



**Sustainable Transport for Tourism**  
Forest of Bowland - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty  
*Final Report - March 2007*



**FOREST OF  
BOWLAND**

---

# Sustainable Transport for Tourism

---

## Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

### Final Report

#### **JMP CONSULTING**

MINERVA HOUSE, EAST PARADE, LEEDS, LS1 5PS.  
T 0113 244 4347 F 0113 242 3753 E leeds@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

| Job no.        | Prepared by   | Verified  | Approved by | Status        | Issue no. | Date            |
|----------------|---------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|
| <b>D076009</b> | <b>SWQ/MR</b> | <b>MR</b> | <b>APB</b>  | <b>Issued</b> | <b>2</b>  | <b>23/03/07</b> |



# Sustainable Transport for Tourism Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Inception Report

## Contents Amendment Record

This document has been issued and amended as follows:

| Status/Revision | Issue Number | Date     | Approved By |
|-----------------|--------------|----------|-------------|
| Draft           | 1            | 09/02/07 | MJR         |
| Draft Final     | 1            | 02/03/07 | MJR         |
| Final           | 2            | 23/03/07 | APB         |

# Contents

|          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Introduction</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
|          | Background  | 1         |
|          | Policy Context  | 1         |
|          | Best Practice in Rural Sustainable Transport  | 7         |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Existing and Potential Visitor Patterns</b>  | <b>9</b>  |
|          | 2006 Visitor Survey   | 9         |
| <b>3</b> | <b>The AONB Tourism Product</b>   | <b>11</b> |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Transport Audit</b>  | <b>15</b> |
|          | Public Transport Access to the Forest of Bowland AONB                                     | 15        |
|          | Public Transport Gateways into the AONB   | 16        |
|          | Conclusions from the audit  | 17        |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Key Actions</b>  | <b>20</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Delivering sustainable transport for tourism in Bowland</b>                            | <b>23</b> |
|          | Delivering the actions  | 23        |
|          | Marketing Initiatives   | 23        |
|          | Public Transport Proofing of Visitor Facilities, Countryside Access and Events in Bowland | 25        |
|          | Sustainable Transport Provision for the Bowland Festival                                  | 26        |
|          | Cycling in Bowland  | 27        |
|          | A Bowland Experience Bus  | 30        |
|          | A Social Enterprise Travel Company for Bowland  | 32        |
| <b>7</b> | <b>A delivery programme</b>   | <b>35</b> |

# Appendices

## **Appendix A**

Best Practice Case Studies

## **Appendix B**

IMD and car ownership maps

## **Appendix C**

Network maps

## **Appendix D**

Examples of Existing Cycle Promotion

# Tables and Figures

|             |  |           |
|-------------|--|-----------|
| <b>T1.1</b> | <b>SWOT Analysis</b>                         | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>T1.2</b> | <b>Management Plan Themes and Objectives</b> | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>T1.3</b> | <b>Cycling Actions</b>                       | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>T2.1</b> | <b>Age of visitors</b>                       | <b>10</b> |
| <b>T6.1</b> | <b>Existing cycle events 2007</b>            | <b>28</b> |
| <b>T7.1</b> | <b>Delivery programme</b>                    | <b>35</b> |

# 1 Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 The Forest of Bowland AONB has commissioned JMP Consulting, Transport for Leisure (TFL) and Lydia Speakman Associates (LSA) to conduct a piece of action research to enable the delivery of a more sustainable approach to tourism in the Forest of Bowland whereby:
- Visitors to Bowland do not need to bring their car with them
  - There is reduced congestion and less unsightly parking
  - Sustainable tourism supports, and relies on, a network of sustainable visitor transport
  - Both tourism and transport contribute to the rural economy
- 1.2 This report brings together the research undertaken into the policy context, best practice in sustainable transport provision for tourism, an audit of existing transport and an assessment of the potential market based on recent visitor surveys. Furthermore, the report outlines a number of realistic and achievable projects to take forward to deliver more sustainable transport in the Forest of Bowland, and a suggested marketing strategy to promote such transport.

## Policy Context

- 1.3 The consultants have carried out a desk top review of relevant policy and strategy documentation relating to the Forest of Bowland AONB. This has included:
- A Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in the Forest of Bowland AONB
  - Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan
  - North Yorkshire Cycling Strategy
  - Draft Lancashire Cycling Strategy
  - Lancashire Walking Strategy
  - Lancashire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan

### A Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in the Forest of Bowland AONB

- 1.4 A sustainable tourism strategy has been developed for the AONB in recognition of the fact that the area's special qualities act as a draw for visitors, who create pressures on the area.
- 1.5 The main recreational activity in the AONB has been identified as walking, although the range of other activities includes cycling, fishing, riding, gliding, canoeing and parascending. In terms of visitor attractions, the Beacon Fell Country Park (including the Bowland Visitor Centre) receives the largest number of visits within the AONB.
- 1.6 Other features that attract visitors include the Trough of Bowland, Pendle Hill, Gisburn Forest and the many picturesque villages such as Slaidburn, Chipping, Barley and Downham.
- 1.7 The Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board (which acts as the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) for the area) has identified the Forest of Bowland and Pendle Hill as the 'Theme Champion' for 'Country Escapes', presenting an untouched countryside ready to be explored by high spending visitors.
- 1.8 The strategy includes a SWOT analysis which identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the Forest of Bowland. The table below summarises some of the main points identified.

## T1.1 SWOT Analysis

| STRENGTHS  | WEAKNESSES   |
|--|--|
| Track record of partnership working and attracting funds   | Current tourism product relies heavily on the car; limited capacity of minor road network  |
| Presence of tourism businesses in more accessible belt on fringes of AONB  | Dependence on short term funding packages introduces uncertainty and mitigates against long term planning required for business investment |
| Track record of community involvement with AONB initiatives  | Project maintenance is an issue, beyond initial set-up costs   |
| OPPORTUNITIES  | THREATS  |
| Ribble Way and North Lancashire Bridleway offer opportunity to build interest through promoted routes and trails | Low interest amongst existing industry in opportunities to engage with cycling/riding/public transport initiatives                         |
| Development of cycling routes for range of users   | Increased traffic pressure and car use exacerbates visitor pressures on vulnerable communities   |
| Ongoing growth in outdoor activity markets   | Competition from many other UK areas pursuing sustainable tourism in rural areas   |
| New injection of support and cash from RDAs prepared to invest in tourism  | Reduction in EU funding opportunities  |

1.9 The strategic objectives relating to the sustainable tourism strategy have been developed and an action plan put together to achieve these objectives. These are summarised here:

- To develop structures that enable all those involved with tourism in and around the AONB to be engaged with its development and management
- To strengthen the identity of the AONB as a sustainable tourism destination, recognised and promoted in partnership by all those involved with tourism service delivery in the wider area
- To deliver visitor experiences of the highest quality, that aim to exceed visitor expectations
- To develop and promote a visitor product that enables discovery and exploration of the special qualities of the AONB.
- To present well connected opportunities for people to develop a greater understanding of, and respect for, the natural, cultural and built environment of the AONB
- To protect and enhance the natural, cultural and historic environment of the Forest of Bowland, strengthening support for this wherever possible through tourism
- To strengthen the performance of the local tourism economy and identify new opportunities for tourism to deliver economic benefit
- To provide good quality visitor information, readily available in and around the area
- To ensure that tourism supports the quality of life of local communities, offering them opportunities to play a special part in the creation and delivery of tourism experiences and visitor services
- To manage the movement of visitors to minimise adverse impacts on communities and the environment
- To base decisions on accurate and current data.

1.10 The above objectives underpin the sustainable tourism strategy for the AONB, and any recommendations made as a consequence of this research should fit in with the objectives and action plan.

## Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan

- 1.11 The management plan has been developed to ensure positive and pro-active management of the AONB, recognising the special qualities of the area and identifying the landscape features that are vulnerable to change.
- 1.12 The plan recognises that the private car is the predominant mode used by visitors to the area and planning for sustainable tourism may require progress towards better integration across other modes (public transport, walking and cycling) to provide a more realistic alternative to the private car.
- 1.13 The management plan is based on the following vision for the AONB and how it should look in ten years:
- The Forest of Bowland retains its sense of local distinctiveness, notably the large-scale open moorland character of the Bowland Fells, traditional buildings and settlement patterns of villages, hamlets and farmsteads. Natural and cultural resources are sympathetically managed and contribute to a sustainable and vibrant local economy. The management of the Forest of Bowland AONB has improved the quality of the landscape for all stakeholders.*
- 1.14 This overall vision has been split into four different themes, each of which has key objectives. The relevant objectives for transport and tourism are discussed here.
- 1.15 The document includes a number of key objectives in terms of access to services and tourism and recreation (under the Social Equity and Economic Opportunity theme) and transport (Enjoyment of the AONB theme). The relevant key objectives for each of these are shown in the table overleaf.

## T1.2 Management Plan Themes and Objectives

| Theme   | Objectives   |
|---|--|
| <b>Social Equity and Economic Opportunity</b> |  |
| Access to Services                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage maintenance of current transport service levels and where feasible, improvements to the bus and rail systems servicing the AONB which are consistent with the purpose of the AONB</li> <li>• Support the current phased implementation of a network of Quiet Lanes &amp; Greenways</li> <li>• Encourage the implementation of sympathetically designed traffic management schemes to improve public safety and reduce the impact of traffic upon the character of the AONB.</li> <li>• Encourage the continuation of existing community led transport initiatives and development of new initiatives if suitable opportunities are identified which are consistent with the AONB designation</li> </ul> |
| Tourism and Recreation                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage tourism initiatives to adopt principles of sustainable tourism.</li> <li>• Encourage partnership networks between tourism operators, land managers, communities and local authorities that benefit the local economy and environment</li> <li>• Promote to relevant partners the use of rural focal points for circular and linear self-guided walks linked to public transport</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Enjoyment of the AONB</b>                  |  |
| Transport                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the relevant authorities to develop innovative public transport services designed to stimulate demand and provide for all types of user.</li> <li>• Promote those transport services which provide a good standard of mobility and accessibility without detriment to the environment.</li> <li>• Support initiatives which seek to manage sympathetically the demand for car parking within the AONB.</li> <li>• Encourage traffic regulations that are adapted to suit the needs of the AONB</li> </ul>   |

### North Yorkshire Cycling Strategy

- 1.16 The objectives of the North Yorkshire cycling strategy support the promotion of sustainable tourism, including seeking to maximise the role of cycling for recreational purposes. The strategy seeks the promotion of cycle networks in the 2 National Parks and other rural areas of the county.

### Draft Lancashire Cycling Strategy

- 1.17 The draft cycling strategy for Lancashire includes the development of cycle tourism as a mechanism for achieving transport targets. Cycle tourism is identified as already being important in some rural villages such as Slaidburn and Scorton which are within the Forest of Bowland.

- 1.18 Six different types of cycle tourism are identified, these are:

- Cycle touring
- Cycling from one holiday base
- Day cycle ride
- Short cycle ride (½ hour to ½ a day)
- Mountain biking (by duration of trip, which can be broken down into people doing tours, cycling from one holiday base or shorter rides)

- Mountain biking (by type of activity, which can be broken down into people touring or looking for technical courses).

1.19 The strategy relates the different types of cycle tourism mentioned above to Lancashire and suggests actions to be taken to increase the market in the county. There are specific references to the Forest of Bowland, which have been italicised within the table.

### T1.3 Cycling Actions

| Market Segment                                | Lancashire Cycling Product   | Actions to Increase Market   |
|---|--|--|
| Cycle Touring                                 | Lancashire Cycleway<br>Pennine Cycleway<br>National Cycle Network<br>Lands End to John O'Groats  | a) Promote Lancashire Cycleway outside the county.<br>b) Develop cross Pennine Route between Lancashire and Yorkshire  |
| <b><i>Cycle Holidays</i></b>                  | <b><i>Forest of Bowland</i></b><br><b><i>North Lancashire</i></b><br><b><i>Lune Valley</i></b><br><b><i>Ribble Valley</i></b><br><b><i>Pendle Hill</i></b> | <b><i>Promote scenic areas of county as areas for cycle holidays to people from outside the county</i></b>   |
| Cycling whilst on holiday                     | Traffic free cycle paths<br>Rural minor roads  | a) Develop more traffic free cycle paths.<br>b) Encourage cycle hire.<br>c) Permit cycling on Promenades.  |
| Leisure Cycle Rides largely on road           | Rural areas of county  | a) Manage traffic on minor roads.<br>b) Improve routes from urban areas into countryside.<br>c) Improve routes into the county from Greater Manchester and Merseyside. |
| Leisure cycle rides on traffic free paths     | Cycle paths in Lancaster Area  | a) Develop traffic free cycle paths elsewhere in county.<br>b) Promote as being healthy.   |
| Mountain Biking Tours                         | Pennine Bridleway<br>Mary Townley Loop   | Promote to national market   |
| <b><i>Mountain Biking from one centre</i></b> | <b><i>Forest of Bowland</i></b><br><b><i>South Pennines</i></b><br><b><i>Pendle Hill</i></b><br><b><i>Rosendale</i></b>                                    | <b><i>Develop more routes and promote them.</i></b>  |
| Technical Mountain Biking Courses             | None exist in Lancashire at present  | Develop and promote mountain biking courses.   |

1.20 The document highlights that the main market currently for cycle tourism in the county is the North West and Yorkshire, and in particular those on short breaks.

1.21 The main actions in relation to cycle tourism for the whole of the county are therefore:

- Promote scenic areas as areas for cycling holidays
- Increase the number of cycle paths that are traffic free
- Encourage and promote cycle hire
- Develop and promote the County's mountain biking product
- Encourage publishers to provide cycling guides to Lancashire
- Achieve good publicity for the County in cycling and outdoor press.

### Lancashire Walking Strategy

- 1.22 The draft walking strategy for Lancashire has been produced to promote walking in a comprehensive and integrated manner. The document sets out the problems and opportunities for walking across the county, and sets objectives and targets for walking and the strategies for achieving them.
- 1.23 In terms of the Forest of Bowland, there is only one element of the strategy (Rural Route Network) which makes specific reference to the AONB. This relates to routes where walking is to be encouraged and the need for adequate provision for walking in terms of footways.
- 1.24 The actions that have been highlighted from this element of the strategy are:
- Establish long and short distance walks that link to public transport such as the Carnforth Connect and Bowland Transit rural bus services.
  - Continue to improve access to the countryside for walkers in line with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 with projects such as the Bowland Open Access Pilot Study.
- 1.25 There are no specific deadlines for this work within the action plan. They are simply noted as being ongoing projects.

### Lancashire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan

- 1.26 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Lancashire has identified around 110 actions all linked to particular policies for the county, that are in turn linked to the seven main themes which are:
- Theme DM (Definitive Map)
  - Theme IIN (Inspection and Improvement)
  - Theme EIP (Education and Information Provision)
  - Theme CCL (Community to Countryside Links)
  - Theme BCC (Bridleways and Off-Road Cycling Circuits and Routes)
  - Theme RMVI (Reduced Mobility and Visually Impaired)
  - Theme HRO (Higher Rights and Other Provisions)
- 1.27 The plan has identified two specific policies which relate to the Forest of Bowland AONB:
- Policy EIP5: We will work in partnership with sustainable tourism and rural development initiatives:
    - a) To ensure that information provided will contribute to the well being of the rural economy;
    - b) That are consistent with the need to safeguard the quiet character of the AONBs in Lancashire.
  - Policy HR03: We will identify and/or support Quiet Lane and Greenways initiatives that:
    - c) Implement the Forest of Bowland Quiet Lanes and Greenways Project, and we will learn from experience in the county and nationally;
    - d) Offer potential public benefits at proportionate costs.
- 1.28 These actions will be reviewed over the life of the plan, a period of five years.

## Best Practice in Rural Sustainable Transport

- 1.29 It is important that a number of European and UK examples of best practice in terms of sustainable access to protected landscapes should be considered in order to see what lessons, if any, could be applied to the Forest of Bowland AONB. This will ensure that appropriate experience from elsewhere is shared with both funders and partners. Seven examples, from the many that at least in some part could provide learning points, have been selected that have particular lessons for Bowland.
- 1.30 These are the Bavarian Forest National Park Hedgehog Bus, Peak Connections in the Peak National Park, the Shropshire Shuttle in the Shropshire Hills, the Coast Link bus along the Suffolk Coast, the Dales Experience bus in Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Northamptonshire Saunterbus, and the Wiltshire Wigglybus.
- 1.31 Further details of each of these successful projects are included in Appendix A.

### Lessons to be learned

- 1.32 Both the Bavarian Forest and the Shropshire Hills examples, though on very different scales of operation, indicate the degree to which a total approach to the problems of visitor and traffic management linked to sustainable visitor transport can provide benefits. In both cases the services not only offer a superb service for people without their own transport, but car owners can also be persuaded in significant numbers to choose to use the shuttle service as part of the experience of visiting the destination, thus adding value to the experience. Both also illustrate how what is being offered can be developed in close partnership with local tourism providers, and integrate fully with the tourism product of their areas.
- 1.33 The need for imaginative, well funding marketing is further reinforced by Peak Connections, which shows how a high marketing profile including major attractions such as Chatsworth House, can make a real difference to visitor behaviour. This remains true even where, as in the case of the Peak District, regular service trains and buses are being promoted as well as specially dedicated leisure services.
- 1.34 The Northamptonshire Saunterbus is an example of where, by focusing the leisure travel product on to a limited number of routes and times of the week, and targeting a variety of destinations for what otherwise would be a far too thinly distributed market, can make a leisure network viable. Again excellent marketing effort over a long period to build up the market has contributed to this success.
- 1.35 The Dales Experience bus project is important in a different way as it directly targets the socially excluded and ethnic minority markets in order to help overcome physical and psychological barriers to participating in informal countryside recreation. It emphasises the need for continuous engagement by volunteers and professional staff with community leaders in the target areas in order to build up the trust and confidence required to promote use of what is a carefully tailored service, which is nonetheless a public bus.
- 1.36 Both the Suffolk Coast Link bus and the Wiltshire Wigglybus projects bring in the notion of demand responsive services which fulfil both essential rural journey and leisure needs. Both bus services feed to and from conventional train and bus services and, on a pre-booked basis can provide both local people and visitors with a quality of service difficult to replicate with a conventional bus – though an element of journey anticipation and pre-planning is essential. The Coast Link gives access to villages and attractions such as Nature Reserves which could not support a conventional service. It also indicates how major partners such as the local authority, the RSPB and the National Trust can work together through the mechanism of the Widen the Choice Partnership.
- 1.37 It is important to stress that to a considerable extent Lancashire County Council's Pendle Wayfarer already uses a similar formula to the Wigglybus, that of a fixed route with demand responsive variations. But Wigglybus also demonstrates the potential role a

Social Enterprise Company can have in not only co-ordinating local rural bus services to meet real community needs, but in working with that community and the local authority as a travel broker. The current process of the Wigglybus Social Enterprise Partnership taking over the role as an operator of certain Wigglybus services will enable the Partnership to ensure high standards of operation and to control costs, rather than being subject to the variable standards of local operators and rising tender prices for subsidised services.

- 1.38 All the examples indicate the need to ensure high standards of operation, preferably with low floor DDA compliant vehicles and well trained drivers, and above all continuous, energetic marketing without which even the best conceived services will quickly lose their customer base, as the Bowland Transit experience indicates all too well.
- 1.39 A further advantage of both the Shropshire Shuttle and the Dales Experience bus is that on board couriers or guides enable much greater visitor contact than most other means such as interpretation boards or visitor centres. This enables not just the transport message but wider conservation messages to be given to the target audience, captive during the bus journey, which could have considerable long term benefits in terms of audience development.
- 1.40 This may be of particular value, for example, in the development and operation of any kind of dedicated bus service to be operated as part of the Bowland Festival.

## 2 Existing and Potential Visitor Patterns

### 2006 Visitor Survey

- 2.1 Data from visitor surveys carried out in August 2006 has been provided for this study. The surveys were undertaken at a variety of locations, and on both weekdays and at weekends. The data has been analysed to establish the existing visitor patterns to the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 2.2 The visitor surveys were carried out across the AONB with two target groups included within the visitors surveyed. There was a general survey of all visitors, and also a specific cyclist survey in Gisburn Forest. The data from the cyclist survey is discussed first.

### Cyclist Survey – Gisburn Forest

- 2.3 A total of 121 cyclists were interviewed in the survey.
- 2.4 The Gisburn Forest surveys showed that the majority of people cycling were there for day visits (99%), and the majority of these visitors (75%) had come from within Lancashire to enjoy cycling in the area. Indeed only one visitor was spending more than the day cycling in the area.
- 2.5 This reinforces the established view that much of the cycling and mountain biking in the Bowland area is undertaken by local people for informal enjoyment or keeping fit. There are not the technical mountain bike courses in the area to attract visitors from a wider catchment (as identified in T1.3). Gisburn has the potential for this, but would require investment in creating such courses.
- 2.6 Private car represented the main mode used to travel to the Forest, with 91% of cyclists arriving by car. The ease that the private car provides for transporting bikes and other equipment was given as being the main reason for travelling by this mode. Only 9% of those surveyed had actually cycled to the Forest. Nobody had used public transport to access cycling opportunities in the Forest.
- 2.7 The surveys identified that a large proportion of those surveyed were repeat visitors to Gisburn Forest, with only 26% of cyclists being first time visitors. 40% of cyclists consider themselves to be regular visitors.
- 2.8 When asked the main reasons for visiting Gisburn Forest, a large proportion of the visitors stated that as they had travelled from within Lancashire, the area was relatively quick and easy to get to and they appreciated that the area was not too commercialised.
- 2.9 The survey presented cyclists with a number of statements about the area and their perceptions of the area, they were then asked to state the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with them.
- 2.10 From these statements, 60% of those surveyed agreed that they would be prepared to pay more for parking, if they knew that this would be put back into the work of the AONB. The results also identified that 66% agreed that they would be keen to support local food producers, shops and businesses, and 57% would be prepared to donate money to the Bowland payback scheme.

### General Visitor Survey

- 2.11 A total of 621 people visiting Bowland were part of groups interviewed in the survey. The age of visitors is shown below:

## T2.1 Age of visitors

| Age        | Total |
|------------|-------|
| 0-5(yrs)   | 23    |
| 6-10(yrs)  | 56    |
| 11-15(yrs) | 15    |
| 16-24(yrs) | 23    |
| 25-34(yrs) | 76    |
| 35-54(yrs) | 183   |
| 55-64(yrs) | 137   |
| 65+        | 108   |

- 2.12 This demonstrates that 69% of visitors were 35 years or older.
- 2.13 In terms of where visitors had travelled from 56% had come from within Lancashire. The maps in Appendix B show that this potentially strong local market is also one with considerable potential to visit the AONB by public transport or other non-car modes. There are significant concentrations of relatively deprived communities within the towns surrounding the Forest of Bowland, some amongst the most deprived in the UK. These communities have low car ownership, and therefore are unlikely to drive to the area at present.
- 2.14 Only 19% of people surveyed were visiting the Forest of Bowland for the first time. The local catchment of relatively deprived communities shown in the maps in Appendix B represent an opportunity to broaden the base of local visitors, helping to increase the proportion of people visiting the area for the first time.
- 2.15 Visitor perceptions of local facilities were assessed in the surveys. As with the cyclist survey carried out in Gisburn Forest, visitors were asked to state their level of agreement with a number of statements (those mentioned in para 2.10). As with the Gisburn Forest survey, a large proportion (39.5%) of those surveyed agreed that they would pay more for parking if they knew it was going towards the work of the AONB. Over 20% of visitors also stated that they would use a shuttle bus to travel around the Forest of Bowland.

## 3 The AONB Tourism Product

3.1 By “tourism product” professionals working in the tourism industry generally mean the totality of a visitor’s experience at a particular destination.

3.2 There are four key elements which make up this visitor experience:

- **The natural and cultural environment** – the landscape, wildlife, historic features, architecture, rural settlement, history, legends and literature
- **The infrastructure** – roads, car parks, bridleways, cycle routes, footpaths, railways, visitor centres, physical attractions, signage
- **The services** – hotels, guest houses, youth hostels, camp sites, pubs, cafes, bus and train services
- **The information and marketing provision** - leaflets, maps, brochures, books, press articles, interpretation, web sites.

3.3 Visitor expectations are built up by national and international experience and comparison with other tourism destinations, as well by any marketing activity for that particular destination which they may have been exposed to.

3.4 If any one of the main four requirements outlined above fail to meet the visitor expectations in a significant way, the visitor may either curtail his or her visit, or simply not repeat the experience. More significantly, however, he or she is also most likely to influence friends and family by reporting on that particular negative experience in some detail, even if the rest of the visit had proved satisfactory.

3.5 Different audiences will inevitably have different expectations. Older, more affluent visitors generally expect high standards of infrastructure and services, whilst different segments of the market will respond to the services and infrastructure they use. For example, in the context of sustainable tourism, walkers will look for clearly way-marked rights of way, free of obstruction, to get them off the traffic dominated tarmac roads and onto safe, quiet routes and perhaps on to the new areas of access land. Cyclists will look for lightly traffic lanes and traffic free tracks. Horse riders will look for a good bridleway network, and good parking for horse boxes (Blandford/TFL 2005).

3.6 Likewise visitors will choose the services they need from expensive country hotel to basic camping barn or camp site, and will seek whatever source of information is relevant to them, from detailed book to simple leaflet, with web sites becoming increasingly important to an IT literate population.

### Tourism in the Forest of Bowland

3.7 What all visitors, whatever their age, income and background, and mode of travel or sources of information, have in common, is an appreciation of the special natural and cultural environment of an area such as the Forest of Bowland. This is their prime motivation for visiting the area. Thus the special qualities of the AONB are the core capital of the area’s tourism product.

3.8 This reaffirms the key message in the **Europarc European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas** to:

*“protect and enhance the area’s natural and cultural heritage, for and through tourism, and to protect it from excessive tourism development”*

3.9 These special qualities are admirably set out in the **Forest of Bowland AONB Sense of Place Toolkit**; particularly the AONB’s landscapes of wild open spaces, the rich moorland and woodland birdlife, the fauna, millstone grit uplands and heather moor.

- 3.10 Equally important is the historic environment; the Bronze Age clearances, cairns and stone circles, the Roman roads, medieval hunting estates, the many stone buildings including farms, barns, bridges, dry stone walls, mostly dating from the 16th – 19th centuries, the industrial heritage of lime kilns, paper and textile mills, small quarries, monastic buildings including two major abbeys, Clitheroe Castle, villages with historic churches, scattered woodland and ornamental parkland, old pubs, and the 19th and 20th century inheritance of water works, reservoirs and water catchment ground.
- 3.11 Important too for Bowland is a literary heritage which includes William Harrison Ainsworth and Robert Neil’s romantic novels of the Pendle witches, and links with J.R.R. Tolkien and Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins.
- 3.12 The other element which enmeshes closely with the sense of place and sustainability is the local distinctiveness of Bowland in terms of local customs, upland farming, dialect and language. Local products and services such as Bowland cheese, beef, beer, and local markets are also important.
- 3.13 Groups such as the **Bowland Experience** network, a not for profit company which seeks to promote Bowland as a distinctive, green tourism destination, rely heavily on this heritage. The network seeks to promote short break holidays staying at high quality local accommodation, consuming locally produced food and drink (thereby reducing food miles and benefiting local businesses) visiting local attractions and using local services.
- 3.14 There is ample information available about Bowland to meet visitor requirements, both before and during a visit, in the form of leaflets, brochures and on web sites. This information not only informs, but provides the motivation for visitors through words and images to draw people to visit leisure attractions in Bowland.

#### Access for tourism

- 3.15 “Tourism leisure day visits” are defined by the Countryside Agency and others as “those leisure day visits lasting 3 or more hours and not taken on a regular basis” (Countryside Agency 2004). In other words these are half day or longer leisure trips away from home but excluding local dog walks or jogging trips.
- 3.16 Around 93% of visitors to UK countryside destinations travel by their own car. The single most popular purpose of a trip to the countryside is to “walk, hill walk or ramble (32%) followed by going out for a meal or drink (15%), taking part in sport (11%), visiting friends or relatives (10%), enjoying a hobby or sporting interest, presumably including such activities as bird watching (8%), visiting a leisure attraction (5%) or a park or garden (3%), with cycling at just 4%. (GB Day Visits survey 2002-3, Countryside Agency 2004).
- 3.17 It is reasonable to assume that for most people driving forms an integral part the pleasure of such trips, and that good, safe parking facilities close to places they choose to visit, whether at individual attractions or small towns and villages, are what recreational drivers expect to find. In Bowland with its quiet roads, easy parking and generally good visitor facilities, such expectations are invariably met.

#### Transport for tourism in Bowland

- 3.18 In terms of the tourism product and most visitors’ experience, Bowland is an ideal location for a motoring destination, easily accessible from the motorway network (many attractions take care to detail the Junction off the M6 to use) for a day or a short or weekend break based around the car. Driving for pleasure is still a popular outdoor activity for many British people. Roads in Bowland are extremely quiet compared with most protected landscapes in the British Isles, and this contrasts sharply with the congested roads of nearby areas such as the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales, Peak District or even Arncliffe and Silverdale. Parking is an issue at busy weekends and bank holidays at honeypots such as Downham, Barley, Dunsop Bridge and Slaidburn, but elsewhere in the Forest of Bowland, and at off-peak times, parking is relatively easy in official car parks or on

roadside lay-bys. A drive along scenic roads through superlative landscape, with opportunity to visit a historic attraction, go for a short circular walk from the car park or enjoy a pub lunch is exactly the kind of car-based tourism activity which will always be the mainstay of tourism in Bowland.

- 3.19 Indeed in terms of traffic management the issue in Bowland, as the Quiet Lanes Project demonstrates, is not about curtailing or reducing traffic, rather managing traffic better. For example, encouraging visitor traffic to use more appropriate roads so that on certain very minor roads and narrow lanes other users – walkers, cyclists, horse riders – can enjoy those roads at less risk.
- 3.20 There is an implicit assumption in almost all the promotional literature and on web sites encouraging people to visit the Forest of Bowland that visitors will drive there. Invariably promotional materials contain information about how to reach the destination by car, in most instances including directions from the nearest motorway and where to park.
- 3.21 However for visitors coming to Bowland by sustainable transport modes the situation is very different. This is in spite of the fact that alternatives do exist. These alternatives are explored in detail in chapter 4. Whilst information is in fact very good – Lancashire County Council (LCC) produce a range of good clear timetable leaflets for all their supported services, as do operators of commercial services, and all timetables are carried live on the LCC web site – marketing of the network, especially in terms of the leisure product to visitors is virtually non-existent. The visitor wanting, for example to visit Slaidburn, Chipping, Downham or Barley would have serious difficulty in finding which service to use in terms of route numbers, routes and destinations and in accessing the relevant timetable through the web, despite the existence of an efficient journey planner.
- 3.22 The information gap is best demonstrated by examples, such as the Pendle Witch Trail. This is not a walk, but a 45 mile drive (or energetic one-way cycle ride) between Barrowford and Lancaster passing places with links to the Pendle witchcraft trials. It is promoted by Pendle Council and the Pendle Tourism Group and featured on the Pendle Witch Project website. Much of this route can be covered by public transport notably by using the Pendle Witch Hopper/Pendle Wayfarer and the B10 buses. It would be easy to promote a parallel and equally enjoyable and interesting day out for non-drivers using these two bus services.
- 3.23 Even the AONB's own literature includes examples written on the assumption that all visitors will drive there. The leaflet promoting the walk around Stocks Reservoir, for example, indicates parking places which is to be expected. However, significantly, it fails to mention that the walk can be accessed from Slaidburn bus terminus, just over a mile away via the B10 from Clitheroe.
- 3.24 Lack of promotion of the available and in some cases reasonably frequent and convenient public transport to and through the AONB and to and from individual attractions is a notable failure in terms of the promotion and information requirements of the non-car using visitor, one of the four basic requirements of the tourism product outlined above.
- 3.25 There is currently little marketing of the car-free option to and within Bowland. The very good linear walks from the bus stop leaflets produced two years ago as part of the Bowland Transit project are no longer in print, and even a very dedicated and highly motivated visitor would find it difficult to acquire the information needed for a weekend visit or to plan a walk. In the Yorkshire Dales National Park for example, the excellent Travel Dales and Dales Bus websites give the visitor immediate access to the necessary information for all train and bus-served locations, plus gateway information from key catchment areas, as well as a range of publications some on the website, indicating linear walks accessible by bus or train. It is worth noting that recent Yorkshire Dales National Park visitor surveys have detected a measurable increase in the still small percentage of visitors using local bus and train services to reach the Dales.

- 3.26 This gap in marketing and information provision is not one that immediately comes to the attention either of tourism attraction operators or to the majority of car-based visitors. Among the 7% of visitors arriving in the countryside by other means than a private car - roughly divided by cyclists, bus and train users and those arriving by private coach or minibus, the 3-5% of potential public transport users to Bowland have no option but to avoid the area, having effectively been excluded even before the journey can begin.
- 3.27 But where good public transport links for visitors actually do exist both to and within the destination area, as experience in the Bavarian Forest and the Shropshire Hills shows, and areas such as Snowdonia and the Lake District also demonstrate, then a percentage of people arriving by car will use a bus or train as a fun element of the trip, providing it is being effectively promoted as part of the tourism product of the area. This will in turn have environmental benefits in terms of reduced emissions and economic benefit in terms of increased fare revenues.

## 4 Transport Audit

### Public Transport Access to the Forest of Bowland AONB

- 4.1 The Forest of Bowland AONB lies close to major centres of population, but much of the AONB is difficult to access by public transport. This is largely due to the area's geography, notably the major range of hills which form the major watersheds between the Ribble, Wenning, Lune and Hodder valleys. The settlements and communities in the central parts of the AONB have insufficient population to sustain more than minimal rural bus networks, and even the western, northern and eastern flanks of the AONB are relatively lightly populated, and served by only irregular bus or train services.
- 4.2 This means that unlike the Peak District or Lake District there is a lack of through inter-urban bus and train services in the heartland of the AONB, and whilst the West coast main line and M6/A6 lie to the west, there is only one settlement of any size close to the AONB, Garstang, which has good transport links with the outside world. The fairly limited train service between Skipton and Lancaster provides some access to the northern fringes of the AONB, generally some distance away from the best walking routes but with great potential for recreational cycling, whilst a frequent local bus service, the Lune Villager, (service 80, 81A, 81B) provides a direct link between villages in the Lune valley, on the north western edge of the AONB, and Lancaster.
- 4.3 On Sundays, apart from the hourly Lune Villager bus service to Caton, Hornby, Wray and Wennington, the summer-only Leeds-Lancaster service, and a single late morning bus from Settle to Slaidburn and Clitheroe (which return too early to be of any value), the AONB is virtually inaccessible from the north and west.
- 4.4 The exception to this situation is to the south of the AONB, and in particular around the Pendle outlier. The main Ribble Valley corridor, containing the A59 and Ribble Valley (Manchester-Blackburn-Clitheroe) railway enjoy excellent levels of services, as do the communities to the immediate south and east of Pendle Hill.
- 4.5 Not only does the Ribble Valley line offer an excellent hourly train service, seven days a week, from Greater Manchester and east Lancashire towns to Clitheroe, but several high quality bus services, such as the Pendle Witch Way from Manchester, feed into the interchange.
- 4.6 A further welcome development is the recently expanded X80/280 service which now provides a good quality hourly bus link to Clitheroe from Preston and Skipton. Currently this service operates on Sundays between Clitheroe and Preston only, but it is proposed by Lancashire County Council to extend two journeys per day to and from Skipton, also giving a Skipton-Clitheroe Sunday link. This service has yet undeveloped opportunities to access the AONB from key bus stops along the A59 or from linking bus services into the AONB, for example to Waddington or Downham.
- 4.7 This in turn has enabled the development of relatively good bus links into the AONB, most notably focused on Clitheroe, with its award-winning rail-bus interchange. To a lesser extent the towns of Burnley and Nelson can also act as gateways, as both support the weekday Pennine Wayfarer service and the very successful Pendle Witch Hopper, which is a mainly recreational service giving access from Burley, Nelson and Clitheroe into some of the finest fell walking country in the area including Pendle Hill itself.
- 4.8 In recent years, the Hodder Valley with its outstanding network of footpaths and magnificent walking opportunities has benefited from the award winning Bowland Transit network, an integrated network of low floor buses based on Clitheroe Interchange. Regular services (B10) link Clitheroe with Whitewell, Dunsop Bridge, Newton, Slaidburn, Tosside and Settle.

- 4.9 Sadly with the ending of the Rural Bus Challenge Fund grant in 2005, the Bowland Transit network has been severely curtailed, with loss of the weekend service across the Trough of Bowland, to the Three Peaks and towards Beacon Fell, with only a Thursday only market day service (B12) linking Clitheroe with Chipping and village westwards to Garstang.
- 4.10 The only other bus service to penetrate the southern part of the main AONB is the regular No 4 bus between Preston, Longridge and Chipping, which has sadly recently lost its Sunday service, again resulting in this popular village and centre for walks being totally inaccessible on Sundays and Bank Holidays the most popular days for informal recreation.
- 4.11 In terms of available Community Transport provision into and through the AONB, there are four CT-style operations in the vicinity of the AONB, namely the Skipton Community Transport Little Red Bus which operates in the Settle-Hellifield area, Bentham Community Transport who operate the Bentham shared taxi service, the Ribble Valley Rider, and Burnley Employment Shuttle Transport - known as BEST.
- 4.12 The main focus of attention of all four CT operations is providing essential local access opportunities for local residents who suffer some degree of mobility problem that makes them unable to use conventional public transport for shopping, hospital visits, doctors' surgeries and other "essential" needs. The general view of all four operators is that there is currently little or no capacity to deal with visitor transport needs. In fact weekend services are not generally offered because of lack of staff, volunteer or other resources. Of the four CT providers, only Bentham, with its shared taxi would seem to offer scope for some demand responsive journeys for visitors into the AONB, an opportunity which might be best developed in partnership with the newly established Lancaster-Skipton Community Rail Partnership. Most interesting, perhaps is BEST, which seeks to establish a social enterprise company which conceivably could become both a broker and even operator of services into Bowland AONB. This would seem to be a promising avenue to explore, especially in view of the possible funding problems being experienced by conventional rural bus operation in rural Lancashire.

## Public Transport Gateways into the AONB

- 4.13 In order to have a clearer understanding of how the existing public transport network of services that access into the AONB is meeting or has the potential to meet the needs of people without their own transport, a detailed audit has been carried out.
- 4.14 This is based on the concept of a number of key **Public Transport to Gateways** into the AONB, which in turn serve key nodes.
- 4.15 A "Gateway" is a town or larger village and service centre within the AONB Buffer Zone which is readily accessible by rail or frequent bus service from larger centres of population, with good interchange facilities, and from where there are direct services, without changing, into the AONB.
- 4.16 **Principal Gateways** are invariably larger towns or cities which are served by the national rail and coach network, as well as being large catchment communities and service centres for the AONB in their own right. It can be generally assumed that travel information to these Gateways can easily be obtained by potential visitors, but indications in literature and on web sites on travel opportunities, together with specific information links, from these centres to specific destinations within the AONB is generally needed. Persuading day and staying visitors to travel to and from these key catchments by existing, readily available public transport services is therefore a priority for the AONB. The Gateway concept also allows for information to be targeted to specific geographic areas – for example there is little point in offering residents of Nelson details of the Lune Village network, likewise most people living or arriving in Lancaster heading for the AONB will have little interest in the Pendle Wayfarer.

- 4.17 **Secondary Gateways** are large villages or small towns which are themselves attractive places to visit and to stay and for many visitors offer opportunities to walk and cycle directly into the AONB. They are generally places where travel interchange is available, for example between bus or train or between main inter-urban and rural bus routes, and where waiting times can be used to advantage, for example for refreshments or even time to visit an attraction.
- 4.18 **Public Transport Nodes** are smaller villages and settlements which are served by regular bus or train services from the Gateways and are generally points from which there are good linear or circular walking opportunities, together with some visitor facilities such as an inn, café, and/or accommodation within the AONB. These are generally good places to stay within the AONB without a car, having at least a regular daily weekday service to and from good walking areas, visitor attractions and good links to and from the Gateways.
- 4.19 The attached Appendix lists each of the Principal and Secondary Gateways in turn, together with the Public Transport Nodes they serve. Network maps showing the current network, Sunday network and potential future network are contained in Appendix C.
- 4.20 The **Principal Gateways** for the AONB are Clitheroe, Burnley, Nelson, Preston, Skipton and Lancaster. The **Secondary Gateways** are Longridge, Garstang, Bentham and Settle. The suggested Public Transport Nodes are listed with each Gateway. Clitheroe, because of its attractive setting close to the AONB at the hub of a local transport network, also shares many of the functions of a Secondary Gateway, and for that reason is an excellent base from which to explore the southern part of the AONB

## Conclusions from the audit

- 4.21 It is clear that in terms of being able to access the AONB without a car, by far the best way to do so is to and from Clitheroe, both in terms of its excellent public transport links with the outside world, but also the choice of destinations that can be served from its manned and visitor friendly interchange. In many ways Clitheroe with its excellent range of visitor services is the ideal place to stay to explore Bowland without a car, allowing the visitor to be confident that there is a very good choice of days out by bus and on foot on every day of a stay in the town.
- 4.22 Especially important in terms of car free access to the AONB therefore is the available access to the Hodder Valley from Clitheroe, and the many outstanding walking and cycling opportunities around Slaidburn and Gisburn Forest. Slaidburn, with its village inn, shops, youth hostel, B&Bs and other facilities is a key node, which thanks to the existing B10 bus service offers a range of linear walks for anyone staying in the village.
- 4.23 Sadly a lack of links to the west, especially to Chipping and the Beacon Fell area, limit opportunities from Clitheroe to a single day of the week, though Chipping village – a very good visitor centre has excellent weekday access from Longridge and Preston, and given the good choice of easy weekday travel links between Preston and Clitheroe, there are many first rate opportunities available for both staying and day visitors for linear walks between Chipping and the Hodder Valley via these two particular Principal Gateways.
- 4.24 Burnley and Nelson both score equally highly in terms of access to the Pendle Outlier, which suggests real opportunity to encourage access to the “countryside on your doorstep” for many communities in East Lancashire.
- 4.25 Settle however is totally reliant on the continuation of the B10 Bowland Transit bus which offers good access to Tosside, Gisburn Forest and the Hodder Valley, as well as the Ribble and Wenning Valleys; this is very much an area which shares an equal pull of attraction to and from the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Indeed for walkers, walking is very much easier and more spectacular into the nearby Yorkshire Dales with direct paths

into spectacular limestone country from Settle, Giggleswick and Clapham stations. Only Bentham and Wennington share the opportunities for walkers on a more equal basis.

- 4.26 However for cyclists the quieter roads of the Wenning Valley and the two spectacular mountain passes of Bowland Knots and Cross of Greets to Slaidburn offers challenging routes which are as fine as anything in the north of England. Further west the new North Lancashire Bridleway is easily accessible from the Lancaster – Caton cycleway or from Wennington or Bentham Stations and offers outstanding opportunities for mountain biking, easily accessible from Lancaster or off the Lancaster-Skipton train service. The morning shared taxi bus from Bentham could have value for walkers, for example to speed access between Bentham or Wennington Stations and Salter Fell.
- 4.27 Lancaster offers good bus and rail access into the north west corner of the AONB, but again away from the Lune Valley villages cycling opportunities are probably more attractive than walking, given the distances into the heartland of the AONB from main transport links, though there is very pleasant walking along and around the Lune and Wenning valleys off the service 80 bus in particular, and also from Wennington and Bentham stations.
- 4.28 Garstang, though easily accessible from both Preston and Lancaster by bus, has no rail access, which means that there is no cycle-carrying facility. It is also separated from the AONB by the considerable physical barrier of the M6 motorway. This limits the town's value for cyclists from outside the area who are more likely to use the quieter lanes from either the outskirts of Lancaster or Preston to access the AONB. The limited weekday Garstang Eight bus service to Calder Vale and Oakenclough is likely to be of no more than occasional local value for walkers.
- 4.29 In summary, there seems little point in trying to establish new or improved transport links in those areas where there is currently little provision or demand away from the larger centres of population. Clitheroe on the other hand offers by far the best opportunities to attract new visitors as a Principal Gateway to the AONB.
- 4.30 The highest priority in any sustainable travel strategy must be to promote what already exists, to increase passenger numbers on existing train and bus services and thereby to help sustain local networks.
- 4.31 Given the outstanding walking and sightseeing opportunities within the Hodder Valley, top priority therefore is to build on this existing network by promoting such services as the B10 and even B12 in all promotional activity and publications. This could also, by extension, lead to the development of Slaidburn and Gisburn Forest with its many walking and cycling opportunities as core car-free destinations within the AONB, though this may be dependent on developing some kind of demand responsive or shared taxi transport link between the Forest and Slaidburn village with its B10 bus service.
- 4.32 Further extensions westwards from Clitheroe towards Chipping and the Trough of Bowland would also seem to be a priority.
- 4.33 Complementary to this network is the Pendle Wayfarer and Pendle Witch Hopper (Sunday) network, both in serving the key gateways of Nelson and Burnley with their large population of households without access to a car (easily accessed from such communities as Colne and Accrington) but which on weekdays perhaps need to be more clearly be linked with services for visitors to and from Clitheroe. There are currently proposals on Sundays to augment the successful Witch hopper (70,71) services by extending the service to Slaidburn, (with links at Clitheroe) thus opening up many more walking and sightseeing opportunities for people living in the Burnley and Nelson area to the Hodder Valley.
- 4.34 The existence of a newly created Community Rail Partnership along the Skipton to Lancaster railway line, supported by the operator, Northern Trains, and an existing,

energetic voluntary group, the Lancaster Rail Users Group (LASRUG) offers the opportunity for the more effective promotion of walks, cycle rides and bus links to and from the three key stations along the line - Wennington, Bentham and Clapham - in terms of access into the northern part of the AONB.

- 4.35 It is also worth stressing that there already exists an excellent recreational bus ticket, the Ribble Valley Ranger, valid on almost all local bus services in the Ribble Valley without any time restriction. This is cheap enough at £4 (families £8) to compete with the marginal cost of motoring, but again this ticket remains relatively unknown outside a small coterie of regular bus users. Currently the ticket is not available or valid on the Pendle Wayfarer service, though it is on the Sunday Witch Hopper into Clitheroe.
- 4.36 Clitheroe also has sufficient high quality bus and rail links between other East Lancashire towns to become the hub of what might become a major “outreach” project working with disadvantaged communities in East Lancashire towns, including ethnic minorities. This will require perhaps a series of dedicated services from key communities complete with on-board couriers of “Bus Buddies”, which, to be effective in the long term, need to “ghost” scheduled bus routes and services via Clitheroe so that users can easily gain sufficient confidence and motivation to transfer to the regular service bus network after the project is completed
- 4.37 If the southern parts of the AONB offer excellent, public transport to accessible walking opportunities for local communities and visitors alike, the northern part lends itself to an expansion of perhaps less intensive cycling activity. There are already good cycle hire facilities in existence in Settle and Lancaster, both linked by train services and with the Lancaster-Caton Cycle path, the North Lancashire Bridleway and a highly attractive network of quiet lanes, including the Chipping Quiet Lane network. Promoted cycle routes and off-road routes, and cycling and short break cycle holidays accessible by train from either Settle or Lancaster can therefore be marketed as a key sustainable tourism activity in the AONB.

## 5 Key Actions

5.1 The Forest of Bowland AONB has identified a number of wider outcomes to promote the delivery of a more sustainable approach to tourism in the Forest of Bowland whereby:

- Visitors to Bowland do not need to bring their car with them
- There is reduced congestion and less unsightly parking
- Sustainable tourism supports, and relies on, a network of sustainable visitor transport
- Both tourism and transport contribute to the rural economy

5.2 A number of specific actions emerge from the research critical to the development of sustainable tourism in the Forest of Bowland and the delivery of these outcomes. Developing projects to deliver some of these actions forms the basis of chapter 6. These actions are identified in the sections below.

### Delivery of effective promotion and marketing

5.3 Effective promotion and marketing to broaden the base of visitors to the Forest of Bowland is important. This applies generally to raise the numbers of tourists regardless of their means of travel, and specifically those using sustainable modes both in arriving in the area and whilst visiting. Effective promotion and marketing is one of the key areas that the AONB can influence travel within the Bowland area.

### Identification of sustainable funding mechanisms

5.4 Sustainable long term funding is crucial to the development of transport provision for tourists and local communities alike. The identification of funding partners whose objectives have common or complementary direction with those of the AONB is a priority.

5.5 Succession strategies for services operated through pump priming funding such as Rural Bus Challenge are required as operating costs and subsidy levels for rural public transport services are always likely to be such as to leave such services under threat if relying on existing local authority budgets. These budgets are under constant and ever increasing pressure.

5.6 The pressure on local authority subsidised service budgets, and the need to secure long term sustainable funding requires that a broader examination of public funding sources is undertaken. Many transport services are funded and/or operated by public bodies involved in the provision of health and social care. There is an opportunity to broaden the base of these services and integrate such services to make best use of public funding for transport across the Bowland area.

5.7 The development of social enterprises to deliver public transport services, building on the experience of elsewhere in the UK and of more recent local examples is worthy of further consideration. Social enterprises have been supported through legislative change, and are a form of delivery that is being developed in the Bowland context.

5.8 The combination of effective promotion and marketing with the identification of sustainable funding will underpin the key deliverables that the AONB can influence. These, in the short term, include cycle tourism and the retention of existing public transport that underpins all sustainable access to the heart of Bowland. Other medium to long term actions are also described below.

### Cycling

5.9 Cycling is a sustainable, and relatively benign, form of leisure activity that already attracts significant numbers of visitors to the Forest of Bowland. The user surveys identify that the majority of these are local, and are day visitors.

- 5.10 This strong local market potential presents an opportunity for growth in the short term, both for mountain biking and more relaxed versions of the activity. The development of more technical mountain biking activities would require significant investment and has no proven market from available data, and therefore should be regarded as a long term idea, rather than something that can be delivered in the short to medium term.

#### Retention of existing public transport in the Forest of Bowland

- 5.11 This is crucial to the future delivery of sustainable tourism in the Forest of Bowland. There are real threats to the future of a number of existing public transport services in the Forest of Bowland. Were some of these services to be withdrawn, the ideals of sustainable tourism will go with them, as there will be no possible transport into the heart of the Bowland area without them.
- 5.12 A high priority in any sustainable travel strategy for Bowland therefore must be to promote and retain the network that already exists, to increase patronage on existing train and bus services to and from the AONB and thereby to help sustain the local networks and infrastructure that local communities need and use to access shops, work, leisure and education facilities. This is something that the AONB team can help do in partnership with Lancashire County Council transport teams.

#### Development of Clitheroe as the principal gateway for sustainable tourism

- 5.13 Clitheroe offers by far the best opportunities to attract new visitors as a Principal Gateway to the AONB. Given the outstanding walking and sightseeing opportunities within the Hodder Valley, the opportunity exists to build on the existing network from Clitheroe by promoting such services as the B10 and even B12.
- 5.14 Other important existing links to promote from Clitheroe include the 5 to Downham, Hurst Green and Ribchester and the C2 and C5 to Sawley, Grindleton and Waddington as well as the Sunday Witch Hopper (70/71). Further extensions, perhaps also on a demand-responsive basis westwards from Clitheroe towards Chipping, Beacon Fell and the Trough of Bowland are worthy of examination.

#### Provision of demand responsive and flexible transport

- 5.15 The experiences of developing and delivering demand responsive and flexible public transport services in other rural areas amply demonstrate the ability of such services to help develop tourist markets. At the same time these services support, and are supported by social transport networks. Good practice from elsewhere in the UK and beyond could be applied to the Bowland situation, and examined in terms of adaptation of the existing services if necessary or development of new services in the medium to long term. The ability of such services to deliver social transport aspirations means that any such services in the future are likely to be promoted by Lancashire County Council, and could be enhanced by promotion of their use for tourist transport in co-ordination with the AONB team.

#### Longer term aspirations

- 5.16 In addition to the delivery of these primary actions, there are two activities with more ambitious goals that may be worth pursuing in the longer term. Firstly, the development of sustainable tourism based on the green traveller modes such as walking, cycling and public transport is an aspiration. The present levels of car dependent tourism suggest that the initial market for this activity is small, but the broadening of the base of visitors to the Forest of Bowland could warrant the development of some specific sustainable transport initiatives that promote sustainable tourism in the longer term.
- 5.17 Providing reasonably affordable, reasonably accessible public transport into the AONB for people living in the main local catchment towns and cities of Lancashire, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire is important, especially for relatively deprived or socially

excluded groups within these communities. These groups include significant black and ethnic minority communities.

- 5.18 A number of social exclusion diversity studies relating to countryside access have shown that transport is the major factor in non-participation in countryside recreation. This is much about confidence and access to information as it is about service provision, and changing perception of users is as much about giving and gaining confidence as running buses. As the Dales Experience bus project in the Yorkshire Dales demonstrates, outreach work with communities, especially with deprived or ethnic minority communities, is essential to create this confidence, and this has to be linked to specially tailored services to build new markets for disadvantaged communities in catchment towns.
- 5.19 Clitheroe has sufficient high quality bus and rail links between other East Lancashire towns to provide the opportunity to become the hub of what might become an “outreach” project working with disadvantaged communities in East Lancashire towns, including ethnic minorities.

## 6 Delivering sustainable transport for tourism in Bowland

### Delivering the actions

- 6.1 The actions above will be delivered through a range of interventions. The research has identified a range of potential projects for delivery in the short and medium term, some of which will contribute to delivery of a number of actions.
- 6.2 The potential projects are described in detail below, starting with the vital activity of effective promotion and marketing and concluding with a project to help ensure the equally vital identification of sustainable funding.

### Marketing Initiatives

- 6.3 A properly costed marketing plan needs to be adopted and implemented through a partnership of key stakeholders in the tourism and transport industries if the AONB is to:

*...raise the profile of sustainable travel and awareness among existing and potential visitors and the tourism industry of what is currently available to encourage higher levels of use amongst all visitors.*

- 6.4 In particular the plan needs to:
- Encourage new visitors to the AONB without access to their own transport;
  - Persuade existing car borne visitors to switch mode for all or part of their visit to the AONB;
  - Support tourism and transport enterprises to develop new initiatives to attract the key target markets which are most likely to use green travel.
- 6.5 It will be essential that implementation of the marketing plan is undertaken through partnership with the local tourism industry, transport providers and other key stakeholders such as the local authorities. Local businesses are particularly important as they are usually in front line contact with visitors and in a position to influence behaviour. It may be possible to use an existing tourism forum within the AONB partnership to progress the delivery of a green travel marketing plan further.
- 6.6 Key elements of the marketing campaign should include:

#### The redesign of key promotional and information tools

- 6.7 Information relating to the Forest of Bowland AONB, including key leaflets, newsletters, events publications, accommodation guides and the website needs to promote a stronger green transport message. This will need to be undertaken sensitively, whilst tapping into growing public awareness of environmental issues. Promotion of green travel will however, only be effective if it is comprehensively tied into the Forest Of Bowland product. Green transport opportunities need to be presented as part of the experience that Bowland offers its visitors, whether this is challenging cycle rides, or the chance to enjoy a linear walk, with a scenic bus trip back to a parked car, or railway station.

#### Green Travel Guide

- 6.8 A current gap in information provision for the AONB is suggestions of where you can go by bus, or where to stay if you are coming to Bowland by public transport or by bike. Whilst it may be difficult with the current uncertainty about the future of the bus network, it is strongly recommended that once this has been resolved, work is progressed on a green

travel guide to Bowland, featuring ideas of walks, places to visit and stay using the public transport network. This publication should include easy to read timetables, a map of the network, and information if appropriate on how to reach a destination, or start of a walk from the relevant bus stop or railway station.

- 6.9 It is possible that this information could be included within or published in co-ordination with the Bowland “Explorer Guide” currently in development.

#### Raising the profile in information and visitor centres of sustainable travel opportunities

- 6.10 Information and visitor centres in and around the AONB need to raise the profile of green transport alternatives by more prominent displays of bus timetables and other publications supporting the green transport message. It is recommended that information staff are offered the opportunity to attend travel awareness days, to better equip them to advise on sustainable travel options and an opportunity to explain why this issue is of such importance to visitor management in the AONB. These sessions should include a trip using public transport, as well as information on key services, ticketing, location of key bus stops and other sustainable transport initiatives. Training on how to access transport information on the internet could also be included.

#### Business Awareness Campaign

- 6.11 Word of mouth is a strong marketing tool and the tourism industry has a key role to play in encouraging visitors to use sustainable transport. Awareness days similar to those run for information staff, should be provided. In addition information packs should be developed to equip tourism businesses to respond to enquiries or actively promote opportunities. These packs should be designed to accommodate existing literature and where appropriate relevant timetables for use at the front desk or in bedroom browsers. It may be possible to co-ordinate or complement such awareness days with existing awareness training offered to tourism businesses as part of the Sense of Place programme.

#### New Business Opportunities

- 6.12 Opportunities exist to develop additional business by developing the green travel market. However, for this to be progressed tourism businesses need to get a better understanding of the needs of the market and find mechanisms to develop new partnerships with transport operators or others involved in sustainable recreation. It is therefore recommended that part of the function of the marketing partnership is to look at ideas for joint initiatives, by raising awareness of the services and facilities required by those using green transport. Possible initiatives which might emerge from such discussions include:

- Joint ticketing between transport operator and visitor attraction;
- Money off deals for green travellers in local cafes or pubs;
- Luggage carriage facilities for walkers and cyclists;
- Accommodation providers willing to meet guests at key bus stops or stations;
- Short break packages.

#### Using the local media

- 6.13 The AONB should adopt a more proactive media campaign aimed at raising the opportunities which do exist to use sustainable travel to the Forest of Bowland. Opportunities should be sought to place stories in the specialist press including walking and outdoor magazines, and lifestyle magazines. Local press activity should focus on raising awareness amongst local residents within the day visitor catchment area of opportunities for linear walks using local transport, the experience bus, and stories to reassure local tourism businesses that promoting green travel to the Forest of Bowland is delivering new business opportunities. The Bowland Festival offers an important opportunity to promote the green travel message.

## Public Transport Proofing of Visitor Facilities, Countryside Access and Events in Bowland

- 6.14 An initial marketing activity and a key principle of environmentally sustainable visitor management within the Forest of Bowland AONB must be to ensure that as much of the AONB is as accessible to visitors (including visitor and heritage attractions) as possible by public as well as by private transport - on at least one day per week. This should not only be a question of suitable, appropriately timed, affordable bus, shared taxi or train services being readily available for visitors, but their availability and how and where to get specific detailed travel information to use them needs to be promoted in all literature, website and media activity. This should include access by bus and train to all of the most popular locations and major countryside events, even if this includes a short walk from bus or rail station to the main attraction entrance or meeting point.
- 6.15 There are two basic reasons for this. First and foremost is the issue of inclusion. The AONB is, by definition, a national resource, equally accessible to everyone, and every effort should be made to enable people of all physical abilities, ethnic background, age and income to access as much of the AONB and as many events within the AONB as possible.
- 6.16 Around a third of the population of the UK does not have access to their own transport, and in the more deprived wards within the heavily populated fringe East Lancashire towns of the AONB, this percentage is higher.
- 6.17 The second reason for encouraging sustainable travel is to give visitors a choice of travel mode so that they can be encouraged to use the more environmentally friendly option, thereby saving up to 16kg of CO<sub>2</sub> on a typical 100km out and return trip, as well as reducing noise pollution, congestion, accident risk and parking demand.
- 6.18 Realistically, modal shift is not likely to be a major output in Bowland given the fact that for many people travel by car is generally by far the most convenient and a less expensive option than local buses and trains. Nevertheless, the message that visitors have a realistic travel choice and a car does not have to be used to access at least some of the most popular parts of Bowland is an important one. This should form a key element of all promotion work to and within the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 6.19 By far the best way of achieving this is to “bus proof” the marketing of all key countryside areas and visitor attractions – including self guided walk publications and guides, popular footpath routes (the Tolkien Way in the Ribble Valley, is a good example of how this can be done), access areas, heritage features, attractive villages, as well as the location and timing of events. This means that wherever possible events in the Forest of Bowland should be arranged so that an individual choosing to arrive by bus can arrive at the attraction, event location or within easy walking distance (less than 1km by footpath or minor road with a pavement), for events at a time which is at least a few minutes before the start of the event, to allow for late running buses or trains.
- 6.20 In practice, and based on current timetables, this provision can be provided, at least on weekdays and on some Sundays and Bank Holidays, to a great deal of Bowland AONB. This includes several villages (Barley, Newchurch, Downham) within the Pendle outlier, as well as along the Hodder valley from Clitheroe and Slaidburn, and other important fringe villages such as Chipping, Hornby, Bentham, Clapham, and Garstang.
- 6.21 It is noteworthy that the AONB Countryside Officers already have a very good track record of ensuring events, whenever possible, are accessible by bus. In spite of this passenger numbers arriving even on advertised links is extremely poor. This reflects the lack of a bus using culture in Bowland, even among people who do not have access to a car. This, as well as physical barriers, prevents people benefiting from the opportunities in the AONB available to them.

- 6.22 A combination of good marketing linked to outreach work, and, as is suggested below, the development of “flagship” Experience bus type services can help to build up a strong bus-using culture among target audiences in Bowland’s catchment towns. Such a culture, once established (or re-established) will be self-perpetuating, and indeed help generate income on both weekday and weekend services, thus supporting the rural service infrastructure in so doing, a key principle of sustainable tourism.
- 6.23 Public transport proofing can consequently contribute to the retention of existing transport services, and to developing Clitheroe as the gateway to Bowland.

## Sustainable Transport Provision for the Bowland Festival

- 6.24 In a real sense, these general principles need to be applied even more rigorously to the specific events that form the Bowland Festival, where Festival organisers have a greater degree of control compared with events organised by independent bodies.
- 6.25 The task of going through a preliminary list of events and seeing which, perhaps with minor adjustments, can fit into the existing public transport network, is a fairly straightforward task which has already been undertaken by the consultants as part of the current Bowland AONB study.
- 6.26 The initial results are somewhat disheartening. Of the 77 events so far planned for June 2007 only 14 – less than 20% - are conceivably accessible by public transport. Even some of these events require a long walk to or from the bus stop and perhaps a long wait for return transport. For example the start time of two of the walks technically miss the arrival of the B10 bus at Dunsop Bridge by just two minutes.
- 6.27 The basic problem is that in any rural area, but especially in Bowland which has limited public transport provision outside the key corridors, it is important to start with the public transport network to fit events in rather than the other way round. There are many opportunities where it would be possible to ensure events meet the arrival of buses such as the B10, Pendle Wayfarer, Witch Hopper, Lune Villager and other useful (usually County Council sponsored) bus services as well as trains at Wennington or Bentham.
- 6.28 However there will be events which cannot be planned to fit in with existing public transport provision for a variety of reasons. This might be because they are to take place at popular locations – e.g. Beacon Fell Country Park – which have absolutely no public transport, or areas where services are so poor or sporadic that they are unlikely to be used even by the most committed public transport users. There are also events which by their nature, such as evening safaris or early morning bird watches, are going to take place at times where there are no buses available.
- 6.29 In these circumstances a decision has to be taken whether or the event is likely to be popular enough to justify either a special conventional bus service, or some form of shared taxi or even courtesy car service, probably on a pre-booked basis, from the nearest public transport node. This is an issue to examine for the 2008 Festival.
- 6.30 However, for the right kind of Festival event, provision of a dedicated bus service can have many major advantages. This may include the promotion of higher profile popular events likely to appeal to families and younger people in catchment communities, where the AONB is keen to deliver a strong conservation or social inclusion message, especially to people living in the fringe conurbations.
- 6.31 This will require the chartering of a suitable vehicle for the day from a suitable local operator. The vehicle could start its journey at suitable pick up point close to target urban communities e.g. in Burnley or Nelson, but be timed to meet passengers off the X43 Witch Way express bus service from Manchester. Services could call at Clitheroe Interchange to pick up more rail and bus passengers, before heading into the AONB to the chosen venue.

- 6.32 The bus itself would act as a mobile information and visitor reception centre, with AONB or volunteer staff on the bus being able to give visitors pre-visit verbal and printed information about the AONB, the Festival and the events themselves.
- 6.33 Once at the location, for example for an all day countryside event, the bus could shuttle between the event site and either outlying car parks or Clitheroe Interchange to offer part and full day out opportunities for visitors, and visitor transport, for example for a linear guided walk.
- 6.34 Depending on actual route and schedules, and using a suitable local operator, ideally with a narrow, low floor vehicle suitable for the narrower minor roads within the AONB, cost of a vehicle for the day is likely to be of the order of £350-£400.
- 6.35 If it was decided to offer this kind of service say for 8 dates during the 2008 Festival, the net operational cost would be in the order of £2,800 - £3,000 (assuming up to £400 income). There would also be publicity costs, though some of these would be covered by normal Festival publicity that would highlight the special bus facility with times and fares. Efforts should be made to make this a key feature in media releases, and adverts in the local press.
- 6.36 It should be possible to secure some kind of sponsorship, which might take the form of on and off bus advertising for the Festival. The major urban bus operator in the East Lancashire area, Transdev (owners of Lancashire United and Burnley & Pendle) would be possible partners (though this would entail higher bus costs up to £450-£500 per day), and this could also result in the offer of through ticketing from points as far away as Bolton, Rawtenstall, Keighley and Manchester from Mainline bus services to the Bowland network.
- 6.37 Providing public transport to Bowland Festival events can contribute to developing Clitheroe as the gateway into Bowland. The encouragement of use of public transport to special events such as the Bowland Festival provides could help to develop a culture of public transport use in new markets, helping in the long term to contribute to the long term viability of public transport services in the area. In the longer term, the Bowland Festival may be used as a launch pad for car free tourism initiatives.

## Cycling in Bowland

- 6.38 Cycling for leisure in Bowland, as identified earlier, has an existing market that already attracts significant numbers of visitors to the Forest of Bowland. There is opportunity in the short term to co-ordinate and promote cycling activities and build upon existing successes in the area.
- 6.39 There are already many cycle routes throughout the Forest of Bowland AONB advertised on the many leaflets and route guides available (a selection is included in Appendix D). Therefore it would not seem necessary to invest in the development of new routes in the short term, simply in the promotion of existing routes.
- 6.40 As confirmed by the visitor surveys most cyclists in the Forest of Bowland AONB come from the local region. The calibre of routes is such that it is unlikely that many experienced cyclists will be drawn from far afield in the short term, especially when considering competition from other established cycling (and especially mountain biking centres) in the Peak District, Pennines, and the Borders. Gisburn Forest, where longer term potential for more technical mountain biking may exist, is managed by the Forestry Commission so their backing would be required for any improvement or development work on the mountain biking trails in the forest.

### Co-ordinated short term marketing

- 6.41 Therefore the main area for focussing any marketing initiatives to attract cyclists into Bowland should be into the established local markets such as towns and cities like

Lancaster, Preston, Burnley and Blackpool, with a medium to longer term aim of attracting leisure cyclists (from a range of sectors including families and touring cyclists) from further afield from 2008 onwards.

- 6.42 Lancaster has been awarded Cycling Demonstration town status by the Department for Transport and Cycling England. They have been granted a share of up to £17 million funding to promote cycling. There would be some excellent marketing opportunities here to encourage cyclists from the Lancaster area into the AONB, and to encourage the use of Lancaster as a gateway into Bowland for cyclists.
- 6.43 Several days and events are already organised locally to promote cycling including:

#### T6.1 Existing cycle events 2007

| Date                       | Event                                | Details   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 18 – 20 May                | Craven Cycling Festival              | Organised rides, bike hire, races, mountain bike races, market, cycling films       |
| 2 June                     | 2move festival in Preston            | Details to be announced   |
| 16 – 24 June               | National Bike Week                   | Series of events throughout the country, several in the Forest of Bowland area      |
| Throughout July and August | Cyclefest Pendle and East Lancashire | Series of races, mountain biking events, family rides, cycle shows and guided rides |

- 6.44 For 2007, the established events later in the summer such as the National Bike Week and the Pendle Cyclefest would be good opportunities to get involved in marketing and promotions at events already running with a target audience.
- 6.45 There are also several active cycling clubs and organisations in the area offering a range of services. The Pendle Forest Cycling Club appears to be an active club with many rides organised in the area. The Settle Cycle Hire Company offers bike hire and guided rides in the area as well as multi day trips with accommodation included in YHA or B&Bs. Their website is the promisingly named [www.cyclebowland.com](http://www.cyclebowland.com).
- 6.46 These activities show the depth of cycling there is to be enjoyed in the forest of Bowland AONB and the wealth of knowledge there is in the area to be 'tapped into' for future promotions.

#### The North Bowland (Lune-Ribble) Cycling Corridor

- 6.47 The northern parts of the Forest of Bowland offer significant opportunities to provide new and improved routes in the medium to longer term, either through better co-ordinated marketing of existing routes, or by the development of better quality facilities and new signed routes.
- 6.48 The Lune, Wenning and Ribble valleys between Settle and Lancaster are linked by the relatively underutilised Skipton to Lancaster railway line, which at most times of the day and year, has adequate space to carry cycles. The route has a number of key local stations close to or within the AONB at Hellifield, Long Preston, Giggleswick, Settle (on the Settle-Carlisle line) Clapham, Bentham and Wennington and would act as a suitable gateway for cyclists into the area. There are three existing cycle hire centres at Settle, Austwick (DalesBridge Centre) and Lancaster to allow people to arrive by train and bus and hire a cycle for the day, with the possibility of onward or return travel by train.

- 6.49 It is also worth noting that the train operator, Northern Trains, has just launched a new cycling policy, and it would be timely to influence this policy to ensure both the Skipton-Lancaster Line and the Ribble Valley Line (Manchester-Clitheroe) are included in the selected lines for leisure cycle development. This might enable cyclists to travel between Clitheroe, Giggleswick/Settle and Lancaster/Wennington/Bentham stations with a single Bike-Rail ticket system, or enjoy cycle hire concessions with a valid rail ticket. This is an option to also be pursued with the recently established Skipton-Lancaster Community Rail Partnership.
- 6.50 This area of relatively low-lying countryside between the high fells of Bowland and the limestone peaks of the Yorkshire Dales lies mainly within the Forest of Bowland AONB, and is characterised by a network of quiet, gently undulating roads, which offer the cyclist spectacular views of the surrounding fells.
- 6.51 For stronger and more adventurous cyclists, this network also links to the two high moorland passes over Bowland Knotts from Clapham or Cross of Greet from Bentham into the Hodder Valley and Slaidburn. Mountain bikers have a fine route in the north between Hornby and Slaidburn over the Hornby Road, which now forms part of the North Lancashire Bridleway. These routes also link into the Gisburn Forest with its extensive network of mountain bike routes. There is a direct off-road route from central Lancaster along the disused Lancaster-Wennington railway, now the popular Lune Valley Cycle Way, as far as Crook of Lune.
- 6.52 Given the excellence of the opportunities for both relatively gentle and more challenging cycling and mountain biking, there would seem to be a real opportunity to develop and promote the northern part of the AONB as an area of cycling excellence. This could link in with the potential to build on existing cycle hire facilities in the Bowland area, giving opportunity to both create activities off the B10 bus into Gisburn Forest (linked by bridleway) and to offer short break cycling and walking holidays both with the YHA at Slaidburn Hostel and at Stephen Park in Gisburn Forest. This could also tie in closely with any outreach style activity that might be developed with deprived urban communities and indeed the development of a possible “Experience Bus” programme.
- 6.53 DalesBridge Centre is also actively involved in developing a range of residential courses and holidays within the AONB and DalesBridge and would be eager to work with the AONB in encouraging green travel, with either courtesy car pick ups from Settle, Clapham or Giggleswick stations, or future demand responsive variation of the NYCC 581 bus service which operates on weekdays between Settle and Ingleton. DalesBridge is also willing to operate as a “park-and-cycle” facility to encourage visitors to leave their cars and either cycle or walk from the Centre.

#### Medium to long term development of cycling

- 6.54 Bringing together these many different opportunities for cycle tourism in the AONB must be a priority. The many different initiatives currently under way could be effectively brought together and co-ordinated by the AONB. This includes the many new developments in Gisburn Forest, the Bowland Experience, potential cycle hire development at Slaidburn, cycle hire at and promotion at Settle, the Country Lanes and related cycle/park and ride and accommodation development at Dalesbridge, the Lancaster-Skipton Community Rail Partnership, the new Northern Rail Cycle Strategy, and the North Lancashire Bridleway.
- 6.55 A key role for the AONB is to act as a catalyst to bring together these different bodies and agencies for common benefit. We therefore suggest that the AONB take the initiative, perhaps for Summer 2008, to launch what we have provisionally entitled Cycle Bowland. This is also something that the newly established Dales & Bowland CIC could assist with.
- 6.56 This project might initially take the form of a Day Conference based within or close to the AONB which would bring together national and local cycle and tourism specialists, perhaps with a partner such as the Institute of Transport & Tourism at the University of

Central Lancashire. A key output from such a Conference would be the setting up of a partnership to co-ordinate the promotion of cycle tourism within Bowland, establishing Cycle Bowland as a national brand, linked to the setting up of accommodation/luggage carrying packages, and developing a strong public transport focus to access the area. This should be linked to both Northern and to Virgin Trains (who operate both to Lancaster and Preston) both in terms of carrying cycles on trains and, specifically, travel, cycle hire accommodation and detailed information packages which can be promoted to national and international audiences through what is now the leading medium for the cycle market, the web.

## A Bowland Experience Bus

- 6.57 Although “lack of transport” is commonly cited by people on lower incomes and by ethnic minority groups as a reason for not travelling to the countryside, the real reason for many people not visiting the countryside, even where as in parts Bowland convenient services exist, is actually a lack of confidence and often total lack of understanding of how public transport works. This, together with inbuilt assumption that a car is the only means of travel in the countryside, limits visits from these groups, of which there are significant concentrations in the towns neighbouring Bowland (see Appendix B).
- 6.58 This prejudice is perhaps the greatest single barrier to people from lower incomes enjoying the countryside, an example of the dominant car culture actually undermining belief in alternative modes, even for those who for whatever reason do not have access to a car or do not drive.
- 6.59 The only way of overcoming such barriers is by education, through confidence building in a variety of ways. Much can be achieved by high quality publicity and promotional work to get better use of the public transport services that already exist. This can be achieved by engaging the active support of transport operators, visitor attractions and countryside managers, thereby reducing subsidy and safeguarding services, as well as increasing the total numbers of visitors to Bowland with the spending power they bring to the rural economy. Recent research by the Institute of Tourism and Transport in the University of Central Lancashire (to be published Spring 2007) confirms that car-free visitors spend more than visitors who arrive by car.
- 6.60 Experience in the Yorkshire Dales and elsewhere suggests that by far the most effective means of converting non-users to public transport users is by face to face contact and confidence building. The initial success in the Yorkshire Dales National Park of the Dales Experience buses - part of the YDNPA/CNP Mosaic programme – in attracting quite large numbers of people from the Asian communities of Bradford and Keighley to spend a day in the Dales under the guidance of Dales Volunteers, who had never before visited the National Park, is eloquent witness to what can be achieved by the right kind of outreach work combined with good promotion of services.
- 6.61 Using the “Saunterbus” principle of different destinations (see case study in Appendix A), it would be possible to devise a programme of say six attractive days out from East Lancashire towns, each time to one of three contrasting visitor destinations within the AONB. Examples of suitable locations would be Chipping and Beacon Fell, Slaidburn and Gisburn Forest, Downham and Barley. At least two or three events such as an easy “heritage” style visit, a short walk linked to another activity, and a longer guided walk or mountain bike ride would be arranged to give visitors a taste of the Forest Bowland.
- 6.62 The cost of the bus is likely to be in the order of £350-£450. This depends on the size of vehicles used, which in turn may depend on size constraints at the destination, but ideally a standard 45 seater bus. If a 24 seater (e.g. Optare Solo) had to be used, then income would be corresponding lower and passenger numbers would have to be more tightly controlled, probably by some form of pre-booking mechanism.
- 6.63 Fares should be charged which would correspond to the existing Ribble Valley Ranger ticket, which is currently (2006 prices) £4 per adult, £2 child or NoW pass holder, and £8

per family group. With well filled buses this is likely to produce £80 - £100 revenue per larger bus trip or £50 - £60 (allowing for concessions) for the smaller bus journey, which even if a cautious £50 revenue per day estimate is used would indicate a cost net of revenue (assuming the higher charter figure) of over £2,000, plus marketing costs.

- 6.64 There is some element of risk in these estimates, as they assume reasonable patronage of the service. Were the buses not to be well filled costs would rise. Clearly good marketing is necessary to reduce these risks of “failure”, and the cost of comprehensive marketing should not be under estimated. For example, the cost of leaflet production alone, assuming that a wide range of outlets will be supplied and therefore print runs could be in the 1000s rather than 100s, is likely to be in the order of £1000 or more, not accounting for development costs.
- 6.65 All users of the service would be given an information pack which would contain simplified timetables of other days out they can make independently from their town, again using the £4 RVR ticket, so that there is a realistic estimate of costs forms in the minds of users for when they use the service independently. The measure of success for the project should not only be well filled buses on the day, but future use of the Bowland travel network, including the Pendle Wayfarer, the Witch Hopper and B10.
- 6.66 Generally Sundays would be chosen for the day of travel, but in any trial a couple of mid-week school holidays would be chosen. The schemes need to be promoted through local community organisation in the towns of origin (these might include local primary school, residents’ associations, Asian groups, healthy walking groups and church groups), and events may have to be modified to meet particular group needs. There is also merit in having a “Bus Buddy” - someone known to the community groups, who meets them at the town bus stop before the bus arrives and travels with them to help reassure and build up confidence for what for many people will be a totally novel experience. The routes operated should “shadow” existing week day bus routes.
- 6.67 The service would run (as in the Dales and Northamptonshire case studies) as publicly advertised scheduled services. It may be advisable to operate a booking system to ensure that any community group that come are say limited to 30 seats on a 45 seater bus to ensure that there is some space available for the general public. Different groups should be targeted on each service, in essence to encourage repeat visits using the regular scheduled networks.
- 6.68 It is important to stress that the project will only succeed if there is indeed strong commitment from AONB countryside managers, together with good links with local groups within the catchment communities.
- 6.69 It is worth noting that Pendle Tourism is currently in the process of planning a “Witch Trail” tourist bus service, aimed at linking a number of sites in Pendle and the Ribble Valley and beyond which have connections with the history and legends surrounding the 17<sup>th</sup> century Pendle Witches. Whilst details of these services are still not available, as and when this programme is agreed it would be important to liaise closely with Pendle Tourism on this programme to ensure integration and avoid overlap, especially as both programmes could appeal to the general visitor to Bowland as well as targeting local communities.
- 6.70 Such a Bowland “experience” bus would contribute to developing local bus services, and encourage the use of public transport into Bowland from local communities. This can be achieved through the “experience” bus shadowing existing public transport routes, thereby helping to reinforce the potential of public transport and build confidence to enable use of the route on other occasions. This may help to develop a culture of public transport use in new markets, helping in the long term to contribute to the long term viability of public transport services in the area.
- 6.71 The project could be trialled as early as 2007, with a full pilot of the idea in 2008. It is suggested that the viability of such a service is established by targeting a range of groups

including those with established patterns of using buses for accessing the area for tourism, with the development of outreach work operating in parallel to target more deprived communities in due course. It is anticipated a full programme of “experience” buses targeting new user groups could be operating by 2009.

## A Social Enterprise Travel Company for Bowland

- 6.72 One of the most important issues facing rural regeneration in Bowland is the longer term financial sustainability of Bowland’s rural transport networks. Cuts in public transport funding resulting from the end of short term funding schemes such as Rural Bus Challenge and Countryside Agency Rural Transport Partnership Funding, coupled with rising bus operating costs and standstill local authority budgets, is causing real concern for the future of rural bus networks in Bowland and elsewhere. Lancashire County Council may have to make major financial cuts in their 2007-8 rural bus provision, and there is no certainty that the current rural bus network in Bowland will survive intact. Much of the existing rural bus network, including the B10, is at serious risk, if not for summer 2007, then beyond this date.
- 6.73 One solution now being explored by Government is for Community Transport to take a higher role in meeting rural travel needs. Recent research by the Community Transport Association and the Plunkett Foundation suggests that many traditional Community Transport organisations are now taking a much more entrepreneurial approach to transport provision. A more pro-active approach, including employing professional drivers to meet a wider range of travel needs, is being encouraged, thereby creating a high percentage of income through the fare box rather than being heavily reliant on grants. Paradoxically the proposed cross-boundary travel for senior citizens may help this process by allowing operators to claim a percentage of the cost of any new journeys so generated as income from Government funding set aside for this purpose.
- 6.74 The Department for Communities and Local Government has recently identified local and community transport as a growth area in terms of rural delivery.
- 6.75 The concept of a Social Enterprise Company which could provide for the travel needs of visitors and for sustainable tourism as well as meeting the needs of local communities, thereby increasing revenue and adding value to Bowland’s sustainable tourism product, is therefore one which is likely to be of increasing relevance to rural areas where it is difficult to sustain public transport services, including those with a protected landscape such as the Forest of Bowland.
- 6.76 However traditional Community Transport (CT) organisations generally operate solely within one Local Authority District, and rarely cross local authority boundaries. The majority of CT groups also have a clear objective of meeting purely local travel needs for those who, for whatever reasons, have physical or other travel problems.
- 6.77 A Social Enterprise Company, to succeed, would have to be much more entrepreneurial in attracting the potentially higher volumes of urban visitors as well as operating across Local Authority and even Regional boundaries so to do. Essentially such an organisation would have the incentive to create sufficient volume business to support and justify service provision. This could include services designed for leisure as well as utilitarian purposes (the linkages and overlap between the two is not always clearly understood by local authorities and Government agencies), which would operate to link and benefit both urban and rural communities. Such a body, whilst independent, will work closely with local authorities, statutory agencies, private business and voluntary sector organisations on both sides of the rural/urban divide.
- 6.78 No such body currently exists in Bowland. However there is an equal concern about the future of sustainable visitor travel provision within North Yorkshire outside Bowland AONB, but especially within the Yorkshire Dales National Park where the Dales Bus network and certain other local services of value to visitors face significant service cuts and withdrawals, especially at weekends, owing to widening funding shortfalls. This has

led to the active involvement in service provision and marketing of the network by the voluntary sector, most notably the Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users Group (YDPTUG), in partnership with the Yorkshire Dales Society (YDS), a Settle based charity.

- 6.79 This process has been given new urgency by proposed significant cuts, in summer 2007, to the popular Dales Bus network, a situation which has clear parallels with the crisis facing the B10, a service central to the whole issue of sustainable access to the heart of the Forest of Bowland.
- 6.80 One important new development which is currently taking place as a result of a joint initiative by the YDPTUG and YDS is the setting up of a new cross-boundary Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company (CIC). This is a new form of a Social Enterprise Company which would look at ways of developing new services as well as maximising revenue for services currently at risk by increasing fare income through effective, carefully targeted marketing and promotion of bus services and events served by the bus network including guided walks.
- 6.81 Such an organisation could also draw down new funding to meet social inclusion, healthy living, economic regeneration and other objectives within both urban and rural communities. This may be achieved by boosting the use and availability of existing conventional bus services. But it could also look at other options including new demand responsive services to areas not currently served by regular public transport, flexible routing (the "Wigglybus" concept), shared taxis which might carry visitors on outward portions of inward regular hospital and other journeys, as well as creating joint, cross-boundary ticketing and other options. By targeting service provision and marketing to meet the needs of visitors as well as local communities, this can create new revenue streams to safeguard networks and services which can then meet local needs at relatively marginal cost.
- 6.82 Such a broker organisation could also look at a variety of other community needs, such as social services, health including patient transport, and education, to see how both conventional and demand responsive services could meet these needs in ways which would be more cost effective than separate, individually-financed services. Separate services which might result, for example, in identical minibus provision operating within a few minutes of the service bus, both provided at public cost. There would also be scope to carry parcels, prescriptions and even (as used to be done on one Bowland Transit service) such items as school milk. This would all create additional income for the network, as well as reducing carbon emissions by reducing the number of vehicles moving across and through the AONB.
- 6.83 It was recognised within the Yorkshire Dales that to set up a Settle-based CIC to also cover the Forest of Bowland AONB would make excellent sense not only in terms of geographic logistics but in terms of developing links into the AONB. Major catchment communities in both West Yorkshire and in Central and East Lancashire and Manchester strengthen markets for both destinations. Partnerships, including working with the principal rail operator, Northern Rail also help to develop potential markets. Though independent, the new body could liaise closely with Lancashire and North Yorkshire County Councils and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Forest of Bowland AONB JAC in developing and devising new cost-effective visitor-orientated services, as well as protecting important existing core services such as the B10 which are of equal value to local communities as to visitors.
- 6.84 There would also be a strong community focus, working with local tourism organisations and individual visitor attractions to tailor services and operations to visitor needs. This is in addition to meeting local community needs, in some cases by acting as broker between meeting the needs of people seeking informal recreation in the countryside, and transport and other services and facilities already supplied for education, health or other purposes. As an independent, non-governmental organisation, such a body would also be able to attract funds not available to local authorities, and being free from political control, could

pursue work across boundaries and develop strategies to maximise revenue opportunities free of political interference or external control.

- 6.85 Ultimately such an organisation could offer a more stable and guaranteed future for services such as the B10 and the Pendle Wayfarer. Initially the Company's role would be primarily a broker, buying in services from established operators (including local CT operators) and finding ways to market these services, but could also eventually, in the longer term, even become an operator, obtaining the relevant licences and leasing or even purchasing vehicles and hiring professional drivers, thereby preventing the development of any possible operator-led cartels which can lead to excessive cost increases as experienced in some rural areas of the UK.
- 6.86 The new Community Interest Company, known as the Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company has now been established as a "wholly owned subsidiary" of the Settle-based charity the Yorkshire Dales Society, and discussions have already started with Lancashire County Council to look at ways in which the new company can assist the County Council with the development and marketing of the struggling Bowland Transit (B10 and B12) network.
- 6.87 It is suggested that the emergence of such an organisation should be broadly welcomed by the AONB and at an appropriate stage in its evolution, dialogue be established to identify an appropriate level of involvement with the new Company in ways which do not compromise the CIC's independence. This will present opportunity to work with the new body to take forward a priority list of sustainable travel and travel-related sustainable tourism projects to be developed to and within Bowland. High amongst these priorities must be marketing work, both among the local community and visitors, to reverse the current downward passenger trends being suffered by the B10 and other routes.
- 6.88 A Social Enterprise or Community Interest Company will put in place a mechanism to start building sustainable funding streams, which in turn can help secure the long term security of the existing public transport networks.

## 7 A delivery programme

7.1 Vital to the achievement of sustainable transport in the Forest of Bowland, for tourism and for other journey purposes, is a realistic delivery plan. The table below outlines the key partners to engage in delivering the actions, together with indicative timescales and costs.

### T7.1 Delivery programme

| Project   | Indicative cost   | Key partners and stakeholders <sup>1</sup>   | Timescale  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Marketing plan and activities</b>                    | Various dependent upon activities chosen, some of which require an ongoing commitment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism partnership</li> <li>• LCC and NYCC media and communications</li> <li>• Bus operators</li> <li>• Tourism operators</li> </ul>   | Ongoing activities could commence immediately<br>Green travel guide for summer 2008            |
| <b>Public transport proofing</b>                        | Dependent upon level  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lancashire County Council</li> <li>• North Yorkshire County Council</li> <li>• Bus operators</li> <li>• Tourism partnership</li> <li>• Tourism operators</li> </ul>                             | Ongoing  |
| <b>Bowland experience bus</b>                           | Up to £2,100 for 6 trips plus marketing   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus operators</li> <li>• Community groups</li> <li>• Countryside officers</li> </ul>  | Trial in Summer 2007<br>Full pilot Summer 2008<br>Launch with excluded communities 2009        |
| <b>Cycling promotion</b>                                |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lancashire County Council</li> <li>• Cycle hire operators</li> <li>• Cycling England</li> <li>• Local bike festival organisers</li> </ul>   | Throughout the summer, targeting Pendle Bike Fest and maybe National Bike Week 2007<br>Ongoing |
| <b>Cycle Bowland</b>                                    | One Day Conference would cost upward of £5000, less any delegate charges made         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lancashire County Council</li> <li>• Cycle hire operators</li> <li>• Cycling England</li> <li>• Local bike festival organisers</li> </ul>   | 2008   |
| <b>Sustainable transport for Bowland Festival</b>       | £3,000 to serve 8 events plus marketing   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Festival organisers</li> <li>• Bus operators</li> </ul>   | June 2008  |
| <b>Community Interest Company for Bowland and Dales</b> |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yorkshire Dales Society</li> <li>• YDPTUG</li> <li>• CT operators</li> <li>• Commercial bus operators</li> <li>• Lancashire County Council</li> <li>• North Yorkshire County Council</li> </ul> | Established March 2007   |

#### Notes

1. In addition to the Forest of Bowland AONB, which it is assumed will play a role in delivering or partnering in the delivery of all actions.

Appendix A  
Best Practice Case  
Studies

## BAVARIAN FOREST HEDGEHOG BUS

- **Location** Bavaria Forest National Park, south east Germany
- **Purpose:** To reduce the negative impacts of visitor traffic and exhaust emissions in the National Park and to develop car-free tourism networks
- **Lead organisation & partners:** The Bavarian Forest National Park Authority, the Regional Transport Company, the State of Bavaria (Land) Government

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Total Cost</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Capital</b> about £2,000,000 (new bus fleet)</li><li>• <b>Revenue</b> £300,000 per annum</li></ul> |
|-------------------|---|

**Funding:** Capital funding from the State of Bavaria (Land) ; revenue funding from bus fares (£100,000), car park charges and balance from financial subsidies from the Regional Government

### Description of scheme

Major traffic management scheme to close certain roads, to restrict parking on others linked to the development of cycle and walking trails, many of the latter deliberately promoted away from the more ecologically sensitive areas.

A network of environmentally friendly gas powered buses operates, linked to the local train services. Services operate throughout the visitor season, May-October. Both trains and buses carry cycles, including a special bike-bus to the cycle only border crossing into the Czech Republic. Car parks are strategically situated to the bus network and a car park ticket gives discounts on the bus. Bus stops and buses carry the distinctive Hedgehog logo to emphasise the “green transport” aspect of the service.

### Impact of scheme

The summer seasonal bus service is now carrying around 150,000 passengers annually, and this is having a major impact on traffic and traffic pollution in the National Park. Opportunity for both “deep green “ travellers arriving on the rail network or “pale green” using fringe car parks. The Hedgehog bus network is now promoted by local businesses as a key tourism project, with hotels/guest houses advertising the fact that they are served by the route. The National Park is now a major car-free tourist destination.

### What are the lessons for the Forest of Bowland AONB

- Opportunity to integrate traffic management – e.g. Chipping or Downham Quiet Roads” with green tourism.
- Value of promoting the bus network as a core tourism product.
- Use of car park charges to help finance the bus network – and discounts for those with car park tickets.

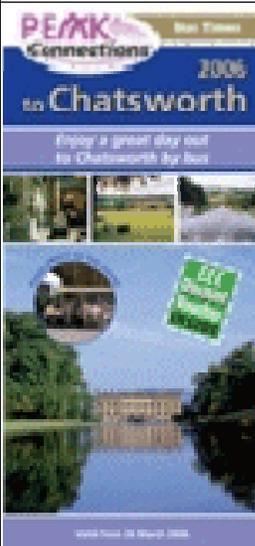
**For Further information:** Bavarian Forest National Park Authority, Grafenau, Bavaria

## PEAK CONNECTIONS

- **Location :** Peak District National Park and surrounding area
- **Purpose:** The development of a marketing campaign to promote recreational public transport to and within the Peak District
- **Lead organisation & partners:** Peak Park Transport Forum a partnership of local authorities and passenger transport executives including the Peak District National Park and Derbyshire County Council

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Total Cost</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capital</b></li> <li>• <b>Revenue</b></li> </ul> |
|-------------------|--|

### Funding



### Description of scheme

Peak Connections is a sustainable transport-marketing project aimed at making travel to the Peak District by public transport easier for those less familiar with using buses and trains. A detailed business plan for the campaign was prepared prior to the appointment of a Marketing Officer in March 2004. The officer has been active in producing a family of user-friendly guides to encourage visitors to sample days out by bus and train. Tourism businesses are key partners in Peak Connections, and a number of attractions have already agreed to offer discounted entry to public transport users.

A strong brand identity has been established 'Peak Connections' to reinforce the idea of an integrated network of public transport and a house style for all future publications adopted. The following publications have been produced:

- Peak Connections from Nottingham and East Derbyshire-
  - *Service 473 to the Peak District* promotes this service from Oldham, Rochdale, Stalybridge, Glossop, to Chatsworth, Bakewell, Matlock and Crich.
  - *Days Out in the Derwent Valley* encourages visitors to use the train and bus services in the Derwent Valley.
  - Suite of four Peak Connections to Chatsworth guide promoting Chatsworth from Sheffield, Chesterfield, Matlock, Bakewell, Buxton, Leek and Hanley
  - Bus 272 Sheffield to the Hope Valley
  - Bus 221 Leek to the Roaches
  - Days Out from Sheffield and Days Out from Chesterfield.
  - 20 linear public transport walks in the Peak District.

Leaflets have been very widely distributed by the partners, as well as using door to door distribution through the Derbyshire Times and the Derby Telegraph. An active public relations campaign is underway with local and national media, Peak Connections were also able to access additional funds from the Countryside Agency to establish Village Transport Information Points (VTRIPs) branded literature racks for information on public and community transport services to be placed in community venues such as post offices, village halls in the High Peak, Derbyshire Dales, Staffordshire Moorlands and Amber Valley.

Information on Peak Connections is also been displayed on timetable cases at bus stations, railway stations and by bus stops. Bus stop carousels in South Yorkshire have also been branded with Peak Connection promotional material.

**Impact of scheme**

*Trying to contact David Marsden to discuss what has happened over the last 18 months- will fill this in when I have spoken to him*

**What are the lessons for the Forest of Bowland AONB**

- Strong brand
- High quality promotion
- Close co-operation with the tourism sector

**For Further information:**

[http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport/public\\_transport/peak\\_connections/](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport/public_transport/peak_connections/)

## SHROPSHIRE HILLS SHUTTLE

• **Location** Shropshire Hills AONB

• **Purpose:** The service was started by The National Trust to help ease traffic congestion in Carding Mill Valley, but has grown into a network of different Shuttle routes, giving visitors and local people easy access to walks, local attractions and pubs in the Shropshire Hills.

• **Lead organisation & partners:**

TESS ( Transport for Everyone in South Shropshire) and the National Trust, English Nature, Shropshire County Council, South Shropshire District Council, South Shropshire Tourism Association.

**Total Cost**

£67,542

• **Capital** £5000

• **Revenue** £62,542

**Funding**

**Main Funders:** English Nature, National Trust, Shropshire County Council, South Shropshire District Council, Rural Development Service (Defra), Advantage West Midlands

**Description of scheme**

After an unsuccessful attempt in 2001 to build on an existing bus service operated by the National Trust to improve access to their Long Mynd estate, a partnership was created to develop a network of services to provide car free access to the Shropshire Hills. The Shuttles are run by mini buses able to cope with the narrow roads and steep climbs which are unsuitable for large vehicles or large numbers of cars.

Over the last five a variety of network combinations have been trailed in response to suggestions from the bus operator and local people, and feed back from passenger surveys, as well as funding constraints. In 2006 The Shropshire Hills Shuttles consisted of a series of two interlinking services around Craven Arms, Church Stretton and Bishopscastle operating weekends and Bank Holidays between April and October. The shuttle services are designed to connect with services into Shrewsbury and all the services are wheel chair accessible (places have to be booked in advance). Where possible the services have been designed to operate on a clock face basis The services included:

- The Long Mynd & Stiperstones Shuttle
- Secret Hills Shuttle
- Countryside Explorer bus around Bridgenorth

During the week a demand responsive service, Link 49, serves the area around Craven Arms, from the Corvedale to the Clun Valley. Whilst the service is targeted at meeting the needs of locally people, the service is also promoted to those wishing to get into the Shropshire Hills during the week.

The Shropshire Shuttles have been well promoted with attractively illustrated leaflets, press releases and adverts in the local media and appropriate national publications. The leaflets contain maps showing the route of the bus in relationship to regional walking routes and attractions. In 2006 the leaflet was also available in French.

Information about the villages and attractions served by the bus is contained in the leaflet and discounts are offered to holders of Shropshire Shuttle bus tickets. In addition to the Shropshire Shuttle Tickets, the services will also accept the ShireRider tickets. A Shropshire Shuttles web site has also been developed [www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk) which provides information on the routes, timetables, local attractions and events.



In the Summer of 2004, using additional funding from the EU Regional Development Fund, a series of special events 'Talking Buses' were introduced on the network in which various guides, some in costume would give talk on the bus as it travelled along its route. Guides included storytellers, wildlife experts, historians, a poet and National Trust staff. Passenger surveys showed that lots of Shuttle users were travelling on the buses just to hear the guides and many made repeat trips to hear different guides.

#### **Impact of scheme**

Overall passenger numbers have steadily increased on the Shropshire Shuttles network. In 2004 the Stiperstone shuttle carried 984 passengers, an increase of 13.5%, Long Mynd 1858 passengers up 0.2%, and the Countryside Explorer 1028 up by 79.4%. The Secret Shuttle carried 424 passengers in 2004 which was slightly down (2.3%) on the previous year, but in 2003 over 100 free passes had been distributed to local people, so in effect passengers increased by 31.7%. (*NB in contact with TESS to get some more up to date figures*).

Surveys on the Stiperstone and Long Mynd shuttle showed that passengers were spending on average £39.20 per head on accommodation, food and incidentals, whilst on the Countryside Explorer average spend was £29.00 per head. These figures have provided important evidence to illustrate the role the buses have in supporting the local economy.

Passenger surveys show that 55% of passengers using the Shuttle services used private transport to reach the bus pick up point, showing that the services are succeeding in encouraging visitors to explore the Shropshire Hills without a car, and do linear walks along the famous ridges.

A number of the bus services are also been used by local residents to reach the local towns with around 14% of passengers using it as a local bus service.

#### **What are the lessons for the Forest of Bowland AONB**

• **Changing behaviour:** The Shropshire Shuttles are part of an overall visitor management strategy for the Shropshire Hills and have therefore involved English Nature and the National Trust who both manage large areas of the Shropshire Hills. There has been a reduction of visitors arriving at popular destinations such as Long Mynd by car, and the high percentage of those using the bus that had a car available suggests that the services are succeeding in achieving modal switch.

• **Partnership working:** The project has established good partnership working between the various bodies, with TESS taking responsibility for the operation of the service and managing contracts. TESS have played an invaluable role as a honest broker between the different organisations involved in the project. The project has also being very successful in bringing together organisations not normally involved in transportation including Shropshire Museum service, English Nature and the National Trust. TESS is a social enterprise and is involved in

delivering a range of innovative transport solutions in rural Shropshire.

- **High quality marketing and monitoring:** The Shropshire Shuttles have an attractive clear logo which is used on all the publications, posters, website and the minibuses themselves. Leaflets have been widely distributed throughout the area and wider a-field through close collaboration with the County's tourism sector.

- **Promoting wider benefits:** Around 40% of passengers using the Shuttle services are taking the bus as a tour of the Shropshire Hills. All the leaflets promote tourist attractions along the route, as well as refreshments facilities. Passenger surveys demonstrate that visitors are spending relatively large amounts of money whilst visiting the area in local businesses. Data of passenger spend has been recorded and used by the project to help support future funding bids.

For Further information:

[www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk)

## THE YORKSHIRE DALES EXPERIENCE BUS

- **Location** Yorkshire Dales National Park
- **Purpose:** To encourage disadvantaged groups, especially ethnic minorities living in nearby conurbation who never normally come to the National Park to enjoy “taster” days out in the Park
- **Lead organisation & partners:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Outreach Team, Council for National Parks Mosaic Project, Yorkshire Dales Public Transport User Group, Metro (West Yorkshire PTE)

|                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Total Cost</b> | • <b>Capital</b> nil    |
|                   | • <b>Revenue</b> £2,000 |

**Funding** Sustainable Development Fund (75%) ; Fares from passengers £650  
Management time from YDPTUG

### Description of scheme

A series of five buses operated from towns in the West Yorkshire conurbation – Huddersfield, Brighouse, Bradford, Shipley, Keighley to Grassington or Malham. These were not private services, but ordinary service buses (806, 814) open to the general public and operating to a scheduled public timetable

Paid part time “Bus Buddies” were on each bus to meet specific groups identified by Dales Park Outreach teams, but ordinary members of the public also travelled. A Bus Buddy is a paid part time or volunteer who meets groups at the bus stop and on the bus to give them confidence on using the network.

When the bus arrived at the destination there were volunteers available to provide a series of events – guided walks, a picnic, a visit to a National Park Centre, local museum. A prime part of the who exercise is to encourage people without their own transport or who were simply not used to using public transport to so, encouraging the skills needed – pre-planning, timetable reading, choosing the right fares. As most of the bus services parallel other regular bus routes, the insights gained from a more structured, accompanied journey enable users to have the confidence to plan their own visitors in the future using the regular Dales Bus network bus of special weekend and weekday services.



### **Impact of scheme**

Huge enthusiasm was generated from among the local communities targeted – interest exceeding all expectations. The first bus service had to be duplicated (98 people turning up) other services full to capacity, but because there were problems over the development of the Bus Buddies, numbers decline, emphasising the need in the early stages, for good community links and support. Nevertheless the service, whilst still requiring subsidy (in order to keep fares realistic and affordable), surpassed financial targets (ordinary public transport fares were charged) and anecdotal evidence suggests useful spin-off by greater use by ethnic minorities in particular onto the regular 67A Sunday Keighley-Grassington service as well as local weekday services.

### **What are the lessons for the Forest of Bowland AONB**

- Given the huge population of deprived communities, including ethnic minorities, so very close to the AONB, most notably in the east Lancashire towns of Colne, Nelson, Accrington and Burnley there would appear to be considerable scope to develop just such a pilot scheme into the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- This pilot could be used to help build new market for the existing weekday and weekend networks, most obviously the existing Pendle Wayfarer and Pendle Witch Hopper services, and via links to Clitheroe, the B10 network, especially given the availability of the £4 Ribble Valley Rider leisure ticket which makes days out in Bowland for individuals and small groups much cheaper than coach or minibus hire.

### **For Further information:**

Andy Ryland, Transport & Visitor Services Manager, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Hebden Road, Grassington, DL8 3BP tel 01756 752774

## THE YORKSHIRE DALES EXPERIENCE BUS

- **Location** Yorkshire Dales National Park
- **Purpose:** To encourage disadvantaged groups, especially ethnic minorities living in nearby conurbation who never normally come to the National Park to enjoy “taster” days out in the Park
- **Lead organisation & partners:** Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Outreach Team, Council for National Parks Mosaic Project, Yorkshire Dales Public Transport User Group, Metro (West Yorkshire PTE)

|                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Total Cost</b> | • <b>Capital</b> nil    |
|                   | • <b>Revenue</b> £2,000 |

**Funding** Sustainable Development Fund (75%) ; Fares from passengers £650  
Management time from YDPTUG

### Description of scheme

A series of five buses operated from towns in the West Yorkshire conurbation – Huddersfield, Brighouse, Bradford, Shipley, Keighley to Grassington or Malham. These were not private services, but ordinary service buses (806, 814) open to the general public and operating to a scheduled public timetable

Paid part time “Bus Buddies” were on each bus to meet specific groups identified by Dales Park Outreach teams, but ordinary members of the public also travelled. A Bus Buddy is a paid part time or volunteer who meets groups at the bus stop and on the bus to give them confidence on using the network.

When the bus arrived at the destination there were volunteers available to provide a series of events – guided walks, a picnic, a visit to a National Park Centre, local museum. A prime part of the who exercise is to encourage people without their own transport or who were simply not used to using public transport to so, encouraging the skills needed – pre-planning, timetable reading, choosing the right fares. As most of the bus services parallel other regular bus routes, the insights gained from a more structured, accompanied journey enable users to have the confidence to plan their own visitors in the future using the regular Dales Bus network bus of special weekend and weekday services.



### **Impact of scheme**

Huge enthusiasm was generated from among the local communities targeted – interest exceeding all expectations. The first bus service had to be duplicated (98 people turning up) other services full to capacity, but because there were problems over the development of the Bus Buddies, numbers decline, emphasising the need in the early stages, for good community links and support. Nevertheless the service, whilst still requiring subsidy (in order to keep fares realistic and affordable), surpassed financial targets (ordinary public transport fares were charged) and anecdotal evidence suggests useful spin-off by greater use by ethnic minorities in particular onto the regular 67A Sunday Keighley-Grassington service as well as local weekday services.

### **What are the lessons for the Forest of Bowland AONB**

- Given the huge population of deprived communities, including ethnic minorities, so very close to the AONB, most notably in the east Lancashire towns of Colne, Nelson, Accrington and Burnley there would appear to be considerable scope to develop just such a pilot scheme into the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- This pilot could be used to help build new market for the existing weekday and weekend networks, most obviously the existing Pendle Wayfarer and Pendle Witch Hopper services, and via links to Clitheroe, the B10 network, especially given the availability of the £4 Ribble Valley Rider leisure ticket which makes days out in Bowland for individuals and small groups much cheaper than coach or minibus hire.

### **For Further information:**

Andy Ryland, Transport & Visitor Services Manager, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Hebden Road, Grassington, DL8 3BP tel 01756 752774

## SAUNTERBUS

- **Location** Northamptonshire
- **Purpose:** To provide a service for people living in Northampton, Kettering and Wellingborough without access to their own car for access to their local countryside and to rural visitor and heritage attractions
- **Lead organisation & partners:** Northamptonshire County Council

### Total Cost

- **Capital** nil
- **Revenue** £2,000 - £5,000 per annum – for promotion and small amount of revenue support for service which are usually self supporting

**Funding** Northamptonshire County Council

### Description of scheme

Saunterbus is a network of regular public leisure bus services provided by Northamptonshire County Council operating each Sunday and Bank Holiday during the summer months from Northampton, Kettering and Wellingborough into Northamptonshire's countryside. The service is a public service operating to a public timetable, but is a hybrid between an excursion bus and a public stage carriage service, operating as the latter but focused on key leisure trip as the former.

Each service operates from Northampton, departing from the town's bus station usually at the standard time of 10.00 and either 15-20 minutes earlier or later from the other two main towns depending on the direction of travel to the relevant leisure and countryside destinations. The service has operated successfully since 1984, initially operating from May until late September and serving seven routes to different parts of the Northamptonshire countryside, a combination of popular heritage or tourist attractions, including country houses, historic towns, steam railways, lakes, a boat service, country parks, as well as more open area of countryside for linear or circular walks. The service appeals to a generally older clientele living in the three main Northamptonshire towns who do not have access to their own transport, but also attracts individuals and families on lower incomes who would not otherwise be able to access the attractions. One additional benefit therefore is to generate additional revenue and visitor spend at each of the attractions

Routes vary but typically are circular and take about two hours per circuit or part circuit. Usually the bus runs around the rural part of the route 3 times so it is possible to break the journey twice and explore selected attractions for a couple of hours until the bus comes around again. Services operate on the same route two or three times in a season, so that each week there is a different choice of destination, but chance to repeat a journey or a destination on a five or six weekly cycle.

Fares on the services are deliberately low, £6 per adult, £3 per senior, family, £12 per family with up to 3 children. Pre-booking is not required, as usually there is sufficient capacity on the bus to accommodate passengers.



**Impact of scheme**

Most Saunterbus services operate with very good loadings, between 60 – 100% of capacity, though financial cut backs have forced some retrenchment (after 22 years of successful, low cost operation) in 2006. This means that subsidy costs are low, but several hundred people who otherwise would not be able to visit Northamptonshire’s countryside and heritage attractions, including many people on low incomes, are able to do so. The network is also supported by local tourist industry, with a range of discounts at attractions.

There is real benefit to the rural area with increased tourist spend at rural attractions; on most days it is possible to visit at least two attractions, or plan a linear walk from the bus.

**What are the lessons for the Forest of Bowland AONB**

- By offering a choice of countryside destinations on a monthly rather than a weekly cycle, passenger levels are higher enough on each service to generate sufficient revenue to justify their retention – this would allow potentially good Bowland destinations such as Beacons Fell Country Park or Abbeystead to support regular services.
- The importance of good quality marketing to build on and develop the market. Without such marketing effort even previously successful service such as the Bowland Transit B10 rapidly begin to lose regular passengers and fail to recruit new ones.

**For Further information:** Northamptonshire County Council Sustainable Transport Unit, Riverside House, Riverside Way, Bedford Road, Northampton NN1 5NX  
Tel: 01604 654438 Fax: 01604 654455

## COAST-LINK, SUFFOLK

- **Location:** Suffolk Coast and Heath AONB
- **Purpose:** Demand responsive bus service for locals and visitors
- **Lead organisation & partners:**  
National Trust, RSPB, Suffolk County Council and the Countryside Agency

**Total Cost**  
£28,000 ( first  
year start up  
costs)

- **Capital**
- **Revenue**  
( awaiting some up to date revenue figures from Suffolk CC)

**Funding:** From a partnership between The Countryside Agency, Widen the Choice RTP (involving the RSPB and The National Trust), Suffolk County Council and Transport 2000 Trust

### Description of scheme

The CoastLink service was launched in November 2004 and is designed to collect passengers from Darsham railway station and also from scheduled bus services that stop at the station and at the nearby villages of Yoxford, Blythburgh and Leiston. CoastLink is available via a booking system and can take passengers to a number of popular destinations



that have previously been inaccessible by public transport, including the RSPB reserve at Minsmere, Dunwich Heath National Trust reserve and also the villages of Darsham, Dunwich, Eastbridge, Middleton, Sizewell, Theberton, Westleton and Walberswick.

The service runs 7 days a week through the year including bank holidays. Passengers are required to book their journey by 12 noon the day before they want to travel. A small vehicle was employed for the service.

It is an Allied Vehicles conversion of a Peugeot Expert van as a "Eurobus". This has a maximum of six passengers, is accessible via ramps by travellers using wheelchairs, and is leased for the project from Suffolk County Council. In legal terms it is a Community Car since its income cannot pay wages, these have to come from project funding.

The operator is Coastal Accessible Transport Service (CATS), based in Leiston. This voluntary sector group has employed the necessary drivers and takes bookings for CoastLink. All bookings are phoned into CATS' office where a schedule for the coming day is drawn up.

All CoastLink drivers have been MiDAS trained, to enable them to use a minibus if required. Drivers are paid for hours worked although a guaranteed sum per month was also agreed, irrespective of the amount of the number journeys made.

In addition to an attractive leaflet aimed at visitors to the area, the service has been promoted through local parish magazines and door to door flyers. The RSPB has also promoted the service to its members as a mechanism to access the Minismere Reserve.

### **Impact of scheme**

By the end of the summer 2006 The service has been carrying 150 passengers a month. A small proportion of these trips (around 20%) are for access to other transport feeder services, employment and medical trips, but the main use of the service is for leisure which also includes shopping trips. Over a 12 month period the service made 3502 journeys.

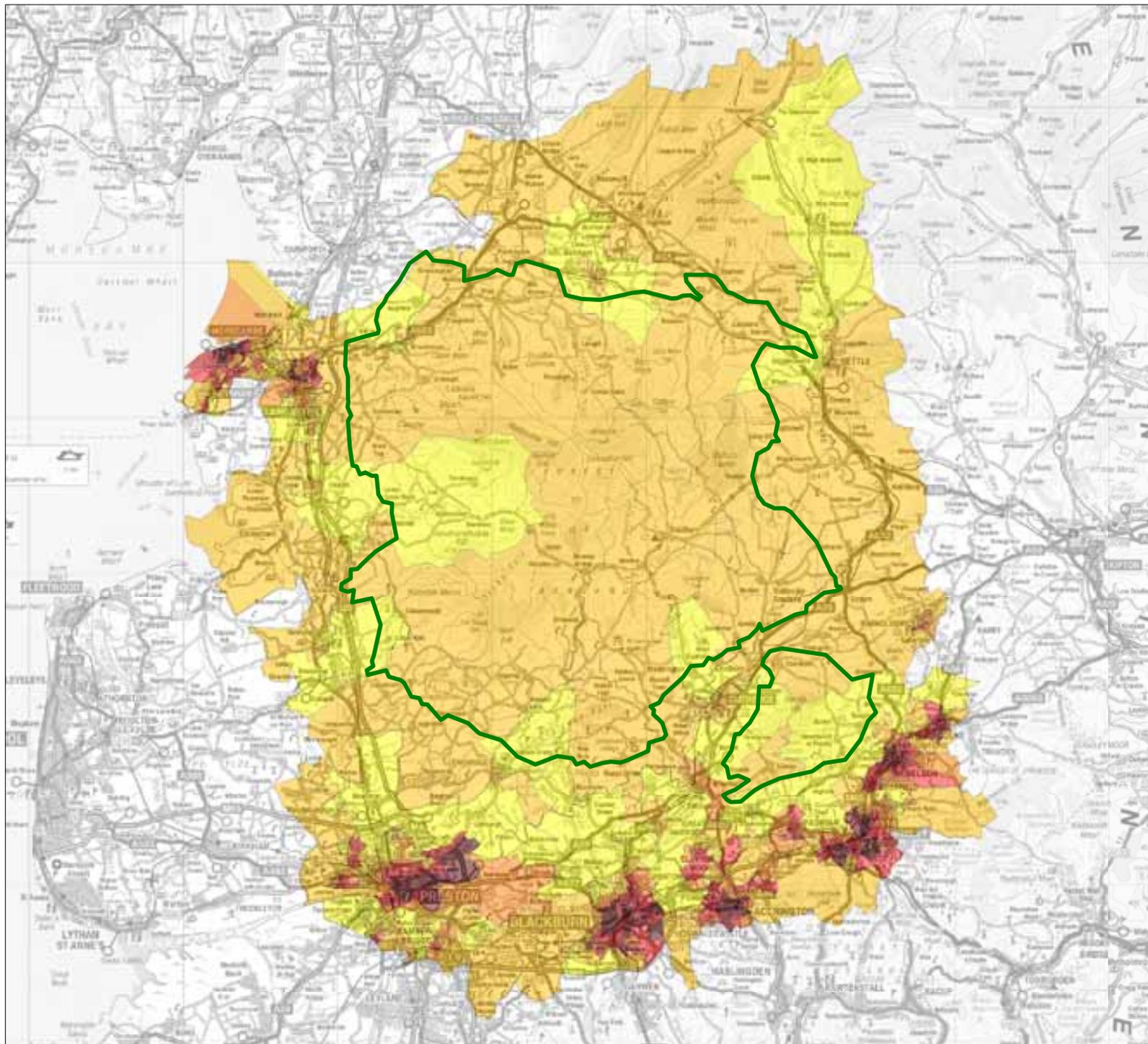
### **What are the lessons for the Forest of Bowland AONB**

- **Flexible service** suited to areas with low population density where it is uneconomic to use larger vehicles carrying low numbers of passengers.
- **Meeting local and visitor needs**- enable the service to be operated daily throughout the year.
- **High quality promotion**- this has included targeting local communities and working with the rail operating company, RSPB and National Trust
- **Use of Community transport organisation**- to deliver the service, has enabled the service to link into a pool of drivers familiar with driving smaller vehicles and minibuses, and team used to booking journey requests.
- **Promoted as a feeder service**- into the existing public transport network

### **For Further information:**

<http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/downloads.asp?PageId=64>

Appendix B  
IMD and car  
ownership maps



### IMD Score

- 60 to 100
- 50 to 60
- 40 to 50
- 30 to 40
- 20 to 30
- 10 to 20
- 1 to 10

 Forest of Bowland  
AONB Boundary

MINERVA HOUSE  
EAST PARADE  
LEEDS  
LS1 5PS

T  
F  
E  
W

0113 244 4347  
0113 242 3753  
leeds@jmp.co.uk  
www.jmp.co.uk



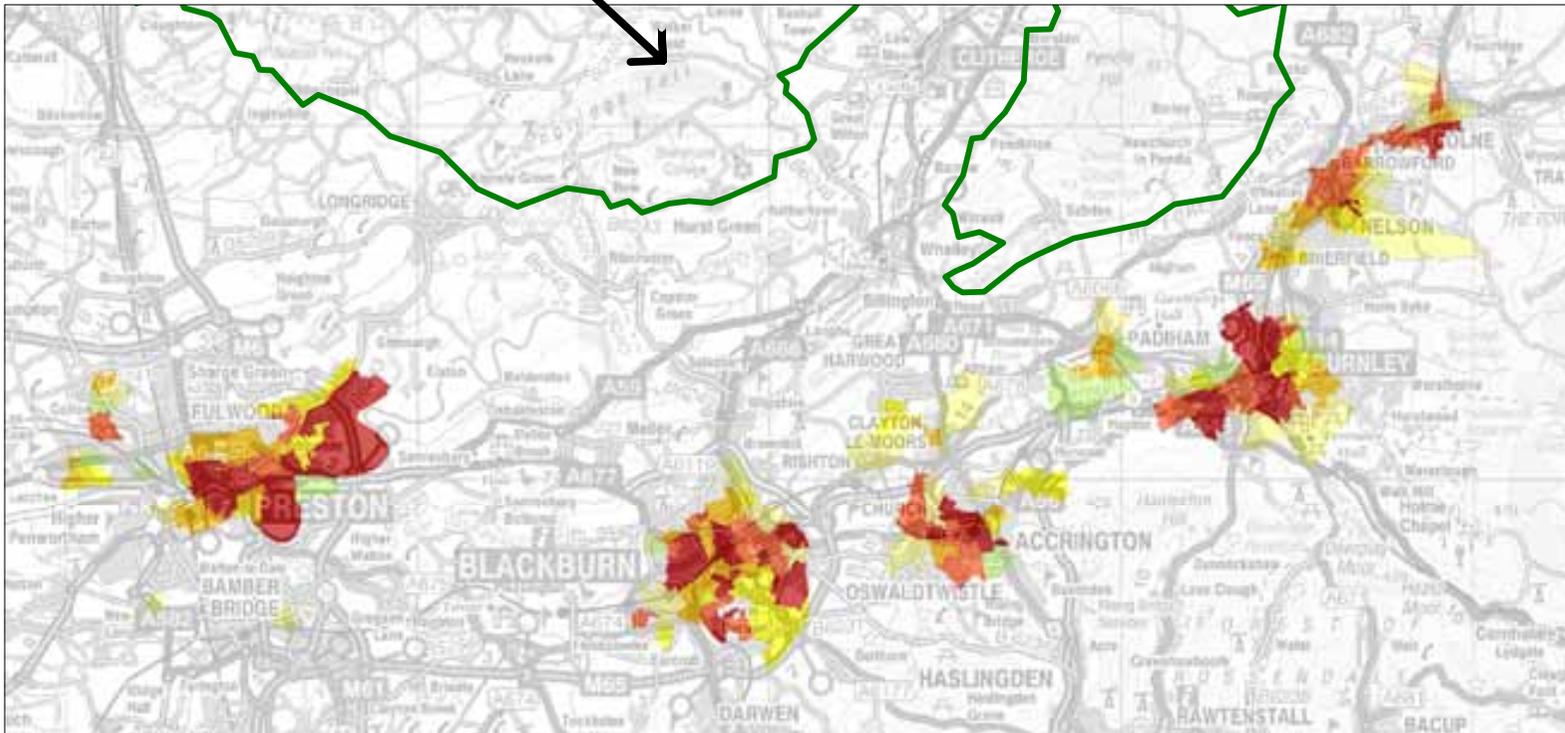
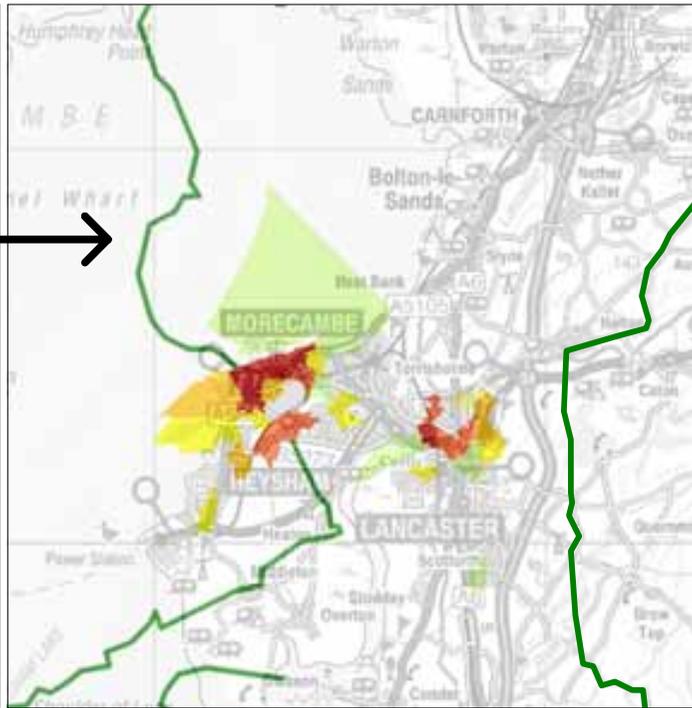
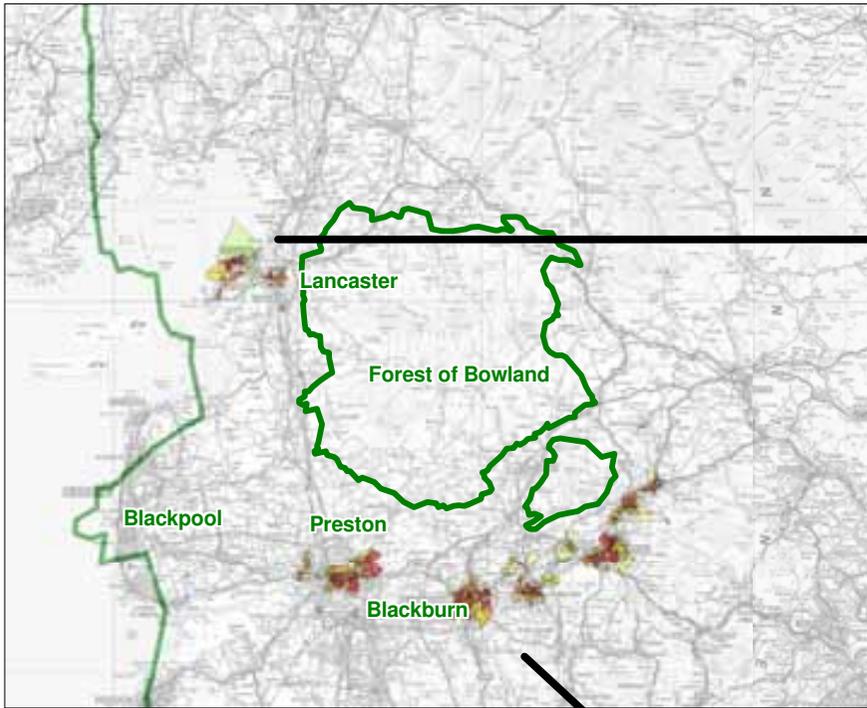
Client  
Forest of Bowland AONB Unit

Project  
Forest of Bowland AONB  
Transport for Tourism

Title  
IMD Scores

Based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings

Licence No: 100033303 Date: 16/11/06



**Output Area Ranking**

Within England

- Worst 5%
- Worst 5-10%
- Worst 10-15%
- Worst 15-20%
- Worst 20-25%
- Worst 25-30%

MINERVA HOUSE  
EAST PARADE  
LEEDS  
LS1 5PS

T  
F  
E  
W

0113 244 4347  
0113 242 3753  
leeds@jmp.co.uk  
www.jmp.co.uk



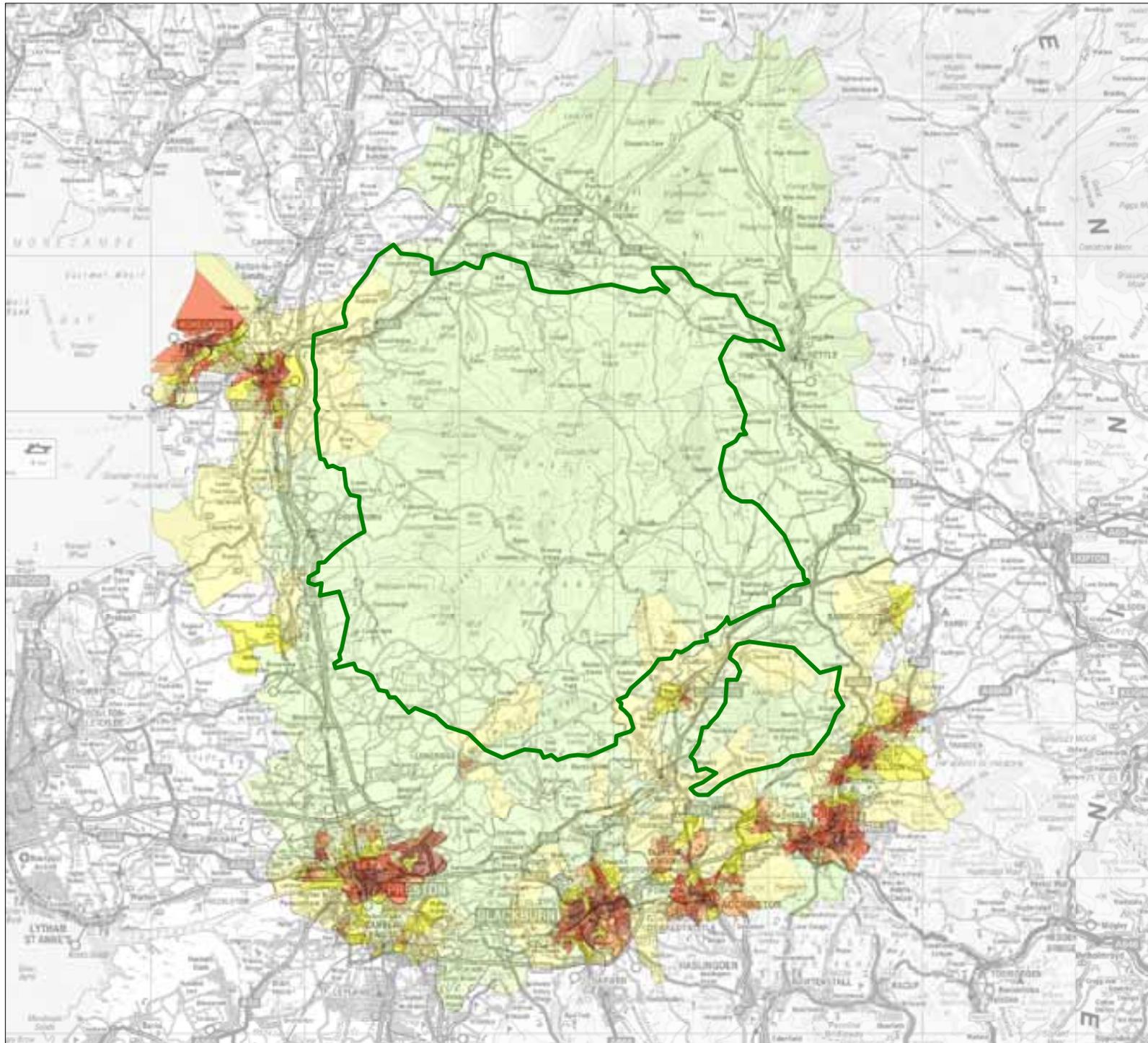
Client  
**Forest of Bowland AONB Unit**

Project  
**Forest of Bowland AONB  
Transport for Tourism**

Title  
**IMD Ranking**

Based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings

Licence No: 100033303 Date: 16/11/06



Percentage of Households with No Cars

- 0 to 10
- 10 to 20
- 20 to 30
- 30 to 40
- 40 to 50
- 50 to 100

 Forest of Bowland AONB Boundary

MINERVA HOUSE  
EAST PARADE  
LEEDS  
LS1 5PS

T  
F  
E  
W

0113 244 4347  
0113 242 3753  
leeds@jmp.co.uk  
www.jmp.co.uk



Client Forest of Bowland AONB Unit

Project Forest of Bowland AONB Transport for Tourism

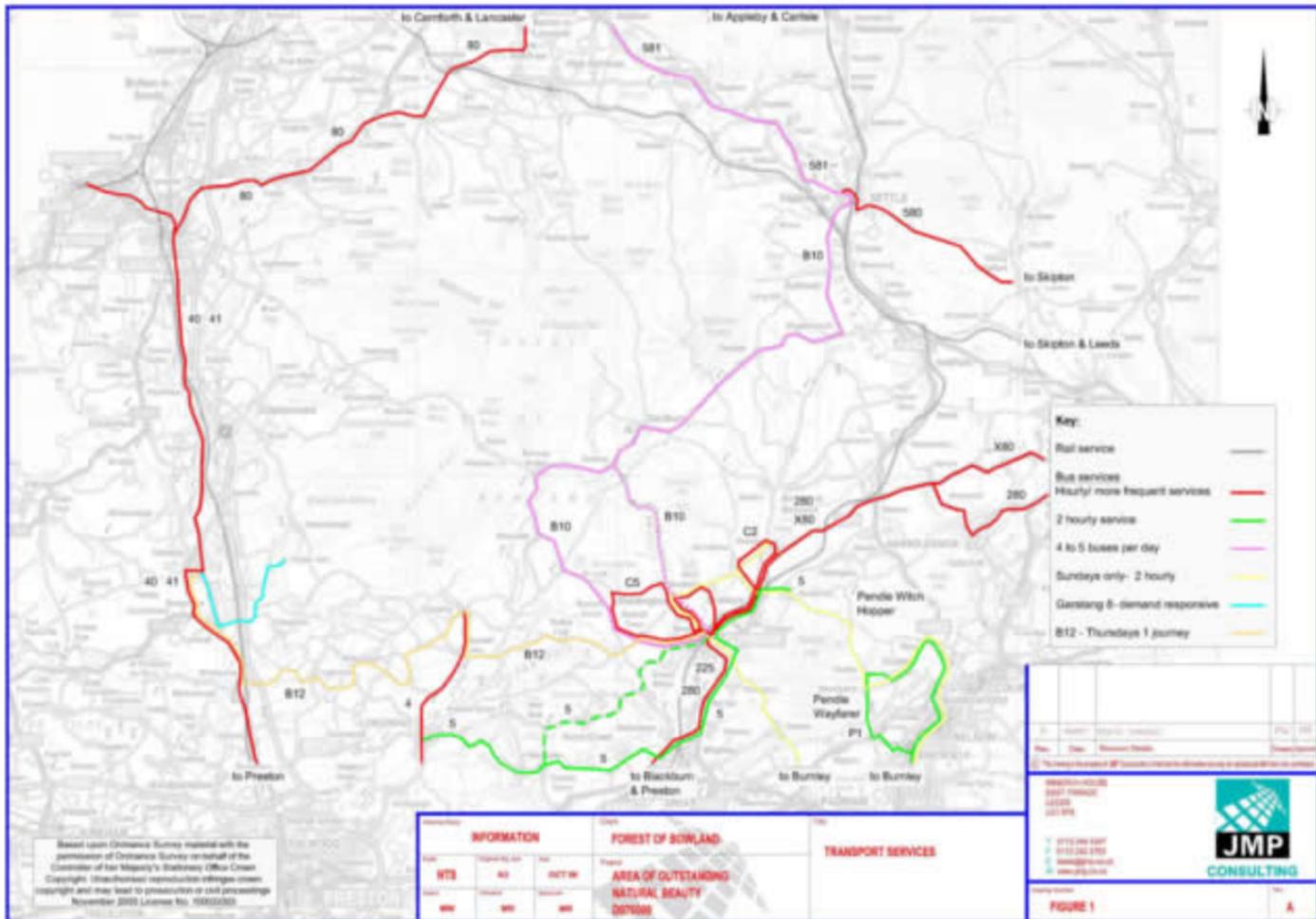
Title Car Ownership

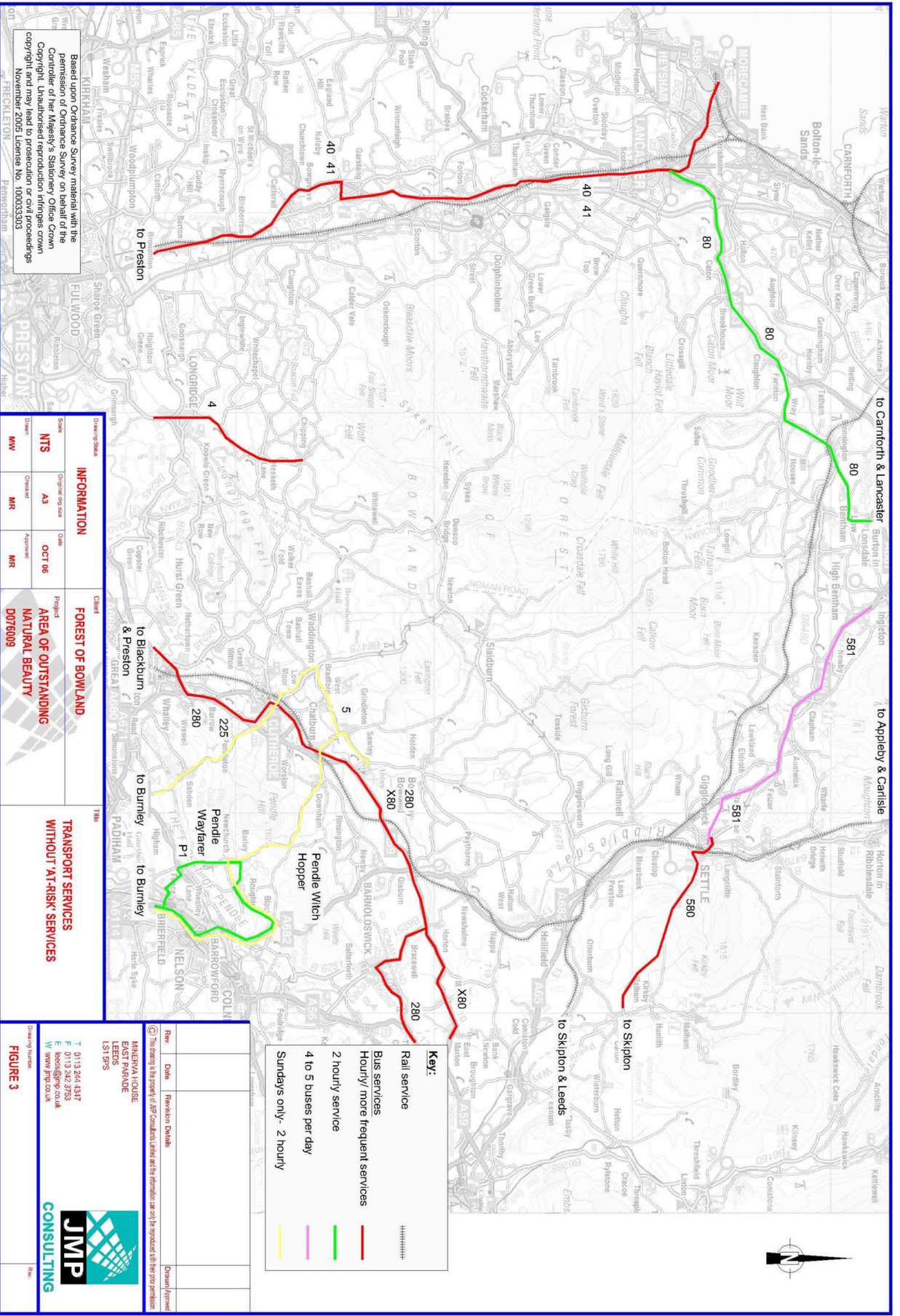
Based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of her Majesty's Stationary Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings

Licence No: 100033303 Date: 16/11/06

## Appendix C

### Network maps





Based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings November, 2005 License No. 100033303

**INFORMATION**

|            |               |               |
|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Scale      | Graphic scale | Date          |
| <b>NTS</b> | <b>A3</b>     | <b>OCT 06</b> |
| Drawn      | Checked       | Approved      |
| <b>MW</b>  | <b>MFR</b>    | <b>MFR</b>    |

**FOREST OF BOWLAND**

Project: **AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**  
 D076009

**TRANSPORT SERVICES**

**WITHOUT 'AT-RISK' SERVICES**

| Row | Date | Revision Details | Drawn/Approved |
|-----|------|------------------|----------------|
|     |      |                  |                |

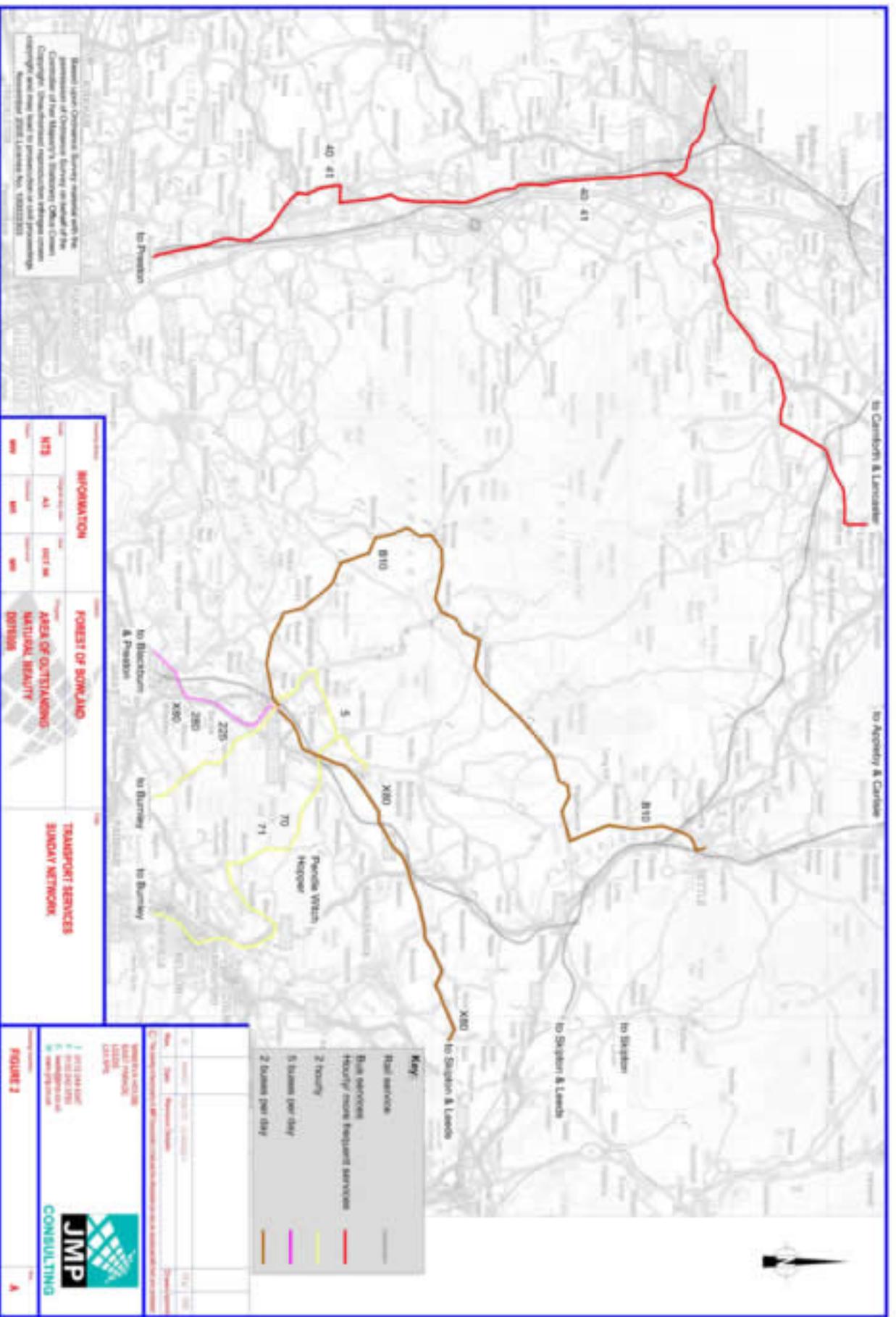
© The names of the transport operators are listed and the information can only be provided if the route permits  
**MINERAL HOUSE EAST PRVADE LEEDS**  
 T 013 244 1317  
 F 013 242 3733  
 E [enquiries@jmp.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@jmp.co.uk)  
 W [www.jmp.co.uk](http://www.jmp.co.uk)

**Key:**

- Rail services: =====
- Bus services: ————
- Hourly/ more frequent services: ————
- 2 hourly service: ————
- 4 to 5 buses per day: ————
- Sundays only - 2 hourly: ————

FIGURE 3





Based upon Ordnance Survey, Survey data and the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction of this content (in any form) and any use to promote or sell products is prohibited. 2005 Licence No. 100022200

**INFORMATION**

|     |     |       |       |
|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| 100 | 100 | 100   | 100   |
| N73 | A1  | not M | not M |

**FOREST OF BOWLAND AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY DESIGNATION**



**TRANSPORT SERVICES BOUNDARY NETWORK**



**Key**

- Blue line: Bus service
- Red line: Bus services hourly more frequent services
- Yellow line: 2 hourly
- Purple line: 5 buses per day
- Brown line: 2 buses per day

**PREPARED BY** JPM CONSULTING

**DATE** 15/01/2018

**SCALE** 1:50,000

**UNIT** A3

**PROJECT** Forest of Bowland Bus Services

---

SCOTTISH AMICABLE BUILDING, 11 DONEGALL SQUARE SOUTH, BELFAST BT1 5JE  
T 02890 434646 F 02890 434647  
E belfast@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

CORNWALL BUILDINGS 45-51 NEWHALL STREET BIRMINGHAM B3 3QR  
T 0121 222 4141 F 0121 222 4142  
E lichfield@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

7TH FLOOR, TOWER POINT 44, NORTH ROAD, BRIGHTON BN1 1YR  
T 01273 666380 F 01273 666381  
E brighton@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

66 QUEEN SQUARE BRISTOL BS1 4JP  
T 01179 876216 F 01179 876217  
E bristol@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

CBC HOUSE 24 CANNING STREET EDINBURGH EH3 8EG  
T 0131 272 2705 F 0131 272 2805  
E glasgow@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

CENTRUM HOUSE, 38 QUEEN STREET, GLASGOW G1 3DX  
T 0141 221 4030 F 0141 221 4050  
E glasgow@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

MINERVA HOUSE, EAST PARADE, LEEDS LS1 5PS  
T 0113 244 4347 F 0113 242 3753  
E leeds@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

LATCHFORD HOUSE, LYNN LANE, SHENSTONE BUSINESS PARK, SHENSTONE, LICHFIELD, STAFFORDSHIRE, WS14 0SB  
T 01543 482300 F 01543 482399  
E lichfield@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

CASTLE CHAMBERS, 43 CASTLE STREET, LIVERPOOL L2 9SH  
T 0151 231 6140 F 0151 231 6141  
E liverpool@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

AUDREY HOUSE, 16-20 ELY PLACE, LONDON EC1N 6SN  
T 020 7405 2800 F 020 7430 9049  
E london@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

8TH FLOOR, 3 HARBOUR EXCHANGE SQUARE, LONDON E14 9GE  
T 0207 536 8040 F 0207 005 0462  
E docklands@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

BLACKFRIARS HOUSE, PARSONAGE, MANCHESTER M3 2JA  
T 0161 831 5600 F 0161 831 5601  
E manchester@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

3RD FLOOR, CATHEDRAL BUILDINGS, DEAN STREET, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE1 1PG  
T 0191 261 2261 F 0191 261 1122  
E newcastle@jmp.co.uk W www.jmp.co.uk

**JMP Consultants Ltd, Registered Office: Centrum House, 38 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3DX. Registered in Scotland No. 88006**