

**THE LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT OF
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

**PUBLIC FOOTPATH FROM BANKS ROAD TO STATION ROAD, NORTH MEOLS,
WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH (DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION) ORDER
2014**


**WITNESS STATEMENT OF
JOANNE PEET**

1. My name is Joanne Peet and I live in Freckleton, Lancashire but I grew up in Banks during the 1980s and 1990s.
2. From 1978 I lived with my family on Station Road in Banks. This is close to the Sluice Path at point I on the Order Plan.
3. I believe I first started walking along the Sluice Path from around the age of about 4 years on recreational walks with my family. We regularly used it as part of a circular walking route. From home, we walked up the sluice (from point I to point A), crossed over Banks Road and on to the track that heads towards the enclosed marsh. We walked past the pond on the right, sometimes stopping there to play, then we walked on to Charnley's Lane and turned right to head home down Vicarage Lane and Hoole Lane. We did this at the weekend and during the evenings in spring and summer.
4. My Mum did not drive so we relied on buses to take us to town (Southport). We used the Sluice Path most Saturdays to get to the bus stop outside the Plough pub on the coast road/Water Lane roundabout. The Plough is no longer there anymore as it's been demolished for houses. We used the Sluice Path as a cut through to the Plough as it meant we avoided walking along the busy bypass (Water Lane) with its narrow pavement. We did this from me being aged 4 to about 11 (i.e. 1982-89).

5. My sister's friend had a pony called Star which was stabled on Station Road and which she would ride along the Sluice Path. When I was about 8 years old I used to accompany my sister and her friend on foot whilst they took the horse out along the Sluice Path. I did this about once a week in the summer for a couple of years.
6. As I got older I used the Sluice Path independently with friends. I used it to get to the pond where we played with fishing nets. We also used the Sluice Path as a place to hang out. Some children used to hang out at the pavilion but my friends and I often met on the Sluice Path.
7. I was stopped from using the Sluice Path by the erection of a fence across the Path on Banks Road (point A). I can't remember when this was but it had happened before I left home in 2000 and I recall having a discussion with my Mum when I was at college in Southport about getting the bus to College and she suggested that I walk to the bus stop via the Sluice Path. I recall saying that I couldn't walk that way anymore because of the fence. I was at college between 1995 and 1997.
8. During the years I was using the Sluice Path I did see the odd person using it at the same time, such as dog walkers and other people on foot.
9. There were never any signs on the Sluice Path prior to it being blocked indicating that it was private land or that it shouldn't be used by the public.
10. I never asked for permission to use the Sluice Path; I wouldn't have known who to ask. It was just a given that this was a path open to the public.
11. I was never challenged when using the Sluice Path.
12. I have never been employed by any of the owners of the land crossed by the Sluice Path.
13. In summary, I used the full length of the Sluice Path on foot from around 1982 to the mid to late 1990s.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

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

Signed: 

Date: 21st May 2020