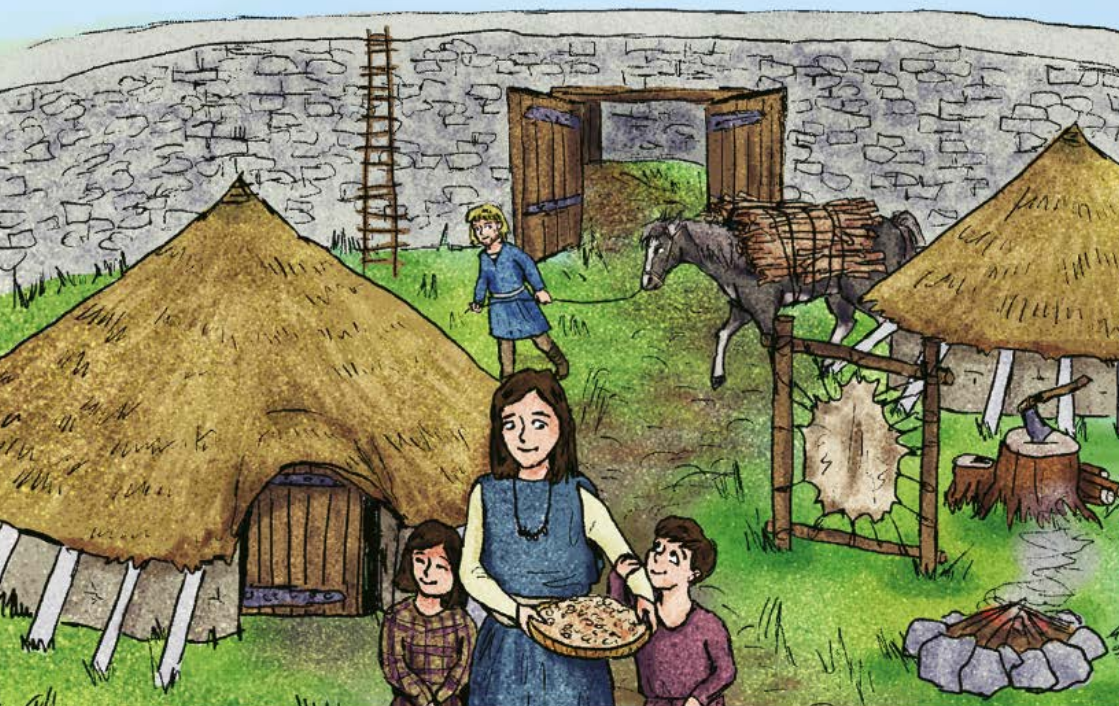




Ingram Valley™

Farm Safari



**National Park
Experiences**

National Park Experiences is a curated collection that brings the stories of our National Parks to life. Each experience offers an authentic insight into the landscape and special qualities of a National Park.

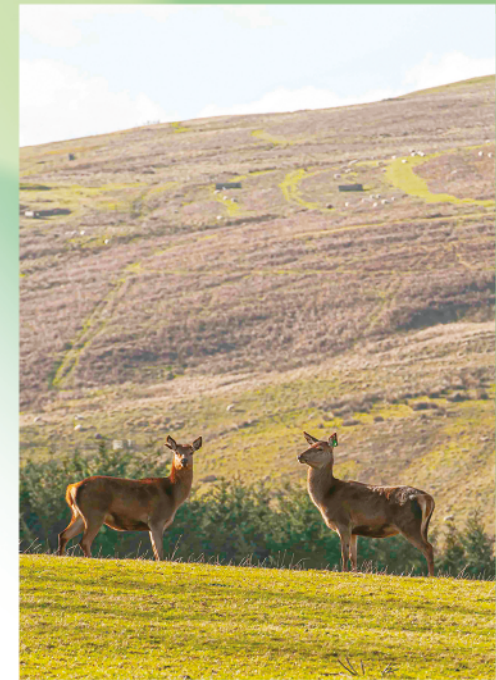
The Valley with Two Names

Typically, a valley is known for being named after its river, however the valley with two names seems to be a unique exception- being either referred to as the Breamish Valley (named after the Breamish River), Ingram Valley, or in some circumstances the Ingram and Breamish Valley. It is not unusual for a valley to change its name or have two names for that matter; comparisons can be drawn to the famous Silicon Valley in San Francisco, which is also known as the Santa Clara Valley. It also used to be called Valley of Heart's Delight, but the nickname of Silicon Valley was coined in the 1950s due to the new manufacturing of the silicon chip, prevalent in technology. Why is it then that the Breamish/Ingram valley with such a rich historical background, that has been inhabited by people as far back as the Stone Age, still cannot decide on a name? Is Ingram Valley a name more familiar with locals, perhaps spread by word of mouth? Is it to do with signposting or trademarking? The truth is that no one really knows why: we can only speculate.

The valley name is not the only name that has changed in the area. In fact, many places in and around the valley have had modulated names. Two hamlets Brandon and Branton, both lying on opposite banks, regularly cause confusion. Their names have changed throughout history: first being known as Bremeton and Brededon, then Bremton and Bromdon, Brampton and Bramdon, Bremtona and Bromduna and finally, Brandon and Branton. Mildly confusing, but hopefully there will not be any more evolutions. Secondly, the name Bulby's Wood has a history also. In the 1920s a man known as 'Mr Bowlby' planted trees to create a new wood at Ingram farm. But as time went on the pronunciation and spelling of his name changed, and his name gradually became 'Mr Bulby'- hence 'Bulby's Wood'. And thirdly, 'Blakehope', which originally derives from the old English of 'blaec' meaning black, and 'hope' meaning a small valley. The perplexity of the name is that local people pronounce it 'Blakehope', while strangers pronounce it 'Bleakhope'. Local newspapers even use both versions of 'Bleak' and 'Blake', and guidebook writers from the 1930s and onwards always call it 'Bleakhope'. With a history of name changes like these in the valley, you can understand why there could easily be puzzlement about the name of the valley itself.

The name 'Ingram' stems from Celtic origin meaning the "in-by-hamlet", or the "in-by-folk". But the story behind the interchangeability of the names of 'Ingram' and 'Breamish' Valley is not so easily pinpointed. When looking at past newspaper archives, we learn the valley has been referred to as 'the Valley of the Breamish' as early as 1877 in the Newcastle Courat. In 1955 the Berwick Advertiser called it the 'Ingram and Breamish valley'. And in the case of 'Ingram Valley', it is not until 1939 that the valley is referred to as such. This was in the more local newspaper of the Alnwick Mercury, so perhaps from the evidence of the papers and their whereabouts, it can be surmised that only locals knew the valley to be Ingram Valley. It was more common however, for 'Ingram' to be used alongside the name of Breamish Valley to provide context- the Newcastle Weekly Chronicle in 1940 titled an image, 'Ingram, Queen of the delightful Breamish Valley'. These days, the name Ingram Valley is a lot more common and has been popularised, with Google search showing up nearly 15 million results for Ingram Valley, and Breamish Valley only 39,500.

Differing names aside, the pleasant experience of visiting the valley has been a universal one across multiple centuries. As far back as the 19th century, a hiker published an article in the Leeds Mercury describing his exploration around the Northumbrian countryside. He recounts being lost and asking for directions from friendly locals with strong northern accents he struggled to understand. He meets hospitable farmers and shepherds along his journey through the valley, narrating how surprised they are to meet a "man from the town (...) rambling about the Cheviots alone." They brought him food and refreshment and welcomed him into their humble home filled with books. Their conversation brushed over the local politics, and they discussed a recent poll that took place which had only been announced the day before, but it seems already the locals knew all about it; "so swiftly does news fly among the thinly peopled hills and dales of Northumberland." With word travelling so fast, it is no wonder the valley has changing names.



© David Dixon

Come the 20th century, articles written about the valley describe holidays as well as teachers lecturing and spending time in the countryside. The 'Whitsuntide' holiday in particular was a busy day for the valley in 1939; a high influx of traffic was illustrated, "one observer counted some 120 cars (...) in the space of quarter of an hour." The valley saw many visitors enjoying the glorious sun that holiday. Car ownership in post-war Britain continued to increase, allowing more and more people to discover and enjoy Ingram Valley and its picnicking spots such as at Peggy Bells Bridge, Bulby's Wood and the grassland near Ingram Bridge. Weekends in the mid to late 1950s would see as many as 3000 visitors at the valley. Now in the present day, it is still very much the same experience: people having picnics, locals standing in awe with the visitor activity, people reciting what they got up to and conversing about the weather. Families nowadays visit the valley and share their stories of their delectable picnics, children paddling in the Breamish River and collecting tadpoles for fun.

While the rising of car ownership in post-war Britain was excellent for gathering visitors from far and wide, it may be a reason for the more frequent use of the name Ingram Valley. This is because around this period the valley was not very well sign-posted, but there was a sign for Ingram nearby. So naturally, it would make sense that the people who discovered the valley on their drive would have equated it with the place of Ingram. It is only until recently, around 2020, that a sign has been put up marking the valley as the Breamish Valley. Moreover, some visitors have commented that they get confused with the name of the Breamish Valley and the Beamish Village in county Durham- so it is easier for them to differentiate if the valley is known to them instead as the Ingram Valley.

In recent times, an Intellectual Property Office (IPO) trademark in 2007 of Ingram Valley has been claimed, and Planet Mark in 2019 started referring to Ingram Farm as 'Ingram Valley Farm'. Along the riverbank, a survey was taken in 2006: 100 people were asked about what name they knew the valley as, and the majority knew it to be Ingram Valley, some explaining it was simply because it was passed down from their grandparents and parents. This could be a factor as to why the name of Ingram Valley has snowballed; if it is a name known in families, it can spread outward by word of mouth. If not word of mouth, certainly now on social media, reaching outsiders of the valley far and wide. While it may not be in newspaper articles, but rather online in the form of posts and blogs, we are still having the same conversations and experiences at Ingram Valley, just in different formats.



© David Dixon



© Mackenzie King

Santander Universities UK

The Santander Universities UK scheme aims to create life changing opportunities to people in Higher Education through inclusive and impactful support. For over a decade they have collaborated with Newcastle University to support students in their learning and increase their career prospects with paid internships, scholarships, and overseas travel.

Newcastle University student and award-winning artist, Ellie Denton, created this brochure as a part of her internship, by means of the Santander Universities partnership. Ellie worked together with Rebecca Wilson to bring this brochure into fruition, with the aim of advertising and sharing the vibrant and stunning history of Ingram Valley Farm to the masses.

Thanks to Santander, this opportunity has allowed for and seen two women start up, run, and complete a rural project, something seldom seen in the agriculture sector due to a variety of social challenges. This brochure, amongst facilitating in advertisement, shines a spotlight of recognition on women's important role in strengthening rural and agricultural development.



© David Dixon

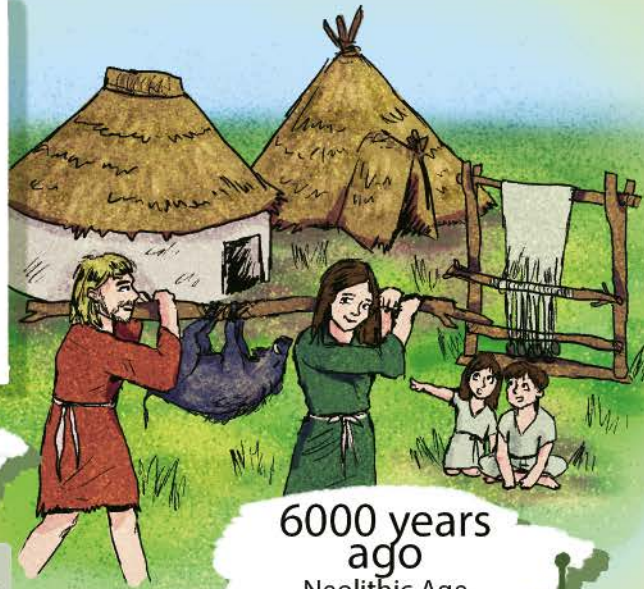


© David Dixon



480 Million years ago

The Cheviot Hills are a volcanically formed igneous extrusion creating the foundations for what is now the granite and carbon rich soils.

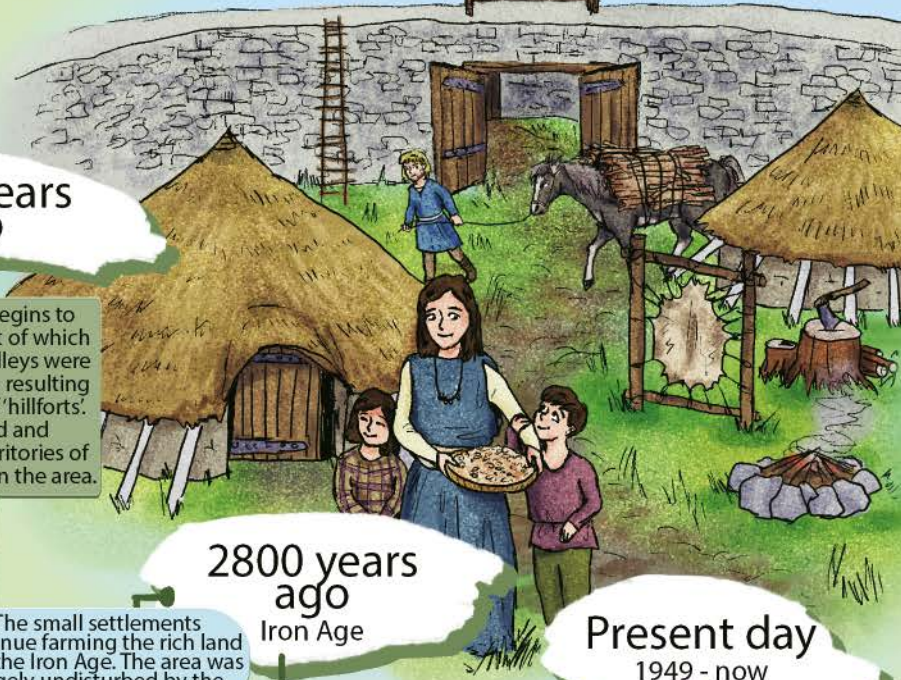


6000 years ago
Neolithic Age

First signs of farming discovered: stone axes used to clear the land for planting crops. Domesticated animals would have been kept; sheep, cattle and deer have been sustaining human life here for 6000+ years.

3000 years ago

The climate begins to cool closer to that of which we know now. Valleys were prone to flooding resulting in the creation of 'hillforts'. These defined and protected the territories of different families in the area.



2800 years ago
Iron Age

The small settlements continue farming the rich land into the Iron Age. The area was largely undisturbed by the Romans.

Present day
1949 - now

12000 years ago

Climate rapidly warms and Ice Age glaciers melt. This deposits rock debris, providing mineral rock/organic matter that further enrich the soil.



10000 years ago

Volcanic granite, carbon rich soil and clean water provide the perfect grazing ground for animals.



As the climate warmed, small settlements appeared, with early forms of paddocks and fields allowing greater control of livestock.

4000 years ago
Bronze Age



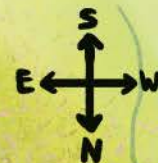
900+ years ago
Medieval Age

Troubles like the Scottish Wars of Independence, the Great Famine and diseases caused temporary abandonment until the 16th century. The area was farmed again with great growth in the 18th and 19th century - a testament to the quality and suitability of the land for farming.

© Ross Wilson



The Wilson family arrive, including Johnny Wilson who still today farms sheep, cattle and deer along with his son Ross and daughter-in-law Rebecca on Ingram Valley Farm. Excavations took place to uncover the history of the valley and this is what the hillforts look like today.



Cochrane Pike Hillfort

Middle Dean Hillfort

Wether Hill Hillfort

South Planting Wood

Haystack Hill & Little Haystacks

Turf Knowe

Ingram Hillfort

Brough Law Hillfort



All photographs © David Dixon



A sense of connection

“Wherever we go there’s evidence of ancient times: turf-covered mounds and hollows, heaps of stones, remains of tumbled walls. Once they were just that but not anymore.

Thanks to the archaeologists the landscape means much more now. We can connect to civilisations, to people, who knows, maybe our ancestors, who like us, lived and worked here millennia ago.”

Sarah Wilson

