



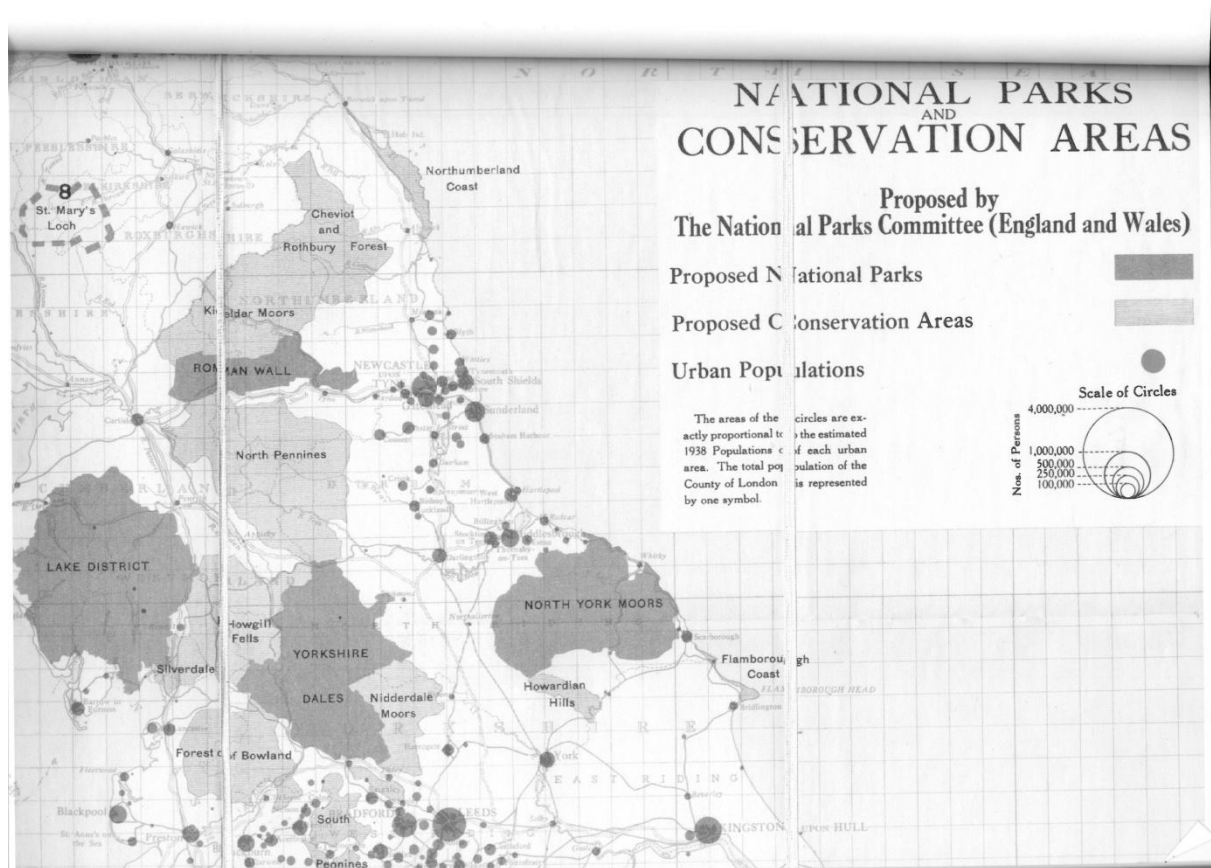
FOREST OF BOWLAND

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

1964 – 2014: Fifty years of the Forest of Bowland AONB

Although the actual designation of the Forest of Bowland as an AONB took place just 50 years ago, in 1964, pressure to protect and conserve our national landscapes began a long time before that. Back in the 1780s the Picturesque movement, and later on the Romantic poets of the 19th century and artists such as William Turner, popularised our nation's love of the countryside, and especially of natural scenery. In 1895 the National Trust was founded, and by the early 20th century people were campaigning for increased access to the countryside: culminating in the mass trespass at Kinder, Derbyshire, in 1932. There was similar pressure, albeit lower profile, for access in Lancashire and West Yorkshire.

The post-war Government responded to pressure from the Ramblers Association, the Campaign for Rural England and the Youth Hostels Association by approving the **National Parks Act in 1949** which established National Parks and 'Conservation Areas' – later called Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The map below shows these proposed areas, including the Forest of Bowland.



An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is an area of high scenic quality which has statutory protection in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of its landscape. AONBs are designated solely for their landscape qualities, for the purpose of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty (which includes landform and geology, plants and animals, landscape features and heritage). They are designated in order to secure their permanent protection against any development that would damage their special qualities.

Between 1958 and 1962 there were many debates, letters and council meetings about the possible boundaries of the proposed Forest of Bowland AONB. The main areas of contention were around the inclusion, or not, of Pendle Hill, Longridge Fell, Beacon Fell and Dolphinholme.

In June 1962 a public consultation was held and on 10th February 1964 the Minister of Housing and Local Government (Sir Keith Joseph) signed the **designation order** to create the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: England's 16th AONB. A copy is shown below:

NATIONAL PARKS AND ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE ACT, 1949

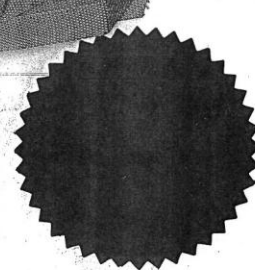
FOREST OF BOWLAND AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

(DESIGNATION) ORDER, 1963

IN pursuance of Section 87 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, and all other powers enabling them in that behalf, the National Parks Commission hereby designate as areas of outstanding natural beauty for the purposes of the said Act, all those areas of land comprising approximately 310 square miles situated in the County of Lancaster and in the West Riding of the County of York and shown bounded by a dark green line edged internally by a broad light green band on the map annexed hereto.

This Order may be cited as the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Designation) Order, 1963.

GIVEN under the Common Seal of the
National Parks Commission this twenty-
seventh day of February, One thousand,
nine hundred and sixty-three.



Strang

Chairman of the National Parks Commission

Pankins Dower

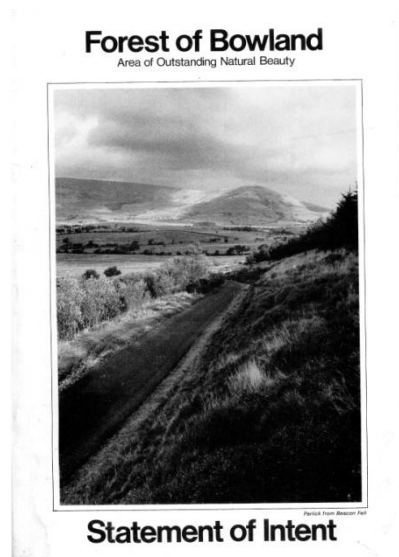
Deputy Chairman of the National Parks Commission

H.L.G. 14806
The Minister of Housing and Local Government hereby confirms the foregoing
Order.

Given under the official seal of the
Minister of Housing and Local Government
on *10th February, 1964.*
S. G. G. WILKINSON
Assistant Secretary,
Ministry of Housing and Local Government

After designation the Ramblers Association continued to campaign for access to the Bowland Fells, and in 1967 Lancashire County Council published a **Recreation Study** for the Forest of Bowland which proposed developing a number of Access Areas, footpaths linking the main fells, and a wardening service. However, it was not until 1972 that four Access Areas were created (at Clougha, Baines Crag, Fairsnape and Parlick) together with a 7 mile access strip linking Clougha to Wards Stone and Tarnbrook, and a countryside ranger to patrol the open countryside.

In 1985 Lancashire County Council, working with a partnership of all the local authorities involved in the designated area, published a '**Statement of Intent**' which led to the setting up of a Joint Advisory Committee and the employment of a Project Officer, Dave Padley, for the AONB.



This was one of the first JACs in the country and it was initially chaired by County Councillor Eric Jones. In 1990 the Bowland Countryside Service expanded with the appointment of Tarja Wilson and Dave Oyston, and in 1992 the JAC appointed its first AONB Officer, Don McKay.

In 2000 the **Countryside and Rights of Way Act** was passed to provide access to the countryside across England, including the Bowland Fells. The Act also conferred equal protection to AONBs and National Parks and instructed that all protected areas should have a statutory Management Plan, something which the Forest of Bowland had already published in 1995.

Since 1995 the AONB Unit has expanded further and a number of high profile projects and activity have taken place, including the annual Festival Bowland programme; hundreds of tree planting, hedge-laying and dry stone walling schemes; improvements to footpaths and bridleways and the introduction of Trammer trails; support for farmers and rural businesses through the Bowland Initiative; the European Charter for sustainable tourism; and so on.

The Forest of Bowland designation was secured because of the area's 'grandeur and isolation' and the contrast between the open moorland and the lush picturesque lowlands. Today a number of special qualities are identified which the Management Plan seeks to conserve and enhance:

- **A place to enjoy and keep special**
- **Wild open spaces**
- **A landscape rich in heritage**
- **Delicious local food and drink**
- **A living landscape**
- **Vibrant local communities**
- **A special place for wildlife**

2014 is planned as a year of celebration for the area, and a variety of events will take place between an official launch on 10th February through until a gala dinner on 1st November. The aim is to increase understanding of the AONB amongst residents and visitors, and to celebrate the achievements and special qualities of the area.