



# Northumberland Marine Wildlife Watching Boating Code of Conduct

We are very fortunate in Northumberland to share our waters with an astonishing variety of marine life, including grey seals, whales, dolphins, porpoises and sea birds. These special animals draw many people to the area and they are an important asset to local wildlife tourism businesses. The international significance of these species means they are also protected by various nature conservation laws so we must avoid disturbing them.



- We approach and depart at less than six knots
- We let the animals decide how close they want to be
- Animals might approach us from many different angles - we try to keep a steady speed, course and direction, avoiding sudden changes
- We avoid scattering or separating groups of animals
- We avoid boxing animals in with multiple vessels - we always leave enough space for them to move away
- We avoid following animals if they display signs of disturbance
- We spend no longer than 15 minutes with the animals, unless they decide to follow us
- We avoid mothers with youngsters, unless they approach us
- We slow down as much as we can when approaching cliff nesting areas
- We avoid steering into birds resting on the sea surface
- When observing animals we move away slowly at the first signs of disturbance
- When making way we proceed slowly and with caution, not exceeding 12 knots. If wildlife is in our path we slow to less than six knots to allow them time to move out of the way