



Public Information Leaflet



### Please help us by...

- Keeping to public rights of way and other designated access areas
- Clearing up after your dog
- Keeping dogs on a lead, or on paths and in sight at all times and be confident it will return to you promptly
- Keeping dogs on leads at all times around livestock
- Keeping clear of military training
- Not obstructing gateways with vehicles
- Abiding by local Byelaws and information panels



### Further Information

**Military Byelaws** -  
[www.gov.uk/ministry-of-defence-byelaws](http://www.gov.uk/ministry-of-defence-byelaws)

**Sanctuary Magazine** -  
[www.gov.uk/government/publication/sanctuary](http://www.gov.uk/government/publication/sanctuary)

**Thames Basin Heaths Partnership** -  
<https://www.tbhpartnership.org.uk>

 [www.twitter.com/mod\\_dio](https://twitter.com/mod_dio)

 [www.gov.uk/dio](http://www.gov.uk/dio)

All photographs courtesy of Thames Basin Heath Partnership

## Dog Walking on MOD Land

Thames Basin Heaths  
Special Protection Area



Defence  
Infrastructure  
Organisation

## MOD land within the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)

The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is a network of heathland across Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire. Roughly 50% of the SPA is in use as a key military training area, as well as being one of the most important wildlife sites in Europe. The very fact that the MOD have been present across these areas for decades has protected this fragile environment from intensive farming and development. Without military training, the SPA would probably not exist here, and the MOD continues to work closely with Natural England, and other partners, to promote sustainable conservation management and responsible access.

## Your safety in mind

We want you and your dog to enjoy your visit and responsible dog owners are welcome. However, please remember the area is in active use for military training, ranging from heavy armoured vehicle manoeuvres, high speed vehicle training, simulated land battles and pyrotechnics, to more covert, tactical training. All pose a risk to the unaware dog walker.

## For your safety we ask that you...

- Keep clear of any military training you see and abide by any temporary restrictions.
- For your safety we ask that you keep to the public rights of way and other designated access areas.
- Listen to any directions given by military staff.
- Don't let your dog pick up metal objects.
- Keep your dog on a lead, or on paths and in sight at all times and be confident it will return to you promptly.
- Help us deal with emergencies by not obstructing gateways with vehicles.

## With your help, heathland will be safe for the future

The heathland of the SPA provides a special habitat for wildlife, including vulnerable rare birds, at risk because they choose to nest on the ground. These include Nightjar, Dartford Warbler and Woodlark. Please help us protect heathland for the future by...

- **Keeping dogs on a lead**, or on paths and in sight, especially March to mid-September when the birds are nesting. Throwing a stick or ball along the track, rather than into vegetation, is a great way to help.
- **Bagging and binning.** As well as being unpleasant, dog waste spreads disease. If there's no bin, please bag it and take it home.
- **Exploring new places.** Did you know that over 60 new dog-friendly walks have been created nearby? Many with great free car parks and poo bins. They're all listed at <https://www.tbhpartnership.org.uk/sites/>.



Dartford Warbler



Nightjar



Woodlark



## The Red Flag Rule

Where public access is permitted, you must be aware of Danger Areas. These are areas where live firing takes place or where there is a risk from unexploded ordnance.



**Danger Areas are marked by signs and red flags (daytime) and red lamps (at night).**

**Red flags raised / red lamps lit = no entry. You must adhere to the signs, flags and lamps at all times.**

Troops may be crawling through the undergrowth or in position for several days. Please help them do their job without getting dog waste smeared on their uniform.

**Please bag it and bin it, any bin will do, or take it home.**

