

## TRF, LARA, NMC Briefing to DEFRA Ministers June 2023

### About Trail Riding

Trail riding is the historic and traditional rural pastime of motorcycling on ancient and post-industrial roads, both sealed and unsealed, which can chart its origin back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### The benefits – economies & communities

Rural economies face significant challenges, especially after the pandemic, and motorists enjoying the countryside make a significant contribution to these businesses. Green Road users support rural economies by spending on campsites, B&Bs, pubs, cafes, hotels, local shops, and local filling stations. A number of specialised businesses are also supported by this activity.

Green Road motoring organisations also raise tens of thousands pounds each year for charities and good causes.

- Using independent data, the TRF has calculated the value of Trail Riding to be £134m per annum in direct spend and a further £14m per annum in tourism related expenditure.
- Evidence is supportive of trail riding contributing £74m per annum of Gross Value Added and 1500 jobs in the UK.
- The average contributory value of Trail Riding to each mile of usable Green Road is estimated at £33,000 per mile per year.
- The UK motorcycle industry makes a significant contribution to the UK economy with a turnover more than £5bn and around £1bn paid in taxes. In total, the industry supports £2.8bn of added value and 81,500 jobs.

### The benefits – health and wellbeing

The Government recommendations for exercise are for 150 minutes of moderate exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise or a combination of both per week to remain healthy. The average a rider will achieve this in just one trail ride, with data showing that the average trail ride lasts 230 minutes.

Just as with other visitors to the countryside, engagement with the natural environment brings benefits to mental health and wellbeing. For some people with health problems and disabilities, motorised access is their only means of enjoying the health benefits that others take for granted.

In addition, other sporting and recreational activities also rely on the Green Road network for practical access to undertake their chosen activity.

### The benefits - conservation and public access

Each year hundreds of local conservation projects are undertaken by Green Road motoring organisations, including those inside National Parks and AONB, to the value of hundreds of thousands of pounds supporting underfunded and under resourced authorities. This work benefits local communities and user groups alike.

Alongside this, the TRF's intervention has protected public access to over 200 Green Roads since 2016.

### Working with DEFRA

1. Future policy announcements adopt a neutral or positive position regarding trail riding on Green Roads as a type of quiet enjoyment of the countryside. Better reflecting its significant contribution to rural economies and communities alongside health and well-being benefits for those that participate as well as rich heritage of motorcycling in the UK.

The Landscape Review Working Group (LRWG) represents an ideal vehicle to consider the broader opportunities to support improved public access through the Green Road Network, rather than focus on a minority of routes where the sustainability of continued motorised access, that is not already being managed, may be an issue.

2. Support the TRF Green Road Mapping project in recognition of achieving the ambitions of the LRWG.
3. Realise the opportunity to free up the Definitive Map Modification Order process by reducing dual recording of public roads on both the List of Streets and Definitive Map and Statement.
4. DEFRA to liaise with DfT on the review of the wider aspects of the Traffic Regulation Order process within the current DfT consultation with the aim of reducing the burden and cost to authorities whilst supporting public access using intelligent orders.
5. Consider the opportunities within the current Network Management Duty Guidance review to address existing issues relating to obstruction and signage within the network impacting the public's ability to access the countryside.
6. The TRF would like the opportunity to work more closely with officials to find solutions that resolve unintended consequences and anomalies created by previous legislation as well as issues relating to the use of Definitive Map and Statement.

### **Green Road Network Background**

- The total length of public highways is estimated at 350,000 miles, of which 40% (140,000) is free from motorised public traffic. The Green Road network is estimated to be only 6000 miles, less than 2% of public highways, equating to less than half a mile per trail rider.
- Independent research found that Trail Riding accounts for only 21% of Green Road traffic.
- 62% of motorised use of the Green Road Network is for land management and access.
- The average overall motorised use on Green Roads is just 4 vehicles a day.
- In National Parks research has shown that the average motorcycle use of a Green Road was a fraction over 1 per day.

**About the TRF and NMC** - <https://www.trf.org.uk/> - <https://www.uknmc.org/>

Formed in 1970 in response to the latest legislation which reduced public access to the countryside, the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) has over 8000 members throughout England and Wales organised into 40 groups. Considered the leading authority on motorcycling on the green and minor black roads, it is the only motorcycling organisation which regularly litigates on behalf of the public to defend their right to use the network.

The TRF is a founding member of the NMC, the UK's coalition of motorcycling and trade representative organisations, with a combined representation of over 200,000 motorcyclists.

**About LARA** - <https://laragb.org/>



The Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) was formed in 1986 as an umbrella organisation to bring together the leading national associations in both 2 and 4-wheeled motorised sport and recreation. LARA promotes and advocates responsible and sustainable motor sport and recreation, offering information and advice on all aspects of land use.