Welcome to Blanchland!

This is a varied walk that begins with a climb up from the village of Blanchland. The walk passes through woodland and pasture with magnificent views of the Derwent Valley and Edmundbyers Common, finally dropping down to the river and returning to the village.

Look for the START on the directions overleaf and follow the trail for new things to see in each season.

Walk Distance: Approx 5.5km (3.5 miles)
Walk Length: 2 hours
Start/Finish: Blanchland car park (donations welcome)
Grid Reference NY964505
Public Transport: For journey and timetable information freephone 0871 200 2233
Facilities: Blanchland has public toilets, a Post Office, shops, a hotel and a tea room
Please follow the Countryside Code: Leave gates as you find them and keep your dog under close control (and on a lead on farmland).

Farming past...

Looking south from the pastures approaching Cowbyre Farm you may be able to make out a series of ridges and furrows in the fields (at this point you may also notice that you are walking over these bumps too).

These are the remains of post-medieval farming systems. The older examples of these are shown as back-to-front S shapes, resulting from a method of farming crops used throughout the medieval period (1066-1540) and later. The shapes were made by ox-drawn ploughs as they cut and turned the soil over. An ox team needed plenty of space to turn at the end of each furrow and by ploughing in a slight curve, the plough could start to turn before the furrow had been completed.

...and farming today

Sheep are used to help manage the heather moorland for red grouse. In the winter the sheep are brought down off the moor and into the pastures in the areas through which this walk passes.

Parts of the walk described in this leaflet have been opened up to walkers with the support of Defra’s agri-environment schemes. For more information see http://countrywalks.defra.gov.uk.
**Route Description - start here!**

1. Turn right out of the car park and immediately left. Bear left along the marked track between stone walls. The track winds along behind cottages. Ignore the path to the right and climb steeply through the trees. Reaching the broad track at the top go left. After 100m turn right and instead of going through the gate to the left, follow the path up through the wood to a ladder stile over a wall. These woods are fantastic for bluebells in late spring and early summer.

2. Head across the pasture. From here you have fine views across the Derwent Valley to Buckshott Fell and Edmundbyers Common. Go through the gate, keeping a fence and then a wall on your left, until you reach a stile and go through a stand of young trees. Continue over another stile to Cowbyre Farm.

3. Cross another stile to reach the road and turn left. There are some fine traditional farm buildings to the left and a good view of the Derwent Reservoir ahead. Walk along the road for 200m before taking the ladder stile on the right and the permissive path which follows the burn before crossing at a way marker. Follow the stream keeping between a fence and the remains of an old field boundary before veering left near a gate, to drop down to the burn and a footbridge.

4. Head across the pasture. From here you have fine views across the Derwent Valley to Buckshott Fell and Edmundbyers Common. Go through the gate, keeping a fence and then a wall on your left, until you reach a stile and go through a stand of young trees. Continue over another stile to Cowbyre Farm.

5. Go right and carry on along the edge of a lovely birch wood with a fence to the right, until you reach a footbridge and ladder stile. This brings you to the River Derwent at Carrick Bridge.

6. Go right and follow the path along the river. There are several stiles and a diversion which avoids an eroded riverbank. Eventually you come to a walled junction.

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**What a view!**

Derwent Reservoir is the second largest reservoir in the North East. The south-western area of the reservoir has been managed as a nature reserve since 1967 for its breeding birds and wildfowl. The surrounding farmland is used as a breeding ground by a host of waders. Species such as lapwing, redshank, curlew, oystercatcher and snipe can regularly be seen in spring and summer. Look out for the bright red beak of the oystercatcher and the green metallic sheen of the feathers of pews (lapwings) an obvious name when you hear their call - peeee...witt!

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**Over the hill to Cowbyre Farm**

[Image of a view over the hill to Cowbyre Farm]

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**Common valerian**

[Image of Common valerian]

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**Rosehip**

[Image of Rosehip]

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**Blanchland Bridge and the River Derwent**

[Image of Blanchland Bridge and the River Derwent]

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**Heron**

[Image of a Heron]