

# DOG WALKING IN THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

leaflet is packed with tips to help you and your enjoy a fun and safe visit to the South Downs National Park.

South Downs National Park has it all – rolling hills, lush heathland, river valleys, ancient woodland and picturesque villages. With over 3,300 km of rights of way lots of open access areas, it's the perfect place for a walk with your four-legged friend.



## KEEPING YOUR DOG SAFE

Dogs will be dogs – it's in their nature to explore. Responsible dog owners can help them stay safe by taking the lead.

## UNDERSTAND YOUR WAY

Look for the Acorn symbol for the South Downs Way National Trail. For other rights of way use the arrows and waymarkers to pick your route.



## TOP TIPS

Put your dog on the lead near sheep. Sheep can drop dead from shock and pregnant ewes can abort their young if scared. Farmers are legally allowed to shoot any dog that is chasing or harming their livestock.

Stay away from cattle. Keep your dog on the lead around cattle and never walk between a cow and her calf. If you feel threatened by cattle, let your dog off the lead and get to safety quickly.

Keep your dog close. Dogs often dash off to explore interesting smells, and can end up lost, trapped or injured. Always keep your dog under close control and make sure they are microchipped so you can be reunited if they get lost.

Follow the signs. Always read and follow signs on stiles or gates. You don't want to miss an important message about your safety.

## HEATHLANDS

Our heathlands are home to ground nesting birds.

Curious dogs can disturb these birds, causing them to abandon their nests and leave their eggs or young to die.

Help protect these birds by sticking to the paths, especially during ground nesting bird season, from 1 March – 15 September.



## THE SCOOP ON PICKING UP POOP

What's the deal with dog poo? Yes, the countryside is full of poo. But dog poo is different to farm animal poo:

- They eat meat which means their poo smells bad and can contain worms and diseases.
- Thousands of people walk their dogs here every day. Can you imagine how much poo that generates!



Dog poo, left to decompose on the ground, can leech parasites into the soil. This can cause worms and diseases to be passed onto humans and even livestock, causing serious illness. This also has a detrimental effect on local water tables, contaminating lakes, ponds and drinking water.



Dog poo is bad for people and bad for the countryside. Please bag it and bin it – any bin will do.

