



Expanses of sky above the wild dramatic sweep of open moorland.

Gentle and tidy lowlands, criss-crossed with dry stone walls and dotted with picturesque farms and villages. This is a place like no other, a place with a strong sense of stepping back in time to a forgotten part of the English countryside, a place known as Bowland – the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Situated in North West England,

covering 803 square kilometres (300 sq miles) of rural Lancashire and North Yorkshire, the Forest of Bowland AONB is in two parts. The famous landmark of Pendle Hill is geologically linked to the main upland block but separated by the broad valley of the River Ribble. The area surrounding this outlier is known locally as the Forest of Pendle, whilst being under the umbrella of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty title and designation.



The Forest of Bowland AONB is protected by law

to ensure the conservation and enhancement of its natural beauty, not just for the present, but also for future generations. AONBs have been regarded for generations as treasured areas with special character, and are designated for the quality of their landscapes. The Forest of Bowland was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1964 under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1949) and was recognised by the government as being of equal status as National Parks by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000. Protective designation not only helps to conserve and enhance the AONB's natural beauty but also seeks, as far as possible, to promote the social and economic well-being of people that live and work within it.

Land use and farming will continue to change the way the landscape is shaped

as it has always done. Today sheep and beef farming predominates in the uplands with dairying being the major land use in the valleys. The extensive heather moorland has largely been conserved because of management for grouse shooting.

The AONB was part of the Old Forest of the North and the Royal Hunting Forest of Lancaster. Whilst the land we see today has fewer trees than it once would have done, in this instance the word 'Forest' denotes a royal hunting ground, an unenclosed tract of land, rather than a distinct wooded area.

The landscape we see today contains many clues to past history.

The remains of the Roman road can be clearly seen from the viewpoint at Jeffrey Hill on Longridge Fell. Further clues to the past are given in the village names. The villages of Grindleton, Waddington and Caton date back to the Saxon period, 'ton' meaning fenced area or enclosure. Norse names are also common, these include 'beck' meaning stream and 'laith' meaning barn. Even Bowland was formally called 'Bolland' meaning cowlard.

During the 13th century Cistercian Monks settled at Sawley and toiled for years building the abbey, clearing trees and cultivating the land to grow crops. Ridge and furrow cultivation patterns can still be seen in the long shadows cast by the winter sunlight. The monks had a major influence on the landscape through their clearance of land for farming sheep and other livestock, which reached up into the Brennand Valley and Whitewell area of Bowland.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw the enclosure of land by drystone walls and hedgerows. Derelict lime kilns, old mineral workings, mills and lodges are all indicators of former industrial activity in the AONB.



An area of national and international importance

because of its unspoiled and richly diverse landscapes, wildlife and heritage, Bowland has outstanding heather moorland, blanket bog, and rare birds. The deeply incised cloughs and wooded valleys are particularly characteristic of the Forest of Bowland as are its well-managed sporting estates. The AONB also has semi-natural woodlands and wildflower meadows. Thirteen per cent of the AONB is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its habitats and geological features. The extensive heather moorlands of the fells are exceptionally important as a habitat for upland birds and have been designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the European Birds Directive in recognition of this.

Working in partnership

with those who live and work in the area and manage the land, and those charged with conserving and enhancing the landscape and wildlife on behalf of the nation, is how AONB purposes are achieved. Management is steered by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) representing a partnership of landowners, farmers, voluntary organisations, wildlife groups, local councils and government agencies. The Forest of Bowland AONB statutory Management Plan, sets a vision for the AONB. This plan lays out aspirations for the future and details what needs to be achieved to reach this vision. You can view this Management Plan on-line at www.forestofbowland.com

The Forest of Bowland AONB offers wonderful opportunities for quiet enjoyment

such as walking, cycling and horse riding. Countryside Officers work closely with farmers, landowners and users to improve the quality of access throughout the AONB.

The CROW Act 2000 opened up large areas of the fells for those seeking recreation on foot. Check www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk or phone the Access helpline on 0845 100 3298 for the most up to date information on where you can go and what local restrictions may apply. Local information is also available from Lancashire Countryside Service on 01772 534709 or by searching 'countryside' at www.lancashire.gov.uk



The hen harrier is the bird symbolised on the Forest of Bowland AONB logo.

The Forest of Bowland AONB is their most important breeding locality in England and is therefore crucial for this nationally threatened bird. Traditionally managed farmland in the AONB is home to significant populations of wading birds, including lapwings, curlews, redshanks and snipe.



It's a place where people live and work,

a place that offers opportunities for everyone to enjoy accessible and beautiful countryside. The Forest of Bowland AONB is not nationally owned or set aside solely for the conservation of its natural beauty but is ever changing and vibrant, a place where people are connected to the landscape. The Forest of Bowland AONB aims to maintain the connection between people and their environment by placing strong emphasis on the importance of local communities.

As the first protected area in England to achieve the European Charter



for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, the Forest of Bowland AONB joins an elite group of other protected areas across Europe.

The Charter is awarded to protected areas that are following a best practice approach in delivering tourism that takes account of the needs of the environment, local communities and the local economy. The Charter approach ensures that organisations, local people and businesses are working together to protect the area, whilst at the same time increasing opportunities for visitors to discover and enjoy it.

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All those enjoying the Forest of Bowland AONB are asked to follow the Countryside Code (www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk) and adhere to signs, particularly during sensitive times such as lambing and bird nesting season (spring and summer).

For accommodation, places to visit and things to do, contact Tourist Information

Bowland Visitor Centre Beacon Fell Country Park.Tel: 01995 640557
Barnoldswick TIC Station Road, Barnoldswick.Tel: 01282 666704
Bentham TIC/TIP Town Hall, Station Road.Tel: 015242 62549/61030
Clitheroe TIC Ribble Valley BC Offices, Church Walk, Tel: 01200 425566
Garstang TIC High Street.Tel: 01995 602125
Kirkby Lonsdale TIC 24 Main Street.Tel: 015242 71437
Lancaster TIC 29 Castle Hill.Tel: 01524 32878
Pendle Heritage Centre Barrowford.Tel: 01282 661701
Preston TIC The Guild Hall.Tel: 01772 253731
Settle TIC Town Hall, Settle.Tel: 01729 825192
Lancashire Tourist Board 01257 226600 www.visitt Lancashire.com
Yorkshire Tourist Board www.yorkshire.com

For Countryside and Ranger Services contact Lancashire Countryside Service/Ranger Service 01772 534709.
Wyre Countryside Service/Ranger Service 01995 606654.

Ordnance Survey Map Explorer OL41, Forest of Bowland & Ribblesdale
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Lancashire County Council acts as the lead authority for the Forest of Bowland AONB Advisory Committee a partnership comprising: Lancashire County Council, North Yorkshire County Council, Craven District Council, Lancaster City Council, Pendle Borough Council, Preston City Council, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Wyre Borough Council, Lancashire Association of Parish and Town Councils, Yorkshire Local Councils Association, NWDA, DEFRA, Natural England, United Utilities plc, Environment Agency, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Forest of Bowland Landowning and Farmers Advisory Group and the Ramblers Association.



Leaflet available in large text format on request. Due to OS legislation the map is not available in larger format.

FOREST OF BOWLAND

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Map Key

Heritage sites

- 1 Bleasdale Circle
- 2 Browsholme Hall
- 3 Clitheroe Castle
- 4 Cromwell Bridge
- 5 Dalehead Church
- 6 Great Stone
- 7 Jubilee Tower
- 8 Pendle Heritage Centre
- 9 Ribchester Roman Museum
- 10 Sawley Abbey
- 11 Slaidburn Heritage Centre
- 12 Stonyhurst College
- 13 Whalley Abbey

Symbols

- Nursery
- Viewpoint
- Garage
- Pub
- Birding Locations
- Café
- Toilets
- Tourist Information
- Parking
- Picnic Site
- Slater Fell Track

Places to Visit

- 1 Bashall Barn
- 2 Bowland Wild Boar Park
- 3 Cobble Hey Farm & Gardens
- 4 Bowland Visitor Centre
- 5 Barn at Scorton
- 6 Backridge Farm
- 7 Mytton Farm Crafts



Birding locations to visit...

- A** – Roeburndale Woods in the north of Bowland offer good opportunities for seeing oak woodland specialties such as redstart and pied flycatcher.
- B** – The circular walk around Stocks Reservoir to the northeast offers a range of woodland and upland birds. The reservoir itself attracts wildfowl and waders and many passage migrants including the occasional osprey.
- C** – Abbeystead in the west is one of the best areas for breeding waders on the upland pastures. Lapwing, curlew, redshank, snipe and oystercatcher are all numerous here and golden plover flocks can often be seen.
- D** – Pendle Hill in the southeast is the place to see migrant dotterel in early May. The open stony ground by the trig point on the eastern summit is the best place to look for these delightful waders on their way to nest in the mountains of Scotland.
- E** – In the southwest, Barnacre Reservoir (which is not open to the public) is an important staging post for hundreds of migrant whimbrel. The public footpaths on the south side offer opportunities for seeing these birds as they fly in to roost in late April and early May evenings giving their loud piping calls.

Visit the Forest of Bowland website to download route maps of walks in these areas
www.forestofbowland.com

For the latest news on bird watching in Bowland, including web cam pictures from a hen harrier's nesting site in the springtime, visit www.forestofbowland.com/wild_birds.asp

