

A close-up photograph of a beagle puppy jumping up to lick a person's leg. The person is wearing blue jeans and is barefoot. The background is a blurred beach scene with other people and a dog in the distance.

50 best (and safest) beaches in the UK...for dogs

When the sun shines and the days are long, there's no better place to be than at the beach with your dog. Has your favourite made our 32-page guide?

The logo for Vetsnow, featuring a white heartbeat line above the word "Vetsnow" in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font.

vets-now.com

Your pet emergency service

50 best (and safest) beaches in the UK...for dogs

Our writers — acting on suggestions from customers and staff — have scoured the country to provide you with the most comprehensive guide ever to pet-friendly beaches.

All those featured are within an hour's drive of a Vets Now clinic or hospital so, if you're at the beach in the evening or weekend and suffer a pet emergency, you know you're never far from expert help.

We've only chosen beaches where:

- parking and access is good
- a daytime vet is based nearby
- water quality is deemed high
- dogs are welcome all year
- a Vets Now pet emergency service is within driving distance

The vast majority of those featured have also won awards for cleanliness and the facilities on offer.

That's not all though. To help you really make the most of your day at the coast or, better still, weekend away, we've included information on hotels and eateries where your pet will be as welcome as you. Some might even dog-sit so you can enjoy a night out.

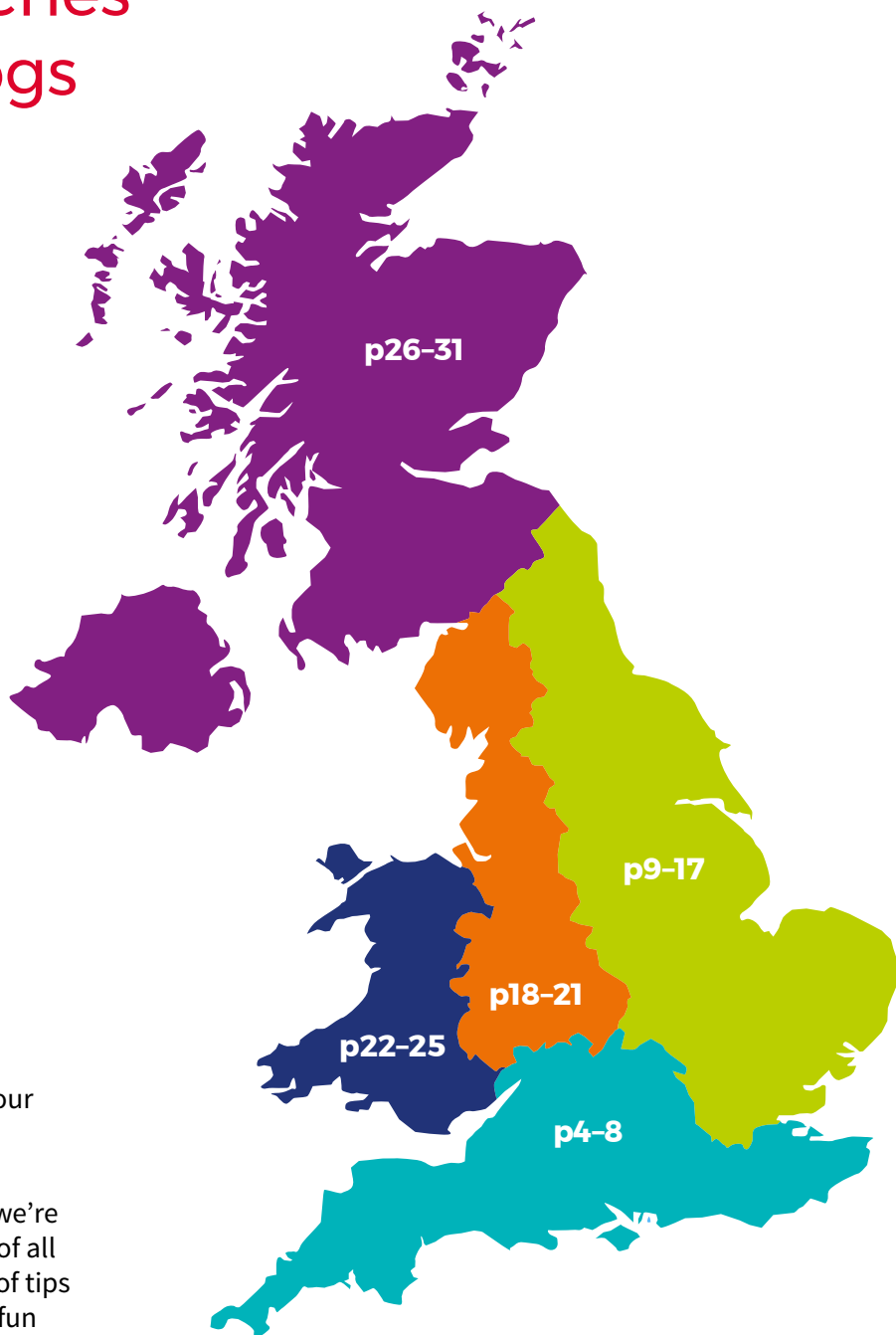
As Britain's leading pet emergency service, we're passionate about the health and wellbeing of all animals so we've also compiled a checklist of tips to help make sure you and your dog have a fun and safe experience when you go on your trip.

Wherever you live in the UK, or wherever you go on holiday, we're confident you and your dog will find a beach you'll love in our special 32-page guide.

...

WRITERS

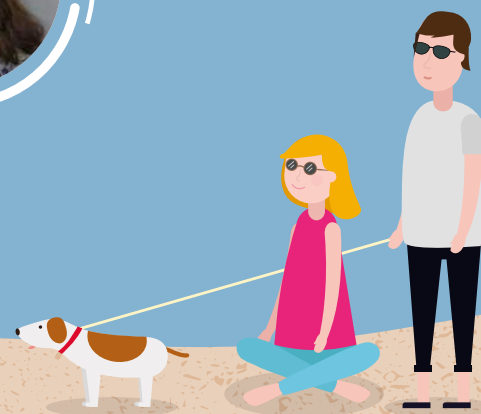
Iain Harrison, Stephen Martin, Rebecca Robb, Laura Playforth, Nick Turner



13 top tips for keeping your dog safe at the beach.



Vets Now emergency vet **Laura Playforth** shares her advice on how to ensure you and your dog have a fun and safe experience in the sun, surf and sand.



1. Dangerous temperatures

Don't be fooled by cool coastal breezes, temperatures on beaches often soar in the height of summer.

Be sure to provide a shaded area for your dog and give them plenty of fresh water.

2. Swimming in the sea

Don't assume your dog can swim.

All dogs have to learn just like us.

If your dog is not used to swimming then the sea is not the place to start.

3. Strong tides and rolling waves

Be careful on windy days when the waves are high and make sure your dog doesn't venture too far out. Waves and currents can quickly exhaust dogs.

4. Drinking salt water

If you notice your dog lapping up sea water — stop them. The salt, bacteria and parasites in the water can make them sick.

5. Walking on hot sand

Even in the UK, the sun can heat up the sand to dangerous temperatures. If it's too hot for you to walk barefoot, then it's too hot for your dog's paws.

6. Jellyfish

It's important to keep a close eye on your dog if there's likely to be jellyfish. Often lurking in shallow water or washed up on the beach, these troublesome creatures can cause a nasty sting.

7. Sunburn

Just like humans, dogs can suffer sunburn. Breeds with short hair or white hair and pink ears must be particularly careful on hot days. Use a sunscreen made specifically for dogs.

8. Overexertion

Running on sand takes a lot more effort than running on grass. Overexertion, particularly in the summer sun, can quickly lead to potentially fatal heat stroke.

9. Sand impaction

Dogs often ingest sand by accident through digging or repeatedly picking up sandy balls and toys. If a dog swallows enough sand it can cause a blockage in the intestine called sand impaction. This requires urgent veterinary treatment.

10. Mudflats and low tides

On some beaches, mudflats are exposed at low tide. These can be very dangerous for humans and dogs alike and should be avoided at all costs. If you're visiting a beach with a high tidal range never attempt to reach the water at low tide and always check the tide times before you go.

11. Fishing hooks

If you're visiting a beach that's popular for fishing watch out for discarded fish hooks. Dogs are often tempted by the shiny lure and tasty bait that's attached. These can cause nasty injuries in the mouth, stomach and paws.

12. Foreign objects

There are always temptations on the beach from other people's picnics, discarded rubbish, beach toys and shells. Try to ensure your pet doesn't eat anything they shouldn't.

13. Seaweed

Seaweed has been championed as a source of vitamins and minerals. However, if swallowed, dried up seaweed washed up on the shore can expand in the stomach and become stuck in the intestine.



Hengistbury West Beach, Dorset (BH6 4EN)

Most of the golden beaches dotted along the coast of Dorset have restrictions on dogs, especially during summer months.

But at Hengistbury West, just a short drive from the better-known beaches of Bournemouth, your four-legged friend is welcome to play all year round.

It's unspoilt, south-facing and enclosed by the cliffs of Hengistbury Head, a scenic headland which attracts walkers and nature lovers from around the world, and which separates Poole Bay and Christchurch Bay.

There's a nature reserve here as well as a popular beach-front café. If you're coming from Bournemouth, why not jump on the train which runs along the coast. Dogs are welcome for a small charge. There are also public toilets and dog bins. The beach is shingle and pebble.

Where to stay

If you're looking to treat yourself (and your dog) take a look at the very swish, four-star [Captain's Club Hotel and Spa](#) overlooking the River Stour in Christchurch, just along the coast from Bournemouth.

Dogs are welcome in most rooms for a £20 surcharge.

Where to eat & drink

Head for the quirky [Goat and Tricycle Pub](#) in Bournemouth. There's an outdoor seating area but your dog is very welcome inside in the bar, too. There are lots of real ales on tap and good bar food as well.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

10-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Bournemouth
20-minute drive
Save our number
01202 859933 ↓



Milford-on-Sea Beach, Hampshire (SO41 0PT)

Tucked away at the southernmost tip of the beautiful New Forest National Park is this smashing little pebble beach, highly popular with dog lovers. Your dog is welcome all year round with no summer restrictions.

There are brilliant views across to the Isle of Wight and a great family walk from the beach along Hurst Spit to Hurst Castle. There are also a couple of cafés, an ice cream kiosk and a kids' play area next to the beach.

It's a quarter of a mile from the beach to the quaint village shops. Locals pride themselves on living in a thriving coastal village which very much has its own distinct identity. There are more famous beaches in Hampshire – but few as chilled-out as Milford-on-Sea.

Where to stay

Where else but the [Beach House Hotel](#) in Milford-on-Sea, a grade II listed Victorian building built in 1897 and lovingly updated. The hotel welcomes dogs in guest rooms and the bar – as, it says, “all good pubs should”.

Rooms start at around £99.

Where to eat & drink

Take a stroll to the extremely dog-friendly [Smugglers Inn](#) in the heart of Milford village. Dogs are welcome inside and outside the pub with water bowls galore.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest Vets Now
Pet Emergency Service

Bournemouth
35-minute drive
Save our number
01202 859933 ↓



West Wittering, West Sussex (PO20 8AU)

At the southernmost tip of Sussex, just below the ancient cathedral city of Chichester, you'll find the charming village of West Wittering and its lovely sandy beach. This is something of a rarity in an area mainly known for its pebbly beaches — so enjoy.

From May to September, there's a small area in front of a row of beach huts where dogs aren't allowed — but don't let that put you off. There's still plenty of beach for your dog to play on.

In fact, your only problem might be getting him or her back on the lead at the end of the day. There are excellent views of Chichester harbour and the South Downs to be enjoyed, as well as kite-surfing for the more adventurous. There are also public toilets and dog bins.

Where to stay

[Crouchers Hotel](#) in the countryside just outside Chichester is just a stone's throw away. The hotel prides itself on good service, good food – and a warm welcome for dogs with well-behaved owners.

Rooms start at around £90.

Where to eat & drink

The old Victorian resort of Bognor Regis is enjoying a new lease of life these days. Go for a pint at [The Waverley](#), where there's always a big smile for dogs and owners. There's decking outside to soak up the sun or you can sit inside the bar area with your dog. Water bowl provided.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

8-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Portsmouth
30-minute drive
Save our number
023 9217 8098 ↓



CASE STUDY

Name Ingrid Ferbert

Dogs Stig and Jazz

Why we love it There are beautiful sand dunes for the dogs to run on as well as spectacular runs in the sea. You could walk for miles here and dogs are allowed all year round except for a small area.

Cooden Beach, East Sussex (TN39 3DJ)

A very typical Sussex beach — it's a long stretch of shingle divided by wooden groynes. At low tide there are some sandy bits of beach exposed.

But don't worry, even at high tide there's still plenty of space for your dog to get off the lead, run in and out of the water and generally have a ball. This stretch of coast is popular with kite surfers and windsurfers. It is also known for jet skiing but the beach rarely gets very busy.

Unusually, there is a train station virtually on the beach with trains running to Eastbourne in one direction and Hastings in the other. So you don't need a car to get there. There are toilets, dog bins and a first aid station.

Where to stay

Book into the welcoming [White Rock Hotel](#) in Hastings, where the owners have two cats and two dogs of their own, all of whom are often waiting at reception to greet you. So they know a thing or two about making a fuss of your dog!

Rooms start at around £80.

Where to eat & drink

Try [The Three Oaks Pub](#) in Hastings situated on the historic town's 1066 walk. The pub is dog-friendly in the main bar eating areas. It's also home to two dogs.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

8-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now** Pet Emergency Service

Eastbourne
35-minute drive

Save our number
01323 301292 ↓



Whitstable West Beach, Whitstable, Kent (CT5 1FB)

Whitstable's mile-long west beach is a stretch of shingle divided up by wooden groynes and offers dogs unrestricted access to the coast in an area where bylaws restricting dogs are common. It runs from just south of the town's harbour to the neighbouring village of Seasalter.

You'll love its traditional charms, such as its beach huts, weatherboard cottages and fishing boats pulled up on the beach. While on your walk you can enjoy watching people windsurf. There's also a yacht club at the northern end. It's a west-facing beach so at the end of the day you can watch the sunset.

Visitors to this popular beach are well served with cafés, toilets and shops.

Where to stay

[Hillview](#) is a dog-friendly bed and breakfast with seven rooms in a bungalow and log cabins. It's situated in a quiet location with relaxing views over farmland and the North Downs.

Rooms from £80.

Where to eat & drink

[The Old Neptune Pub](#) sits practically on the beach and is popular with dog owners. Locals refer to it as the 'Neppy' and when the weather's good you'll enjoy the large beer garden which sits on the beach. When it's cold there's a fire inside to warm you and your dog.

Water Quality



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Canterbury
30-minute drive
Save our number
01227 470033 ↓



OTHER DOG-FRIENDLY BEACHES IN THE AREA

Mudford Sandbank Beach,
Christchurch, Dorset, BH6 4EW

Seagrove Beach,
Isle of Wight, PO34 5BP

Bembridge Beach,
Isle of Wight, PO35 5TB

Durdle Door,
West Lulworth, Dorset, BH20 5PU

Ringstead Bay,
Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 8NG

West Beach,
Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5DL

Tankerton,
nr Whitstable, Kent CT5 2BE



Southwold Pier, Southwold, Suffolk (IP18 6BN)

Southwold is one of Suffolk's best known resorts — not least because of its 800-foot long pier and distinctive beach huts.

The quality of the beach has been recognised over the years by regular Blue Flag awards which demonstrates that it is not only clean but provides an excellent array of amenities.

The shingle and pebble beach at Southwold is backed by a promenade which runs along the front of the town. You'll find plenty to do including amusement arcades, fishing and swimming.

It has all the facilities you would expect of such a popular and stylish resort to take your pick of the cafés and shops nearby. The beach is also provided with a first aid point and lost child centre.

Where to stay

Southwold has a rich mixture of holiday homes for rent, but you need to book well in advance. Holiday lets firm [So Southwold](#) has a lot of properties on its books and makes a point of reassuring holidaymakers: "If you want to bring your dog there's no need to compromise on the standard of your holiday accommodation."

Where to eat & drink

[The Sail Loft](#) café sells alcoholic drinks along with the usual teas and coffees. Breakfast is available from 9 am and pleasingly there's lots of space between the tables for bigger dogs to lie down. It's ideally placed to offer food and drink after a bracing walk, situated behind the dunes along the road between the town and the harbour.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

3-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Ipswich
20-minute drive
Save our number
01394 548484 ↓





Claremont Pier, Lowestoft, Suffolk (NR33 0QN)

This is a fine sandy beach, north of Claremont Pier, with zones earmarked for water sports.

There are restrictions on some areas in the summer, but that still leaves plenty of room for you and your dog to enjoy the beach and dunes.

The Gunton Denes area is probably where you will enjoy the most freedom and is signposted off the B1385, north of Lowestoft. Here you'll find a rich mixture of wildlife.

As well as watersports, visitors can also partake in tennis and bowls during a visit.

Facilities include a beach office, parking, cafés and toilets.

Where to stay

[The Ivy House Country Hotel](#) goes out of its way to attract dog lovers. Pets are welcome around the hotel and in the room a Woof Box is left for each dog. There are extensive grounds to walk around and the beaches are only five minutes away. Rooms from around £140.

Where to eat & drink

The White Horse in Lowestoft is a family-run pub and restaurant surrounded by some great dog walking areas. The conservatory and outside seating area is dog friendly with fresh water provided for your pet. Good honest pub grub for humans and a dog treat for your four-legged friend.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

8-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now** Pet Emergency Service

Ipswich
50-minute drive
Save our number
01394 548484 





West Mersea Beach, Essex (CO5 8DE)

This quiet, south-facing sand and pebble beach is a nice place to take your dog in a county where many local authorities have imposed restrictions on pets visiting beaches. It looks out over the Blackwater Estuary from Mersea Island.

Local dog walkers describe it as a relaxing, welcoming area. Yes, there are holiday parks and beach huts, but the vibe is very much laid-back and unspoilt. Families and walkers can enjoy the simpler seaside pleasures of digging in the sand or just watching the boats go by. It is also a good area for oysters and crabbing.

Take note that this is an island connected to the mainland by a causeway which all but disappears on the highest tides — so check the tide times before you set off.

Facilities include cafés, toilets, picnic area and shops.

Where to stay

The award-winning [Gladwins Farm](#) just across the county border in Suffolk is a short drive away and offers dog-friendly self-catering holiday cottages, some with hot tubs.

Set in 22 acres of stunning countryside, there's also an indoor swimming pool and a tennis court if you have the energy after your beach walks.

Where to eat & drink

[The Victory Pub](#) at Mersea serves traditional pub food and drink with a contemporary twist and uses locally-sourced food. It has a dog-friendly bar and offers the chance to sit back and take in the sea views while you recharge your batteries.

Water Quality



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Colchester
50-minute drive
Save our number
01206 842224 ↓





Whitley Bay, Tynemouth, Tyne & Wear (NE26 1QB)

When the sun shines Geordies head to Whitley Bay and other gems along the north east coast in their thousands. It's popular for its golden sands and despite the number of visitors it attracts, the town has won numerous awards for its cleanliness and conservation work.

A small southern section of the beach at Whitley Bay is restricted for dogs, but that still leaves a vast expanse of sand to enjoy. Dogs love it because of the space and clean sea water.

Nearby you'll find a full range of facilities include cafés, toilets and lots of benches to stop and admire the views.

You can also stroll along the promenade and the Links which offer wonderful walks with the beach as a magnificent backdrop.

Where to stay

[The Windsor Hotel](#) is the largest in Whitley Bay and as well as being dog friendly, it's just a two-minute walk from the beach. The hotel's Bazil Brasserie offers an extensive menu. Room prices start from £60 a night.

Where to eat & drink

You'll find lots of dog-friendly pubs around Whitley Bay including The Fat Ox. It provides dog bowls and treats for dogs provided by the staff. According to one online reviewer, if you're having Sunday lunch, the landlady will plate a small one for your pooch too.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Gateshead
30-minute drive
Save our number
0191 469 6926 ↓



Warkworth Beach, Northumberland (NE65 OSW)

Beaches don't come much more impressive than this beauty – whose majestic golden sands stretch out for pretty much as far as the eye can see.

Even in high summer, it doesn't get crowded so there's always plenty of space to let your four-legged friend off his lead to run in and out of the waves.

Speaking of waves, there's even a surfing school at the beach which pledges to cater for all levels of ability – but you'll need a minimum of three people for a lesson.

Nearby, pretty Warkworth Village has lots of interesting shops and galleries to stroll around and is home to spectacular Warkworth Castle. The only issue is parking. It's a 20-minute walk from the village car park although the walk is shorter if you park near the golf club.

Where to stay

Look no further than [Warkworth House Hotel](#), a former 19th-century coaching inn, where dogs are made as welcome as their owners. Dogs are allowed in the bar and lounge and in guest rooms on the first floor. There's a £10 extra fee for a dog to stay overnight. Rooms start at around £100 for a night.

Where to eat & drink

Head for [The Masons Arms](#) in Warkworth. They've got a grassed area in their beer garden for those warm summer afternoons. But dogs are more than welcome in the bar area, too. There's a hearty menu of good home-made food and real ales on tap.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

7-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Gateshead
50-minute drive
Save our number
0191 469 6926 ↓



CASE STUDY

Name: Sheila Timmons

Dog: Dexter

Why we love it: Dexter loves the wide open space off the lead. But he's also in his element jumping around in the dunes well away from any roads.



Seaham, County Durham (SR7 7AD)

A lovely sand and pebble beach with some rocky areas which stretches for more than a mile north of the town and harbour.

On your walk look up to the low-rise cliffs above the promenade and you'll see that towering above the beach is Seaham Hall, where in 1815 Lord Byron married heiress Anne Milebanke.

Until the 1920s Seaham had one of the country's largest glass factories. Now the beach is famed for its smooth, multi-coloured sea glass. Beachcombers might find the smooth glass "stones" washed up on the shore line, as well as fossils and shells.

Facilities at the beach include toilets, cafés, picnic areas and nearby shops.

Where to stay

The Pemberton Arms Guest House welcomes dogs and boasts a restaurant and five bedrooms. It is so dog friendly that a barmaid once got chatting to a walker about his dogs and ended up marrying him. Four of their dogs were bridesmaids at the wedding.

Where to eat & drink

In nearby Dalton le Dale you'll find The Times Inn, a beautiful 17th century village pub. The owners are very dog friendly and serve a great range of meals and real ales.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Gateshead
20-minute drive
Save our number
0191 469 6926 ↓





Cayton Bay, Redcar, Yorkshire (YO11 3NP)

A quiet and unspoilt bay just three miles south of Scarborough. It is regarded as one of Yorkshire's best surfing locations.

The sandy beach is formed by a large sweep of fine sand backed by cliffs — you can really lose track of time here.

The area is popular with both bird watchers and fossil hunters as the cliffs were formed in the Jurassic period around 150 million years ago and yield many interesting finds.

Be aware though that the northern part of the beach is known as a naturist spot although signs warn “offenders” may be prosecuted.

Facilities include cafés, toilets and nearby shops.

Where to stay

The huge [Grand Hotel](#) dominates the Scarborough seafront and proudly boasts of offering dogs a friendly welcome. Pets are allowed in all parts of the hotel apart from the restaurant.

There is a £25 surcharge for dogs to stay more than two nights.

Where to eat & drink

Scarborough has many dog-friendly options. Try the [Cellars Bar](#) where you and your dog will be made welcome. There will be a bowl of water for your pet and a range of food and real ales for you.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

8-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now** Pet Emergency Service

Hull

1 hour drive

Save our number
01482 908169 ↓





South Landing, Flamborough, Yorkshire (YO15 1AG)

If you and your dog, are looking to get away from it all this could be the beach for you. South Landing offers seclusion in a cove that is home to a vast expanse of sand and chalk pebbles, dotted with rock pools.

The long, sandy, shallow beach is considered ideal for wind and kite surfers and is surrounded by steep, chalky cliffs.

It might be quiet, but you'll still find parking and toilets — and during the summer months traders will keep up a supply of refreshments. There is a first aid post in the lifeboat house.

Where to stay

A few miles up the coast you'll find [The Three Tuns](#) in Filey. It's an old coaching inn close to the seafront with a wide selection of meals. Dogs are made welcome in the bar area and in rooms on request.

Rooms are available from £50.

Where to eat & drink

The Rose & Crown pub in Flamborough welcomes dogs along with walkers, tourists and all the villagers who make good use of their local. On offer you'll find a menu that includes a range of homemade dishes. There's also a real fire roaring in the colder months to warm you up after your walk.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest Vets Now Pet Emergency Service

Hull

1 hour drive

Save our number
01482 908169 ↓



Skipsea beach, Hornsea, Yorkshire (YO25 8TU)

A sandy beach to head for if you are looking for a relaxed walk along beautiful coastline. Its appeal was recognised when it was proudly awarded the Quality Coast Away From It All Award.

While you are there you can visit nearby Skipsea Castle too — or what is left of it. It was built in 1086 but now only earthworks remain as the castle was destroyed in the 13th century.

Nearby is Skirlington Leisure Park and there is an amusement park to the north of the beach.

Where to stay

[The Village Farm](#) bed and breakfast has designated rooms for visitors who want to holiday with their dogs. Customers are effusive in their praise for the friendly B&B with one commenting how much her dachshund had enjoyed the underfloor heating.

Where to eat & drink

The Board Inn in Skipsea has a strong reputation for good food and being dog friendly. Dogs can join their owners in the conservatory and the bar. Customers praise the village pub for its friendly atmosphere and good value meals.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

12-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Hull
45-minute drive
Save our number
01482 908169 ↓



OTHER DOG-FRIENDLY BEACHES IN THE AREA

Marsden Beach,
South Shields NE34 7BS

Littlehaven Beach,
South Tyneside NE33 1LH

Wilthorpe Beach,
East Riding of Yorkshire YO15 3QL

Dalton Burn,
nr Seaham, County Durham SR7 7EZ

Jaywick Beach,
nr Clacton, Essex, CO15 2HN

Reculver Beach,
nr Herne Bay, Kent CT6 6SU

The Warren Beach,
Folkestone, Kent, CT19 6NQ





Bispham Beach, Lancashire (FY2 9JJ)

The Lancashire coast has some of Britain's best beaches – but dogs are banned on many, especially in summer. Thankfully, you won't find that problem at sandy Bispham beach, just up the road from Blackpool.

Bispham very much considers itself a separate village from its big, brash and busy neighbour. So, on a quiet day, you and your dog may find yourselves with the entire beach to yourself.

There's a split-level promenade from where you can admire the views over the Irish Sea and the sprawling sands at low tide. The Blackpool trams run along the esplanade – and your dog is welcome on board for 50p – or you can buy the appropriately-named Rover ticket to give your dog all day travel for £1. The well-maintained beach has public toilets and dog bins.

Where to stay

For a royal welcome for your canine friend, head to [The Queen's Hotel](#) just down the coast at Lytham St Anne's. There are dog treats and dog bowls and yours is welcome to join you for dinner as well. Rooms start at £64.

Where to eat & drink

Why not head to the [Waterloo](#) in Blackpool? It's home to a varied mix of live music and entertainment – as well as a sun-trap beer garden where your dog is welcome to join you as you sup a well-deserved drink. There are water bowls for canines.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

12-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Preston
40-minute drive
Save our number
01772 378764 ↓



Ainsdale Beach, Merseyside (PR8 2QB)

Less than an hour from the noise of Liverpool, you'll find peace and tranquillity for you and your dog at lovely Ainsdale Beach. It's on a wild stretch of the Lancashire coast between Southport and Formby and offers a vast open stretch of golden sand.

Aside from one small area where dogs aren't welcome, it's pretty much canine perfection – as long as your dog enjoys a bit of breeze! The beach is so exposed that it is a major centre for kite-surfing and other daredevil sports. For the more sedate, there are also donkey rides for kids.

The beach is backed by one of Britain's largest areas of wild sand dunes, part of the Birkdale Sandhills nature reserve which covers 988 hectares and is home to a wide array of plants and flowers.

Where to stay

Dogs are welcome in all areas of [The Britannia Hotel](#) in Southport apart from the dining room. So your dog can join you for a pint or a glass of wine at the bar.

Room prices start at £40.

Where to eat & drink

Look no further than the [Wagging Tail](#) café in Southport – motto: Where dogs bring their servants! There are beds for your four-legged friend to take a snooze while you put your feet up and it even has its own dog menu featuring doggie cupcakes, dog-friendly popcorn and puppuccinos. Genius!

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

8-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now** Pet Emergency Service

Liverpool
30-minute drive
Save our number
0151 480 2040 ↓





Sand Bay Beach, Somerset (BS22 9UZ)

Little more than half an hour in the car from the hubbub of Bristol is this glorious and windswept expanse of sand.

It's two miles north of Weston-super-Mare, but much quieter and more dog friendly. Your dog is welcome here all year round and chances are that, except on really hot days, fellow dog walkers are the only other people you'll come across.

There are brilliant views across the Bristol Channel towards South Wales, which can be seen quite clearly when the weather is good. It's also got toilets and a free car park but aside from that it's relatively remote. So it's just perfect to exercise those doggy legs and get a great run-around in a safe location.

Where to stay

Dog beds, a dog grooming area and a dog shower room mean that the [Lauriston Hotel](#) in Weston super-Mare is one of the most dog-friendly places about.

Prices start at £60 a night for a room.

Where to eat & drink

The Wharfside Tea Rooms in Weston-super-Mare is the place to go. Lots of home baking and delicious food on the menu and it's totally dog friendly with areas of the café reserved for canine guests. It's such a doggie hang-out that many dog owners arrange to meet each other here.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

8-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Bristol
40-minute drive
Save our number
0117 971 3111 ↓



Uphill Beach, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset (BS23 4XY)

Also known as Slipway beach, you'll find this lengthy stretch of sand a few miles south of popular holiday resort Weston-super-Mare. While facilities here are limited in comparison to the beaches nearer the town, it's much more peaceful and a haven for dogs and dog walkers seeking a bit of freedom and solace.

Uphill is ideal for those with limited mobility as you can park on the beach itself. One word of warning though — it's best to go when the tide is high. If you do find yourself here at low tide avoid the area around the mouth of the River Axe. It can get very muddy.

Just up from the beach is Uphill nature reserve. If you climb the hill you'll find a tower which gives great views of the beach and coast below.

Where to stay

A short drive south from Uphill Beach you'll find award-winning [Wall Eden Farm](#). It has a range of pet-friendly log cabins, lodges and glamping pods, which are ideal for group bookings, families and couples.

Prices start from £90.

Where to eat & drink

The Dolphin is a dog-friendly pub just a 10-minute walk from the beach. The food is honest and popular with locals and there's a beer garden around the back if the sun is shining.

Water Quality



Nearest Daytime Vet

10-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Bristol
40-minute drive

Save our number
0117 971 3111 ↓



OTHER DOG-FRIENDLY BEACHES IN THE AREA

Clevedon Beach,
nr Bristol, BS21 7RH

Burnham-on-Sea Beach,
Somerset, TA8 1BB



Old Colwyn Beach, Clywd (LL29 9TA)

Dogs aren't welcome on the famous sands at Colwyn Bay — but that's not an issue if you take just a short stroll along the seafront to Old Colwyn Beach instead. Quieter than its neighbour, it's arguably just as pretty — with a vast expanse of beautiful sand for your dog to explore and make new friends.

In the summer, sun-worshippers flock here for jet skiing, sailing and other water sports. Sea fishing is popular, too, so beware of discarded fish hooks. Thankfully, the beach is well looked after and has toilet facilities and a fine promenade to take a seat and marvel at the scenery.

Where to stay

Take a short drive to Conwy and the 12-room [Sychnant Pass Country House](#) hotel, where there are 'doggie towels' in the porch for wet paws and throws provided in the rooms so your dog can snuggle up. Dogs are allowed in the lounge with the owner's dogs and also out in the garden.

Where to eat & drink

Head for [The Groes Inn](#) in Conwy where dogs are welcome inside part of the bar area and the gardens — so you can tuck into fine food in beautiful Snowdonia while your dog puts his or her paws up! This old coaching inn overlooks the Conwy Estuary, so the views are superb too.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

10-minute drive

Nearest Vets Now
Pet Emergency Service

Colwyn Bay
5-minute drive
Save our number
01492 338082 ↓





Conwy Morfa Beach, Flintshire (LL32 8GA)

The North Wales coastline isn't short of breathtaking beaches where you'll just love to see your dog sprinting in and out of the water. But the rolling sands at Conwy Morfa really are something special.

It's a giant stretch of sand which at low tide forms part of the beaches and mussel banks of Conwy Bay. It is great for fishing, has a marina and is next to a golf course. But most importantly, dogs are welcome all year round with no restrictions.

There are shops, cafés and restaurants galore in the historic walled town of Conwy, which is overlooked by a very impressive castle.

But it's the beach, a popular haunt since the Victorian era, which really steals the show.

Where to stay

Originally a 17th-century coaching inn, the grand [Castle Hotel](#) in Conwy is now a swish venue with 27 bedrooms, most of which are dog friendly. Dogs are welcome in most areas of the building and get a warm welcome from the pet-loving staff. Rooms start at around £90 a night.

Where to eat & drink

Head to L's Coffee and Books in Conwy, where you'll join other dog owners who pop in to enjoy coffee, cakes, a chat and a perusal of the latest best-sellers. One local dog owner says it's her pet's favourite place!

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest Vets Now
Pet Emergency Service

Colwyn Bay
10-minute drive
Save our number
01492 338082 



Three Cliffs Bay, Gower Peninsula (SA3 2HD)

Utterly stunning, this is one of the most photographed beaches in Britain – and understandably so.

It also just happens to be Welsh opera singer Katherine Jenkins' favourite beach – and a place she always takes guests to when she's back home. She describes this magical expanse of sand with a freshwater stream running through it as “spectacularly beautiful” ... and who could disagree?

There are sand dunes to the rear, with the bay's three iconic cliffs towering over the beach below. The cliffs are very popular with climbers. Unusually for the best beaches in this area, dogs are allowed all year with no restrictions.

Perhaps because it takes a 400-metre walk to get there, the beach is never very busy even on hot days and it's often empty in the winter. Park at the car park in Parkmill and then take the path down to the beach.

Where to stay

The [Mumbles Carlton Hotel](#) overlooking Swansea Bay was recently described by one delighted guest as “the most dog-friendly hotel EVER”. That's some accolade – but you can see why it was given. There's breakfast sausages on offer for your four-legged friend (a treat before that long beach walk) and the staff love pets so much they'll even offer to dog-sit if you want to pop out for a bit. What a service! Rooms start at £75 a night and there's no public area in the hotel where dogs are banned.

Where to eat & drink

You could do a lot worse than head for [The Village Inn](#) in Mumbles, where dogs are super-welcome and where they serve quality pub grub until 9.45pm at night – ideal for a long day out on the beach in summer.

Water Quality

This beach isn't regularly tested for water quality but is rated as clean by online reviewers.

Awards

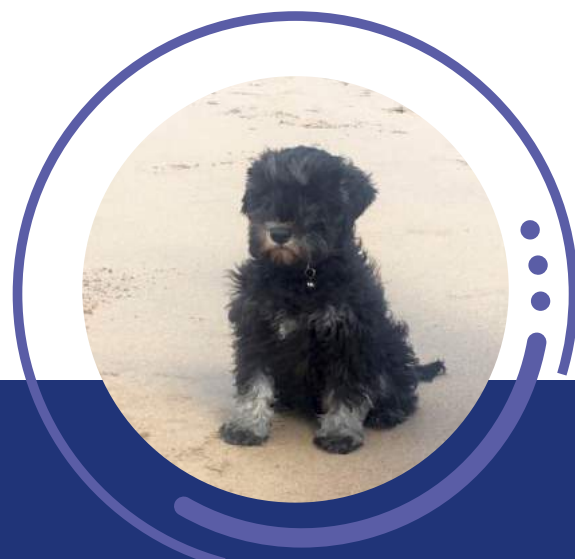


Nearest Daytime Vet

7-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Swansea
30-minute drive
Save our number
01792 775572 ↓



CASE STUDY

Name: Mhairi Jones

Dog: Archie

Why we love it: This was the first beach Archie visited. He loved the open space and running through the sand castles but wasn't too sure about the sea and didn't like the taste of the sand much. It's a really lovely beach, a treat for us both.

Oxwich Bay, West Glamorgan (SA3 1ND)

The stunning Gower peninsula is the jewel in the crown of South Wales and home to some of the best beaches in Europe. One of the most dog-friendly is Oxwich Bay. There's a car park virtually on the beach and dogs are welcome to roam free in and out of the water.

The sands here slope very gently indeed, so if you've got kids with you it's the ideal spot for swimming and paddling as well as letting your dog off the lead. And at low tide, you can walk around the foot of a cliff onto the next beach along at Three Cliffs Bay.

Many of the other beaches in this area either have restrictions on dogs or are hard to access without a long walk.

Where to stay

The [Oxwich Bay Hotel](#) is just 200 yards from the beach — and your dog is assured of a warm welcome. Dogs are allowed in the hotel gardens and in most parts inside of the hotel, which specialises in beachfront weddings.

Where to eat & drink

Head to the [The Poundfald Inn](#) in Three Crosses, just outside Swansea. A classic village pub where they serve a Sunday lunch for dogs and welcome dogs into the bar. The farm dog from across the road usually comes across to say hello, too.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

7-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Swansea
35-minute drive
Save our number
01792 775572 ↓



OTHER DOG-FRIENDLY BEACHES IN THE AREA

Pensarn Beach,
Abergele, Conwy, LL22 7BU

Point of Ayr Beach,
Talacre, Flintshire, CH8 9RS

Mewslade Bay Easy,
Rhossili, Swansea, SA3 1PL

Rhossili Bay,
Rhossili, Swansea, SA3 1PP

Waters of Philorth Beach, Fraserburgh, Grampian (AB43 8TP)

This is regarded as one of the best beaches in Scotland, offering a beautiful stretch of golden sand for bathers, swimmers and dog walkers to enjoy. It is also frequented by surfers and windsurfers.

The Waters of Philorth is named after the nature reserve that runs along the back of the beach. This is a rare estuarine environment which attracts a variety of waders, wildfowl and seabirds.

You can extend your dog walk by exploring the extensive dune system that stretches across Fraserburgh Bay. On your way enjoy the views across the bay and of Kinnaird Head lighthouse.

Dog bins are provided and other facilities include a café and a children's play area.

Where to stay

If you are looking to stay in the area the pet-friendly Rose Lodge bed and breakfast provides a convenient option. It offers evening meals too and regularly receives praise for the welcome offered to children and pets. A little further away you'll find the [Cairngorm Lodges](#) at Aboyne which allow three dogs per luxury cabin.

Where to eat & drink

Near the beach you'll find The Tiger Hill Café which offers a range of meals and is dog friendly. Customers rave about its range of pies.

You could also try the Ark Inn pub in nearby Sandhaven which is rated for its meals and beers.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

7-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now** Pet Emergency Service

Aberdeen
1 hour drive

Save our number
01224 379091 ↓





West Sands Beach, St Andrews, Fife (KY16 9XL)

On the edge of St Andrews' world-famous Old Course, West Sands Beach is popular with dog walkers throughout the year. But it comes into its own in the summer when temperatures rise as it's set in one of the driest and sunniest places in Britain.

The south side of the beach featured in the Oscar-winning movie, *Chariots of Fire*. With uninterrupted sand, backed with dunes stretching for two miles, it's a great place for you and your dog to burn off some energy.

Although parking in St Andrews town centre, which is a 15-minute walk from the beach, can be a challenge, there are plenty spaces near the beach. There are also lots of dog-friendly facilities nearby as well as a first aid point and toilets.

Where to stay

There are few cheap sleeps in St Andrews so if you're going for the weekend, it might be worth pushing the boat out and staying in the stunning [Rufflets Hotel](#). All of its four-legged guests receive a welcome pack on arrival, and various items such as towels, leads, bowls and beds are available from reception. One night's B&B for two costs around £170.

Where to eat & drink

The dog-friendly café in [The Byre Theatre](#), situated in the centre of the town, is a favourite of locals and tourists alike. Dogs are welcome throughout the theatre apart from the formal dining area beside the bar. Water bowls and dog biscuits are provided.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Kirkcaldy
45-minute drive
Save our number
01592 328336 ↓



Burntisland Beach, Fife (KY3 9BS)

A great beach around which to base a family day out or holiday as you'll have plenty of space for walking your dog, but also lots of activities to keep children entertained.

The beach is sand and rock and overlooks the Firth of Forth as well as offering great long-distance views of Edinburgh. Nearby you'll find a leisure centre, seaside park and crazy golf, and also bouncy castles and an annual summer fairground.

The grass links the beach backs onto are very dog friendly and feature a large children's playground. Facilities here include cafés, toilets and a first aid point. One other plus point is it's fairly flat so easy for walking.

Where to stay

[The Burntisland Sands Hotel](#) is just a one-minute walk from the beach and half a mile from the centre of the town. Dogs are welcome in its four bedrooms, but not in the restaurant. Rooms from £99.

Where to eat & drink

The Crown Tavern along the coast at Kinghorn is recommended by the Campaign for Real Ale and welcomes dogs as well as real ale drinkers. It could be the perfect halfway stop-off point on a coastal walk that will take three to four hours return.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

3-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Kirkcaldy
15-minute drive
Save our number
01592 328336 ↓

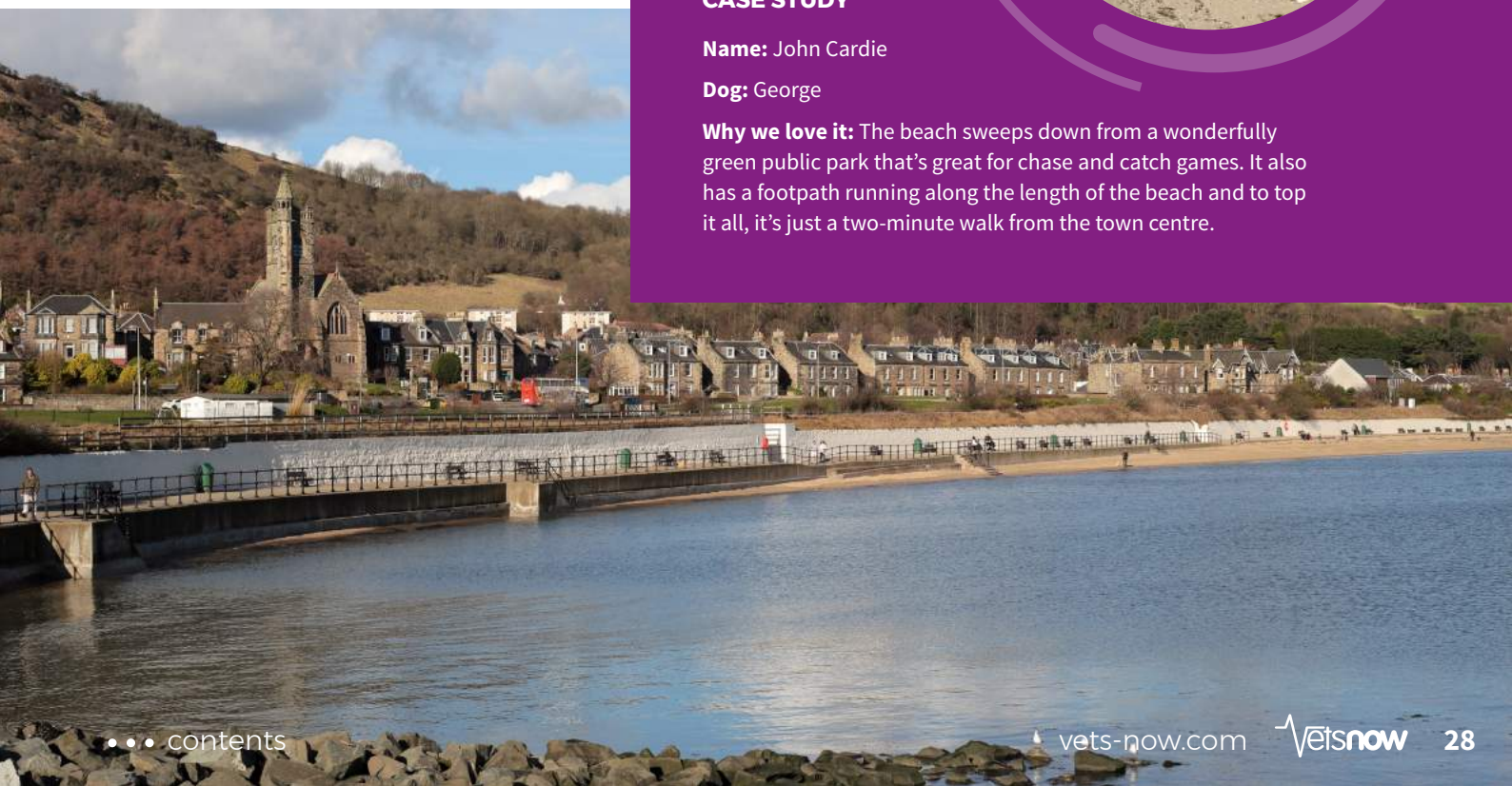


CASE STUDY

Name: John Cardie

Dog: George

Why we love it: The beach sweeps down from a wonderfully green public park that's great for chase and catch games. It also has a footpath running along the length of the beach and to top it all, it's just a two-minute walk from the town centre.





Seton Sands, Longniddry Beach, Port Seton, East Lothian (EH32 0PW)

The sand stretches out for a mile and half and when the tide is out offers a vast amount of space for your family, or more likely your dog, to run around. Situated to the east of Cockenzie and Port Seton and to the north-west of Longniddry, it's within easy driving distance of Edinburgh.

The beach is made up of sand and rocks and is popular for horse riding, windsurfing and canoeing as well as dog walking. Nearby you'll find a large caravan park with a café and bar, amusement arcades, toilets and a first aid point.

Where to stay

[Gilsland Park](#) is a family-run, holiday park located in the harbour town of North Berwick. Dogs are welcome in all accommodation. The site aims to take care of all your doggy needs with a walking service, dog bins, water and poo bags.

Where to eat & drink

Visit the 17th-century [Cockenzie House and Gardens](#) for a dog-friendly welcome in its café and an inspiring look around this community-run enterprise. Dogs are welcome in all areas of the house which hosts a gallery and more than 30 artists, small businesses, crafters and a wide variety of allotments and beekeeping. Take note: there is a house cat called Pippa – described as 'not the most friendly'.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest Vets Now Pet Emergency Service

Edinburgh
30-minute drive

Save our number
0131 444 0990 ↓



Seacliff Beach, East Lothian (EH39 5PP)

Five miles east of the charming seaside town of North Berwick lies this little known and absolutely magical beach.

As the tide slips back here, it leaves a beautiful expanse of sand for your dog to run around on. Meanwhile, you can feast your eyes on what is arguably one of the finest views in Scotland — looking north to Bass Rock and, further in the distance, the East Neuk of Fife.

Bass Rock is an uninhabited island of volcanic rock in the Firth of Forth which is home to a vast colony of gannets.

On the headland to the west of the beach you'll find the remains of Auldham Castle, once used to attack Tantallon Castle, at the other end of the beach. Troops were stationed at Auldham Castle during the Napoleonic Wars to guard against French attack. It's worth noting you have to pay to get along the private road which leads to the beach.

Where to stay

The [Ducks Inn](#) at Aberlady, on the other side of North Berwick to Seacliff Beach, gets rave reviews for its warm welcome for dogs. Tired dogs who need a snooze after a long walk are allowed to sleep on the sofas in the lounge. Dogs are welcome in guest rooms, too. Rooms start at around £105 a night.

Where to eat & drink

Why not head for the café at [Why Not?](#) It's a collection of 20 independent stalls and traders operating from under one roof in the middle of North Berwick. The whole place is dog friendly and the café (which has great home baking) is particularly so, with an unlimited supply of doggie biscuits and treats.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

5-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Edinburgh
50-minute drive
Save our number
0131 444 0990



CASE STUDY

Name: Aileen Patterson

Dog: Jasper

Why we love it: It's a lovely dog-friendly beach hidden from the 'picnic summer rush' and it's also home to Britain's smallest operational harbour.

Crawfordsburn Beach, County Down (BT19 1JT)

This stunning beach is just 10 miles from Belfast — yet you'd think you were hours from the hustle and bustle of the city. With rocky outcrops at both ends and just under half a mile of sand in between it's the perfect spot for your dog to roam and have fun.

The views across Belfast Lough are superb — and on a clear day you can see across to Scotland, too. The beach is part of Crawfordsburn Country Park, home to woods, a waterfall and even a 5 km running track as well as the historic Grey Point Fort monument.

The beach has a few restrictions on dogs — but there's plenty of room, so don't worry. There's also a café and visitor centre with public toilets.

Where to stay

Where else but [The Salty Dog Hotel & Bistro](#) in nearby Bangor? With a name like that, you won't be surprised to hear dogs are not just welcome but positively pampered by the staff and owners. Rooms, many of which overlook the sea, start at £90.

Where to eat & drink

Well, you won't go far wrong at The Salty Dog, but for home baking and a warm welcome for you and your hound, head for the brilliantly-named Scooby Brew café in Bangor, which prides itself on its friendliness towards four-legged customers.

Water Quality



Awards



Nearest Daytime Vet

7-minute drive

Nearest **Vets Now**
Pet Emergency Service

Belfast
15-minute drive
Save our number
028 9065 1729 ↓



OTHER DOG-FRIENDLY BEACHES IN THE AREA

Silver Sands,
Aberdour, Fife, KY3 0RQ

Cramond,
Edinburgh, EH4 6QU

...

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