# A LIVING LANDSCAPE

The landscape of the Forest of Bowland is the result of hundreds of years of human influence. The land has long been managed for game hunting and farming; while the large country estates have had a controlling influence over the nature of building and development in the area. Without human activity there would be no dry stone walls, no hedgerows or open moors, no network of lanes, no barns nor grazed fields.

The Forest of Bowland needs to continue to be a living landscape, while at the same time fulfilling its important purpose as an AONB to conserve and enhance the landscape. Farmers and landowners work closely with the AONB and the farming community is vital to the local economy. Sheep and beef farming dominate the upland areas; while dairy farming remains the major land use in the valleys.

Some farmers have diversified to find new ways of using the land – developing tourism facilities and other enterprises, such as business workspaces. Others are concentrating on their farming and finding ways to improve their income, for example by farming rare breeds, or producing their own boxed meat.

This can be experiences best at agricultural shows and events, such as hedge laying competitions.