



# Responsible Dog Walking in the Great Outdoors



Location – Allt yr Esgair, Brecon Beacons National Park

*Adventuring in the great outdoors is not only good for us physically, but also mentally. Being accompanied by our canine companions on our outdoor adventures is great. The outdoors possess many dangers to our furry friends, some may not be relevant to us as people or things we may not be aware of. We all love the outdoors and we all enjoy it in different ways. Whether it is dog walking, trail running, mountain biking, horse riding, wildlife watching, etc we all have our favourite outdoor activities. The outdoors is about enjoyment for all and as the saying goes respect others as we would like them to respect us. We all have different views and our outdoor activities may not be to everyone's interest. Considering others when outside is a good place to start for outdoor enjoyment for all.*



*The huge problem of dog faeces left behind or even worse being bagged and left is one issue that affects us all, including wildlife and nature. Not only is it unsightly, smelly and unpleasant if stepped in (or rode through by mountain bikers or wheelchair users), it is an extreme health hazard. Improper discarded poo bags pose a danger to animals. Cows, sheep, horses and wildlife are at risk of ingesting the plastic and small creatures getting caught up in the bags can suffocate.*

*Dog faeces contain dangerous diseases and parasites. These dangerous parasites can live in the soil for years and can also get carried to waterways contaminating our water systems. These diseases affect people, from slight stomach upsets to infections of digestive system, kidney, liver, lung, heart and neurological damage and even fatality.*

*Your dog is also at risk from left dog faeces. Hookworms, Roundworms, Giardia, Coccidia are just some of the nasty parasites that can be transmitted through not cleaning up after your dog. Ensuring your dog is wormed regularly can also help to prevent spread of these parasites.*



*There are many containers on the market which you can place the poo bags inside and have an airtight seal, which will have no odour release. These containers can be clipped to your belt, dog lead or even be placed inside a rucksack until you can dispose of responsibly.*

[www.dickybag.com](http://www.dickybag.com)

*Grazing livestock eat the grass from the contaminated soil and drink from polluted waterways. There are no vaccines or drugs available for some diseases in livestock and not only risk infecting the food chain, but can cause great suffering to the animals, even death. This also has huge implications to farmers, their livestock and crops are their livelihood. **Please help back British farming, clean up after your dog and bin it or take the bags home.***





It is important to have full control over your dog whilst out walking. There are areas where off lead exercise is perfectly fine and pose no danger to your dog, other people, animals or nature. However outdoor walking can pose unexpected risks, even if you are familiar with an area. Scaring livestock even when your dog is close can cause injury, suffering and distress to the animals, resulting in death from shock, miscarriage of pregnant animals, separating parent from their young, herding them into danger and even a danger to yourself and your dog. Cows and even horses can charge when felt threatened, especially when with young. Cattle and wild ponies/horses can be found on open land and may not be restricted to an enclosed field.



*When encountering livestock keep calm, hold dogs close, locate the safest route which will enable enough distance between you and the animals as not to disturb them. Use paths and access land where it is possible. If charged or you feel threatened by fast approaching aggressive cattle or horses, release your dog and get yourself to safety. Your dog can evade danger more quickly than you. You can then recall your dog once you are safe.*



*Dog walking can have a damaging impact on wildlife. Wildlife and nesting ground birds can be disturbed by dogs that are roaming freely, which can result in the loss of young, physical damage of rare plants and habitats of wildlife. Wildlife can pose a danger to your dog too! There are some areas in the UK at certain times of the year where venomous snakes are present and a startled snake could result in a fatal bite.*



*The curiosity and excitement of your dog could lead them into all sorts of danger. When running free there are many landscape dangers that could cause injury and death. Escarpments, cliffs, quarries, cave systems, sinkholes are all possible hazards when walking in the outdoors. Fast running rivers and other waterways are potentially hazardous to dogs.*





*When roaming off lead it's difficult to know what your dog is sniffing or eating. Ingesting something poisonous can happen without you knowing. Some plant life can be dangerous and even cause fatalities in dogs. Acorns and conkers for example may seem harmless but can be highly toxic to your dog.*



*Please be mindful of fellow outdoor users such as horse riders and mountain bikers. There are potential risks of injury to your dog and others, should a horse become startled or your dog may run out in front of, or chase a bike. These incidents can be avoided if your dog is kept on a lead. Some people also have a fear of dogs and what may seem a harmless approach may cause alarm and panic in people and children. This can also apply to other dogs. Your dog maybe approaching to say hi, however you can never be sure how dogs will react to each other.*

*A walking belt is a useful accessory to have. It leaves your hands free, helps take the strain from your shoulders and arms, also handy pockets for waste bags and waste containers.*





*Please adhere to signs they are there to safeguard and enhance everyone's enjoyment of the great outdoors.*

**Let's enjoy the great outdoors together!**



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