

A photograph of a dirt path leading into a forest. The trees on the left have bright yellow autumn leaves, while the trees on the right are mostly green. The path is dark and appears to be made of dirt or gravel. A semi-transparent green box with a thin blue border is centered over the image, containing the title and subtitle text.

BHS Project 2026

Protect our historic bridleways through restoring them to the record



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Unrecorded Bridleways to be extinguished in 2026

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2026: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

On 1 January 2026, bridleways in England and Wales that aren't formally recorded will be lost to the public. Our aim is to safeguard bridleways for public use so that equestrians today and in the future have safe off-road routes to ride on.

Extinguishment of unrecorded rights of way

- On 1 January 2026, bridleways (plus footpaths and byways) in England and Wales that are not formally recorded, will be lost to the public as rights of way forever
- These unrecorded, historic routes actually exist in law, but have never been registered on the definitive map, the legal record of public rights of way
- The BHS is committed to saving as many bridleways as possible before 2026, but they need our help!

How can I help?

As a first step, check your riding routes:

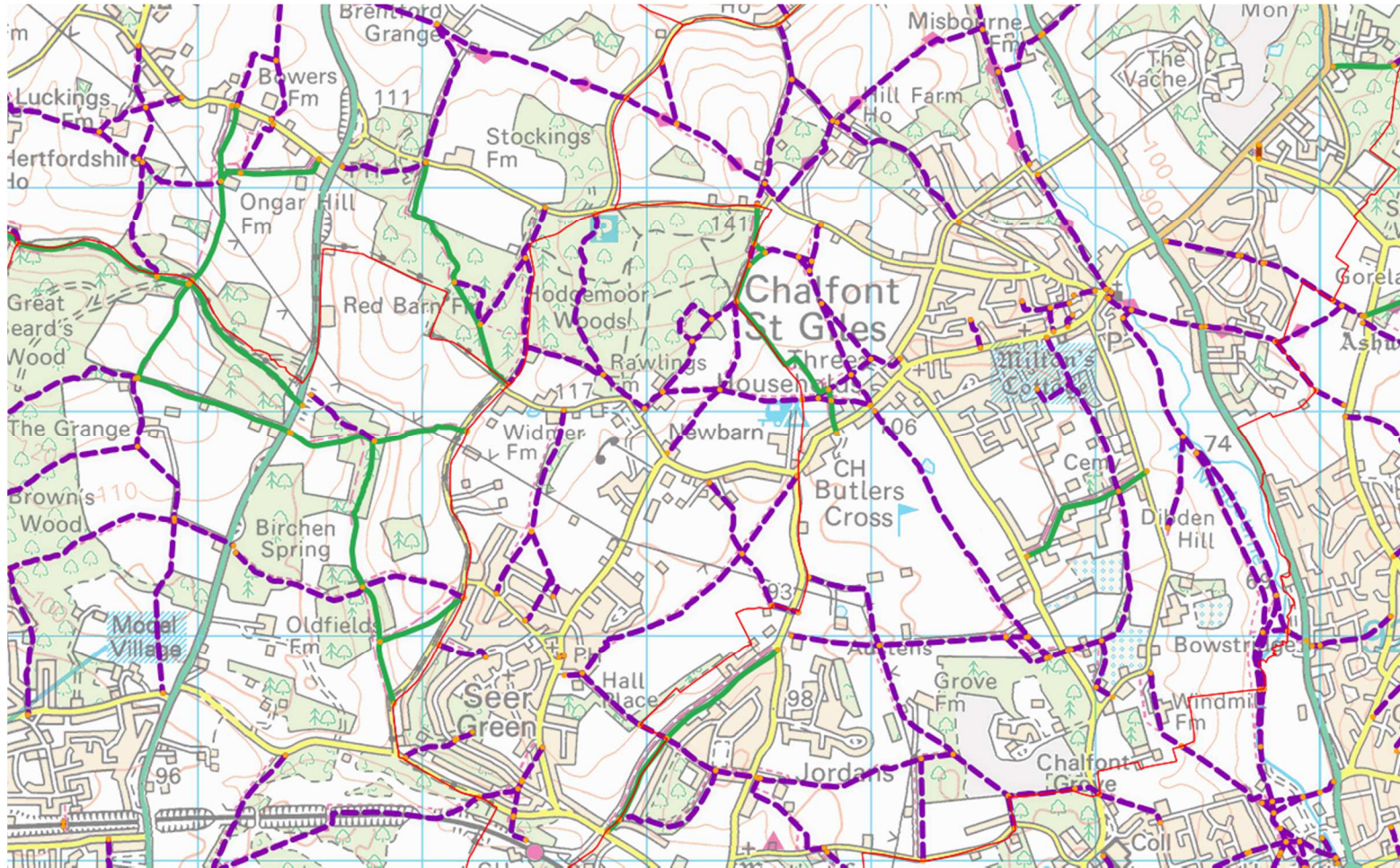
- on the Ordnance Survey Explorer 1:25 map
- go to the local council online rights of way map to check if they are officially marked as bridleways.

For Buckinghamshire County, the online rights of way map is here:

<https://prow.buckscc.gov.uk/standardmap.aspx>

IF YOUR ROUTE IS MARKED AS A BRIDLEWAY OR BYWAY, IT IS SAFE
AND WILL REMAIN PROTECTED AS A RIGHT OF WAY AFTER 2026

Buckinghamshire CC Rights of Way Map



My route is not marked....

- Is it a 'historic' route that has been missed from the record?
- After 2026, routes not shown on the Definitive Map can no longer be restored to the map and protected
- this also applies to footpaths, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic

How the route can be restored

- Definitive Map Modification Order – DMMO - process to restore unrecorded rights of way to the Definitive Map
- The application can be based on **either** or **both** of the following:
 - **Historic Evidence** – eg old maps, documents and records
 - **User Evidence** - 20 years uninterrupted use ‘openly’ (without force, secrecy or permission)
- Application for a DMMO is submitted to the Highways Authority at the Local Council
- Applications must be received before the 2026 deadline

Next Steps:

More information and help in restoring unrecorded routes is available from BHS website:

<https://www.bhs.org.uk/our-work/access/campaigns/2026>

- Contact details for local BHS Bridleways Officers
Bucks County Access and Bridleways Officer
Alison Heath - alisonheath71@hotmail.co.uk
- 2026 Toolkit for researching routes
- Rights of way training courses

Claire James: claireannejames@hotmail.com

Hodgemoor Riders: chairman@hodgemoor.org.uk