

32

**Claimed Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road,
Hamsterley Mill**

**Statement by Mr Lawrence Graham of Lintzford Road Hamsterley Mill
NE39 1HG**

My name is Lawrence Graham and I have lived at 53 Lintzford Road since September 1961.

There were fewer houses in the estate at that time. I knew about the link path to the B6310 Burnopfield Road as it was regularly used by local people and by Lord Gort, who would use the path on his way from Hamsterley Hall to the bus stop on the A694.

I first used the path immediately after moving to Lintzford Road in 1961, initially to get to the grounds of Hamsterley Hall and later to access the Derwent Walk. From about 1984 my wife and I began to use the path a lot more often for recreation, as our children had grown up and we had more leisure time. We used the path to visit people on the Parklands Estate and also to access the Derwent Walk.

When I first used the path it had a grass surface. I cannot recall exactly when the flagstones were laid. I am not entirely certain of the date when the steps were installed, but they were probably put in because Lord Gort used the path.

Over the years I have seen many people, including walking groups and cyclists, using the path. I cannot recall the path ever being obstructed, and have never heard from friends or neighbours of anything about the path being closed.

There have never been gates, stiles or signs on the path. I never sought permission from Lord Gort to use the path, and have never been challenged when walking it. I have always used the path for leisure purposes or for visiting people.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Kevin Telford from Durham County Council by telephone on Wednesday 26 September 2012

Signed



Date

1 October 2012

37

**Claimed Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road,
Hamsterley Mill**

**Statement by Dr Michael John Harbinson of Lintzford Road Hamsterley
Mill NE39 1HG**

My name is Michael John Harbinson and I live at 35 Lintzford Road Hamsterley Mill.

I moved to Hamsterley Mill in 1965, and lived at 13 High Hamsterley Road until 1977, when I moved to 35 Lintzford Road. I can recall the footpath to the B6310 Burnopfield road being there when we first moved to Hamsterley Mill, as we used it to get to the Burnopfield road to watch the Parklands Estate being built.

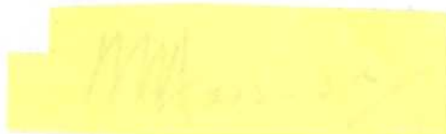
My main use of the path has always been for recreation, and I use it to get to the Derwent Walk, Hamsterley Hall and Pont Burn Woods, and also to visit friends in Parklands. I use the path frequently, sometimes several times each day. The path has always been well used by other people, by both local residents and by people who do not live on the Hamsterley Mill or Parklands Estates.

I do not recall the path ever being obstructed or closed. There have never been gates, stiles or notices on the path. As far as I can remember the steps were on the path when I first started using it in 1965. The flags were put down sometime during the 1980s, and may have been paid for by the Residents Association.

I never sought permission from anyone to use the path, and I have never been challenged when walking it. I have always used the path for leisure purposes or for visiting people.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Kevin Telford from Durham County Council by telephone on Monday 1 October 2012.

Signed

A yellow rectangular box redacting the signature of Dr Michael John Harbinson.

Date

8.10.12.

40

**Claimed Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road,
Hamsterley Mill**

Statement by Mrs Carol Hunt of Tollgate Road Hamsterley Mill NE39 1HF

My name is Carol Hunt and I have lived at 25 Tollgate Road Hamsterley Mill since May 1976.

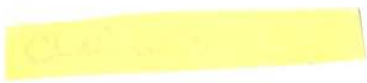
I first used the path between the B6310 Burnopfield Road and High Hamsterley Road in the late 1970s. The bus which brought the children from High Westwood School stopped at the top of the steps. I recall the path having a natural surface with 2 steps leading to the B6310.

In 1984 we acquired a pet dog, and I began to use the path more for recreation, primarily to access the Derwent Walk. At this time I bought an Ordnance Survey map of the area, which clearly shows a route through the estate where the path is. I have since used the path almost on a daily basis to exercise our dog. I consider the path to be public as I have always used it since moving to Hamsterley Mill, and I have seen many other people using it.

I can't recall exactly when the paving slabs were laid, but it may have been sometime during the 1990s. In the time I have used the path it has never been obstructed. There have never been gates, stiles, notices or signs on the path. I have never been stopped from using the path and have never sought permission from anyone to use the path. I have never used the path for business purposes.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Kevin Telford from Durham County Council by telephone on Thursday 4 October 2012.

Signed



Date

18.10.2012.

42

**Claimed Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road,
Hamsterley Mill**

**Statement by Mrs Joyce Hutchinson of Lintzford Road Hamsterley Mill
NE39 1HG**

My name is Joyce Hutchinson and I was born in Hamsterley Colliery. I have lived at 39 Lintzford Road since 4 February 1949, having purchased the land from Lord Gort two years earlier.

There were very few houses when ours was built and apart from the main through road no estate roads as such. I can't remember exactly when the link path to the B6310 Burnopfield Road was first used, but I recall Lord Gort using the path to get to and from Medomsley Church and his house. He would stop to talk to people in the estate on his walks.

I first used the path from the early 1950s when I was a part time teacher at Lanchester School. I used the path to get to the bus which ran between Burnopfield and Lanchester. I would sometimes come home this way, but two or three times a week I would return via Consett. There was no bus stop as such; we just got on and off the bus at the hole in the hedge where the path leaves the road.

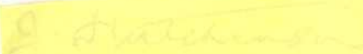
After 1955 I mainly used the path to go on countryside walks to Hamsterley Hall and through the grounds to Dipton. When the railway closed I used the path to get to the Derwent Walk. My son had a milk round he took over from his father-in-law, and for an 18 month period between 1976 and 1978 I also used the path to deliver milk and collect money from the Parklands Estate. During this time I still used the path for recreation. I last used the path in 2009.

The steps were put in on the path by Lord Gort around 1960. Previous to that there was just a slope leading to the road. The Hamsterley Mill Residents Association bought the concrete slabs which were laid on the path by the local Council, but I can't remember the exact date they were laid, or when the handrails were installed next to the steps.

There have never been gates or signs on the path. During the time I used it the path has never been obstructed and always kept open. I never sought permission from Lord Gort to use the path, and have never been challenged when walking it. I have seen many other people using the path over the years.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Audrey Christie and Kevin Telford from Durham County Council at my home on Monday 24th September 2012

Signed



Date

1/10/2012

43

**Claimed Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road,
Hamsterley Mill**

Statement by Mrs Georgina Jack of Parklands Hamsterley Mill NE39 1HH

My name is Georgina Jack and I live at 26 Parklands, Hamsterley Mill.

I first used the path between the B6310 Burnopfield Road and High Hamsterley Road straight after moving to Parklands in 1972. My husband used the path to get to the bus stop on the A694 to catch the bus to Newcastle, and I used it regularly to get to the bus stop and to post letters. On Sundays I also did a recreational circular walk around the estate using the path.

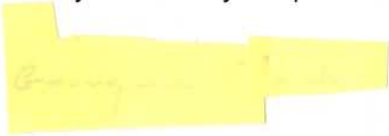
The path as it was when I first started using it is almost exactly the same as it is now. It has always followed the same route and I recall the steps and two handrails being on the path from the time I first started using it. I can't recall exactly when the paving slabs were laid, but they may have been paid for by the Residents Association. I do remember thinking after the flagstones had been laid that the path was in better condition than the Parklands path on the opposite side of the B6310, which had a cinder surface.

I have seen many other people using the path. Since I started using it I cannot recall the path ever being obstructed or overgrown. The path has always been well used as it is the only way to get to the main road through the estate.

There have never been gates, stiles or signs on the path. I never sought permission from anyone to use the path, and have never been challenged when walking it. I have never used the path for business purposes.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Kevin Telford from Durham County Council by telephone on Monday 1 October 2012.

Signed



Date 11.10.12

49

**Claimed Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road,
Hamsterley Mill**

**Statement by Mr James Longrigg of High Hamsterley Road Hamsterley
Mill NE39 1HD**

My name is James Longrigg and I have lived at 4 High Hamsterley Road since September 1966.

I recall the link path to the B6310 Burnopfield Road from the time I moved to Hamsterley Mill. I clearly remember using the path with my wife to get to the field where Parklands was built. I have always considered the path to be for public use, and believe that Lord Gort had prescribed that paths should be provided in the estate. My use of the path is entirely recreational. I use it frequently to get to and from the Derwent Walk, and occasionally to visit friends in Parklands.

I do not know the date when the steps and handrails were put in, but there was open access when we first started using the path in 1966. The flagstones were laid relatively recently. I don't recall exactly when they were laid. In the time I have used the path it has never been blocked and I have always been able to walk it free of hindrance, even before Parklands was built.

I have never seen any notices or signs and there have never been any gates or stiles on the path. I never sought permission to use the path, and have always assumed it was a common right of way. Over the years I have seen many people using the path, both local residents from the estate and people from elsewhere.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Kevin Telford from Durham County Council by telephone on Tuesday 2 October 2012

Signed

Date


17 October 2012

53

Statement by Mrs Audrey Oxley McCormack of Parklands, Hamsterley Mill, NE39 1HH

Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road, Hamsterley Mill

I have lived at my current address since March 1976. Almost immediately after moving in I began to use the path. I have always used it to visit people on the bottom estate and to post letters using the box on the main road (A694). Five years into living here I joined Hamsterley Mill wives where we would meet at someone's house on an evening, often on the bottom estate so I would walk that way. During my time living here I have used the path about once a week.

For a particular period from 1976 to 1984 I used to come home from work by bus 1 day a week and got off on the A694 and walked through to Parklands via the path. I would usually get a lift going to Newcastle.

Since I retired, about 16 years ago, I have also come back from Newcastle on the bus and walked back home via the path. In that time I have also walked more for leisure and have also gone that way to go to Lintzford, walking along the footpath alongside the A694.

My recollection is that the steps and handrail on the path are exactly as they were when I arrived at Hamsterley Mill in 1976. The paving slabs came later but I cannot be sure when. I can recall that prior to them the path could be muddy. There has always been grass on either side of the path.

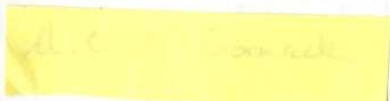
I cannot remember obstacles across the path until in 2012. I have never asked anyone permission to use the path, and have never been challenged or used the path to visit nos 17 or 20 High Hamsterley Road.

When my children were at school, in Newcastle, they used to often come back by bus and walk back home from the bus stop via the footpath. They normally had a lift to school. My son was at school from September 1976 to Summer 1982 and my daughter from September 1979 to Summer 1986. For a period of 3 years my daughter came back by bus every day.

We have always taken the path to be a public right of way. I have never been stopped by anyone saying it's not a public path. I have heard that the steps were put in by Lord Gort for him and the people of the estate to use.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Audrey Christie from Durham County Council by telephone on Monday 17 September 2012

Signed



Date

13th October, 2012.

63

Statement by Mrs Rosemary Morris of Long Close Road, Hamsterley Mill, NE39 1HQ

Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road, Hamsterley Mill

I have lived at my current address since August 1972 until present with a break of about 10 months in 1983/4 when I lived in Canada. For all the time I have lived here I have used the footpath and since 1975 have always had a dog to walk. Until 2007 I walked the path about 4 or 5 times a week and since then once a day, either to walk around Parklands, into the grounds of Hamsterley Hall and certainly since the 1980's to gain access to the Derwent Walk (to the east of Hamsterley Mill).

In my memory there have never been any stiles or gates on the path, nor signs or obstructions until 2012. I am aware that others may remember an obstruction for a short time around 1990 but I never saw anything. I have never asked permission to use the path nor have I ever been challenged by anyone. I have not used the path to visit anyone at nos 17 or 20 High Hamsterley Road. I recall during the 1980s children have sledged there and been asked not to.

I understand that the steps were put in by Lord Gort's then Estate Manager Billy Chapman. Possibly the handrail was put in later by the Residents' Association. I think there was an intention for it to be put in as a road exit on early estate plans but this idea was abandoned. I think that the Residents' Association in conjunction with the Council laid the paving slabs using work experience lads in the mid to late 1980's because it was becoming muddy and this was paid for out of the Residents' Association's funds.

More recently the residents were concerned that some slabs were shifting and lifting up, probably due to nearby tree roots.

The path has been used for a considerable period of time and by everyone on the Estate. I think it was Lord Gort's intention for the path to be used by everyone to gain access to his grounds in nearby Hamsterley Hall which he encouraged and he often used it prior to his death in 1975 to visit people in houses here and gain access to the A694.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Audrey Christie from Durham County Council by telephone on Friday 21st September 2012

Signed

Rosemary Morris

Date

25th September 2012

66

Statement by Dr Roy Nichols of Parklands, Hamsterley Mill, NE39 1HH
Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road, Hamsterley Mill

I have lived at my current address since Christmas 1969. I started using the footpath in 1970 and have continued to do so for a number of reasons. I have walked it to access the bus stop on the A694 (travelling in Newcastle direction), visit people on the bottom estate, use the postbox and when taking a walk down to the Lintzford nursery (now garden centre). Up until 2008 I used the path on average 200 times a year.

Since 2008, due to changes in bus services, I have used the footpath less regularly, but still about 150 times a year.

I have never encountered any obstructions on the path, until 2012, nor seen any signs or notices on or near it. I have never asked anyone permission to use the footpath nor been challenged by anyone.

I can always remember the steps and handrail where the path comes down from the B6310. The paving slabs weren't there when I first knew the path and I think they were put down more than 10 years ago. Previously it had just been grass. The hedge alongside 20 High Hamsterley Rd has always been in the same place but I remember that the garden fence for no 17 was erected about 15 years ago.

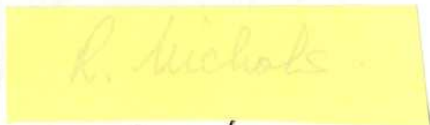
My children used to walk the path every day during term time to access the bus stop on the A694 to go to and from school (in Newcastle) between 1976 and 1985. They were friendly with the children at no 20 High Hamsterley Road between about 1972 and 77 so would use the path to go there, as did I.

My wife has also used the path, and probably more so than I as she was at home when the children were smaller and more regularly uses the facilities in Rowlands Gill by bus.

I can remember when we first moved here that Lord Gort would himself walk the path to visit the estate on a Sunday. I understand that even before we even came here that the residents of the bottom estate walked that way for taking their dogs out. Until recently we had never heard of any objections or problems with using the path.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Audrey Christie from Durham County Council by telephone on Thursday 27 September 2012

Signed



Date

16/10/2012.

68

**Statement by Mrs Irene Oakley of High Hamsterley Rd, Hamsterley Mill,
NE39 1HD**

Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road, Hamsterley Mill

I have lived at my current address since September 1971. I can remember at this time my children were primary school age and we used to regularly go for walks with them that way. We had a particular favourite walk via the footpath, along to the Derwent Walk, passing the old Lintzford ink works and back up the main road home. We'd also sometimes walk onto Lord Gort's land (Hamsterley Hall) via the footpath as well as going blackberrying during September and October. I had friends in Parklands that I would walk to via the footpath. I would say that in that time, up until the mid 1980's when my children left home, I used the path a couple of times a month.

After the mid 1980's I still used the path, but less frequently, about once every 2 months. I would often go walking by myself at weekends, leaving the estate that way.

I last walked the path about 2 years ago.

I can remember that when my children were primary school age they tobogganed down the footpath and the owner of 20 High Hamsterley Road ~~had~~ complained that it was making the footpath too ~~muddy~~ *muddy, slippery*.

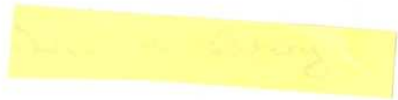
I have never seen any obstructions across the path nor any signs or notices. I never asked anyone for permission to use it.

I can always remember there being steps and a handrail but the paving slabs came later. I don't know when they were put down.

Everyone's always regarded the path to be a public right of way and it's been used by residents and people from outside the village.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Audrey Christie from Durham County Council at my home on Thursday 27 September 2012

Signed



Date

21/10/2012.

89

Statement by Mr David Turner, Parklands, Hamsterley Mill, NE39 1HH
Footpath between B6310 and High Hamsterley Road, Hamsterley Mill

I have lived at my current address in Parklands since 1 April 1978 and used the path from this time onwards.

I have walked the path in order to gain access to the bus stops on the A694 when going to Newcastle, Consett and Shotley Bridge. I've also used it to visit friends on the Hamsterley Mill Estate, to go to the post box on the A694 and when going on leisure walks. One of our favourite walks is to go down the Derwent Walk, along to Lintzford, back along the A694, through the Hamsterley Estate and via the footpath back up to Parklands. I have on average used the path about 100 times a year and about 80% of my use has been in getting to the bus stop and walks.

The steps and hand rail have been in place for as long as I can remember. The paving slabs are more recent and I remember prior to this that the path was an earth surface that could get quite rough. I don't know exactly when the slabs were laid but it could be about 30 years ago.

I cannot recall there ever being any obstructions to the path until 2012. Similarly I have never seen any signs or notices on the path.

When you descend the steps you are surrounded by scrubby bushes but the path then crosses a grassed area which I cannot remember ever being overgrown. I have always assumed land on either side of the path to be no man's land.

We have never asked anyone permission to use the footpath and no one to my knowledge has ever been stopped from using it.

The path is important as we don't have any pavements along the B6310 and we don't want to trample along wet road verges. The road is dangerous and my wife broke her ankle slipping on the verge when the path was shut in 2012.

My wife has used the path as much as me from 1978 to 2012 as access to the bus stops and during walks

Everyone has just used the path as if it was a public right of way. I wasn't aware that the land was private until it was closed off in 2012.

I state that this correctly describes the information I gave to Audrey Christie from Durham County Council at my home on Wednesday 3 October 2012

Signed David R Turner

Date 3rd October 2012

