

How to enjoy access in Orkney

Better access to Orkney's Countryside

There is a new law to help you enjoy Orkney's countryside:

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 gives everyone:

A right of public access over most land and inland water.

It includes hills, moorland, grassland, woods, coasts, paths and tracks, rivers and lochs

It's for getting from one place to another.

It covers walking, cycling and horse riding (also running, climbing, sailing, wind surfing, canoeing and wild camping)

It's for pastimes such as photography, bird watching and painting

It includes family and social activities like dog walking, beach games and picnics

It also includes taking part in recreational and educational events.



Enjoying the Countryside Responsibly

You share the countryside with other people

- people who work on the land
- people who live on the land
- people enjoying the countryside like you

and also with Orkney's wildlife and livestock.

So with the new law comes a duty for everyone to act responsibly in the countryside.

To respect the needs of others and act lawfully and reasonably.

This means:

- thinking about other people's privacy
- not hindering farmers in their work
- taking responsibility for your own safety
- keeping your dog under control
- caring for the environment

You can do this by following the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

This Orkney guide is based on the Code and will help you to enjoy the countryside in a responsible way.

A practical guide to responsible access

Inside this leaflet you will find helpful advice about responsible access in a variety of places and situations.

Here are some hints for particular activities:

Cycling

- dismount on busy or narrow paths
- slow and give way to other users
- avoid alarming livestock or wildlife
- avoid churning up wet or soft ground

Horse Riding

- give way to walkers on narrow paths
- slow down for other users
- avoid churning up wet or soft ground
- take care not to alarm livestock or wildlife

Water Sports

- do not pollute the water
- avoid disturbing anglers
- minimise disturbance to wildlife
- avoid damaging banks and vegetation

Climbing

- follow the advice in this guide for getting to climbing sites
- take care not to disturb wildlife
- follow local guidance to safeguard bird breeding sites