

**OBJECTION TO THE PROPOSED REVISED APPLICATION TO RE-ROUTE  
SMAN13 FOOTPATH IN SUTTON MANDEVILLE, WILTSHIRE**

**From:** Sarah Beddington, Sutton Mandeville resident and documentary filmmaker

**To:** Ali Roberts and the Definitive Map and Highway Records Team of Wiltshire Council

10/06/2025

Dear Ali Roberts and Team,

Having objected to the first application to re-route footpath SMAN13 in Sutton Mandeville, I wish to object again to this second, revised version.

The revised proposal to re-route the original footpath, while now keeping to the holloway through the wood, will still alter the path's direct and meaningful connection between the fields above the escarpment and the centre of the village. The applicants wish walkers to loop away from their newly constructed swimming pool, tennis court and house extension, leading us on a meaningless detour close to unsightly solar panels set up to heat their private pool.

As I stated previously, the owners of the Homestead must have known when they bought the property the positioning of the public footpath, adjacent to their house and garden, yet they inexplicably ripped out the dense and biodiverse hedge that had previously screened them and their new developments from public view. Why is it only now, with their alterations almost complete, that they wish to change the route of the local community's right of way?

The Homestead is a second home and the owners are often absent from the property so why should the multiple permanent residents of the village who use this footpath regularly be forced to alter their ways purely for the benefit of a single household that is often elsewhere?

SMAN13 once linked the cornfields below the downs to Sutton Mandeville Mill on the River Nadder, by way of the deeply worn holloway through the wooded escarpment and then past the Homestead and the church – a route along which cartloads of corn were taken to be milled into flour and the same route which we still use today.

While the historicity of this footpath has been dismissed as irrelevant in planning terms, I would strongly beg to differ – as it seems does Wiltshire Council itself. Together with other participants, including the National Trust, Salisbury Museum and the Wessex Rivers Trust, **Wiltshire Council** is named as a partner in Cranborne Chase National Landscape's [The Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme](#) with funding from the National Lottery, Natural England and Historic England and South West Wiltshire Area Board (**Wiltshire Council**), among others.

Their mission statement says:

***"There have always been historical, natural and social links between the valley and the Chase downland, and the Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership explores and reinforces these links..."***

This partnership is still involved in improving and alerting the community to:

### **ANCIENT WAYS**

***“The Chase & Chalke landscape area is criss-crossed by paths, many of them ancient ways... In centuries past these were the main routes between settlements, the way the rural economy functioned before the coming of the motorcar and the roads we use today.”***

And under **KEY ISSUES** in 'Cranborne Chase Landscape Partnership Plan's 2025 - 2030 Future Vision', of which **Wiltshire Council** is also a partner, page 12 of their PDF states:

### **“Historic and Cultural Heritage**

**7.1. *The way the land has been used over the centuries has influenced the character of the landscapes we see around us today.***

***The remnants and artefacts of working life, together with the layout of settlements, routeways, and buildings, contribute to the historic character of an area.***

How does it add up for Wiltshire Council to commit to protecting the “**historic character**” of this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and “**the layout of...routeways**” on the one hand, only to dismiss the historicity of an ancient footpath as irrelevant on the other?

And what sort of precedent is set if public routeways can be changed on the whim of a singular and often absent second home owner, unhappy with their self-inflicted situation, in contravention to the wishes of the majority permanent residential community who wish their footpath to stay in its centuries old position?

Yours sincerely,  
Sarah Beddington