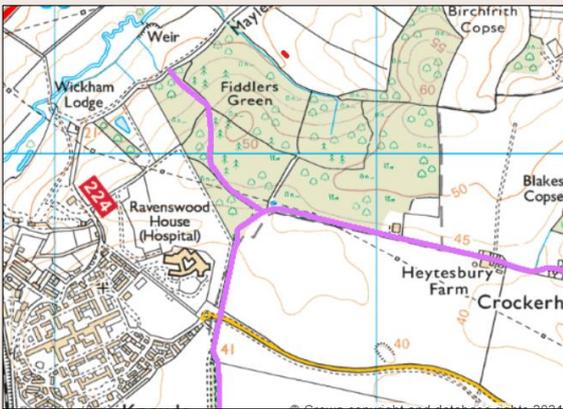




## Dashwood - new signs and protection works. Public footpaths remain open



Dashwood is a large private woodland with public access via two official footpaths (marked in pink above).

The woodland has a mix of areas including designated Ancient Woodland, bluebell woods and managed forest. On-going monitoring is carried out to ensure public safety is maintained and the special woodland environment is protected.

In recent months there has been increased footfall into the private areas of the woodland, beyond the vicinity of the public footpaths, with fences damaged or taken down and private signs removed. Necessary forestry works are often undertaken within the woodland and therefore it is important members of the public keep to the official footpaths to maintain their safety. New 'private' signs have recently been installed and fences re-instated at selected locations to show more clearly the public footpaths from the private areas.

In addition, part of the private woodland at Dashwood has been significantly altered, without permission, to create larger bike jumps – causing environmental damage and creating a health and safety liability. The level of construction was in stark contrast to the previous landscape and as permission had not been sought to undertake these extended works or to bring materials into the woodland (as below), the area has been levelled to restore the woodland and to protect people's safety.

The interest in biking is welcome but it needs to be carried out in an appropriate place. There is a shared responsibility to ensure that this is done properly and safely, and not in the vicinity of Ancient Woodland. We would be open to conversations to look at the potential to



provide bike trails and jump facilities elsewhere at Welborne in the future.

Dashwood forms part of the natural green space provision for Welborne with plans for a new 2.8km circular within the woodland that will provide much wider access than currently available. This new public path will come forward with the first phase of Welborne around 2022-2023. In the meantime, it is important to manage and maintain the health of Dashwood to allow the sustainable future use of this valued natural local resource.

For more information on existing public footpaths at Welborne, please visit <https://maps.hants.gov.uk/rightsofwaydefinitivemap/>



*Bluebells in Dashwood*