



Putting the Forest First

On your visit to the area please...

- GUARD.....against all risk of fire
- PROTECT...trees, plants and wildlife
- LEAVEthings as you find them
- TAKEnothing away except your litter



Watch your Hoof-Prints

Riding fast across open country may be exhilarating, but galloping hooves can damage the ground, particularly if it is wet. Some forest soils are fragile and quickly cut up under horses' hooves, which can lead to erosion.

Erosion scars the forest, makes paths difficult to negotiate and damages fragile habitats. Please ride slowly when the ground is soft and wet. When damage occurs, land managers are permitted to close routes to prevent further erosion.

Ridden horses may disturb birds nesting on the ground during the 1 March - 31 July breeding season. If you have a dog with you, keep it close by and under control (please see the Dog Walking code).

Please remember that horses can also intimidate other forest users if they approach them quickly or are not under proper control.

Other codes that you may find useful:

- Out and About in the New Forest
- Dog Walking in the New Forest
- Cycling in the New Forest

For further information please contact:

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This code has been compiled by a forum of local people, representing both conservation and recreation interests, under EU Interreg IIIB funding. The code is endorsed by the New Forest Verderers, the British Horse Society, the New Forest Equestrian Association and the Forestry Commission.



Horse Riding

In The New Forest



A guide to help horse riders enjoy the New Forest



Conserve • Protect • Enjoy



New Forest Horse Riding Code

Enjoy

The New Forest is a wonderful place to go horse riding. There are mature woods, shady streams, dappled glades and beautiful open heathland - what better way to see the landscape than from the back of a horse. You can walk quietly through magnificent oak woods, past tall conifers, or strike across the heathland enjoying the views and the wild open country.

Horse riders have always enjoyed open access in the forest, which is well furnished with suitable tracks. Most riders respect the forest and act responsibly. We want to protect the landscape and ensure that it remains beautiful and safe for everyone who visits. With this in mind, we have put together a code of conduct for horse riding. If you follow the code, you will enjoy yourself and allow other people to enjoy their activities too.

Help us to keep the New Forest a special place.

Remember that local byelaws apply in the New Forest

PLEASE FOLLOW THE CODE →

1

Keep to the tracks when the ground is soft or muddy. When there is no alternative, keep to a slow pace.



2

Take an alternative route to avoid soft slopes. Riding straight up and down causes erosion.

3

Avoid widening existing tracks, or creating new ones. Keep off re-seeded areas and recently reinstated rides.



4

Vary your route on the forest to spread the wear and tear.

5

Keep to the tracks when birds are nesting on the ground (1 March - 31 July).



6

Slow down and call out a warning when approaching other forest users. Be courteous and friendly.

7

Do not build jumps or create lunging areas on the forest.



8

Keep well away from any work taking place in the forest.



9

Never ride more than two abreast. Limit groups to a maximum of eight horses on the road.



When leaving Forestry Commission land, remember to use the bridleways provided. On private land, riders must keep to public Rights of Way. These are shown on Ordnance Survey maps, and are usually indicated by fingerposts and/or blue arrows or dots.