A Drivers' Countryside Code of Conduct

1. Respect the life of the National Park. Be courteous to all other users, and take great care when passing horses, cyclists and walkers. Be prepared to stop your engine if needed. Always fasten gates and take particular care near sheep and livestock.

2. Use only vehicular rights of way. Not all "green roads" have vehicular rights. Even those that have, may not be appropriate for all vehicles at all times. The NPA and LARA groups can help with information.

3. Keep to the defined track, and deviate only to pass immovable obstructions. Report obstructions, including low branches and very soft ground, to the NPA or highway authority. If the correct route is not obvious on the ground, ask the local users, or check the details held at the NPA, highway authority and local record offices.

4. Travel at a quiet and unobtrusive pace, and in small groups (recommended 4 cars or 6 motorcycles per group). Remember that some routes can be especially prone to damage. Take special care in spring and early summer.

5. Ensure that you and your vehicle are fully road-lega. "Green roads" do not mean you are 'off-road' and do not use routes after dark. Others seek to get away from bustle and rush. Think of other trails and activities for enjoyment.

6. Pay attention to ‘the Four Ws’
- WEATHER: Do not travel on green roads when they risk being damaged beyond a point of natural recovery when the weather improves. In wetter conditions routes can be especially prone to damage.
- WEIGHT: Do not use roads that may be seriously damaged by the wheel pressure of your vehicle. LARA does not support the use of heavy vehicles on green roads.
- WIDTH: Do not use roads that are too narrow for your vehicle. Avoid damage to walls, trees and hedges.
- WINCHES: Don’t get yourself into a position where you need one. If you do, use it only as a last resort. Always avoid damage to trees, walls, and surface while recovering.

7. Remember that wildlife faces many threats, and green roads can be valuable habitats. Take special care in spring and early summer.

Towards a Sustainable Future

The motor vehicle has brought great mobility and opportunity to most of us. However, the numbers of all-terrain vehicles bring particular problems. Concerns about pollution, noise, erosion and the needs of other trail users are issues to address. It is against this background that the NPA and organisations representing motor vehicle users have produced this Code. The Lake District is a special place that deserves the highest standards of environmental protection.

The Code is promoted by
The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) and is supported by:
- The Land Access & Recreation Association (LARA)
- The Cumbria Group Trail Riders Fellowship
- North Lakes 4 x 4 Club
- Clarks Competition Motorcycles Ltd
- Over the Hills Safaris
- Auto Cycle Usan

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The Lake District National Park

The Lake District National Park is a special place. Created in 1911, it is one of a family of National Parks in England, Wales and Scotland. The national park covers some 2,292 square kilometres and within its boundary it includes England’s highest mountain (Scafell Pike) and deepest lake (Wastwater), as well as a stretch of coastline and busy tourist towns like Keswick and Bowness-on-Windermere.

The Lake District National Park Authority

The Lake District National Park Authority is a local government body which has two purposes:

• to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and
• to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

In pursuing these purposes we will also seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.
Using vehicles on unsurfaced roads in National Parks is an emotive subject - there are many who would like to see their recreational activity banned. Although the National Park Authority has stated that green road driving is not compatible with National Park purposes, it is following current Government advice in looking for management solutions.

Members of the Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA), believe that all users of the countryside can enjoy their pastime without upsetting others, and without destroying the green roads themselves, so long as care and consideration is exercised.

The NPA’s Green Road Code of Conduct aims to promote responsible driving in order to ensure sustainable use of green lanes in the Lake District.

It is intended to make all drivers aware of the NPA’s approach to trails management and to LARA’s approach to trails management. Each route will be assigned to one of three categories based on a number of considerations, including the quality and impact of the route, popularity with other users, and levels of conflict, whether the route is sustainable for vehicular traffic at all times. Recorded use has been recorded and turning round may be considered to be moving a route into a different intervention category. These routes will not be signed but the advice contained in this Code still applies.

This trail management scheme will be operational from autumn 2002 and will run for two years once the advisory signs are out on site. For further information please contact either the NPA or LARA.