

Ropley Parish Council response – Webb Lane application November 2022

Ref: CR/652 Ropley

Section 53, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

Application for a Map Modification Order to record a restricted byway and record part of footpath 25 as a restricted byway

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/rightsofway/definitivemap/registerofapplications/add-restricted-byway-and-record-part-of-footpath-25-as-restricted-byway>

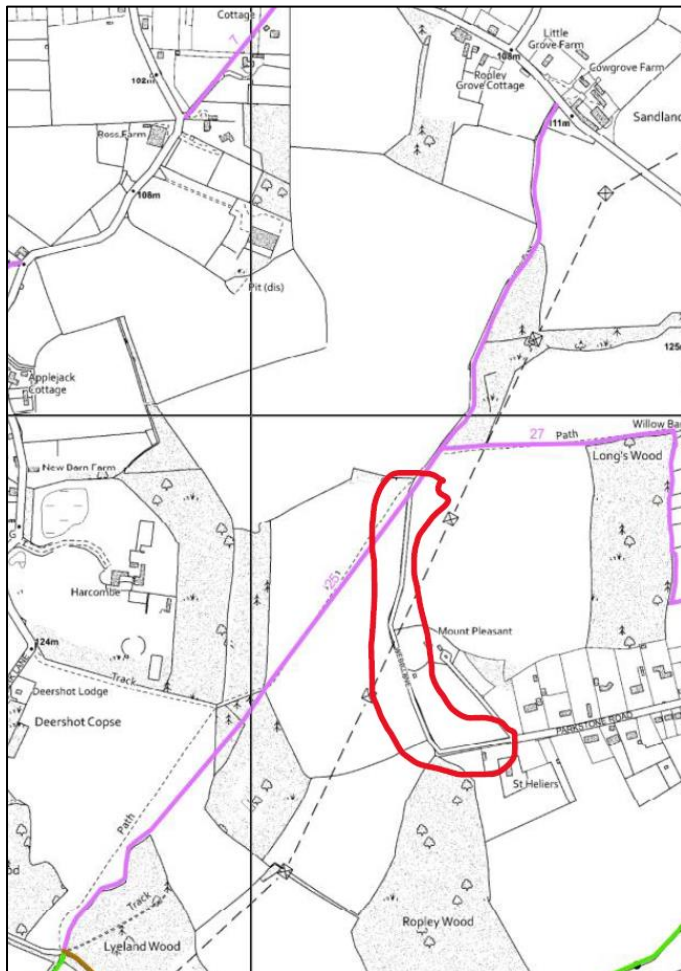
Introduction

Hampshire County Council sent Ropley Parish Council an email on 26 October 2022, regarding the above application. They requested evidence or comments from the Parish Council regarding how the route has been used and managed over the years.

Currently the upper half of Webb Lane is not recorded as a right of way, although it has been used regularly for walking, horse riding and cycling for many years (figure 1).

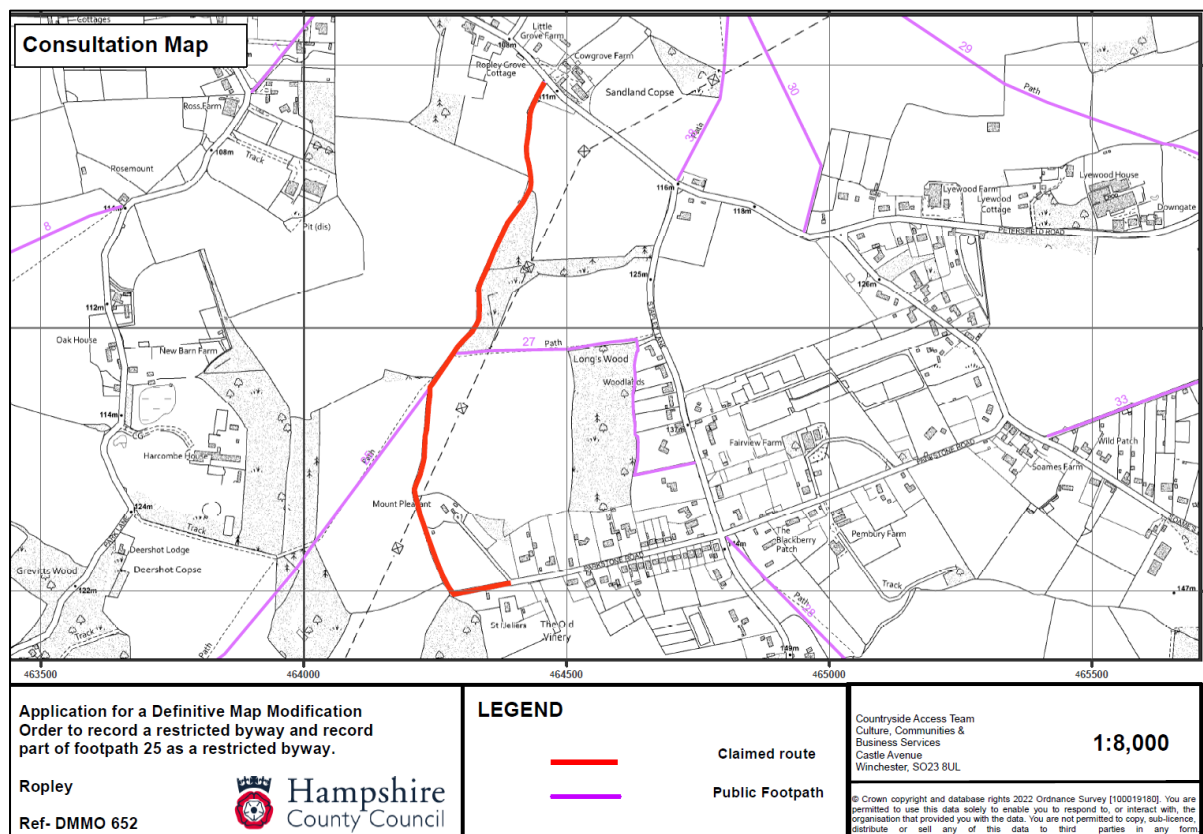
Figure 1 Current right of way for Webb Lane

Currently the second half of Webb Lane marked within the red area below is not recorded as a right of way.



The application, made by the British Horse Society in 2008, is for the whole of the route marked in red in figure 2 to be recorded as a right of way as a restricted byway¹.

Figure 2 Claimed route in application



Online survey

Ropley Parish Council used an online survey from 5 – 21 November to seek the views of local residents. 118 people completed the survey. The survey questions and analysis are included in the appendix.

¹ HCC definition of a restricted byway: for walking, cycling, horse riding and horse drawn carriages (or other non-motorised vehicles)

Key points from Ropley Parish Council

Ropley Parish Council fully supports the application for the whole route marked in red in figure 2 to be recorded as a right of way.

Our survey results demonstrate that the whole route has been used for walking, horse riding and cycling for many years (see appendix). In addition the long-established community Boxing Day walk uses the route every other year, involving between 250 to 350 people.

However, our view is that the route marked in red in figure 2 should be designated as a bridleway², not a restricted byway, for the following reasons:

- There is no evidence of the route being used by horse-drawn carriages.
- It would not be possible to use a horse-drawn carriage at the Parkstone Road end of the route as the path is heavily rutted.
- The survey responses show that local residents use the route as a safe link between the centre of Ropley and the Parkstone Road area of Ropley for walking, cycling and horse riding, avoiding the busy Petersfield Road. This includes children going to the primary school.
- Local residents are concerned that if the route is recorded as a restricted byway, this could encourage motor bikes to use the route, even though it would be illegal.

We note the short amount of time given for Ropley Parish Council and others to comment on the application (just over a month). We would ask that if Hampshire County Council has not had a response from all interested parties by the deadline of 30 November 2022, they should extend the deadline.

Any queries about this report should be addressed to either:

Councillor Catherine Mitchell cmitchell@ropleyipc.org

Ropley Parish Clerk clerk@ropleyipc.org

² HCC definition of a bridleway: for walking, horse riding and cycling

Appendix – survey results

Ropley Parish Council invited residents to complete an online survey between 5 – 21 November 2022.

Survey questions

The survey questions were:

Q1. What is your name?

Q2. What is your address?

Q3. Do you use Webb Lane on foot?

Q4. If you use Webb Lane on foot, when did you first use it?

Q5. If you use Webb Lane on foot, how often do you use it?

Q6. Do you use Webb Lane on horseback?

Q7. If you use Webb Lane on horseback, when did you first use it?

Q8. If you use Webb Lane on horseback, how often do you use it?

Q9. Do you use Webb Lane on bicycle?

Q10. If you use Webb Lane on bicycle, when did you first use it?

Q11. If you use Webb Lane on bicycle , how often do you use it?

Q12. Do you have any comments?

Publicising the survey

The survey was publicised in the following ways:

- Ropley village website
- Ropley News and Community Hub (private Facebook group)
- Three posters, one on the Parish Council noticeboard, and one each end of Webb Lane
- Ropley Society email to 320 members of the Ropley Society.

Survey results

The survey had a high-level of response with 118 people completing the survey within tight timescales. The results show that the Webb Lane has been used by local residents over many years. Analysis of the results is shown below.

Evidence of use of Webb Lane by people on foot

All 118 people who completed the survey use Webb Lane on foot.

42% have used it for more than 20 years and 75% use it at least once a month (figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3 If you use Webb Lane on foot, when did you first use it?

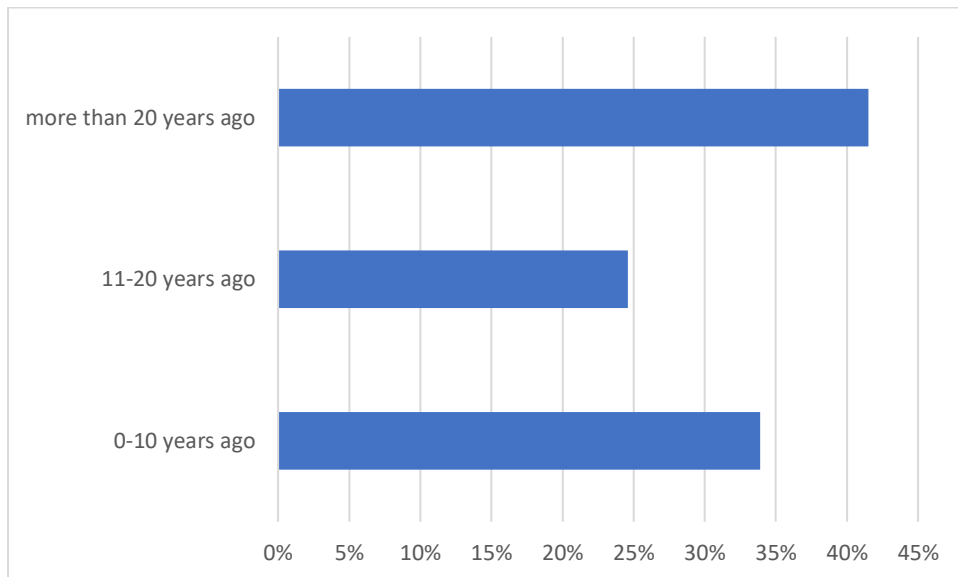
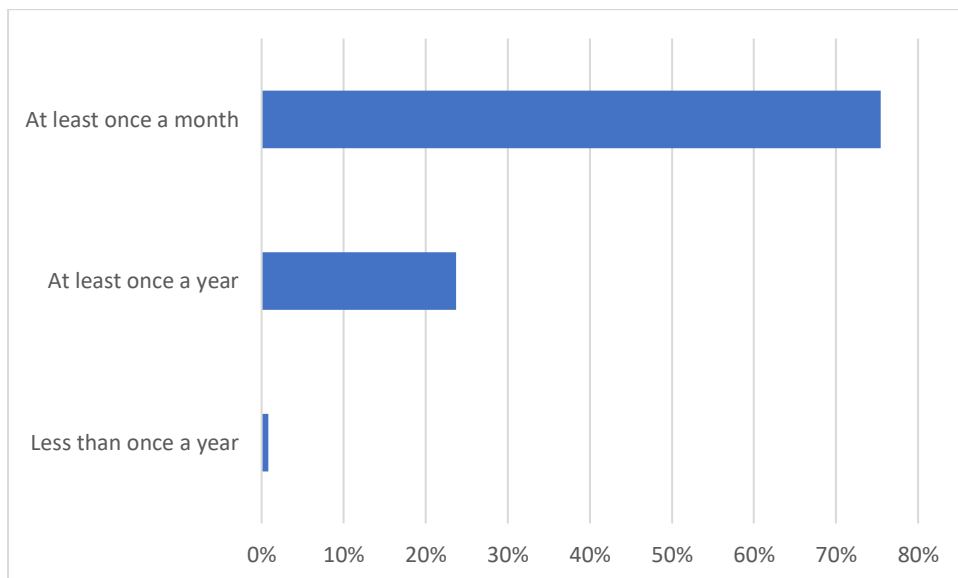


Figure 4 If you use Webb Lane on foot, how often do you use it?



Evidence of use of Webb Lane by horse riders

11 people stated that they use Webb Lane on horseback. The majority have been using Webb Lane for at least 11 years, and 10 people use it at least once a year (figures 5 and 6).

Figure 5 *If you use Webb Lane on horseback, when did you first use it?*

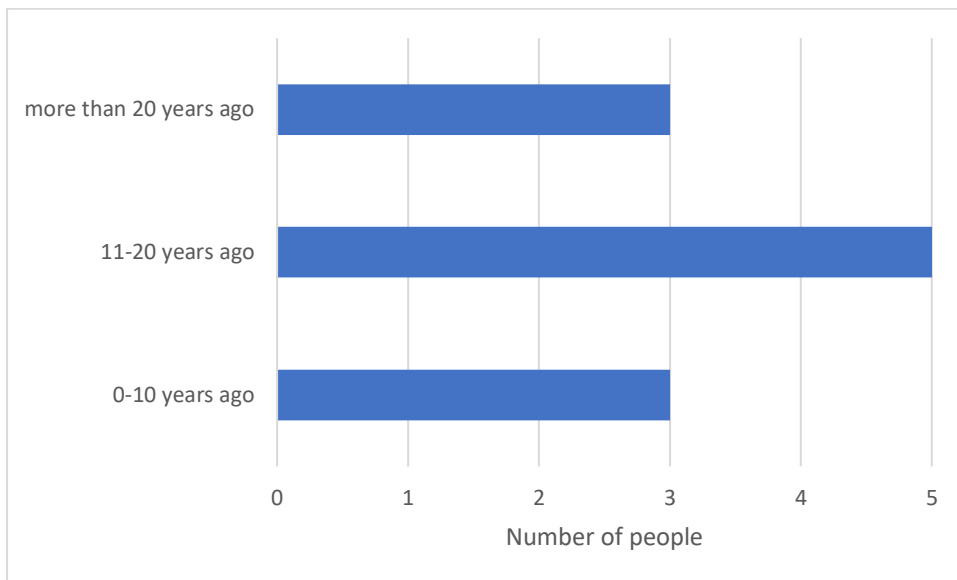
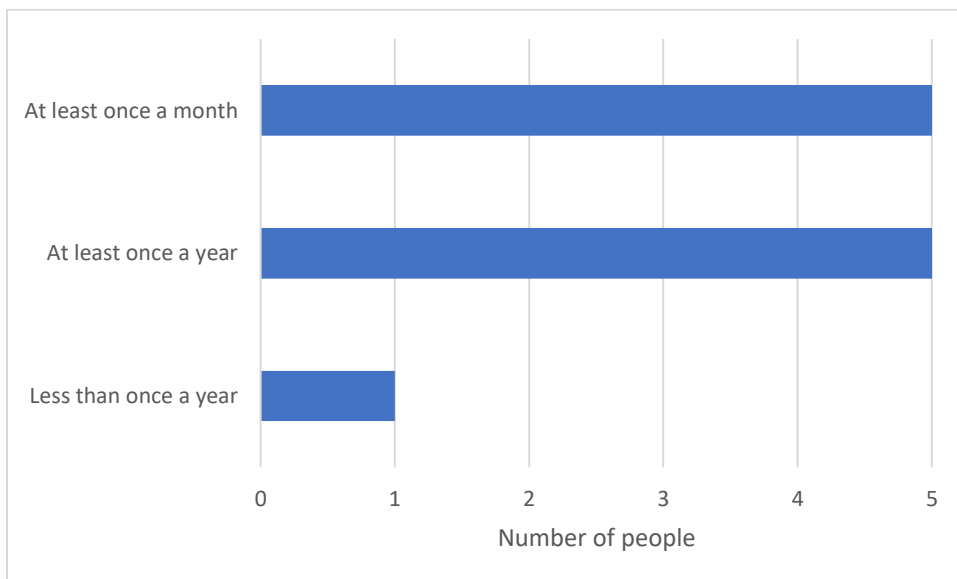


Figure 6 *If you use Webb Lane on horseback, how often do you use it?*



Evidence of use of Webb Lane by people on a bicycle

29 people stated that they use Webb Lane on a bicycle. Over half have used Webb Lane for more than 10 years, and 90% use it at least once a year (figures 7 and 8).

Figure 7 *If you use Webb Lane on a bicycle, when did you first use it?*

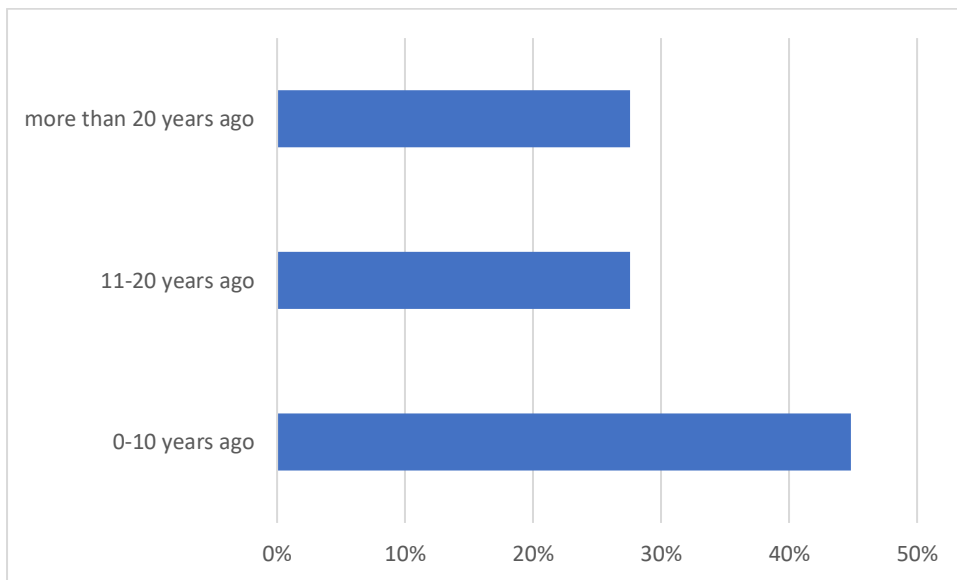
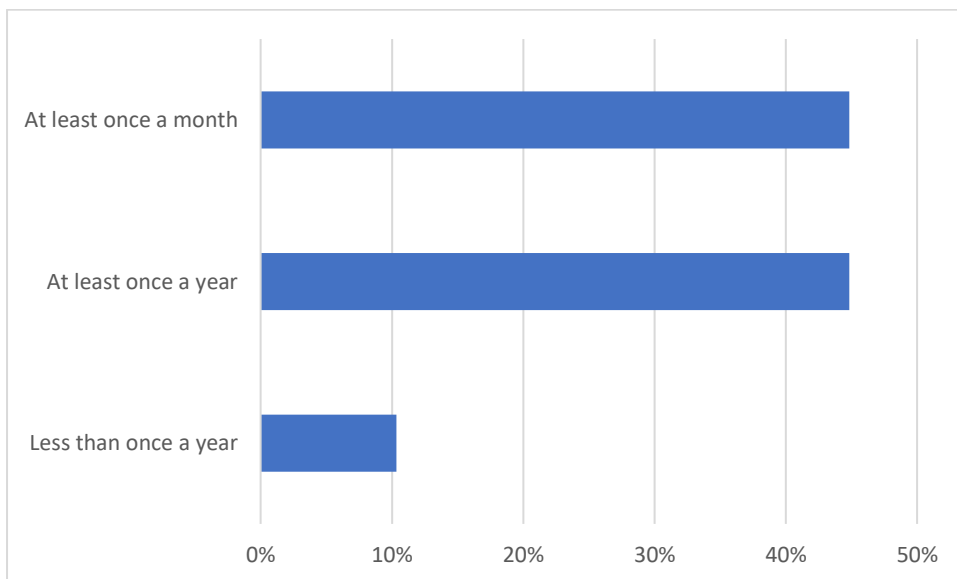


Figure 8 *If you use Webb Lane on a bicycle, how often do you use it?*



Comments

The survey asked if respondents had any comments to make.

25 people referred to the importance of Webb Lane providing a safe link between the centre of the village and the Parkstone Road area of Ropley (figure 9).

Figure 9 Comments about Webb Lane providing a safe link between the centre of Ropley and the Parkstone Road area of Ropley

It's clear that Webb Lane has been a lane used by the public over many decades. It is also an important safe route for residents of Parkstone Rd to walk into the centre of Ropley
Webb lane is frequently used by my teenage children to walk / cycle into the centre of the village, which avoids them having to walk / cycle along a particularly nasty stretch of Petersfield Road.
I walk along the full length of Webb Lane several times a week to access the other footpaths, bridleways and byways in Ropley Parish . It forms an important traffic-free route that enables my wife and I to walk extensively within the parish.
This is a critical walking and running path connecting the West Tisted side of Ropley with the heart of the village
There are very few off-road tracks for horse-riders in Ropley. Webb Lane is a vital link for riders to access other bridleways without having to use the busy Petersfield Road
This lane, apart from being of historical interest, is essential for the children and other residents get safely to the rest of the village. It is a very good safe link right through to West Tisted also and popular for walkers and horse riders.
Have used Webb Lane for many many years. Used to walk children to school , over 55 years ago
Having lived in St Heliers, Parkstone Road, over 65 years ago and used Webb Lane daily walking to Ropley school, now with my dogs, it would be such a shame to lose something that has been part of my life for so long.
I use Webb Lane at least once a week and it is an important walking connection for me to the village.
I use Webb Lane regularly, often several times a week for exercise and for accessing a wide number of other local footpaths.
It is important to retain the integrity of the whole of Webb Lane, for all users. It acts as a spine route for many other walks in the area.
It would be a great pity to lose this footpath, giving as it does, an option for waking the area away from busy roads.
It's a great, safe link to lots of different walks/routes away from the road
Safer and more peaceful to walk down Webb Lane than go Stapley Lane and Petersfield Rd
The proposed route is essential for connection to rights of way from the Petersfield Road
Webb Lane is a valuable and much used footpath, useful both for recreational walking and riding, and for pedestrian access from Parkstone Road to the centre of the village.
This is a valuable route well away from traffic.
This Lane is also a good and safe link to reach Ropley village and back again, avoiding the increasingly busy Stapley Lane.
Using Webb Lane enables me to walk a circular route from Monkwood and across the Petersfield Road in Ropley.
Very useful path to avoid main road traffic on Petersfield Riad

Webb Lane provides vital access by foot to the countryside to the south of Ropley. Without it, I would make many more car journeys.
Webb Lane provides cyclists turning right from Petersfield Road up Stapley lane a far safer route to Parkstone road than turning right at the dangerous junction with Stapley Lane.
Webb Lane is a good link to other footpaths.
Webb lane is a safer alternative to Petersfield road. It should be made a public right to walk along.
Webb Lane makes an ideal place to cross when walking from the centre of the village, across the Petersfield Road to access the South Downs and the beautiful scenery surrounding our village.

Figure 11 lists other comments made by respondents.

Figure 11 Other comments

Gets very muddy in wet weather
Great to see this happening
Have you also considered the PROW status of Parkstone Road from Stapley Lane junction to Webb Lane?
I have been using Webb Lane for 56 years and use this route every day
I have been using Webb Lane for 56 years walking riding horses, and building camps as a child.
I have been walking my dog down Webb Lane for four years since my son has been attending Ropley School. It's a lovely route.
I lived on Parkstone road for 34 years since 1976. We always walked up and down the whole route to and from our house also riding our pony and donkey
I moved in to Ropley more than twenty two years ago and have walked my dog regularly there usually at least once a week
I support the application
I think I have only walked it on Boxing Day Walks.
I use it regularly
I use Webb Lane about 4 times a week.
I use Webb Lane at least 4 times a week to walk my dog.
I use Webb Lane between once and twice a week/ between four and eight times a month.
I use Webb Lane several times a week
I walk along Webb Lane a few times a week and would be most upset not to be able to do my favourite round walk. It's a much used route
I walk at least three times per week up and down the length of Webb lane.
I would like the right of way maintained
I would love it to be made a public right of way
I've used Webb Lane regularly since moving to current home 16 years ago. I always presumed it was a public footpath.
It is a lovely quiet track between fields ideal for dog walking or a simple walk in the countryside.
It used by lots of people and I understand it was accidentally left of the list
It's a very useful and enjoyable lane but often gets blocked by fallen trees and bushes

<p>Most of us were unaware that Webb Lane was not a public right of way. Those of us who live nearby have been using it for many years, in our case over 45. There has never to my knowledge been any attempt to block it off.</p>
<p>My parents live in Parkstone Road and every time we visit we go for a walk along Webb Lane.</p>
<p>My wife remembers farm vehicles being driven up and down Webb Lane. Her parents have lived in Parkstone road over 60 years</p>
<p>One of my favourite walks</p>
<p>Please keep it open</p>
<p>Should be a public right of way - assumed it was.</p>
<p>The upper part of Webb Lane track as marked in Red is the part of the track most used by me on our regular dog walk.</p>
<p>There are 4 of us in this household and we all use the lane as described above</p>
<p>This is a beautiful walk giving great access to other paths and lovely countryside and I fully support this application.</p>
<p>This is part of our regular dog walk</p>
<p>This is such a beautiful walk and very quiet-everyone I meet on this walk is very respectful of the area. I would be really disappointed if I could no longer walk here.</p>
<p>We walk along Webb Lane quite often. It can be a bit muddy but still a lovely walk.</p>
<p>Webb Lane has become overgrown in places over the years. It does need better maintenance to keep it attractive for all users.</p>
<p>Webb Lane is a lovely and important walk way, and even though I have now moved to Four Marks I continue to like to use it for walking</p>
<p>Webb Lane is a used by many pedestrians and horse riders very frequently and has been throughout the time we have lived in Ropley.</p>
<p>Webb lane is a very well used pathway for walkers and riders in the 23 years we have lived locally. Any access to motorised vehicles would ruin it! Official access for walkers, riders and horse drawn vehicles would be wonderful. We walk it many times a week!</p>
<p>Webb Lane is a well-used path which should become a public right of way.</p>