

Farmer shoots dogs after a bloodthirsty attack on sheep

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A FARMER shot two dogs that killed 40 sheep in what police have described as one of the worst animal attacks they have ever seen.

Ray Turnock said he had no choice but to destroy the four-foot tall Great Danes after they set upon his flock which was grazing at Trout Dale Farm, in Blackshaw Moor, last Friday morning. Twelve sheep were killed and a further 28 had to be put down later the day after being mauled and traumatised.

Mr Turnock said he too had been mentally scarred after heading out to the field to feed his flock and witnessing the brutal attack.

He initially tried to scare off the dogs but with no luck. He then shot them before calling the police and a vet.

Mr Turnock said: "There was no option but to shoot the dogs as they kept up their vicious attack.

"I don't want anyone else to have to get up to find that kind of destruction.

"I found 12 dead sheep, three more were dying and the rest were traumatised, bleeding and mauled. Another 25 had to be killed for welfare reasons."

Mr Turnock is now appealing for dog walkers to keep their pets on leads when in the countryside. A number of footpaths run near his farm.

He said: "Any dog is capable of this destruction if its pack instinct is allowed to take control.

"I am sure the owner of these two dogs didn't think they were capable of such a thing. The stress and trauma that the sheep and my family went through should never have happened.

"Without family and friends I could not have collected up all the sheep and cleaned up everything myself."

Mr Turnock estimates the attack has left him around £5,000 out of pocket in vet bills and paying for the carcasses to be removed.

PCSO Paul Flowers, who has spent three decades with Staffordshire Police, was called out to the farm.

He said he had never seen such a bloodthirsty attack. It is thought the dogs had spent the whole night killing the sheep.

Mr Flowers said: "In over 31 years, this is the worst attack on sheep I have attended. I fear it will only be a matter of time before a child is attacked by a dog that has been left to roam.

"I fully support the farmer on this occasion for shooting the dogs which were attacking and killing his sheep because he had tried frightening them off but they continued the attack.

"He had no other option."

Anyone with information is asked to call Staffordshire Police on 0300 123 4455 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Some of the sheep which were attacked and killed, left, and the two dogs that Ray Turnock was forced to shoot, right.

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