

New Forest Professional Dog Walkers' Charter

Operate the business in a professional manner

- Have appropriate insurance for your business, including public liability cover and vehicle insurance.
- Ensure you comply with Government legislation on the licensing of activities involving animals, welfare of animals during transport and welfare of dogs and other relevant business regulations and legislation including General Data Protection Regulations and Health and Safety.
- Follow best practice for Professional Dog Walkers' Guidelines published by the RSPCA, Dogs Trust, PIF and CFSG.
- Only walk the number of dogs you can effectively control and never more than six dogs¹ in one group.
- Carry a lead for each dog in your care and keep dogs on leads around car parks and alongside roads.
- All dogs must wear collars with ID tags with the owner's name and address. Add a tag with your contact details when you walk them.
- Carry a canine first aid kit and be able to administer basic dog first aid; ensure you have a plan in place for emergencies that covers the health, safety and welfare of yourself, all of the dogs in your care and any affected third parties.
- Keep informed of things that might affect where and when you walk at the coast and in the countryside (e.g., landowner permissions, temporary car park closures, bird nesting information and events).
- Park in designated car parks where provided, do not obstruct emergency access routes and be considerate of other road users.
- Businesses should display the charter logo on their website or other promotional materials.

Respect the environment and be considerate to others by always following the New Forest Dog Walking Code

- 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 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 (March – 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.

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¹ In line with the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 under section 13 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006