

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 20th April 2016 at 9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

PRESENT:	Mr Dominic May	Official Verderer
	Mr R Deakin	Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman
	Mr A B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr J Greenwood	Elected Verderer
	Mr E Heron	National Park Appointed Verderer
	Mr G M H Mills	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss Justine Bayley	Acting Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr Jonathan Gerrelli	Head Agister
APOLOGIES:	Miss D Macnair MBE	Senior Elected Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2016/8572 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of Court held on 16th March were approved and signed.

2016/8573 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Official Verderer, and Elected Verderers Mr Deakin, Mr Greenwood and Mr Readhead all declared an interest in the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, the Verderers Grazing Scheme, and the new Basic Payment Scheme. Mr Pasmore declared an interest in the new Basic Payment Scheme.

Mr Deakin, Mr Readhead and Mr Greenwood are members of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association committee. Mr Deakin is also Treasurer.

Mr Dowsett is a Forestry Commission Volunteer Ranger.

Mr Deakin and Mr Readhead are members of the New Forest Stallion Syndicate.

Mr Greenwood is employed part-time by Cadland Estate and therefore has an interest in the Stallion Grazing. Mr Greenwood also has a stallion of his own.

Mr Deakin and Mr Readhead are Directors of the New Forest Livestock Society.

Mr Hallam Mills declared an interest in HLS Schemes as his Estate is in Higher Level Stewardship. The Estate is also involved in the Better Boundaries Project, run by the New Forest Land Advice Service with support from Natural England. Mr Mills is also a Patron of the New Forest Trust.

Mrs Westerhoff is a tenant of the Forestry Commission.

Cllr Heron declared his membership of Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council and the New Forest National Park Authority. He

will declare any additional interests that may arise during the course of the meeting at the item.

2016/8574 CONDITION OF STOCK

RESUME

The Head Agister told the Court that as always the ponies look scruffy at this time of year. He explained they are at their lowest ebb during late April and early May. The grass is starting to grow and ponies are moving away from eating gorse and holly. He continued to say the majority of the animals are looking good and he is pleased with how well they have come through the winter, although thick winter coats can be deceiving and make the ponies look better than they really are. The Agisters are continuing to remove the odd animals that are not coping as well as the others although fewer animals have been removed this year than last.

Cattle which have spent the winter on holdings are being turned out onto the Forest, but some Commoners are turning the animals out slightly too early.

2016/8575 BEECH TREES DAMAGED BY PONIES

RESUME

The Official Verderer asked the Head Agister how they had got on with catching the ponies identified as chewing the bark on trees in Mark Ash. The Head Agister said they had a good session and managed to catch and remove six of the twelve identified ponies and hope to catch the other six at another round up scheduled next week. He said it had proved to be difficult to catch the animals in the Inclosure and that he is very grateful for all the help received from several commoners and the FC staff.

Mrs Westerhoff said that at a recent visit to Hollands Wood she had seen an ash tree that had been barked by the ponies. The Head Agister said that FC Keeper Jonathan Cook had come into the office yesterday and reported an ash and an oak tree that have been barked by the ponies at the entrance to Hollands Wood. The Court had a brief discussion on actions they felt the FC should take to protect the trees. Mr Deakin said that it is difficult to compensate for the loss of a breeding mare.

2016/8576 REPORT ON ANIMALS REMOVED FROM THE FOREST

RESUME

This very useful report had been circulated prior to the Court.

2016/8577 STOCK DEATHS - OTHER THAN ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

RESUME

This very useful report had been circulated prior to the Court.

2016/8578 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

RESUME

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Forest Ponies	4183	4468
Forest Cattle	1915	2114
Forest Donkeys	91	105
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	6189	6687
Common Ponies	490	647
Common Cattle	903	869
Common Donkeys	55	92
Common Pigs	60	33

Common Sheep	197	179
Total Common Stock	1705	1820
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	6189	6687
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	1448	1608
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	7637	8295
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	7894	8507

2016/8579 DAMAGE TO THE FOREST AT BIG MATLEY DISCHARGE

Mr Readhead and Mr Greenwood reported to the Court the findings of their recent site visit to Big Matley. Both are pleased with how it looks considering how wet the winter has been. Five representatives of the Court have visited and photographed the feeding area and no one can see any issues. Feeding areas are routinely inspected in the early summer by The Head Agister, Natural England and the VGS Administrator. Mr Readhead will respond to the complainant.

Action DR

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2016/8580 ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

OPEN COURT – 10.00 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor
Mr Paul Gurgeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2016/8581 GARDEN WASTE

'We are approaching the time of year when we will all be cutting our lawns and sorting out our gardens after the winter. Please may we remind residents that lawn mowings are very dangerous to ponies and donkeys and they must not be left where the animals can get to them. Tipping your grass cuttings over the fence or emptying a bag on the Open Forest may be a cheap and easy way of disposing of your garden waste, but it can result in a very sick or even dead pony. Mown grass left in a heap heats up, and when eaten, the resulting gasses that accumulate in the stomach of a pony or donkey can result in a very painful death for the unfortunate animal.'

2016/8582 ROAD THROUGH LINWOOD

'I have received a disappointing reply from Hampshire County Council regarding the excess traffic through Linwood. It is a classic local government one-and-a-half pages to tell me that the Council will do nothing to reduce the speed limit through Linwood. And also that the proposal to protect the road verges across Broomy Plain, and install passing places, has been rejected by something called the Operation Resilience team, without any reference to, or consultation with, the Verderers. The ongoing damage to the Broomy Plain verges, which are SSSI, is a matter of continuing concern, and I will write back to suggest to Hampshire County Council that it cannot ignore its responsibilities under national legislation.'

2016/8583 UNDERCOAT?

'Thank you to Mike Eccles for the shortest and most effective presentment in my five years as Chairman of this Court. He asked simply "can we be assured that the green is an undercoat." He was of course referring to the camp site signs which had been repainted in

a light green colour. I am pleased to say that the Deputy Surveyor has resolved this, and Camping in the Forest has returned the signs to their usual Forestry Commission dark green. I believe one or two signs have not yet been repainted in the correct colour, but we hope that they will be soon.'

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2016/8584 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR MARCH 2016

The Agisters attended 6 accidents in March 2016. This compares with 9 in March 2015.

Two donkeys were killed in the same accident, two ponies were injured and had to be destroyed, one donkey was injured and in two instances nothing was found.

1 Accident was not reported

5 accidents occurred in the dark and 1 at twilight.

None of the motorists were local.

THE SPEED CAMERA VAN

213 drivers were caught speeding on the unfenced Forest roads in March 2016.

The total number of drivers caught speeding in March overall was 1009.

PRESENTMENTS

2016/8585 WETLAND RESTORATION SITES Presentment by Mr Richard Stride, Commoner

'Good Morning Official Verderer and Verderers

My name is Richard Stride, I am a practicing Commoner. Over the last few weeks I have made the effort to visit several restoration sites throughout the Forest and I am pleased to say generally the Forest has benefited from the works.

However last week I walked the lower reaches of the Highland Water from Brinken Wood to Queen's Bower and came across several problems that require attention.

I request a site meeting with the Verderers to look at Driver's Nursery and the sad state of the dead trees, which are causing debris dams and will continue to do so for many years to come.

I would like to visit the small lawn on the corner of Pound Hill which is now permanently under water and also the small stream from Warwickslade to investigate what action can be taken to improve its flow.'

2016/8586 FEEDING OF PONIES Presentment by Graham Ferris on behalf of the Commoners Defence Association

'The CDA strongly endorses statements by the Official Verderer regarding feeding of ponies by members of the public.

We all know that the reward of food is the easiest way to train an animal. Feeding ponies by the side of the road, in Forest car parks out of car windows, outside shops in the villages with bags of apples or carrots or loaves of bread is training the ponies.

It is training the ponies to hang around by the side of the road, approach cars in car parks, try a little self-service through the doors of village shops or from shoppers bags and to fight each other for access to the so called treats. All the while they should be grazing naturally on the Open Forest as they have done since time immemorial.

A young friend who lives and works in the Forest called me a few days ago to report having seen someone driven to Burley Golf Course specifically to dip out domestic vegetable matter by the side of the road. Chaos ensued with ponies rushing over the road, in and out of the traffic, fighting each other off for access to the food. When he stopped to explain why it was self-evidently not a good thing to do he received nothing but abuse.

We would implore people who clearly like to see the ponies and care about their welfare –
BE KIND TO THE PONIES YOU LOVE BY NOT FEEDING THEM.'

2016/8587 **ONGOING DAMAGE TO THE FAWLEY INCLOSURE**
Presentment by Mr Ashley Jenkins, local resident

'My friend made a presentment last month regarding cattle in the Fawley Inclosure. The cattle congregate daily at feed time causing damage to the pathways. It is an advantage to have areas such as Fawley Inclosure for dog walkers and people wanting to enjoy the Inclosures around the edge of the Forest. The problem will probably ease with the dryer weather but something needs to be done for the coming years.'

2016/8588 **EXBURY ESTATE FENCES**
Presentment by Mr Chris Aldhous, commoner

'Ponies have stopped coming through the Exbury Estate to my land at Summer Lane. I would like to thank the Verderers for the work you have put in.'

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2016/8589 **WETLAND RESTORATION SITES** **RESUME**

The Official Verderer asked the Deputy Surveyor to ask the HLS Team to arrange a site visit to Driver's Nursery and Pound Hill and include an invitation to all Verderers. Mrs Westerhoff, Mr Pasmore, Mr Dowsett and Mr Greenwood all stated that they would like to attend.

Action DS

2016/8590 **FEEDING OF PONIES** **DISCHARGE**

Mr Pasmore said the feeding of ponies on the Forest is a serious matter and a breach of the Byelaws. Mr Heron said it is an important message that is not getting through to the public: many people believe they are allowed to feed the ponies, and he suggested that the Verderers involve the NPA as it is a shared responsibility to prevent the feeding of animals.

2016/8591 **ONGOING DAMAGE TO THE FAWLEY INCLOSURE** **DISCHARGE**

The Court discussed that much of the damage to the tracks in Fawley Inclosure had been caused by the heavy vehicles used by a contractor working for the Forestry Commission. The Official Verderer asked if the contractor should be asked to rectify the damage, but Mr Deakin said the area was dry and should reinstate by itself. Mr Deakin continued that some damage had been caused by the commoner feeding his cattle where he found them in Fawley Inclosure. The commoner is now feeding his cattle at his approved feeding area on the open Forest.

2016/8592	EXBURY ESTATE FENCES	RESUME
	Mr Deakin advised the Court that there were still some ponies in the woodland sold by the Exbury Estate and that the problem was not yet fully resolved.	
	SUBMISSIONS BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION	
2016/8593	NEW GAS SUPPLY TO HOLLY HATCH, EMERY DOWN	DISCHARGE
	The proposed new gas supply is approved with no objections subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.	
2016/8594	NEW GAS SUPPLY TO YEW TREE COTTAGE, BISTERNE CLOSE, BURLEY	DISCHARGE
	The proposed new gas supply is approved with no objections subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc. and that the pipe is laid under the hoggin path that leads to the property.	
2016/8595	SSE FROGHAM FURTHER ADDITIONAL WORK, REPLACEMENT POLE	DISCHARGE
	The replacement of the existing pole is approved with no objections subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.	
2016/8596	CADNAM CRICKET CLUB, RENEWAL OF LICENCE	DISCHARGE
	The Court discussed the licence renewal at length. The Club require some advice on the correct temporary fencing to be placed around the wicket when the cricket ground is opened to Forest stock. This will prevent animals being caught up in the slack stock wire currently used. Mr Greenwood suggested the court may permit holes for permanent posts dug at each corner which would then be filled with plugs during the cricket season.	
	Mr Readhead said that the club buildings have been extended over the years and that no further extensions should be permitted. Mr Grugeon commented that the pavilion should be toned down to look less chocolate box and more Forest. Mr Deakin said that the club has been in the habit of spreading its old grass cuttings compost on the open Forest, and that this must not continue. The Court requests that the hanging baskets and tables and chairs are put away after each game. The Official Verderer asked the Land Agent if there is now a clause included in the cricket club's lease that the club must meet its obligations under any agri-environment scheme at any time in place over the Crown Lands, Mr Grugeon replied that this is contained in a side letter.	
	The renewal of the Cricket Club licence was approved with no objections subject to the acceptance of the Court's conditions: safe fencing of the wicket; no further extensions to buildings; hanging baskets, tables, chairs and other paraphernalia put away after each game; no grass cuttings or compost on the open Forest; and an agri-environment scheme clause.	
2016/8597	HCC ROADSIDE DRAINAGE REPAIR WORKS, SWAN GREEN	DISCHARGE

The Court is pleased that Hampshire County Council proposes to carry out the works by hand.

The roadside drainage repairs are approved with no objections subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COURT AND PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2016/8598 BEECH TREES DAMAGED BY PONIES

RESUME

The Official Verderer is pleased to report that the first round up had been successful and six of the identified ponies were caught and removed from the Forest. Another round up is expected to take place in the coming week. He raised the Head Agister's concerns regarding the number of members of public in the Inclosure whilst the round up was in progress and requested that the Deputy Surveyor arrange the temporary closure of the Inclosure when the next round up occurs. Mr Deakin will liaise with the FC Rangers to ensure the closure goes smoothly.

Action RD

Mr Deakin said he was very grateful to the FC employees that helped on the day; they were knowledgeable and knew exactly what they were doing. He hopes they will be available to assist with the next drift which is planned to start from Highland Water.

The Official Verderer asked the Deputy Surveyor for a report on the Forestry Commission's actions to protect the beech trees from further damage. The Deputy Surveyor advised that three trees have been fenced to try to save them from further damage, and that mineral licks had been placed at various locations with the help of the Head Agister. The most vulnerable areas of fencing had been identified and repaired with new posts as required. Drift Inclosure fencing was also repaired at the request of the local Agister. Cribbox has not been put on the beech trees as a deterrent because of Natural England's concerns regarding damage to lichens on the bark.

The Official Verderer said he has heard reports that ponies have already returned to the Oakley Inclosure and asked if there were plans to repair the fence. The Deputy Surveyor advised that ponies were thought to have accessed the Inclosure via gates left open by members of the public.

Mr Deakin said that not all Commoners were happy about removing their animals from the Forest and saw it as an infringement on their rights. So far all owners of ponies identified as barking have agreed to remove their animals. The consensus of the commoners seems to be that the FC has done nothing to prevent the situation, which has resulted in the necessity to remove ponies.

Mr Deakin continued that FC employees owned some of the ponies involved, and asked for the Deputy Surveyor's help in persuading them to remove their ponies. Mr Pasmore advised that Crown tenants have no Forest Rights to turn out stock and do so only by the permission of the Deputy Surveyor. Mr Deakin added that many FC employees also own land from which they may derive Forest Rights.

The Court then discussed the possibility of fencing Mark Ash to allow the trees to recover.

Mr Pasmore said that the New Forest Act of 1949 restricts the size of

Inclosures; Mr Deakin said that there is no real grazing in Mark Ash so nothing will be lost by fencing it and that if left alone it should regenerate naturally. Mrs Westerhoff said the high number of deer on the Forest would have an impact on the natural regeneration of the area. Mr Pasmore said there is no reason why a deer fence could not be erected.

The Deputy Surveyor said the annual deer study has just been completed so he would soon have the cull figures for the year.

2016/8599	PROBLEMS WITH EXCESSIVE TRAFFIC AND ANIMAL ACCIDENTS IN LINWOOD	RESUME June
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The Official Verderer was very disappointed with the letter of response from Sean Woodward of Hampshire County Council. The restoration of the verges is necessary, and these are part of the SSSI. The HLS can provide funding which has been completely ignored by Hampshire County Council.

Cllr Heron explained that Mr Woodward was no longer in the position of Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment, and that anyway, Operation Resilience is the wrong team within HCC to assess the Broomy Plain road, concerned as it is with worn-out roads, not restoration of SSSI verges. He suggested that the Official Verderer write further to Rob Humby who has replaced Mr Woodward on HCC's cabinet. The limited resources available within HCC for the design of non-safety related works was also discussed; the Official Verderer asked Cllr Heron if HCC would permit the use of an outside designer possibly with detailed knowledge of the Forest. Cllr Heron felt that HCC would agree to this, particularly if external funding were available.

Action OV

2016/8600	PIPERS COTTAGE, BISTERNE CLOSE, BURLEY	DISCHARGE
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A prospective buyer of Pipers has been in contact with the office; the Official Verderer asked if the same gentleman had contacted the FC: he has apparently not. Mr Deakin advised that both accesses are currently being used; Mr Dowsett visited the property and was concerned to see a new double garage inside the property which does not line up with the vehicle access gateway. He suspects we will be receiving another request to alter the accesses in due course. The Land Agent will contact the prospective buyer.

Action PG

2016/8601	NO 3 FOX COTTAGES AND BULL HILL HOUSE	RESUME
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The Land Agent has written to the occupiers of No 3 Fox Cottages and Bull Hill House, but has not received a reply. A regular visit at different times of the day has shown that vehicles are sometimes parked on the Forest. Mr Grugeon feels it is difficult to tell the occupants that they cannot park on the Forest as they are damaging the grazing when there is very evident poaching and damage to a gravel track caused by cattle nearby. He also has concerns that, as a holiday rental, he will not be able to communicate the Verderers' message to every holidaymaker that rents the cottage. Mr Heron suggested the Land Agent target the person or agent who is responsible for the letting of the cottage. Mr Grugeon will write to the property owners again.

Action PG

2016/8602	UNDERCOAT?	DISCHARGE
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The Official Verderer thanked the Deputy Surveyor for the prompt action taken. The Deputy Surveyor advised that the threshold signs have been

	returned to the traditional dark green colour, but a small number of ladder boards remain to be done and he will chase Camping in the Forest to get the work completed. Mr Pasmore asked if the same action could be taken with the Network Rail bridge between Marlpit Oak and Latchmoor which has been painted the same vile green colour.	ACTION DS
2016/8603	HOLMSLEY PASSAGE Cllr Heron advised the Court that Hampshire County Council have proposed a change to its policies on minor works; from now on, it is planning on only undertaking work that is safety related at areas where someone has been killed or seriously injured. Local Councillor Ken Thornber has received assurance that animal accidents will be included in the criteria. The Official Verderer asked Cllr Heron if he felt HCC would accept the closure of the road as a dangerous rat run. Cllr Heron advised that it would be a lengthy paperwork exercise, but that with partnership funding it may be considered.	RESUME June
2016/8604	HOLLY STUDY Meeting scheduled this afternoon with Dave Morris of the Forestry Commission.	DISCHARGE
2016/8605	BRAMSHAW GOLF COURSE, BUNKER SAND BEING STORED ON OPEN FOREST The Land Agent has received a letter from Bramshaw Golf Course insisting that consent was sought and given for the bunker sand to be stored on the forest with their original proposal. As the Verderers have no record of this, the Official Verderer suggested to the Deputy Surveyor that perhaps the previous Assistant Land Agent may not have brought the correct documents to Court. The Land Agent will tell the golf course that it does not have consent, and that the sand is used or removed promptly to allow the area to recover.	RESUME Action PG
2016/8606	NOTICE BOARDS IN FOREST CAR PARKS The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that there are no new structures in the Forest car parks. Older notice boards are being replaced as and where required.	DISCHARGE
2016/8607	WAYFARERS BURLEY, NATURAL ENGLAND PROPOSAL FOR MITIGATION A letter is to be sent to Jenny Thomas at Natural England detailing the Verderers' concerns.	DISCHARGE
2016/8608	VERGE RESTORATION – WOODGREEN The letter sent to parish residents following Gary North's meeting with the Parish Council was met with a few concerns. A meeting has since taken place where residents were invited to raise these concerns which have now mostly been resolved. Mr Dowsett said that four people had initially objected to the verge restoration proposals but is now able to confirm that the project is moving forward and should start in May.	RESUME ACTION DS

Cllr Heron has asked that Gary North write to him so he can reply confirming his support of the project as the local District & County Councillor.

2016/8609 VERGE RESTORATION – EAST BOLDRE RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that Gary North will now push on with the East Boldre project.

2016/8610 KINGS COPSE ROAD RESUME

Mr Readhead said the 50 metres of ditching work Gary carried out in Kings Copse Road had solved some verge parking issues, but had also moved part of the problem further up the road.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2016/8611 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST RESUME

The Official Verderer requested that the key for issues reported by the Verderers be changed from VGS to V.

2016/8612 COWLEY'S HEATH DISCHARGE
Action DS

Mr Readhead reported that the drainage works by the road at Cowley's Heath are not complete; the Official Verderer asked that the Repair and Maintenance list be changed to show the job as not yet completed.

2016/8613 WATER COPSE DISCHARGE

Mr Pasmore told the Court that Water Copse is not open Forest, but part of New Park, and therefore Crown Freehold. He asked that the FC ensure that an old corrugated pig hut which has been dumped in the area be removed.

ENCROACHMENTS

2016/8614 ENCROACHMENTS INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION INCLUDING ENCROACHMENT LIST UPDATE AND REPORT ON ANY NEWLY IDENTIFIED ENCROACHMENTS RESUME

An updated encroachments list was circulated and the various items discussed.

2016/8615 EYEWORTH WATER PIPE DISCHARGE

This is not an encroachment and the Official Verderer asked for it to be removed from the list.

Action PG

Mr Greenwood said that, on the plans submitted for the Court's approval, the pipe is shown to go down the left of the road, but has actually gone down the right. The Land Agent replied the line of least resistance was followed and the pipe is partly on the left and partly on the right.

2016/8616 VERGE PARKING WATER'S GREEN BROCKENHURST DISCHARGE
Action PG

The Official Verderer said this was still mistitled on the Encroachment List as "muddy track at Water's Green" and asked the Land Agent to amend

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2016/8617 the subject to "cars parking on the open Forest at Water's Green".
LITTLE HAY, BURLEY DISCHARGE
Action PG

The Official Verderer said this was reported by Miss Macnair and asked for the list to be amended to correctly reflect this.

ACTION LIST

2016/8618 THE OAK INN AT BANK DISCHARGE
Action DS

The Official Verderer said item 3b should read The Oak at Bank not Fritham and asked the Deputy Surveyor to change on the list.

2016/8619 NO CYCLING FROM THIS CAR PARK SIGNS DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that the signs have been erected at the relevant car parks and the FC will monitor.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2016/8620 BROWNHILLS DRIFTWAY RESUME
June

Brownhills driftway has become impassable and bog-like, with water draining from a private property into the driftway which has nowhere to go as the ditch through the Inclosure is blocked.

The suggestion of fencing off the drift way is not popular with the Court. Forest stock is using the driftway despite its terrible condition, meaning that it is an important access to the grazing animals and it should therefore be kept open.

The Official Verderer suggested minimal intervention, and that a contractor using low impact machinery should be invited to clear and re-dig the ditches which had been neglected for some years, and particularly remove the man-made vehicular access which is blocking the ditch in the Inclosure. It was suggested that Dave Morris should take over the project.

Mrs Westerhoff said that looking at the map it shows that both wet areas are the headwaters of two tributaries of the Avon water and this explains why it is so wet. She considered that the Head Agister and Leanne had spent a good deal of time coming up with their plan which would solve the issue for the long-term.

Mr Deakin said it was important that all the Inclosure ditches be cleaned out too.

The Deputy Surveyor agreed to ask Dave Morris to plan the works which will be an HLS project.

ACTION DS

2016/8621 WINDBLOWN TREES RESUME

The Official Verderer raised his concerns of the increasing number of windblown trees reported as not being dealt with. He continued that a calf had recently died after getting trapped in the crown of a windblown tree at Roundhill. Mr Deakin said it was a common problem on the Forest, ponies and cattle wind their way into the crown of a fallen tree but when they try to reverse out a branch touches their back legs and they think they are trapped and stay there. The lucky ones are found and cut out by Agisters. Mr Readhead said the Verderers have an agreement with the FC that the crowns of fallen trees should be cut up if nothing else.

	<p>The Deputy Surveyor told the Court that Storm Katie had brought down a number of trees which had created a heavy workload and priority was being given to trees across roads and fences. Mr Deakin told the Deputy Surveyor that the Staff Committee does not report all windblown trees to the FC as it would inundate them with work; they only pass on those in need of urgent action.</p>	ACTION DS
	<p>Stock has been escaping onto the A337 where a Forest tree has come over the highway fence: Hampshire Highways is waiting for the FC to remove the fallen tree so that it can repair the fence. Cllr Heron said it is a County fence and that it is the County's responsibility to ensure it is stock proof. He suggested an email be sent to Highways detailing its responsibility to repair the fence, and stating that it should seek to recover any costs from the land owner for the tree work.</p>	ACTION JB
2016/8622	NEW PARK FENCE	RESUME
	<p>Mr Deakin told the Court that ponies are constantly getting in to New Park through a poor fence, and ultimately get put into the Verderers' rented fields. Mr Grugeon said that the fence has multiple owners. The Deputy Surveyor will pass the problem to the beat walk team for resolution.</p>	Action DS
2016/8623	HOLLAND'S WOOD	DISCHARGE
	<p>Mrs Westerhoff told the Court about her disappointment following a recent visit to Holland's Wood. A contractor conducting work in the area had over run into bird nesting time and had excessively trimmed branches on trees, which Mrs Westerhoff is now worried may not survive. She asked if a bat survey was conducted and said she would like to see the report. She continued that cut wood left in the area was a lot smaller than agreed and as it was cut into fire wood sized pieces she was concerned that it would be a temptation to campers.</p> <p>The Deputy Surveyor advised Mrs Westerhoff that the FC had noticed that the work was being carried out by a Camping in the Forest contractor; the work has been stopped immediately whilst the FC spoke with the contractor involved and explained the appropriate standards. He believed that the remainder of the project was completed to the correct standard.</p>	
2016/8624	ADVERTISING BOARDS	DISCHARGE
	<p>Mr Dowsett told the Court that a large sign advertising the Downton Cuckoo Fair had appeared at Bramshaw Telegraph. Mr Pasmore advised that he had already spoken to Estates Keeper Graham Wilson and had agreed if the sign was still there later in the day he would be personally removing it himself.</p> <p>Mr Pasmore continued that he had an agreement with the previous Deputy Surveyor that he could remove any illegal signs he saw on the open Forest and bring them into Queen's House. The Deputy Surveyor confirmed he was happy for all Verderers to continue doing so.</p>	
2016/8625	BRAMSHAW CRICKET CLUB	DISCHARGE
	<p>The Land Agent explained that Bramshaw Cricket Club has gone up a league and would like to provide better facilities. The club is considering demolishing its current pavilion and building a two storey pavilion on the existing foot print. Mr Pasmore and Mr Readhead were both concerned</p>	

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that the size would not be fitting in the Forest location. It was suggested that the club look to purchase private land, or request an exemption to the league rules because they play in such a unique area.

The Official Verderer suggested the Land Agent go back to the club to say that consent would not be easy.

Action PG

The Deputy Surveyor and Land Agent left the meeting

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2016/8626 NEW FOREST PONY BREEDING AND CATTLE SOCIETY DISCHARGE

During February's Court Miss Macnair told the Court that the New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society is changing its criteria for the stallion selection process.

The Court has received a letter from the NFPB&CS stating that the criteria have not changed, and will not be changing.

2016/8627 NEW ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO VENARDS HOUSE NORTH GORLEY DISCHARGE

The new electricity supply is approved with no objections subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2016/8628 SPEED CAMERA INITIATIVE – MODIFIED PROPOSAL DISCHARGE

Hampshire Constabulary has proposed that it commits 40% of its speed camera van time on unfenced road as part of its core activity under its own budget. It has asked for the Verderers to fund a further 20% of time on unfenced roads, for a sum of £10,703 per year for the next four years. The modified proposal was accepted by the Court.

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME (HLS)

2016/8629 HLS AGM DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer thanked the Verderers who attended the HLS AGM.

VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME (VGS)

2016/8630 VGS ADMINISTRATOR DISCHARGE

Samantha Luther, the new VGS Administrator, has started in the office.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2016/8631 STALLION COMMITTEE DISCHARGE

The Stallion Committee has decided which 15 stallions will be turned out in 2016. The areas have yet to be decided with the Agisters.

2016/8632 COMMONERS DWELLING SCHEME DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff updated the Court following the recent meeting she attended with the NPA who are reviewing the Local Plan.

The Commoners Dwelling Scheme is to be separated from the Affordable Housing Scheme in the draft plan.

The Ombudsman has returned his decision on the property at Bartley, but it is confidential. Steve Avery is seeking permission to make the decision public.

Mr Pasmore asked if there were any further applications for Commoners Dwellings, Mrs Westerhoff replied there were not.

New Forest Trust is planning to build two commoners' dwellings on a Hampshire County Council-owned plot in Rockford and the chairman, William Ziegler, would like the Verderers' support.

2016/8633 CYCLE ROUTE GROUP DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett asked Mr Pasmore for a report of the Cycle Route meeting he recently attended. Mr Pasmore advised that he arrived for the meeting at the National Park offices in Lymington and was left in a waiting room because a Natural England officer was running late. Mr Pasmore waited a while but then left. The Official Verderer said he was appalled at this impolite treatment of a volunteer Verderer, being made to wait because a civil servant was late. He has complained to the National Park Chairman Mr Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre regarding the matter, stating that the meeting should have simply started on time without the Natural England officer present.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2016/8634 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR MARCH 2016 RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

STAFF MATTERS

2016/8635 PUBLIC SPEAKING AND PRESENTATIONS DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin requested a budget to update the Head Agister's PowerPoint presentation as it is now out of date. The intention is to commission a portfolio of photographs, and own their copyright, which can be used in presentations, including at the New Forest Show, and eventually to produce an online presentation that can be downloaded by local groups in and around the Forest. A budget of £1,500 was agreed.

2016/8636 TB PLAN DISCHARGE

Mr Mills said there is unfinished business regarding the TB Plan. The plan needs to be re-written to incorporate the Q&As. It was agreed that the re-writing will be carried out by the Clerk when she is feeling better.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2016/8637 WETLAND RESTORATION DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff confirmed that the Wootton Restoration Plan had been submitted for planning.

2016/8638 ANIMAL ACCIDENT SIGNAGE B3078 DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett told the Court he was impressed with the new animal accident

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 20th April 2016 in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

signage put up on the B3078 following consultation with the Verderers.

2016/8639 A31 FENCE

RESUME

Mr Mills said he has been told the fence posts on the A31 are wobbly. He ACTION HM
will confirm the location to Agister Rix for him to investigate.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 13:38 hrs.

Domine May
Official Verderer
18th May 2016