



Clearing up after your dog

Dog mess is unsightly and the parasites from unwormed dogs can harm farm animals and children.

Clear up after your dog where required to do so by law (parks, streets, playing fields etc) and please consider clearing up after your dog in the wider countryside, either by bagging it up and taking it home, or by flicking it into the hedgerow. Otherwise bag it up until you can deposit it away from livestock and rights of way. Please DO NOT throw the bag in the hedge or hang it on a tree.

For your dog's good health, please remember to worm it regularly.



More information may be found at the following links:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/enjoying/countrysidecode/keepdogs.aspx>

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/info/practical/safety.htm#Dogs%20and%20bulls>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/articles/cattle-public-access.htm>

<http://www.nfuonline.com>

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=72>



Walking your dog in the countryside


The production of this leaflet was supported by the Gloucestershire Local Access Forum, an advisory body comprising representatives of walkers and riders as well as landowners and farmers.

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Health & wellbeing

Research has shown that walking for just 30 minutes every day gives you more energy, helps reduce stress, can lower blood pressure and helps keep your heart in good order.

Your dog will enjoy the adventure too but there are a few simple guidelines which will help keep you safe and make sure you enjoy walking your dog in the countryside.

 ***The countryside is a great place to exercise dogs, but it's every owner's duty to make sure their dog is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, wildlife or other people.***

It is worth remembering that the countryside is working land and the place where farmers earn their living, sometimes by grazing cattle and sheep.

 ***By law, you must control your dog so that it does not disturb or scare farm animals or wildlife.***



Dogs and livestock

We recommend that you keep your dog(s) on short leads (not more than 2 metres) and keep as much room between you and livestock as possible. The dog should stay on the path with you and not wander in the field.

Sheep

Sheep are easily frightened and will usually run away, which can elicit the chase instinct in many dogs. Even well behaved dogs can then turn into a predator. Furthermore, pregnant ewes can abort their lambs when frightened.

Cattle

Cows can be inquisitive, and if they have calves with them they may be suspicious and perceive you as a threat – especially if you have a dog with you. Keep your dog on a short lead of less than 2m and if possible, between two people if you are walking with someone else.

If cattle do start showing an unusual interest, for example, they are following close behind, try to veer towards the closest field boundary (hedge, fence, wall etc) and continue towards your exit.

If the cattle surround you and start acting aggressively (pushing towards you, lowering their heads or attempting to butt you, pawing the ground or jostling), you will then be able to release your dog through or over the boundary, to safety (although be aware of what is on the other side of the boundary).

Once your dog is away from the cattle, you may find they lose interest. However, if are still being threatened, you will be in a better position to protect yourself and leave the field if you need to. Try not to panic and never run.

If you can, let the farmer know about any problems you have encountered so that he can take remedial action to prevent similar occurrences.

And of course always leave gates as you find them.

