

PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF:

Gary Dennis John

Title of Order:

S53 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981
Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way for Gloucestershire
(Additional Length of Footpath at Witcombe Farm)
(Parish of Great Witcombe) Order 2009

Planning Inspectorate Reference:

ROW/3354782
Public Inquiry: 6 October 2026

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Gary Dennis John.
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. I have known the claimed route for over 50 years.

I wish to state to this Public Inquiry that...

5. [REDACTED] for over 20 years. From 1984 to 1987 I was living in Bristol, returning very regularly to visit my parents still living in Boverton Drive. In 1987 I returned to [REDACTED] until we moved to our current address in June 1995.
6. I have known this route for over 50 years; I was introduced to the route by my mother. She had worked at the shop in Witcombe and would always go out walking during her lunch break. I was at [REDACTED] and virtually all of my friends lived in Cranham.

There was a lot more to be done in Cranham than Brockworth, I would regularly walk up

7. The Black Horse pub was a very regular destination; the landlord Ray was not concerned to check customer's age. From 1976 onwards myself and [REDACTED] could very regularly take this route up to the Black Horse, I have said twice a week but in practice it was probably more. We were both very fit and could get up to the pub very quickly, this also served the purpose of walking our respective dogs. Mine being a border collie needed lots of exercise.
8. This frequency of visits continued for 3 or 4 years until Nick finally went off to University. During this same period, I took this route with various girlfriends and the dog.
9. 1984 to 1987 would have been infrequent, if at all.
10. Once we returned to Brockworth in 1987 I took my wife and children in a push chair down the same route. We didn't head up to the woods until one daughter was old enough to walk and the other was carried in a baby carrier (like a rucksack).
11. Having moved to Cranham in 1995 the frequency of travelling the route dropped dramatically, but we did still use the route. We walked down to visit the Gilbert family on several occasions and with another Cranham couple walked to the Roman Villa and then down through the reservoirs to go through to the twelve bells pub.
12. I have used the path in question for approximately 20 years and was shocked to hear there was a claim it wasn't a right of way. I have never had any issues with taking this path.
13. On rare occasions there were farm gates pulled across the road which were obviously to prevent the cattle from setting off down the road. On each occasion we waited patiently until they had completed the move. We always chatted with the farm staff; they were always friendly and grateful that we had been considerate. There was never any mention or suggestion that the route was considered restricted.
14. I do not know any of their names and they would not know me by name, they may recognize someone familiar having been such a regular visitor. I am aware that

comments have been made about how they have never seen me, this is such desperate rubbish given that they don't know me.

15. I am not related to or have ever worked for the land owner.
16. I have travelled the route at all times of day and night, week days were early evening and late-night return. Weekends tended to be around lunchtime, returning in the evening.
17. With such a long time since regular use I cannot recall if there were any styles etc. at the far end of the reservoirs furthest from the farm. What I am certain of is that I never went over locked gates etc.
18. The majority of my use of the path was from 1975 to 1984, during this period I was seen dozens of times using the path by the farm staff, if that includes the land owner I wouldn't know. What I am certain of is that if they had objections, they had numerous opportunities to state this, that never happened. The interactions were always friendly and considerate, if they had a concern the nature of the interaction would have left them confident to raise.
19. To me it seems like the Landowner is trying to re-write history to serve their view, trouble is history is established.
20. The above is a true and honest account of my recollections regarding the pathway through Witcombe Reservoirs over a long period of time.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the facts I have stated are true and correct.

Signed:



Date:

12TH AUGUST 2026