

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 10th February 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
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Senior Elected Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss Justine Bayley	Assistant Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J R Gerrelli	Head Agister
	Mr Nigel Atkinson	Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire
APOLOGIES:	Mr G M H Mills	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mr E Heron	National Park Appointed Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2016/8454 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of Court held on 13th January were approved and signed.

2016/8455 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Official Verderer, and Elected Verderers Mr Deakin, Mr Greenwood, Miss Macnair 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.

Miss Macnair is a member of the New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society Council.

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.

Mrs Westerhoff is a tenant of the Forestry Commission.

2016/8456 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Head Agister told the Court that overall stock is still looking very well,

with some older and younger ponies starting to lose condition, as well as some mares with foals. Stock removed from the Forest was lower than in January 2015. The low number of acorn deaths this winter was noted, with factors like the good autumn weather resulting in the abundance of alternative food on the Forest thought to be behind the low incidence of poisoning.

Cattle that remain on the Forest are now having their feed supplemented either in agreed feeding areas, or back on Commoners holdings.

2016/8457 REPORT ON ANIMALS REMOVED FROM THE FOREST RESUME

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

2016/8458 STOCK DEATHS - OTHER THAN ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS RESUME

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

2016/8459 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR RESUME

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Forest Ponies	116	643
Forest Cattle	112	255
Forest Donkeys	4	10
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	232	908
Common Ponies	13	185
Common Cattle	7	345
Common Donkeys	3	16
Common Pigs	0	32
Common Sheep	0	141
Total Common Stock	23	719
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	232	908
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	23	546
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	255	1454
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	255	1627

2016/8460 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

A Commoner who had forgotten to pay his marking fees for cattle depastured was discussed; the error was only discovered with the non-payment of VGS monies. The cattle in question had been marked, but payment was not due at that time. Commoners are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure their marking fees are paid to their Agister.

The Agisters dealt with an escaped pony stallion from a non-Commoning property at Burley Lodge. The stallion was caught and returned to its owners within 24 hours of escape. A letter was sent to the owner from the office highlighting the seriousness of this breach of the Verderers' Byelaws.

Head Agister Jonathan Gerrelli left the meeting.

2016/8461 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 Grugeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2016/8462 LORD-LIEUTENANT OF HAMPSHIRE

Welcome to February's Verderers Court., I would particularly like to welcome the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson, who joins us today. Welcome Nigel.

2016/8463 STALLIONS

Thank you to Lindsey Stride for her Presentment at our October Court, asking us to consider an increase in the number of stallions which we turn out in 2016. We received several other similar requests. The Court has agreed that stallion numbers should be increased this year from 10 to 15. They will be turned out for a period of 4 weeks starting from Monday 9th May 2016 to Monday 6th June, with a deadline for removal of the 13th June 2016. The Stallion Inspection will be held at the Beaulieu Road Sale Yard on Saturday 9th April 2016 commencing at 9.30am.

2016/8464 FENCE AT EXBURY

Thank you for the three Presentments in January about the broken fence between the Forest and a field on Exbury Estate. The Verderers have exerted considerable pressure on the Exbury Estate, with the result that the tenant of the field, Racal, has now employed a contractor to erect a new fence, which appears at present to be stock proof.

2016/8465 CLEAN FOR THE QUEEN

To celebrate the 90th birthday this year of Her Majesty the Queen, I have initiated all the New Forest organisations to join in a national litter-pick called Clean for the Queen. This will be held on Friday 4th March, Saturday 5th March, and Sunday 6th March. I am pleased to report that the Commoners Defence Association is joining in, and its effort will be coordinated by Mike Eccles. The Forestry Commission is coordinating the litter picking on the Crown Lands, and is allocating areas to all the licensees and volunteer groups. If you would like to join in, please make contact with the Forestry Commission's Zoe Cox. New Forest District Council and the New Forest National Park Authority are also heavily involved locally. Thank you to everyone in advance: let's give the New Forest a Spring clean.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2016/8466 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JANUARY 2016

The Agisters attended 16 accidents in January 2016. This compares with 14 in January 2015.

4 ponies were killed or had to be destroyed and another was injured. One of the ponies killed was wearing a reflective collar.

In the remaining accidents, the animals were either uninjured or nothing was found.

1 accident was not reported.

10 accidents occurred in the dark, 4 at twilight and 2 in daylight.

8 motorists were local.

THE SPEED CAMERA VAN

Unfortunately due to Court being a week early this month the Police have not had time to provide us with the Speed Camera reports. I will provide a full update at the next Court.

PRESENTMENTS

2016/8467 APPLES LADE BOTTOM, LINWOOD PROBLEMS WITH EXCESSIVE TRAFFIC AND HIT AND RUN ACCIDENTS IN 2015

Presentment by Richard Deacon, Linwood resident and a practising commoner, retired civil engineer with considerable experience of highway and environmental engineering.

'The Commoners living in the hamlet of Linwood, wish to draw the Verderers' attention to recent unacceptable traffic movements, speed and accidents involving our cattle and ponies depastured on the Forest.

For an unclassified and narrow single track road, passing through the village, we have been subjected to extraordinary traffic volumes as commuters seek to avoid the ever growing congestion problems on the A31, particularly at and around Poulner Hill / Picket Post.

Over an eight month period we have routinely experienced excessive peak traffic flows in the early evenings, most notably on Thursday and Friday and whenever an accident occurs on the A31, between Cadnam and Ringwood. 'Rat run' activity, travelling east, is less intense but fraught with excessive speed, particularly when driving blind into the morning sun. In summer, peak west bound homeward traffic has reached 700 movements per hour and we have recorded 576 movements in an hour in the last month.

In an 8 month period and over an 800m length of this single track road at Appleslade Bottom, we have sustained 3 Hit & Run accidents, resulting in 2 ponies destroyed and a cow knocked clean off her feet. She survived the collision with a Mercedes car, but was left cast in the middle of the road with her legs upslope. She regained her footing with help from experienced passers-by. The badly damaged car was driven off unexpectedly, but pulled up when a temporary traffic light turned red. The quick thinking lady witness to the accident ran and pulled the driver out of the car. Veterinary bills arising have still to be settled by the offender.

The day old foal lost with a broken leg last May, had clearly been dragged along the road under a vehicle. No report was received either by the Police or the Verderers.

In the first week of January, a local taxi hit and broke the leg of a chestnut gelding sustaining sufficient damage to the vehicle to leave a headlight hanging out of its seating. This taxi left the scene, collected its passengers in the village, drove back past the scene of the accident, but only made a police report within the statutory 24 hours. Fortunately, I found the distressed animal still at the roadside, phoned my local Agister who quickly arrived to do the necessary despatch.

The incidents described clearly show a worsening of the situation in Linwood whose road

has even been described by one traffic policeman with some amusement – 'Oh! You mean the A31 Bypass.' There is no air of amusement amongst the Linwood residents, one of whom has surrendered, sold up and moved out of the village, citing this very issue.

We seek the Verderers intervention and help on the following issues:

For some eight years now I have endeavoured unsuccessfully, to provide appropriate signage on the Linwood Road. Despite my best efforts, there is still none between Moyles Court and Lyndhurst or Longcross. To put this in context, motorists diverting off the A31 and arriving at Godshill in similar numbers to Linwood are confronted by copious signage, a cattle grid, 30mph restriction and traffic calming measures / pinch points.

The time has come to put Linwood on the map, quite literally. 700 unfamiliar motorists an hour finding themselves diverted off the A31 have a need to know they are entering a village community and that livestock are likely to be on the road ahead!

It is my view that the village confines need to be delineated with suitable boundary markers such as have been erected at Breamore and Charlton All Saints on the A338. Safe, plastic wicket gate sized panels of rustic appearance need to be erected on opposing verges to identify the village limits. The usual yellow reflective signs, warning of the presence of 'Animals on the road, Day and Night' need to be deployed. A 30mph restriction within the village would be similarly appropriate.

Our local press reports this very week that 10,000 speeding motorists have been caught to date on Forest roads. Linwood too could use some of this enforcement. I have observed none to date. Recent repairs to road edges have made this rat run route safer and more attractive to speeding commuters.

Finally, It should be a punishable or even publishable offence for anyone involved in an accident with a depastured animal to leave the scene or the limits of the cattle gridded enclosure without first ensuring that a report of the incident has reached the Verderers Office. Reliance on the statutory 24 hour accident report to a local police station is hopelessly, too little, too late.

It is nonsense that 'Out of Hours' accident notification is routed through an Edinburgh call receiver with no understanding of local terrain, place names and routes. Could the Verderers consideration be given to setting up local accident reporting stations? Reporting accuracy and response might improve the situation for injured stock and reduce the frequent 'Nothing Found' outcome. In dead mobile phone areas such as the whole of Linwood, a local volunteer reporting centre marked by a red equine silhouette posted on the roadside gate would suffice to serve the reporting needs of a passing motorist unfortunate enough to have hit an animal. I would be happy to volunteer such a service for the Linwood area.

It is easy for me to make this offer, because it happens already with motorists knocking at my front door. My holding is the only obvious Commoning unit to be seen from the road between Moyles Court and Lyndhurst.

I would be happy to explore/develop this idea with the Verderers, the Forestry Commission, the Police and the National Park, but with 20% of all accidents with animals as Hit & Run (i.e. some 25 this year); we have to do something more than at present.'

2016/8468 EXBURY ESTATE FENCES
Presentment by Mr Brian Ingram, Practising Commoner.

'The new fence put up by the Exbury estate is not very good, I wouldn't use whichever contractor they used for any work. They have done away with one of the gateways so

now we will have to go a long way to remove any animals who find their way through the fence. Whilst they had a mini digger on site why didn't they pull up all the old metal work and wire? I am sure the FC has got this in hand. The fencing is not satisfactory and I believe my grandchildren could put up a better fence!

2016/8469 **EXBURY ESTATE FENCES**
Presentment by Mr Chris Aldhous

'I turn out ponies and have a few acres around the Forest including land off Summer Lane Exbury.

Last month I made a presentment concerning ponies and cattle from the Forest which had been crossing the Exbury estate to the track alongside my property since October 2015.

I was pleased that the day after the court, work started on replacing the defective fencing, initiated no doubt by pressure from the Verderers and the publicity the proceedings of the court receive. Unfortunately the new fencing is not to an adequate standard and as of Tuesday morning some animals are still coming through the Exbury estate.

I am sorry to have to ask the Verderers to continue to keep up the pressure.'

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2016/8470 **APPLESLADE BOTTOM, LINWOOD PROBLEMS WITH
EXCESSIVE TRAFFIC AND HIT AND RUN ACCIDENTS IN 2015**

RESUME

The Court discussed Mr Deacon's presentment at length. It was decided that the Court will write to Cllr Sean Woodward at Hampshire County Council requesting that the speed limit through Linwood be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. The Court will also ask the police to allocate the speed camera van to the area.

Action Asst
Clerk

Mr Dowsett advised that at the last Western Escarpment meeting they identified the traffic problem on the Moyles Court to Linwood road and are intending to trial a single track road system with passing places. It is hoped that this will make the road less useable and deter traffic bypassing the A31.

The idea for plastic fencing marking the entrance to the village is not popular with the Court. However, it was felt that the entrance to the Forest at Moyles Court is not adequately marked and would benefit from an additional sign.

The FC Land Agent said the temporary signs which flash the speed that vehicles are travelling at had been effective in reducing speeding in his home village. He continued to say that they were easily moved to different locations by fixing brackets to existing road signs.

The Court discussed the number of "Hit and Run" accidents in the area. The lack of mobile telephone signal was not felt to be a reasonable excuse, as accidents were reported adequately before the widespread use of mobile devices. The national law that traffic collisions with an animal must be reported within 24 hours was also not deemed acceptable when there was an injured animal left on the verge. Mr Pasmore is to speak to the local RSPCA Inspector to investigate possible prosecution under the

Action

Animal Welfare legislation.

Mr Pasmore

The Deputy Surveyor said that the Forestry Commission 24-hour help desk was effective at dealing with calls regarding animal accidents. The call centre has the Agisters roster and anything requiring urgent action is passed back to an on call Duty Officer within the Forest. The message to drivers who are involved in a collision with a Forest animal is to phone the police.

2016/8471 EXBURY ESTATE FENCES

RESUME

The Court is grateful that the new fence has been erected, but is disappointed that it has already started to fall down. An email will be sent to the Exbury Estate Office to state that the Court is not happy with the standard of the fence construction, which is failing already; and reminding the estate of their responsibility to remove the debris from the old fence from the Forest.

Action Asst
Clerk

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that the FC is aware of the debris left on the Forest. The Estates Keeper has spoken to the Contractors who have confirmed they will be removing the debris in due course; he will continue to monitor the situation.

NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2016/8472 HOLLY TRIAL SITES AT LITTLE WOOD

RESUME

The two existing trial sites at Bolderwood and Shirley Holmes were discussed: Mr Deakin asked at what point the FC will decide to take the fences down from these plots.

Mrs Westerhoff said that when pollarding some years ago, the holly was cut a lot higher than it is today, the cutting height being reduced more recently due to new chainsaw health and safety policies.

Mrs Westerhoff continued to say that she felt it would be beneficial to conduct a full study looking at the effects of pollarding. Mr Deakin said that the FC must look at the way pollarding is carried out, and ensure that only smaller trees are cut, as the older trees cut by mistake in Bolderwood did not respond well to cutting. The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that this work is usually carried out by FC staff and not contractors. The Official Verderer suggested that the HLS team contracts an immediate survey, to be repeated in three years' time. Mrs Westerhoff will talk to the HLS team about designing a project.

The two holly trial sites at Little Wood are agreed with no objections, subject to the usual three conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2016/8473 POWER SUPPLY TO NEW KIOSK AT SWAY RESERVOIR

DISCHARGE

This small addendum to the original proposal is approved subject to the usual three conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2016/8474 REPAIR TO ESSO PIPELINE, TWIGGS LANE END, MARCHWOOD

DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer raised concern about the proposal for the area to be fenced off following the pipeline repair. Mr Deakin advised that it was the same as happened with a similar repair near the Ipley Pound last year: the area is fenced off to reinstate for two years. The Official Verderer asked for confirmation of the management process, and who will be responsible for removing the fence. Mr Deakin said that the use of the pound in the autumn would prompt him to ask for the fence to be removed.

The Official Verderer felt that a consultation meeting with the Forestry Commission and Local Agister would be beneficial before the works started.

The proposal is approved subject to the usual three conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2016/8475 BT OPENREACH NORLEYWOOD EAST END PCP 1 DISCHARGE

Concern was raised that the BT maps supplied with the proposal are incorrect and show the junction box in the wrong place. The Land Agent was asked to liase with BT to advise them of their error. Mr Grugeon told the Court that the Forestry Commission have served notice to terminate the Master Wayleave Agreement with BT Openreach.

Despite the drawing and maps being incorrect, the proposal is approved subject to the usual three conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2016/8476 NEW FOREST SMOOTH SNAKE SURVEY 2016 DISCHARGE

The proposal for the second year of the two year smooth snake survey was discussed. The Official Verderer asked if all the refugia from the first year had been removed from the Forest: the Deputy Surveyor advised that to the best of his knowledge they had been. The proposal for the second year of the survey is approved subject to consultation with the Agisters.

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

2016/8477 NETWORK RAIL BRIDGES DISCHARGE
TO ACTION
LIST

The Deputy Surveyor apologised to the Court for not having an update; he will once again chase Network Rail. Item discharged to the Action List.

2016/8478 VERGE RESTORATION PROJECT DISCHARGE
TO ACTION
LIST

Gary North has not yet submitted his work plans for East Boldre. The Deputy Surveyor will request he supplies them as soon as possible.

Mr Dowsett updated the Court on the situation at Woodgreen, where he joined the local FC Keeper, the Estates Keeper and Gary North at a meeting with Woodgreen Parish Council. Gary North has submitted his work plan to the Parish Council who reacted positively and is very supportive of the plan. Additional areas have also been added by local residents. A letter, advising residents of the works, has been sent to the Parish Council for approval. Once approved it will be sent to local residents.

A similar liaison is hoped for in East Boldre, with Sarah Kelly from the NFNPA liaising with the Parish Council. She will also raise awareness of the Verge Restoration plans at the Quadrant Meetings to get locals involved to drive the project forward and identify problem areas within their Parishes.

2016/8479 NOS. 1 & 2 FOX COTTAGES DISCHARGE

The Land Agent advised that cattle regularly crossing the excessively wide track at Fox Cottages has helped to start its return to Forest. The track is expected to grass up naturally and the home owners will not do any further work to keep the track clear although they will be driving on the track.

The Official Verderer asked Mr Grugeon to monitor the area and ensure that during the forthcoming building work, the gravel area and adjacent grazing is not used for storage of building materials, skips, machinery or parking.

2016/8480 NO. 3 FOX COTTAGES AND BULL HILL HOUSE RESUME
April 2016

The Land Agent has written to the home owners who have been parking on the Forest.

2016/8481 CASTLE HILL RESURFACING DISCHARGE

The Land Agent advised the Court that the scalplings have been removed and replaced with hoggin. Miss Macnair confirmed that this was correct.

2016/8482 PEA SHINGLE OUTSIDE THE CLOUD HOTEL DISCHARGE
TO
ENCROACH
MENT LIST

The Land Agent advised that plans are in place to reduce the parking area and move the dragons teeth.

2016/8483 GRASS AREA OPPOSITE LITTLE HAY, BURLEY DISCHARGE
TO
ENCROACH
MENT LIST

Item discharged to Encroachments List

2016/8484 CLEAN FOR THE QUEEN DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer said that the New Forest Hounds, as a Forest Licensee, had received their letter and have been allocated an area, date and time.

Miss Macnair said that the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society did not know about the event. She has told them all about it and they are looking forward to taking part.

The Deputy Surveyor said that there are 7 events being held over the weekend on the Crown Land at various locations. Four events are for license holders and a further three are public events. FC staff will be providing attendees with all required equipment. NFDC are carrying out roadside litter picking as health and safety does not permit members of the public to collect litter at the roadside.

The Deputy Surveyor also advised that temporary signage was planned to

promote the event and that a media event was arranged for the Friday. Local schools are holding litter awareness assemblies and the NFNPA is liaising with schools directly.

The Official Verderer voiced his concerns about the removal of full dog poo bags which litter the Forest, hung from trees, bushes and gateposts and said they pose a public health risk. The Deputy Surveyor said the FC campaign every year to try and stop the disgusting practice. Zoe Cox is to decide how best to dispose of the dog waste bags.

Mr Dowsett said that he had represented the Verderers at a meeting of the Litter Working Group, made up of the Forestry Commission, New Forest District Council and the New Forest National Park Authority. The Group has put in a huge amount of work prior to the event.

The Official Verderer thanked all the organisations for their hard work and said that we are on schedule for a very successful event.

The Official Verderer is planning to write to Her Majesty to inform her of the litter picking events scheduled on the Forest Crown Lands.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2016/8485	REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST	RESUME
	The updated list was circulated to all Verderers before the meeting.	
2016/8486	CORBETS HAT	DISCHARGE TO REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST
	No rail is to be placed on the two posts; the posts are to encourage stock to move between them to reduce poaching and widening of the track further. The Court saw no reason why the proposed works should be discussed with the local keeper, as it was a condition of the original consent that no vehicle access should be possible.	
2016/8487	COWLEYS HEATH	DISCHARGE TO REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST
	An additional line should be added for the completion of the works.	
2016/8488	SUBURBS WOOD MIRE	DISCHARGE
	The Site visit on the 25 th January was attended by Mrs Westerhoff, Mr Deakin, Mr Pasmore, Miss Macnair, Mr Heron and Mr Greenwood. The attending Verderers voiced their disappointment that Mr Mills did not attend despite the meeting time being changed to suit him.	
	Mrs Westerhoff said the meeting went well and that nearly all the Verderers present were content with the project. Mr Pasmore voiced his concerns, opposing the scheme.	
	The Official Verderer said he visited the area on horseback and found the lawn surprisingly wet, the stream deep and said there was very obvious previous human intervention in the stream.	
	The Restoration works were approved by a majority vote, with Mr Pasmore not in support.	

ENCROACHMENTS

2016/8489	ENCROACHMENTS INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION INCLUDING ENCROACHMENT LIST UPDATE AND REPORT ON ANY NEWLY IDENTIFIED ENCROACHMENTS	RESUME
	An updated encroachments list was circulated prior to the Court. It was agreed that it was beneficial to have the list in advance.	
2016/8490	CHAPEL LANE EAST BOLDRE	DISCHARGE TO ENCROACH MENTS LIST
	No details received from Gary North. The Deputy Surveyor will chase.	
2016/8491	WAYFARERS, BURLEY	RESUME
	The principle of the proposed mitigation suggested by Natural England to resolve the encroachment at Wayfarers to its satisfaction have not yet been discussed or approved by the Verderers. This will be added to the agenda for March's Court.	
2016/8492	WATERS GREEN, BROCKENHURST	DISCHARGE TO ENCROACH MENTS LIST
	The Official Verderer suggested that the description should read illegal parking at Waters Green. The date should be 22 nd July 2014.	
2016/8493	LITTLE HAY, BURLEY	DISCHARGE TO ENCROACH MENTS LIST
	Miss Macnair advised that the riding stables have been given three months' notice to quit so the poaching issue may remedy itself. Miss Macnair went on to say that the track was an ancient Forest track and did not belong to the residential properties; she also added that it was not just the riding school horses that used the track.	
2016/8494	HONEY LANE	DISCHARGE TO ENCROACH MENTS LIST
	Miss Macnair advised the Land Agent that the materials under the green tarpaulin at Honey Lane had not yet been removed.	
2016/8495	COPSEFIELD, BURLEY	DISCHARGE TO ENCROACH MENTS LIST
	Miss Macnair advised that the pea shingle is yet to be replaced with hoggin.	

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2016/8496	MARKWAY HUT AND TARGETS	RESUME
	Mr Pasmore told the Court that he has been asked to look into the encroachment by a Forestry Commission rifle target and hut in what was Markway Inclosure but now is open Forest.	
	Mr Pasmore continued that the Forestry Commission does not have the authority to build a rifle range on the open Forest, nor do the Verderers have the authority to consent it.	

Mr Dowsett said that the New Forest Keepers were held up as exemplars of safe and humane deer management. It is imperative that a facility such as this is available to the Keepers for training and assessment purposes, and for checking the zero of their rifles. He asked that if the Court considers that the facility must be removed, it is allowed to remain until a replacement is operational, such is its importance to the FC Staff.

Mr Pasmore said that necessity is not the case: legal basis is the case. He continued to say that the Forestry Commission has a lot of land to which Forest Law does not apply including 2,000 acres of Crown Freehold and similar terrain outside the scope of the New Forest Acts.

The Deputy Surveyor asked the Court for time to look into the issue further.

Action DS

2016/8497 **Longbeech Cottage**

RESUME

Mr Pasmore said that he has received a complaint from a party, who wishes to remain anonymous, regarding the letting of Forestry Commission cottages surplus to requirements at market rates. The cottages in question were at Shobley, The Coppice of Linwood and in Longbeech Inclosure.

Mr Pasmore continued that the cottage in Longbeech Inclosure appeared to have been built improperly with no legal authority or valid Verderers' consent. Mrs Westerhoff asked Mr Pasmore if all cottages built in inclosures were illegal. He replied that earlier Woodsman Cottages were built under now repealed laws. He said since the Denny Oil Enquiry it has been apparent that the Forestry Commission is only legally allowed to grow trees in inclosures and not carry out development there.

The Deputy Surveyor said he was unsure where the rumours were coming from, but that Longbeech Cottage was lined up for a member of Forestry Commission staff once refurbished.

The Land Agent said it was scheduled for refurbishment this year and would then be made available to a Crown employee. Mr Grugeon confirmed that the Forestry Commission does let some properties out to 3rd parties at market rates, where they are allowed to do so, but that this was never going to be the case for Longbeech Cottage. He said the cottages are let under internal Forestry Commission Policies, unrelated to the New Forest Acts.

Action DS

The Court invited a reply from the FC as to the legality of Longbeech Cottage.

2016/8498 **Beech Trees Damaged by Ponies**

RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor circulated a report on beech trees damaged by ponies bark stripping to the Court. It was suggested that a joint working group be formed to discuss a medium term solution to the problem that has been worsening over the last five years.

Mr Pasmore said Mark Ash has lost 12 huge beech trees since December and that it couldn't continue to lose trees at that rate. He suggested that the ponies responsible are removed from the Forest immediately for mischievous behaviour.

Mr Deakin disagreed saying that there were not two or three ponies responsible, the problem is widespread across the Forest and it could be argued that the ponies are acting naturally. He said the problem at North Oakley Inclosure would be remedied with the repair of the fences.

Miss Macnair asked if putting chicken wire around the trees would act as a deterrent to the ponies.

The Deputy Surveyor supported the decision for convening the action group immediately; the group was decided as Mr Pasmore, Mr Deakin, Mrs Westerhoff, the Head Agister and Marianne Bergin FC Senior Ecologist. The Official Verderer requested that Mr Richard Stride be asked to join the group.

Mrs Westerhoff asked that Natural England be made aware of the issue.

The Deputy Surveyor and the Land Agent, and the Lord-Lieutenant, left the meeting

ENCROACHMENTS NOT INVOLVING THE FC

2016/8499 HYDE COMMON POUND DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin advised the Court that a Commoner has moved a gate onto the verge which now blocks access to the Hyde Common Pound. The Commoners' Defence Association are believed to be pursuing the matter.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2016/8500 BACK UP GRAZING DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff circulated a report from the meeting she attended with Dave Readhead and the Clerk and the NFNPA & NFDC Planners. The Court does not feel able to determine how much back-up grazing is required to support Commoning. They do not want to see development of any potential back-up grazing land. Mrs Westerhoff was asked to respond to the NFNPA and NFDC. Action DW

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME (HLS)

2016/8501 HLS CONTRACTORS DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer has received a letter from the MD of the low scoring HLS Contractor. It is decided that the Contractor will be given the opportunity to complete the projects they are currently working on before the final assessment of their work is carried out.

VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME (VGS)

2016/8502 VGS PAYMENTS DISCHARGE

The Commons Commoners have now been paid.

2016/8503 MICROCHIP READERS DISCHARGE

Microchip scanners have now been purchased for all Agisters.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2016/8504 NEW FOREST CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP GROUP DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff circulated before the Court notes from the recent meeting she attended. Verderers were requested to send any comments to her by email.

2016/8505 NEW FOREST PONY BREEDING AND CATTLE SOCIETY DISCHARGE

Miss Macnair reported that the Pony Breeders Society is changing its criteria for the stallion selection process, which she disagrees with, and urged the Verderers to keep their scoring methods the same. Mr Readhead advised that the New Forest Livestock Society is not changing its criteria; however it can only look at the stallions which the NFPBCS license.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2016/8506 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR DECEMBER 2015 RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

STAFF MATTERS

2016/8507 NO WIN NO FEE SOLICITORS RESUME

Mr Deakin said that the office were receiving a high number of enquiries from "No Win No Fee" solicitors and he felt that the office staff could benefit from proper guidance on how to deal with the enquiries. Action RD

2016/8508 NEW FOREST SHOW 2016 DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin advised that due to the low staffing levels, and the relocation of the Heart of the Forest area on the showground, it had been decided to re-use a lot of the stand from last year. The Court agreed a budget of £5,000.

2016/8509 TB PLAN RESUME

Mr Deakin feels that some clarification is needed with regards to the New Forest TB Plan. There are questions that need to be answered and we have lost both our contacts at the Animal and Plant Health Agency.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2016/8510 RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STEERING GROUP RESUME

The Official Verderer advised that a review is to be undertaken on Forest Car Parks and Cycle Routes. The review was put out to tender, but as there were no takers, Nigel Matthews of the NFNPA has been asked to conduct the review. Mr Pasmore volunteered to represent the Court.

2016/8511 DOUGLAS FIR RAILS DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer queried the recent purchase of Douglas Fir rails

when he thought it had been agreed to build pounds from hard wood. Mr Deakin explained that the rails were purchased for repairs to existing pounds and all new builds are constructed of hard wood.

2016/8512 SPRING WELFARE TOUR

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin advised the Court that the Spring Welfare Tour was booked for Friday 13th May 2016.

2016/8513 CATTLE GRID AT RANS WOOD LODGE, FURZEY LODGE

RESUME

Mr Deakin told the Court that Agister Maton has raised concerns about a cattle grid currently being constructed at Rans Wood Lodge (formerly Oakdene), opposite the Furzy Lodge Pound.

The Verderers objected to the cattle grid in 2013 due to the complications it will cause to stock management in the area and it was removed from the original planning application.

The grid's construction is not to our recommended standard and does not look as though it will be stock proof. The Official Verderer asked that a letter be written to the occupier requesting that a gate remains on the Forest side of the cattle grid which can be closed when the pound is in use.

Action Asst
Clerk

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 13:16 hrs.

Dominic May
Official Verderer
16th March 2016