

NEW FOREST PROFESSIONAL DOG WALKERS CHARTER



If you are a professional dog walker, show that you follow best dog walking practices and respect the special qualities of the National Park by signing up to the New Forest Professional Dog Walkers Charter. If you are a dog owner, follow the New Forest Dog Walking Code and display one of our car window stickers. If you are employing someone to walk your dog, please check that they are signatories to the Charter. You can find the Charter on our website and view listings of all the businesses already signed up or find out how to register your own business.

I walk your dog responsibly



We've produced this guide to help you walk your dog safely and responsibly while helping preserve the Forest's unique character and ensuring everyone's enjoyment.



In World War I, a training school was set up in the New Forest where dogs were trained to carry messages across difficult and dangerous terrain between the trenches. Right - The kennels in Matley Woods War Dogs Training School, Lyndhurst.

Historical hounds
Ancient Forest law strictly regulated who could own different types of dogs in the Forest. Lesser land owners and commoners risked being imprisoned for owning hunting dogs.

With so many paths and tracks available through the Forest, it's a great place to enjoy fresh air and exercise with your dog. Remember that not everyone loves dogs. There are also free-ranging ponies and farm animals, wildlife such as deer and rare birds, and a few potential hazards (including adders and ticks) to be aware of.

Enjoying the New Forest with your dog



Ticks are a common risk in most countryside areas. They may attach themselves to people or dogs and they can carry Lyme disease. If you find one, carefully remove the whole tick with a tick remover and seek medical advice if you have any concerns.

Right - female tick shown about 10x larger than life and a variety of tick removers.



Fetch, don't chase!

Try placing a ball or throwing it and waiting for it to settle. Then send your dog to find it.

This helps your dog learn not to chase things without checking it's ok with you.



Sniff! Sniff!

Sniffing is really important to your dog. They are up to 10,000 times more sensitive to some smells than we are.

Sprinkling treats for them to find when you're out on a walk will keep them busy.



The adder can be found throughout the New Forest. They are the only venomous snake in the UK and dogs can sometimes disturb adders in the undergrowth, which can lead to them being bitten. Keeping your dog on the tracks and close by can help prevent an encounter with an adder.

If you suspect your dog has been bitten you should get the dog to a vet. Try to keep your dog calm and if possible, carry your dog rather than letting it walk. Most local vets are experienced in treating bites to pets, and most dogs make a full recovery.

Above - The adder is one of six species of reptile found in the New Forest. It is easily recognised by a dark zig-zag marking along its back. All reptile species in the UK are protected by law and should never be injured or killed.



Dogs in ponds

We encourage owners to keep their dogs out of Forest ponds, streams and other wetland areas. Chemicals present on their fur, such as veterinary treatments can wash off into the water - not only reducing its effectiveness for your dog, but also polluting the water and posing a risk to rare and endangered insect species. Dogs also cause erosion of the banks and disturb fine sediment from the bottom, this clouds the usually clear water and if used regularly can lead to the loss of wetland plants and wildlife.



Love dogs Love the Forest



MAP INSIDE

Dog Activity Trails

There are lots of walking routes and green spaces near to the New Forest National Park for dogs to enjoy. Look for the Green Way logo or find a Green Way dog activity park marked on the map inside this leaflet.

Fun and fitness for you and your dog

Can you and your dog attempt to tunnel, weave, jump and balance your way around a Green Way dog activity park? Try these challenges with your dog: there is no right way to use each activity, just have fun together.

Look after yourself and your dog

- Don't overdo it: If you or your dog get out of breath, take a rest. Take it easy if your dog is recovering from illness or injury.
- Check the activities before you use them: Make sure there is no broken glass or sharp objects that could hurt your dog.
- Watch out for snagging collars: Avoid check chains, pinch collars or slip leads when using the trail.
- Be aware: Keep an eye open for other users to avoid conflict.
- Clean up after your dog: Pick up and put in the dog waste bins.
- Make sure your dog is always under control.

The activities are based on 'agility' challenges which have specific rules for competitions - you never know, you might have an agility champion with you!



New Forest National Park Authority

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www.newforest.gov.uk

New Forest Dog Walking Code

Welcome to the New Forest. As a national park it is a protected landscape and one of the most important areas for nature conservation in Europe. It is a place which is a working landscape; activities such as forestry and grazing livestock have helped to create and maintain the Forest as we know it today. It is also enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike for all types of outdoor recreation including dog walking.

To help everyone enjoy the Forest, local people and organisations have agreed guidance for walking with dogs throughout the National Park.

Please follow the Dog Walking Code and if you employ a dog walker to exercise your dog – make sure they also follow the Professional Dog Walkers’ Charter.

- Always keep all dogs under effective control; if you cannot reliably recall your dog or keep it close by, please keep it on a lead.
- Prevent dogs from approaching or jumping up at others. Give extra consideration around horse-riders, cyclists, picnickers and children.
- If an approaching dog is on a lead, put yours on a lead too.
- Always pick up after your dog; put bagged dog poo in a dog waste bin or litter bin, or take it home.
- Keep your distance from grazing animals, especially mothers and their young. Release your dog if threatened or chased by cattle, ponies or other animals to get to safety separately.
- Do not allow your dog to chase or attack livestock, deer or any other wildlife.
- Protect wildlife by keeping your dog to the main tracks especially through heathland when birds are nesting on the ground (February – August).
- Avoid disturbing coastal birds by exercising dogs away from them.
- Keep dogs on leads in car parks and alongside roads.
- Remember it’s a working Forest; always obey warning and safety signage.
- Do not park in gateways or on verges; it can prevent access for farm and forest vehicles and the emergency services.



Poo bags

Please bag and dispose of your dog’s waste throughout the Forest. Dog waste poses a risk to people, livestock, other dogs and wildlife. Never leave bagged waste behind – if there are no bins available, please take the bagged waste away with you. Products such as the ‘Dicky Bag’ (pictured left), are an easy way to carry it away until you can dispose of it properly.

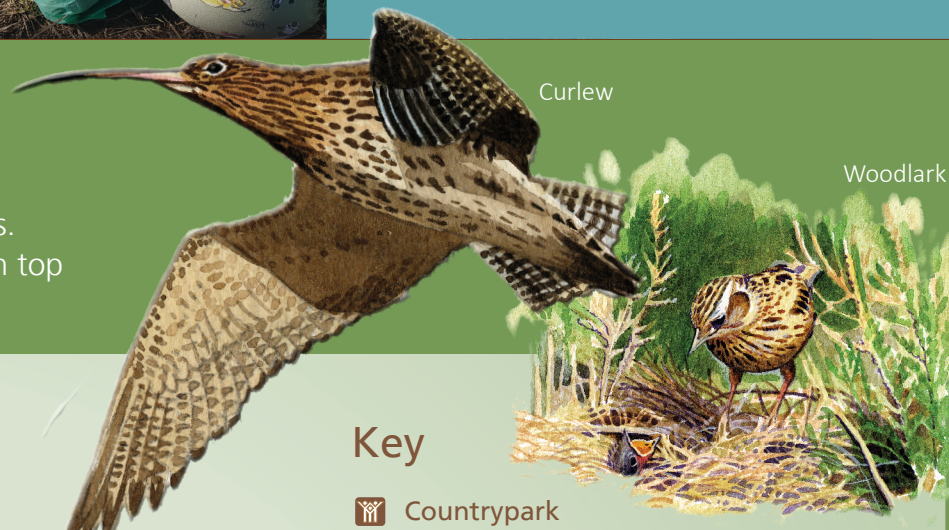
Dogs welcome!

The New Forest has many dog friendly places at which you can stay, visit or eat. Check for signs saying ‘dogs welcome’ and please remain considerate of other users. Don’t forget the seasonal New Forest Tour welcomes well-behaved dogs on its open top buses. Visit www.newforesttour.info for details.



Key

- Countrypark
- Green Way dog activity park
- Information
- Railway station
- Car park with toilets
- Museum
- Campsite
- Caravan site
- Waymarked footpath
- Holiday park



Help protect wildlife

In the New Forest many rare birds nest on or near the ground – even in woodland. They are particularly susceptible to disturbance by people and dogs – they fly off, leaving eggs or chicks exposed to the cold and vulnerable to predation, or the adult birds simply give up trying to breed.



Your dog should never be allowed to chase deer; pregnant females and young fawns are particularly vulnerable in spring and early summer and deer chased onto a road can cause a serious traffic accident. On Forestry England Crown Land, chasing deer is an offence against the byelaws and intentional hunting of deer is a criminal offence under the Hunting Act 2004.



Bird illustrations by Tim Bernhard

Download the New Forest National Park Walks App and discover free walking routes around the beautiful New Forest, devised and tested by National Park rangers:



Download for iPhone



Download for Android



Beaches

If you enjoy taking your dog along the coast, make sure you know which are dog friendly and if they have seasonal restrictions. The New Forest coastline is part of the Solent Special Protection Area, because of its importance for coastal birds – especially over the winter. Birds at the coast need to feed, rest and breed without being disturbed.

