



FOREST OF BOWLAND

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

An outstanding landscape of natural and cultural heritage

Bowland Hay Time and Networks for Nectar

Presentation and verbal update.

For further information contact sarah.robinson@lancashire.gov.uk or visit www.forestofbowland.com/haytimeproject

Lancaster Beekeepers Pollinator Patches

Lancaster Beekeepers continue to enthusiastically involve local volunteers from the Lune Valley including Community Payback and Littledale Hall to develop and manage a network of small new pollinator sites. The display of flowering plants this season has been stunning and the areas have been buzzing with insect life. This is been supported by Lancashire Environmental Projects and the Forest of Bowland AONB Networks 4 Nectar project.

For more information click on **Press Releases** at <http://www.lancaster-beekeepers.org.uk/http://forestofbowland.com/Networks-4-Nectar-N4N>

For further information contact sarah.robinson@lancashire.gov.uk

Drystone Shelters South Bowland Fells

With the support of a local master craftsman, drystone walling volunteers have built two new shelter features and built up their skills along the way. Over five days, 11 volunteers walked up and down the fell daily to build a new shelter next to Paddy's Pole on Fairsnape Fell. This substantial shelter now provides a cosy spot to have a snack irrespective of which direction the wind and rain are coming from. The volunteers and master craftsman were certainly fitter after the week!

At the base of Parlick Fell near Fell Foot, a new shelter-art feature has been created in the shape of the top of a Shepherd's Crook. This will also act as a background for new interpretation-guidance for recreational users using the Bowland Fells.

Beauty Stones

24 stones with the word beauty written in 24 different languages were created as part of the Bowland Revealed project celebrating 50 years of the Forest of Bowland AONB in 2014. These stones are now being sited in drystone wall features across the AONB. So far there are 4 in situ on Fairsnape Fell, Parlick and Beacon Fell.

Watch this space as we complete these installations.

For further information contact tarja.wilson@lancashire.gov.uk

Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership

Our application for just over £2 million to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership Scheme was submitted in late May. We have had further discussions with the North West office of HLF since, and had an appraisal visit from three members of their staff plus an external assessor in August. We are now eagerly awaiting news of the bid which will be decided upon by the HLF Board in London on 27th October.....watch this space!

For further information contact cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk

Resilient and sustainable rural communities

Champion Bowland

We have been re-vamping the Champion Bowland website (www.championbowland.org.uk) to make our messages clearer. We have also set up a facility so that people can donate to the charity via a text service, which we hope to transfer to all AONB publicity and download maps (text CBOW15 followed by the amount you want to text, e.g. CBOW15 £5, to 70070). We are also currently setting up a system to enable people to make donations to Champion Bowland on-line, which will also incorporate the facility to use Gift Aid. Both these systems are free in that they do not incur any charges to Champion Bowland or to the donors.

The Bowland Scrapbook, part of our Golden Anniversary activity last year, has been reprinted by Champion Bowland and copies are available for a £5 donation from various outlets in the AONB, we will be promoting this more in the run-up to Christmas as it makes an ideal gift! See where you can get hold of copies at:

<http://www.championbowland.org.uk/index.php/bowland-scrapbook>

Champion Bowland has awarded four new grants since the Spring:

Bowland Forest High parish council were given £500 towards a shelter to be built on Dunsop Bridge village green, this will commemorate the Queen's Jubilee and provide a handy shelter for walkers, picnickers and bus users.

Friends of Bentham Station were awarded £750 towards their 'Day in the Life' photography project on 29th July – which recorded life in the town as seen through the eyes of its residents and visitors. The resulting photos will be used to create a new mural at the station and a travelling exhibition.

More 'Friends', this time at **Beacon Fell country park**, were given £630 to pay for two volunteers to attend a 'learn to scythe' course, and to purchase their own scythes and rakes in order that they can develop and manage a small wildflower meadow at Beacon Fell, where they will educate and inspire visitors about our wonderful wildflower resource.

The '**Church Goes Wild**' project run at **St Johns, Hurst Green** was given £175.00 to purchase a moth trap and ID guides to enable them to run moth trapping events.

Champion Bowland is keen to support other small scale projects in the AONB which benefit the environment, local communities and visitors. So if you need up to £750 to get your project off the ground contact admin@championbowland.org.uk

Bowland Experience

Since April, seven new businesses have become members of Bowland Experience. Other activities:

- We recently developed a 'Know your AONB' workshop - designed for new members to the network to inform them of the special qualities of the AONB and the opportunities for visitors
- A Social Media Workshop was organised for members held at the Tithe Barn, Browsholme Hall on 30th September. The workshop was attended by 10 businesses
- Very well done to Cobden Farm B&B, Sabden who were recently re-accredited by Green Tourism, they maintained their Gold Award on the new Version V criteria
- Business cards promoting the Electric Bike Network have been produced and distributed to increase awareness of the opportunities and the Teashops Leaflet was re-printed with contributions from Bowland Experience members
- BEx have been exploring ideas for potential collaboration projects through EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) funding. A proposal is being developed for a local produce/holiday hamper initiative to benefit a number of tourism businesses including food producers and retailers across the AONB. We are awaiting for the call for projects under this funding strand before submitting an application.

The Bowland Experience AGM and Sustainable Tourism Forum are being held on 10th November: 4 to 5pm – AGM and 5 to 8pm – Forum, at the Assheton Arms, Downham. JAC members and partners are warmly invited to these meetings and further information will be made available soon.

For further information contact hetty.byrne@lancashire.gov.uk

Sustainable Development Fund

The 2015 Sustainable Development Fund was allocated by one panel meeting this year as we had a good level of interest from applicants. The £17000 available was mostly allocated and the remainder is earmarked for a project still in development. Successful projects awarded grants were as follows:

Bolton by Bowland village hall received a grant of £4408 to carry out insulation works to improve energy efficiency. This is part of a hall refurbishment project which will make the hall more attractive and cost-efficient to run, and so will generate more income to resource the hall into the future.

Burton in Lonsdale sports pavilion was given £2000 for a renewable energy heat sink as part of a new-build scheme. The committee are currently fundraising to purchase solar thermal and PV equipment to heat the building, and the heat sinks will enable them to store and re-use the excess heat generated.

Ribble Rivers Trust are organising two training courses in 'Pinpointing Diffuse Water Pollution' this autumn. They were awarded £2000 to support 5 Bowland-based farm advisors to attend the course free of charge. This is part of the Ribble Rivers Trust drive to improve river water quality as part of their new Catchment Management Plan.

The Deer Initiative received a grant of £3450 towards deer survey work, to assess the numbers and impact of deer in the AONB. They will also raise awareness of the need for deer management in Bowland via public meetings, school talks, food fairs and workshops for volunteers.

For further information contact cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk

A strong connection between people and the landscape

Bowland Revealed

Mid Pennine Arts are managing the Explore & Engage element of the Bowland Revealed arts project and summer 2015 has seen the birth of the Bowland Explorers: an intrepid crew of pith-helmeted adventurers who have pitched their tent at various locations in order to encourage like-minded folk to discover the wonders of the AONB. To date, the Explorers have visited Cloudspotting in Gisburn Forest, Burnley Canal Festival and Blackburn Heritage Festival and are set to make an appearance at Lytham Hall in Wyre for the Hopeful & Glorious art and craft fair in November.

Alongside the Bowland Explorer's Club, In Situ have been working with Brierfield-based group, Mums Together, who have visited Gisburn Forest, Downham, Clitheroe Castle and Dunsop Bridge to enjoy picnics and walks and to gather inspiration for creative projects back at base.

Writer, storyteller and film maker, Steve Fairclough (in the guise of an anthropologist) has been journeying around Bowland, interviewing the people he meets on his travels and blogging about his observations.

Huckleberry Films are documenting various parts of the programme, which is due to close with a culminating celebration delivered by family arts organisation, Wild Rumpus.

For further information contact sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk

Festival Bowland

It's been another busy year for Festival Bowland event leaders and, although this year's programme is now drawing to a close, there is still chance to enjoy some fresh air and exercise on walks with Wyre Council and the Friends of Garstang Walking Festival, hands on practical tasks with Lancashire Countryside Rangers and spooky happenings with the Friends of Beacon Fell amongst others.

Beacon Fell's family activities were popular once again, with over 100 people joining both the Easter Trail and summer Gruffalo days. Coronation Meadow walks were well attended, as were the star gazing events, archaeological dig tour and visits to Claughton Hall estate. Training in practical navigation and hedge laying had good booking numbers, as did Lancashire Wildlife Trusts Birds Before Breakfast and Wyre Council/RSPB's Whimbrel Roost Watch.

The Spread Eagle's Ribble Valley Rambles, combining a local guided walk followed by a meal at the pub, were popular again this year.

We're now planning for Festival Bowland 2016 and welcome ideas for new events which celebrate the birds, wildlife, landscape and culture of the Forest of Bowland AONB. Email sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk with ideas or if you would like to be added to our events mailing list.

Raising the Profile of the AONB

Local events and festivals are a great opportunity for the team to go along and promote the work and opportunities of the AONB. During the summer the team attended several events including: Clitheroe Food Festival, Hodder Valley Show, Scorton Game Fair and Tour of Britain, reaching new audiences and liaising with old friends and colleagues. The team also held a Dunsop Teas fundraiser in May generating funds for Champion Bowland – thanks for everyone's support and for those who baked cakes!

Dark Sky Discovery Sites

Over the summer months we've been working with local astronomer and physicist Robert Ince to identify a number of sites across Bowland that offer the best opportunities for star gazing, and that would be suitable for Dark Sky Discovery Site accreditation. The accreditation is administered by the Royal Observatory in Edinburgh, and the application process involves gaining support from the land owner and local authority. Robert Ince's expertise has helped in assessing the darkest skies and providing quality images that are submitted as part of the application. So far four sites have been submitted for accreditation: Beacon Fell, Gisburn Forest Hub, Crook O'Lune and Slaidburn. There are a few more potential sites that will also be put forward in the autumn, so we'll keep you posted as things develop.

The dark skies have already captured people's imagination and both events, organised at Beacon Fell recently have been fully booked. We are looking forward to providing more events next year as part of the Festival Bowland programme.

For further information visit <http://forestofbowland.com/Star-Gazing> or contact hetty.byrne@lancashire.gov.uk

A dynamic and effective AONB partnership

Annual Report 2014/15 Now Available

The latest Forest of Bowland AONB Annual Report is now available. From biodiversity action, pollution reduction measures and undergrounding electricity cables to enhanced community facilities, business support and access improvements, 2014/15 was another busy year for the AONB and its partners.

The report also highlights the projects which helped us to celebrate the AONB's 50th anniversary during 2015, including the Bowland Anniversary Awards, Bowland Scrapbook, Bowland Revealed and Festival 50!

Many thanks to all those who contributed articles and images. The latest report can be viewed on-line at <http://forestofbowland.com/Plans-Strategies-Reports> alternatively, email sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk for an electronic or paper copy.

Bowland Land Managers Forum

The Forum met in June and September 2015 to discuss a diverse range of topics from the Countryside Stewardship grant schemes and rural development funding to high nature value farming and bracken control.

In addition, the May meeting saw the return of Phil Warren from the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust to update forum members on the status of Black grouse conservation efforts in Northern England and in particular the potential to restore this species to the Bowland Fells.

Previous feasibility work completed in 2013 had suggested that efforts should remain focused on extending the range southwards in the Yorkshire Dales before considering translocation of birds to any Bowland sites. However, the southern range has now advanced close enough to Bowland to reconsider potential translocations. The AONB Partnership and several landowners have been able to commit funding to support further planning and assessment work which would be required to pave the way for a future Black grouse conservation project led by the Bowland Land Managers Forum.

Farming forum members were also involved in a trip in early August to visit high nature value farming projects in County Clare, Ireland, which is detailed under the section in the report on 'Northern Upland Chain LNP'.

For further information contact elliott.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk

Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership (NUCLNP)

The Principal AONB Officer has attended meetings of the NUC LNP Board and 'High-Nature Value' Farming Group in recent months. The two principal areas of development have been:

NUC LNP High Nature Value Farming Group

This group has been working on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the HNV farming report commissioned by NUC LNP to look at the future of this type of low-intensity, environmentally sensitive farming, particularly with the likely decline in agri-environment funding (<http://www.nuclnp.org.uk/themes-and-projects/>).

This work has two principal projects currently in development:

- Piloting a 'Results-based' approach to agri-environment payments (RBAPS) in the NUC LNP area, based on a programme delivered in the Burren, County Clare in Ireland. A bid for EU Environment DG funding has been submitted and if successful will involve the AONB Partnership and Bowland Land Managers Forum
- Establishing a 'Northern Upland Chain Farmer Forum' to raise the profile of hill and upland farming within Government and other strategic organisations (e.g. Local Enterprise Partnerships). Bowland Land Managers Forum members will be consulted shortly for support and ideas on this proposal

Farmers from the Bowland Land Managers Forum have attended recent HNV group meetings and also took part in a visit to County Clare, Ireland in August 2015 to visit the pioneering RBAPs projects in the Burren and Shannon Callows. Officers from the AONB Unit and Ribble Rivers Trust also took part in this visit with a view to potentially establishing a similar scheme in Bowland in the future.

NUC LNP Natural Capital Investment Plan

Natural Capital refers to the stock of resources from the natural world that supports our society. So, woodland, species-rich grassland, wetlands, peatland and other soils are all elements of our natural capital. Our natural capital provides society with food, fuel, clean air, clean water, and opportunities for recreation.

The principal purpose of the plan is to stimulate new investments in natural capital, to help reverse its long-term decline, and sustain the goods and services that nature provides for society, and on which almost every business depends. NUC LNP believes that major new investment in conserving and enhancing our stock of natural capital is not only good for nature but essential for the communities and economy of our area.

Research work has continued over the summer involving the AONB Unit and the plan will be published in October/November 2015.

For further information contact elliott.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk

An Outstanding Week in September

During September the UK's AONB Family came together to organise a week-long programme of events to help people enjoy and be inspired by the UK's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). Starting on Saturday 19th September and continuing through to Sunday 27th September, the events were listed on www.landscapesforlifeevents.org.uk

Two events were held in Bowland as part of Outstanding week, both of which proved very popular:

Monday 21st September: Dark Sky Discovery Event, Beacon Fell

Sunday 27th September: Wyresdale Park Circular Walk

NAAONB's Jill Smith, explains the purpose behind the week, which will hopefully become an annual celebration:

"Outstanding Week is an opportunity for you to get involved and get out into our AONBs' outstanding landscapes to enjoy country shows, dark sky discovery nights, walking festivals, archaeology walks, wood fairs, foraging and local food festivals, wildlife walks, coastal and marine days, thatching courses, drystone walling competitions, charcoal making, bioblitz, inspiration through art and music and many, many other activities. Events are being organised throughout the country so please join us for an Outstanding Week!"

If you have any events that could be promoted as part of 2016 Outstanding Week please contact

sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk

National Association AONBs - Sustainable Tourism Working Group

Hetty attended a NAAONB meeting on Sustainable Tourism in London in May, along with other sustainable tourism officers and lead officers across the AONB family. The meeting was held at the Visit England offices and was attended by Lyndsey Swift - Head of Strategic Partnerships & Engagement at Visit England who informed the group of ways in which the NAAONB could get more involved with Visit England.

The development of a visitor giving scheme for the AONB Family was discussed, and it was felt important to progress the opportunities for this. Hetty and Elliott attended an RDPE lead officer meeting in the spring to talk about the potential for visitor giving as a LEADER funded co-operation project, we will update the partnership as things develop, but the proposal was received well by officers.

For further information contact hetty.byrne@lancashire.gov.uk

New AONB and National Park Publication

A new publication was produced in June: 'So much more than the view...'

The purpose of the joint publication was to highlight England's most iconic landscapes and focusing on the social and economic benefit that they bring.

The publication highlights that AONBs and National Parks welcome more than 260 million visitors who spend in excess of £6bn and support thousands of jobs and more than 85,000 businesses.

Chair of the National Association for AONBs, Philip Hygate said:

"AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards, and National Park Authorities, with their dedicated small teams, make things happen; translating vision and national policy into local action. "Our staff and volunteers work with local communities, businesses and others, supporting skills development, investing in infrastructure and attracting visitors to promote sustainable rural economies that conserve and enhance the natural environment for the benefit of everyone. Together our volunteers put in over half a million days' work each year to help keep these places special and accessible."

See the publication at:

http://www.landscapesforliferesources.org.uk/images/uploads/pdf/So_much_more_than_the_view.pdf

Undergrounding for Visual Amenity

As part of the Undergrounding for Visual Amenity (UVA) programme, Electricity North West (ENWL) has continued to work with the Forest of Bowland AONB to identify visually intrusive sections of overhead lines for undergrounding.

Since April 2015, two undergrounding schemes have completed with poles and lines now down at Deep Clough to Winder in Littledale and Laund Wood to Middle Lees, near Whitewell.

Also, the Forest of Bowland AONB has been allocated approximately £1.8m to fund further undergrounding schemes between April 2015 and March 2023. The AONB Unit has begun surveying a number of overhead lines for early inclusion in this new programme period. In addition, a call for potential undergrounding schemes has been made to all the Parish Councils within the AONB. Parish Council have been asked to send in details of any suggested lines for undergrounding by early December.

For further information contact cathy.hopley@lancashire.gov.uk

Rural Development Programme for England – LEADER Local Action Groups

The National LEADER Programme was formally launched by Defra on Wednesday 14th October 2015 in London. The Principal AONB Officer attended the launch and associated LEADER Network Conference, as the Chair of the North Lancashire & Bowland LAG

It is currently anticipated that the North Lancashire and Bowland LAG will launch its first calls for applications for LEADER funding in November 2015. These calls will be for projects which can increase agricultural productivity, support micro- and small business and farm diversification. Other LEADER priorities such as boosting rural tourism, support for rural services and heritage activities will follow in 2016.

For further information contact elliott.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk

Interactive Management Plan

Design consultants Countryside attended a recent AONB Funders Group meeting to demonstrate the new interactive management plan for the partnership. Along with the team, partners are being encouraged to update progress on the action plan; It is envisaged that these updates can then be used to draw useful reports and summaries to inform the partnership and funders.

If you would like a log-in to be able to update the plan please contact hetty.byrne@lancashire.gov.uk

The new interactive plan can be viewed at: <http://forestofbowland.com/action-plan>