

User Evidence Claim 873 Overton

Appendix 3

Name of User	Dates of Use	Details of Use
Mrs. B. Ayres	1969-2008	<p>Moved to Overton in 1950 and played on path as child; used weekly on horseback; path always used by people on bikes; nearby farmer kept hunters which were taken to river to stand with feet in water; saw horses with groom, who did this every day; no way mark recalled to indicate path was footpath only; had pony when was 13, and friends with ponies, so natural to use path together; hunters used it and no-one complained; used path to avoid busy road and steep hill; saw locals on foot, horseback and bicycles; saw people riding not from immediate area; barriers and gates put across at Station Road end to stop access about 3 or 4 years ago; no gates or stiles before this; only signs indicating that horses should not use path are associated with these barriers; vehicles use path to get to house called Flashetts to north of path; before this house an old tin bungalow which was occupied by someone who worked for paper mill, part of estate that owned path; he came out and talked about horses; barrier stopped use of path; never walked round barrier through river; fence across where river is was broken down but was replaced; does not feel can access the river with all the barriers in place; only uses path on foot now; no connection with landowner; not told that path was not a public bridleway; did not use with horse with permission; never turned back while on a horse; did not hear of anyone else being turned back; not in exercise of a private right; no annual closures or signs indicating use on horses was permissive; route a gravelly path to house, wide enough for cars and vans to use; path narrower beyond house, and with concrete bridge; bridge narrow but able to be crossed safely by horses; track made up to house, with more gravel and a harder surface; this part always had hard footing; narrower part east of house about 6 feet wide; a couple of passing places; always gave way to pedestrians</p>
Mr. M.A. Ayres	1960-2007	<p>Always lived in Overton; used twice a week on horseback and with bicycle for nearly 50 years; started riding in 1960; no indication then that path only a public footpath; way to mill, and used by people with bicycles; saw people riding there when still at school; local people took horses there; at that time was riding bicycles; could get access to the river from path which was 5 or 6 inches deep; local farmer involved with hunt and groom took horses to stand in river; can ride</p>

		<p>horses in river, or walk them there; no reason not to take horses down there; used path for pleasure, and because Kingsclere and Station Roads leading to the Harrow Way narrow and busy with traffic; stopped using path in 2007 because barriers put up; someone broke them shortly after they appeared but were repaired; still use path on foot but not on horseback; saw mainly locals on foot, horseback and with cycles; people would not come from long distances to ride there; signs on footpath that not to be used by horses only in 2007, associated with the barriers; only obstruction a metal barrier in 2007; stopped use of river; wide metal barrier across path entrance, and another barrier to stop access to river; bungalow in past to north of river; occupant cut back the vegetation so could take a van along track; present house much bigger; path driveable for two thirds of length; one occupant worked at mill, and another for the Council; neither of these people turned anyone back; no connection with the landowners, and not tenant of Portal Estate; not told path not public for use with horses, and not used with permission; not stopped, and not heard of anyone else being stopped; no annual closures and no indication that use with horses permissive; first part from Kingsclere Road 10 feet wide, section to Station Road 5 to 6 feet wide; in places 30 feet from river to farm fence; can ride along path without interfering with footpath; concrete bridge goes over relief for the river, and horses can avoid it as the relief usually dry; surface to house originally mud, then made up with hard core and gravel; still muddy surface for narrow part of path; boundary on one side is river and other is a fence belonging to farm in Station Road and also shrubs and trees; nor aware of status of path when started to use it, as it was a short cut and play area, until signs indicating only a footpath recently put up</p>
Mrs. J. Crosbie Dawson	1979-2005	<p>Moved to Northington in 1979 and started riding path straight away; used 125 times a year on horseback until about 2005 when path made inaccessible at eastern end; not currently using path on horseback, though gained access to river at Station Road end for a while in 2005; also did that if saw walkers on path and rejoined path at house called Flashetts; in March 2005 item in Parish Newsletter that 'Footpath Only' signs had been put up; these followed by kissing gates at Station Road end; first sign put up in January 2004, which prompted enquiries to find how what could be done about being stopped from riding on the path; since then official green notices, which thought put up by Hampshire County Council, followed by rails and kissing gate; path had concrete slabs to help users cross wet or stream areas; these lethal and slippery;</p>

		replaced by wooden bridges before 2004 and these much better; wooden shack along path, by river, which is now Flashetts, where old man lived; saw others riding along path when rode it, and Overton Riding School may have used it; no gates or stiles, or any reason to use force to use path; never told that path was not public for use with horses; no annual closures; or indication that horse use was permissive; never had to seek permission prior to 2005, when signs and obstructions appeared; husband wrote to property manager of De La Rue to ask if could take horses on Footpath 4, and they were not prepared to agree; does not think exercising a private right as has no contact with landowner, though husband a tenant of Portal family for about 5 years; path not materially different now from when first used it; very much path by river, and has a firm footing; blocking off of path came out of blue and was a shock
Mr. J. Crosbie Dawson	1955-2005	Moved to Northington aged two in 1950; knew Footpath 4 quite well by 1958; used path regularly with parents, mostly with a horse, but also with bicycle; used more in summer, but also all year round; father resumed riding in 1958; just a track; and used it 2 or 3 times a week particularly between August and March to get to quieter lanes so use purely recreational; never challenged while using route; never any suggestion could not ride there; first indication was putting up of rails and kissing gate which were constantly vandalised; went across river and used this as another access; saw local people using path; feels that path would be used as a bridleway mainly by people from the area; did not see other people most times used it, but evidence that others used it on horses; no reason to use force to gain access, as no gates or stiles; no earlier signs than ones currently in place, which thinks were instigated by Parish Council; only obstruction at Station Road end, which has been blocked intermittently since 2004 to 2005; these obstructions were probably not put up by De La Rue but by Hampshire County Council; father a tenant of Portals from 1950 to 1990; tenant himself between 1990 and 1995; not told path not public for use with horses, and no annual closures or indication that horse use was permissive; didn't think exercising a private right; wrote to De La Rue in January 2005 to ask for permission to ride path, but this not agreed; never stopped, and bemused by whole thing; path has same characteristics and appearance for all 50 years has ridden it, apart from replacement of two concrete bridges with wooden ones in about 2004, possibly for wheelchair access; wooden bungalow where Flashetts house is now; width is about 10 feet as far as old bungalow, narrowing down to 3 feet beyond that; surface always

		had some gravel on it; takes view that land agents would have been in favour of people riding path, but doubts that agent was given instructions to turn horse riders away
Mr. B. Stickland	1964-2008	Always lived in Overton, as has family before him; quiet place, and riding on the path not a problem; used on horseback since 1964; riders need to consider their routes in Overton, with traffic lights compounding traffic problems with long waits; heavy lorries go to paper mill, and people only have to experience being passed by these once to want to go off road; 11 when had first pony, and used path since then; no signs on Station Road to indicate status of path; used more regularly since has lived on south side of village; makes good short cut; in early days of use, not even signposted as footpath; path is also road to house on north side of river; bungalow on site earlier, occupied by water keeper Mr. Green and owned by Portal Estate; no issue with him; water bailiff was not given any instructions about public access, and was never challenged; went on path with other children, and did not cross mind that path should not be used with a horse; nearest bridleway is the Harroway to north, which involves some road work; use recreational, using same route consistently; used sometimes 3 or 4 times a day, but usually used once or twice a month; currently ride every day; first way mark on path was aluminium post, later replaced by a wooden post; barriers at Station Road end have been up and down, and has walked horse in river; after hunting would stand horses in water to cool down and drink; also done with working horses, and helped with this when young, sitting on bridge; not using path on horseback now, and last used path in 2008; saw locals and strangers using route; strangers come down from Harroway; used path with riding school; also seen walkers, riders, cyclists and mini motorbikes; no obstructions until recently; may be more than 5 years since kissing gate put up, but not a problem, because horses can be walked whole length of the river; paper makers take water out of borehole and no fishing in that part of river; uncle retired water bailiff, but has never been tenant of either Portals or De La Rue; 'No Horse Riding' signs appeared at similar time to kissing gate; rails obstructing Station Road end, and have put an end to horse use of path; rails have had holes made in them recently, as was vandalism previously; thinks rails put up by County Council; no connection with landowner, not told path not public for horse use; people mostly using path are dog walkers; very narrow small bridge on path, and a challenge to meet other users there, but riders can go down into river; if meets pedestrian goes down in river; never thought about seeking permission and

		never challenged; no annual closures, or notices indicating horse use permissive; use not in exercise of private right; route to Flashetts house from Kingsclere Road up to 3 metres wide, with bank forming the boundary on one side, with hedge and river edge on other; until recently, path surface was cinders from the mill, but in last two years made up with hoggin and gravel; path more rutted when cinders, so has firmer footing than before; surface gravel for first part, and after bridge also gravel with wood chippings on it about one and half inches thick; first little bridge is timber with hand rail, and second is also timber; these used to be concrete; used to walk through ditch bridge went over; surface of path damp, because of trees on both sides; path opens up to Station Road with kissing gate and railings
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