidence that whiter light causes greater scattering on moisture particles in the air. Highways England have commissioned research into this, to examine whether driving visibility in fog is worse under LEDs. Astronomical Societies are also reporting more upper atmosphere scattering with LEDs. There's a lot less orange glow as sodium lamps are phased out, but the hypothesis is that whiter light reflecting off buildings and roads and then scattering in the air, is creating a grey wash instead. So we're still learning, and we are moving towards warmer light.

As a nation, I think we have missed a fantastic opportunity to document and understand the changes resulting from changing to LED street lighting. The science is complex, but if we had been gathering data on design, energy, colour, perception, spill and wildlife impact all in the same places, we could have learned so much.

Nirvana for any lighting engineer is connecting engineering with perception. The aim is to gain enough evidence of how people perceive different lighting scenarios so as to be able to engineer their perceptions,

and thereby guide them to do what you'd like them to do. Basically this means creating environments that people want to be in. People are different and they have a range of responses to a place and how it's lit, so the trick is to give them options and let them make their own choices. For example, Bradford City Park has an 80 metre-wide water feature: if you light it for maximum safety you won't actually see the water feature. We created a lighter zone around the edge, where everyone feels safe, and a darker area where the feature itself could be illuminated. People can decide whether or not to go into the darker area – it's up to them.

There's a crucial difference between 'well-lit' and 'brightly-lit'. The engineer is given the brief 'we need lighting', but the skill in lighting the public realm is to nudge people to make decisions. When you arrive at a point, you want to know you've arrived and be able to decide where to go next. Brighter lights are stepping stones. You can't make that process work if you light everything.

This principle translates into rural and parkland settings, as I showed in the Olympic Park. The lighting design should work for the people you want to use a place, to make sure they can read where they are, where they want to go and where they don't want to go. You can have lower overall lighting levels, and maintain dark corridors for wildlife as well as for people who like the darkness.

RIVER HOLME UPDA

In our previous issue we heard from River Holme Connections about the work that they, along with volunteers, community groups and local members of the community, have been doing to improve the river environment.

One of the great things about this project is that providing people with the opportunity to get involved and lend a hand has helped share knowledge about the stewardship of rivers and why this work is so important for future generations.

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The charity is looking to secure partners to help them expand their education programme to include all 21 schools in the river catchment. If you would like to get involved or would like to support the River Holme Connections to achieve their goals over the next 5 years, please visit their website.

A Running A

Appreciation

by Peter Newton

Peter Newton, a freelance software developer, lives in Normanton with his wife and daughter. A regular runner, he recently took part in the St Aidan's Half Marathon, which circuits the two adjacent RSPB nature reserves at Swillington and Fairburn Ings to the east of Leeds. We asked Peter to tell us how running has shaped his appreciation of the area.

Like many people passing forty, I felt an increasing need to look after my health. Running seemed the best option to be more active and spend time with my thoughts. My regular local run takes in some countryside, heading downhill to the canal and along the towpath. I usually see dog walkers, anglers and cyclists, but the earlier I go the more wildlife I see, especially the cranes fishing. It's an energising way to start a day.

As a family, we go to Fairburn Ings quite often - for a walk, a coffee, and to take in the nature. We're not ornithologists by any means, but the Ings have been a regular feature of parenthood - it's good for kids. I'd push my daughter around in her pram as a baby, when my wife needed a break from us both. Later, as a toddler, there were the ducks to feed. She has been there on a school trip too.

The St Aidan's Half Marathon through Swillington and Fairburn Ings is organised by Even Splits who give 30% of the revenue to the RSPB. The terrain is gently undulating with good views (which can't be said of all running routes), and though I hadn't thought of doing an off-road trail before, I'm really glad I did. On the day there were about 350 runners – enough to give it a good atmosphere, but not too many for the place to be wrecked by excess footfall.

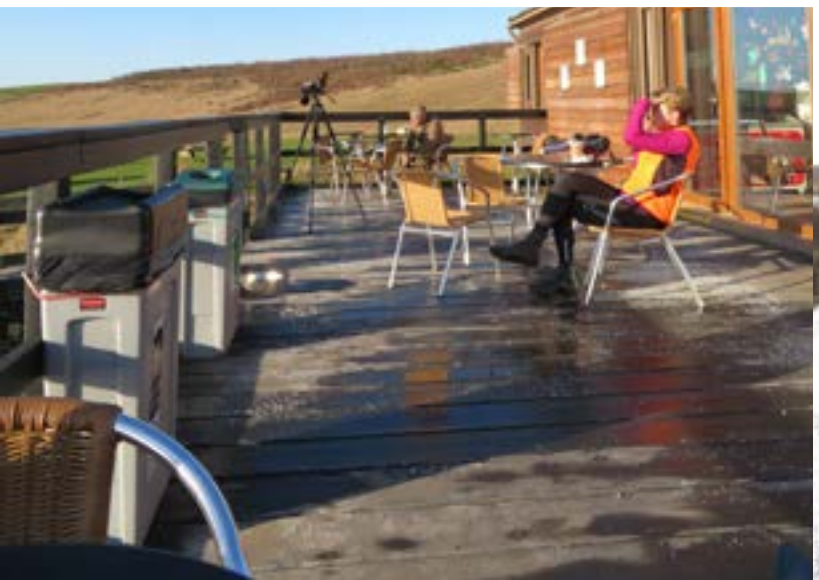
The weather on race day was fine but it had rained heavily for several days before. Due to mud and high river levels the route was nearly truncated but eventually went as planned. At first, I tried to avoid the puddles, but soon surrendered to the

mud and wet feet. That's something about trail running – as you run through a landscape you get quite a bit of it on you. When we come to the Ings for a stroll, we wear sensible shoes and coats against the chilly wind that blows across here. When you're running in a t-shirt and shorts, you're more aware the elements.

When running alone I usually wear headphones, listening to something that will help my mind to clear. In the race I couldn't do that, but once my body was in the rhythm of the run then my brain was able to focus on enjoying the landscape. As the route curves around the Ings you're on higher ground and the view is great, and the pace made me feel I was going purposefully to meet that view.

I'm aware that none of our landscape is truly 'natural', that it's all managed and worked. This is especially true of Swillington and Fairburn Ings, which were open-cast mined. The huge relic of mining machinery at the St Aidan's end, as big as a house, is a striking reminder of this. There's no real way to sense what this landscape would have been like before mining. Even so, when I'm out here, it feels like a non-built environment. I convince myself that I'm out in the wild.

West Yorkshire is full of industrial heritage, and the canals are



great because they can be bustling and peaceful at the same time. By running I have discovered a better appreciation of place, and of distance. It's surprising where you can actually get to on foot. A couple of steps away from the roads and you feel different. I heard an interview with Werner Herzog in which he said, "the world reveals itself to those who travel on foot". It's the idea of the pace giving you a different perspective, and of being part of the landscape. We respond to stepping a few paces into the countryside as though we're heading for the wilderness. Perhaps that's a peculiarly English thing, or maybe it's an instinctive human response to being away from immediate habitation.

I'm fascinated by the idea that, psychologically, there's both divergence and inter-dependence between city and country. In William Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience it's the difference between, for example, a young boy who grows up exploring the woods and communing with nature, and one whose childhood is stolen by working in the factories and breathing polluted air. From Little Red Riding Hood to horror movies where there's usually a cabin in the woods, the countryside is portrayed

as a place of cunning and danger. I remember the public information films when I was growing up, and the Crimewatch reconstructions – you were constantly urged to consider what could go wrong in the countryside, in the quiet places. Yet it's also a place of healing.

I think we have a conflicted relationship with solitude. When I run alone I like to feel that it's a solitary experience, but these days – as I've started running further – I take my phone with me so that my wife can track me in case something goes wrong. I don't think I'm unusual in this: people want to feel solitude but they also want a lifeline. Obviously, when a few hundred people come to the same piece of countryside, as they do for a running race, that's a very different experience from being alone in it. Being swept up in the atmosphere of the Half Marathon is a more social experience, a shared moment with many other people who are also seeking something similar from the landscape – the feel of it under their feet and a personal sense of achievement. I'll certainly be booking my place again for next year.

Tell it to the Trees

by Anna Gugan

Anna Gugan is the United Bank of Carbon (UBoC) Tree Officer, a Research Assistant specialising in trees and natural capital. UBoC is a charity set up by the University of Leeds and businesses to communicate climate science and the role of trees and forests in addressing the challenge. Anna explains her work and why trees are so important to us both scientifically and culturally.

I came into UBoC by an unusual route. I started out as a Geographer and did a Masters in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), but when I had children I became a gardener. From gardening the next step was a course in Landscape Architecture; a logical merging of my two previous jobs. While studying, I volunteered to take part in the i-Tree survey of the trees on the University of Leeds's campus, and when a vacancy came up to continue the i-Tree project, I got the job. So I'm actually a good advert for the value of volunteering as a way to make a career change.

UBoC is an environmental charity, formed in 2008 when the concept of carbon trading was gathering interest. The idea was to connect businesses wanting to make responsible investments with forest conservation projects around the world, whilst providing an informed basis for the types and locations of tree planting that would contribute to carbon offsetting. This includes managing and protecting existing trees, reforestation (restoring old forests) and afforestation (creating new forests). Over the past 10 years, UBoC has grown to include a team of 4 staff and 11 postgraduate research students working both in the UK and across the tropics. UBoC is passionate about communicating the science of trees and carbon to wider audiences. We run a help desk, which is busy with local authorities, community groups and businesses asking tree and carbon related questions. At the moment, everyone wants to know about tree planting. Councils are declaring climate emergencies, and we get

lots of questions about the carbon value of trees and how organisations can offset unavoidable emissions.

One of our recent projects involved calculating the environmental benefits provided by the trees on the University of Leeds campus. We used i-Tree Eco which is a methodology for calculating the role of trees in absorbing carbon, air pollution and intercepting rainfall. We used the method to study every tree on the University campus over two summers. That's 1,450 trees measured with the help of over 40 volunteers. We found that these trees are currently storing over 500 tonnes of carbon, which is equivalent to the annual carbon footprint of 180 people in the UK. And each year they grow, they capture some more.

Trees are the most cost effective way of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, but the first step is to work out your own carbon footprint and do everything you can to reduce carbon emissions – such as decarbonising homes, reducing food waste and transport emissions. The UK still needs to plant 50,000 hectares of new woodland every year to get to its net zero target, because there are carbon emissions we can't really avoid. The Committee on Climate Change recommendation to reach Net Zero is to increase the UK's tree cover from 13% to 19%, and every locality needs to do what it can.

In urban areas the trees are often stressed because of restricted roots, limited soil and reduced access to water, but they're working incredibly hard. In the study of the trees on the University campus the biggest 100 of the trees (7% of the total number) were doing a third of the work, so large stature, mature trees really matter. If you fell a mature tree, the time it takes the new trees to replace the lost carbon will be measured in decades. Depending on the tree species, you need to plant many more than three replacements common in lots of planning policies, so it is best (whenever possible) to keep the existing mature trees and plant some more.

For the planning process, this means we need a major rethink, because planning only tends to value trees that have aesthetic or historical amenity value – through Tree Preservation Orders and Ancient Woodlands. We need urgently to start valuing trees for their carbon and pollution removing functions too - in other words keeping as many large stature, mature trees as possible and planting new trees that will grow big too. In streets, it's important to remember that it's much easier and cheaper to maintain an old tree, which already has its soil and root system established, than to make space and soil for big new root systems. But we'll need to do both. A tree that doesn't have the right space to grow will not reach its potential and will not provide the environmental benefits it could.

Our cultural relationship with trees is fascinating, and it also needs to evolve. We know that people love trees and that are so many benefits to health and wellbeing from being around trees. But if we're going to really embrace trees to help us fix the climate, then our landscapes need to change. Cities need big trees. Livestock farming needs to embrace woodland pasture techniques, where animals graze under the canopy – this will also help the animals keep cool and healthy.

Uplands need lots of tree planting not just for carbon but for flood management and soil protection (but not in any peat which is an excellent carbon store). This will all change how people see trees, so we need to communicate the wider benefits, and make sure people understand more about what trees are doing.

UBoC are involved in the Northern Forest project, and this is both a practical and a cultural initiative. In West Yorkshire the White Rose Community Forest is leading this. Planting 50 million trees across Northern England over 25 years is the headline target, for many benefits including recreation. The accessibility of the Northern Forest is crucial – people need to live near to the forest so the focus is around urban areas. The White Rose Forest is looking for land for tree planting whilst the Environment Agency is looking for natural flood management opportunities – some of this can also turn brownfield land into beautiful green spaces.

We can keep global temperature rises to below 1.5˚C if we all take action to reduce our carbon emissions. When we have done all we can personally, the solution is to look after the existing big trees and plant a lot more to get excess the carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

LET'S GO OUTSIDE

Previously a community and youth worker, with a special interest in street-based work, Graeme Tiffany has worked as an independent education consultant and outdoor educator since 2000. He works as a freelance lecturer, researcher and outdoor educator, and runs training courses for a wide range of youth and community workers and activists. Graeme explains here his pioneering work in the use of Community Philosophy, including the 'Step-into-Dialogue' project he ran in Kirklees last year.

Community Philosophy empowers people in any context to be active citizens and to generate ideas at a grass-roots level. This is about thinking together in a non-confrontational and truly democratic way. Concepts are questioned, power shifts, minds change and preconceptions are discarded.

The settings and spaces in which people explore philosophical questions exert real influence on how that exploration pans out. So if we see the classroom or lecture theatre as a constrained setting, what happens if we escape that constraint? What if we take philosophy outside?

I use the word 'outside' in preference to 'outdoors' to avoid the connotations of 'The Great Outdoors': beloved of some, hated by others. 'Outside' is altogether more accessible – simply stepping outside the buildings we spend so much time in, opening ourselves up to myriad stimuli. Taking the walls away can free up our

thinking; thinking sans murs, as the French say.

To ‘step out’ is surely to walk, a universal activity if ever there was one, and there are so many cultural references to how walking both clears and stimulates the mind. Therefore, there seems to be great potential in combining walking with philosophical enquiry. A specific aim of my work has been to bring people together who don’t know each other well, to walk and talk together - to create a community, even if only for the duration of the walk.

Walking and talking together also means walking alongside someone, side-by-side. In Spain my colleagues in street social work speak of ‘acompañamiento’ – accompaniment, which has a sense of solidarity about it. I remember discussing sensitive issues with the young people I worked with. Some said very little

when sitting across the desk, but few resisted my suggestion that we might walk together, and when we did they invariably talked.

In summer 2019 I led Philosophy Walks in Kirklees. Kirklees is ideal for this because many of those who live there need only walk a few minutes to get into the countryside. The urban fringe is a gateway drug for getting people hooked on the countryside, and on being outside.
The objective was to work with voluntary, statutory, community and faith-based organisations, supporting their leaders in learning the practical and philosophical skills needed to lead their own walks, with their communities, and to bring those different communities together through walking.

In Philosophy Walks the environment acts as a constant stimulus for discussion, but we often also make use of the many things philosophers have said about walking. Henry David Thoreau, for example, said that walking teaches us of the distinction between profit and benefit. Or as Frederic Gros put it, 'walking is unlike most other things these days – you can't pay someone to do it for you.' On a more mountainous walk we might also have the opportunity to connect with the origins of the word 'summit' – people walking to the top of a hill to gain a different perspective, in order that this nourishes their dialogue.

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questions are pre-determin
usually those in power. For
with minority communities
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to people who have never
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people who are feeling

powerless this can be transformative.

If walking together is a source of solidarity, and orienteering – reading maps and reading the landscape – is a source of power, then it's clear that doing one, the other, or both means that people can gain so much from getting outside. It's a stimulus for thinking and for health, and it's a route to mobility, autonomy and community. When we wander, we wonder. And in walking and talking together we also learn that we think better together.

You can read more about Graeme's theories on Philosophy and Community in Philosophy and Community: Theories, Practices and Possibilities edited by Amanda Fulford and published by Bloomsbury Academic, available soon.

www.graemetiffany.co.uk

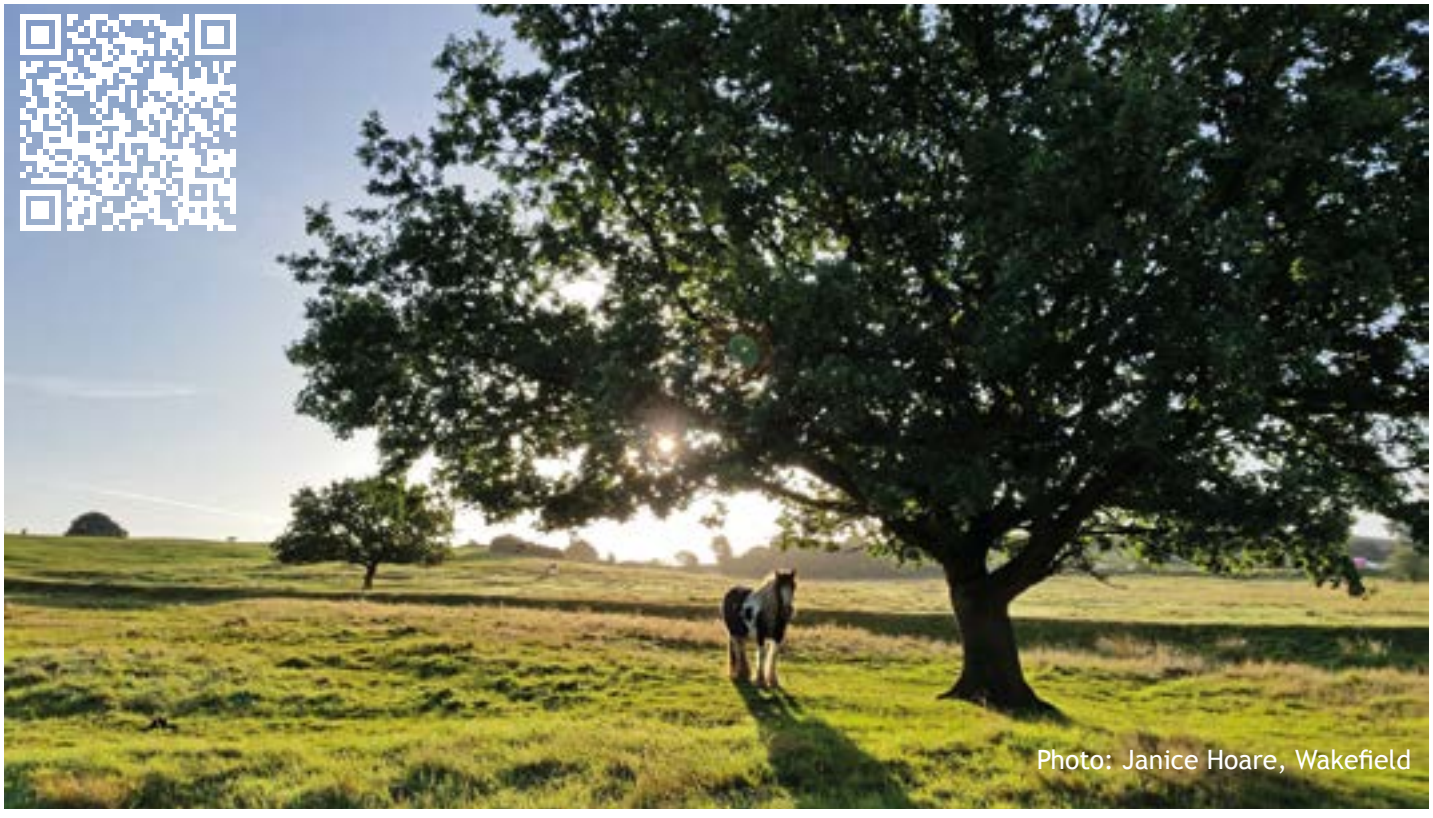

Photo: Janice Hoare, Wakefield

Ways of Seeing

West Yorkshire

CPRE is the countryside charity that campaigns to promote, protect and enhance the places you care about.

Across West Yorkshire, we're running a project to find out about people's favourite places and what they value about them. We'd like you to tell us where your favourite place is and what it means to you, and to upload a photo of it if you have one.

We'll add your favourite place to our map and our website, celebrating what's great about West Yorkshire's countryside.

Read about the Ways of Seeing project on our website and tell us about your favourite place

or get there by scanning the QR code above.

The countryside charity
West Yorkshire

We are CPRE, the countryside charity.

We believe that the countryside is for everyone. We want a thriving, beautiful countryside rich in nature and playing a crucial role in our nation's response to the climate emergency. We word hard to enhance, promote and protect the countryside, including the communities within it.

West Yorkshire's countryside is beautiful, interesting, full of stories. Some of this countryside is under threat from the wrong kinds of development, such as housing schemes that are more about playing the land market than genuinely meet people's needs, and road schemes that only serve to generate more traffic. That's why CPRE campaigns for better, fairer decisions.

Ways of Seeing West Yorkshire is a two-year project to help demonstrate just how amazing our countryside is, and to get to know many more of the people who love it. People whose homes, businesses and families rely on West Yorkshire's countryside in some way. In this way, we hope to give our countryside a stronger voice in the decisions that affect it. We have plenty of work to do.

As a charity, we rely on donations, on partnerships, on people becoming members, and on people choosing to benefit us in their wills. We also depend on wonderful, committed volunteers to manage our organisation, to lead our campaigns and to help us build grassroots support for our work.

If you'd like to know more about giving to CPRE, or volunteering with us, you can find out more on our website https://www.cprewestyorkshire.org.uk/ and contact us https://www.cprewestyorkshire.org.uk/contact-us/ to have a chat.

The countryside charity
West Yorkshire

If *you* have a story to tell about the West Yorkshire countryside and would like to feature in a future issue of Ways of Seeing magazine, send us your story via our website.

Keep an eye out for Spring 2020 issue #4. We will be taking a closer look at how the land in West Yorkshire is worked, lived on and loved.

The countryside charity
West Yorkshire