

## Cleeve Common Canine Code

Duty Ranger - 07756 828 458

Based on recent surveys, Cleeve Common has in excess of 500 dogs walked across it each and every day.



Cleeve Common, a magnificent 1000 acre Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), is privately owned. Under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act, you have a statutory right to walk freely across the Common; however CROW does stipulate that **dogs** must be on a **short lead** during the **bird nesting season** (March to July inclusive), and **at all times** around **livestock**.

### Dog Attacks on Sheep

The sheep on Cleeve Common belong to local 'Commoners' who have rights to graze the Common. Grazing is an essential tool for managing the biodiversity of the grassland and maintaining the SSSI, and the sheep are a livelihood for their owners. There are sheep on the Common between April and November inclusive, and cattle live on the Common all year round. You can check the 'sheep status' on the home page of our website [www.cleevecommon.org.uk](http://www.cleevecommon.org.uk).

**Please keep your dog on a lead around all livestock**, and if you have any doubts please use a muzzle to be extra safe. On average, three sheep are killed every year on Cleeve Common by dogs. **Please don't let it be your dog**. If you witness livestock worrying or a dog attack, **please** call the Duty Ranger immediately. If you lose control of your dog and it attacks a sheep or cow **please** call us - **do not leave an injured animal to suffer**.

### Dog Mess

Increasing amounts are being left, especially in plastic bags in scrub and in hedgerows. Dog mess takes years to break down. It is acidic and changes the composition of the grassland, it poses a health risk to livestock, wildlife and children, and it is very unpleasant for other visitors. **Please pick up after your dog** – put dog waste in the bins provided at the main car parks. **If you bag it, bin it!** Please do not drop plastic mess bags on the Common.

### Minimise Damage

Please tread carefully in areas where erosion could occur - on thin soils, muddy areas and on sensitive archaeological sites.

### Dogs and Adders

Be aware that we have adders living on the Common. These rare animals are legally protected. They are timid creatures and will not bite unless they feel threatened. Most adder encounters occur between March and October. To prevent your dog from being bitten, keep it under close control and stick to main paths. If your dog gets bitten, get it to a vet immediately. Try to keep your dog calm and if possible carry your dog rather than letting it walk. This will help to slow the spread of venom.

### Leave things as you find them

Observe the minimum impact code. Take only photographs and leave only paw prints. Shut gates behind you. Take litter home.

### Minimal Disturbance Zone

Please tread extra carefully, or avoid if you can, the three Scheduled Monuments (shaded red on the map overleaf) and the area between Watery Bottom and Postlip where many of our rarest plants and animals live on the fragile thin soils. Please keep off the golf course.

### Eyes and Ears

As regular visitors to the Common, dog walkers are a really important extension to our field team! Please keep the Ranger's number in your phone; let us know if you see anything problematic or if you get into danger. Our Rangers respond to call outs on a daily basis.

### Donations

Cleeve Common Board of Conservators is a small charity that receives no core funding to manage the recreation on the Common. **If you use the Common please help us to pay for it** – if you would like to support our work in managing the Common for biodiversity and people, please see our website, under the 'Support' tab: [www.cleevecommon.org.uk](http://www.cleevecommon.org.uk).

Thank you