



The Isle of Man Countryside Code

Your guide to enjoying the coast and
countryside of the Isle of Man.



Isle of Man
Government

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Respect everyone

- be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside
- leave gates and property as you find them
- do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking
- be nice, say hello, share the space
- follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available
- stay away from farm machinery and follow farmers' directions when asked

Farming, livestock and wild animals

Your actions can affect other people's lives and livelihoods.

Co-operate with people working in the countryside. For example, follow the farmer's directions when animals are being moved or gathered and stay away from farm machinery. This helps keep everybody safe.

Leave gates and property as you find them or follow instructions on signs. When in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates. Farmers close gates to keep animals in or leave them open to give access to food and water. Do not interfere with farm machinery, horses, or livestock. If you think a farm animal is in distress, try to alert the farmer, or contact the Department for Environment Food and Agriculture on 695742, or contact the Police on 631212, only call 999 if there is an emergency.

Give all animals (whether livestock, horses or wild) plenty of space. Their behaviour can be unpredictable, especially when they are with their young and you could get hurt.

Do not feed livestock, horses or wild animals as it can cause them harm.

Dogs should be kept on a lead when travelling through areas of farmland and fields (regardless of whether livestock is present) and on a lead in open areas with livestock present. Dogs should be kept under close control in other open areas as you never know where there might be livestock or wild animals. If your dog does not answer a recall command, it should be on a lead in all locations.



Travel and parking in the country

Traffic on country roads can be dangerous to people and wildlife.

Slow down and drive with care when driving on rural roads. Make sure you do not block access to gateways or driveways when parking. Always leave access for emergency vehicles.

When you are driving or cycling, slow down or stop for horses, walkers and livestock. Always give other road users plenty of room.

Consider leaving your car at home when visiting the outdoors. You could use public transport instead. Find bus information at bus.im or contact one of the many local independent taxi services.

Take extra care and stay alert when you cross a railway line or road. Remember some of the Island's roads are de-restricted. This means that road traffic on the Isle of Man can be legally travelling at speeds well in excess of 60 miles an hour.

Face oncoming traffic and follow The Highway Code when you walk on a road without a pavement.



Be nice, say hello, share the space

When you're spending time outdoors you could come across other countryside users and animals.

Ensure you are on the correct path for your use, cyclists should not use footpaths, horse riders should not use cycle-paths or footpaths, and traps and carriages should stay on carriageways.

Cyclists should make sure that walkers and horse riders are aware of their presence, possibly by ringing a bell.

Cyclists must give way to walkers and horse riders on bridle-paths.

Cyclists and horse riders should respect walkers' safety.

Walkers should take care not to obstruct or endanger cyclists or horse riders.

Follow local signs and keep to marked paths

Use maps and local signs to help you find your way. Stay on marked paths, even if they are muddy, unless wider access is available, such as on areas of public rambage. This helps to protect crops, wildlife and the natural landscape.

Get to know the signs and symbols used on the Isle of Man as they differ slightly from other areas of the UK and British Isles. They help you identify routes for different users through the countryside.

Use gates, stiles, or gaps in field boundaries where you can. Climbing over boundaries can cause damage and put livestock at risk, please do not do so unless it is an emergency.

Contact the Department of Infrastructure if you think a sign is illegal or misleading or missing. For example, a 'private - no entry' sign on a Public Right of Way. Or if you spot any damages or defects on any of the Island's paths or roads. Issues can be reported at <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/infrastructure/highway-services/>.

Protect the environment

- take your litter home - leave no trace of your visit
- take care with BBQs, do not bury a used BBQ, and make sure that you remove the BBQ when it has cooled sufficiently to be removed
- do not light fires
- always keep your dog under control and in sight
- dog poo - bag it, carry it and bin it in any public waste bin
- care for nature - do not cause damage or disturbance
- observe any signs, including closed signs and diversions.

We all have a responsibility to protect our countryside and open spaces for current and future generations.

Care for nature - do not cause damage or disturbance. Leave rocks, stone, plants and trees as you find them and take care not to disturb wildlife including birds that nest on the ground.

Do not disturb ruins or historic sites – our heritage is important.

Take your litter home - leave no trace of your visit

Remember to bring a bag with you and take your rubbish and food waste home, use public bins or recycle if possible. Litter spoils the beauty of the countryside and can be dangerous to wildlife and livestock. Dropping litter and dumping rubbish are criminal offences.

Take care with BBQs and do not light fires

Be careful with naked flames and cigarettes – extinguish and dispose of cigarettes / e-cigarettes properly. Only use BBQs in suitable and safe areas, such as, on raised, dry and flat surfaces away from long vegetation. Do not use BBQ's on dry ground, during extended periods of hot weather, or where signs indicate they should not be used. Always put your BBQ out, make sure the ashes are cold and dispose of them responsibly. Do not bury a used BBQ. Be mindful of litter, do not leave litter including glass bottles where sunlight shining through can start a wildfire. Fires can be as devastating to wildlife and habitats as they are to people and property.

Check first with the relevant landowner that BBQs, campfires & camp stoves are permitted.

Controlled fires are used by some land managers to manage vegetation, particularly on heaths and moors between 1 September and 31 March. If you see an unattended fire in the countryside, report it immediately by calling 999 and ask for the fire service. Don't put yourself in any immediate danger by attempting to tackle fast-spreading fires. Leave the area as soon as possible.

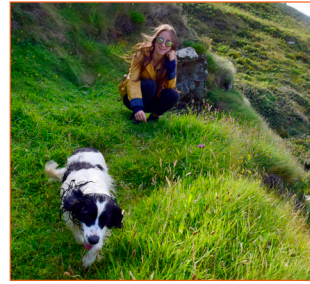
Continue enjoying and exploring the Island's hills, forests and glens but work with DEFA to reduce the risk of incidents. Those visiting these areas are asked to act responsibly and not light barbecues, camp stoves, campfires and dispose of cigarettes in a proper manner.



Always keep dogs under control and in sight

The countryside is a great place to exercise your dog, but you need to consider other users and wildlife.

To keep your dog under effective control (making sure it stays away from wildlife, livestock, horses and other people unless invited) as the owner you are expected to keep to the following:



Farmland, private land with a PRoW and/or permissive paths	Areas of public rambage	Glens, plantations, beaches and other public areas
<p>Always keep your dog on a lead on the designated path and;</p> <p>Adhere to the request of landowners with permissive paths (dogs may not be permitted)</p>	<p>If no wildlife or livestock is present your dog should be kept in sight but;</p> <p>If wildlife or livestock is present your dog should be kept on a lead</p>	<p>Your dog should be kept in sight and;</p> <p>You should adhere to local signs and conditions</p>
<p>Where permitted, you should only allow your dog off the lead where you are in effective control and your dog will return on command.</p>		
<p>When travelling along PRoWs you and your dog must not stray from path. You have a right of access only along the path, this includes your dog.</p>		

Always check local signs as there are situations when you must keep your dog on a lead for all or part of the year. Local areas may also ban dogs completely, even for assistance dogs. Signs will tell you about these local restrictions. If a dog disturbs, worries or chases any bird or animal, or causes a nuisance or annoyance to any person on areas of public rambage, the keeper of the dog is guilty of an offence.

A keeper of a dog who fails to keep the dog on a lead on Department land when required to do so by a notice or by a person authorised by the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture is guilty of an offence (Forestry Byelaws 2009)

Between 1st March and 31st July, you should have your dog on a lead on upland areas of public rambage. This is to protect livestock and ground nesting birds.

Under current Manx law, The Dog Act, allows farmers the right to shoot on sight any dog that is attacking or worrying livestock. Farmers do not have to compensate the dog's owner.

If you are walking a dog on a lead and you feel threatened by livestock or horses, let the dog off the lead. Do not risk getting hurt protecting your dog. Releasing your dog will make it easier for you both to reach safety.

If your dog is off the lead keep your dog within sight, you never know when you might encounter livestock, wild animals or people who are uncomfortable around dogs.

Remember that while dogs need space to exercise and run, the countryside is for everyone.

Prevent your dog from approaching horse riders, cyclists, or other people and their dogs uninvited.

Ensure your dog is microchipped – dog owners residing on the island are required by law to have each dog microchipped. Ensure your dog's details are up to date on the microchipping database, a keeper who fails to update details may be liable of a fine of up to **£500** whilst anyone who fraudulently or negligently enters inaccurate information may be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine of up to **£1,000**.

You may also wish to consider providing details of your name, address and contact number on your dog's collar. This means you can be reunited quickly if your dog becomes lost.

Dog poo - bag it, carry it and bin it - any public waste bin will do

Always clean up your dog's poo because it can cause illness in people, livestock and wildlife.

Never leave bags of dog poo around, even if you intend to pick them up on your way back. Even if you intend to pick it up later this is still illegal dumping of rubbish. Deodorised bags and containers can make bags of dog poo easier to carry. If you cannot find a public waste bin, you should take it home and use your own bin.

It is an offence under the Litter Act 1972 to leave bags of poo around, even if you intend to pick them up later. Those guilty of an offence can be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding **£2,500**.



Enjoy the outdoors

- check your route and local conditions
- plan your adventure - know what to expect and what you can do
- enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory.

The outdoors is great for your wellbeing. It is a place for relaxation, peacefulness and activity. Whatever you like to do outdoors, you will enjoy it more if you prepare in advance.

Check your route and local conditions

Make sure you know your route and have the maps you need. Refer to up-to-date maps, guides or websites before you set off.

You can find advice on activities from www.visitisleofman.com as well as information on local activity centres. Likewise local information centres can also give you ideas and advice.

Check weather, tide and water conditions

Check weather forecasts before you set off. Conditions can change quickly on the Island. Prepare for different conditions from where you set off, the Island has a unique microclimate and the weather can change dramatically in just a few miles or in a short time. Do not be afraid to turn back if conditions change when you're out and about.

If you are walking by the sea, look up tide times at www.tidetimes.org.uk before you leave to reduce the risk of getting cut off by rising tides. Some rivers are affected by tidal change, it's not just the sea. Take care on slippery rocks and seaweed.

DEFA monitor water quality and conditions at several locations around the Island. If you want to paddle, swim or enjoy the water check <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/environment-food-and-agriculture/environment-directorate/environmental-protection-unit/bathing-water-quality/> for the water quality.



Plan your adventure - know what to expect and what you can do

Check your route before you set off. Any footpaths or carriageway closures will normally be shown on www.one.network/uk. You should not pass any official closed signs on the public rights of way or road network.

Tell someone else where you are going and when you expect to be back. In rural areas you may not see anyone for hours and phone signals are unreliable in some places.

You are responsible for the safety of yourself, and others in your care. Make sure you have the skills and knowledge you need for your activity. Paths that are more rural and coastal paths are likely to require a greater skillset than urban and sub-urban routes.

Prepare for natural hazards, including weather changes, to stay safe. Make sure you take the right clothing and equipment for your planned activities.

Remain flexible in case you need to change your plans if places are busy, the weather changes or you change your mind.

Rights and permissions

This code sets out information about the rights of different users. For some activities you may need to get permission from the landowner, including:

- camping
- freshwater swimming
- freshwater fishing
- kayaking and canoeing

Enjoy your visit, have fun, make a memory.

Driving in the Countryside

The island has a network of 100km of unsurfaced carriageways known colloquially as Green Lanes with some being legally defined Green Way Roads. These allow off road vehicles access to the countryside and a place to challenge themselves on these unsurfaced carriageways. The infrastructure map can be used to see the Island's network of carriageways with black being used to show green lanes: <https://manngis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8382a21e92da426885e383f926d66f02>

While all of the above information is relevant to driving/riding in the countryside, there are some additional points to be aware of.

Green Lanes and Green Way Roads – know the difference

While all unsurfaced carriageways (which includes some D & C classification roads) are Green Lanes, not all Green Lanes are Green Way Roads. Green Lanes are carriageways and any vehicles travelling along them must adhere to the Highway Code. Green Way Roads, have specific restrictions applied to them, they have a weight limit of 0.5 tonnes and it is advised that a limit of 20mph is adhered to across both types of carriageways.

There is a permit system to allow vehicles of heavier weight to utilise the Green Way Roads if needed. Application forms can be found here: <https://www.gov.im/categories/travel-traffic-and-motoring/greenlanes-unsurfaced-carriageways/>

Please note, permits are usually only approved for professional organisations and qualified groups. Applications need to be approved and permits shown in vehicles before driving on Green Way Roads is undertaken

Driving Code

Green Lanes offer greater mobility and opportunity for individuals to explore the scenic landscape of the Island. This is also a rare example of where walkers, cyclists and horses are closely intertwined with vehicle use. To keep everyone safe and able to enjoy the countryside together vehicle users are asked to adhere to the Highway Code and utilise the countryside driving code below:

1. **Show consideration for others** – Be courteous to all other users, and take care when passing horses, cyclists, walkers and livestock. Be prepared to stop your engine if needed. Travel at a quiet and unobtrusive pace, and only in small groups.
2. **Keep on the Defined Track** – Do not stray off the track for any reason. If an immovable object is found, retrace your route and report it: <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/infrastructure/highway-services/>
3. **Ensure that you and your vehicle are fully road legal** – Although it is described as “off road”, Green Lanes are legal carriageways and you are subject to the same laws as surfaced roads. Obey all traffic and advisory signs.
4. **Drive according to the ground conditions** – Where ground is soft, ride or drive gently to avoid unnecessary damage.
5. **Remember that wildlife faces many threats** – Green Lanes can be valuable habitats. Take special care in spring and early summer.

Know the signs and symbols of the countryside

The symbols used in the countryside include:

Public Right of Way

Public Rights of Way are depicted by Purple/Maroon signs and symbols or Green finger signs, please note no vehicles, bicycles or horses are permitted onto a PRoW unless it also runs along a carriageway. Each symbol depicts the rights of users on a Public Right of Way. They may also be shown by wooden arrows or coloured finger posts stating "Public Right of Way" which will include the appropriate symbol. PRoWs are depicted using the following symbols.

Footpath

A right of way for walkers and mobility aid users only.

Bicycles (including electric assisted bikes), horses, motor bikes, cars and other vehicles are NOT permitted.

Previously, green arrows stating "Public Footpath" and showing the three legs of man or a green disc with a footprint have been used. These may still be in situ on some paths and also indicate a public right of way.



Cycle-path

A right of way for walkers, mobility aid users and cyclists:

Cyclists have the right of way on cycle-paths however, cyclists should respect walkers' safety and walkers should take care not to obstruct or endanger cyclists.

Horses, motor bikes, cars and other vehicles are NOT permitted.



Bridle-path

A right of way for walkers, mobility aid users, cyclists and horse-riders (not traps or carriages):

Pedestrians and cyclists should give way to horses on bridle-paths. Cyclists should give way to pedestrians on bridle-paths.

Motor bikes, cars and other vehicles are NOT permitted.





Carriageways (Green Lanes and Green Way Roads)

Greenway

A Loaghtan Head Symbol (normally against a green background) – is the sign for a Green Way - a weight restricted carriageway for walkers, mobility aid users, cyclists, horse riders and any traps carriages or vehicles weighing less than 0.5t.

Green Way Roads are a carriageway and the Highway Code applies.



Green Lanes and U Roads

Any unsurfaced carriageway showing this sign is available for all the designated uses. They are depicted by the below symbol on a green background, however, not all Green Lanes will be suitable for vehicles. If in doubt, walk the route first before proceeding.



Other signs and symbols

A blue background with white symbol (Herring Gull, Herring, Three Legs with crown and Celtic Knot). A premier route, created for walking. On trails where a use other than walking is permitted the route symbol and the appropriate PRoW symbol will be used in conjunction. Users with limited mobility can go to the www.gov.im/prow website to check trail suitability where routes have been graded, these will also be shown at the start and end of sections.

The various symbols are as below:

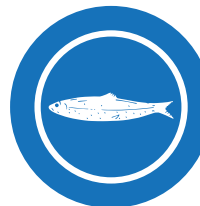
Raad-ny-Foillan

The Way of the Gull – the coastal footpath – over a 100 miles in total – follows the coast where practical – generally not suitable for users with limited mobility.



Bayr-ny-Skeddan

Bayr-ny-Skeddan – The Herring Way - a route from Peel to Castletown following the route fishermen used to take – around 14 miles – generally not suitable for users with limited mobility.



Millennium Way

The Millennium Way – a route from Ramsey to Castletown developed as a premier path to celebrate 1000 years of Tynwald – around 24 miles – generally not suitable for users with limited mobility. Previously this route was known as the King's Road/Way as it closely aligns with the ancient route the Kings of Man would take to their crowning.



Heritage Trail

The Heritage Trail – follows the track bed of the Douglas to Peel railway. Around 12 miles – Generally suitable for users with limited mobility.



Area of Public Ramblage

You can explore away from paths. This includes many areas of:

- moorland
- heath
- down
- registered common land.

Check the Isle of Man Leisure maps for information or use the online environment map: <https://manngis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=74e6bd8c85534835b80dea94a4180a11>

Please follow local signs for any access restrictions.



These signs are used to denote when you are entering and exiting an area of public ramblage.



ENTERING



EXITING

A permissive path sign bordered in purple

Some landowners voluntarily provide access to paths that cross their land, and can choose who can use them. Follow advice on the signs that show exactly what each landowner allows, please make sure you respect their wishes. Some open access areas are also made available in the same way.



Permissive Path

Permissive Footpaths are not graded for skill level

Park Llewellyn

Walkers Only

Distance 2.3km, Elevation Gain 90m

Important Information

A Permissive Path is **NOT** a Public Right of Way.
Access is by kind permission of the land owner to **walkers only**.
Please **keep dogs on a lead**.
Permission is required directly from landowner to hold events.
This path may be closed at any time at the landowner's discretion,
during which time the public are not permitted.
Please stay on the permitted route below.





No Horses



No Cyclists



For more information on permissive paths please call D:1 on (01624) 850000

Landowners may choose to erect their own permissive path signs. Any details on these should be followed and the landowner's intentions respected.



Department of Infrastructure

Sea Terminal, Douglas
Isle of Man IM1 2RF

**Department of Environment,
Food and Agriculture**

Thie Slieau Whallian, Foxdale Rd,
St John's, Isle of Man IM4 3AS

Department for Enterprise

St Georges Court, Upper Church St,
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