

Please acknowledge → AIS

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Claim for a Bridleway along the route from Bridleway No.11 Burnhope Parish to the War Memorial Burnhope

Statement by [redacted] Burnhope.

My name is [redacted] and I live at [redacted] Burnhope. I have lived here for 45 years prior to which I lived in Annfield Plain. I have used the railway line since 1955 on a weekly basis as part of a circular walk for pleasure with my family. We would walk onto the route from the memorial hall or by Footpath No.14 and then walk along as far as Wheatley Hill before leaving the line to loop back around to the village. I rode my motor bike along the route from 1955 until 1980 as a means of reaching South Moor. I would access the road to South Moor from Morrow Edge Road (Bridleway No.10). The last time I walked the route was 5 years ago.

While the opencast took place a fence was erected across the path next to the coal boards maintenance area.. Other people and I did continue to use the route while the opencast took place by simply jumping over the fence that was positioned near the junction with footpath No.14.

I have always used the same route and seen many other people using the path. I have never seen any stiles or gates along the route and have never seen any signs or been told the land is private. I have always perceived that the public had a right of access along the path.

If this went to a public enquiry I would be prepared to give evidence if work commitments permitted alternatively I would be prepared to make a statutory declaration.

This is a correct account of the interview conducted by Audrey Christie and Alastair Semple of Durham County Council on Monday 4th October 2000 at my home.

Signed..... [redacted]

Date..... 20/11/20

COUNTRYSIDE RIGHTS OF WAY	
ACKNOWLEDGED	
DATE	22.11.00
INITIALS	BC

**Claim for a public footpath along the former mineral line
between the War Memorial, Burnhope and footpath 26
Burnhope**

Statement by [REDACTED] Burnhope

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED] Burnhope. I have lived in the village all my life and moved to [REDACTED] from Whitehouse Avenue ten years ago.

I can remember walking along the line as a child in the late 1930s and early 1940s. I would visit my grandfather [REDACTED] hut where the line crossed Holmside Road, and walk along the path by the trackbed. As a teenager I would walk up the line to get to Craghead to play in the brass band. I would walk the line with my father and other musicians to play at South Moor and Craghead. Also during 1945/6 I regularly walked up the line to catch the bus to Tanfield Lea Grammar School to attend evening classes 3 times a week.

The path was a popular walk on Sundays with local mining families, and miners would walk or cycle along the path to get to and from work. A lot of local men also used the line to reach the woods on the right hand side half way up to Wheatley Hill to play pitch and toss. The headmistress of Burnhope School Miss Reid used to take us up the line to get to the park, and we would walk back along the path leading to the Ivy Leaf. I also remember another teacher who lived in South Moor, Miss Kay, who used to walk or cycle along the line every day to get to school.

I did National Service between 1951 and 1953, but came back to Burnhope on leave when I would still sometimes walk up the line. I can remember Mrs Jewitt, who lived at the farm at the top of the line. I continued to walk the path into adulthood, mostly for pleasure but sometimes to get shopping from South Moor or Stanley when there were no buses. I remember during the opencasting a stile and a kissing gate were put in where the path meets the bridleway at Wheatley Hill. There were no other fences and the opencasting did not affect me accessing to the line.

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I still use the path about twice a week, sometimes as part of a circular walk across the fields to Wheatley Hill then down the line to the war memorial, where I take a rest. The route of the line has always been the same. In the early 1990s three boulders were placed on the path to stop motorbikes, but they were moved soon after. The only signs I recall were warning signs where lorries crossed to enter the opencast site. I have never worked for the owner or occupier of the land, and have never been turned back or asked permission to use the path. When the railway track was down the path alongside was a good 3 metres wide. It was a properly laid track made with well compacted mineral material. More recently the track has narrowed a little due to vegetation and trees growing in.

This is a correct account of the information I gave to Audrey Christie and Kevin Telford of Durham County Council on Thursday 4 February 2010.

Signed.....
[Redacted Signature]
Date..... 6/2/2010.....

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**Claim for a public footpath along the former mineral line
between the War Memorial, Burnhope and footpath 26
Burnhope**

Statement by [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] Burnhope

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Burnhope. I moved to Burnhope in August 1960 and specifically to
this house in [REDACTED]. Previously I had lived at [REDACTED] from 1958-60 but
prior to that I did not live locally.

I walked up the line for a few years starting when I first moved to Burnhope
until the early 1970's. I first went up there when my wife and I were courting
and later when we got our Labrador dog from 1970 onwards. On average I
went up there 3 or 4 times a week. I went up to a certain point and back
down, starting out from behind the Chapel. The last time I used it Jackie
Knowles had the land. It had always been a public right of way and he never
stopped anyone. I cannot remember that I ever used the line when the
immediate area was being opencast.

I remember seeing different people walking the line. In particular there was a
preacher woman who I remember seeing coming to Burnhope from Quaking
Houses/South Moor. I also recall being asked more than once by strangers
on the line where the Burnhope Reservoir was. I cannot remember ever
seeing any horses along the line.

There was a farm on the left hand side as you went up from Burnhope and
then another further up on the right hand side. I remember Jackie Knowles'
cows being in the fields next to the line.

When I used it I cannot recall any blockages, anyone being stopped or any
notices up along the line.

This is a correct account of the information I gave to Audrey Christie and
Kevin Telford of Durham County Council on Tuesday 19 January 2010.

Signed..... [REDACTED]

Date..... 23/1/10

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**Claim for a Bridleway along the route from Bridleway No.11 Burnhope Parish
to the War Memorial Burnhope**

Statement by [REDACTED] Burnhope.

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED] Burnhope and have done so since 1979. When I moved to the area I began to walk the above route 2 or 3 times a year between 1979 & 1985 and once in 2000. I did not use the path between 1993 to 1996 but between 1996 and 1999 I rode along the above route at least twice a week to exercise my horse and between 1996 and 2000 I rode my bike along the route usually at least once a month.

I have seen people using the route for walks, bicycle and horse rides. I have never been challenged by anyone for using the route, told the route was private or seen any notices along the route.

Between 1985-1993 while the area was opencast I did not use the route, I had no need to.

Barriers appeared in March 1997 at the junction with FP 14, first metal then wooden and finally boulders. The barriers did not impede my access or other walkers, cyclist or horse riders. There was evidence of motor car and motor bikes using the route (tyre tracks) although I never saw any.

The last time I used the route was on horseback in spring 2000 and access was not impeded. I have since noticed the gates and embankment have appeared and this has now deterred use of the route by horse riders although walkers can still use the stile and are not confronted by the embankment.

If this went to a public enquiry I would be prepared to give evidence if work commitments permitted alternatively I would be prepared to make a statutory declaration.

This is a correct account of the interview conducted by Audrey Christie and Alastair Semple of Durham County Council on Monday 2nd October 2000 at my home.

Signed..... [REDACTED]

Date..... 15 November 2000

**Claim for a Bridleway along the route from Bridleway No.11 Burnhope Parish
to the War Memorial Burnhope**

Statement by [REDACTED] Burnhope.

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED] Burnhope and have done so since 1979. When I moved to the area I began to use the above route 2 or 3 times a year while out walking exploring the local countryside. In 1983 I bought my first horse and began to ride the route as part of circular rides. Between 1983 and 1985 I rode the path about once a week.

Between 1985-1993 the area crossed by the above route was opencast during which time I stabled my horse in Writton Gilbert. I only rode the path once or twice during this time and I do remember that a fence was erected across the line of the path at its junction with footpath 14 and it was not possible to ride it by horse.

From 1993 until August 2000 I rode along the route once or twice a week usually on horseback but occasionally on my bicycle. Metal barriers were erected at the junction with FP 14 in March 1997 and then replaced by wooden ones after being damaged. These were in turn were replaced in April 1997 by stone blocks. These barriers did not impede my access or that of other walkers, cyclists, or horse riders. There was evidence of motor vehicles using the route (tyre tracks), although I never saw any. I did see on two occasions motor bikes using the route.

When I first started using the route in 1979 there was an open gap by the war memorial allowing access along the route. About 5 years later, when the bungalow to the east of the route was built, a stone stile was built at the side of the bungalow. This still left a gap of 10ft along the line of the path.

Until August 2000 access along the path was unimpeded. I was never stopped or told the land was private, never saw any notices along the route suggesting I was not allowed to be there. On at least 50% of the occasions when I used the path I saw other walkers, cyclists and horse riders. At the beginning of August 2000 gates were erected across the southern end of the route. The gates were open on each occasion I approached them except one occasion in early August when they were closed, I am not sure if they were locked or not. When I returned from my holidays in early September 2000, an embankment had appeared across the route on the inside of the gates. The embankment prevented access by horses but did not prevent access on foot over the stone stile.

If this went to a public enquiry I would be prepared to give evidence if work commitments permitted alternatively I would be prepared to make a statutory declaration.

This is a correct account of the interview conducted by Audrey Christie and Alastair Semple of Durham County Council on Monday 2nd October 2000 at my home.

Signed..... [REDACTED]

Date..... 15 November 2000.....

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**Claim for a public footpath along the former mineral line
between the War Memorial, Burnhope and footpath 26
Burnhope**

Statement by [redacted] of [redacted] Burnhope

My name is [redacted] and I live at [redacted] Burnhope. I was born in South Stanley and moved to Burnhope in 1956. I previously lived at [redacted] and [redacted] Burnhope before moving to [redacted] around 1960.

We call the path 'the line'. I first remember using the line when I was transferred to Seaham Colliery and had to walk to South Moor to catch the contract bus service. Between 1964-1970 I used the path every 2 weeks in 4 to get to the bus stop and to get home after being dropped off, both mornings and afternoons depending on what shift I was on.

I also used the line when my family was small. I would go so far up the line with the pushchair then turn left behind the park and down to the Ivy Leaf. I did this during the late 1950s and early 1960s until the children went to school. It was a nice little walk once each week.

I [redacted] years. There was no bus service from Burnhope to South Moor or Craghead, so I walked the path to get to football matches or to catch a bus. I became [redacted] in 1960 and finished in 1992. I mainly used the path in connection with [redacted] mainly during 1960s and 1970s until other transport became available – first buses then cars.

I can't remember the last time I used the path. The farmer Mr Knowles who lived on the bend was still alive when I last used it.

I saw other people using the line walking dogs etc on odd occasions. There were no horses or bikes until much later. People I knew walked the path and I used to meet them regularly. I used to pass the people who owned the cottage at the top of the line when they came down to do their shopping in Burnhope.

The route of the path never changed and there was nothing to climb over. Two people could walk side by side but no more, and it was just wide enough for a pushchair. There were no remnants from the colliery along the line, and I wasn't aware of any signs or notices. I did not work for Mr Knowles. I am not aware of anyone having asked permission to use the path and was never challenged. The path had a hard ash surface and was solid.

This is a correct account of the information I gave to Audrey Christie and Kevin Telford of Durham County Council on Tuesday 19 January 2010.

Signed: [redacted]

Date: [redacted] 24.1.10

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Plan attached → KT
ACC 10-5-10

**Claim for a public footpath along the former mineral line
between the War Memorial, Burnhope and footpath 26
Burnhope**

Statement by [REDACTED] of [REDACTED], Burnhope

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED]
Burnhope. I have lived in the village all my life ([REDACTED] years).

I can remember walking along the line as a child with my father, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Once or twice a year we would use the
track to visit friends who lived in the houses near the top of the line and also in
Craghead. We would walk up the line then along crab apple dyke. I remember
the rails with a path alongside and another at the base of the east
embankment which was used when tubs were running.

I worked at Craghead pit for 15 years between 1951-66, and almost always
used the line to get to and from work, except during heavy snow. A group of
us would walk together, and used the path at all hours depending on what
shift we were working. We would walk up the line to Wheatley Hill then onto
Craghead.

I have walked and cycled along the line for pleasure for most of my life. I
would often (about once each month) use the line as part of a circular route
using other public rights of way in the area. I saw many other people using the
line, including walkers, cyclists and people with pushchairs. I stopped walking
along the line about 14 years ago due to back problems, but still regularly
cycle along it.

I can remember a field gate with a much smaller gate alongside on the line
put in by the farmer Jackie Knowles to stop cattle running up the line when
being loaded onto trucks. The gates were about 30 yards from the road and
were in for about 2 years, but I can't remember exactly when. More recently I
recall a stile and gate being put in next to the memorial, I think to stop horses,
but I'm not sure exactly when.

The route of the line has always been the same. There has never been any fencing across the track, even during the opencasting. I can't specifically remember any signs along the track. I have never worked for the owner or occupier of the land, although I did do favours for Jackie Knowles such as making gate latches and hinges, in return for being allowed to shoot rabbits on his land. I have never been turned back or asked permission to use the path. After the rail line was lifted you could use the full width of the line. It was wide enough to drive a car over and had a good, compact surface made from ash, although more recently the surface has loosened up.

This is a correct account of the information I gave to Audrey Christie and Kevin Telford of Durham County Council on Tuesday 2 March 2010.

Signed.....


Date.....
7/3/10.....

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**Claim for a public footpath along the former mineral line
between the War Memorial, Burnhope and footpath 26
Burnhope**

Statement by [REDACTED], Burnhope

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED] Burnhope. I have lived in the village all my life except for 3 years between 1973 and 1976. However I still returned to the village during that time to visit my mother, and would walk the path regularly.

I first remember walking along the line during Sunday school walks. When I was at junior school and Burnhope colliery was open I regularly walked the line with my uncle to visit the colliery under manager who lived in the house near the top of the line. As a teenager during the 1940s and 50s I was in the Endeavour organisation and would regularly attend the chapel at the foot of the path. We would walk along the path after chapel at least once each month.

I continued to walk along the line regularly well into adulthood for pleasure, exercise and to walk our dogs. I would sometimes walk to the top then turn back, or turn off at the back of the park and down the path to the Ivy Leaf. I would also walk the line to get to the picture halls at South Moor, or to get home after dances from the bus drop off at Craghead. For about 4 years I exercised my children's horse along the line, but have not ridden since. I last walked the path about 10 years ago in my role as a parish councillor.

I saw many other people using the path, and knew most of them. I used to pass the two sisters and the hind from the farm at the top of the track on their way to and from Burnhope. Also workers on the opencast site would use the path. My uncles used to take my children up the path for a walk. The former owner Mr Knowles did not object to people using the path, and it was regularly used by workers to get to and from Craghead, South Moor and Burnhope pits. After Craghead pit closed in 1969 some workers started at the tyre factory in Burnhope, and walked down the line to get there until it closed in 1972 or 1973.

The route of the path has always been the same. I still walked the path during the opencasting. There were railings across the path at the junction with the footpath to Burnhope Flatts Farm, but they did not stop people from walking up the line to Wheateley Hill. The surface of the path was compressed shale like you would get on a railway line. It was well drained and you could easily walk side by side. I remember a kissing gate where the footpath crosses the line about half way up, but it was probably removed when the rails were taken up after the colliery closed. I remember a stile in the brickwork at the chapel end of the path during the 1990s and into the 2000s. There were no signs on the track. I have never worked for any owners or occupiers of the land and never asked permission to use the path.

This is a correct account of the information I gave to Audrey Christie and Kevin Telford of Durham County Council on Wednesday 27 January 2010.

Signed
[Redacted Signature]

Date: 30-1-10

16

**Claim for a public right of way along the route from Bridleway no.11
Burnhope Parish to the War Memorial Burnhope**

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED], Burnhope. I have lived in Burnhope all my life (75 years).

The route in question follows the old mineral line from the war memorial up to the farms, Wheately Hill and Morrow Edge.

I first used the route between the memorial hall up to Morrow Edge when I was at school in the 1930's. I used it with friends and we would often sit down and knit or crochet alongside the path. We would also use the route to walk right through to South Moor to go to the shops and the cinema.

When I had my own children, starting in 1945 I would walk up the line with them, initially when they were babies in prams right through to when they were in their early teens around about 1960. We often played games along the way.

I used to use the route on a weekly basis through out this whole time

After the children grew up and left home I used to walk the route with my husband. We did not walk it quite so often as previously as I had returned to work. We still used it regularly, for pleasure and for walking through to South Moor for the shops right up until the open cast.

I saw lots of people walking along the route, young and old. I did not see any other types of users but walkers.

I did not ever see any signs to suggest the route was private

I had no business reasons for using the route. I just used it to go to the shops or for pleasure

I have only heard of people being stopped recently [REDACTED]

If this was to go to a public enquiry I would be prepared to give evidence. Alternatively I would be prepared to make a Statutory Declaration.

This is a correct account of the interview conducted by Audrey Christie and Alastair Semple of Durham County Council on Friday 17th November 2000

Signed [REDACTED]

Date 25.11.2000

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Please acknowledge → A15

E

Claim for a Bridleway along the route from Bridleway No.11 Burnhope Parish to the War Memorial Burnhope

Statement by [redacted] of [redacted] Witton Gilbert.

My name is [redacted] and I live at [redacted] Witton Gilbert, Durham. I have lived here for 17 years before which I lived in Ouston. I have ridden the path in both directions since 1971 when I rode from a stable at Beamish. The path formed part of a circular route from Beamish through Burnhope and across Waldridge Fell.

I used to ride the full length of the path from the memorial hall up to Bridleway No 10 (Morrow Edge access road) then I rode through a small copse of trees out onto the main road. Prior to 1979 I only rode the route occasionally often to check the route for prior to group horse rides I helped organise, but between 1979 to 1983 I rode the route more frequently. From 1983 to 1985 I rode along the route once a week. While the opencast took place I did continue to use the route, I remember it did not cause me any problems.

After the opencast finished in 1993 the access between Bridleway 11 and Bridleway 10 was blocked off when the landowners changed but I was able to continue using the rest of the path. Due to an injury I have only ridden along the path occasionally over the last several years. I have never been told by anyone that I had no right of access and the only signs I ever saw were white the opencast was taking place. There have never been any stiles or gates along the path. I do remember seeing other people walking along the path and although I never saw any horseriders there were signs i.e. hoof prints on the ground.

If this went to a public enquiry I would be prepared to give evidence if work commitments permitted alternatively I would be prepared to make a statutory declaration.

This is a correct account of the interview conducted by Audrey Christie and Alastair Semple of Durham County Council on Monday 4th October 2000 at my home.

Signed..... [redacted]

Date..... 16/11/2000

20

COUNTY OF DURHAM	
STATEMENT MADE & SIGNED	
DATE	21.11.00
INITIALS	RS

Please acknowledge → A15

B

Claim for a Bridleway along the route from Bridleway No.11 Burnhope Parish to the War Memorial Burnhope

Statement by [redacted] Nr Burnhope

My name is [redacted] and I live at [redacted] Nr Burnhope. I have lived here 14 years and prior to that I lived at Holmeside. In 1976 I began using the route on a weekly basis up until a couple of weeks ago when the gates were fitted across the path near the Memorial hall. Even while the opencast took place I rode the path and took a detour because of a fence across the line of the line and went east to Burnhope Flats farm along FP 14 and then out onto the main road. I have also walked the path a few times each year while out with my dog.

I rode this path for pleasure and it formed part of a circular ride. I often saw people on foot, bicycles and horseback using the path. More recently I did see youngsters using motorbikes on the path. I have never seen any stiles, gates or notices along the path and I have never been told by anyone that the land was private and I have always believed the public had a right of access.

I have always ridden the full length of the path between the Memorial hall and Bridleway 10 until [redacted] farm and fenced off the path between Bridleway 10 and Bridleway 11.

If this went to a public enquiry I would be prepared to give evidence if work commitments permitted alternatively I would be prepared to make a statutory declaration.

This is a correct account of the interview conducted by Audrey Christie and Alastair Semple of Durham County Council on Monday 4th October 2000 at my home.

Signed.....[redacted].....

Date.....14.11.00.....

RECEIVED	
DATE	16.11.00
[Signature]	

**Claim for a public footpath along the former mineral line
between the War Memorial, Burnhope and footpath 26
Burnhope**

Statement by [REDACTED] Annfield Plain

My name is [REDACTED] and I live at [REDACTED] Annfield Plain. I was born in Stanley and have lived at Annfield Plain since 1925. I remember walking along the line as a child in the 1930s. My father used to take me to see Mrs Jewitt who lived at Wheateley Hall farm at the top of the line, and whose brother was a friend of my father. Sometimes we would walk from Annfield Plain to Quaking Houses, then through the fields to New Acres Farm and along the road to the line at Wheateley Hill and onto Burnhope. At other times my father, brother and I would catch the bus to Burnhope then walk up the line and onto Quaking Houses. I can remember the track and the pulley system - the path ran alongside the railway track and was obvious and wide enough for two people to pass. On these occasions we would walk up the line for pleasure, although I can't remember how many times we did this walk.

As a child I can't recall many other people using the path, although we would walk it at weekends and I would think it would have been more used during weekdays by people going to or returning from work.

I have also walked along the line as an adult. I may have done so before I retired in 1980, but I definitely walked it several times during the 1980s whilst checking out [REDACTED] in the area. I had to [REDACTED] on bus routes. I couldn't say how many times I walked the line during this period, but it was always for pleasure. In the 1980s the path was like a 'black path' with an ash and soil surface and bordered by hedges and trees. I stopped doing guided walks in the late 1980s or early 1990s.

I always used the same route and can't remember the opencast workings. I can't recall any signs or obstructions. I have never worked for any owners or occupiers of the land and have never sought permission to use the path. I have never been challenged or heard of anyone being when walking the path.

This is a correct account of the information I gave to Audrey Christie and Kevin Telford of Durham County Council on Monday 1 February 2010.

Signed..... [REDACTED]

Date..... 4/2/10