

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at 9.00 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
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Senior Elected 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

**IN COMMITTEE in the Library**

2016/8700    MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of Court held on 18<sup>th</sup> May were approved and signed.

2016/8701    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.

2016/8702    **CONDITION OF STOCK**

RESUME

The Head Agister advised the Court that overall stock is in good condition, the grass is growing and there is plenty to eat. Most ponies have lost their winter coats and are looking fit and well with gleaming coats. A few ponies have been slow to pick up and the Agisters still have to remove the odd one or two.

The Official Verderer asked the Head Agister why he thought more animals had been removed this year than last. The Head Agister replied that a lot more foals were left on the Forest over the winter, as Commoners are trying to replace older stock; the foals have taken a toll on the mares who have continued to feed them all winter. The Head Agister further said that ponies that were not picking up now had something else wrong with them like a worm burden or the start of liver failure. Mr Deakin said that there were more animals on the Forest so therefore we would expect to see more needing to be removed. Miss Macnair said that she feels the animals turned out are not the right type and are not adapted to life on the Forest.

The Official Verderer then asked the Head Agister if he felt that the Forest is currently overgrazed. The Head Agister replied that, with the amount of grass currently on the Forest, it would be difficult to say it is overgrazed.

The Official Verderer said that cattle numbers are up by 1,100 on this time last year and asked the Head Agister if marking fees have been paid earlier than last year, or if herd numbers have increased. The Head Agister said the BPS was attracting new Commoners, and he believed that the herd has increased, probably by about 500.

Mr Greenwood raised the subject of Ghost Cattle, and asked the Head Agister whether, if it were a requirement to turn out the animals to claim BPS, commoners would turn out despite the risks of diseases like Red Water. The Head Agister replied he believed people would.

2016/8703    **REPORT ON ANIMALS REMOVED FROM THE FOREST**

RESUME

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

2016/8704    **STOCK DEATHS - OTHER THAN ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS**

RESUME

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

2016/8705    **REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR**

RESUME

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Forest Ponies	4707	4299
Forest Cattle	3589	2441
Forest Donkeys	108	96
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	8404	6836
Common Ponies	648	722
Common Cattle	980	1098
Common Donkeys	90	59
Common Pigs	67	23
Common Sheep	233	142
Total Common Stock	2018	2044

Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	8404	6836
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	1718	1879
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	10122	8715
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	10422	8880

2016/8706 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT

RESUME

Mr Deakin advised the Court that one or two small Commoners were very late in paying their marking fees for animals already depastured. The Acting Clerk is writing to those concerned.

**The Head Agister left the meeting.**

#### **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**

2016/8707 TRAFFIC IN LINWOOD

I thank Richard Deacon for his two presentments, in February and again in May, regarding excess traffic in Linwood. I have been writing to Hampshire County Council, and I have at last received a positive reply from Councillor Rob Humby, who has recently taken on the Transport and Environment portfolio.

Councillor Humby has agreed to meet and I will update the Court when I have further news.

#### **ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT**

2016/8708 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR MAY 2016

The Agisters attended 3 accidents in May 2016. This compares with 2 in May last year.

A cow was injured, a pony escaped injury and in one instance nothing was found.

1 Accident was not reported

2 accidents occurred in the dark, and 1 in daylight

2 of the motorists involved were local.

May saw four consecutive weeks with no road traffic accidents, sadly this lull was brought to an abrupt end last week with four incidents. One of which was a hit and run near Burley Golf Course on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June at approximately 11.30pm. A roan Shetland cross mare was killed.

The vehicle involved is thought to be a Jaguar S Type and anyone with any information is urged to call the police on 101 or the Verderers Office.

#### **THE SPEED CAMERA VAN**

106 drivers were caught speeding on the unfenced Forest roads in May 2016.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR**

### **2016/8709 NEW FOREST DESIGN PLAN**

In May Harry Oram used the opportunity of an open Court to plea for continued long term production of quality conifer timber from 10% of the Inclosure land whose site conditions are not suitable for heathland restoration or oak plantations. The plea was to keep the Forest working.

These comments were in reference to the long term management proposals for the woodland Inclosures of the Forest. These proposals are currently open for consultation. They broadly indicate a gradual transition to more native woodland, increasing areas of ancient pasture woodland and some restoration of heathland habitats.

The plans under consultation only cover management for the next 10 years, but they also set out a long term vision for the character of woodlands in 200 years' time. Managing woodland is a long term business and the character of some of the woodlands we want to develop will only be enjoyed by our great, great, great, great grandchildren.

To achieve this vision requires a very gradual change delivered by regular management activity over a long time. In general we visit each woodland once every 5-10 years. Each year, somewhere in the Forest, we will be working in the woodlands.

The New Forest landscape has been shaped by man's activity for over 1000 years and it will continue to be managed by man for many more centuries – there's no shortage of work!!

Harry's plea is that conifers should be a component of the future Forest landscape and be managed to contribute quality timber. In practice the plans do indicate that conifers will be a component of the landscape for many years to come but proportion of native trees will gradually increase. We can calculate future timber production and we know that the long term transitions within the plans do allow conifer timber production to be sustained at current levels for the next 40 years.

We appreciate that understanding the detail of the proposals and the context within which the proposals have been considered is complex. We have already talked with a wide range of people to form these proposals and the plans remain open for more comment until 4 July. We encourage anyone to make comment and we look forward to considering a wide range of views!

## **PRESENTMENTS**

### **2016/8710 FOREST DESIGN PLAN**

Presentment by Mary Gray, Practising Commoner

'Official Verderer, The Verderers. May I also address Forestry Commission Representative?

At May's open Court I verbally supported Mr Harry Oram's Presentment, not knowing he would be bringing this before you.

I support him all the way, my knowledge of this plan is minimal compared to his!!

Looking to the future, we do need to keep this a working Forest. All love to see hard woods, needing at the same time a mix of Conifer and Birch, the like to be harvested for its use within inclosures!

Realising they must be controlled, not to have seeding Firs and the like straying onto open forest to affect grazing!! Those who remember my late father, George Rockley, strongly opposed such a happening!

With today's forestry skills this should be out of the question.

As always we need a balance, my theory on the Parish Council, like a good fruit cake, we need a good mixture for best results.

My fears on this issue are leaning toward being even more park like for the future. Leisure and pleasure being the theme of this 21<sup>st</sup> Century, only lasting while our economy is sound! The day may come when we have to get back to basics, using our own resources. Too late when all is gone, using hardwoods take a life time to grow and longer. Beautiful as they are the country's growth cannot live on beauty alone!

2016/8711 HIGHWAY FENCING

Presentment by Mr Brian Ingram, Practising Commoner

'On the Saturday of the last bank holiday weekend my cattle escaped through the highway fencing on the B3054 between the cattle grid and the A326 Heath Roundabout. The cattle were removed from the road twice on the same day, luckily this all happened in daylight or a serious accident could have occurred.

The Verderers attended and looked at the fencing with a Hampshire Highways representative who didn't think that the fence required repair. A repair was eventually carried out which consists of two new stakes. This repair is simply not acceptable nor does it make the fence stock proof; the roadside fencing in the Forest should be a priority.

It is common practice for farmers to tie up or secure fences with baling twine but this is not acceptable on the Forests fenced roads.'

2016/8712 FOREST DESIGN PLAN

Presentment by Brian Tarnoff, New Forest Association, Chair Habitat and Landscape Committee

'With your patience, I'd like to start with a quote:

"A significant proportion of woodlands in the Inclosures will be modified to restore pasture woodlands, heathlands, valley mires and Ancient and Semi-Natural native woodland where these are appropriate. A consequence of the modification will be that the present overall balance between broadleaves and conifers will be changed in favour of broadleaves. The pace of this modification will depend on markets, availability of resources and a desire to avoid unnecessary premature felling of existing growing trees, the removal of which will be necessary for restoration of habitats". – Plan for the Inclosures, Minister's Mandate For the Forest 1999 – 2008 (July 1999)

The NFA find that the proposed Forest Design Plan comes much closer to delivering on this promise than the plan made a decade ago. Additionally it is in keeping with policies and directives including Policy on ancient Woodland Sites, the SAC management plan, The Lawton White Paper and even an aesthetic nuance demanded by the 1877 New Forest Act.

Last month the court heard an accusation that the plan would reduce the Forest to an artificial park. A mono-cultural crop of uncertain or decreasing commercial value, little or no habitat value is the very definition of a fake landscape held in aspic. While we can't ask the Forestry Commission to guarantee the economic future of forestry, a more diverse woodland would be safer for future climate change and biosecurity. The Forest has been a working forest long before the proliferation of blocks of non- native conifers, and can be again. Plantation and managed woodland habitat restoration may co-exist with a naturally structured functional ecosystem.

The NFA welcomes the broad intent of the plan. However, we find the current draft flawed at the detail level, the good intentions have not been applied in a way that will produce the needed functional habitat. Without serious attention to these details, the plan would likely fail the habitats regulation hurdles of the inspectorate. The NFA offer the Forestry Commission our resources and experienced ecologists to assist and will encourage like-minded knowledgeable organizations to follow suit. We hope the Verderers may add their collective wisdom of the Forest's ecology, history and law to our efforts.

NOTES:

Minister's Mandate For the Forest 1999-2008

Plan for the Inclosures

- (i) A significant proportion of woodlands in the Inclosures will be modified to restore pasture woodlands, heathlands, valley mires and Ancient and Semi-Natural native woodland where these are appropriate. A consequence of the modification will be that the present overall balance between broadleaves and conifers will be changed in favour of broadleaves. The pace of this modification will depend on markets, availability of resources and a desire to avoid unnecessary premature felling of existing growing trees, the removal of which will be necessary for restoration of habitats.
- (ii) No broadleaved woodland will be regenerated with conifers
- (iii) The regeneration of broadleaved areas will be managed with an emphasis on conservation of nature and amenity. For oaks, beech and Sweet chestnut, stand rotations will be at least 200 years with cleared patches for regeneration thereafter not exceeding one acre.'

2016/8713 WETLAND RESTORATIONS

Presentment by Brian Tarnoff, New Forest Association, Chair Habitat and Landscape Committee

'We also trust that the Verderers can spot the spurious elements of disputes raised in this court with the Forestry Commission's program of HLS funded Wetland Restorations. The NFA would like to affirm our support for these projects, adding again the consensus of our ecologists to those of the Hampshire and IOW Wildlife Trust, RSPB and Ringwood Natural History Society. WE agree with Natural England that these works should help to restore these precious habitats to "favourable" condition, and point out that in many cases they will also undo engineering mistakes of the past and make these areas more resilient under flooding conditions. We thank the Forestry Commission for their untiring efforts in seeing these through.

2016/8714 LATCHMOOR STREAM RESTORATION

Presentment by Margaret Bunyard, Practising Commoner

'Official Verderer, Verderers, good morning,

I am Margaret Bunyard, I live at Ogdens and am a turning out Commoner. Last week a group of us followed the Latchmore stream from Claypits Bottom through Islands Thorns, Amberwood and Alderhill, down to Latchmore Shade. We took with us the Lidar maps for the area which mark the proposed infilling and stream diversions. Lidar is only reliable if it is used in conjunction with observation which is why archaeologists routinely ground-truth the results, as they did in the recent Lidar survey of the Forest. It is obvious that desk-based analysis has been deemed sufficient and neither ground-truthing nor levelling has been done for the proposed 'restoration' of Latchmore Stream. In some crucial sections this mapping is quite clearly wrong, and in one case, 9 metres out, so if the work were to follow the Lidar, the stream would need to flow uphill. This is surreal: a beautiful stream to be in-filled and a new one dug uphill? It's as nonsensical as something out of Alice in Wonderland, but worryingly, this is real life, and the HLSS partnership is driving it.

The natural topography makes the plans impossible in places, not only because of the levels, but because of the underlying geology, which forces water to flow the way it does. And then there are the drainage ditches. Looking at the stream and the way tree roots are exposed, it is easy to see that the side drains that are necessary for commercial tree growing caused much of the erosion in the first place and are still carrying a lot of water. There are 76 ditches entering the stream along one short section, but while there are plans to fell the trees and fill in the stream, there are no plans to infill these ditches. Thousands of tons of imported material will be needed to fill in the ancient stream, whose beds, rich in fossils, pre-date the English Channel. This infill will then be washed

downstream, the area destroyed and money wasted for nothing.

We noted various protected species on our walk, watched a fly-catcher and saw a large area of Pilwort growing near the stream, both of these, of course carrying the highest protection, and we thought of the 16 other red-listed species that will be threatened if the work goes ahead to say nothing of the otter, sea trout, eel and lamprey that have been seen there.

Natural England's advice was that an EIA was necessary for the Latchmore Catchment "and for sites such as this". For Wootton which is a RAMSAR, SPA, SAC and SSSI site there is nothing, and its 'restoration' scheme goes to planning on 21<sup>st</sup> of this month, with no EIA to highlight the high number of SAC species already to be found there. The Secretary of State EIA Screening Direction for Pondhead says in the Written Statement that for Schedule 2 Development under 1b), permanent changes to the character of more than 5 hectares of land 'are more likely to indicate that EIA is required' ( according to the Planning Regulations Schedule 2 it's only 1 hectare). The area of development at Wootton is at least 30 hectares and the affected area significantly more. In fact if there is likely to be a "significant effect" there is no threshold, and who could claim that infilling a stream that already has an abundance of the rarest flora and fauna will not have a 'significant effect'?

I have stated in the past that my concern has only been for Latchmore with its special character, and not anxiety about wet restoration as a whole. However the ever growing catalogue of destruction at other places has changed that. Broomy/Amberslade has now been completely re-landscaped and infilled after only 1 year. Following a previous attempt to 'restore' the stream in 2007, it has now been eliminated altogether. Harvestslade is disintegrating; the infill has caused large beaches to form and banks to collapse, while clay and hoggin have created nick points.

The estimated cost for the Harvestslade work was £65,000; it was in fact £374,000 without the Forestry Commission charges. The cost of wetland restoration, as it is carried out by HLSS is just too high.

To quote from Richard Buxton, Environmental and Public Law Solicitor, 'lack of consistency undermines the local community's confidence in the planning system in relation to regulation of matters affecting biodiversity interests of the highest importance'. This must be of concern to the Verderers whose aims include 'to conserve the traditional landscape, wildlife and aesthetic character (of the New Forest) including its flora and fauna, peacefulness, natural beauty and cultural heritage'. One can only assume that Verderers have not had the opportunity to examine these sites objectively, on the ground. Please find time to do so before it is all too late. Thank you for listening.'

### **IN COMMITTEE in the Library**

#### **CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS**

2016/8715 FOREST DESIGN PLAN

DISCHARGE

Mrs Gray's presentment was discussed; it was agreed that the Deputy Surveyor's presentment may have allayed her fears.

Mr Tarnoff's presentment was also discussed.

Mr Pasmore asked for the notes from the workshop discussion of the Forest Design plan. Mrs Westerhoff said she was still awaiting the maps from the FC; the Deputy Surveyor agreed to chase them up.

Action DS

2016/8716 HIGHWAY FENCING

DISCHARGE

Mr Readhead said he had been involved with the fence onto the A326, animals have escaped through the fencing three times. He continued that the entire stretch of fence is mostly held together with binder twine and is in need of replacement. Cllr Heron suggested that the topic was added to the agenda of the meeting with HCC Cllr Rob Humby but that he should be informed prior to the meeting.

Mr Pasmore said he believes the office have a booklet on suitable stock proof fencing and felt it may be beneficial to pass a copy to the HCC Contractor. Cllr Heron continued the County Council are currently in the process of reappointing a main contractor for the maintenance of Hampshire Highways and that clauses have been included in this tender relating to the unique circumstances of the New Forest.

2016/8717 LATCHMOOR STREAM RESTORATION

DISCHARGE

Mrs Bunyard's presentment was discussed, several questions were asked, and the Deputy Surveyor committed to check the details of the plan.

Action DS

The Acting Clerk will email Mrs Bunyard's presentment to Lawrence Shaw at the New Forest National Park and ask for his comments regarding the LIDAR data.

Action Acting Clerk

#### SUBMISSIONS BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2016/8718 BT FIBRE OPTIC CABLE INSTALLATION TO THE WARRENS, LINFORD

DISCHARGE

The Land Agent apologised for the confusing number of maps and photographs submitted by BT and proceeded to explain the proposed route to the Court.

The Official Verderer and Mrs Westerhoff visited the site and found the plans misleading as the maps show the cable installed under the road, but the photographs show them under the verge.

Mrs Westerhoff said Southern Electricity had installed new poles in the area and BT were supposed to be moving the phone lines to the new shared poles and remove their existing poles. Mrs Westerhoff asked the Land Agent to ensure that BT removes the old poles as agreed some time ago. The Official Verderer added that the protection around the old pole stays had collapsed and is now a risk to stock in more than one location.

Action List

Mr Heron raised his concerns about additional infrastructure on the Forest that is for private not public benefit, with the possibility of the Court soon receiving such applications frequently. He said that in order to deliver faster broadband for as many residents as possible with the least impact on the Forest, the priority should be the support of new infrastructure by BT that will be of benefit to all households in that area.

Mr Mills said that BT and Hampshire County Council are not providing the service the public require. He voiced his sympathy for the business owner.

Action PG

The Court is concerned at the lack of information provided by BT; the Official Verderer asked the Land Agent to go back to BT for more information regarding the route, the size of the manholes, and what BT's

Action PG



plans are for protecting the tree roots along the proposed route.

Mr Dowsett asked the Land Agent to ensure that if run along the verge the cables would be deep enough not to interfere with any future verge restoration in the area.

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

2016/8719 BEECH TREES DAMAGED BY PONIES DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer asked if Mr Deakin and the Deputy Surveyor had come to a conclusion about the Crown employee refusing to keep his ponies off the forest.

The Deputy Surveyor said that it has been established that the employee is turning out under Crown Privilege; but without photographic evidence, he feels unable to enforce the animal's permanent removal from the Forest.

Mr Deakin said that he did not have photographic evidence, only a witness statement, so the animal concerned should be released back on to the Forest. No doubt local commoners or the local Agister will photograph it eating bark in due course.

Miss Macnair said she hated seeing the ponies punished for what is man's fault. She continued that the ponies are simply reacting naturally to their environment and just trying to survive.

## **SSSI RESTORATION WORKS**

2016/8720 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor provided an updated list.

2016/8721 COWLEY'S HEATH DISCHARGE

Mr Readhead said he has attended a meeting with Dave Morris regarding the drainage at Cowley's Heath, and Sarah Oakley is to propose a way forward.

2016/8722 SITE VISIT TO DRIVER'S NURSERY AND POUND HILL RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor advised the Court that the site visit has been scheduled for Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June. Invitations will be sent out to all Verderers as soon as possible.

Action DS

2016/8723 PONDHEAD WETLAND RESTORATION DISCHARGE

In response to an email sent to the Official Verderer, Mr Readhead has met with Mrs Sally Hayward of Matley Cottage and Mr Richard Mabbutt of Pondhead Farm and discussed the proposed plans. The agreed plans have been passed to the FC. The Official Verderer said the planning application is due for submission on the 21<sup>st</sup> June. The Deputy Surveyor said he appreciated Mr Readhead's intervention.

## **ACTION LIST**

2016/8724 WINDBLOWN TREE OVER A337 FENCE DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor said he has been told by Robin Mair that the final tree has been removed. Agister Napthine to confirm he is happy that the fence is now stock proof.

2016/8725 SWAN GREEN CRICKET PAVILION DISCHARGE

The Land Agent advised that the wildlife surveys are now in the second stage. Bats may possibly be roosting in the pavilion, which may delay the demolition until August 2017.

## ENCROACHMENTS

2016/8726 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.

2016/8727 WAYFARERS, BURLEY DISCHARGE

The Land Agent advised he and Natural England are discussing a way to move this forward.

2016/8728 PONY PROOF BINS DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer thanked the Land Agent for his activity and confirmed that the concrete paving slabs have been removed from under the three replacement bins in East Boldre, and the grazing will eventually recover.

The Land Agent has been asked by NFDC if the Verderers will require an application for every new bin. The Official Verderer said that the new wooden bins are certainly more in keeping with the forest landscape than the old blue plastic bins, so he was happy for bins to be replaced like for like so long as the grazing was not dug up or disturbed. New bin sites, however, will require Verderers' consent via a submission to the Court.

2016/8729 MCDONALD'S PICKET POST DISCHARGE

Mr Heron said he was surprised at the lack of a response from McDonald's about the damaged fence, as he had heard that the franchise owner has handed out his personal and home numbers to the Parish and District Council so he could resolve problems instantly.

The Official Verderer said that locally litter was under control by the McDonald's litter pick, but a litter problem has been created further into the Forest. He continued that many of the local Forest car parks outside the franchisee's litter-picking area could be found strewn with McDonald's litter.

2016/8730 CANTERTON COTTAGE, CANTERTON DISCHARGE

The Land Agent confirmed that the gravel has now been replaced with hoggins and the brick rubble has been moved and the area is being left to re-grass.

2016/8731 BELMORE, LINWOOD DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett advised the Court that he had visited the site with the Estates Keeper to view the extent of unauthorised materials on the open Forest. The Estates Keeper, Estates Officer and Assistant Land Agent have subsequently been invited to meet the property owner to discuss the removal of the materials.

2016/8732 NEW COMMONER'S DWELLING AT CULVERLEY

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin told the Court that a condition of the planning consent for the new Commoner's dwelling at Culverley was the placement of several concrete blocks on the Forest to protect trees from delivery lorries driving over the roots. The Official Verderer said he had ridden over there and had taken some photographs which he was planning to send to Steve Avery of the NPA stating that it is not entitled to make it a condition of the planning application, as it requires Natural England and Verderers consent.

Mr Deakin said he was not complaining about the purpose of the blocks, but that the NPA just thought they could put them there.

Mr Heron said that the NPA should not ask the Verderers for consent, but that it is up to the applicant to ensure that planners come up with conditions that can be met.

Mr Deakin said he has heard that Heras fencing may be put on the Forest due to a neighbour objecting. The Land Agent said that a neighbour had drawn the planner's attention to a lot of things, but that there is currently no damage to the trees.

2016/8733 DRAGON'S TEETH AT BRAMSHAW TELEGRAPH

DISCHARGE

Mr Pasmore said he had noticed some large dragon's teeth had appeared outside Franchise's Cottage at Bramshaw Telegraph and he wondered if the occupier had put them there. Mr Dowsett replied they had been installed by the FC as part of the verge restoration project, with the support of the property owner, to prevent lorries using the entrance as a parking area while waiting for the Pound Bottom Landfill Site to open. Mr Dowsett continued that the FC is waiting for Farwells to start the ditching work.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

2016/8734 LAURENCE PLATT

DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett said that the Assistant Land Agent, Laurence Platt, was leaving soon to take up his new post as Assistant Land Agent for the FC in the Forest of Dean. Mr Dowsett continued that Mr Platt had been of great benefit to the Court by resolving encroachments and assisting the Verge Restoration Project. Mr Dowsett personally asked the Deputy Surveyor to pass on his profound thanks to Laurence for all his help.

The Court all thanked Mr Platt and wished him the very best for his future.

2016/8735 PANNAGE

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin said the Staff Committee has proposed the 12<sup>th</sup> September as the start date for Pannage this year. The Deputy Surveyor said he would speak to his Head Keeper and announce his decision at next month's

Court.

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|-----------|---|---|
| 2016/8736 | <p><b>LOCKED GATES IN PARK GROUND AND PARKHILL INCLOSURES</b></p> <p>Mr Pasmore has received a complaint that several ride gates are locked in Park Ground and Park Hill Inclosure. The Deputy Surveyor will investigate.</p>   | <p><b>ACTION LIST</b><br/>Action DS</p> |
| 2016/8737 | <p><b>BRIDGE AT FLETCHERS THORNS</b></p> <p>Mr Pasmore said he has been told that work is about to start on a cycle bridge at Queens Bower, and asked if planning consent had been obtained.</p> <p>The Official Verderer said that the plans were discussed last year before Mr Pasmore re-joined the Court, and it was understood that, being inside an inclosure, the location was outside the Verderers' jurisdiction.</p> <p>The Deputy Surveyor will check that planning consent was sought and will find the plans for Mr Pasmore.</p> | <p><b>RESUME</b></p> <p>Action DS</p>   |
| 2016/8738 | <p><b>YEW TREE COTTAGE, IPERS BRIDGE</b></p> <p>The Land Agent informed the Court of an urgent subsidence claim that needed actioning before the end of the month. He will forward plans to the Verderers as soon as possible.</p>  | <p><b>RESUME</b></p>                    |

**The Deputy Surveyor and Land Agent left the meeting**

#### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- |           |   |                         |
|-----------|---|-------------------------|
| 2016/8739 | <p><b>FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR MAY 2016</b></p> <p>The Financial Statement was noted.</p>  | <p><b>RESUME</b></p>    |
| 2016/8740 | <p><b>AUDITED ACCOUNTS</b></p> <p>The Audited Accounts were proposed by Mr Deakin and seconded by Mr Readhead, and the Official Verderer was authorised to sign them.</p> <p>Mr Mills was not present for the discussion.</p> | <p><b>DISCHARGE</b></p> |

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

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| 2016/8741 | <p><b>APPLESLADE POUND</b></p> <p>Mr Deakin told the Court about an incident that occurred whilst a Commoner was using Appleslade pound without an Agister present. The Commoner's son-in-law had stepped back, whilst opening the gate, onto a nail which had gone through his foot resulting in a trip to A&amp;E.</p> <p>The pounds are routinely inspected at least once a year, but are heavily used throughout the year. It is impossible to guarantee they are safe for use at all times. Mr Heron suggested that the Agisters have a checklist to follow when carrying out inspections.</p> <p>The Official Verderer said it is important to learn from this incident: contractors remove nails from the old posts and rails; and casual users should report any damage.</p> | <p><b>DISCHARGE</b></p> <p>Action RD</p> |
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## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2016/8742 STALLIONS

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin told the Court that of the 15 stallions turned out only, 12 stayed out for the full 4 weeks. Two had to be brought in due to becoming injured.

One was removed following complaints from a horse rider in Burley. Miss Macnair said it was the wrong decision to remove the stallion, it being the rider's responsibility to avoid the stallion.

The Official Verderer asked if another stallion had been turned out in his place; Mr Deakin replied not, for fears of further complaints from the local rider.

Mr Mills suggested that some advice to horse riders should be issued before the stallions are turned out next year. It was discussed that stallions are an essential part of the management of the Forest, and they are only turned out once a year for a very short period of time. The Forest is enormous, and with only 15 stallions occupying very small areas, there is always somewhere else to ride.

The Official Verderer said he fully supported Mr Deakin's decision to remove the stallion, and thanked him for making a common sense decision.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 11:58 hrs.

Donna Mary  
Official Verderer  
24 July 2016