



Coasteering Code of Conduct for Guides: 2016 - 2017

Access to the coast in the UK is often taken for granted, however much of the coastline, and the paths we use to access the coast, are privately owned. Coasteering providers should familiarise themselves with land ownership of the sites they use, and any site specific access agreements that are in place.

The coastline is also home to an abundance of wildlife ranging from spectacular birds of prey such as the Peregrine Falcon, and internationally important nesting sites for sea birds, to rare plants and lichens and delicate rocky shore species such as sponges and sea urchins. The rocky shore, caves and remote beaches are also the habitat of Atlantic Grey and Common seals. Much of the coastline and wildlife on our coast is protected by law from damage and disturbance, and as coasteering guides we have a responsibility to lead activities on the coast with minimal impact to the environment and with respect for wildlife and other users of the coast.

The Coast is a special place, so make sure that you:

- **Respect** Other People
- **Protect** the natural environment
- **Enjoy** the outdoors and stay safe

Respect Other People

Please respect the local community and other people using the outdoors.

- For existing and established coasteering venues, ensure that you have up to date site specific agreements in place for access and use of the coast for coasteering activities from landowners, and the relevant conservation organisations.
- Avoid obstructing roads, gateways to fields or entrances to buildings when parking your vehicle.
- Try to keep the size of your group to a level that is appropriate to the venue you are using, and be aware not to overcrowd sites.
- If changing into or out of coasteering kit at the venue, be sure to brief your group to maintain modesty at all times, and to use appropriate toilet facilities.
- Show respect for other users of the coast by keeping noise to a minimum when coasteering along a tranquil stretch of the coast.
- Pass on information on any existing access agreements and share best practice to other coasteering guides in your area.

Protect the Natural Environment

- Avoid disturbing wildlife whilst coasteering – be prepared to change your route if necessary. Ensure that you understand and respect any site specific access agreements that are in place to protect wildlife from disturbance / prevent damage to the environment.
- Be aware of nesting seabirds from 1st March to the end of July, and of Grey Seals pupping and moulting from 1st August - end of January. Some coasteering routes have agreed seasonal restrictions in place.



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- If you can, try to leave the coast tidier than it was when you arrived – where possible, pick up litter as you go, especially old fishing tackle which can be a real hazard for wildlife.
- Report any pollution incidents / environmental damage to the [Environment Agency](#). Criminal damage such as graffiti should be reported to the police on 101.
- Do not damage the rocks, or remove any fossils from the coast.
- Before developing a new stretch of coast for coasteering, it is essential that you first find out about land ownership / access at the site, and contact local conservation organisations to determine if there is any sensitive wildlife / geology or access issues in that area. The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) can be contacted in the first instance to find out about the conservation status of a site.

Enjoy the outdoors and stay safe

- Enjoy the outdoors - it is worthwhile learning some interesting facts about the wildlife, geology, culture and heritage at the sites you use. You can then pass on this knowledge to your clients to help them enjoy the session even more, and appreciate how special the coastal environment is.
- Stay safe - follow the '[Safety guidance for coasteering providers](#)' & '[Safety Guidance for coasteering guides](#)' which have been developed by the National Water Safety Forum and National Coasteering Charter group with input and advice from 120 coasteering businesses UK wide to help you and your groups to stay safe.
- If you come across wildlife stranded, injured or in distress, contact the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999
- You may be lucky enough to see unusual wildlife such as a leatherback turtle, cetaceans, basking shark or large numbers of jellyfish – you can help with conservation of the natural world by reporting your sightings to the [Marine Conservation Society](#).