

# Looking after **Walborough**

Walborough is enjoyed by many visitors each year and for many different reasons, to exercise, go birdwatching, enjoy the views, spend time in the peace and quiet of nature or walk their dog. However, the number of dogs on nature reserves can cause problems.

Britain is a nation of animals lovers with over 8 million dogs across the country. Dogs make lovely companions and can be a fun addition to a walk in nature and help keep us happy and active. However they can also bring with them a series of problems including:

- Disturbing birds that are nesting on the ground
- Hurting or killing wild animals
- Scaring cows and other grazing animals
- Leaving dog mess

Over 1,000 tonnes of dog mess is created every single day according to 'Keep Britain Tidy'. In addition to being an unpleasant sight, dog mess can be dangerous due to the risk of *Toxocariasis*, an infection caused by small worms that can be found in dog poo which can lead to nausea, asthma and even blindness or seizures.

One thing we can all do whilst enjoying these beautiful natural places is to pick up after our pets, which will keep them clean and safe for other visitors. Bag your dogs mess up and take it away with you or use one of the bins on site. To protect your dog from the grazing cattle, adders and to prevent disturbance to wildlife and in particular ground nesting birds, please keep your dog on a lead whilst enjoying Walborough. Picking up and taking your litter home is another way to make sure the site stays nice for all wildlife and visitors.

## Ground nesting birds

Birds in particular can be prone to dog disturbance. Too much and it can cause the birds to abandon their nests or chicks. Some birds build their nests on the ground which makes them extra susceptible to dogs. Some birds build their nests on the ground which makes them extra susceptible to disturbance including the skylark and the curlew, both of which can be found at Walborough.

