



## Colton Parish Council

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2<sup>nd</sup> September 2009

Richard Leafe  
Chief Executive  
Lake District National Park Authority  
Murley Moss  
Oxenholme Road  
Kendal  
Cumbria  
LA9 7RL

Dear Mr Leafe,

### **Green Roads and Recreational Users in Colton Parish**

On 6<sup>th</sup> July, Colton Parish Council held an additional meeting to address two related issues:

- i) the poor state of its eight green roads (unsealed, Unclassified Country Roads - UCRs)
- ii) the behaviour of off-road users (4x4s, trail bikes and quad bikes).

Representatives from Cumbria Highways, the LDNPA, and the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership MPV sub-group and Cumbria Police were present. Minutes of this meeting are enclosed.

The increasing use of green roads by recreational motorised traffic has led to a rapid deterioration of the surface and damage to adjoining fell-sides. The **High Nibthwaite-to-Parkamoor track (UCR 5051)** is the worst example and is now in a truly appalling state (please see enclosed CCAP reports and our photographs). It is impassable for agricultural vehicles trying to reach stock, and the sensitive ESA land is being damaged by illegal off-road excursions. This is causing real difficulties for the farming community, animal welfare issues and potentially a loss of income from ESA schemes. Other green roads are suffering from erosion and serious drainage failure, causing problems for traditional recreational users. For example, there are now long stretches of wall-to-wall water, where wellington boots are the only suitable footwear.

At the 6<sup>th</sup> July meeting, Mr John Robinson (Network Manager, Cumbria Highways) acknowledged his department's responsibility for repair of these green roads, but explained that there was no chance of any funding in the near future.

The Council is writing to ask the LDNPA to take the following actions:

1. Under the powers given to the LDNPA under the NERC Act 2006, place a **temporary Traffic Regulation Order on UCR 5051 (High Nibthwaite to Parkamoor)** to restrict access until such time as the green road is effectively repaired and the fell-sides have had time to recover. The damage to this UCR is so great that it will require significant machinery and manpower input from Highways teams.

2. Initiate a **pilot cooperative scheme in Colton**, analogous to 'Fix the Fells', to tackle surface deterioration and drainage problems for the remaining UCRs which, at present, are capable of being repaired to a large degree by volunteer teams. This idea was raised at our 6<sup>th</sup> July meeting and met with universal approval from all parties present. We anticipate this taking the form of projects involving the LDNPA, the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership, Cumbria Highways, MPV user groups and the Parish Council. Funding would be required at a minimum for materials, transport of in-fill and hire of any machinery.

We hope you will appreciate that the pressure on these green lanes has become unsustainable, causing serious problems for our local farmers and for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. Urgent action is required to prevent further damage and we look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Barr  
Chairman, Colton Parish Council

CC: Mr John Robinson (Cumbria Highways)  
Mr Tony Hill (LDNPA Ranger)  
Mr David Gibson (Cumbria County Council, Chair of CCAP Maintenance Task Group)  
Mr Steve Pighills (CCAP MPV sub-group)  
Mr Rod Wilson (Cumbria County Councillor)  
Tim Farron MP