The Forest of Bowland AONB is protected by law.

To ensure the conservation and management of its natural beauty not just for the present, but for the generations to come, AONBs have been established. The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was designated in 1957 under the provisions of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. This Act made provision for the establishment of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England. As the Forest of Bowland AONB is protected under the AONB designation, certain land use and management activities are regulated to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The Forest of Bowland AONB is managed by the Forest of Bowland Partnership, a partnership of the Lancashire County Council and the Ribble Valley Borough Council, the National Trust, and the Woodland Trust. The Partnership aims to balance the needs of nature, agriculture, and people, while maintaining the natural heritage and biodiversity of the area.

Land use and farming will continue to change the way the landscape is shaped as a result of policy changes. Today, sheep and beef farming predominates, with dairying being the major land use in the valleys. The extensive heather moorland has largely been conserved because of management for grouse shooting. In the past, the fertility of the land was maintained through burning to maintain the heather cover, but this is no longer required. The AONB Partnership aims to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area for future generations, ensuring that the landscape is shaped in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to the needs of nature, agriculture, and people.

Expanses of sky above the wild dramatic sweep of open moorland.

The landscape we see today contains many clues to past history. The Forest of Bowland AONB is an area of national and international importance, because of its unspoiled and richly diverse landscapes, wildlife and heritage. The area has a complex history, with prehistoric and Roman remains, as well as medieval castles and monasteries. The Forest of Bowland AONB was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1957, making it the third AONB in England, following the Peak District and the Lake District. The AONB Partnership aims to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area for future generations, ensuring that the landscape is shaped in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to the needs of nature, agriculture, and people.

Situated in North West England, the Forest of Bowland AONB covers 803 square kilometres (300 square miles) of rural Lancashire and North Yorkshire, the Forest of Bowland AONB is situated in two towns, Clitheroe and Settle. The Forest of Bowland AONB is not nationally owned or set aside solely for the conservation of its natural beauty, but is managed by a Partnership of the Lancashire County Council, the Ribble Valley Borough Council, the National Trust, and the Woodland Trust. The Partnership aims to balance the needs of nature, agriculture, and people, while maintaining the natural heritage and biodiversity of the area.

An area of national and international importance.

The hen harrier is the bird symbolised on the Forest of Bowland AONB logo.

The hen harrier is the bird symbolised on the Forest of Bowland AONB logo. The hen harrier is a widespread species of raptor that is found across Europe, from southern Spain to eastern Russia. The hen harrier is a medium-sized bird of prey, with a wingspan of around 1 metre (3.3 feet). The hen harrier is a solitary bird, and it is often seen perching on a fence post or a tree branch. The hen harrier is a bird of open country, and it is often found in areas with a mix of open grassland and scrubland. The hen harrier is a fast flyer, and it is often seen gliding over the ground in search of its prey. The hen harrier is a fierce predator, and it is often seen attacking other birds, such as lapwings, curlews, and redshanks. The hen harrier is a bird that is often seen in the Forest of Bowland AONB, and it is a symbol of the area's rich birdlife.

Working in partnership

As the first protected area in England to achieve the European Charter,

The Forest of Bowland AONB offers wonderful opportunities for quiet enjoyment, such as walking, cycling and nature watching. Countryside Officers work closely with farmers, landowners and land users to ensure the conservation and enhancement of its natural beauty, not just for the present, but for future generations. The Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership aims to ensure that the landscape is shaped in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to the needs of nature, agriculture, and people. The Partnership aims to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area for future generations, ensuring that the landscape is shaped in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to the needs of nature, agriculture, and people.

It's a place where people live and work, a place that offers opportunities for everyone to enjoy the natural beauty of the Forest of Bowland AONB. The Partnership aims to ensure that the landscape is shaped in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to the needs of nature, agriculture, and people. The Partnership aims to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area for future generations, ensuring that the landscape is shaped in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to the needs of nature, agriculture, and people.

For more information, visit the Forest of Bowland AONB website at www.forestofbowland.com or call the Access helpline on 0845 100 3298 for the most up-to-date information.
Birding locations to visit...

- Roeburndale Woods in the north of Bowland offer good opportunities for seeing oak woodland specialities such as redstart and pied flycatcher.
- The circular walk around Stocks Reservoir to the northeast offers a range of woodland and upland birds. The reservoir itself attracts wildfowl and waders and many passage migrants including the occasional osprey.
- Abbeystead in the west is one of the best areas for breeding waders on the upland pastures. Lapwing, curlew, redshank, snipe and oystercatcher are all numerous here and golden plover flocks can often be seen. You can also see red grouse in the upland moorland.
- The lowers valley is a good spot for seeing oaks and the higher moorland is the place to see red grouse. The surrounding moorland is also rich in upland birds.
- Pendle Hill in the southeast is the place to see migrant dotterel in early May. The open stony ground by the trig point on the eastern summit is the best place to look for these delightful waders on their way to nest in the mountains of Scotland.
- In the southwest, Barnacre Reservoir (which is not open to the public) is an important staging post for hundreds of migrant whimbrel. The public footpaths on the south side offer opportunities for seeing these birds as they fly in to roost in late April and early May evenings giving their loud piping calls.

Visit the Forest of Bowland website to download route maps of walks in these areas and for the latest news on bird watching in Bowland, including web cam pictures from a hen harrier’s nesting site in the springtime, visit www.forestofbowland.com/wild_birds.asp.