

Susan Jane Mayer

Brockfields  
68a, Coombe Lane  
Bristol  
BS9 2AY

Housewife/Grandmother

Statement.

I have lived at the above address for more than twenty years having relocated from Kent in August 1990. In the early years I would often take my son to neighbouring city parks that provided children's play equipment, I was fortunate to have access to a car because these play areas lie beyond the walking limits of small children living in Stoke Bishop.

Later, when our dog arrived, we would often take long strolls through Coombe Dingle and up to Blaise along the woodland path that follows the River Hazel/Trym, as well as daily walks across the Downs on the way to school. Nonetheless, I have never walked my dog on Stoke Lodge Parkland.

Over the years, I have attended various meetings on local issues as well as foreign language classes at Stoke Lodge House; I walked to many of these meetings across the field from West Dene or via a friend's garden at the Cheyne Road end of the Parkland.

Some classes, notably Art and Yoga, regularly spill out onto the grounds, particularly during summer months, to take full advantage of the spectacular landscape and peaceful character of the grounds.

The Parkland has been utilised for both formal and informal sport for almost one hundred years; the Butlin Sisters (owner's pre 1947) would allow local children to play there unfettered and took particular delight in regular cricket matches between local teams but this was before my time in Bristol.

In recent years I have used the parkland for picnics, kite-flying and ball games, usually with my young Grand Daughter; during this time I have also witnessed, people walking their dogs, jogging/strolling around the perimeter or simply sitting 'on the logs' to catch the sun.

There is a continuous flow of visitors to the parkland on a daily basis, from early morning, to dusk and beyond and a much-favoured place for local youngsters to have an informal kick about after school.

These diverse traditions, painstakingly documented in a weeklong survey conducted by residents together with a protest picnic-in-the-park (attracting local press and one hundred and fifty locals, August 2010), epitomise opposition to the threatened loss of this treasured parkland; notably, both highly publicized events progressed without comment from BCC or the Grounds men.

I can certainly identify with the community regard for this tranquil open space particularly for those with very young families, the elderly and infirm who rely on this Parkland for moderate exercise and the opportunity to socialise. Equally as the realities of senior life become more apparent to me, the option of local parkland within comfortable walking distance is an increasing priority, particularly now that alternative woodland walks have become unsafe for lone walkers, particularly female (police advice) and all previously Open Green Space in Stoke Bishop is built on.

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

Signature S.J. Mayer. (Mrs)

Date .....26<sup>th</sup> January 2011.....

