

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 20th May 2015 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
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Senior Elected Verderer
	Mr G M H Mills	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mr R Stride	Co-opted Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer
APOLOGIES	Mr A Gerrelli	Elected Verderer
	Mr Clive Maton	National Park Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J R Gerrelli	Head Agister

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2015/7920 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 15th April 2015 were approved and signed.

2015/7921 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Official Verderer, the Elected Verderers and Mr Stride all declared an interest in the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, the Verderers Grazing Scheme and Single Farm Payment / new Basic Payment Scheme.

Mr Hallam Mills declared an interest in HLS Schemes as his Estate is in Higher Level Stewardship and borders the perambulation of the New Forest. He also declared an interest in the new Basic Payment Scheme, although not as a practising commoner. In addition, Mr Mills' Estate is involved in the Better Boundaries Project, run by the New Forest Land Advice Service with support from Natural England. The Estate has a tenant who is a Commoner. Mr Mills is also a Patron of the New Forest Trust.

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

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

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

Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Stride are tenants of the Forestry Commission.

2015/7922 CONDITION OF STOCK & THE WELFARE TOUR

RESUME

The Head Agister reported that the condition of stock is good. This was reflected in the success of the recent Welfare Tour of the Forest. Over 500 ponies were seen, along with several large herds of cattle and a lot of donkeys.

The representative of one of the welfare bodies remarked that having seen some ponies on the Forest which are not fat, but are obviously in good overall health, he may revise his advice in connection with lean looking animals in fields.

One or two ponies were seen that the Agisters will keep an eye on over the next few weeks, but nothing gave cause for concern.

Mrs Campbell suggested more stallions should be turned out as only four foals were seen and the New Forest Pony has been placed on the Rare Breeds Survival Trust Watch List.

Members of the Court agreed that there is a lack of filly foals, however, it was pointed out that we have almost a year before a decision for 2016 has to be made, and the market for colt foals will be monitored over that time. It was agreed that to breed more foals with the current market situation would not be considered responsible when there are so many unwanted equines.

Ten stallions have been turned out this month, and they will remain out for a full four weeks this year.

2015/7923 REPORT ON ANIMALS REMOVED FROM THE FOREST

RESUME

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

2015/7924 STOCK DEATHS - OTHER THAN ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

RESUME

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

2015/7925 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

RESUME

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Forest Ponies	4513	4284
Forest Cattle	2295	2280
Forest Donkeys	105	96
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	6913	6660
Common Ponies	659	701
Common Cattle	869	1030
Common Donkeys	92	59
Common Pigs	33	23
Common Sheep	179	142
Total Common Stock	1832	1955
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	6913	6660
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	1620	1790
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	8533	8450
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	8745	8615

2015/7926 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT

RESUME

No byelaw offences have been reported.

2015/7927 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS

RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

Head Agister Jonathan Gerrelli left the meeting.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Paul Gurgeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

APOLOGIES: Mr Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2015/7928 BLOCKAGES IN THE BEAULIEU RIVER

Thank you to Brian Ingram for drawing to the Court's attention the blockages in the Beaulieu River. The Deputy Surveyor has told us that if private land is being flooded, he will find a solution. He will investigate and respond by way of an announcement at June's Court.

2015/7929 BRAMSHAW GOLF COURSE ALTERATIONS – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Thank you to Mrs Mary Gray for alerting the Court to the submission of the planning application for Bramshaw Golf Course's alterations. We have checked the planning application, and it aligns with our ambition to separate golf from cattle at the first tee. It will also lead to an area of car park restored to open forest grazing, the watercourse restored and some old paths also restored to grazing. Providing that consent is granted by the local planning authority without significant alteration, the Forest will benefit from the work by restoration of natural vegetation on former tees and current gravel areas, and by restoration of the water course.

2015/7930 REFLECTIVE COLLARS FOR PONIES

Thank you to Neil McGrigor for asking us to make the wearing of reflective collars compulsory. We give away reflective collars free of charge to commoners for their stock, for cattle as well as ponies. Much as we would like to have all ponies wearing collars, it is simply not possible to enforce it for practical reasons, as not all ponies are caught on the drifts; and even when they do come in to the pound, some ponies are expert at rubbing their reflective collars off on the nearest tree branch.

2015/7931 REDUNDANT HIGHWAY AUTHORITY PARAPHERNALIA

And finally, thank you to Mike Eccles for drawing our attention to the abandoned temporary road signs, barriers, sandbags and cones at the railway bridge in Balmer Lawn Road. The Clerk contacted Hampshire County Council's Highways department, and I am pleased to say that the mess was removed. This part of the forest now looks much tidier.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2015/7932 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR APRIL 2015

The Agisters attended 4 accidents in April all involving ponies. This compares with 6 accidents in April last year.

2 ponies were killed outright, 1 was fatally injured and had to be destroyed by the Agister and 1 was injured.

2 of the accidents occurred in daylight.

2 accidents have not been reported. The two which were, involved local drivers, one in a car, the other in a small van.

23 animals have been killed or injured so far this year, compared with 20 by this time last year.

THE SPEED CAMERA VAN

482 motorists were caught driving over the speed limit on the unfenced roads in April.

On Monday of this week, the speed camera van was operating on Beaulieu Heath. A Nissan 4x4 was recorded doing 71 mph. The driver will be summoned to attend Court in due course.

PRESENTMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR

There were no Presentments on behalf of the Deputy Surveyor.

PRESENTMENTS

2015/7933 NEW FOREST STALLION – ASHDENE RECORD
Presentment by Mr Raymond Readhead

'I Raymond Readhead would like to make this presentment regarding my stallion Ashdene Record.

Two years ago on the East Boldre drift a yearling colt of mine came in. I discussed with the senior Agister the colt's merit and we both agreed it would be worth keeping him as a stallion.

As the Verderers inspection in 2014, the colt was passed. I then presented him to the vet for inspection but he was not quiet enough for the vet to inspect so we took him away and presented him to our local vet, Mr Tunney, who passed him on a temporary licence owing to one testicle being slightly smaller than the other. He was then selected to be turned out on the Forest and checking with the Agister who said some of the mares he was running were in foal.

In 2015 the colt was presented to the Verderers inspection from which he was passed. However Mr Tunney did not carry out his vet inspection as the pony would not stand still and asked him to be taken away to get quieter, this I did.

Following a Verderers Staff meeting on 21st April to discuss which stallions would be turned out for 2015 I was invited by the senior Verderer to bring Ashdene Record to his premises that evening when he had the Verderers vet Mr Hughes attending. Mr Hughes inspected the stallion in an open pen with no problems and signed him off as being fit to run the Forest but made the comment that one testicle was larger than the other.

On April 25th I delivered the signed Vet's form to the New Forest Pony Breeders office at Bransgore. Then on 1st May I received a telephone call from Sue Westwood to say that the New Forest Pony Breeders vet had now failed Ashdene Record without even inspecting him.

On the same day an envelope was put through my letter box saying the stallion was not approved.

Owing to the circumstances over this stallion I would ask the following questions for clarification:-

1. How can a vet turn down a stallion without an inspection.
2. As the Verderers' vet passed the stallion why did the Pony Breeders need to ask a vet that hadn't even inspected him for a decision.
3. It's my opinion that once an inspection has been carried out by a vet and signed it is the Verderers decision whether or not it can run on the Forest. Not the Pony Breeders'.

2015/7934 PONDHEAD (REVISED RESTORATION PROJECT APPLICATION)
Presentment by Mrs Sally Hayward of Matley Cottage

Mrs Hayward returned to the Court to express her continued concern over these proposals. She firstly thanked the Court for listening to her concerns in the first place.

Mrs Hayward said she has submitted her objection online but no new ecological data has been presented and she said the report she submitted has been ignored.

Mrs Hayward met Natural England and the Forestry Commission on site. However the representative from NE said that he didn't understand what is happening on Parkhill Lawn. NE and the FC representatives both felt that moving the bridge from its historical location could recreate problems elsewhere.

Mrs Hayward said the lack of data and science bother her. She understood that the flood risk will be reduced by lowering the drain at the confluence but she was not happy that the culvert is being refused. She felt proper engineering is needed to avoid increasing the flood risk. Mrs Hayward also questioned the LIDAR data and asked how many people would trust a report that places Limewood Hotel which is on the top of the hill, 2m lower than the cottages on the lawn below it.

2015/7935 BRAMSHAW GOLF CLUB
Presentment by Mrs Mary Gray

Mrs Gray remarked that on her way into Court this morning she overheard someone say 'here comes Mrs Gray to complain about the Golf Course'! Mrs Gray said she much appreciates the time spent by the Court on the issues surrounding the Golf Club. The Official Verderer thanked her for saying so.

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2015/7936 PONDHEAD

RESUME

The Forestry Commission was asked to check the LIDAR data for accuracy.

Action
N Wardlaw

Mrs Westerhoff said she would speak to Mr Greenslade of NE, whose remarks about botany had clearly been misinterpreted by Mrs Hayward.

Action
DW

Mr Nick Wardlaw at the Forestry Commission advised the Clerk that the FC will not undertake the permanent maintenance of the culvert because of the cost. Because of that, Hampshire County Council (which is responsible for the issuing of Ordinary Watercourse Consents) won't approve the culvert, because it believes that without maintenance there is a risk of blockage. The latest proposal, therefore, is to construct a gravel

stock crossing in the hope of limiting potential poaching damage by stock trying to cross the watercourse.

Mr Grugeon suggested that the proposal for a gravel stock crossing should be accepted with the proviso that if, in future, it proves not to be satisfactory, the Forestry Commission agrees to construct a culvert and accept the ongoing maintenance that will be required. It was agreed that the Official Verderer should write to the Deputy Surveyor setting out the Court's concerns that the project is being delayed and asking for the Forestry Commission to agree to this suggestion.

Action
OV

2015/7937 MRS GRAY

DISCHARGE

Everyone agreed it is nice that Mrs Gray said thank you.

SUBMISSIONS BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2015/7938 PROPOSED WORKS TO HALT EROSION UNDER LINBROOK BRIDGE DISCHARGE

Everyone agreed it is important to ensure this traditional old bridge is preserved and the present undercutting by the watercourse needs to be resolved. The proposals were therefore accepted, with some minor changes suggested for the upstream Northern bank. A condition of the Court's approval is that the area of restoration must be fenced temporarily for two growing seasons to aid consolidation and prevent poaching by stock. Post and rail must be used and the fence maintained to ensure that it does not become a hazard to stock. Mr Grugeon confirmed the Forestry Commission will remove the fence at the end of the second summer.

Action
PG

Consent was therefore given subject to the temporary fence, and the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2015/7939 BURLEY GOLF COURSE – DRAFT PROPOSALS

RESUME

This matter was resumed to allow time for further consideration of the proposals. Mr Readhead agreed to consider the proposals and report to the Court in June.

Action
DR

Meanwhile, Mrs Macnair asked for litter clearance to be extended to the whole of the area covered by the Club's licence. Mr Grugeon will pass this onto the Golf Club.

2015/7940 AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE SURVEY – REVISED SUBMISSION

DISCHARGE

The Court was satisfied of the need for the survey and it was agreed in principle.

Action
PG

However, the actual locations for the siting of the refugia need to be agreed. This will be delegated to the Agisters and it was suggested that the Keepers also need to be involved.

Action
RD/Clerk?

The use of Onduline sheets was approved. The refugia must be removed by the end of October.

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

2015/7941	CAR FREE DITCHING & VERGE PROTECTION	RESUME
	Ditching works are progressing. Some of the Parish Councils have now become involved in identifying where there are problem areas. Gary North is reviewing the programme.	
	The Official Verderer said he is meeting Gary North on 9 th June at Tile Barn Lane to discuss how best to protect the verge there.	Action DS
	It was remarked that the double ditch in Forest Road Burley has still not been sorted out.	
	Mr Dowsett reported that members of the Western Escarpment Conservation Area Group are very proactive with regards to verge protection. A survey has highlighted that residents are concerned about verge damage and parking outside properties. This is felt to be very positive and it will be very interesting to see how the Parish Councils suggest the problem should be dealt with.	Action OV
	The Official Verderer said he will be speaking to the Agent of the Beaulieu Estate to see if they would like to join in with the project as they are known to have similar concerns.	Action OV
	Mr Mills suggested the planners should be considering this issue in the Partnership Plan.	
2015/7942	VERGE PARKING AT PILLEY ALLOTMENTS	DISCHARGE
	Tony Gerrelli and the local Agister Robert Maton will meet with Gary North.	
2015/7943	HIGHWAY FENCING DEFECTS	DISCHARGE
	The Clerk contacted Mr Richard Bastow at Hampshire County Highways and informed him of the Court's concerns regarding the longstanding fencing defects. The problems have now been resolved.	
2015/7944	ORDNANCE AT MATLEY	RESUME
	The MOD is due to undertake a walkover of the site shortly. A map was provided by Mr Grugeon showing the area (105ha) that has been demarcated as hazardous since 2012. It is understood that the MOD is not now expecting to find any ordnance in such a wide area. There is a proposed revised demarcation area of approx. 19ha within which is a 5ha impact zone where it is expected most of the ordnance will be found.	
	Normal Forest management operations should be able to be resumed in the larger area. The red and white demarcation poles will therefore be repositioned and those which are not needed removed.	
2015/7945	LITTER	DISCHARGE
	Mr Dowsett reported that he has met with the Deputy Surveyor on this issue. The Litter Advisory Group is being reconvened to address the problem further.	

£40,000 is allocated for litter removal in the Forest. There are two contracts, one covering emptying litter bins in car parks and dealing with fly tipping and the other dealing with roadside litter clearance. The latter is a responsive contract which means that when litter builds up on a particular road or area, a clearance operation is undertaken.

In addition the Volunteer Rangers are routinely undertaking clearance of litter in Forestry Commission car parks.

If monitoring shows that some roads are particularly bad, regular litter picks will be instituted.

Other problems include building and other materials from insecure loads on skips and lorries. This has been a particular problem in the past on the approach roads to the Pound Bottom Landfill Site in the north of the Forest.

Miss Macnair commented that the Thorney Hill road is particularly bad at the moment. Anyone who has noticed specific areas of litter build-up should contact Gary North.

Action
All

2015/7946 BARRIER AT BRAMSHAW DISCHARGE

This barrier has been erected.

2015/7947 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AT TILE BARN LANE, BROCKENHURST RESUME

The Official Verderer is meeting with Gary North on the 5th June to discuss how best to protect the verge from over-running by vehicles.

Action
OV/GN

2015/7948 EAST BOLDRE ROAD SIGNAGE RESUME

The Clerk is awaiting a response from Hampshire Highways.

Action Clerk

2015/7949 REPAIRS TO MINSTEAD BRIDLEWAY NO. 10 - LOWER CANTERTON RESUME

The Official Verderer and Mr Stride met with Sam Jones of Hampshire County Council Countryside Services. A way forward has been agreed. Mr Stride will meet the contractors on site.

Action
RS

2015/7950 WATER TOWER AT ROUNDHILL – SECURITY FENCE DISCHARGE

It was agreed that the present metal security fence should be replaced with a wholly wooden fence. A photograph showing what the fence will look like was provided. In addition, the area within the fence will be reduced as far as possible.

Action
PG

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2015/7951 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST RESUME

The Court was concerned that the list appears to have gone by the wayside and asked that it be kept up to date and copies provided when necessary.

Action
DS

2015/7952 SLUFTERS RESUME

Mr Stride reported that several fords have now been washed out and at least one is impassable. The Court asked Mr Stride to make

Action

arrangements to meet with the HLS Ecologist, Sarah Oakley, with a view to arranging for remedial works to be agreed and undertaken.

RS

ENCROACHMENTS

2015/7953 ENCROACHMENT LIST RESUME

This list also needs to be kept up to date and the Court provided with copies. Mr Grugeon apologised and said that he will make sure it is.

Action
PG

2015/7954 SEATS ON THE OPEN FOREST DISCHARGE

The bench at Hightown has been removed but it is not known whether the one at Bentley and the one at Berry Wood are still in situ. Mr Grugeon was asked to ensure they are removed.

Action
PG

2015/7955 THE LODGE, COLLEYS GREEN (The Pig) DISCHARGE

The encroachment has now been abated. A small area of concrete has also been removed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2015/7956 OBSTRUCTION TO WOODS CORNER POUND DISCHARGE

The Agisters have complained that a badly sited cycle event drinking station on the Forest adjacent to the pound at Woods Corner prevented access recently, on a day when access to the pound was needed. In addition, vehicles were parked all over the verges.

The Forestry Commission was asked to ensure that this doesn't happen in future. The access to the pound has been altered in an effort to prevent such problems, but on this occasion it was still blocked. Mr Grugeon noted the complaint and will find out whether the FC had been advised of the event. The Court suggested the Ranger team should be monitoring places like Woods Corner to try to prevent this sort of problem.

Action
DS

2015/7957 PIPERS, BISTERNE CLOSE, BURLEY DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin said he recently went to look at Pipers in Bisterne Close. This was the first time he had visited since the work had been completed. He was dismayed to see that the track has been extended and the verge eliminated. In addition, an 'everyday in use' type of car was parked to the side of the garage. The Court had been given to understand that the Forest access gate in front of the garage was only used for a classic car that was rarely taken out. Unfortunately it seems that the Land Agent may have been misled.

2015/7958 BROWNHILLS INCLOSURE DRIFTWAY RESUME

The driftway between Brownhills Inclosure and Wootton Farm Estate is almost impassable. Significant works will be required. The Official Verderer feels this is a project for the HLS's Terrestrial Restoration programme. The Court agreed.

Action
DS

2015/7959 PASSAGEWAY BETWEEN BROWNHILLS INCLOSURE AND THE A35 DISCHARGE

Work is due to be undertaken this summer to improve this passage.

2015/7960 NO CYCLING SIGNS

RESUME

Mr Readhead pointed out that the promised No Forest Cycling from this Car Park signs in certain car parks where cycle trespass is considered to be a problem, have never been erected. This was an HLS project. Cycle counters were installed at locations where illegal cycling was considered to be a problem, but it seems that some did not work. The Court asked for the signs to be erected as soon as possible.

Action
PG(DS)

Mr Grugeon left the meeting

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENT (NOT INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION)

2015/7961 LICENCING OF STALLIONS AND ASHDENE RECORD

DISCHARGE

It was agreed that the licencing of stallions is the remit of the New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society. The Verderers only select from the pool of stallions which have been licenced by the Society because of the desire to ensure that only pure bred New Forest Ponies are sired on the Forest and that their progeny are registerable either as pure or part bred New Forest.

Mr Deakin said he is concerned that recently we have paid for two colts to be in the grazing at Cadland that have subsequently failed their second vetting. It was, however, accepted that there is little that can be done if a colt is issued with a temporary licence except for the Stallion Sub-Committee to decide whether to accept the risk of the colt failing a later inspection.

In the case of Ashdene Record there was clearly some confusion regarding whether or not the colt had passed the vet. It was an unfortunate situation which should be avoidable in future.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2015/7962 JACK DONKEYS

DISCHARGE

Six jack donkeys were inspected and were passed by the vet. Each has been microchipped and a sample of hair taken for future DNA testing if the need arises.

The Agisters will ensure that no unpassed jack donkeys are turned out.

2015/7963 ENTIRE MULES

DISCHARGE

The Court emphasised that the byelaws do not permit entire mules to remain on the Forest if, on the first day of February in any year, it is in the second or subsequent calendar year after its birth.

2015/7964 STALLIONS

DISCHARGE

It was reported that disappointingly, out of 12 futurity colts, only three were retained in the scheme operated by the New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society. Miss Macnair added that keeping good fillies on the Forest is equally as important.

2015/7965 AGISTERS VEHICLES

DISCHARGE

It was agreed that at the moment replacing the Agisters' Land Rovers does not represent a sound financial decision. The present Land Rovers

can continue to be covered by an extended warranty until they are 10 years old or have covered 100,000 miles.

2015/7966 NEW FOREST SHOW

DISCHARGE

The Clerk said that this year, it has been suggested that an interactive touchscreen display should take the place of the film which is now well out of date. The Court considered this is a good way forward and approved the additional expenditure which will be required for additional filming and the hire of a touchscreen.

It was suggested the content of the touchscreen display could be included on the Court's website. The Clerk will investigate whether this is feasible and at what cost.

Action
Clerk

A maximum budget of £10,000 for the Show display was approved.

The Clerk thanked the Court.

2015/7967 ASHURST TO LYNDHURST CYCLEWAY

DISCHARGE

The Court is disappointed to learn that this whole project has been a desk top exercise and as a result no-one at Hampshire County Council realised that the existing surface is gravel coloured and not blacktop. In fact, it seems no-one there realised it was tarmac. As a result, Hampshire County Council costed the cheaper blacktop for the grant application, and the opportunity to retain the lighter coloured surfacing, which it is felt would blend in with the surroundings much better than black, has been lost. Hampshire County Council's conduct in this matter is most regrettable.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2015/7968 RAILWAY REGULATIONS

DISCHARGE

Earlier in the year the Court became aware of a proposal to delete the specific requirement for railway companies to maintain safety barriers (fences) from railway safety legislation. The reason cited being that under general Health and Safety Legislation, railway companies have a duty of care and that includes ensuring the public cannot not gain access to dangerous areas of railway infrastructure.

The Court felt that the removal of the relevant clause could result in serious problems in the Forest, where there are already issues with poorly maintained railway fencing. The Clerk therefore wrote to object to the removal of the relevant clause from the proposed revised regulations. The National Park Authority also wrote to object to the proposed amendment to the legislation.

The Clerk said that she has now received confirmation that the Office of Rail Regulation has decided that the current requirement to prevent unauthorised access should be retained and the proposed regulations have been amended to include the existing requirement on preventing authorised access almost verbatim.

All agreed this is an excellent result.

2015/7969 A PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK

RESUME

Since the Official Verderer's request for views from members of the Court last November, when it was decided that the Verderers name should appear on the front cover of the Plan as a partner, there have been some changes of tone, and some additional projects.

The Partnership Plan has been amended to remove the clause which stated that the partnership supports a change in legislation to provide for proper control of large cycling events. This is felt by the Court to be unacceptable.

The Court was also concerned at the wording in respect of a proposed project by HCC to provide 'adjacent to carriageway' cycle routes between main settlements. It was felt the way this clause is currently written could mean it includes cycle tracks along the verges of the unfenced roads which the Court would not support. Additionally, the Court may not support the provision of cycle routes on the verges of fenced roads, depending on the detail.

The Court also objects to a change to the wording of the clause regarding back up land. The original plan stated that efforts should be made to 'increase' the availability of back up land for commoning has been altered and the word 'increase' has been replaced with 'maintain'.

Mr Mills suggested the inclusion of the Verderers' project to stop verge damage from parking by visitors and residents.

The Court suggested the inclusion of a clause stating that visual degradation of the landscape by utility cabinets must be avoided. The Official Verderer will go back to the National Park Authority with the Court's requested further amendments.

Action
OV

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2015/7970 OPEN FOREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE (OFAC)

DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff had provided a report for members of the Court containing matters of interest which were discussed at the last OFAC meeting on 21st April. Anyone with any comments is requested to contact Mrs Westerhoff direct.

2015/7971 NEW FOREST CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP

DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff reported on the meeting of this group on the 7th May.

A further draft of the River Basin Management Plan on which the Court commented, will be published in June and further comments invited. The final Plan will be published in December. Mrs Westerhoff will look at the June draft and report back with any concerns.

The Living Waters Project is a Heritage Lottery Bid which includes proposals to improve the water quality in the lower Beaulieu River (Abbey Stream and Leygreen Farm).

Catchment Partnership Action Bid – septic tank project. More work is being undertaken to justify the need for such a project.

Future projects include People, Ponds and Water, which includes getting

people out, especially children, with water quality kits. One thousand are proposed in the New Forest.

A Fresh Water Week, similar to one held last year on the Test and Itchen Rivers, is to be held in the Forest. The idea is to encourage the public to be more aware of the water environment.

A request to include the Verderers' logo on the Catchment Delivery Group's newsletter was declined.

2015/7972 NEW FOREST PONY BREEDING AND CATTLE SOCIETY DISCHARGE

Miss Macnair said she is trying to encourage the Society to alter its marketing policy which she feels concentrates too much on Showing. Miss Macnair felt that as it is so expensive to show at a high level, it would be advantageous to also market the ponies as having the right temperament for pony club and general riding ponies for people who are not competitive.

2015/7973 BURLEY HISTORY SOCIETY DISCHARGE

Miss Macnair said there are proposals to create a museum in Burley to include commoning. A local business owner is keen and has offered part of his premises. There is a yard of significant local history which the National Park Authority is thinking of listing. If so, it may come onto the market and be a suitable base for the museum. The Society is looking for support. The Court felt the idea has merit.

2015/7974 NATIONAL GRID PROPOSALS FOR UNDERGROUNDING THE HIGH VOLTAGE PYLONS AND LINES IN THE NORTH OF THE FOREST DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Dowsett will be attending the further meeting of the Stakeholder Group with National Grid on 6th August, to prioritise options. In September the National Grid Advisory Group will decide which projects are to be taken forward.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2015/7975 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR APRIL 2015 RESUME

A query was raised which the Clerk was asked to check and if necessary to re-issue the statement.

HEALTH & SAFETY & TRAINING

There have been no health and safety issues since the last Court and no training is currently planned for the near future.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2015/7976 BASIC PAYMENT SCHEME DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin advised the Court that the Agisters and the Office are receiving a large number of enquiries from people asking questions about the RPA and BPS, that the Court's staff are not qualified to answer. The Clerk said that enquirers are being referred to the Land Advice Service.

2015/7977 PUBLIC CONSULTATION AS PART OF THE FITNESS CHECK OF THE DISCHARGE
EU NATURE LEGISLATION (BIRDS AND HABITATS DIRECTIVE)

The Court is happy for Mrs Westerhoff to respond to this consultation on its behalf.

2015/7978 NO CYCLING SIGNS DISCHARGE

Referring back to the earlier discussion about no cycling signs, it was agreed that they need to be in place before the start of the summer season. The Court asked Mr Dowsett to discuss this with the Deputy Surveyor. Mr Dowsett said he will point out that the signs will be a great help to the Volunteer Rangers in their efforts to guide cyclists to the nearest section of the waymarked cycle route.

Action
BD

2015/7979 YOUNG COMMONER AWARDS DISCHARGE

Mr Mills commented that there appear to be no nominations for the Young Commoner Awards which are made at the New Forest Show. The Court agreed this is shame and asked Mr Mills to find out more about the nomination process. Mr Deakin suggested it should be mentioned at the next CDA meeting.

Action
HM/RD

2015/7980 DEFRA TRAINING DISCHARGE

The Clerk reported that she has been asked to organise a training day for Defra staff in London, who are interested in how the Forest is managed. It has been scheduled for a day in September.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 13:58 hrs.

Domini May
Official Verderer
17th June 2015