

16.v Recreation & Access

Summary

Open access across most of Ennerdale ensures that people are free to experience the valley in an unrestricted way. A combination of mountains, crags, lake and forest offers a wealth of opportunity for 'quiet recreation'. Along with farming and forestry, recreation is one of main human processes operating in the valley though the landscape impacts of recreation have been more modest in scale when compared to the effects of major land use changes such as farming and forestry.

Active pursuits such as walking, rock climbing, mountain biking, orienteering, canoeing and fishing all take place within the valley, though some are restricted through a permit system (e.g. canoeing & fishing), or determined by the level of access to a site (e.g. long walk in for climbers to crags).

The network of forest tracks and public rights of way provide freedom of access to many areas of the valley. With few way-marked routes or signage, emphasis is very much on self exploration and personal discovery. Under the Countryside Rights of Way Act (CROW), much of Ennerdale is designated 'open access'. In addition, the Forestry Commission is dedicating all its woodland as open access land.

With no public road beyond the 'mouth' of the valley itself, the visitor experience of Ennerdale offers closeness to nature, solitude and tranquillity.

Actions (within next 10 years)

- Develop a better understanding of recreation in Ennerdale.
- Review all countryside furniture and signage. Remove or minimise where appropriate.
- Maintain all rights of way open and accessible, accepting that some natural processes may affect routes (e.g. river erosion) and that any maintenance/repair work must be sensitive to the remote and wild character of the valley.
- Create a Wild Ennerdale 'Access Code' in partnership with local access groups.
- Increase access & recreation opportunities for communities on the West Coast of Cumbria.

[Linked maps: K & R](#)

[Linked photos: Plates 13 – 16](#)