
‘Landowners’ Perspectives on the Benefits and Challenges of Public Access’

A farmer’s perspective

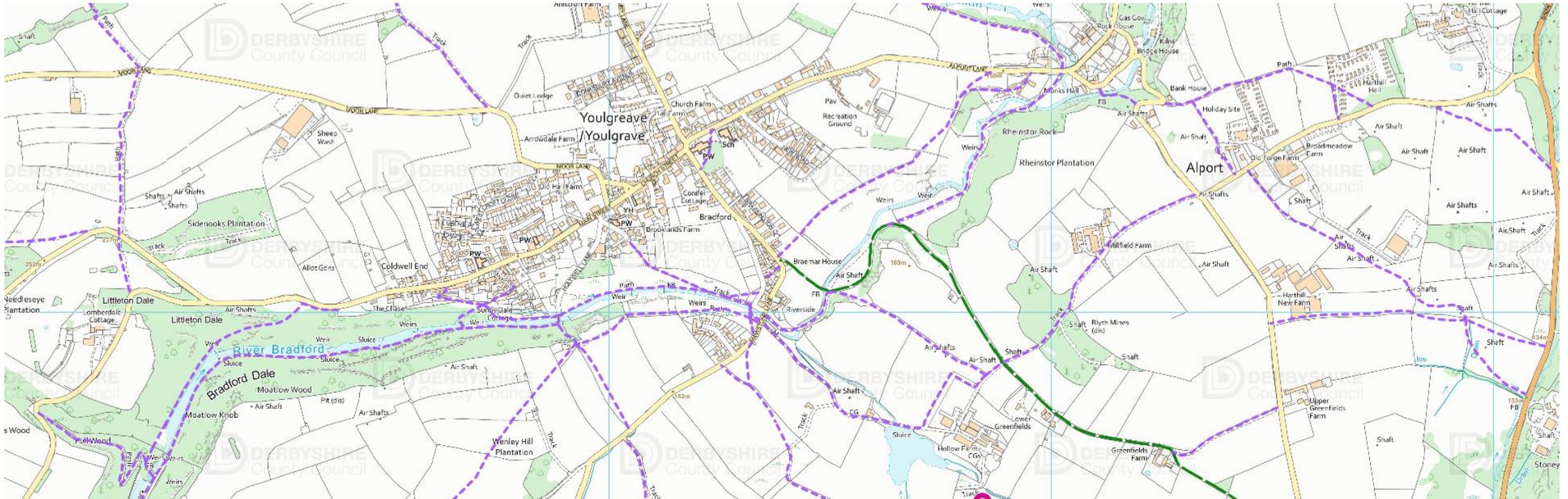


I am a farmer

- I am a tenant of the Haddon Estate
- I farm about 50 acres in Bradford Dale near Youlgrave.
- I have a flock of Balwen Welsh Mountain Sheep.
- A herd of Dexter Cattle.
- HLS for regeneration of species rich hay meadows.



Bradford Dale, the local RoW network.



Benefits

- Diversification – Agritourism, B&B, Livery yard, Caravan or campsite.
- Open Farm events
- Opportunity to talk with people to explain farming practices.
- Share something we are passionate about.
- Farmgate sales.
- Mental and physical health benefits for people accessing the RoW network.
- Government grants for new concession footpath/bridleway – FiPL.

Challenges

- Managing people.
- Livestock on rights of way.
- Dogs.
- Wildlife.
- Signage.

Managing people

- Waymarks
- Stiles and gates easy to use
- Make it easy for people to do the right thing
- Use body language to avoid confrontation
- Wild camping
- Litter
- Gates left open allowing stock to stray



Livestock on footpaths. There are responsibilities for the public and farmers. These are covered in the Countryside Code.

Dogs

- “My dog doesn’t chase sheep!”
- Sheep worrying
- Poo and bags
- Other dogs
- Disturbing wildlife
- Contract dog walkers



Sheep worrying

- Chasing by dogs can do serious damage to sheep. The stress can cause sheep to die or abort their lambs.
- Derbyshire Constabulary take the matter very seriously and will record every incident and prosecute whenever possible.
- It is a frightening sight to witness.
- NFU Mutual Insurance data shows claim costs of dog attacks rose to £1.8 million in 2022.
- NFU Mutual commissioned a survey of 1,100 dog owners in 2022. The key stats are: 64% admit their dogs chase animals – 46% believe their dog was incapable of injuring or killing livestock – 65% of owners let their dogs off-lead in the countryside – 39% admit their pets do not always come back when called.

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Wildlife

- Stand back and enjoy.
- Loose dogs can accidentally separate young from their parents.
- Persistent disturbance can cause abandonment.
- Spot-on dog flea and tick treatments are poisonous to aquatic life.



Signage

- Informative – positive message to engage the reader.
- Waymarks.
- “Beware of the Bull”.
- Few signs
- Right sign, right place.
- Consistent message.

