



# Beldon Cleugh



## What will I see?

A steep sided valley cutting through the hills west of Blanchland. Today it only has a small stream running in it but during the last Ice Age ago it was a channel used by torrents of glacial meltwater under an ice sheet.

## How old is it?

The channel was cut by water under an ice sheet around 20,000 years ago, during the last glaciation of northern Britain.

## Did you know?

Geologists know it was cut by a river under pressure under the ice because it has a “humped profile” – its course goes up and over a col. Beldon Cleugh is even more remarkable than it looks because there are at least 9 metres of peat infilling its floor.

## Why it is here?

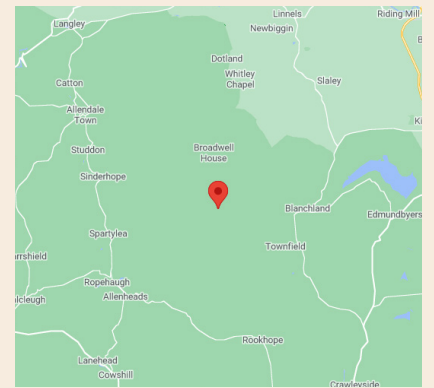
During the last Ice Age all of northern Britain was covered by a thick sheet of ice – up to a kilometre thick in places. Ice that thick completely changed the landscape and blocked normal valleys and drainage routes. Water beneath the ice cut new channels, often completely ignoring the pre-existing topography. Beldon Cleugh and the Butt Hill channel are just two examples of sub-glacial meltwater systems.

## And wildlife?

Bog vegetation on the peat infill consists mainly of heather and hare’s-tail cottongrass. Bracken grows on the steep sides. The surrounding heather moorland is managed for red grouse.

## Where is it?

Beldon Cleugh is about 5 kilometres west of Blanchland (NY 915 505).



## Want to know more?

- NNP Geodiversity Audit
- Onshore GeoIndex
- iGeology
- Geological history of Northumbria
- Carboniferous rocks

