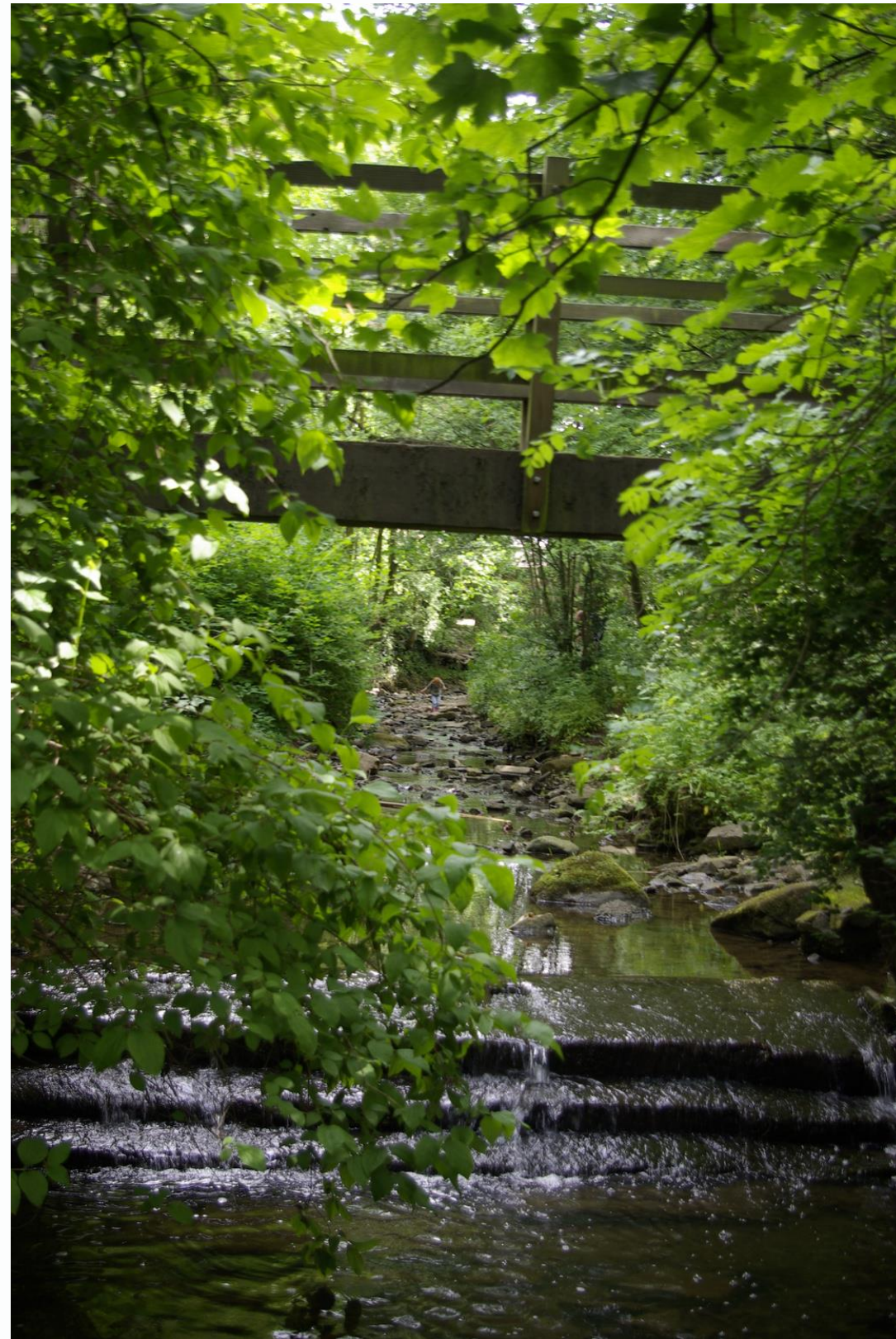


THE WILDERNESS



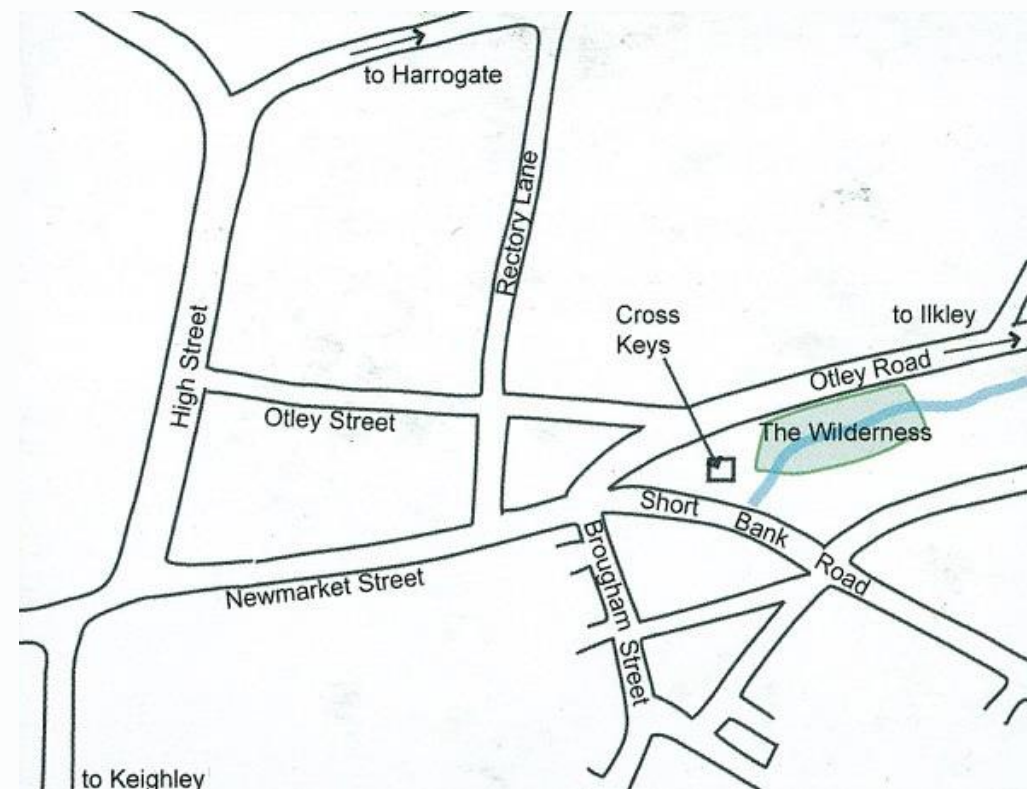



SHORT [VIDEO](#) TO SHOW YOU THE
WILDERNESS

WHERE IS THE WILDERNESS


Find us using 'What Three Words'
<https://what3words.com/>

Otley Road Entrance: hourglass period blue
Shortbank Road Entrance: proclaims nips
voltage





If you like nature, then you will like visiting the Wilderness. Wilderness Beck meanders through the trees on its way to join the River Aire, with a footbridge and stepping-stones inviting you to cross.



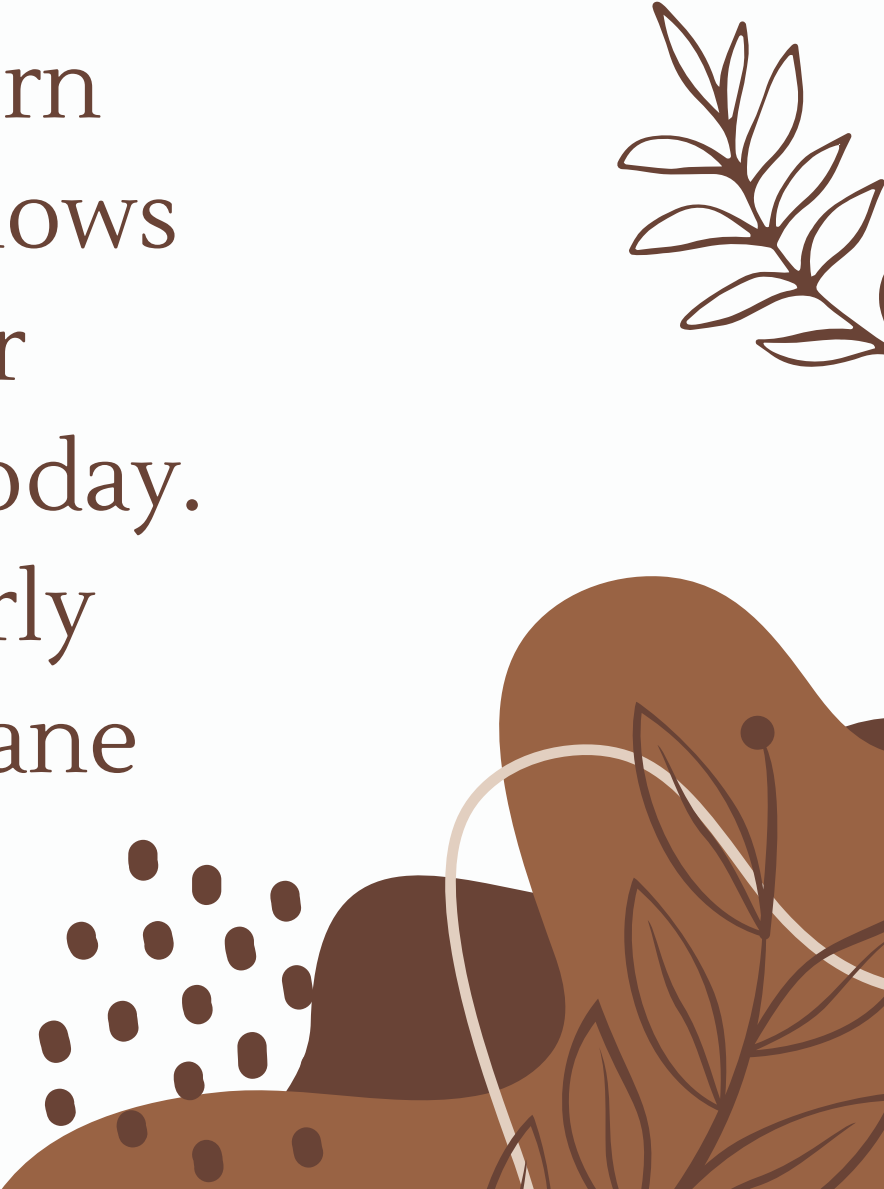
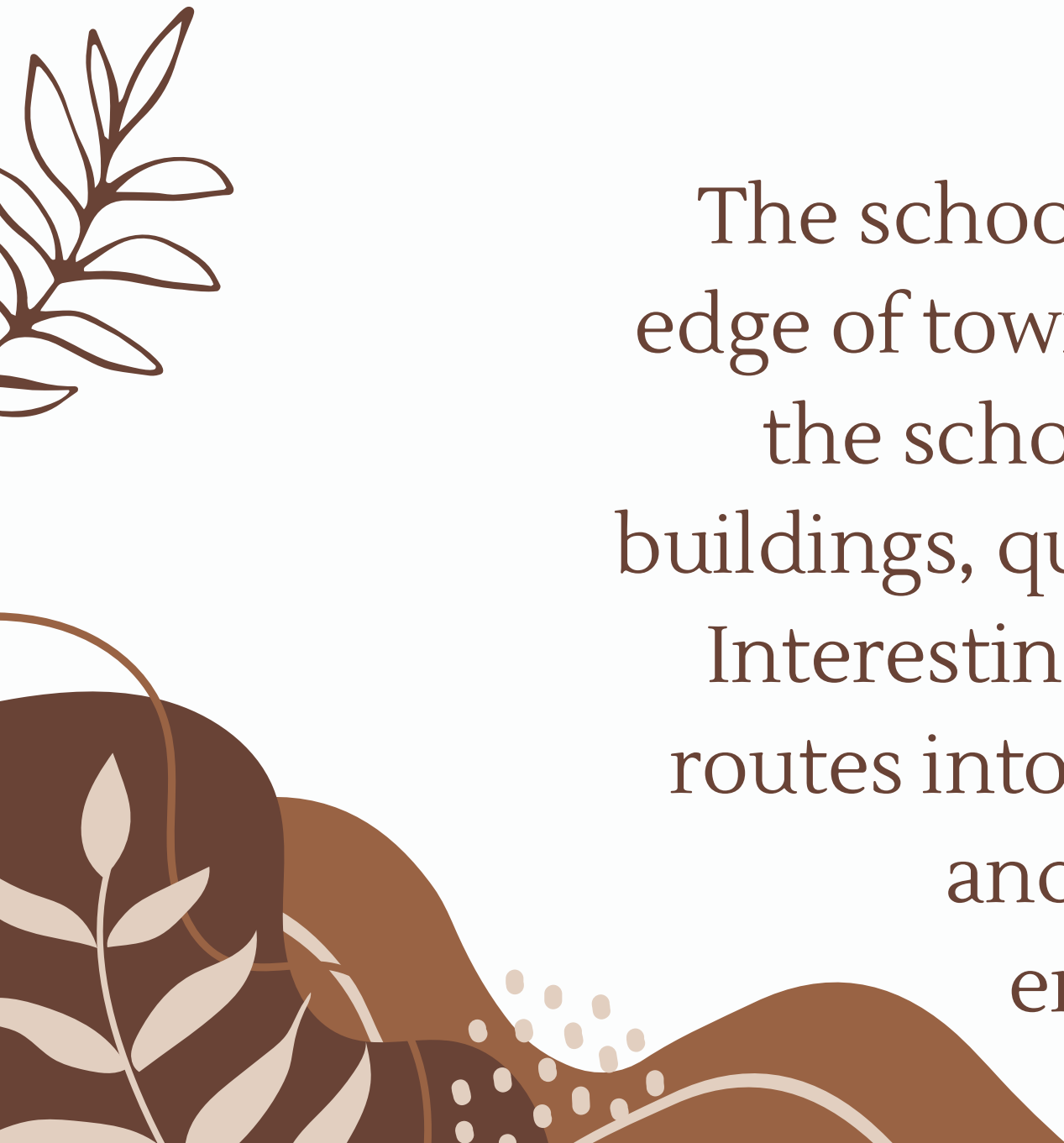
Access is easy, and the gates are unlocked – so if you want to bat-watch at dusk, or listen to the dawn chorus, you can come in without hindrance.





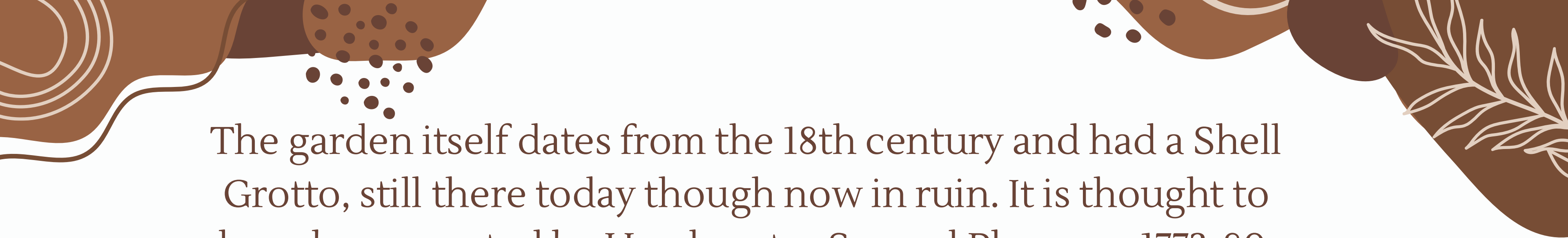
BACKGROUND

The Wilderness was formerly the garden of Skipton's first Grammar School, Ermysted's, dating from the 16th century

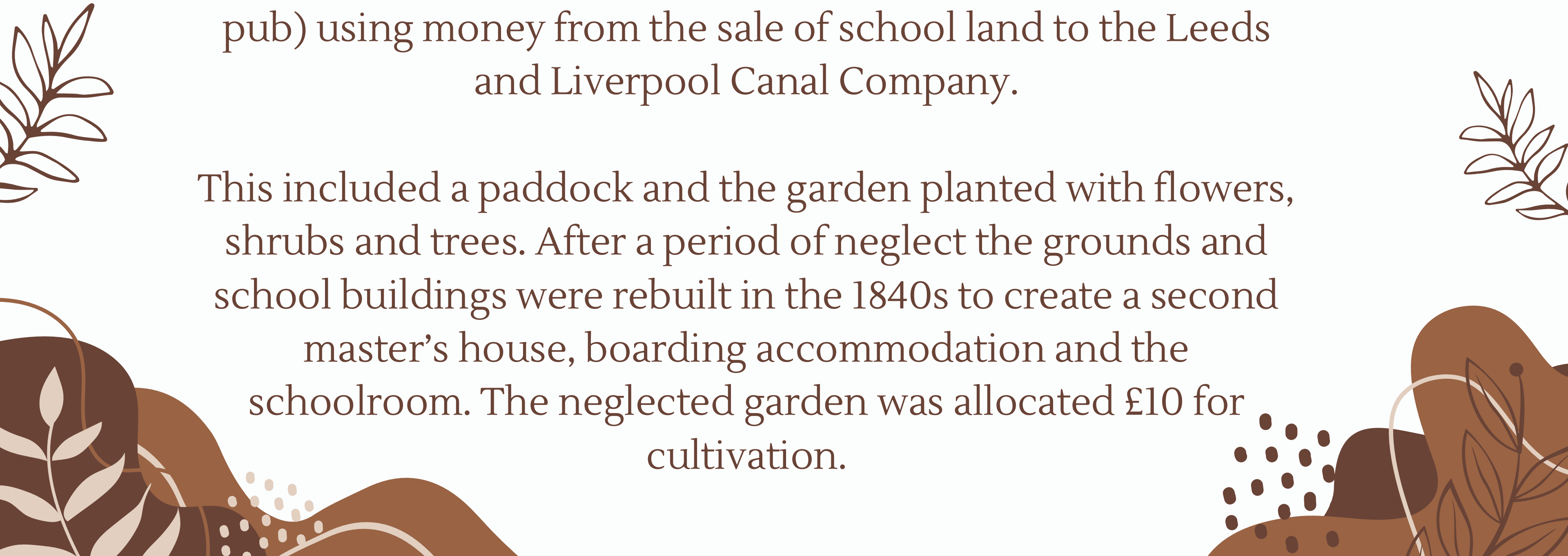


The school was built on green fields, on the eastern edge of town. The Ordnance Survey map of 1852 shows the school buildings then standing free of other buildings, quite unlike the built-up area we know today.


Interestingly, the site is adjacent to one of the early routes into Skipton from the east - via Sunmoor Lane and the pack horse bridge, a medieval entry to the growing market town.




The garden itself dates from the 18th century and had a Shell Grotto, still there today though now in ruin. It is thought to have been created by Headmaster Samuel Plummer, 1773-80, when he built himself a fine new house (now the Cross Keys pub) using money from the sale of school land to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company.



This included a paddock and the garden planted with flowers, shrubs and trees. After a period of neglect the grounds and school buildings were rebuilt in the 1840s to create a second master's house, boarding accommodation and the schoolroom. The neglected garden was allocated £10 for cultivation.



In 1876 the Grammar School moved to new premises on Gargrave Road, and the old site plus grounds were put up for sale. At first in private hands, the main building, the Headmaster's house, was later bought by a brewery and the Cross Keys pub was created and opened in the late 1950s. What had been a proud garden with grotto became a dumping ground for rubbish - totally neglected.





In 1998 the town's Civic Society, as a Millennium project, decided to rescue what had now become known as The Wilderness. £30,000 was raised to buy it from the brewery and restore it to an approximation of its original layout. In August 2000 it was formally handed over to the town.







THE FRIENDS OF THE WILDERNESS



The Friends of the Wilderness group was formed in 2008 to care for and maintain the area. We strive to hold a balance between what is essentially a ‘wild’ and natural area and managing this to ensure you can enjoy it in safety



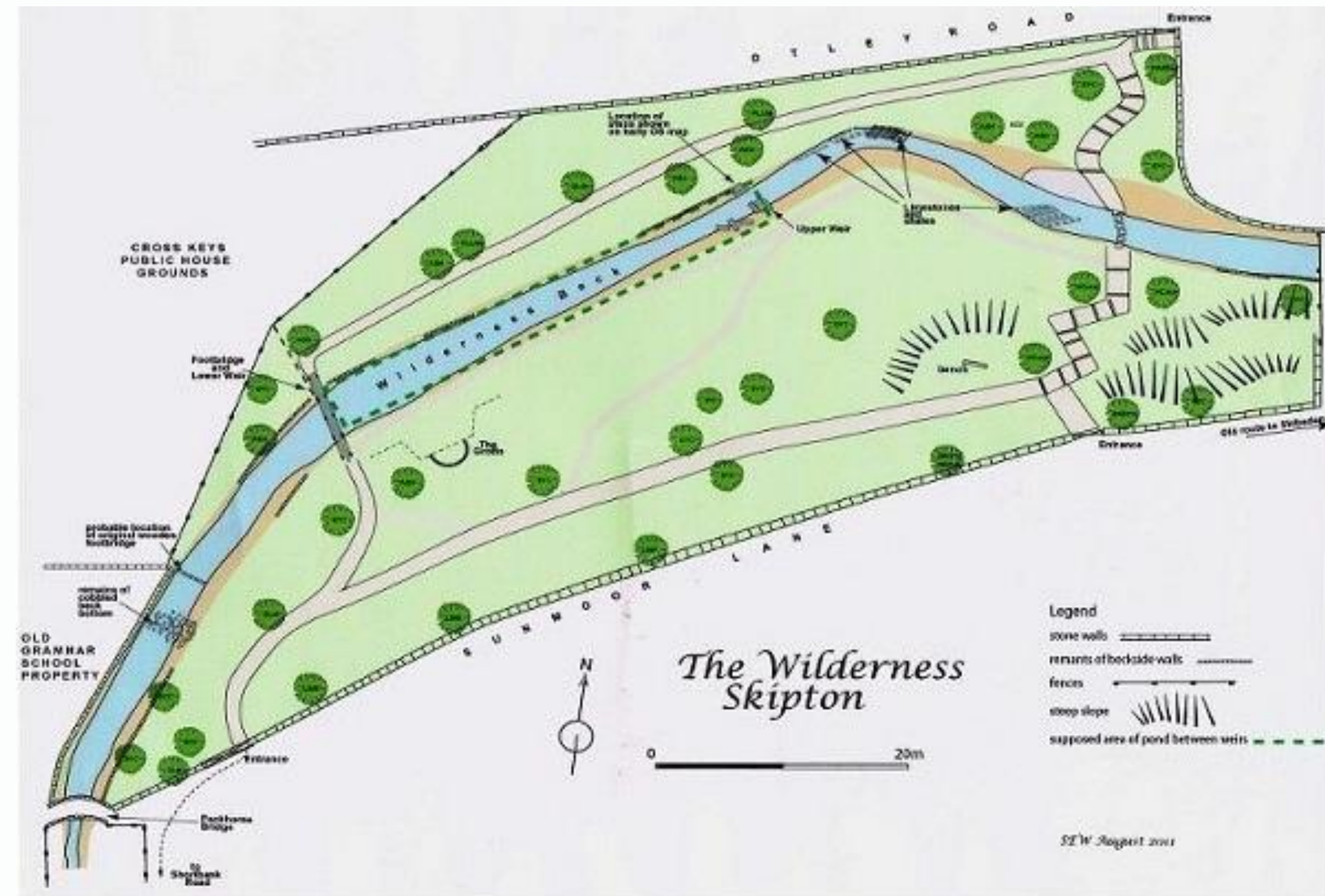
THE WILDERNESS TODAY

Forest School.

The Wilderness is used
for forest school
sessions by Brougham
Street Nursery School,
SELFA and the Scouts.



Members of the Friends group carry out regular surveys to identify what is growing in the Wilderness, and to identify if what management is required.



VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers take part in a litter picking rota to litter pick each day. Volunteer days are also held to build bug hotels, work on the dead hedge and put up bird boxes.

The Friends of the Wilderness have meetings approximately every 2 months. Anyone is welcome to join us.







THANK
You