

HARDWOLDS 80 ADVICE ON COWS

The Hardwolds 80 goes through some fields that contain cows. We have spoken to as many farmers as we can but cannot guaranteed to have spoken to everyone.

At this time of year, a lot of cattle will have been moved indoors already, so there are less than for the 40 in June.

The farmers we have contacted have been lovely – some will move their cows for the day, some for the weekend, and some cows will remain due to the extensive area in which they are kept.

If any remain, they are not going to be mothers with their calves, but could be young cattle, eg at Muston where there are 4 young ones.

It will be dark for most runners at this point, so don't be spooked by the cows! The farmer there recommends not turning your back on them, and as I mention below, go slowly, and speak gently to them and you will be absolutely fine.

I have written some advice regarding cows – some is personal experience, and some is from friends and the Internet. (*Source with slight amendments at the bottom of the page).

I was always told to make yourself large and wave your arms. This does go against the keeping calm and quiet method, so all advice is just guidance, please use your own discretion but the main thing is to **NOT RUN**

Heifers and bullocks

- Heifers (young females) and bullocks (young males) tend to be naturally inquisitive. They are most likely to approach you. They are just interested in you, so if you are boring, they are more likely to leave you alone.
- The best thing to do is to walk slowly and talk gently to them.
- **DO NOT RUN!!** This makes you interesting and you are more likely to be chased.

Cows with calves

- Cows with calves arguably pose the greatest threat to walkers
- Cows are very protective of their young and are likely to view you as a threat
- Never pass between a cow and its calf and give them a very wide berth
- **Make yourself as large as possible**; put your hands out to your side and wave in order to make you seem larger.
- **Move slowly but assertively** forward, don't run, or look them in the eye.
- If cows get too close turn to face them, stretch your arms to the side and **say "GO ON BY!" firmly and confidently**. You can also give them a firm but gentle shove if they are crowding.
- **Always have an exit route**. Stay close to a hedge if possible and in the worst case scenario you can jump through / into the hedge.

- **Don't surprise** the cows as this can cause them to become aggressive. Remember that a cow has peripheral vision and not frontal vision.
- **Find another way around**, even if this strays off the footpath – but do return to the footpath as soon as it's safe.
- Try to **wave them off**, especially if you're at a gate and can jump back to safety. If they back off, it's a good sign that they will leave you alone. Also try bashing a stick on a gate to get them to back off.
- **Get out of their vision** for a few minutes and they may dissipate allowing for a clear path.
- **Don't panic or fluster**, they will be able to pick up on this and may think you are there to harm them.
- **If you're pregnant or feeding** try to avoid crossing a field with cows at all. They have been known to take interest in pregnant women.

*<https://www.nestandglow.com/nature/how-to-walk-across-a-field-with-cows-safely>