

Green Road Map

Release to Authorities

APRIL 2024



TRAIL RIDERS
FELLOWSHIP



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Welcome to the Green Road Map

There are an estimated 350,000 miles of highway in England and Wales. Roughly 38% are paths or Restricted Byways and are off-limits to public motor traffic (see page 17). The other highways are nearly all roads made up with tarmac – black roads. Between the black roads and paths and restricted byways are around 6,000 miles of Green Roads that are available for the public to responsibly enjoy by reasonable means of travel, including motorcycling.

Green Roads are subject to a broad range of naming conventions and designations, and are recorded in multiple places such as Local Authorities' Definitive Map and Highway Authorities' List of Streets, it was considered that one 'all-embracing', public-facing, online and real-time map of the Green Roads was in the public interest.

The Green Road Map (GRM) has been created by the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) to provide clarity and certainty as to the public right to use a motorcycle on the Green Road Network of England and Wales.

Project background

Currently available mapping does not serve public access well:

- Ordnance Survey mapping can be incomplete, ambiguous and out of date and does not show access restrictions.
- Local Authority mapping, including the List of Streets and the Definitive Map can be inconsistent and difficult to access, and in extreme instances, non-existent. It is also subject to inconsistencies and anomalies created by previous legislation.
- Maps that are easily accessible to the public – *not open source*, such as Google, Apple, and Bing Maps – do not carry the level of detail that help determine public highway types.

In addition to this, misrepresentative, inconsistent or non-existent signage does little to provide clarity on the Green Road itself.

The Trail Riders Fellowship has therefore developed the Green Road Map (GRM), detailing all those unsealed routes where it is lawful to use a motorised vehicle. The TRF is now inviting authorities to participate in its development.

The purpose of the GRM is to provide public benefit by:

- Providing a resource to identify Green Roads that can be lawfully and sustainably used by the public using motorcycles.
- Facilitating the gathering and archiving of evidence and protecting the public entitlement to enjoy Green Roads.

- Maintaining and reinforcing the reputation and status of Green Roads as public roads for all to travel on by any reasonable, lawful, and sustainable means.

The GRM is not intended to be a Sat Nav and the roads identified are not available to download as a GPX file as the network is in a constant state of change. It is, however, possible to view the map on a smartphone.

Green Roads

The TRF has adopted the single term of 'Green Road' to provide greater clarity to the public on the status and access rights to this type of highway. Currently there is a bewildering array of terms: Unclassified County Roads (UCR), White Roads, Other Routes with Public Access (ORPA), Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT), and many more.





How authorities can contribute to the project

The GRM will always be a 'work in progress' as it is intended to be a 'live' map that is forever changing. The GRM is currently in a beta development and the TRF believes that there are still more roads to be recorded. It also recognises that some recorded routes may not have motor vehicle rights, and welcomes engagement with Authorities in both of these areas as well as discussing other ways that they may wish to utilise this resource.

The TRF invites you to:

- Identify Green Roads that are either missing or you consider need reviewing.
- Promote the GRM as a useful resource for the public and specifically responsible Trail Riders.
- Use it as a tool to raise public awareness and understanding of Trail Riding as a legal, historic and legitimate recreational activity or active recreation.
- Think about how the TRF could work in partnership with authorities to utilise the GRM in other ways.
- Inform the TRF in advance on intended changes to the status of a Green Road, be it short or long term, or through Definitive Map Modification or Traffic Regulation Orders, thus avoiding costly and unnecessary litigation.

Sign up to access the GRM

If you work for a National Park, Local Authority or Police, then please email the Trail Riders Fellowship using your authority email address providing details of the authority you represent, your role within the authority and a telephone number should we need to contact you. grmadmin@trf.org.uk

The TRF has 41 regional groups. Details of a representative from your area can be found on page 15.



A history of the motorcycling on Green Roads, and their mapping

In October 1901, Hubert Egerton completed the first Land's End to John O'Groats trip by motorcycle. The feat was a triumph of navigation as much as motorcycling. The rider had to consider gradient when choosing their route, as the motorcycles of the time were not always capable of climbing steep hills or effectively braking on the descents. In this regard, from 1897, the cartographers, Gall and Inglis published a contour road book that provided details on gradients on roads and was intended to be used in conjunction with Gall and Inglis' regular maps.

Another popular form of motoring and cycling maps of the time were the Gall and Inglis strip maps, which covered the Land's End to John O'Groats route in three sections. Following the strip map was much like following the line on a modern-day Sat Nav, the information

similarly confined to the depicted route and immediate surrounding area.

Between the late 1800s and the establishment of motorcycling as a popular activity pre-WW1, pioneering motorcyclists enjoyed the introduction of maps that specifically catered for the full exploration of the network of minor highways. In addition to the maps, the British Trail Rider enjoyed the world's first motorcycling magazine, *The Motor Cycle*, launched in 1903. *The Motor Cycle* featured an abundance of readers' letters and articles that discussed roads and celebrated the exploration of new roads, often with direct reference to commercially available motoring maps.

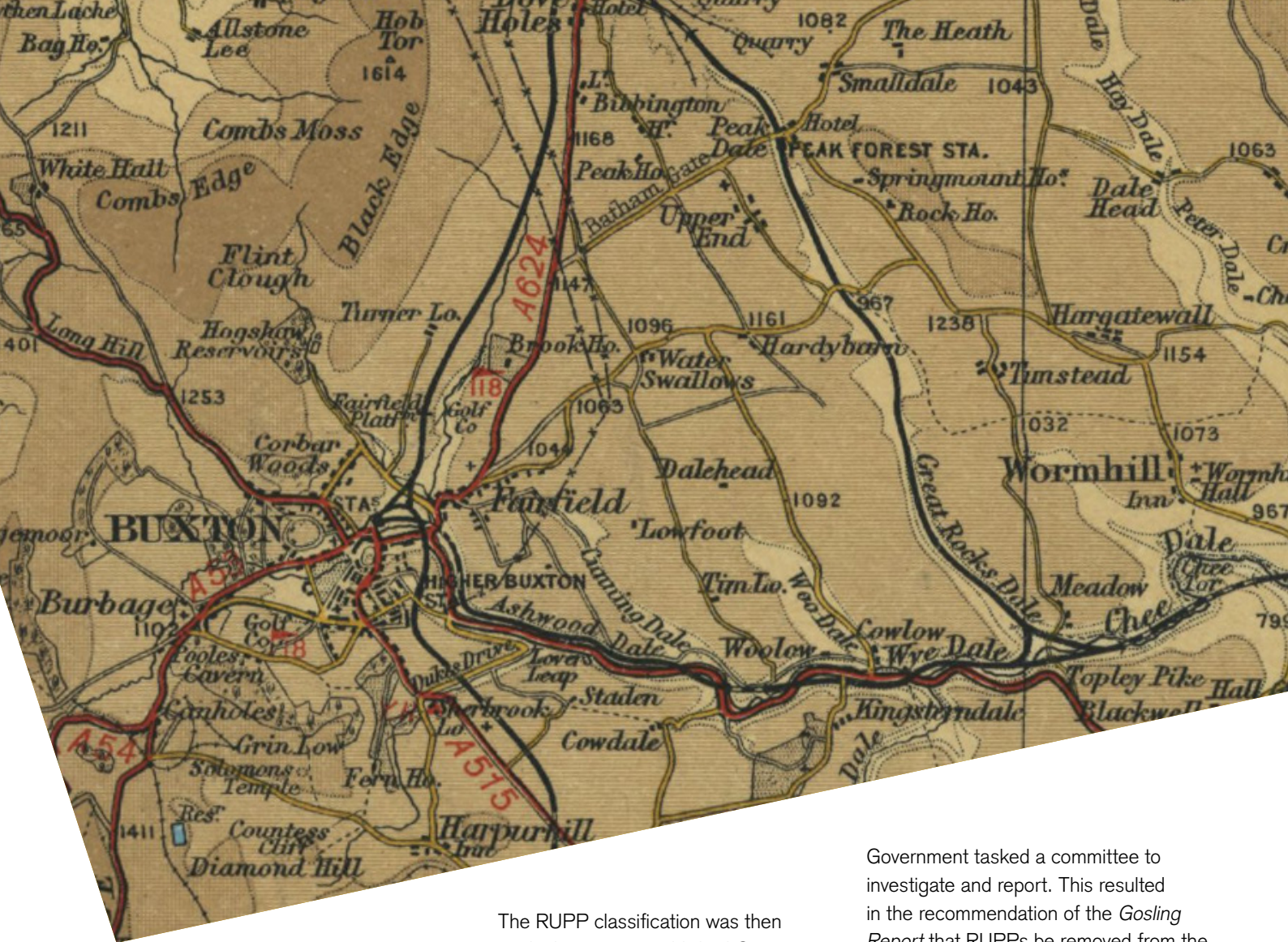
Popular motorcycling maps included Bartholomew and Autocar Maps, together with the Michelin Guides. Bartholomew marked its motoring maps

to show the passability of roads. Many of the recommended roads are present day Green Roads.

The mapping of roads encouraged the exploration and use of the public carriageway network. Beyond the maps, the motoring and wider media worked hand-in-hand on the mapping, celebrating the revival of the countryside.

Government mapping

Road numbering and classification was introduced in the 1920s, and this was conveyed to the motoring public by Ministry of Transport Road Maps, published by Ordnance Survey. Those maps showed the many minor and unsealed Green Roads in the same manner as the rest of the road network, while A and B roads were shown with their respective numbers.



Green Roads continued to be shown as roads on Ordnance Survey and other road maps and were managed as one status: public carriageway - either as County Road (List of Streets) repairable at public expense, or more rarely as a Ratione Tenurae (RT) road repairable at private expense.

Motoring organisations (such as the RAC and AA) had substantial influence over public mapping and the depiction of green and other roads. They published their own maps and endorsed others, influencing the content (e.g. Bartholomew).

Enter the RUPP

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 introduced the new classification of 'Road Used as Public Path' (the "RUPP") and the 'Definitive Map'. Rights for vehicles for uncertain.

The RUPP classification was then applied to many established Green Roads, the effect of which was the diluting of their status and reputation as public carriageways (as the new RUPP classification put their status in question). Further, the Definitive Map was systematically used to record Green Roads as bridlepaths or footpaths, and so present them as illegal for motorcycle use. The Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping was used to publicise the recorded RUPPs, bridlepaths and footpaths, with the effect that from the 1950s the OS maps in common use – which have no legal authority – were used to mislead the public on the status of Green Roads and lawfulness of motorcycle use.


BOATs that don't float

By the late 1960s the problem had been escalated, in no small part due to anti-public access pressure groups seeking to ban motorcycles from using RUPPs and beyond. The

Government tasked a committee to investigate and report. This resulted in the recommendation of the *Gosling Report* that RUPPs be removed from the public maps, with all Green Roads being managed under the one status of UCR. That recommendation was conducive to motoring interests and would have returned mapping to the one status depiction for Green Roads that was enjoyed prior to 1950.

However, the Government departed from that recommendation and made legislation (*The Countryside Act 1968*) to introduce a third classification – the 'Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT)', further confusing the status of Green Roads. The TRF was formed in 1970 in direct response to the Countryside Act 1968, as trail riders foresaw the confusion and detriment that would arise from having three classifications (UCR, RUPP, BOAT) shown on public maps.

If that wasn't enough, a fourth classification was introduced in the mid-1990s, the 'Other Route with Public Access (ORPA)'. This was used to depict



some County Roads while others that were not shown as ORPAs were left white on the OS maps and became known as White Roads – a fifth classification!

Land of confusion

We entered the noughties with the status of Green Roads deliberately confused and diluted, with no less than five classifications shown on the Local Authority and other public maps. Undeterred, the Government invented a sixth classification in 2000, the 'Restricted Byway' which would be used to show Green Roads where public rights for non-motorised traffic existed, but car and motorcycle use was now illegal.

The deliberate use of mapping to confuse and dilute the status and reputation of Green Roads was a significant factor that led to the creation of the Restricted Byway classification and ultimately the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act* in 2006, which extinguished car and motorcycle access to a vast swathe of established Green Roads. The mechanism of the NERC Act was focused on public mapping, where it represented Green Roads as a diluted and confused classification.

The Green Road Network was best protected pre-1949, when public mapping simply showed the roads at the one status.

NERC reduced the number of classifications of Green Roads shown on public maps, but four different classifications are still shown. This still allows those that want to restrict public access, based on their terms, plenty of scope to confuse and mislead the public over the status and reputation of Green Roads. Today's public mapping continues to be a threat to public access.

The Green Road Map – finally providing clarity

Today's internet offers greater opportunity in respect of public mapping, which is now firmly online. As part of the Government's "Access to all" programme, they have already outlined their desire for "digital signposting" of the Green Road network, and the good news is the TRF has already done that! The Green Road Map project seeks to provide clarity to protect this national asset for the public access to the countryside.

This public access project seeks to remedy the harm to public access of current public mapping, which is inconsistent and causes confusion over the status of Green Roads. It seeks to educate and inform all users, including motorcyclists, on their entitlement to use a route. Furthermore, it promotes

sustainable and responsible use of Green Roads with consideration for all road users and the environment. It can also act as a mechanism to identify Green Roads in need of improvement as well as protecting public paths and Restricted Byways, reducing the likelihood of inadvertent and unlawful use by motorised vehicles.



Green Roads mapping case studies

To illustrate the need for the GRM, here we provide five examples where unclear or misleading mapping has led to issues over public access.

01 Confusing Status – one road with four depictions of status

Colwel Lane is shown as ORPA, White Road, BOAT and Path. The road was recorded as a County Road in both East Sussex and West Sussex. Boundary changes between the counties resulted in part of the road being additionally recorded as RUPP in East Sussex. The RUPP section was then reclassified as BOAT in 1971.



The entire road is legal for motor traffic and named as Colwel Lane on highway records. The section shown as ORPA is tarmac, whilst the remainder is mostly unsealed. OS infers that the BOAT is

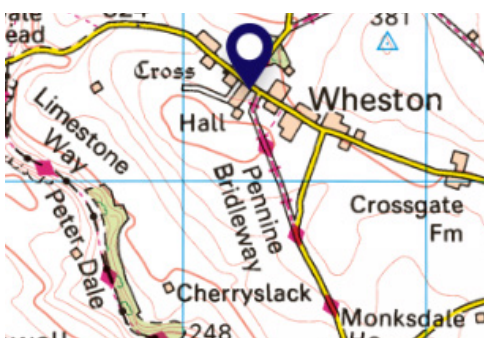
isolated by sections of (illegal for MPV) path (shown as dashed black line).

With the GRM

OS's four statuses could usefully be replaced with one status – Green Road. Note that the road is the subject of a seasonal 4x4 TRO but the signage is poor and has deterred Trail Riders. The public GRM would assert motorcycle legality, whilst the members' GRM would furnish TRF members with additional TRO information to increase their confidence to use the road and better enjoy it.

02 Diluting Status – presenting a road as a bridlepath

The road, described as 'Pennine Bridleway and depicted on mapping with red diamonds, is named as a bridleway but is in fact a Byway. The road was left off the Definitive Map on the basis that it is a carriageway forming part of the ordinary road network i.e. it was (and still is) a carriageway mainly used by the public for the purposes of carriageway. But OS dilutes that status by showing it as bridlepath and invites the risk of conflict between lawful users by

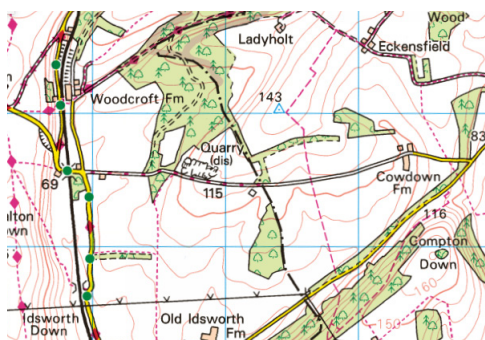


inferring that trail riding is unlawful. That is also exacerbated by on-site signage that only shows it as 'Pennine Bridleway'.

With the GRM

The public GRM would assert the public's vehicular rights. The TRF members version holds additional information as to status.

03 Denying Highway Status – inconsistent presentation of a road implying that highway rights do not exist



Half ORPA, half white road. The inference is that public highway rights do not exist on the white road. The entire highway is recorded as a County Road and is left off the Definitive Map on the basis that it is an ordinary road.

With the GRM

The public GRM asserts the road's legality for vehicles. The TRF members' version provides additional information of the County Road name, history re obstruction and signage.

04 Misleading Trail Riders – implying a road is legal where its status is in significant dispute



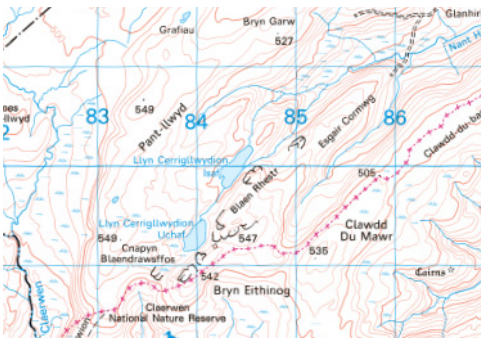
A road is shown as an ORPA where its historic origin is as an inclosure awarded bridlepath. The TRF does not have sufficient evidence to prove carriageway status.

that TRF has not deemed it to satisfy the criteria for inclusion. Equally, the members' GRM does not show the road, providing members with certainty that it has not been approved for GRM inclusion.

With the GRM

The public GRM does not show the road, providing the public with certainty

05 Encouraging Illegal Use – TRO not shown and no information on sustainability



The BOAT half of the road is the subject of a permit TRO, however OS mapping does not convey this information. The road has some fragile sections where the TRF recommends use of low impact tyres.

With the GRM

The entire road can be shown as 'partial access' on the public GRM. Additional

information can be provided as to sustainability and/or to convey that the through route is only available subject to permit. The members' GRM can provide a higher level of detail.

The Green Road Map User Guide

Use the search box to:






- a: Search by location
- b: Select USRN Search if you know the Unique Street Reference Number
- c: Select GRMUID if you know the Green Road Map Unique Identification Number

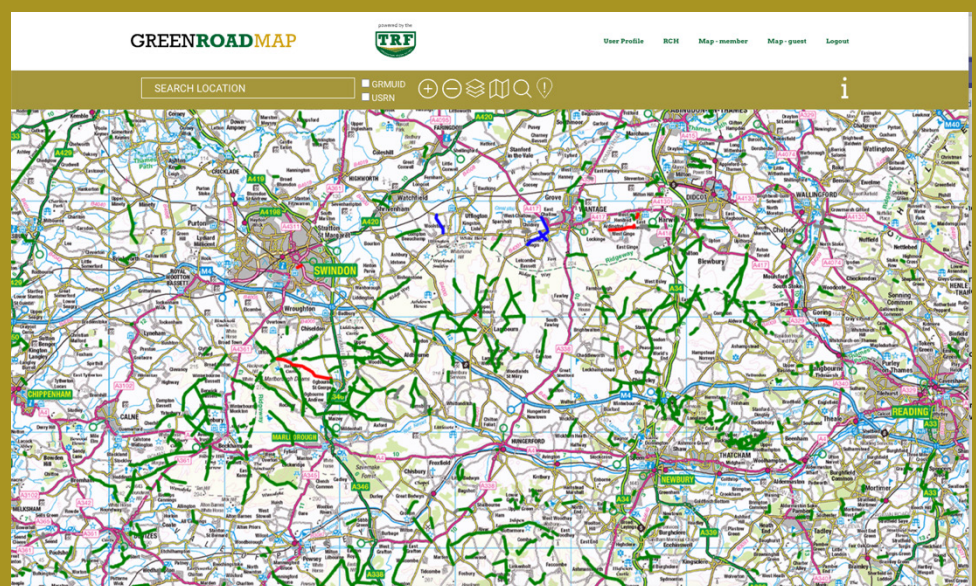
Use the layers icon to switch between base maps to view Green Roads

Use the key icon to identify the line styles and colours to indicate different Green Roads

- **Solid Green** – Full access 365 days a year
- **Dashed Green** – Access restrictions, apply, click on the Green Road for details
- **Blue** – Temporary restrictions apply, click on the Green Road for details
- **Red** – No motorcycle access
- **Grey** – Sealed through road with motorcycle access

Click on a Green Road to trigger a dialogue box with limited information. Click on More Detail and an area beneath the map is revealed with more information (only available to members)

-  **Icons**
+/- – Zoom in / out
-  **Layers** – Alternative map views
-  **Map** – Key to different roads indicated
-  **Location Pin** – Contact details of local groups of the TRF
-  **Information** – User Guide





Supporting Authorities

SUPPORTING NETWORK MAINTENANCE

Every year, Trail Rider volunteers support Authorities to undertake projects that help maintain the Green Road Network and improve public access to the countryside.



STAMPING OUT ILLEGAL RIDING

Throughout England and Wales, the TRF works with Authorities to educate riders on the impact of illegal riding.



EFFECTIVE NETWORK MANAGEMENT

Local Authorities are responsible for maintaining and managing public highways including Green Roads. It is in the public interest that this is done effectively and efficiently with public access as the priority. This is a significant task for Authorities and when it comes to the Green Road Network the Trail Riders Fellowship can provide help and support.

For more information on any of the above please email engage@trf.org.uk



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Green Roads for All

The Green Road Network provides unique public access to the countryside unlike any other and should be celebrated and recognised for the special asset that it is.

With 77% of the Public Rights of Way Network only accessible on foot and 98% of it traffic free, Green Roads are a special place where there should be no place for intolerance, injustice, prejudice, or discrimination. Trail Riders welcome every opportunity to share the trail and countryside with everyone.



TRAIL RIDERS FELLOWSHIP

In 1970, the Trail Riders Fellowship was established to conserve Green Roads for all users to enjoy, including motorcyclists, and to promote responsible and sustainable Trail Riding.

With over 9,000 members in 41 groups in England and Wales, the organisation works with Central and Local Government, Authorities and other user groups and landowners to enhance the awareness and understanding of Trail Riding.

trf.org.uk – engage@trf.org.uk

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