

## Outdoor Action

Bentham is an ideal place to enjoy the outdoors. The views of the Three Peaks are enticing, but why not try exploring from the town itself? The Bentham Heritage Trail is actually three trails in one (see map) which all start and finish at St Margaret's Church near the station. There are lots of other walks in the area, including the beautiful river walk from High Bentham to Low Bentham along the Wenning. Check with your Harveys or OS map, and explore for yourself, or meet up with the Bentham Footpath Group on one of their regular guided walks – ask at the Tourist Information Point for details.



Cycling ▲ © Jon Brook

Cycling around Bentham is another good way to enjoy the outdoors. Bring your own bike or hire from one of the nearby operator (see over for details). The Lancashire Cycleway (regional route 90) skirts the town, but can easily be picked up at Hornby or the Tatham Fells, and if you have the legs for it, you can pedal the entire northern loop (around 150 miles!) Less challenging rides will take you west along the Wenning valley to Mewith and Keasden, or east to Wennington and the Lune Valley. Catch the train one way and cycle back downhill!

## Food and Farming

Bentham is at the heart of an agricultural community, the market having existed for just over 700 years. A network of small villages and hamlets rely on Bentham as a market, and today's Auction Mart is one of the biggest sheep markets in the north of England. Every Wednesday there is a street market and a monthly farmers market is also held on the first Saturday every month, at Bentham Town Hall, 9.30am to 1.30pm. It is an excellent place to purchase fresh local produce.



Sheep ▲ © Jon Brook

Nearby producers include Growing with Grace, an organic market garden near Clapham which grows and delivers a fantastic selection of vegetables. They also have a farm shop. Also in the area are Bowland Outdoor Reared Pork at Lowgill, which produces pork, lamb and beef direct to customers and farmers markets as well as organising their own hog roasts. Close to the river in Low Bentham there is a Trout Farm. Bowland is a living landscape and it is the farmers and land managers who create this beautiful landscape. Many repair the dry stone walls and lay the hedges in the traditional fashion, so please respect this when you are out walking, and keep to the Countryside Code!

## Sporty Bentham

Good mountain biking opportunities exist on the Salter Fell section of the North Lancashire bridleway, or across at Gisburn Forest – for more information pick up Bowland by Bike or download maps from [www.forestofbowland.com](http://www.forestofbowland.com). Hot air balloon rides are available from Wray village not far from Bentham and they often drift over the Wenning valley on still days! Nearby there are opportunities for caving, canoeing, and paragliding.



Golfer ▲ © Jon Brook

For the less adventurous it is possible to play badminton, tennis, football and cricket in Bentham – ask at the TIP for details. There are indoor swimming pools at Hornby and Settle and an outdoor pool at Ingleton (open from Whitsun). Bentham boasts an eighteen-hole golf course where visitors are welcome to play. The views are magnificent and the club also hosts a PGA professional (see over for details). Fishing is available on the river Wenning, and you can buy day tickets from the Riverside Caravan Park (see over for details), the Punch Bowl in Low Bentham or at Dales Anglers off the Main Street. The river is good for brown trout and is an important salmon breeding area. You can also travel over the fells to Stocks reservoir for a day of fly fishing.

## Wildlife

Bowland is a special place for wildlife, particularly bird life, and around Bentham you can catch a glimpse of a variety of birds: from kingfisher, sandpipers, grey wagtails and dippers on the river, to lapwing and curlew across the fields. If you go up onto the moors you may be lucky enough to see the iconic hen harrier and hear the red grouse in the heather. Along the riverbanks you may see signs of otter and if you are lucky you may spot brown hares in the springtime. In the spring several of the woods are carpeted with bluebells and wildflowers can be seen in many meadows.



Fish Lantern ▲ © Gayesart.com



Dragon ▲ © Looking Well

## Cultural Bentham

Bentham is well known for its annual community bonfire held at the Auction Mart, with its spectacular lantern procession, samba band, and fireworks. Don't miss it at the end of October each year! Bentham also hosts a traditional agricultural show on the first Saturday of September with livestock, show jumping and dog obedience classes. Closely contested prizes are awarded for a host of handicraft and produce classes as well as poultry, guinea pigs, rare breeds etc. There is a wide range of trade stalls and a grand parade of the competitors.

## Staying, Eating and Drinking

Bentham hosts a variety of places to stay – ranging from comfortable pubs, to guesthouses and bed and breakfasts. There are also self catering cottages and award winning caravan parks. There is a wide choice of places to eat and drink; choose from a fish and chip shop, Asian and Chinese takeaways, and a bistro café, together with several friendly pubs most of which serve food daily. The town has two well-known bakeries, one of which makes gingerbread and sticky toffee pudding and the other, Barwise, is a traditional craft bakery which also stocks fine foods and makes up hampers.



High Street ▲ © Jon Brook

## Shopping

One of Bentham's main attractions is the old fashioned feel of the main street, created by the large number of independent traders. You'll find a post office and chemist; butchers and bakers; greengrocers and ironmongers; sweetshops, newsagents and a video shop too! The street market is held on Wednesdays and brings a splash of colour to the town. The traders association works hard to keep the town vibrant and attractive, so please buy local when you come to Bentham – we need your support!

## Cultural Bentham

Bentham is home to a surprising number of artists, attracted by the town's location and strong creative community. Alongside a pottery and art gallery, you will find painting, photographs and sculpture on display in unusual settings. Looking Well Studios in King Street provides opportunities for visitors to try out arts and crafts activities throughout the year. Pioneer Projects, the charity that runs Looking Well, is known nationally and internationally for their groundbreaking work using the arts and celebration to promote health and wellbeing.



Painting ▲ © artwork Gill Barron

You will find a wide range of complementary therapies available in the town and a lively music scene. In February the town stages a spectacular community pantomime and in June you can visit local artists in their studios as part of the Lunesdale Studio Trail. You will soon discover the wealth of original talent in this small but vibrant town.

This project is supported by the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and received funding from the following organisations:

62549 for information or visit [www.bentham.net](http://www.bentham.net). Staff will be happy to help you! Telephone 015242 4pm, March to October, and is largely manned by volunteers. Here you can find a place to stay, or pick up information about events and activities in the area – the quarantined villagers to collect, and where coins would be left in return. Bentham began to develop in the late 18th century and Anglo Saxon roots: 'bent' meaning rough grass, and Bentham - although the town derives its name from a section of ancient road has been found near Low Bentham can trace its history back to Roman times - a Burton Road and also on Low Bentham Road - this is where food and provisions would be left for the spread of the disease. Flange stones can still be seen at 1598 and 1665, and was put into isolation to halt the Low Bentham was badly affected by the Black Death in Today Bentham is a small but lively market town: well-known for its auction mart. It offers a wide range of independent shops, a friendly welcome and a fantastic location!

Big Stone ▼ © Jon Brook



The railway line linking Lancaster and Morecambe to Leeds provided an important link for Bentham, providing employment and new markets for the town. In the early nineteenth century it also brought campers to one of the first holiday camps in the country, constructed seasonally on the banks of the Wenning. The town's oldest and most curious attraction is the Great Stone of Fourstones, or the Big Stone, to be found up on Burnmoor to the south of the town. Legend has it that there were once three more of these massive boulders, thrown or dropped by a giant. In reality it is a glacial erratic, brought here in the Ice Age and left when the ice melted and retreated. The views from up here are impressive and not to be missed.

Church ▼ © Jon Brook



The church at Low Bentham is a 'Domesday Church' and was founded during the Saxon period, the remains of a Saxon cross is on display. The tower was built in the fourteenth century but the bulk of the building dates from the nineteenth century having been designed by the famous architect Norman Shaw. In 1306 King Edward I granted a market charter to the Parish of Bentham. Markets and fairs could sometimes see up to 3000 sheep crammed into Main Street, and a June Fair included a duck hunt. Bentham and Low Bentham, lies cradled between the Yorkshire Dales and the Forest of Bowland, and within striking distance of the Lake District too. Bentham is accessible by rail via the Leeds to Morecambe line and is an ideal centre for exploring these areas, by bike, on foot, by horse or car.

Waterfalls ▼ © Jon Brook

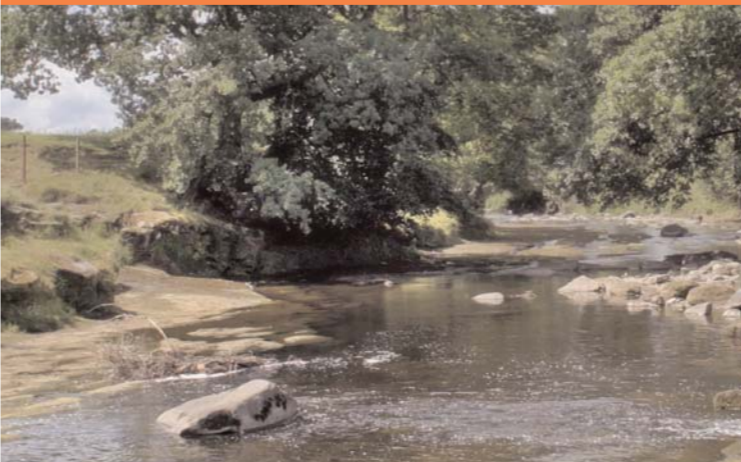
## FOREST OF BOWLAND

### Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally protected landscape and internationally important for its heather moorland, blanket bog and rare birds. It is the first protected area in England to be awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. The Charter approach ensures that organisations, local people and businesses are working together to protect the area, whilst at the same time increasing opportunities for visitors to discover and enjoy its special qualities. Sustainable tourism aims to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while encouraging better income, employment and conservation of the very landscape upon which our tourism is based. For more information regarding the Forest of Bowland AONB, visit the website at [www.forestofbowland.com](http://www.forestofbowland.com) or ring 01772 531473 for an information leaflet. The businesses featured here are part of the local economy which supports this special landscape - please support them with your custom and enjoy your stay!

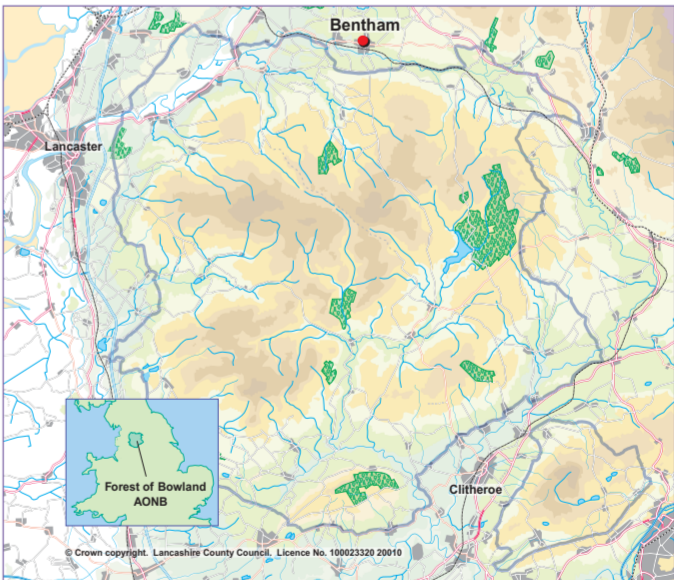


Waterfalls ▼ © Jon Brook



## How to find us

**Public transport:** Trains running from Leeds and Skipton to Lancaster and Morecambe. Buses run regularly to High and Low Bentham from Lancaster and Ingleton (number 80, the Lune Villager service) from Monday to Saturday. For details check with Traveline 0870 608 2608, or visit [www.countrygoer.org/Bowland.htm](http://www.countrygoer.org/Bowland.htm)



**By Road:** Bentham lies on the B6480 approximately 5miles from the A65 between Ingleton and Clapham, or 8miles off the A683 between Hornby and Caton, via Wray. You can also reach Bentham from the south via Slaidburn using the beautiful quiet lane past the Big Stone and Cross of Greet.



Wentham appeared as 'Bentum', recorded as the manor of 'Benehat' and in Tudor times 'heim' meaning home. In the Domesday Book it is Bentham - although the town derives its name from Anglo Saxon roots: 'bent' meaning rough grass, and Bentham - although the town derives its name from a section of ancient road has been found near Low Bentham can trace its history back to Roman times - a Burton Road and also on Low Bentham Road - this is where food and provisions would be left for the spread of the disease. Flange stones can still be seen at 1598 and 1665, and was put into isolation to halt the Low Bentham was badly affected by the Black Death in Today Bentham is a small but lively market town: well-known for its auction mart. It offers a wide range of independent shops, a friendly welcome and a fantastic location!

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## WELCOME TO BENTHAM

a gateway to the Forest of Bowland AONB

