

# SUSTAIN ABILITY

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE  
FOREST OF BOWLAND AONB'S  
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM SYMPOSIUM



Holmes Mill | 21st March 2023

# 02

## THE EVENT IN NUMBERS:

**87** audience members keen to learn more about sustainable tourism

By area...

**40** attendees from within the Forest of Bowland AONB

**29** attendees from Lancashire

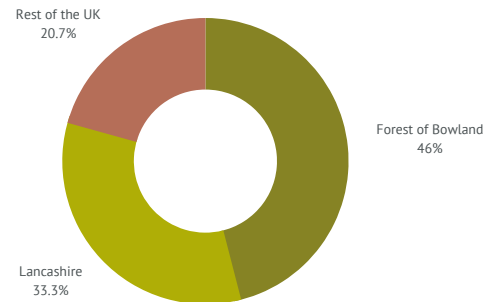
**18** attendees from further afield

**100** paper programmes  
were replaced by  
**1** digital download

**0** plastic name badges  
Recycled paper stickers provided

The accessible venue was chosen to encourage car-free travel where possible:  
**0.5** miles  
From the railway station

**100** metres  
To the nearest bus stop



**8** Green Tourism Awards presented during the event

**58** big questions asked and answered on stage

**5** individual presenters and **2** informative panel discussions

**3** field trips the following day, showcasing the best of Bowland food, walks and cycle routes.

Tickets for the symposium were all reserved quickly, and the event attracted a varied cross section of attendees from all sorts of industries, from AONBs and accommodation providers, to restaurants, rail partnerships, photographers and farmers.

All with at least one thing in common: *the desire to embrace sustainable tourism practices.*

## 03 PRESS RELEASE

# FUTURE PROOFING THE FOREST OF BOWLAND

## Sold out symposium promotes sustainable tourism

A sustainability symposium hosted by The Forest of Bowland AONB at Clitheroe's Holmes Mill, and presented by Caz Graham of BBC Radio 4's Farming Today programme, saw every seat taken - with attendees keen to learn more about sustainability and inclusivity.

Hetty Byrne, Forest of Bowland AONB Sustainable Tourism Officer, explains: "The event was free to attend and all the places were soon booked up.

"It was a pleasure to see so many people there - a mixture of local organisations and those from further afield - all keen to embrace sustainable tourism practices. The symposium showcased some of the fantastic businesses we have in the Forest of Bowland and our speakers opened up some really interesting discussions around topics like farming in protected landscapes, inclusivity, accessibility, and transport, including ways to avoid using the car as our 'default' option.

"Around 85 people attended, and heard from organisations such as Earth Changers, All the Elements, an active travel specialist, and our own Forest of Bowland AONB team."

Eight businesses were also presented with their official Green Tourism awards during the event.

Gold Accreditations went to: Dale House Barn and B&B, and Bowland Wild Boar Park.

Silver was achieved by: NaturesGems Wildlife Tours, and The Forest of Bowland AONB.

Bronze awards were collected by: Little Oakhurst Glamping, Cobden View Holiday Cottage, The Garden Cottage, and Patty's Barn and The Rewilding.

Throughout the busy and varied day, attendees were also given a demonstration of a new all-terrain mobility vehicle, taken on a tour of Holmes Mill, and heard from Environmental Artist Kerry Morrison who introduced 'The Pendle Peat Pie'; a pie that uses local ingredients to create delicious layers representing the ecology of a healthy peat bog.

Feedback from delegates following the symposium was overwhelmingly positive: "Just wanted to say thank you for a lovely, informative event which was brilliantly well planned and executed. I came away with lots of ideas and will be in touch about how we can link better with the EcoEscapes project."

Hetty added: "It was really rewarding to see people sharing our enthusiasm for sustainable tourism, and we owe all our speakers and discussion panels a huge thank you for contributing their valuable time, knowledge and ideas.

"A number of attendees also took the opportunity to join one of our three field trips the following day, which were: a wild walk from Clitheroe, an e-bike safari in the Bowland Fells led by Breaking Cycles CIC, and a foodie tour of rural Lancashire with Bowland and Bay.

"Like our EcoEscapes campaign, these field trips encouraged visitors to enjoy the best of Bowland while 'treading lightly' on the landscape and using car-free travel where possible."

## 04 A FEW STATS FROM THE STAGE:

**76%** of UK population are 'very concerned' about sustainable issues (95% are very/fairly concerned). The biggest reported concern is deforestation.

**78%** of global travellers intend to stay in a sustainable property at least once in the coming year. (According to Booking.com Sustainable Travel Report 2022).

*Good news for initiatives like EcoEscapes.*

**55%** of global travellers are looking for 'off-grid' vacations to escape reality, switch off and experience life.

Cars are parked **96%** of the time.

In rural areas, the average journey is **8.3** miles, with many trips much shorter.

For many people these journeys would be more than possible on an e-bike.

**6** varied itineraries are currently available with EcoEscapes.

**300,000** people visit Pendle Hill each year.

**100%** of participants in the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership's '72 Seasons' research project felt more connected to nature. They also reported improved sleep and reduced loneliness.

**100** portions of Pendle Peat Pie were served to delegates at COP26  
– a delicious conversation starter.

The Green Tourism scheme has been around for **25+ years**.



# 05 LEADING FROM THE FRONT

## OUR SPEAKERS

Our host **Caz Graham** is a freelance journalist working primarily for BBC Radio 4. She's a regular voice on both Farming Today and On Your Farm. She also reports for PM and the World at One and has presented and reported for a variety of programmes for Radio 4 and the World Service over the last 20 years. She grew up on a farm in north Cumbria and made her professional debut reading out the lamb bank and fat stock prices on BBC Radio Cumbria.

Earth Changers Founder **Vicky Smith** has worked in tourism since the mid 90s, in destinations, marketing and ecommerce. She's headed up operations abroad and online for major tour operators, online travel agents and media, in mainstream tourism, ski, tours and volunteer tourism, NGOs and sustainable tourism accreditation. She's a qualified ranger in Africa, charity challenge leader, acclaimed academic for her published MSc Responsible Tourism Management thesis on online marketing and greenwashing, and is a trustee for SEED Madagascar. After 10 years' specialist expertise in sustainable tourism, she launched Earth Changers in 2017 to promote the best sustainable tourism around the world, creating proven positive impacts.

*On the day, Vicky talked about creating positive impact destinations which connect and support the landscape they're in.*

*She recounted how she had changed her career path when she saw huge piles of plastic outside an all-inclusive resort. She felt these types of breaks were anything but 'inclusive' with visitors discouraged from leaving the resort and interacting with the locals and the surrounding community.*

*She shared several in-depth best practice examples of positive impact destinations abroad.*

“We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”

Albert Einstein



# LEADING FROM THE FRONT

**Hetty Byrne** is the Sustainable Tourism Officer for the Forest of Bowland AONB and has developed a number of sustainable tourism initiatives over the last 17 years, including supporting a tourism business network linked to developments such as Sense of Place, Dark Skies – whereby businesses can become dark-sky friendly – walking & cycling itineraries, and green accreditation.

*On the day, Hetty showcased the Eco Escapes itineraries and discussed the important gateway railway stations that make these adventures accessible by rail; allowing travellers to leave the car at home and explore by train, bike, and on foot.*

**Kit Allwinter** is Active Travel Policy Lead with West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Having previously worked at Transport for Greater Manchester and infrastructure consultants AECOM, Kit is passionate about urban design, sustainability, innovation, public transport and distribution processes – in particular how these factors all interact to create communities.

*On the day, Kit discussed the amount of physical space taken up by cars at any given time and how car parks have the potential to displace and disrupt town centres, town squares and gathering places. Among other things, he highlighted the impact of traffic on communities eg. by preventing easy access to neighbours across the road, and how Car Clubs or specialist vehicle hire could meet the needs of those who only need such vehicles on an occasional basis. He also delved into the many benefits of e-bikes.*



# LEADING FROM THE FRONT

**Soraya Abdel-Hadi** is an award-winning writer, artist and advocate for diversity in the UK outdoors. She believes in taking a holistic approach to making the world a better place, and writes about sustainability, nature and adventure travel. Soraya is Lonely Planet Sustainable Storyteller 2021 and founder of the All The Elements – a non-profit network for those increasing diversity in the UK outdoors.

*On the day, Soraya explained how she went from being Operations Manager for eXXpedition (All-women sailing voyages exploring the impact of and solutions to ocean plastic and toxic pollution) to founding All The Elements; an intersectional community committed to increasing diversity in the UK outdoors.*

**Soraya chaired the day's sustainable tourism and inclusion panel, featuring Cathy Hopley from The Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, The Forest of Bowland AONB's Sarah Robinson – specialist in Farming in Protected Landscapes, and Environmental Artist Kerry Morrison.**





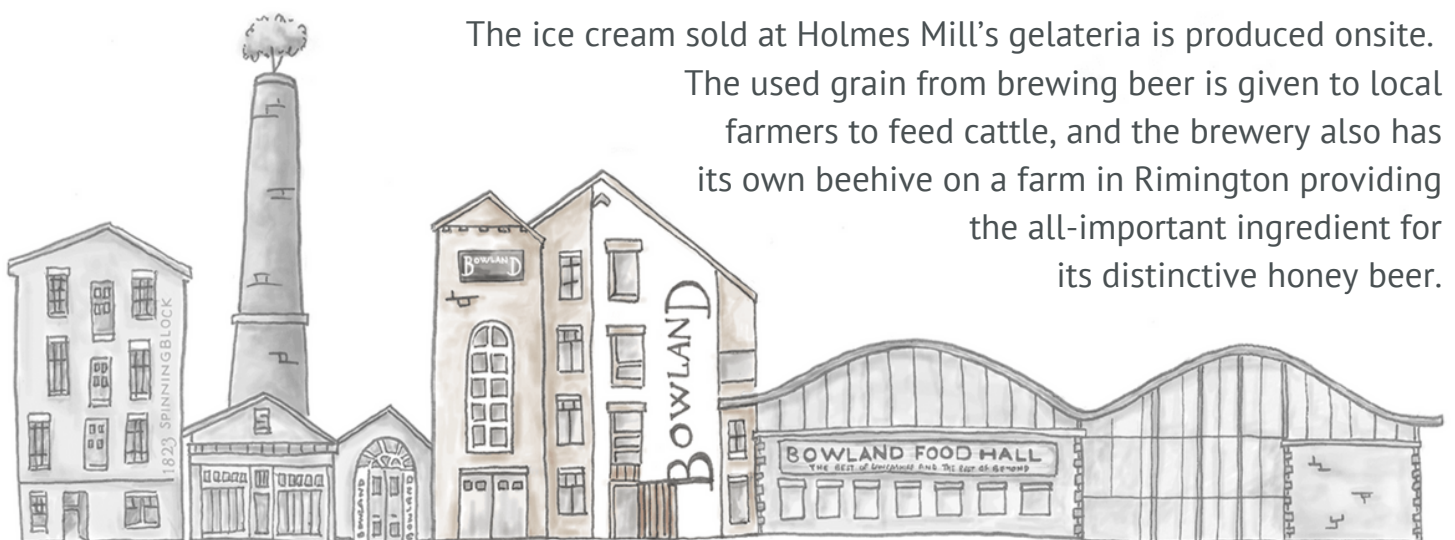
## 06 FANTASTIC FEEDBACK

“Just wanted to say thank you for a lovely, informative event which was brilliantly well planned and executed. I came away with lots of ideas and will be in touch about how we can link better with the EcoEscapes project.”

“Thank you so much for the opportunity to go on the Foodie Tour. It was great in so many ways as I now have more insight for my guests and it was lovely to meet new business owners too!”

“The event was really well organised with lots of food for thought thanks to all the different speakers. I found it a really good opportunity to meet and connect with other like-minded local businesses too. Thank you.”

### MADE AT THE MILL



### DID YOU KNOW?

The ice cream sold at Holmes Mill's gelateria is produced onsite. The used grain from brewing beer is given to local farmers to feed cattle, and the brewery also has its own beehive on a farm in Rimington providing the all-important ingredient for its distinctive honey beer.