# A LANDSCAPE RICH IN HERITAGE

The Forest of Bowland has long been recognised as a special and beautiful area. It officially became a protected landscape in 1964, when it was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Much of this beauty is related to the wild and ‘untouched’ nature of the landscape – itself a result of hundreds, if not thousands of years of human activity.

Managing the land for game hunting, primarily grouse shooting, has remained a predominant influence on the landscape, and several large private landowners remain today - such as the Duchy of Lancaster, the Duke of Westminster and Lord Clitheroe. The private estates were responsible for building the distinctive villages at places such as Slaidburn, Downham and Abbeystead. The current, largest single landowner is United Utilities, which manages a large area of the fells primarily for water catchment.

**Some examples of local history:**

Bronze Age settlers cleared trees from the fells and began cultivating the land. They left little material evidence of their presence, but the fells have remained largely clear of trees ever since.

Other prehistoric remains in the area include a cairn on Parlick Pike and Bleasdale Circle.

The Romans left behind two key route ways through Bowland, the north-south Ribchester to Carlisle road, and a lesser east west route which is evident north of Downham.

The Norse settlers left their impact in our language as well as the landscape – for example the word ‘Bu’ (in ‘Bolland’ or Bowland) is old Norse for cattle, and ‘Pen’ in Pendle means hill.

‘Tolfin’ was a norseman who founded what is now called Dolphinholme (‘holme’ is an area of flat land).

**Other notable heritage features in Bowland include:**

Medieval vaccaries (a type of cattle farm) at Sabden and Marshaw; the motte and bailey castles in the Lune valley, and the monastery at Sawley.

Grand halls, parks and houses at Browsholme, Leagram and Quernmore.

Sixteenth to eighteenth century stone buildings with their distinctive stone mullions, lintels and date stones can be seen in many villages - a fine example is at Stephen Park in Gisburn Forest.

Dry stone walls and out barns – the irregular field patterns are oldest (pre 1600AD), while the more regular patterns date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Disused quarries and lead mines.

Lime kilns (used to make mortar as well as lime to fertilise the fields).

Nineteenth century cotton and paper mills at Oakenclough and Caton.

Visit Britain’s last remaining Clarion House – a traditional meeting place  
for working folk. Located between Roughlee and Newchurch, the Clarion House is open onSundays between 10am and 4pm and can only be reached on foot or by bike, but everyone   
is welcome and it’s a unique experience.