

UNESCO vs. green lane motoring: will the National Park step up?

UNESCO has made its stance clear: green lane motoring has no place in the Lake District's most sensitive landscapes. At its 2023 session the World Heritage Committee called on the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) to:

- Use existing tools to **prevent vehicular access** to unsealed roads in highly sensitive and emblematic valleys.
- **Urgently monitor** all unsealed roads to assess the impact of green lane motoring on the area's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) —and use this data to introduce an effective strategy and real protections.

But is the LDNPA listening?

Its [latest response to UNESCO](#) (pp. 21-23) suggests otherwise. Despite strong evidence of harm, including from its own surveys in 2019, the authority still prioritises motorists' rights over protecting the Lake District's essential qualities, such as tranquillity and the integrity of a historic landscape.

Worse still, its proposed monitoring programme looks more like a delaying tactic than a solution. It will not probe whether all those qualities that make the Lake District so special are being harmed.

Instead of swift action we face **years of continued damage** while 4x4s and motorbikes face no restrictions, even on the most sensitive green lanes.

UNESCO has asked for a proper regulatory policy - and it's time for the LDNPA to deliver. We need decisive action to protect the **essential qualities of our National Park and World Heritage Site** before they are degraded even further.

Why not look at how others have solved the problem? In many US National Parks, for instance, the use of off-road vehicles on unsealed roads is prohibited.

The Superintendent's Companion of Grand Teton National Park puts it succinctly:

Recreational use of off-road vehicles

- is incompatible with the National Park's mission
- would impair Park resources
- and would conflict with other users.

Three reasons that are just as valid for the Lake District.

§4.10(a) Travel on park roads and designated routes, off-road vehicle use

- There are no designated areas or routes for off-road vehicles within the park or parkway.

The Superintendent has determined the recreational use of off-road vehicles is an incompatible use within the park mission, would impair park resources and conflict with other park uses.