



<http://www.openstreetmap.org>

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

June 18, 2008: for immediate use

OpenStreetMap comes to Royston

Starting Friday*, cyclist David Earl will be visiting every street in Royston. Surveying for OpenStreetMap, an international, voluntary, collaborative project to produce a free-to-use map, he will be using a bike, GPS receiver and voice recorder, to collect electronically the routes and names of streets and details like schools, pubs, churches, parks and commons.

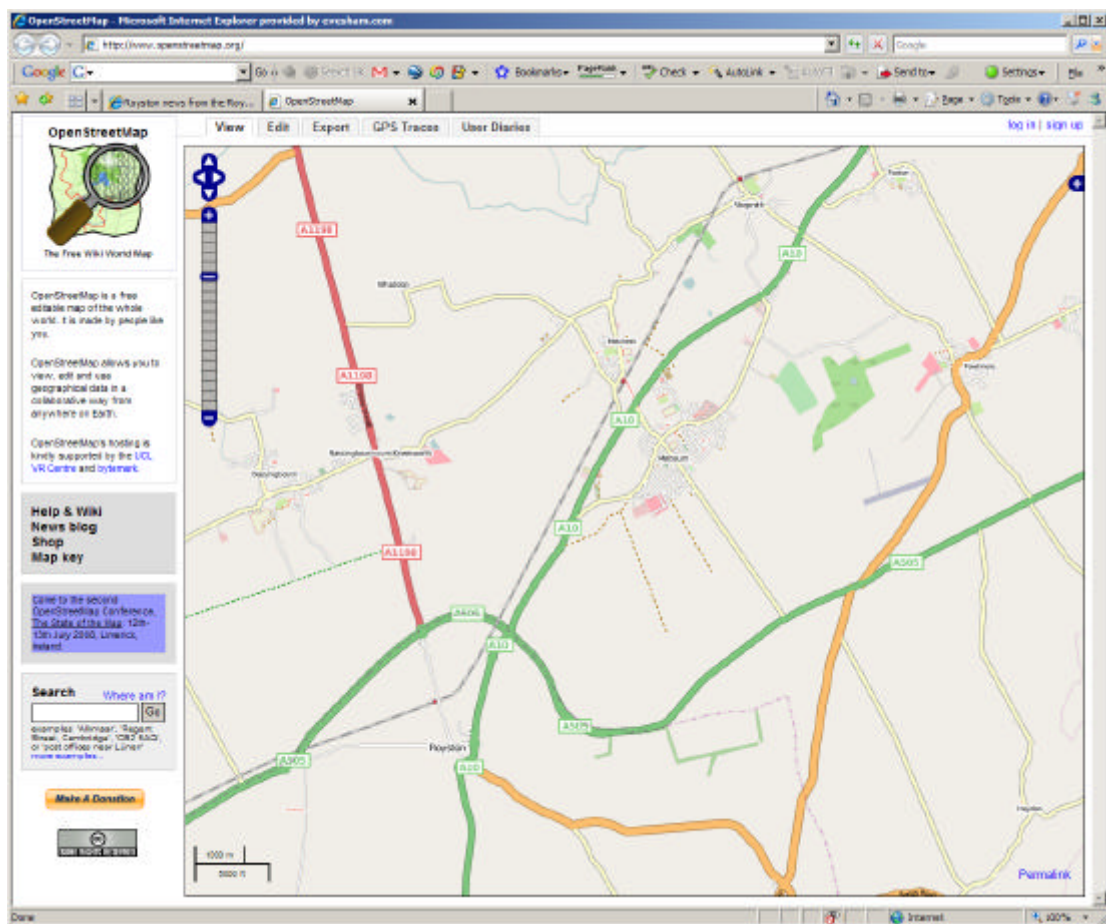
Royston is something of a hole in the map at present. To the north and east, all of Cambridge city, Saffron Walden, Newmarket and Ely have been completed by David, along with most of South Cambridgeshire and much of East Cambridgeshire. Baldock, Letchworth and large parts of Stevenage have also had the OSM treatment from other volunteers.

David said: "the problem with existing maps in this country is that you can't use them, especially in print, without paying a fortune in royalties to Ordnance Survey. By surveying from scratch like this, OpenStreetMap does not infringe copyright of existing maps and can be made freely available to everyone**. OSM is to maps as Wikipedia is to encyclopaedias – a project that has already shown how effective a large number of volunteers working together can be.

David continued: "OSM means that, in time, maps can be used much more widely by community groups and commercial organisations alike for whom the cost of

simply illustrating something with a map, or as part of a larger project, is just too high today. Though it's great you can use Google maps, among others, on websites, you aren't allowed publish them in print or make derivative works from them. OSM doesn't have this limitation."

Over the last two years David reckons he has covered about 4,000 km (2,500 miles) on two wheels collecting map data. Motivated by the need for more exercise, a fascination with maps since childhood, a passion for cycling, and



frustration at not being able to print maps for the Cambridge Cycling Campaign's magazine, he reckons the bike is a great tool for the job: "If Royston is like most places, I'd guess over half the streets are dead ends, most quite short, and in a car you would forever be reversing, not to mention the environmental damage a car would cause. A bike is much faster." David also has an unusual combination of computer and graphics skills which are perfect for this project.

The collected data is joined up on a computer, cross-referenced with copyright-

free satellite images and sent to an internet site where it is merged with the data collected by others across the country, Europe and the world.

The map is stored as a network of points and lines which form places, streets and areas when naming information is attached to them. From this data, various pictorial maps can be produced of varying quality and detail. The methods for producing these are being developed at the same time as data is being collected. Like the wider map these still have much work to do.

OpenStreetMap is at www.openstreetmap.org. Anyone can contribute to the project.

E N D S

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* Weather permitting, surveying will start on Friday 20 June and is expected to take about 30 person-hours to collect and process over two or three sessions.

** OpenStreetMap data is available freely to all under a 'Creative Commons' licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>) which requires attribution and similar licensing of derivative works so making them free for use by everyone.



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