

A brief history of Cromwell Bottom

Cromwell Bottom takes its name from the Old English language meaning 'crooked stream'..

In the past it has been the site of a quarry, a tip for pulverised fly ash from the old Elland Power Station and a land fill site. Now, it is a mix of woodland, wetlands and grasslands, rich in plants, including species of orchids and a variety of wildlife due largely to the alkaline nature of the fly ash underneath.

Cromwell Bottom stands as one of Calderdale's most treasured nature reserves. Situated next to the Calder and Hebble Navigation, the River Calder skirts round and in 2000 it became a nature reserve. It is now considered to be one of the most important wildlife sites in Calderdale. The reserve is jointly maintained by the dedicated efforts of Cromwell Bottom Wildlife Group, founded in September 2011 and Calderdale Council. The partnership is a great example of community action for nature. The wetlands and meadows provide a variety of habitats for many insects, such as butterflies and moths, dragonflies and damselflies. Bird feeding areas help to attract many birds to the site including bullfinch, dunnock, woodpeckers, robins, tits and a variety of winter visitors. Other birds that can be seen or heard around the site include kingfishers, buzzards, herons and cormorants.

Many mammals and amphibians have also made Cromwell Bottom their home.

Created on an old landfill site in 2000, the area has been transformed into a thriving haven for wildlife. Its wetlands and meadows teem with diverse species of birds, mammals and insects. Thanks to the unwavering support of volunteers, bird boxes, tranquil ponds and viewing areas have been provided across the reserve. The reserve serves as a hub for community engagement and includes an area designated for education which is part of a monitoring area called North Loop, originally funded by EU money.

The Visitor Centre, headquarters of Cromwell Bottom Wildlife Group, hosts events that foster a shared appreciation for nature among locals, including our popular Open Day.