

F5 Holme and Hall Dike (Holmfirth and Meltham)

The Holme and its tributary the Hall Dike form steep sided valleys to the south of Huddersfield. Both are more sheltered, 'softer' and lacking the strong moorland influence associated with the Colne. The valley of the Hall Dike is characterised by generously wooded slopes and farmland on the lower slopes and valley floor. The lowland oak woods including Honley Wood and Spring Wood represent an important ancient woodland resource. The Holme Valley, by comparison, has less woodland although planting along the roadside perpetuates a wooded feel. The valley slopes support upland sheep farming with improved grassland on the lower slopes and unimproved grassland in the steeper areas. The condition of the stone wall boundaries varies although the farmland in this area generally has an intact well maintained appearance. Both valleys are characterised by fairly extensive development although this is masked by the steep contours and thick woodland that serve to contain views. The small towns include Holmfirth, Holmbridge, Thongsbridge along the valley floor and the valley settlements of Netherthong and Upperthong in the side valleys. There are frequent buildings between settlement centres and in some areas development has extended out from the valley setting and up onto the surrounding hillslopes, such as at Meltham. The landscape of the Holme Valley has been epitomised in popular culture as 'Summer Wine Country'.