

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 20th November 2013 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 B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr A Gerrelli	Elected Verderer
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Senior Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mr R Stride	Co-opted Verderer
	Mr G M H Mills	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J R Gerrelli	Head Agister (Items 6946-6949)
ABSENT:	Mr C Maton	National Park Appointed Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2013/6943 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 16th October 2013 were agreed and signed.

2013/6944 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 and the Verderers Grazing Scheme. They all turn out stock and therefore also declared an interest in the subject of marking fees.

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.

Mr Gerrelli declared an interest in campsites.

Mr Dowsett advised the Court that he is a Forestry Commission Voluntary Ranger.

Mr Stride reminded the Court that he is an employee of the Forestry Commission.

2013/6945 MARKING FEES DISCHARGE

After careful consideration it was agreed that at present there is no need to adjust the marking fees and that they should therefore remain unchanged in 2014.

Mr Deakin proposed the motion which was seconded by Mrs Westerhoff and agreed unanimously.

The Head Agister joined the meeting

2013/6946 CONDITION OF STOCK

RESUME

The Head Agister said that condition of stock is unchanged with most animals going into the winter looking well.

The drifts are finished although the Agisters are arranging occasional additional days to catch ponies which were missed.

It is pleasing to note that Commoners are particularly keen to catch any young colts prior to the deadline of 1st February by when two year old colts must be removed from the Forest.

A lot of cattle have been taken in by commoners keen to try to protect them from the large acorn crop although that is by no means a solution as most fields also have oak trees.

There have been a significant number of deaths due to acorns this year on the Forest as well as on the holdings although numbers on the latter are not recorded.

The Welfare Tour, which is to be held on Friday 6th December, will be different this year in that a visit to the Stallions in their grazing at Cadland Manor is planned, and also a hot branding demonstration on the Forest at Pilley Pound

2013/6947 STOCK LOSING CONDITION AND REMOVED FROM THE FOREST

RESUME

1 mare was removed in October due to poor condition.

The total removed for the year is 343 compared with 213 to the end of October last year.

2013/6948 MARKING FEES RECEIVED THIS YEAR TO DATE

RESUME

	Forest	Common	Total
Ponies	4382	729	5111
Cattle	2518	968	3486
Donkeys	94	71	165
Pigs	243	35	278
Sheep	0	113	113
Total	7237	1916	9153

Ponies, cattle and donkeys on the Forest – 6994

Ponies, cattle and donkeys on the Common – 1768

Total Ponies, Cattle and Donkeys – 8762

MARKING FEES RECEIVED IN 2012 TO THIS DATE

	Forest	Common	Total
Ponies	4122	799	4921
Cattle	2280	879	3159
Donkeys	89	68	157
Pigs	181	105	286
Sheep	0	136	136
Total	6672	1987	8659

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Ponies, cattle and donkeys on the Forest – 6491
Ponies, cattle and donkeys on the Common – 1746
Total, Ponies, Cattle and Donkeys - 8237

2013/6949 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

There were no byelaw issues.

The Head Agister left the meeting

2013/6950 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The announcements and decisions were approved.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Mike Seddon, Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest (DS)
Mr Mark Street, Area Land Agent (New Forest)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2013/6951 GELDINGS IN THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

We thank Susan Mitchell for her Presentment at October's Court about Geldings. The Verderers' Grazing Scheme Management Committee meets in December and your views will be given due consideration.

2013/6952 PANNAGE

After October's Presentment by the Commoners Defence Association, the Pannage season was extended by 6 weeks to the 15th December, because of this year's large acorn crop. Since then we have started to see stock deaths from acorn poisoning. So far the Agisters have dealt with 47 ponies, and 16 cattle, which have died from acorn poisoning.

There are still acorns which have not fallen, and in some places there is a carpet of uneaten acorns under the oak trees. Consequently, it may be that a further extension is appropriate. However, we feel that it is too early to decide on an extension now for an end-date possibly two months hence (in mid-January).

I therefore propose that the Agisters review the situation on Monday 2nd December, which is two weeks before Pannage is currently due to end. If the Agisters recommend an extension, the Deputy Surveyor will be asked to agree it, and pig keepers will be notified by the Agisters of the new end date.

May I remind everybody that it is the responsibility of land owners to fence their property to keep Forest stock out.

2013/6953 MARKING FEES

I am pleased to announce that Marking Fees will not increase in 2014.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2013/6954 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

'It is very disappointing to have to report that compared to last year, we have seen a significant increase in accidents involving Forest Stock. Up until last Sunday, there had been 149 accidents. This compares with 117 in the same period last year. 86 animals lost their lives compared with 71 last year.

Now for the Accident report for October....

The Agisters attended 28 accidents in which 8 ponies and 3 cattle were killed. 4 of the ponies were wearing reflective collars.

3 ponies, 1 cow and a pig were injured. 3 animals were uninjured. 9 accidents were reported where the animals could not be found.

6 accidents occurred in daylight, 5 at twilight and the remaining 17 in the dark.

23 vehicles were cars or light commercials
10 motorists were local and
5 accidents were not reported by the drivers involved.

6 accidents occurred on the B3078 between Brook and Godshill.

5 on the B3054 between Lymington and Hatchet Pond.

3 on the B3056 Lyndhurst to Beaulieu Road.

2 on the B3055 Sway to Brockenhurst Road.

1 on the B3055 near Hawkhill Car Park on the road between Brockenhurst and Hatchet Pond.

3 accidents occurred round Burley, 1 outside Burley School, 1 by Burley Golf Course and 1 in Burley Street.

A further accident occurred at Wootton on the Holmsley Road and another on the Burley Road at Dur Hill. In addition accidents occurred near Coppice of Linwood not far from Fritham, on the Linwood Road near the track to the High Corner Inn, at Wilverley and between Hilltop and Ipers Bridge.

Up to the end of October, 81 animals had been killed or injured, compared with 59 in the same period last year.

We can only ask, once again, that drivers take far more care when crossing the Forest. The days are getting shorter which means more people are obliged to drive in the dark when the animals are more difficult to see. 40 mph may be the speed limit, but it is too fast in the dark with vehicles coming towards you.

Travelling at 40 mph in the dark, it is extremely difficult to see a pony crossing the road behind the car that is coming towards you – until it is too late. Animals don't have road sense. They WILL step out in front of a vehicle.

Of course some people don't care about the animals, but it is worth remembering that many cars are written off following accidents with large animals and such collisions do nothing for your no-claims bonus'!

PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST

None

PRESENTMENTS

2013/6955 ROAD SIGNAGE

Presentment by Mr Richard Deacon, Practising Commoner from Linwood and on behalf of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

'Members on the bench will be aware of recent reports in the print and visual media concerning the upturn in road traffic accidents along the B3078 – the Roger Penny Way, from Godshill to Brook.

Our traffic police carried out a speed monitoring event on 25th October on this road which despite all the flashing headlamps still managed to produce and process a continuous supply of offenders and further, reined in one car driver at 76mph a severe offence that can only be resolved in Court.

Accidents involving ponies and livestock on the 3078 this year have exceeded those for all the other Forest roads. This year in 39 accidents to date on this one road and its immediate feeder roads our Commoners have so far lost 18 animals either killed outright or destroyed. Even worse, 1 in 5 of all accidents throughout the Forest are now Hit & Run.

Our reason for addressing the Verderers today, stems from our objection in the strongest possible terms to a proposal from Hampshire Highways, backed by the National Park to dismantle the principal signage that informs motorists of the dangers of freely roaming ponies and livestock to be expected along the seven miles of the 3078.

Notwithstanding the increased carnage on this particular road this year the proposal will see the dismantling of the very large yellow triple information signs at each end of the 3078, together with the smaller yellow reflective repeater signs spaced out along the route which warn of likely animal presence on the road, Day and Night.

National Park policy seeks to remove as much unsightly signage as possible from roads within the Park. The Park administration perceives that smaller triangular signs underslung with non-reflective information boards are likely to be more effective in briefing drivers. Those information boards already in use either, routinely update the cumulative weekly accident rate for the whole of the Forest, or, provide seasonal information such as the presence of 'new foals' at the appropriate time of year. Several of these new signs have been deployed along the B3078 throughout 2013 - the period of increased carnage.

What do we need by way of signage? Most importantly, we need a collective not unilateral approach to warning the public of risks to themselves and animals, whilst using Forest roads.

We ask the Verderers - to intercede with the signage proponents and defer all signage removal until proper review by all parties involved; and we request that:

The Verderers call and chair a meeting with all the relevant parties to review the worsening situation on the B3078 and seek to devise a unified response;

In particular,

We request the Verderers to press for more effective policing of our most animal accident prone road on those regular days of the week and at those times of day when the

accident rate is clearly disproportionately high;

There are also a number of additional measures that could be considered to better alert vehicular users of this road:

The use of suitable signage at the obvious accident black spots;

The temporary use of pin point signage at each Hit and Run location to find witnesses together with publication in our local press and a reminder of our standard Offer of Reward for information leading to conviction of offenders;

In the New Year, CDA would be happy to participate in a trial of progressive placement of individual coloured marker posts to be set back from the verge at each accident site as a means of increasing driver awareness around accident black spots. These markers would follow up after the short term Animal Casualty triangles already being deployed by the Agisters. The National Park administration perceives that the regular variation of signs is the most likely way to hold drivers attention. Such marker posts accumulating throughout the year and cleared away at the end of the year only to start appearing again individually as each new accident occurs would achieve this NPA objective.

Finally, It is vitally important that drivers are made properly aware at each point of entry onto the Forest roads of the presence of ponies and livestock and a typical suitable sign has been brought to the court today as the basis for discussion. This sign was used to support the recent speed monitoring. The 'Slow Down' can be modified with use of 'Be Alert' or 'Be aware' or 'Warning' to make it appropriate at entry points.

No driver should be allowed to enter the Forest area without being reminded of the presence of ponies and livestock and his or her responsibilities thereto'.

2013/6956 WIGGLE 'FALLEN LEAVES' CYCLE EVENT DECEMBER 8th
Presentment by Mr Graham Ferris, Chairman, New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

This Court received in September three presentments from the Commoners Defence Association, the New Forest Equestrian Association and the New forest Association, all of which opposed the planned mass cycle event on Forest tracks on Sunday December 8th.

These objections focused on the incompatibility between quiet peaceful enjoyment of the Forest by the general public, and participants in the planned cycle events who would be to all intents and purposes racing. And Commoning activities typically concentrated at weekends would be impossible. Bye Laws and the Sustrans Code of Conduct were quoted, making it clear that events involving speeding cyclists would be illegal and inappropriate on Forest Tracks.

The Verderers supported those views and recommended to the Forestry Commission that a permit for the event should not be given. And at that time, despite months of advertising and selling out the planned event, the organisers, UK Cycle Events, had not even applied for a permit, presumably expecting a rubber stamping.

Subsequently the Forestry Commission made it clear that they intended to issue a permit, on the basis that it would give them an opportunity to impose conditions.

If that is the case, we seek the Court's support in asking the Forestry Commission to impose the following conditions if despite the widespread opposition, a permit is to be granted:-

-no timing devices should be issued, nor times collected, nor times published, to avoid the

encouragement to speed.

-The speed limit of 20mph should be strictly enforced and passing other users of the tracks should be as slow as possible.

-an audible warning should be given well in advance of approaching other track users.

-the event should be strictly limited to the way marked cycle routes and all participants clearly briefed that cycling off those routes is never allowed.

-the organisers should make widely available , not just on the internet, a clear map with estimated timings of first and last riders at points on the route so that commoners, riders, walkers etc. can avoid the event if they wish.(The currently available map is quite inadequate and extremely difficult to interpret even for those with extensive Forest knowledge)

-participants should wear clearly legible identifying numbers on the front and back.

-participants should not shout to one another.

-marshals, who understand the issues regarding forest stock, must control every gate into and out of inclosures and those giving access to fenced roads . Such gates should be closed other than when cyclists are actually passing through.

-marshals to be clear that they are there to marshal cyclists not the general public.

-Forestry Commission Keepers to attend the route to manage behaviour.

2013/6957

JACK DONKEYS

Presentment by Mr Mike Eccles, President of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

The CDA has in the past made representation regarding the problems caused by jack donkeys,(entire male donkeys), being at large on the Forest throughout the year.

Many CDA members , who are dedicated to producing Forest Bred New Forest Ponies, continue to be concerned, especially given the limited number of pony stallions turned out for a short period only, thereby providing a greater opportunity for jack donkeys to be active and mules to result.

We believe that the Verderers' Bye Laws provide sufficient mandate for the Verderers to exercise control over the turnout of jack donkeys, as they do for colts and stallions.

We suggest that the Verderers initiate, with CDA support, a wider discussion of this issue, including with those commoners turning out jack donkeys, on the implications of limiting the period during which entire male donkeys are allowed on the Forest, limiting their numbers if necessary and introducing a passing scheme similar to that for pony stallions, if thought desirable.

2013/6958

LITTER

Presentment by Mr Mike Eccles, President of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

Mr Eccles said that he had noticed an increase in the amount of litter along the roadsides. In particular he mentioned Pond Head where he saw three unopened plastic bags full of rubbish. On the Forest outside the property called Roe Beech, there were approximately 5 or 6 bags strewn over a large area.

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2013/6959 ROAD SIGNAGE & RTA REDUCTION INITIATIVES RESUME

The Court agreed that there must be an animal warning sign at every entrance to the Open Forest i.e. at every cattle grid, and that it does not want any more of the large yellow signs warning of stock on the roads removed. In addition, a request will be made for the signs which were removed from the B3055 between Lymington and Beaulieu be replaced as soon as possible. The Clerk was asked to write to Hampshire County Council Highways Department and the New Forest National Park Authority, expressing the Court's strong views on this subject. At the same time, the Clerk will request that the signs be regularly cleaned in order to retain their reflective qualities.

Action
Clerk

Mr Deacon's request that the Verderers initiate a new committee to coordinate a response to worsening animal accidents on the B3078 was not felt to be of merit: the Animal Accident Reduction Group already exists, and it should be that committee which should do this.

As respects the suggestion that marker type posts and new warning signs should be used to highlight accident sites, the Court agreed that this innovative idea should be trialled for one year subject to the necessary consent being obtained from the Forestry Commission on whose land the posts and signs will be placed, and any conditions which may be imposed by the Highway Authority. The trial is agreed on the understanding that it will be managed by the CDA which will take full responsibility for it, including in respect of any liability issues which may arise. Mr Street said that the Forestry Commission will wish to ensure that the CDA has appropriate public liability insurance in the event of any unforeseen incidents or accidents. He requested a detailed proposal from the CDA for consideration.

Action
CDA

Mr Mills said he is shortly to meet Chief Inspector Simon Dodds, who is Hampshire Constabulary's lead on Rural Policing. Mr Mills offered to raise the question of whether Hampshire Police can provide additional resources in the fight to reduce animal accidents in the Forest. That offer was most welcome. The Clerk said that recently, problems have been experienced with Police Control where the operators have failed to take details of drivers who have been involved in accidents with Forest stock. Some operators believe that RTIs involving livestock are 'damage only' and as such action by the police is not required and that it is not therefore necessary for driver details to be recorded. This is incorrect and steps need to be taken to train operators in the procedure for dealing with such reports. Mr Mills said he would raise this with the Chief Inspector.

Action
HM

2013/6960 WIGGLE 'FALLEN LEAVES' CYCLE EVENT DECEMBER 8th DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor advised that a permit has not yet been granted to allow this event to take place, however he felt that subject to agreeing the off-road parts of the route, approval will be given. Having said that, there are now only just over two weeks to go before the event and the organisers have still not submitted a route that is considered to be suitable. Some of the route is on gravel tracks which are not on the cycle

network and the condition of at least one track - at Castle Hill, Burley - is completely unsuitable for use by several hundred cyclists.

The Forestry Commission has already advised UK Cycling of a significant number of conditions that it will be imposing on any consent. These include...

- a cap on the number of participants (600)
- the route must be on the waymarked cycle tracks only
- there must be a phased start with no more than 10 cyclists in each group
- the event is non-competitive in that there must be no racing,
- participants must ride with due care and attention in respect of livestock and the public
- the speed limit on Forest tracks is 15mph
- signs are erected one week in advance of the event warning the public that the event is to take place – such signs to be removed immediately after the event. Agreement as to *how* the signs are displayed is also controlled
- noise must be kept to a minimum where the route passes residential properties
- no verge parking
- all gates to be locked when not in use.

The Forestry Commission does not actually specify *how* the event is to be run. The actual delivery is a matter for the organisers. The reason for this is that if the Forestry Commission says the event must be run in a specific way and there is an accident, the Commission may be considered liable.

The Deputy Surveyor said the Forestry Commission is not in a position to insist that no timing devices are used because most cyclists have their own devices which can be used for timing anyway. He also pointed out that the start and finish points are not on Forestry Commission land and therefore he has no jurisdiction in that respect. The Deputy Surveyor added that the Forestry Commission does not have a fundamental objection to such events, but it does believe that there should not be too many in the Forest. This particular event has been run on three previous occasions without any problems. The Deputy Surveyor added that he is arranging for Forestry Commission staff to be present in order to monitor the event.

2013/6961 JACK DONKEYS

DISCHARGE

It was agreed that as Jack Donkeys are not a matter for the Forestry Commission, this item will be discussed later in the meeting.

NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2013/6962 PROPOSED WORKS AT BROCKENHURST ROAD BRIDGE BY DISCHARGE
NETWORK RAIL (AMCO RAIL) OS GRID REF. SU290 001

The proposals concern the (long) bridge that carries the main railway line over the B3055 below Marlpit Oak crossroads.

The Official Verderer was concerned that the run out from the pipe through which water from under Latchmoor Bridge will be pumped in order to ensure continued access to properties during the road closure, will result in erosion if the pipe is not properly placed in the culvert. He asked that the outlet pipe is carefully positioned so no erosion takes place, and that careful continuous monitoring of this be undertaken by the contractor.

Action
MSt

The Clerk added that she has asked that Network Rail replace the fencing in the four archways under the bridge. The fencing, which is in fairly poor condition, stops Forest stock from gaining access to the railway line.

Action MSt

It was also suggested that to assist the movement of stock whilst the bridge is closed off, the nearby tunnel - which was fenced some years ago with stiles at each end following an accident in which a stallion ran through the tunnel and out in front of a vehicle - could be opened up for the duration of the road closure. This is on the condition that it is re-enclosed at the end of the work on the bridge, before the road is re-opened.

Action
MSt

The proposals were considered acceptable subject to the above and the usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2013/6963 BRAMSHAW GOLF CLUB DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Readhead will continue to represent the Court in respect of the proposed redesign of the golf course but a further site visit will be necessary prior to consent being given. The proposals will result in a reduction in the number of holes to 15; it will hopefully reduce pressure on some of the more vulnerable parts of the course and should also alleviate conflict with an adjacent commoners' holding - all of which are welcome.

Action
DW/DR

2013/6964 SWAY RECREATION/FOOTBALL GROUND (MEMORIAL FIELD) – DISCHARGE
LICENCE RENEWAL

The wire has now been removed from the fence. As agreed a short stretch of post and rail fencing has been erected for safety reasons. The redundant fence posts have been left in situ to delineate the boundary of the field. The Forestry Commission will assume responsibility for the management of the gorse which surrounds the field.

It was agreed that a new 10 year licence will be granted, subject to a 5 year break clause to ensure satisfactory management. The Court will not consent to a continuation of the licence after 5 years if the management of the field is deemed to be inadequate. Issues such as litter, damage to grazing, poorly maintained fencing will be considered at the 5 year break.

Action
MSt

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

2013/6965 REPAIRS TO HCC FENCING OF THE A ROADS DISCHARGE

The Clerk read the following statement from Mr Richard Bastow, Highway Manager, New Forest, Hampshire County Council Highways:-

'It is acknowledged that ad-hoc repairs to fencing are not always being completed to a good standard and particularly in terms of tensioning of the wire.

This is being addressed with our service partner Amey and the expected outcome is for fence repairs to only be undertaken by trained and experienced crews or the specialist sub-contractor. It is anticipated that this will be in place in the New (Calendar) Year.

It is understood that there is not a problem with the work, where complete sections have been renewed using a specialist sub-contractor'.

2013/6966 LYNDHURST SEWAGE WORKS SCREENING DISCHARGE

This work is included in the Forest Design Plan. The Deputy Surveyor said he will obtain a sketch plan of the area which will require fencing in order to protect the screening whilst it establishes. He will bring the sketch plan to the Court in due course. It was agreed to discharge the matter from the Agenda for the time being.

Action
MS

2013/6967 FALLEN TIMBER RESUME

The Official Verderer thanked the Deputy Surveyor for the paper which sets out the basis on which fallen timber and deadwood is dealt with in the A&O woodlands and on the Forest's lawns.

Concern was expressed by Mr Deakin that the paper gives the Forestry Commission a lot of flexibility of interpretation, but the Deputy Surveyor explained that it would be virtually impossible to state definitively the action it would take whilst at the same time obtaining Natural England's consent, because there are so many possible scenarios.

The main issue appears to be fallen timber in the A&O Woodlands, on tracks, lawns or where there is a stock welfare issue.

It was generally agreed that on balance there is probably enough dead wood in the Forest now and therefore some clearance could be undertaken. The Deputy Surveyor said he will liaise with the CDA and Natural England to agree what can be done.

Action
MS

One issue that the Court feels needs to be addressed is how the non-commercial parts of fallen trees are dealt with when trees are sold. Some purchasers clear up well whilst others are inclined to leave brushwood lying around. The Deputy Surveyor replied that he is content that this will be addressed, with instructions given to purchasers that brushwood must be removed from lawns and tracks and taken away, or agreement reached as to how else it is to be dealt with.

Action
MS

There is also an issue with fallen trees that are not offered for sale, but are

cleared by the Forestry Commission; an example being the trees at Ashurst which were simply cut up and pushed to the side of the track and left.

A meeting between NE, the CDA and the FC is to take place shortly to discuss drainage and the Deputy Surveyor said he will schedule in time for a discussion about fallen timber at that meeting.

Action
MS

The additional problem of trees which came down in the recent storm was also raised. Several fell over roads and when they were cleared (by the Highway Authority), the timber was left on the verges resulting in stock having to walk out into the road to get past. The Clerk said she has contacted Hampshire Highways about this and has received an assurance that they will do their best to push back the timber so as to leave a gap sufficient for stock to pass without stepping onto the roads. The Deputy Surveyor said that clearance work is now underway.

2013/6968 HIGHWAY SAFETY WORKS ON FOREST ROAD APPROACH TO DISCHARGE
NOMANSLAND AND THE LONGCROSS JUNCTION ON THE B3078

The Court agreed to the addition of coloured tarmac on the road surface to warn drivers that they are approaching a junction.

The proposal to erect a new reflective chevron sign on the sharp bend at Pipers Wait in place of the current chevron sign is also approved.

Action
SW

Replacement of the existing posts in this location with new posts is also agreed, but consent is not given for any additional posts. The Clerk will advise Hampshire Highways.

2013/6969 HAMPSHIRE HIGHWAYS TRAFFIC SIGNAGE RESUME

The Court asked what agreement the Forestry Commission has with Hampshire Highways as respects erecting signs on the verges. Mr Street said he will provide an update.

Action
MSt

Mr Hallam Mills gave his apologies and left the meeting

2013/6970 ORDNANCE CLEARANCE AT MATLEY RESUME
January
2014

The Official Verderer wrote to the Deputy Surveyor on behalf of the Court asking him to pursue the Ministry of Defence regarding the delay in the clearance of the ordnance which has been located at Matley. The Deputy Surveyor confirmed the letter has been passed on to a Senior Officer in the MoD and a response is awaited. The Commoners' Defence Association wrote a similar strongly worded letter and that has also been forwarded.

Action
MS

2013/6971 ACCESS TO WEIRS POUND DISCHARGE

Mr Stride said he has looked at the problem and feels the solution is simply to improve the crossing by adding some more material to replace that which has been washed out over the winter. It is on the list of works to be undertaken next Spring.

Action
RS

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2013/6972	SNAGGING LIST	RESUME
	There was no update to the snagging list. However, Mr Stride said that some maintenance work is needed in North Sluffers. A re-visit to the site is due and he will ensure that Sarah Oakley is aware of what needs doing.	Action RS
2013/6973	ISLANDS THORNS (SOUTH) & AMBERWOOD	DISCHARGE
	The restoration proposals for these sites were considered. Mrs Westerhoff proposed the works be agreed. This was seconded by Mr Stride and approved unanimously.	
2013/6974	NORTH SLUFTERS	RESUME January
	As mentioned above, a further site visit is required to consider a few outstanding items. In the document provided to the Court, Item 9a in particular requires further consideration. It was decided the site visit should be undertaken before agreement is given to the proposals.	
2013/6975	COWLEYS HEATH	RESUME January
	A further site visit is required which will take place as soon as possible. Mr Stride will be meeting the CDA to discuss which trees should be felled. Mrs Westerhoff said the intention is to remove as much birch as possible from the area included in the proposal together with Willow which is in wet areas and Scots pine.	
	A passageway is to be reinstated in order to discourage people from going onto the heath.	
	There is an issue with water laying on the roadside which is attracting stock. This needs to drain away.	

ENCROACHMENTS

2013/6976	ENCROACHMENT LIST	RESUME January
	An updated encroachment list was provided to the Court by Mr Street. Two items which specifically required the Court's approval:-	
	<u>Pondhead Farm Lane</u>	
	It is suggested that a barrier should be installed at the beginning of the lane which will mean the unofficial dragons teeth can be removed. The Court approved the suggestion	Action MSt
	<u>Burley Bus Turning Area</u>	
	One parent is still parking where he/she shouldn't. In order to address this problem Mr Street asked the Court for approval to move the "Residents Only – No Parking" sign closer to the entrance to Moorhill Lane on a temporary basis in order to try to get the message across. It will eventually be re-sited in the most appropriate place. This was agreed.	Action MSt

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2013/6977 BEAULIEU AERODROME MODEL AIRCRAFT FLYING AREA DISCHARGE

A complaint has been received that model aircraft are flying outside the approved area and that gliders are being flown from the perimeter track rather than where they should be. It was also questioned whether there is a separate licence for gliders and if so, what are the conditions and does it have the Court's approval.

The Deputy Surveyor agreed to investigate and let the Court know his findings.

Following the Court, the Deputy Surveyor confirmed, the Forestry Commission grants one permission for model flying at Beaulieu Heath and has done so for very many years and predating the New Forest Review in 1988. This permission allows for the flying of radio controlled aircraft generally – both powered and free flight types.

As respects "gliders": the permit allows for the flying of "free flight" model aircraft from the former airfield boundary road and specifies certain launch points which allow for weather conditions at the time. Engines can be used to launch these free flight models, and where engines are unsilenced, allows for running time up to 7 seconds or 20 seconds in the case of nostalgia or vintage models.

2013/6978 KINGS COPSE BRIDGE DISCHARGE

The Agisters believe this bridge is not of standard design and they have expressed concern that it is too narrow. Mr Stride assured the Court that it is of the standard design and the Deputy Surveyor agreed to provide the Agisters with the specification for a standard bridge.

Action
MS

2013/6979 NEW FOREST GOLF CLUB, LYNDHURST DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Dowsett had prepared a report of their recent site visit to the Golf Course which included three numbered proposals. The Court was in agreement with the three numbered proposals but it was decided that the usual system of the Forestry Commission coming to the Court with a formal submission for consent should be followed. The Forestry Commission's consent is of course also required.

Action
MSt

Miss Macnair and Mrs Westerhoff left the meeting

2013/6980 CAMPSITES DISCHARGE

Mr Readhead reported that he is very pleased with the condition of the campsites following their closure. The wardens and their staff have done a very good job in clearing the sites which have been left in a neat and tidy condition. Mr Readhead said he has arranged to meet with Mr Nick Tucker (FC) and Mr Adrian Goodyear from Camping in the Forest in February next year to discuss the campsites.

Action
DR

It was reported that the fencing round Holmsley Campsite is in poor repair and is felt to be a hazard to stock. The Forestry Commission agreed to inspect the site. The upkeep of the fence is the responsibility of Camping in the Forest.

Action
MS

The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Street left the meeting

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2013/6981 JACK DONKEYS (from earlier in the meeting) RESUME

It was suggested that the possibility of grazing being provided for Jack donkeys if their time on the Forest is restricted, should be considered by the VGS Management Committee when it meets in December. The Clerk was asked to ensure that Mr Draper includes this item in the Agenda for the forthcoming meeting. Action SW/CD

2013/6982 CYCLING – FUNDING PROVIDED TO THE NFNPA FOR CYCLING PROJECTS RESUME

It was agreed to resume this item in December.

Mrs Westerhoff returned to the meeting explaining that Miss Macnair was unwell and would not be able to return to the meeting for the time being.

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME (HLS)

2013/6983 HLS BOARD MEETING DISCHARGE

The next HLS board meeting is in January. A site visit will be arranged for the board to view the restoration works at Queen's Meadow. Mr Stride offered to meet board members on site.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

2013/6984 COMMONERS HOUSING SCHEME DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff reported that there are several applications under consideration. In particular, one application is problematic because the house cannot be built on the part of the holding which is subject to Common Rights. Therefore the proposal is that it is built elsewhere on the site, with the land ownership being transferred to the New Forest Trust. The Court warned that the Commoners Housing Scheme has recently suffered from a lot of opposition, so permissions should be for proposals which meet the existing rules. It was felt that there is a danger of bringing this very important scheme into disrepute if permission is granted outside the scheme rules.

2013/6985 CYCLING LIAISON GROUP DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett reported that the sub-group of the NPA Cycling Liaison Group recently met to finalise the new code of conduct for cyclists. The next project is a charter for cycling event organisers. A further meeting is scheduled for December.

2013/6986 NEW FOREST PONY BREEDING AND CATTLE SOCIETY RESUME
January

The Pony Society is running a pony futurity scheme to encourage the keeping of good young New Forest Pony colts. At the moment they are offering £100 in respect of a mare and foal, payable at the end of the year. There is, however, a problem in that the £100 is not considered to be sufficient incentive for people to keep a colt. It has been suggested that

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 20th November 2013 in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

the Verderers could make Long Meadow available for the scheme but in order to do so the fencing will need to be renewed. The Clerk was asked to request Mr Draper obtains some quotations for re-fencing the field. Action SW/CD

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2013/6987 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR OCTOBER RESUME

The financial statement was noted.

STAFF MATTERS

2013/6988 DRIFT WASH UP MEETING DISCHARGE

A drift wash up meeting has been arranged for Monday 9th December at 11.30 a.m.

2013/6989 STALLION SUB COMMITTEE DISCHARGE

The stallion sub-committee will meet on Monday 9th December at 9.30 a.m.

HEALTH & SAFETY & TRAINING

2013/6990 MONTHLY VEHICLE CHECKS RESUME

Mr Deakin reported that the trial system for vehicle checks will be reviewed after the drift wash up meeting. Action RD

2013/6991 ORANGE BEACONS ON DRIFT WARNING SIGNS DISCHARGE

Mr Readhead reported that whilst it is perfectly possible to add beacons to the signs, it is not proving to be particularly straightforward. Permission is required from the Police and probably the Highway Authority. Construction and method of deployment must be agreed. Mr Readhead is obtaining some samples and is awaiting Police advice. For the time being, the matter will be referred back to the Staff Committee. Action DR

2013/6992 HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING RESUME
May 2014

Training is complete. However it is important to maintain and regularly review health and safety documentation and any recordable incidents.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2013/6993 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (NFNPA) DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff will provide a response on behalf of the Court.

2013/6994 PIGS DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff wondered if there is a way that young commoners can be encouraged to keep pigs, particularly as this year there were fewer pigs than were hoped for given the enormous acorn crop.

It was suggested that the Young Commoners section of the CDA be invited to propose a project which could attract VGS funding. Action RS

