



# FOREST OF BOWLAND

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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Wenning Bank Bridge, Keasden  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

Brock valley bluebell woods  
© T Wilson



# View from the Chair



## View from the Chair:

### County Councillor Albert Atkinson, Chairman of the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee

So much work has taken place during the last year, I will almost inevitably fail to capture and summarise it all in this Chair's report. Nevertheless I should try, so here goes...

Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership got off to a flying start in April 2018 with the 'Summit' project to renew and improve routes to the top, restore the summit area and provide a new stone shelter. This was all delivered within its first six months, in time for the formal launch of the programme in October 2019!

Other exciting Pendle Hill LP developments have seen the establishment of new outdoor learning opportunities for toddlers through to teenagers, working closely with the Ernest Cook Trust; new 'People Enjoying Nature' supported countryside visits in partnership with Lancashire Care NHS Trust; and local community archaeology projects, to name just a few.

Several aspects of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan have also moved forward apace. The AONB unit has worked hard to ensure that the wider Partnership has a strong voice and is influential in both the Glover Review of Designated Landscapes and also in the development of a new Environmental Land Management System to support farmers and land managers to provide public goods, such as biodiversity, soil health, water quality and flood management.

Work to support nature's recovery has continued this year, with delivery of 'Hay Time Rescue' hay meadow restoration work during the spring and summer (supported by Lancashire Environmental Fund) and further excellent progress in restoring peatlands on Abbeystead estate in the autumn and winter (supported by the Defra Peatland Fund).

There are so many more wonderful projects and activities to discover in the following pages, delivered by the AONB unit and many other partner organisations – so delve in and find your favourite!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'A. Atkinson'.

County Councillor Albert Atkinson

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage

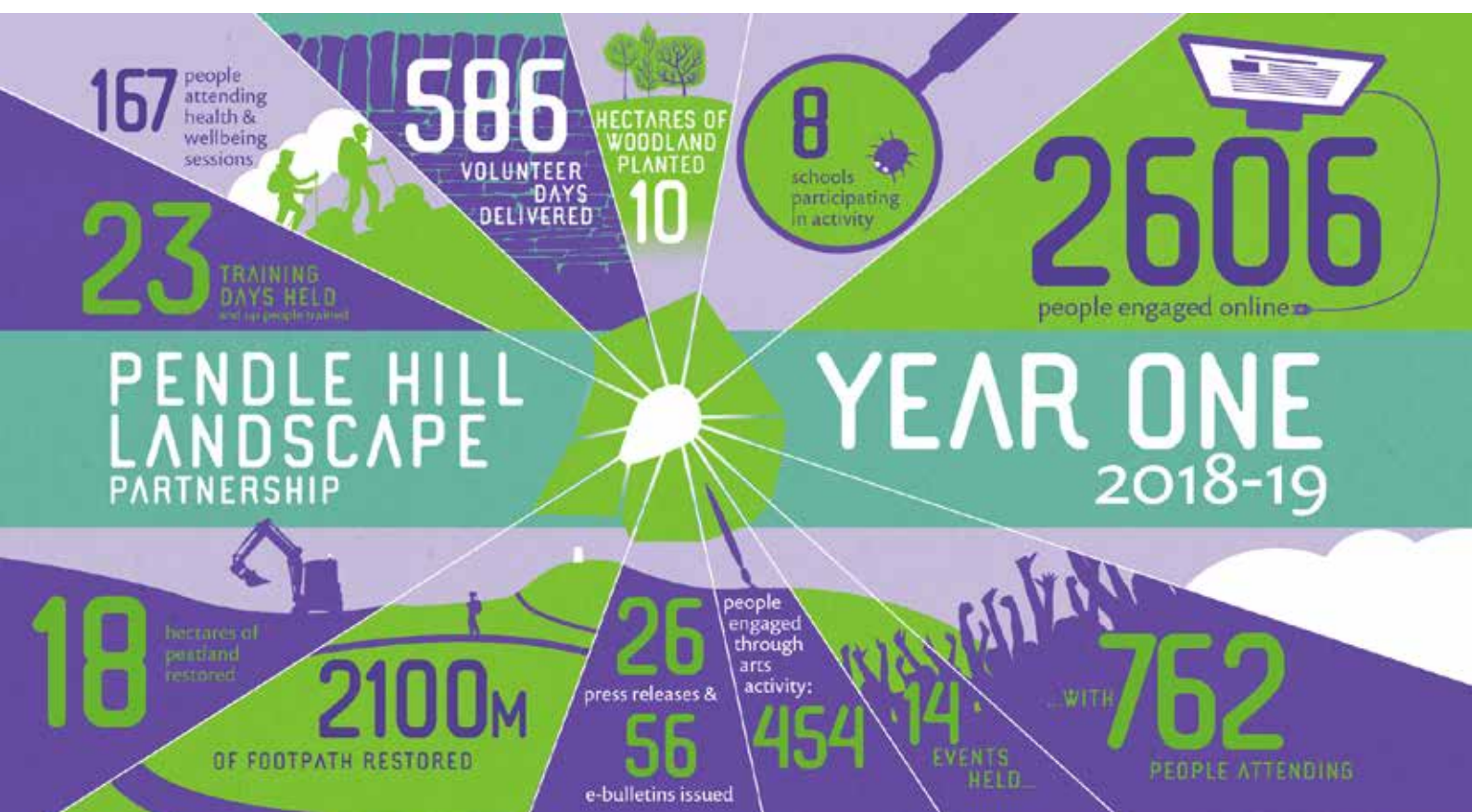
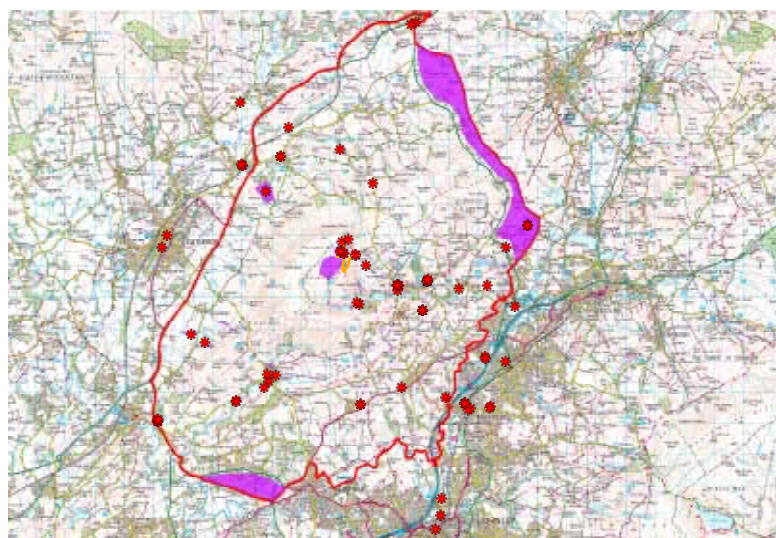
## Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership

The Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership has had a busy first year of activity. The scheme aims to restore and enhance the heritage and landscape of the area; to re connect people with the landscape and their past; to bring the two sides of the hill together and to create a sustainable future.

The PHLP covers 120 square kilometres of land lying between Clitheroe and Nelson, including our iconic landmark hill and the lower lying villages and farms on both sides. Half of this area, the central core, is within the AONB.

PHLP is largely funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (£1.8m over 4 years) with additional funds coming from charitable trusts, statutory bodies and volunteer time. The scheme is hosted by the AONB and is based in Clitheroe with a small team of seven. We work with four other partner organisations: the Dry Stone Walling Association, Mid Pennine Arts, Ribble Rivers Trust and In-Situ Arts; and between us we are delivering 14 individual projects over 4 years!

Keep in touch with our progress via [www.pendlehillproject.com](http://www.pendlehillproject.com) and find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership Activity map  
© Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership

2018 - 2019 infographic  
© Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage

## Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership: Summit

Our Summit project began with a major contract to restore the badly eroded cart track, a well-used route up the hill from Barley. This track was re excavated and punctuated by stone water bars which take rainwater off the path and so reduce erosion of the track itself. This, together with the creation of two 'sub soil' paths that link this track and the 'steps' route up the hill, means walkers can now clearly reach the central trig point which marks the summit of this amazing and very popular 557m tall hill. To top off the work a new seating area, made by Phil Dolphin, a master craftsman dry stone waller, was created near the trig point. This was based on a design created by architecture students from Manchester University and incorporates seating facing a variety of directions to ensure there is always shelter from the wind that so often blows up on Pendle.

Finally the *Summit Stones* were installed. These show a variety of images depicting the area's natural wonders and historic features, as well as four directional stones to help you get your bearings.

More recently the top of the hill has again been visited by diggers and tracked machinery, this time working on repairing eroded gullies and areas of bare peat. This will help the remaining peat to regenerate and to trap both rainfall and carbon, whilst providing valuable habitat for birds and invertebrates that frequent the moorlands. We hope our repair work makes the hill a better place for wildlife and for visitors for many years to come.



Coir rolls and reprofiling on Pendle Hill  
© Conservefor

Footpath maintenance on Pendle Hill  
© Conservefor

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage

## Hay Time Rescue

Hay Time Rescue is a new project funded jointly by Lancashire Environmental fund, Yorkshire dales Millennium Trust and Forest of Bowland AONB.

The project aim is to bolster the population of some of the scarcer plant species in the Forest of Bowland, by extending and managing the areas where they are currently found, with the support of farmers, land owners and volunteers. The work is focussed in the species rich hay meadows and pastures in the area, but also includes special verges.

The key focus species are bird's eye primrose *Primula farinosa*, globe flower *Trollius europaeus*, melancholy thistle *Cirsium heterophyllum* and saw wort *Serratula tinctoria*. Seed of these species has been collected from sustainable local populations and, together with the resources at Kew Millennium Seed Bank, local volunteers and land owners, propagated and fostered into plug plants. Over 2000 plug plants will go out into suitable sites across the AONB later in the year.

Local knowledge is key to the project: from identifying the local sustainable populations, to the help of LERN and local botany groups enabling us to gain a fuller picture of the species distribution, their decline, and hopefully a list of additional re-introduction sites at historically recorded locations.

Field scale meadow restoration is also part of this project as in previous Hay Time projects. This year more than 10 hectares of species poor meadows have begun their transformation into beautiful wildflower rich hay meadows. Over the past 8 years more than 120 hectares of Forest of Bowland semi-improved grassland has undergone some restoration work: either in the form of green hay from the SSSI meadows in the Forest of Bowland, seed, or plug plant addition, continuing to extend this important wildlife resource and visual asset across the AONB landscape.

The Coronation meadows at Bell Sykes Farm are one of the donor sites for the Hay Time restoration work and also the host of the National Meadows Day at the beginning of July - a celebration of all things "Meadow". This year activities included meadow walks, bug walks, local craft stalls and scything demonstrations attracting well over 150 visitors on the day.



Globe flower at a site in the Hodder Valley  
© Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage



## Peat Restoration

During quarter 4 of 2017-18, we had word that, together with other protected landscapes in the North of England, the Forest of Bowland AONB had been successful in being granted funding from the Defra funded peatland restoration budget, as part of their climate change responsibilities.

We had worked up the bid as part of this larger bid earlier that year, and so it was fantastic news to be part of this successful bid, which included £4.4million of funding as a whole, with the Forest of Bowland projects making up £560K of this funding over three years on six sites on the Abbeystead Estate.

The sites were chosen based on their ability to mitigate climate change. This means that only the sites with the highest carbon reduction potential went into the funding application. These are sites where there is eroding bare peat and actively eroding gullies, both of which can be restored and the further loss of carbon prevented. Following restoration, these sites are also then able to start to lock carbon up in their developing sphagnum moss and cotton grass vegetation.

During the summer of 2018 the landowners paid for a detailed assessment of all the sites to be undertaken. This was then used in the tendering process during which a contractor for the work that year was chosen. Once the winter restoration season began and the necessary consents from Natural England were in place (the sites are all protected at national and European level and so there is a detailed consenting process to go through in partnership with Natural England), work began on three of the six sites.

The winter weather was quite kind and there were only two weeks when it was not possible for the contractors to be on site. By the end of the season (31st March), the contractors had completed works on each of the three sites. Fencing was installed around each of the areas to ensure sheep could not graze any new developing vegetation; eroding peat hags were re-profiled to prevent rainwater washing out more peat; the bare peat was covered with chopped grass and heather brash to provide a good seed bed for developing vegetation and small wooden dams were installed to help to re-wet the peat.

The next steps will be to work on two more of the sites during the 2019-20 restoration season, and the final site the following year.

Wooden dam installed on Brown Syke  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage

## Natural Flood Management on Whitley Beck

In the wake of the repeated catastrophic flooding of Galgate, the Environment Agency, working with the Local Flood Action Group, appointed JBA to model the River Conder and Whitley Beck with a view to recommending the type and location of Natural Flood Management measures which might help the situation. At the same time the Lune Rivers Trust was successful in retaining Slow the Flow funds to be used for NFM measures to help the Community at Risk at Galgate.

The EA and JBA agreed that LRT could have early sight of the modelling recommendations (our funding was time-sensitive!) and it was agreed that Whitley Beck would be a good place to start. From the modelling maps it was clear that leaky woody dams and/or tree-planting would be the most suitable NFM for this sub-catchment.

Armed with the maps we visited the farms identified and Kitchen Ground Farm and Boldens Farm were willing to work with us. With support from the Forestry Commission, Huw Thomas, their hydrologist

and Project Leader Natural Flood Management, visited the two farms and explained the best sites and designs for 10 leaky woody dams, which the farmers would install on our behalf. At the same time he explained how these would work and any risk factors to representatives of Lancashire County Council so that we could then obtain our Land Drainage consent.

The 10 leaky dams were installed in March and have been monitored by the farmers who were delighted to report that they were working. Ideas for the future on Whitley Beck include retention ponds, further leaky dams and kested hedgerows.

Our thanks to the EA for advice and Slow the Flow funding, JBA for their modelling advice, the Forestry Commission and Huw Thomas for advice on where and how to build the leaky dams and most importantly, the farmers of Whitley Beck without whom none of this would have been possible!



One of the newly installed leaky dams on Whitley Beck  
© Lune Rivers Trust

A leaky dam in action on Whitley Beck  
© Lune Rivers Trust

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage

## Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership: Habitats and Landscapes

Our aim to restore the Pendle Hill landscape by creating better managed, extended and linked up wildlife habitats is delivered in part by our partner-led projects which focus on woodland creation and management; the removal of invasive species; and the restoration of hedgerows and dry stone walls.

### WINNS

Ribble Rivers Trust have worked on five sites this year, managing 2.5 hectares of woodland; and creating 10.6 hectares of new woodland. The majority of these are clough woodlands which lie alongside streams running off the hill. These new woodlands are great for wildlife as well as helping to reduce flooding, keeping water cool and reducing silt and pollution. Removal of invasive species such as Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed along these and other watercourses also help the native wildlife and the retention of soils along the riverbanks.

### Traditional Boundaries

Last summer we kicked off the Traditional Boundaries project with the creation of the seating area on the summit of Pendle and a short walling training course for 10 volunteers; and then this spring 15 people were trained in hedge laying skills at Twiston near Downham. In addition Pendle Hill LP hosted this year's Bowland Hedgelaying competition at Cockshotts farm in Sabden. 21 participants from across the north west competed and nearly 200 people came along to view them in action as well as to explore the farm, have-a-go at walling and hedging and enjoy a variety of stalls and information stands in the church hall. The winner of the Championship Class, and best overall hedge of the day was Craig Procter; and Steven Boyes was top of the Open Class.



Tree planting with Ribble Rivers Trust  
© Ribble Rivers Trust

Bowland Hedge Laying Competition 2019  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage



## Pendle Hill Farmers Group

The Pendle Hill Farmers Group was set up in March 2018, following a successful application to the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund. Currently there are 28 members covering around 2750 ha. The group aims to: increase understanding of local Countryside Stewardship priorities and knowledge of landscape scale conservation techniques, and to encourage the uptake of schemes; work together with as many group members as possible implementing these techniques on, and across, members' farms by:

- Restoring, managing and expanding priority habitats: woodlands, grasslands, wetlands and moorlands
- Restoring traditional boundaries
- Implementing natural flood management techniques

In its first year the group met eight times and, in addition, members of the group attended meetings organised by the Forest of Bowland AONB on behalf of Defra, looking at the developments of ELMS in the uplands.

Site visits included a trip to Nethergill Farm in the Yorkshire Dales to look at demonstration natural flood management features. Following on from this, the AONB collaborated with the Yorkshire Dales National Park, Yorkshire Rivers Trust and Ribble Rivers Trust, to produce a publication - 'Natural Flood Management Measures – a practical guide for farmers'.

Following the launch of the 'Farming Rules for Water' in April 2018 the group attended an evening walk along the Twiston valley to hear the rules explained by Jackie Monk, a local EA adviser. The cab cards produced by EA were well received, ensuring that members could check up on buffer zone widths whilst out spreading.

This event followed an evening meeting led by the local CSF Officer, focusing on the Water Capital Grants available through Countryside Stewardship. During the 2018 application window, four group members applied for the water capital grant, supporting work to decrease diffuse pollution risk from their yards and buildings.

Ian Cairns, from Agri-food Technical Services in Northumberland, delivered a popular workshop in Pendleton on rush management, offering practical advice to all the attendees. As rushes are a common issue in pasture ground, this was well received. As part of the session, local RSPB advisers, Janet Fairclough and Chris Tomson, talked about how rush control can take account of wading birds and how it is straight forward to manage rushes in a way which also benefits birds.

Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust Adviser, Matt Goodall, visited the group on two different occasions, firstly to lead a walk in Sabden looking at farmland bird management as part of the Big Farmland Bird Count and then to speak to members about predation control.

Plans for 2019 include soil health, compaction and nutrient status – manure management planning, traditional boundaries – training opportunities and troubleshooting days, wildlife monitoring and nest box location.



# Natural & Cultural Heritage

## Traditional Boundaries

Bowland is criss-crossed by hedges and dry stone walls - markers of landholdings past and present. With hedges tending to feature around the lower, more fertile fields and walls dominating the uplands, these important elements in our landscape provide not only clues to the area's past, but also welcome shelter for stock, plus habitat for small mammals, birds, reptiles and insects.

Managing and maintaining these features is skilled work, and essential if they are to continue to contribute to the AONB's sense of place and mosaic of wildlife habitats into the future. Fortunately, during 2018/19 keen volunteers once again headed to the four corners (almost!) of the AONB where they picked up bill hook, axe and pruning saw and got to work.

Hailing from far and near, 27 people – regular volunteers and new faces – joined us to learn from experienced hedge layers, Joe Craig, Geoff Whitley, Andrew Kirkwood and Phil King, and Master craftsman waller, Alan Rhodes. We were treated very kindly by the weather this season,

with only a few hours lost over the twelve sessions - quite a contrast to last year! In all, just over 500m of hedge were laid, along with around 3m of wall gapped up.

It's been great both to work at familiar sites and to discover some new corners of Bowland and we extend our thanks to this year's hosts: Swainshead Hall Farm, Abbeystead; Higher Gills Farm, Rimington; New Laund Farm, Whitewell; Fell View Park, Scorton; Laneside Farm, Grindleton and Lower Gills Cottages, Tosside.

And of course, a big thank you goes to all the volunteers and trainees who braved the winter months to help us keep Bowland's boundaries looking beautiful.

We're looking forward to continuing our Traditional Boundaries programme during 2019/20 when we hope to welcome back long-standing volunteers and encourage newcomers to join in and have a go.



Hedge laying at Dinkling Green  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

Dry stone walling at Swainshead Farm  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage

## Quernmore & the Conder Valley Landscape Enhancement Initiative

National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative aims to provide up to £24 million over six years (2015-2021) for localised visual improvement projects in AONBs and National Parks.

The initiative seeks to reduce the visual impact of National Grid's existing infrastructure and enhance the quality of the affected landscapes. Where the visual impacts of the electricity transmission line cannot be directly screened or otherwise mitigated it may be possible to shift emphasis away from the transmission line by enhancing the landscape in other ways such as maintaining boundaries and restoring landscape features.

The Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership have submitted a proposal for landscape enhancement around Quernmore and the Conder Valley working with 16 landowners, which includes planting copses and field corners, restoring drystone walls, planting parkland trees and restoring/recreating hedgerows.

We have been working with partners including the Woodland Trust (part of the Northern Forest), Lancashire & Westmorland Hedge-laying Association, the Drystone Walling Association, Lune Rivers Trust, Forestry Commission and Lancaster University.

A decision is to be made in 2019/20 with the programme (worth around £260,000) running for three years. The scheme is intended to be a catalyst for further related work in the area over the coming decade. For example, the Rivers of the Conder and the Lune have been the focus of work for the Lune Rivers Trust to improve water quality and to develop natural flood management. We would also seek to work with the Forestry Commission to restore plantations on the sites of ancient and semi natural woodland around Quernmore.

### Proposed LEI Outputs

1. Plant, protect and manage **18** tree cages (mature trees) in areas immediately surrounding National Grid's infrastructure
2. Plant **4,137** metres of hedgerow on existing fence lines (mostly where there were previous hedges) and restore **1,345** metres of existing hedgerow (gapping up and protection)
3. Lay **2,608** metres of hedgerow, a central component of the landscape character
4. Create **1.084** hectares of copse and field corner planting
5. Restore **304** metres of drystone walling
6. **6** training sessions
7. **165** standard hedgerow trees



National Grid infrastructure in the Conder Valley, Quernmore  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

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# Natural & Cultural Heritage



## Undergrounding for Visual Amenity

As part of the 'Undergrounding for Visual Amenity' (UVA) programme, Electricity North West Ltd. (ENWL) continues to work with the Forest of Bowland AONB Unit to underground visually intrusive sections of overhead lines. Forest of Bowland AONB was allocated c. £1.8m in 2015 for the current price review period (RIIO-ED1) for delivery up to 2023.

Work in 2018/19 focused on planning and early works for four undergrounding schemes identified within Ribble Valley:

- **Closes Barn to Beatrix (near Dunsop Bridge)**

This scheme involves undergrounding 1926m of high voltage line and 170m of low voltage line. This work will improve the local landscape and views at the southern end of the Dunsop valley

- **Brennand spur (near Dunsop Bridge)**

This scheme involves undergrounding 920m of high voltage line and 56m of low voltage line. This project will remove overhead lines from the valley floor in the open upland landscape of the Brennand valley.

- **Fellside to Merrybent and Kenibus to Lamb Hill (Upper Hodder)**

These two closely linked schemes will involve undergrounding 2362m of high voltage line and 37m of low voltage line. This project will remove particularly visually intrusive overhead lines from the open moorland fringe landscape of the Upper Hodder valley.

In addition, the availability of programme budget (due to scheme drop-out and budget inflation) means that a new scheme from Holden village to near Wycongill Farm has been added to the overall programme. Surveying and planning work for this scheme took place in early 2018/19.



# Resilient & Sustainable Communities

## Sustainable Tourism Business Network

Due to Champion Bowland changing its governance arrangements and reconstituting as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Bowland Experience Ltd was closed as a company at the end of 2017. The network still remains with the same aims and is now called the Forest of Bowland Sustainable Tourism Network.

The network now has a working group of seven businesses, meeting informally two to three times a year to move forward the priorities of the network, and working with the AONB Sustainable Tourism Officer. During 2018 -19 the following businesses have joined the network: Peaks and Pods, Rathmell; The Old Woodshed, Goosnargh; The Shippon, Longridge; Goosnargh Gin; The Calf's Head, Worston; The Cabin, Barley and The Gathering Fields Retreat, Over Wyresdale.

A Discover Pendle Hill business networking launch event was held at the beginning of July as part of the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership Scheme and was attended by 23 participants from 15 businesses at the Assheton Arms, Downham. The purpose of the event was to engage with tourism businesses and for them to find out more about the Scheme, in particular the Discover Pendle Hill Project. The networking meeting was also an opportunity to develop contacts to begin the planning of the Foodie Foray event for Autumn 2018.

In June eight network members attended the 'Star Tips for Profit' workshop held at Three Rivers Caravan Park, West Bradford, learning how to promote the opportunities of dark sky tourism. By attending the workshop and completing a business audit, tourism businesses can apply to the AONB for 'Dark Sky Friendly' Business status. A list of accredited businesses to date can be viewed here:

[www.forestofbowland.com/Star-Gazing](http://www.forestofbowland.com/Star-Gazing)

A joint event - to launch the Discovery Guide and for the annual sustainable tourism forum - was held on 7th February 2019 at Bentham Golf Club and was attended by 40 businesses and volunteers. The forum was an opportunity to provide network members with updates about the Pendle Hill Project, Champion Bowland and apprenticeship opportunities provided by Myerscough College. There was also plenty of opportunity for discussions around pledges and ideas for sustainable tourism initiatives in 2019.

Five new locator logos have been produced to assist local tourism businesses and communities to promote the fact that they operate within, or are allied to, the beautiful landscapes of this nationally protected area. The scheme is part of the Forest of Bowland AONB's Sustainable Tourism work which aims to work in partnership with a range of visitor related businesses and organisations to encourage sustainable tourism to the area, benefitting rural businesses and the local economy as a whole.

The logos include:

- **Tourism Business in/Working in/Happening in/Made in and Located in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

The locator logos represent the place – they are not a quality mark, and do not represent an endorsement, funding or any other support by the Forest of Bowland AONB. The locator logos were launched at the Sustainable Tourism Forum in February 2019 and so far 8 businesses have now applied to use them.



Guide Launch and Forum  
© Mark Sutcliffe

Locator logo

Dark Skies logo

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# Resilient & Sustainable Communities



## Ten years of Champion Bowland

Champion Bowland is an independent Charitable Incorporated Organisation run by voluntary trustees with secretariat support provided by the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit. It raises funds from visitor donations and charitable activity and these funds are then awarded to local projects which benefit the environment, local communities and visitors in the Forest of Bowland AONB.

Champion Bowland has reached its ten year anniversary and recently transitioned from a charitable company into a charitable incorporated organisation and recruited new volunteer trustees. Over ten years £13,460 has been donated to 28 community and environmental projects, including community based biodiversity conservation and habitat protection, such as pond restoration and wildflower meadows. Grants have also helped with education in wildlife and landscape appreciation in school.

Access for All has also been a major theme with maintained wheelchair and pushchair trails in the countryside and Trampers bought through the project.

Champion Bowland also administers a Farm Visits Fund on behalf of the AONB and 28 groups making 52 visits involving 1496 people had benefited from the bursary scheme as of July 2018.

In 2019 Champion Bowland, working with the AONB, launched a Landmark Trees initiative to safeguard the legacy of the area's oldest and most prominent trees. Many of Bowland's beautiful old trees are nearing the end of their lives and in order to safeguard the unique character of the Bowland landscape, Champion Bowland is looking for help from the public and corporate sponsors to identify suitable trees and plan for replacements to be established before their predecessors succumb to old age or disease. Participating businesses can nominate Landmark Trees in their neighbourhood and also opt to plant and safeguard new trees.

The Seafood Pub Company's Nina Finn plants the first sapling for Champion Bowland's Landmark Trees initiative outside the Assheton Arms in Downham  
© Mark Sutcliffe

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# Resilient & Sustainable Communities

## Apprenticeship Provides Stepping Stone to New Career

In October 2017, Ribble Rivers Trust took on their first River Conservation Apprentice, Michelle Tierney, working on all aspects of RRT's work from fencing to fish passes and working with schools and volunteers. Michelle recently 'graduated' from her apprenticeship, finding a permanent role with English Heritage. In the six months before her departure, Michelle worked on the Pendle WINNS (Woodlands & Invasive Non-Native Species) project, part of the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership Scheme, working with volunteers to plant thousands of trees and tackle Himalayan Balsam and other invasive species in the AONB. In her own words, Michelle highlights her experience:

*Changing careers can be a daunting prospect as you can never be totally sure whether it's something you'll be good at or even like. I somehow knew though that my decision to change from working in an office to working as an apprentice for an environmental conservation charity would be the best professional decision I would ever make. I've been involved in a wide range of activities, including fitting eel tiles on a fish pass to allow eels to migrate upstream. Having never used a chisel and hammer before (seriously), this was a first for me, and only on my second day! Next came tree planting and oh boy, were there a lot – the first site had over 7000 trees!*

*My skills were developing quickly, and I was feeling more confident carrying out practical tasks. During the glorious summer of 2018, I spent most of it outdoors in the sunshine. I helped to construct a post and rail fence and made a hurdle to fit between the fence posts. Other activities included creating woodland footpaths, hosting community litter picking sessions and creating leaky dams to help slow the flow of water downstream. Aside from the practical learning, these types of activities helped to explain the importance of caring for our environment and making it a safer, cleaner and more enjoyable place to be in for wildlife and people.*

*The apprenticeship has had its challenges, but I think it has only proven to me how determined I am to persevere and make sure I finish whatever task I start. It has been a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills and meet like-minded people and I will take away so many fond memories.*

Ribble Rivers Trust also have three other apprentices as part of their National Lottery Heritage Funded Ribble Life Together project, working alongside the Forest of Bowland AONB and others to improve the Ribble Catchment and engage people about the river heritage through a range of events and activities.



Ribble Rivers Trust apprentice, Michelle Tierney  
© Ribble Rivers Trust

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# Resilient & Sustainable Communities

## Leeds-Morecambe Community Rail Partnership

Partnership work with the Leeds-Morecambe CRP (also known as The Bentham Line) continued during 2018/19.

Once again, residents and visitors had the chance to climb on board the Bowland Explorer – a summer Sunday/Bank Holiday mini-coach service between Lancaster and Clitheroe via the AONB.

Connecting with Bentham Line rail services from Leeds and Morecambe at Bentham Station and with Clitheroe Line services from Manchester, Bolton and Blackburn at Clitheroe station, the service provided onward journeys across Bowland calling at Ingleton, Clapham, Gisburn Forest, Slaidburn, Newton and Waddington.

Part-funded by the Seed-Corn Fund of Arriva Rail North Ltd (Northern) and managed by the Dales and Bowland Community interest Company, the Bowland Explorer operated from late May until the end of September and offered a great opportunity for hiking, rambling or trying out some of the area's fantastic pubs and cafes.

The Bentham Line's pioneering Dementia and Community Rail project continued to develop, furthering the aim of raising awareness of dementia amongst rail staff and volunteers so that passengers living with dementia – and their carers – are supported in their journeys along the line. The initiative also aims to encourage these passengers to explore and enjoy the wonderful countryside which the train gives access to.

As part of this project, the AONB Partnership was excited to be involved in the launch of a new dementia-friendly trail at Birch Hills, Gisburn Forest & Stocks, in September. Working with the CRP, and with great support from Forestry England, an existing one and a half mile easy-access route was provided with more frequent, specially-badged, way marker posts, designed to increase confidence in those following the walk. A number of attractive, new benches were also installed, providing lots of opportunity to stop and enjoy the forest surroundings. Thanks to help from United Utilities and Slaidburn Archive, the walk description was updated and made into an accompanying, illustrated leaflet by the CRP, highlighting local heritage and wildlife.

To mark the launch of the trail, a group of visitors from Dementia Friendly Keighley travelled by train to Bentham and then took a minibus across the fells to Gisburn Forest where they enjoyed a picnic followed by a walk along the trail.



Bowland Explorer bus stop at Gisburn Forest & Stocks  
© Mark Sutcliffe

Visitors explore the Birch Hills Trail  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

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# A Strong Connection Between People & The Landscape

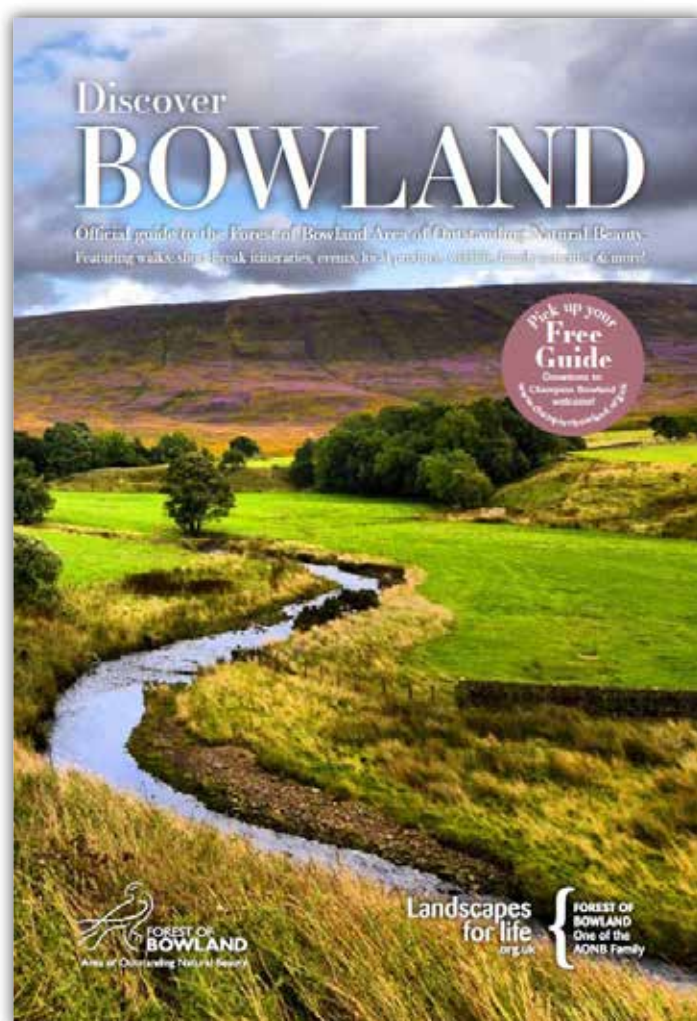
## Discovery Guide

A brand new guide to the Forest of Bowland was launched in February, packed with information and ideas for exploring this fantastic Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Featuring walks, short-break itineraries, events, local produce, wildlife, family activities and much more, the guide is a key publication for the Partnership.

The new look guide - which has been re-designed from its original A4 to a journal size in order to encourage visitors to pick it up - is available from local Tourist Information Centres and a range of local tourism businesses, or by visiting [www.forestofbowland.com](http://www.forestofbowland.com)

Business advertising generated £3,000 of funds to support the production of the guide and, although the brochure is free, often visitors comment on the quality of the publication and are happy to donate to Champion Bowland. Businesses collect these donations to pass onto the charity.

Local businesses, event organisers and community members celebrated the release of Discover Bowland 2019 at Bentham Golf Course on 7th February. Feedback about the newly designed booklet has been positive and work on the 2020 edition is now underway.



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# A Strong Connection Between People & The Landscape

## Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership: Heritage

### Archaeology

Our first summer (2018) got off to a roaring start with an archaeological excavation at Malkin Tower farm and the restoration of two key footpaths providing access to the hill from Barley village. Luckily for us the summer was dry and hot, sometimes too hot, and this enabled us to get lots of ground work done. The excavation was led by University of Central Lancashire archaeology department in conjunction with an international field school. We were fortunate to have the expertise of Professor Charles Orser on hand, a specialist in the post medieval period and an enthusiast in the 'archaeology of poverty' plus the many hands of university and overseas students and community volunteers who joined the dig for five weeks. The students uncovered the remains of two buildings – one a barn and the other a small dwelling, together with very many fragments of pottery. Nobody knows if these were anything to do with the Pendle Witches last coven supposedly held at Malkin Tower in 1612, but it was fun finding out more about life in the early 17th century. You can see the site and some of the findings in a couple of films available on our YouTube channel.

The excavation was also attended by artists in residence Nastassja Simensky and Rebecca Lee who recorded the sights and sounds of the dig and carried out their own extensive research. This was then re-imagined as a 'micro-opera' entitled *Five Verses on Six Sacks of Earth* and performed at a number of sites around the hill. This was part of our arts practice, *The Gatherings*, which is led by In-Situ. The team there have also this year supported Henrietta Armstrong, who created the *12 Summit Stones* for the trig point on the top of Pendle; and Kerry Morrison who has been researching her Peat residency which will continue into 2019/20.

### Pendle Radicals

Mid Pennine Arts are leading a project for us called 'Pendle Radicals' which is exploring the rich social history of agitators, activists and reformers from around the Pendle Hill area. This year research has focussed on an amazing woman called Ethel Carnie Holdsworth who wrote novels and poetry with a very radical edge. The MPA volunteers have arranged for new recordings of some of her work to be deposited in the National Poetry Archive. The team have also been researching the visual culture of protest banners and plan to hold a major exhibition of old and new banners in October 2019 as part of the British Textile Biennial. A new tourist feature, the Radicals Trail has been developed, it visits a number of sites associated with locals including George Fox and Jonas More: this will 'go live' in 2019 with site information and a new website.



*Five Verses on Six Sacks of Earth* "micro-opera"  
© In-Situ

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# A Strong Connection Between People & The Landscape



## Wyre Coast and Countryside Service

Wyre Council supports the AONB partnership to promote and help care for the Forest of Bowland AONB. The Wyre Coast and Countryside service has a small team of volunteers and staff who support healthy outdoor activities, access for all, habitat management, sustainable tourism and visitor management with the aim of connecting people with wildlife and landscape.

Rangers and volunteers help to provide access for all by looking after popular picnic areas such as Brock Picnic Area and gateway access points to the Forest of Bowland at Garstang and Scorton. Weekly volunteer teams carry out a programme of surveys, maintenance and improvement on paths, routes and trails that are promoted by the Council, the AONB and Visitor Centres. Tasks undertaken include rejuvenating surfaced paths, installing kissing gates, way-marking and vegetation management alongside the routes.

In partnership with the Wyre Waters Catchment Partnership the Ranger Service carried out Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed control in areas which are important for biodiversity.

The council coordinated a programme of community engagement activities within the Festival Bowland programme with the aim of connecting people to nature through healthy outdoor exercise and promoting the opportunity to volunteer in the countryside.

Events and activities include Health Walks and Legstretchers, which are easy walks for people recovering from ill-health and provide an introduction to exploring the countryside on foot. The popular Trampler Treks provide customers with disabilities opportunities to explore the area with the provision of Trampers and guides for the day. One special walk is the Scorton challenge which enables people using Trampers to visit the top of Nicky Nook Fell. The Rangers supported themed guided walks where leaders were highlighting the wildlife of the Forest of Bowland, such as walks on bats, hares and whimbrels, and the night time skies through a new stargazing event at Cobble Hey Gardens.

The 2018 Garstang Walking Festival experienced blistering springtime heat and was well supported by locals and visitors. The festival ran a 3 day Knott-to-Tot long distance walk from the coast to the fells and gave wonderful opportunities to explore the moors, meadows and moss lands of Garstang and the Forest of Bowland. The council supported the Friends of Garstang Walking Festival who coordinated the 9 day Festival of 40 plus walks with the help of a team of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteer walk leaders. The walks and events are booked through the Visit Garstang Centre, which provides an easy access location for visitors to find out about Wyre and the Forest of Bowland and helps to promote local visitor attractions, accommodation and places to enjoy through walking and cycling.

Garstang Walking Festival participants in Bowland  
© Mike Coleran

Volunteers checking a section of the Wyre Way long distance route  
© Wyre Coast & Countryside Service

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# A Strong Connection Between People & The Landscape

## Discovering Bowland

### Foodie Foray

The Pendle Hill Foodie Foray event was developed over the summer months and took place from the 13th to the 18th October, offering a celebration of local food producers and the distinctive local dishes found at the foot of our landmark hill.

The five-day programme included walks, talks, foraging and feasting, linking with local eateries and producers on both sides of the hill. The Foray included 10 bookable events which can be viewed here: <https://pendlehillproject.com/foodie-foray> with links to producer and chef profiles here: <https://pendlehillproject.com/foodie-foray-profiles>. The events were attended by over 100 people and supported by nine eateries and specialist food consultants. Because of the success of the Pendle Hill Foodie Foray, the week will be widened to include the whole of the AONB for 2019 and will feature as a themed Festival Bowland week in the autumn.

### Mobile App for Walking Routes

We have now uploaded the AONB walking routes to the ViewRanger App, where you can plan, navigate, record and share your adventures! The App provides us with a more efficient way of updating routes and gives you access to the most up to date information.

ViewRanger offers thousands of downloadable route guides, free worldwide maps, and powerful GPS navigation features. Their mobile app runs on iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, Kindle Fire, and Android smartphones, tablets, and watches. ViewRanger's GPS navigation works offline anywhere in the world, without phone or data coverage. Simply save maps and route guides to your device before you leave home.

If you still prefer the pdf downloads, then follow the links below to print a paper copy. View the new routes at [www.forestofbowland.com/walking](http://www.forestofbowland.com/walking)



### Dark Skies Festival

The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has been officially recognised as having some of the darkest skies in England - celebrated with a week of special events during half-term in February 2019.

Running from Saturday 16th until Sunday 24th February the themed week was a sell-out and included guided star gazing and astrophotography with local amateur astronomer, Robert Ince; the chance to book into one of Bentham Golf Club's glamping pods or lodges; wrap up warm and listen to nocturnal tales in Gisburn Forest with storyteller, Sue Allonby and an invitation to step inside Yorkshire Planetarium's mobile dome for night-sky films with the wow factor.

Visitors wanting to stay and explore the area for a little longer were encouraged to choose from a number of Dark Sky Friendly businesses - many of them accommodation providers offering information about star gazing in Bowland. Details of the festival can be viewed here: <https://www.forestofbowland.com/Bowland-Dark-Skies-Festival>

We plan to run the festival during the same half term week in 2020 – look out for further details on the website.

Cabin to Clarion walk  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

Viewranger app

The Milky Way above St. James' Church, Dalehead

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# A Strong Connection Between People & The Landscape

## Festival Bowland

This year's Festival introduced three themes into the wider programme, with the idea of helping festival-goers to focus on particular aspects of Bowland. From lapwings, hares and butterflies in April (Springtime Wildlife) to wildflowers in July (Meadow Magic) and night-time explorations in September (Bowland by Night), the events were a great way to discover and enjoy the AONB.

Adventures on foot included a series of moorland walks above Slaidburn, bluebell tea walks in Calder Vale, pub rambles in the Ribble valley plus bat walks by the River Hodder and in Garstang. Trumper treks in Dunsop Bridge, Scorton and Nether Wyresdale offered the chance for less mobile countryside-lovers to enjoy Bowland's fresh air and fantastic scenery.

Navigation, stone carving and needle felting were on offer for those wanting to learn a new skill, whilst clog dancing demonstrations brought local Lancashire folk dances to life in Clitheroe.

Garstang Walking Festival offered nine days of springtime walks on a "Moss, Meadows and Moorland" theme during early May, with Bleasdale hosting a variety of events featuring wildlife, landscape and heritage.

National Meadows day in Slaidburn, plus open gardens in Bleasdale and Tatham, showcased fantastic flowers during the summer months, whilst apples took centre stage in Ribchester in the autumn.

The 2019 programme got off to a flying start with the AONB's first Dark Skies Festival. Held during February half term the week of activities included everything from guided star gazing to a pop up planetarium and proved extremely popular:

Once again the Festival was supported by a range of agencies, businesses and knowledgeable volunteers – without whom such a varied calendar of events wouldn't be possible and our thanks are extended to everyone involved.

Between April 2018 and March 2019 events attracted over 2000 attendances.



Clitheroe Clogs! event  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

Lapwing chicks  
© G Thomas

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# A Strong Connection Between People & The Landscape

## Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership: Community Engagement

The PHLP has three themes running through it: the Environment; the Economy; and Engagement. This latter part is very important to us as an AONB as it enables us to work with communities lying just outside the AONB boundary and to offer opportunities to re-connect people with their landscape. We are particularly keen to offer support to communities who are less likely to visit the Pendle Hill landscape: young people, those dealing with mental health and social isolation issues, and those from resident black, Asian and refugee communities.

### PEN

Our People Enjoying Nature project (PEN) provides meaningful trips to the countryside for people supported by NHS Community Restart. Over the last year the project has provided sessions for people in activity such as bird and bat box making; meadow management; bushcraft and foraging skills; archaeology workshops; dry stone walling and removal of Himalayan balsam. Participants also enjoyed working with artist Henrietta Armstrong and made a special visit to view the completed Summit Stones in February. In total 167 participants attended the sessions, involving 50 different individuals.

### Volunteering & Learning

Our Volunteering and Learning project has also got off to a successful start. Thanks to the Ernest Cook Trust we employ a full time Outdoor Learning Officer who organises family nature events and an under 5's outdoor playgroup called Little Saplings. These are very popular events, often fully booked, and this year 52 events catered for 1880 people. The OL also works with targeted schools, encouraging teachers to use the landscape to help deliver national curriculum themes, for 5 -16 year olds; and also helps the various LP projects to engage with schools for example in archaeology or local and social history.

The Pendle Hill Volunteer group meets at least twice a month, carrying out a range of conservation tasks; wildlife surveys and support for guided walks and other events. Volunteers have received training in outdoor first aid and a variety of rural skills; and in 2018/19 we delivered 144 volunteer work days, engaging with 125 different volunteers. Most of these came via our Introduction to Volunteering work, which supports non environmental groups in taster sessions such as tree planting.



People Enjoying Nature (PEN) project  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

Volunteer woodland management session  
© Forest of Bowland AONB

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# Financial Summary

	Actual 2018/2019 Out-turn prices) £'s
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
<b>Core Costs</b>	
Salary, N.I. and Superannuation	190022.47
Out-based premises	14800.81
Travel and subsistence	7410.78
Central, Departmental & Tech. Support (LCC)	51400.96
Partnership costs	22422.67
<b>SUB TOTAL OF CORE COSTS</b>	<b>286,057.69</b>
<b>Non Core Costs</b>	
Projects	92838.32
<b>SUB TOTAL OF NON CORE COSTS</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>378,896.01</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	
<b>Government Grants</b>	
Defra Grant	219069
<b>Contributions</b>	
United Utilities	6800.00
Other project contributions	14596.05
<b>County Councils</b>	
Lancashire	40800.00
North Yorkshire	5430.00
<b>District Councils</b>	
Craven	6800.00
Lancaster	6800.00
Pendle	6800.00
Preston	6800.00
Ribble Valley	6800.00
Wyre	6800.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME RECEIVED</b>	<b>327,495.05</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORT COSTS (IN KIND)</b>	
Lancashire County Council	51400.96
	<b>378,896.01</b>



# Membership



## Membership and Terms of Reference of the Joint Advisory Committee 2018/19

### **Lancashire County Council**

County Councillor A Atkinson  
County Councillor S Charles  
County Councillor S Turner

### **North Yorkshire County Council**

County Councillor R Welch

### **Craven District Council**

Councillor I Thompson

### **Lancaster City Council**

Councillor J Parkinson

### **Wyre Borough Council**

Councillor V Wilson

### **Ribble Valley Borough Council**

Councillor Mrs R Elms

### **Preston City Council**

Councillor J Browne

### **Pendle Borough Council**

Councillor J Starkie

### **Lancashire Association of Local Councils**

Mr M Helm / Ms C Kynch

### **Yorkshire Local Councils Association**

Mr C Price

### **United Utilities**

Mr M Upton

### **Environment Agency**

Ms H Dix

### **Natural England**

Ms R Budd

### **Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)**

Ms B Denman

### **Bowland Land Managers' Forum**

Mr A Taylor

### **Ramblers Association**

Mr D Kelly

### **Champion Bowland**

Mr M Pugh

### **Friends of Bowland**

Ms M Pilkington

### **Moorland Association**

Vacant

# Membership

The Committee and its constituent bodies are responsible for the implementation of the AONB Management Plan. The role of the Committee and its Terms of Reference, is as follows:-

The Joint Advisory Committee supports and encourages an active partnership between all of the agencies involved and co-ordinates management over the whole of the AONB. The aim is to:

- promote the AONB at national, regional and local level,
- ensure that the landscape of the AONB is conserved and enhanced appropriately through the implementation of the AONB Management Plan,
- work to assist the social and economic well-being of the AONB commensurate with the conservation of its special qualities,
- provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas,
- consider any issues likely to affect the area adversely and agree appropriate action
- make recommendations for new initiatives

A range of organisations with interests in the AONB is eligible for membership. Members include local authorities and the key organisations and interests, including representatives of local people, whose involvement will assist in implementing the Management Plan. Membership is kept under review and is at the discretion of the local authorities. Ideally there should be between 10 and 20 members and, where it is not practicable to include all of the represented interests, regular consultation mechanisms should be established.

Brief for the Joint Advisory Committee:

- co-ordinate the preparation and implementation of strategic plans for the AONB, including the preparation of the statutory Management Plan
- advise local authorities preparing structure plans, local plans or other plans covering all or part of the AONB, to ensure that policies and practices (including those for development control) are co-ordinated and consistent with the statement of commitment and AONB Management Plan
- advise local authorities and other agencies on the level of resources required for effective AONB management
- lobby to influence organisations that are not members of the JAC in the delivery of their services and programmes in order to benefit Bowland communities, businesses and the environment
- advise on, and co-ordinate the actions of the constituent organisations to achieve the objectives of the AONB and, in particular, ensure that the statement of commitment and Management Plan are implemented and reviewed. This includes:
  - receiving monitoring reports from the partners on progress and achievements in implementing the Management Plan, reviewing the Management Plan every five years and producing an annual report,
  - agreeing an annual work programme for the AONB to be delivered by the partners and the AONB Staff Unit,
  - carrying out special studies of key issues, as they arise, for example by setting up working parties or conducting research
  - advising the appropriate local planning authority about any developments within or adjacent to the AONB that are likely to affect significantly the landscape character of the area,
  - acting as forum for the discussion of major issues affecting the character of the AONB
  - promoting other action that is necessary to further the objectives of the AONB designation





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