

The Law

Northumberland County Council has introduced four Dog Control Orders under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act.

Order One - Removing Dog Faeces

This requires people in control of a dog to immediately remove faeces deposited by their dog on all land which is open to the air and to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access in the County of Northumberland at all times of the year. This includes beaches, sand dunes and coastal grasslands.

Order Two - Keeping Dogs on Leads

This would require people in control of a dog to keep it on a lead no longer than 1.5metres in the following area(s) at all times of the year.

All cemeteries within the County of Northumberland.
Alongside A and B Class roads

Order Three - Keeping Dogs on Leads when Directed

This would require people in control of a dog to put and keep it on a lead, no longer than 1.5m, when told to do so by an authorised officer, which will apply on land open to the air and to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access in the County of Northumberland at all times of the year.

Order Four - Excluding Dogs from Land

This would require people in control of a dog to ensure that it is prevented from entering any of the following areas:

- All enclosed children's play areas within Northumberland at all times of the year
- Part of the beach at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea (May-September)
- Part of the beach at Blyth (May-September)

Failure to comply with any of the above orders could result in a fixed penalty fine of £75.

Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953

Under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953, you are committing an offence if your dog worries (chases or attacks) livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, horses and poultry) on agricultural land, so keep your dog on a lead around livestock. If your dog worries livestock, the farmer has the right to stop your dog (even by shooting your dog in certain circumstances).



Useful Information

Northumberland County Council
www.northumberland.gov.uk

Northumberland Coast AONB
www.northumberlandcoastaonb.org

The Kennel Club
www.thekennelclub.org.uk

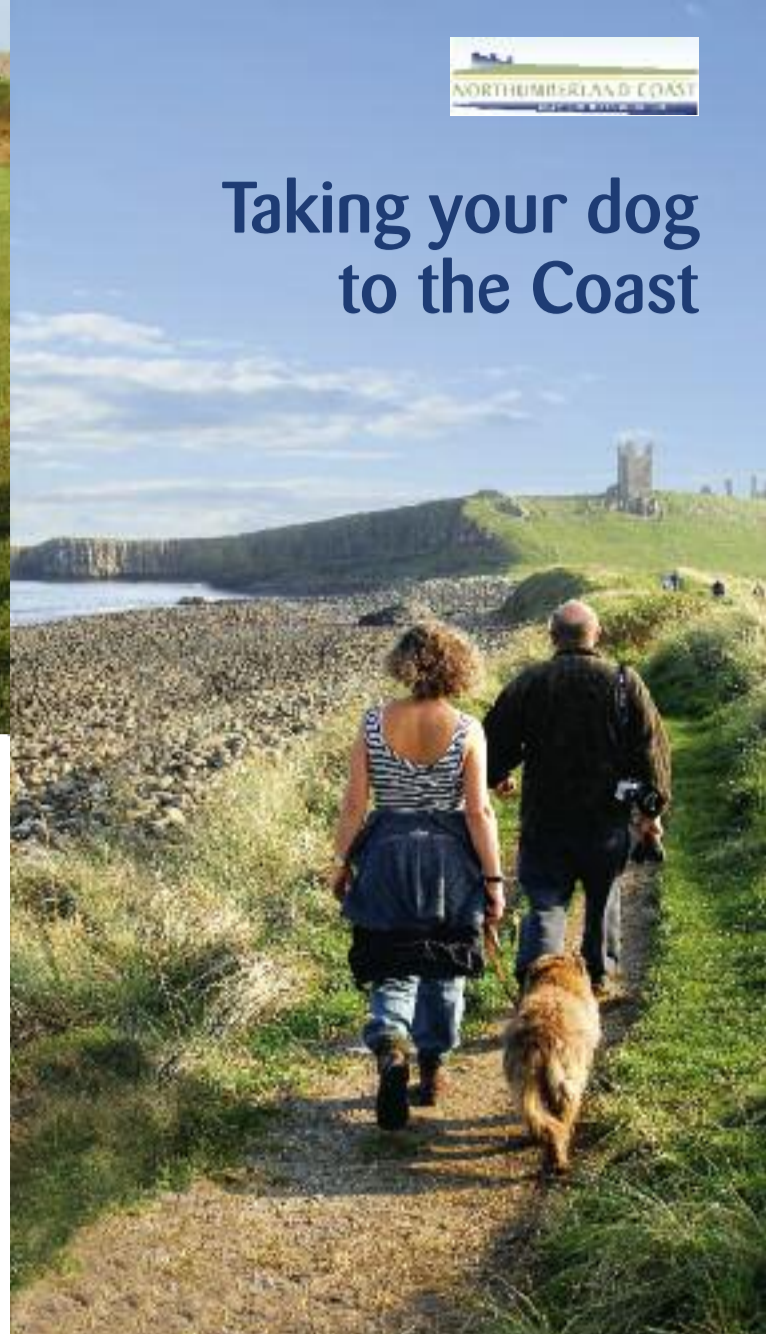
National Trust
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

This leaflet has been prepared by the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership with support from the National Trust and Northumberland County Council.

Funded by The Crown Estate and Northumberland County Council.



Illustrations by Marcus Byron.
Photography courtesy of Neil Anderson, Gavin Duthie and Iain Robson.
Designed by Hunter Johnstone.



Taking your dog to the Coast

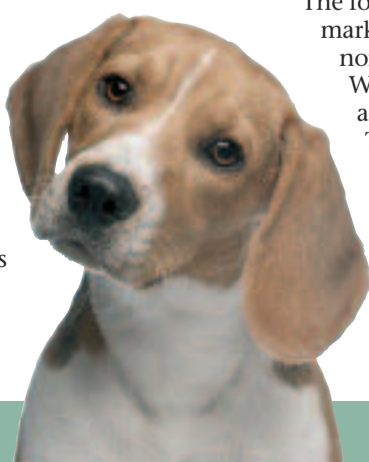


Taking your dog to the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

The Northumberland Coast has been recognised as one of the finest landscapes in Europe and as such it has been designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Much of the coast is designated as a Special Protection Area for birds.

The wide sandy beaches of the Northumberland Coast AONB are an excellent place to exercise your dog and as such, dog walking is perhaps the most popular activity on our beaches.

Dogs on the coast can cause disturbance to wildlife, livestock and other beach visitors, however if you follow the simple advice in this leaflet, our beaches and coastal grasslands can be enjoyed by people, dogs and wildlife.



Access to the Coast

Beaches (above the mean high water mark) may be privately owned. Although public access along beaches is generally permitted by landowners, the same is not normally true of the dune land behind the beach.

There is no automatic right of access over private land from the nearest road to the beach, and you must use existing public paths and beach access points.

The foreshore (between the mean high water mark and the mean low water mark) normally belongs to The Crown Estate. While there is no legal public right of access along the foreshore, in practice The Crown Estate generally permit public access.

In Northumberland there are generally no restrictions on taking access along the beach for recreation, but please observe local signage.



At Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve, dogs should be kept on a short lead or at heel. There are seasonal restrictions at Beadnell Bay, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Blyth, please observe local signage.

On public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) your dog should be kept under close control at all times, and leads are advisable in sheep farming areas.

Code of Conduct

Keep your dog under close control at all times

- Do not allow dogs to disturb birds or livestock. Once your dog gets fun out of chasing birds or livestock, it will quickly start to look for them every time you are at the beach! Teach your dog to chase and retrieve a toy instead.
- Never let your dog roam around the coast unattended as dogs can disturb wildlife and cause a nuisance to other visitors.
- Not everyone likes dogs, some people, especially children, are very afraid of them. Try and prevent your dog from running up to people even if the dog is 'just being friendly'.
- Always clean up after your dog. Bag the faeces and use bins where they are provided. Otherwise, take it home.
- Your dog should have a collar and tag. If you are on holiday, it is a good idea to have a temporary tag with your holiday address on it or mobile phone number.
- Never leave a dog unattended in a car, even with the window open and water available. Take them out of the car and leave them in a secure, cool place with access to shade and water.



Here is our guide to being a good dog owner at the coast



There are plenty of other fun things to do!



Remember to put your dog on the lead at appropriate times

Disturbance to roosting and feeding birds

Large flocks of birds on the shore will either be roosting or feeding. Whether they are winter visitors or passing through on migration, they are under stress and conserving energy is important to them.

It may be fun, but please do not allow your dog to run at flocks of birds on the shore. Regular disturbance like this wastes valuable energy – it could mean the difference between life and death for them.



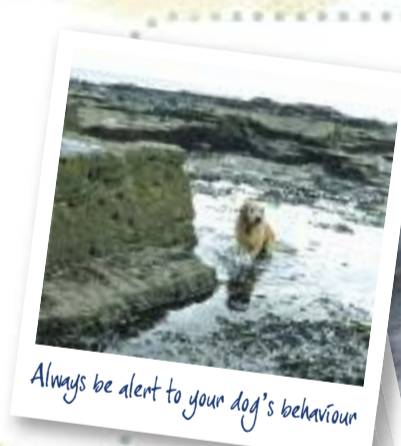
Disturbance to breeding birds

The dunes and coastal grasslands that back onto the shore are important areas for a variety of ground-nesting birds such as skylarks, meadow pipits, stonechats and partridges. They are easily disturbed, which can prevent them from breeding successfully. Between March and July, please keep your dog on a lead when you are walking through the dunes or coastal grasslands or passing through them to access the shore.

Farm animals

Cattle, sheep and ponies are often grazed in dunes, coastal grasslands and adjacent fields. Where you come across livestock, please put your dog on a lead.

If you are chased by cattle you should let your dog off its lead to protect yourself.



Always be alert to your dog's behaviour



Clean up after your dog – Bag it and bin it

If your dog fouls any coastal land, please pick it up, it is an offence not to. Leaving dog faeces is not only hazardous to health it is offensive to other beach users. Please bag it and either take it home or place it in a bin, do not leave bags of dog faeces hanging on gate posts, trees or anywhere else – this is also a criminal offence.

Stranded Seals

Seals can often be found on the Northumberland coast. If you find a seal pup that looks fit and healthy and shows no signs of distress, then it is best to leave it where it is, at least for two high tides. Do not allow your dog to go near the seal and do not try to handle it yourself, they do bite!

If a seal pup is sick, thin or injured then contact RSPCA's 24-hour cruelty and advice line 0300 1234 999.

