THE SAPPHIRE CLUB Code of Conduct

General

1. One named member of the Sapphire Club (the “rally marshal” or “responsible person”) is to be responsible for the conduct of any exempted touring caravan or camping event and for ensuring that those attending comply with this code.

2. The responsible person must ensure that all members are aware of The Countryside Code, The Caravan Code and The Seashore Code (see Annexes 1a -c).

The Venue

3. The Sapphire Club will take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the site to be used is not subject to a relevant order under paragraph 13 of the First Schedule to the 1960 Act (for caravans), or an Article 4 direction under Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (for caravans and camping), and that it is not one where planning permission has been refused or where enforcement action has been taken.

4. The Sapphire Club will consult the local authority before meeting on land adjacent to sites for which planning permission has been granted (i.e. next to permanent or commercial sites).

5. The Sapphire Club will agree to move from and avoid any site to which the local authority maintains a valid objection.

6. The Sapphire Club will not meet on sites adjacent to certificated locations/sites unless the proposed site is clearly differentiated and the risk of interference with local people and other users is minimal.

7. The Sapphire Club will take reasonable steps to ensure that the siting of units (a caravan, motor home, tent or trailer tent) does not unduly interfere with the activities of local people, their privacy or their enjoyment of their property. They will also ensure that the siting of units does not interfere with the enjoyment by others of the landscape, natural beauty or nature conservation value of the area, particularly in areas designated for their landscape or wildlife qualities.

8. The Sapphire Club will undertake not to over-use any venue and will consider carefully before holding successive meetings on the same land.

Nuisance

9. Local people should be able to carry on their normal activities when meetings are in progress. The Sapphire Club will take reasonable steps to minimise disturbance and will investigate and deal with the causes of any complaints made.

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Telephone 01270 620165 or 07973 503807
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10. Care should be taken not to damage the site or the surrounding locality. Trees, fences, buildings, equipment and stock should all be respected.

11. Domestic animals belonging to members of the Sapphire Club will be kept on a lead and under close control. They will not be allowed to run loose on the site or cause disturbance to local people or animals. They will be exercised away from units and those parts of the site used for communal activities. Any mess will be cleared up.

12. The responsible person will identify open space suitable for the playing of games which might otherwise intrude upon or constitute a danger or annoyance to others on or around the site.

13. Noise should be kept to a minimum for the comfort of others on the site as well as people who live or work nearby.

Road Safety and Access

14. The responsible person will take steps to ensure that travel from major roads to a proposed site is not likely to cause undue disruption or difficulties for other road users. Access to the site must be suitable for the number and likely size of units attending the meeting. The arrival and departure of units should be arranged to minimise disruption to other road users.

15. The speed of vehicles on the site should be restricted to 5 mph.

Spacing and Density

16. For health and safety purposes emergency vehicles must be able to gain access to any unit on the site. As such, units should be well spaced and sited so they do not restrict access to, or exit from, any other unit or the site in general. At least 3 metres should be required between units in all circumstances. For this purpose, a unit includes the caravan, motor home, tent or trailer-tent, plus any awnings, gazebo or pup-tent and the car or towing vehicle.

17. Where a site is being used by both caravans and tents they must be sited entirely separate from each other for health & safety reasons. However, this does not necessarily mean segregated. If the layout of the field does not allow for separate lines of tents, it is permissible to continue a line of caravans/motor homes with a line of tents, but they must be sited *en-bloc* and not interspersed. Trailer tents are classified as tents and must be sited accordingly. Children's "pup-tents" may be erected alongside the parents' unit and should be considered as part of the unit for spacing purposes. It is recommended that there is at least 6 metres between any rows of caravans and tents. See Annex 1d for further advice on spacing issues.

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Fire Precautions

18. Open fires and barbecues will not be held except with the permission of the responsible person. Where permission is given for open fires or barbecues, they will be sited on open ground, away from units, vehicles, awnings and any other structures.

19. A fire extinguisher approved to British Standards Institute and/or Fire Officers Certificate standards will be held on site.

Chemical Toilets and Waste Water Disposal

20. Sapphire Club will act responsibly when disposing of the contents of chemical toilets and waste water and take full account of the need to safeguard water supplies and prevent the pollution of rivers and streams.

21. On-site disposal of the contents of chemical toilets and waste water will be in accordance with arrangements agreed with the site owner/occupier. Neither will be allowed to foul the ground except at designated disposal points. If there is any doubt about the disposal of waste, the Sapphire Club or, if appropriate, the responsible person will contact the relevant Local Authority for advice.

Refuse disposal

22. Sapphire Club should ensure that refuse is either taken home or disposed of in accordance with on-site arrangements. The rally marshal should be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place.

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Annex 1a: The Countryside Code

Helping everyone to respect, protect & enjoy our countryside

The Countryside Code applies to all parts of the countryside. There are five parts to the Countryside code and most of it is just good commonsense. It's designed to help us all to respect, protect and enjoy our countryside.

The Code, which applies in England and Wales (Scotland has its own Outdoor Access Code), makes it clear what the responsibilities are for both the public and the people who manage the land. For further information see http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk/things_to_know/countryside_code

1) Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs

- Even when going out locally, it's best to get the latest information about where and when you can go. For example, your rights to go onto some areas of open land may be restricted while work is carried out, for safety reasons, or during breeding seasons. Follow advice and local signs, and be prepared for the unexpected.
- Refer to up-to-date maps or guidebooks or contact local information centres.
- You're responsible for your own safety and for others in your care, so be prepared for changes in weather and other events. Visit www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk for links to organisations offering specific advice on equipment and safety, or contact visitor information centres and libraries for a list of outdoor recreation groups.
- Check weather conditions before you leave, and don't be afraid to turn back.
- Part of the appeal of the countryside is that you can get away from it all. You may not see anyone for hours, and there are many places without clear mobile phone signals, so let someone know where you're going and when you expect to return.
- Get to know the signs and symbols used in the countryside

2) Leave gates and property as you find them

- Please respect the working life of the countryside, as our actions can affect people's livelihoods, our heritage, and the safety and welfare of animals and ourselves.
- A farmer will normally leave a gate closed to keep livestock in, but may sometimes leave it open so they can reach food and water. Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs. If walking in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates.
- If you think a sign is illegal or misleading such as a 'Private - No Entry' sign on a public footpath, contact the local authority.
- In fields where crops are growing, follow the paths wherever possible.
- Use gates, stiles or gaps in field boundaries when provided - climbing over walls, hedges and fences can damage them and increase the risk of farm animals escaping.
- Our heritage belongs to all of us - be careful not to disturb ruins and historic sites.

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- Leave machinery and livestock alone - don't interfere with animals even if you think they're in distress. Try to alert the farmer instead.

3) Protect plants and animals and take your litter home

- We have a responsibility to protect our countryside now and for future generations, so make sure you don't harm animals, birds, plants or trees.
- Litter and leftover food doesn't just spoil the beauty of the countryside, it can be dangerous to wildlife and farm animals and can spread disease - so take your litter home with you. Dropping litter and dumping rubbish are criminal offences.
- Discover the beauty of the natural environment and take special care not to damage, destroy or remove features such as rocks, plants and trees. They provide homes and food for wildlife, and add to everybody's enjoyment of the countryside.
- Wild animals and farm animals can behave unpredictably if you get too close, especially if they're with their young - so give them plenty of space.
- Fires can be as devastating to wildlife and habitats as they are to people and property - so be careful not to drop a match or smoldering cigarette at any time of the year. Sometimes, controlled fires are used to manage vegetation, particularly on heaths and moors between October and early April, so please check that a fire is not supervised before calling 999.

4) Keep dogs under close control

- The countryside is a great place to exercise dogs, but it’s every owner’s duty to make sure their dog is not a danger or nuisance to farm animals, wildlife or other people.
- By law, you must control your dog so that it does not disturb or scare farm animals or wildlife. On most areas of open country and common land, known as 'access land' you must keep your dog on a short lead on most areas of open country and common land between 1 March and 31 July, and all year round near farm animals.
- You do not have to put your dog on a lead on public paths, as long as it is under close control. But as a general rule, keep your dog on a lead if you cannot rely on its obedience. By law, farmers are entitled to destroy a dog that injures or worries their animals.
- If a farm animal chases you and your dog, it is safer to let your dog off the lead – don’t risk getting hurt by trying to protect it.
- Take particular care that your dog doesn’t scare sheep and lambs or wander where it might disturb birds that nest on the ground and other wildlife – eggs and young will soon die without protection from their parents.
- Everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess is and it can cause infections – so always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly. Also make sure your dog is wormed regularly to protect it, other animals and people.
- At certain times, dogs may not be allowed on some areas of access land or may need to be kept on a lead. Please follow any signs. You can also find out more by phoning the Open Access Contact Centre on 0845 100 3298.

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5) Consider other people

- Showing consideration and respect for other people makes the countryside a pleasant environment for everyone - at home, at work and at leisure.
- Whether you're walking on your own or with a large group, you'll have an impact on the local environment. Follow these brief rules to make it more pleasant for visitors and locals alike.
- Busy traffic on small country roads can be unpleasant and dangerous to local people, visitors and wildlife - so slow down and, where possible, leave your vehicle at home, consider sharing lifts and use alternatives such as public transport or cycling. For public transport information, phone Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or use your local sources of information.
- Respect the needs of local people - for example, don't block gateways, driveways or other entry points with your vehicle.
- Keep out of the way when farm animals are being gathered or moved and follow directions from the farmer.
- When riding a bike or driving a vehicle, slow down for horses, walkers and livestock and give them plenty of room. By law, cyclists must give way to walkers and horse-riders on bridleways.
- Support the rural economy - for example, buy your supplies from local shops.

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Annex 1b: The Caravan Code

The Caravan

- Whether trailer or motor caravan it is a vehicle specifically for caravanning. Its appearance and colour are appropriate and do not offend public opinion.
- It is regularly serviced so that it is safe in all respects when touring on the road, and on site.

On The Road

Selection of trailer caravan and towing vehicle allows adequate performance in line with the Towing Code, namely:

- The actual laden weight of the caravan should be kept as low as possible and should never normally exceed the kerb weight of the towing vehicle
- The engine is powerful enough to keep the outfit at a speed, particularly on hills, that does not baulk other traffic
- The caravan is carefully loaded to provide good balance and avoid instability

The caravan complies with all Road Traffic Acts and other relevant Regulations, in particular that there should be an adequate view to the rear of the caravan.

Where the caravan is a trailer towed by a vehicle, it is insured against third party risks. This must cover not only the caravan when attached to the towing vehicle, but also when detached.

Particular attention is paid to those sections of the Highway Code relevant to trailer caravans.

- To cause the minimum inconvenience to other traffic the caravanner observes traffic to his rear and ensures that every opportunity is offered for other vehicles to overtake. This includes the need always to allow space in front of the outfit for faster traffic to pull into with safety (and never to have two or more outfits bunched together) and on narrow roads to pull in and halt at a safe place to allow following traffic to overtake.
- To carry out normal road manoeuvres with increased care to take account of the length of the outfit, the vehicle's reduced acceleration and its longer stopping distances when braking. This requires greater anticipation, early signalling of intentions, and a very careful watch of overtaken traffic, particularly cyclists, before pulling in.

On Any Site

The member:

- Pitches on private land only with the express permission of the owner
- Places the caravan where it will not interfere with the convenience or enjoyment of others
- Avoids damage to turf by digging holes only when absolutely necessary, and replacing turf where possible and by considerate use of the vehicle
- Disposes of any rubbish only by the means provided on the site. If no receptacles are provided, as on some small farm sites, rubbish is taken home for disposal, or to any other recognised disposal point that has space.

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- For touring other than on sites equipped with toilets, will carry his/her own sanitary equipment (usually chemical closet and approved related fluid) and dispose of the contents only at a point provided for the purpose. If burial is necessary, as perhaps on private property, this will not be done in the vicinity of any water course.

- Allows no waste water from the caravan to foul the ground, ensures that suitable receptacles are connected to the waste water pipes to collect the waste, and the receptacles emptied as necessary. In the few instances where no disposal point is provided, minimum fouling is achieved by distributing the water over a considerable area, as along a hedge
- Allows neither children nor animals to spoil the enjoyment of others, by keeping them under control
- Drives slowly and quietly when on site
- Respects the privacy and peace of others at all times by keeping to a minimum, mechanical, instrumental or vocal noise
- Ensures that any laundry outside the caravan is displayed as discretely as possible
- Keeps the pitch neat and tidy, with no loose equipment outside the caravan beyond what is necessary or appropriate, and on departure leaves it as clean as, or cleaner than, it was on arrival
- Observes the country code relating to water, cleanliness, fire dangers, litter, public paths, gates, control of dogs, damage to crops, hedges, walls, trees and plants, livestock and wildlife.

General

At all times, on the road or on site, every caravanner shows courtesy and consideration to all comers so that the good will of the general public towards caravanners is maintained and improved.

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Annex 1c: The Seashore Code (Marine Conservation Society)

The British Isles have over 16,000 km of coastline. This includes some of our most varied and best loved scenery - sea cliffs, rocky shores, rock pools, sand dunes, salt marshes - and some of our most interesting wildlife.

On a warm sunny day the coast is ideal for holiday makers, but it is also our wildest frontier and can be dangerous. It is subject to battering by wind and sea, searing heat, bitter cold and driving rain. Coastal wildlife survives by ingenious means, often at the limit of its tolerance. Compiled by the Marine Conservation Society, this Code explains how you can best enjoy the coast and its wildlife, without causing harm. By following the Code, and showing it to other people, you can help to ensure that this wonderful part of British heritage survives for us all to appreciate in years to come:

Show Respect for Seashore Creatures
Seashore creatures are fascinating and have found special ways of living in their environment. They have to adapt to survive the rigours of wave-action, exposure and predation. Some have shells for protection, but many need to hide under rocks, seaweed or in the sand

Exploring the seashore is fun, but please remember:

- Leave animals where you find them.
- Take care when touching soft-bodied animals - they are very delicate.
- Carefully lift and replace any rocks you may have moved - there are animals underneath which need them for shelter.
- Leave attached seaweed in place - there is plenty lying loose on the strand line.
- Do not trample through rock pools.

Take Photos, Not Living Animals

- Shells come in all shapes, sizes and colours. Many still contain living animals, even if they do look 'dead'. If you want to collect shells, please make sure they are empty before taking them home.
- If you want to buy a souvenir:
  - Buy a photograph, book or poster of colourful marine creatures rather than shells, coral, starfish and urchins or other 'marine curios'.
  - Remember 'curios' would almost certainly have been alive, when collected.
  - If we don't buy them, the shops won't sell them.

Avoid Disturbing Wildlife
You can see many animals at their best when they are behaving naturally. This is true for animals such as seals, otters and seabirds, as well as rock pool animals.
To avoid disturbing wildlife:

- It is best to watch from a distance, through binoculars if possible, especially if the animals are nesting, or pupping in the case of seals.
- Keep your dog clear of birds and other animals.
- Remember, it is now illegal to disturb or harass many species of birds and animals.

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THE SAPPHIRE CLUB Code of Conduct

Take Your Rubbish Home with You

Beach rubbish is unsightly and can be dangerous to sea creatures. Much of the litter on our shores comes from tourists, shipping, fishing vessels and sewage outfalls. You can help to reduce this problem when visiting the coast:

- Take your rubbish home - burying it is no solution.
- Keep your dog from fouling the beach.
- Report canisters or drums that may be washed up on the beach, but do not touch them.
- Take part in Beach Watch - the annual beach clean and survey organised by the Marine Conservation Society, or Adopt-a-Beach - a regular survey of beach litter.
- Bag It and Bin It, Please Don't Flush It - bag and bin all plastic bathroom waste such as cotton bud sticks.

Watch Where You Go

Beaches and sand dunes are prone to erosion and easily damaged by people and vehicles. To help protect the coast:

- Keep to established paths and dune boardwalks.
- Park in designated car parks and keep access to footpaths clear.
- Do not use beaches or dunes for scrambling motorcycles or other 'off-road' vehicles.
- If you dig holes in the beach, please fill them up again.
- Leave pebbles and rocks on the beach rather than collect them for your garden.

Be Careful!

All cliffs are unstable and potentially dangerous, yet they are an impressive sight and from the cliff top it is possible to enjoy a panoramic view of the coastline. Cliffs also provide a very specialised habitat for the plants and animals that live on them.

Take Care Near Cliffs:

- Remember that it is dangerous to climb up or go near the top or bottom of a cliff.
    - Please don't throw or push anything over the edge of cliffs. As well as being dangerous, it can increase the rate of cliff erosion and kill or disturb wildlife.
- Play safe on the beach too:
    - Check tide times to avoid being cut off.
    - Keep away from soft sand and mud - it is easy to get stuck!

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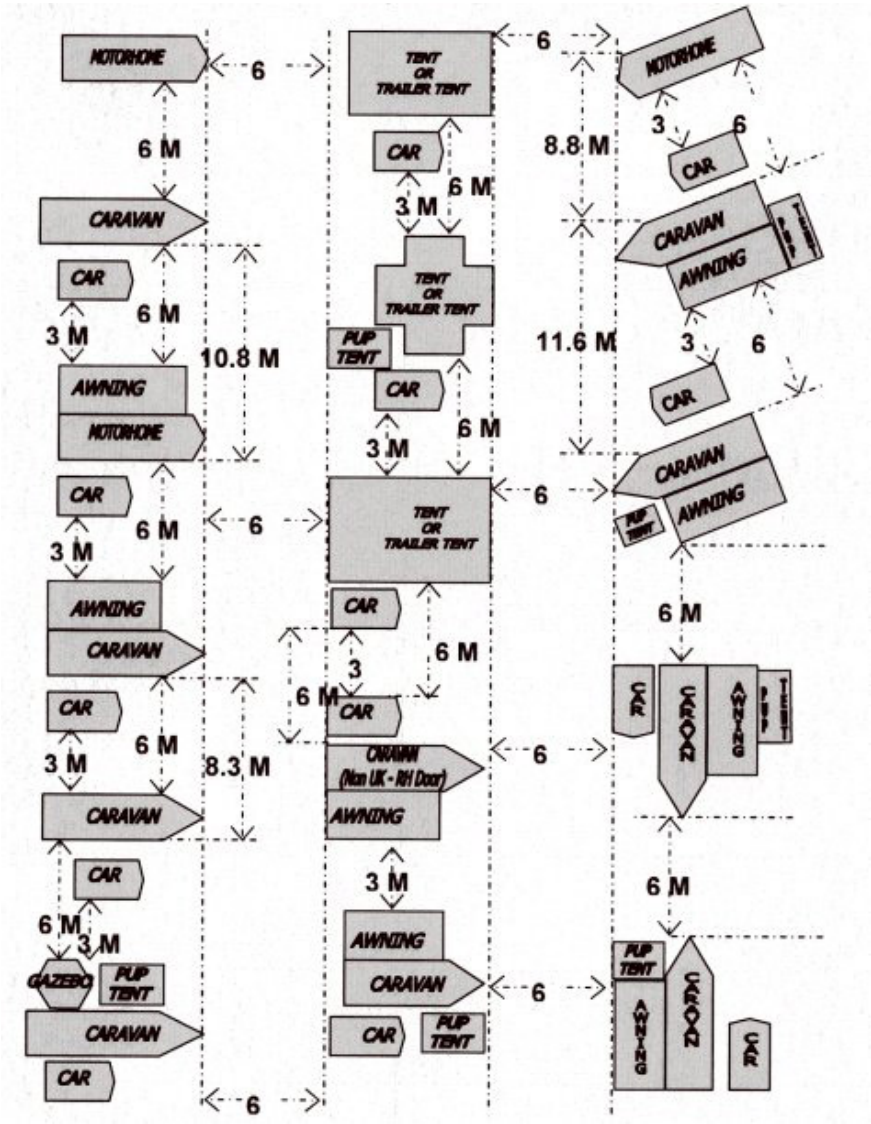
Annex 1d: Safety Spacing of Units

The following diagram (reproduced by kind permission of ACCEO*) is intended only as an example to illustrate the safety spacing requirements under varying scenarios:



This guidance recommends that not less than three metres should be permitted between units. For this purpose, a unit **includes** the caravan/motor home/tent plus any awning, gazebo or "pup-tent" and the vehicle/tow car

Please Note: - To allow the attendance of tents & trailer tents (with the exception of children's "pup-tents") on caravan rallies a separate Camping Exemption Certificate must be held in conjunction with a Caravan Exemption certificate.

* - Further details can be obtained from the Association of Caravan & Camping Exempted Organisations (ACCEO), Head Office, PO Box 5191, Rugeley, Staffordshire, WS15 9BS. Tel: 0845 419 1520; Website: www.acceo.org.uk

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