

The Countryside Code (abbreviated for hashing)



Respect other people

- Don't block gateways, driveways or other paths with your vehicle.
- When driving, slow down or stop for horses, walkers and farm animals and give them plenty of room. By law, cyclists must give way to walkers and horse-riders on bridleways.
- Keep out of the way when farm animals are being gathered or moved and follow directions from the farmer.

Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

- Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs. Make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates.
- Follow paths unless wider access is available, such as on open country or registered common land
- If you think a sign is illegal or misleading such as a 'Private - No Entry' sign on a public path, contact the local authority
- Don't interfere with animals even if you think they're in distress. Try to alert the farmer instead.
- Use gates, stiles or gaps in field boundaries if you can
- Be careful not to disturb ruins and historic sites.

Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home

- Take care not to damage, destroy or remove features such as rocks, plants and trees.
- Take your litter home with you. Dropping litter and dumping rubbish are criminal offences.
- Be careful with naked flames and cigarettes at any time of the year. Controlled fires are used to manage vegetation, particularly on heaths and moors between 1st October and 15th April, but if a fire appears to be unattended then report it by calling 999.

Keep dogs under effective control

- This means that you:
 - keep your dog on a lead, or
 - keep it in sight at all times, be aware of what it's doing and that it will return to you promptly on command
 - ensure it does not stray off the path or area where you have a right of access
- Special dog rules may apply in particular situations, i.e.
 - Dogs may be banned from certain areas that people use, or there may be restrictions
 - The access rights that normally apply to open country and registered common land require dogs to be kept on a short lead between 1 March and 31 July, to protect ground nesting birds, and all year round near farm animals.
 - At the coast, some local restrictions require dogs to be kept on a short lead during the bird breeding season, and to prevent disturbance to flocks of resting and feeding birds during other times of year.
- A farmer may shoot a dog which is attacking or chasing farm animals without being liable to compensate the dog's owner.
- If cattle or horses chase you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead
- Always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly – 'bag it and bin it'.

Follow advice and local signs

Some of the symbols you may see

- **Footpath** – open to walkers only, waymarked with a **yellow arrow**
- **Bridleway** – open to walkers, horse-riders and cyclists, waymarked with a **blue arrow**
- **Restricted byway** – open to walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and horse-drawn vehicles, waymarked with a **plum coloured arrow**.
- **Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT)** – open to walkers, cyclists, horse-riders, horse-drawn vehicles and motor vehicles, waymarked with a **red arrow**.
- **National Trail Acorn** – identifies 15 long distance routes in England and Wales. All are open for walking and some trails are also suitable for cyclists, horse-riders and people with limited mobility.