

2nd February, 2011

WITNESS STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF TOWN GREEN APPLICATION FOR

STOKE LODGE PARKLAND

Mrs Stacey Harris

2 Stoke Lodge Cottages,

West Dene, Stoke Bishop,

Bristol. BS9 2BH

Teaching Assistant At Stoke Bishop Primary School

I first moved to 2 Stoke Lodge Cottages 34yrs ago in October 1977 when I was 9 years old. My dad took the job of Caretaker of Stoke Lodge and the cottage was part of his job package. My mum also worked in Stoke Lodge a privilege which I later had when I helped out in lessons throughout my teenage years. I attended Stoke Bishop Primary School where I have since sent my children and where I now work. We had a family dog that moved with us and whom we exercised in the field from day one of moving in.

Although at the time there were grounds men (Kevin and Colin and later William) based in the pavilion on the field in the day time there was no security or cover at night so my dad would act as security at night and on weekends. He saw off many unsavoury characters that were up to no good mainly teenage drinkers climbing over the pavilion. A "tradition" that myself and my husband now find ourselves doing.

At that time there was the main entrance through Stoke Lodge to the field, an entrance to walk through at the bottom of the field leading to Cheyne Road, various entries up Ebenezer Lane, a proper gate entrance next to our garden by the pavilion and a drive through entrance at the top of the field which is still there. Although there was and still is a notice next to the gate entrance by the pavilion banning dog exercise in the 34yrs I have been here people have always disregarded the signs and walked their dogs and have NEVER been ejected from the field not even by the grounds men when they were based here.

As mentioned before we started to walk our dog on the field when we moved here and haven't stopped to this day with the various dogs that we have had since. Whilst I was a child I always met with my friends on the field to play sports games, have picnics and generally catch up as groups of children do. After leaving junior school I attend Cotham Grammar school and then found myself taking PE lessons on Stoke Lodge field as Cotham have the use of the field for their sports facilities.

Cont/d

Since having my own family we have used the field for our children's exercise and leisure and whilst working at Stoke Bishop Primary School we have also used the field on numerous occasions bringing the children over for various outings.

I can honestly say that except for holidays or illness not a day has passed that we haven't walked on the field for one reason or another. This is partly due to the fact that my cottage is one of two which are within the walls of the field and so the front of our home opens straight out onto the field with an access gate straight onto the grass. Both bedrooms and living room look out straight onto the field and are directly in line with Stoke Lodge and its beautiful mature trees.

When my father passed away myself and my husband immediately put in to buy 2 Stoke Lodge Cottage as it was my home but it had also played such a big part in my life that we didn't want to loose it. We were lucky enough to purchase it in 1994.

As I started to get older I wanted to learn a different language and as we were taking holidays in Greece alot I started 3 years of Greek Lessons at Stoke Lodge as well as attending various one off weekend courses which filtered out onto the gardens and field in the summer. I also attended Photography lessons there and had one of my photos of the front of Stoke Lodge published in their brochure in the 1980s.

Obviously living here for over 3 decades and my families involvement with Stoke Lodge, a wooden bench is still dedicated to my father's service in the foyer of the building to this day, any change or prevention of our daily use of the field and its natural beauty would be heart wrenching and a very, very sad loss.

The field has offered me and my family, past and present, leisure, space, natural beauty, wildlife, security and a social life. I have seen many people come and go over 3 decades but have only seen a hand full of trees fall in that same time. I have seen the pavilion set alight and burn and be rebuilt in that time but it is still here, I have seen children play then come back with their children in that time as the field has always remained an open free safe space for people to enjoy and introduce their families to time and time again.

The thing I most value about Stoke Lodge is the large part it has always played in my life and still does. After all this time I can open my window and still hear the foxes calling, the owls hooting or squirrels screeching and breath in the fresh air and have the feeling of being in the country although we are in the middle of a bustling busy town.

To have this taken away from me and my family after all this time would be the equivalent of taking away more than half my life.

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signature: Stannis

Date: 2-2-11

Save Stoke Lodge Parkland - Application for Town Green Registration - Evidence Questionnaire

NAME of Witness
Print

STACEY HARRIS

1	Your address when you used the land being claimed as "Town Green" and edged in red on Map "A"?	21, STROKE LODGE COTTAGES WEST DENE BRISTOL BS9 2BH
2	Your address when you knew the land edged in red on Map "A" was being used by the local inhabitants? If different from 1 above?	As Above
3	Did you sign the map "A" attached to confirm your understanding of the extent of The Land being claimed? As "Town Green" edged in Red? And relates to the evidence	YES
4	Confirm your agreement that the Locality or Neighbourhood is the Political Ward of Stoke Bishop plus parts of Westbury on Trym, Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle. Map "B"	YES
5	Please confirm that you have marked the location of your house on Map "B" with an X.	YES
6	By what name, if any, is The Land edged in red on Map "A" known?	STROKE LODGE
7	Has the land, referred to in question 6, ever been known by any other name? If so what?	STROKE LODGE PLAYING FIELDS
8	For how many years have you known about the Land edged in red on Map "A"?	FROM 1977 TO DATE
9	Between which years did you use the Land edged in red on Map "A"?	FROM 1977 TO DATE
10	Do you consider yourself to be a local inhabitant in respect of the Land edged in red on Map "A"?	YES
11	During the time you have used the Land edged in red on Map "A", has the general pattern of use remained basically the same?	YES

12		What recognisable facilities are available to the local inhabitants of your locality? Please tick all boxes that apply and add any other additional matters not covered	
Local infants school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community centre	Community activities
Local junior school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sports facility	A central feature
Local secondary school		Swimming pool	Scout hut
Residents association	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Library	other STOPS
Neighbourhood watch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Air green space within easy walking	other
Neighbourhood Partnership		Area police	other
Local place of worship		Doctors surgery	other
13	To your knowledge are there any public paths crossing the Land edged in red on Map "A"?		
14	How do you gain access to the Land edged in red on Map "A"?		
15	How do you travel to and from the Land edged in red on Map "A"?		
16	Why do you go on to the Land edged in red on Map "A"?		
17	How often do/did you use the Land edged in red on Map "A"? (apart from use of any public paths on the Land)		
18	What activities do/did you take part in on the Land edged red on Map "A"?		
19	Does your immediate family use the Land edged in red on Map "A"?		
20	If so, for what?		
21	Do you know of any community activities that take place or have taken place on the Land edged in red on Map "A"?		
22	If so please list them and state when and for how long they have taken place?		
23	Do/did you participate in any of them?		

NO

THROUGH MY GATE - DIRECTLY OPENS ONTO FIELD

WALK

Exercise Children play
Walk dog ACCESS

EVERY DAY Children play
Walk Dog ACCESS

YES

Walk dogs Play football
wide SCOTERS

YES - Football

Football - as long as I can remember
Cordon Park School - 2x yearly - Community Coherision

YES - AS TEACHER'S ASSISTANT

24	Do any organisations use the Land edged in red on Map "A" for sports or pastimes? If so, please specify.	Uni sports Football Shire Courts Cricket Keep fit Classes
25	Do any seasonal activities take place on the Land edged in red on Map "A"	Sports.
26	Please tick all the activities that you have seen taking place on the Land edged in red on Map "A"	
	Children playing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Rounders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Drawing and painting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Dog Walking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Team Games (Formal)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Team Games (Informal)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Picking blackberries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Community celebrations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Fetes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Football	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Rugby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Cricket	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Bird watching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Picnicking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Kite flying	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	People walking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Bonfire parties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Bicycle riding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Carol singing	other KEEP FIT
	other	other TV FILMING - WILDLIFE
	other	other JOGGING
	other	other ATHLETICS
	other	other HOT AIR BALLOONING LANDED
27	Do you know the name of the owner of the Land edged in red on Map "A"? And if so please state.	THE COUNCIL
28	Do you know the name of the occupier of the Land edged in red on Map "A"? And if so please state.	COTHAM SCHOOL
29	Has the owner or occupier seen you on the Land edged in red on Map "A"?	YES
30	What did they say? If anything?	NOTHING
31	Was permission ever sought by you for activities on the Land edged in red on Map "A"?	NO
32	If so, from whom and when?	N/A
33	Did anyone ever give you permission to go onto the Land edged in red on Map "A"?	NO BUT I LIVE ON THE LAND
34	If yes, when and for what reason?	N/A
35	Have you ever been prevented from using the Land edged in red on Map "A"?	NO

36	If yes, when and for what reason?	N/A
37	Has any attempt been made by any means to prevent or discourage the use being made of the Land edged in red on Map "A" by local inhabitants?	No
38	If yes, give examples and dates	
39	Are you aware of any signs or notices restricting access to the Land edged in red on Map "A" by local inhabitants?	SIGN AT WEST DENE
40	Do you have any photographs or any other evidence of use of the Land edged in red on Map "A" by local inhabitants?	No
41	Are you willing to allow us to copy them for use as part of our application?	N/A
42	If you have additional information please attach a separate statement? (witness statement etc)	See att'd statement
43	If you have knowledge of others who may be in a position to complete an evidence form, would you please write their names and addresses upon the reverse of this form.	
44	I have carried on the activities referred to in this questionnaire, on the Land edged in red on Map "A", for 34 34 years without anybody trying to stop me and I believe the activity should be treated by the law as having a lawful origin.	
45	I understand that the evidence form I have completed in relation to this application may become public knowledge and I authorise the applicant to disclose this form to anyone reasonably requiring access to this application.	
46	I also understand that this evidence may be presented at a non-statutory inquiry and I authorise the applicant to use this form for that purpose.	
47	Signed	
48	Name	SHARBUS
49	Date	3-2-11

