

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at 9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.**

PRESENT: Mr D May Official Verderer  
Mr R Deakin Elected Verderer & Action Staff Committee Chairman  
Mr A Gerrelli Elected Verderer  
Miss D Macnair MBE Elected Verderer  
Mr C Maton National Park Appointed Verderer  
The Hon R Montagu Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer  
Mr A H Pasmore Elected Verderer  
Mrs P Thorne 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

APOLOGIES: None

**IN COMMITTEE in the Library**

2011/5474 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2011 were approved.

2011/5475 CONDITION OF STOCK & THE WELFARE TOUR RESUME  
(see also 2011/5509)

The Head Agister reported that since the last Court the Welfare Tour has taken place. It was very well attended and very successful. A large number of animals were seen and virtually all the comments received were positive. Those present were pleased with the overall condition of the animals that they saw. Representatives of the welfare organisations attending also said that they have had few complaints from the public through the winter.

There are a lot of foals on the Forest now and some of the mares, particularly those which have just foaled, do not look as well as they might. Anything that gives cause for concern will be removed.

As reported in the April Court, a few cattle have been taken off the Forest because their condition was not satisfactory.

Most animals are now starting to put on condition as the grass is beginning to grow. The dry weather is not, however, helping although where burning has been carried out, the grass is growing well.

The Forestry Commission had a successful burning season and completed most of the planned program.

**The Head Agister left the meeting.**

Mr Deakin remarked that on the welfare tour the only complaint received was that a few ponies have long feet.

A few complaints have been received about poor cattle as reported at the last Court. The problem appears to be that commoners have run low on

fodder and have turned their cattle out a little too early. Any that are too poor will be removed as there is not a lot of food on the Forest yet for cattle.

Mr Deakin said the Staff Committee may decide to come back to the Court over the question of whether any action is required in respect of owners of stock which is turned out too early.

2011/5476 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The announcements and decisions were approved.

2011/5477 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Official Verderer, the Elected Verderers and Mrs Thorne declared an interest in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

Mr Deakin declared an interest in matters connected with the Beaulieu Road Sale Yard as he is a director and the treasurer of the New Forest Livestock Society.

Mr Gerrelli declared an interest in matters concerning campsites.

2011/5478 FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statement for April 2011 was approved.

2011/5479 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE IN 2011 RESUME

Ponies	4248	Pigs	24
Cattle	1844	Sheep	130
Donkeys	106		
SUB TOTAL	6198	TOTAL ALL ANIMALS	6352

2011/5480 ANIMALS REMOVED IN APRIL DUE TO POOR CONDITION RESUME

1 mare with a foal  
9 mares  
6 fillies  
1 cow  
2 cows with calves

Total 19

So far in 2011, a total of 248 animals have been removed due to poor condition, compared to 520 at this time in 2010.

2011/5481 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT DISCHARGE

There are currently no reported byelaws infringements.

## ENCROACHMENTS

2011/5482 ENCROACHMENT - HOME FARM, BARTLEY

RESUME

The Official Verderer said he visited the site the day before the Court with Mr Street from the Forestry Commission. He has also introduced himself to the Court's solicitor and has discussed the case briefly with him.

A letter has now been received from the solicitor acting for the owner of Home Farm asking for a site meeting to be attended by both sides together with their lawyers. It was agreed that if a resolution is reached, a hand written record should be made at the time which would be signed by all those present. If no agreement is reached, the matter would then have to be referred to the Courts.

Mr Pasmore expressed his reservation that this would mean that the Verderers who attend will make a decision without the approval of the full Court.

Mr Deakin then asked if the Verderers attending could be given a mandate to make a decision on this one occasion.

The Official Verderer said the advice he has received is that new rules for alternate dispute resolution have recently been introduced. Failure to follow the rules is looked at in an unfavourable light by the Courts. For this reason, he felt the meeting, as requested, should be held, as this clearly indicates a willingness on the part of the Verderers to resolve the issue out of Court if at all possible.

At this point, the discussion was halted. It was resumed later in the meeting (before Minute No. 2011/5509) and continued as follows:-

The Commoners' Defence Association is paying 50% of the cost of these proceedings, therefore it's approval must be obtained prior to a settlement being agreed or further costs being incurred. The Chairman of the CDA, Mr Graham Ferris, should also be asked to attend the meeting.

Action  
Clerk

It was agreed that Mr Ferris will be asked to confirm the CDA is happy to contribute to the additional legal fees and also that he is happy to attend the site meeting.

Action  
Clerk

The Official Verderer, Mr Pasmore, Mr Deakin and Mrs Westerhoff will represent the Court at the site meeting.

Subject to obtaining the approval of the CDA the Clerk will write to the Court's solicitor asking for a site meeting, with lawyers present to be arranged.

Action  
Clerk

The Court agreed that the Sub-Committee of Verderers who will attend the meeting are authorised to make a decision if an acceptable settlement can be reached.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Kevin Penfold, Acting Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest  
Mr Mark Street, Area Land Agent (New Forest)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER**

2011/5483 MR JEFF KITCHER MBE

It is with great regret that I have to report the death of elected Verderer, Mr Jeff Kitcher MBE, on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May. Jeff served this Court for just under 23 years. He was awarded an MBE in 2003 for services to the Forest and commoning. His very valuable contribution to the proceedings of this court will be greatly missed. Personally I always found Jeff to be gentle, amusing, generous with his time, knowledgeable and helpful. We offer our sincerest condolences to his family. Jeff's funeral will be held next Tuesday, the 24<sup>th</sup> May at 10.30 a.m. in Beaulieu Abbey.

May I ask Elected Verderer Mr Richard Deakin to now give a fuller tribute...

JEFFERY KITCHER

68 years ago, on 3rd January 1943 Jeffery Kitcher was born. (Jeffery, Jeff, 'Kitch').

One of three children, he had two older sisters, one of which survives him, he grew up in Okedene the family home at Furzey Lodge, Beaulieu. Attending school at Beaulieu and Brockenhurst. He lived most of his life in Okedene, with just a few years spent in a bungalow 200 yards up the road. You could say that his roots were nearly as deep and fixed as the trees that he eventually came to work with. He saw no good reason to go away on holiday.

Upon leaving school he started work on Beaulieu Estate. His self employed father wanted more security for him and he advised joining Beaulieu Estate rather than The Forestry Commission as he didn't trust the Commission to look after his long term future. I don't know if things changed in this regard, but in the early 60's, Jeff moved, actually taking employment with the Forestry Commission. For some time he worked with his father who was a contractor to the FC, pulling out timber with heavy horses. It is believed that Jeff was probably the last person to use Horses in this work. He always thought that current day examples appear to be "just playing at it". Saying he could pull more himself without the horse.

Jeff then trained to operate the various new machines that were phased in to modernise Forestry Operations, and continued to drive these until deciding to leave the FC in 1983 and start his own Forestry Contracting business. He completed 20 years with the FC. He continued to run his business until his untimely death, which was beyond normal retirement age, saying that he didn't see much sense in retiring as he felt that to continue to enjoy life he would carry on doing exactly the same things as when working, despite being retired. What a fortunate position to find yourself in!

As well as pursuing a busy career, in the 70's, his deep love and commitment to The Forest and to Commoning led him become a founder member of The New Forest Stallion Syndicate, a group set up to help ensure that there was a sufficient number of stallions available to run The Forest and also to act as a pressure group actively working for the interests of the Commoner. He also joined The NFCDA committee, remaining there as a very active member for the rest of his life, and in latter years being elected as Association President. He successfully stood for election as a Verderer in November 1988, again remaining in position, through many elections, until his untimely death. During that time for two separate periods he filled the role of Staff Committee Chairman, a role that effectively

assumes control of and responsibility for the Agisters and their activities. He was a prime mover in establishing the Welfare tours that have been heralded as a significant step forward in depastured animals condition, and also the outside perception of welfare on the Forest. He was also a founder member of the New Forest Livestock Society, which was set up to raise funds to rebuild and operate the Beaulieu Road sale yard. I'm pleased that he was able to attend the last sale for a brief period.

In Committee he listened a lot and spoke less, but when he did speak he commanded respect, people listened and usually his words ended further debate. Appropriate recognition for his services to Forestry and Commoning came with the award of an MBE in 2003. An award he received with humility and pride. Jeff was a true believer in the (slightly modified) proverb : "We haven't inherited The Forest from our fathers, we have loaned it from our children". He was determined to hand it over in good order to the children that he had with former wife Phyllis and partner Christine. Four children; Natalie, Jacqueline, Paulette, and Kelly. Our own role in that demanding challenge suddenly got much harder on the 9th May, when we lost the ability to draw upon his enthusiasm, wisdom, expertise, and experience for help.

Our thoughts are with the immediate family, and also with the extended family and extensive network of friends and colleagues'.

Please be upstanding for a minute's silence in memory of Jeff Kitcher.

2011/5484 NEW OFFICIAL VERDERER

My name is Dominic May. I have the honour to have been appointed by Her Majesty the Queen to serve as Official Verderer for a term of three years. I will carry out my role as chairman of this court with vigour and independence. I will endeavour to ensure during my term of office that all decisions taken by the Verderers and the Verderers' Court will be to the benefit of the preservation of commoning and the conservation of the New Forest's unique landscape and character.

2011/5485 STALLION BLOODLINES SCHEME

Following the excellent response to our request for suitable mares to be offered for inclusion in our bloodlines scheme, 15 suitable mares have been selected. These mares will be visiting 5 specially selected stallions very soon. Only time will tell how successful the scheme turns out to be, but the hope is that it will result in several good colts.

2011/5486 DOGS

At our last Court, Mr Tarnoff suggested that details of serious dog attacks on Forest stock should be reported in Open Court at the same time as the Animal Accidents. We feel, however, that as few incidents are actually reported to our office, it would be preferable to only publicise the worst attacks.

A record of various types of incident is kept by the Forestry Commission in a database and dog attacks are included. The Forestry Commission's policy is that dogs must be kept under control at all times.

## **ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT**

2011/5487 ACCIDENT REPORT FOR APRIL 2011 (amended)

The Agisters attended 10 accidents, compared with 5 in April last year.

2 ponies, 1 cow and 1 donkey were killed and 2 ponies and a cow were injured.

7 accidents occurred during the hours of darkness.

8 involved private cars or light commercials.

1 accident was not reported (hit and run).

5 accidents involved local motorists.

The total killed and injured for the year to date is 25 compared with 19 for the same period last year.

## **PRESENTMENTS BY THE ACTING DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST**

2011/5488 OFFICIAL VERDERER

Firstly could I congratulate the Official Verderer on his appointment, we look forward to working with you in the coming years.

JEFFEREY KITCHER MBE

I would like to express the Forestry Commission's deep sadness in the sudden death of Jeff Kitcher. Known to this court as a Verderer and commoner Jeff was also a former Forestry Commission employee and forestry contractor. Jeff was widely respected within the forest industry which extended far beyond the boundaries of the New Forest, I understand on one occasion taking him as far away as Scotland. To sawmillers, timber buyers, woodland owners and agents Jeff was a hard working honest man with the forest in his heart. Whether a Lord or a commoner he treated everyone alike, he was a pleasure to work with.

Jeff was a respected friend of the Forestry Commission, the forest industry and the New Forest, we will miss him.

## **PRESENTMENTS**

2011/5489 OFFICIAL VERDERER

Presentment by Mr Graham Ferris on behalf of the Commoners' Defence Association.

Before paying tribute to Jeff Kitcher which is the purpose of this Presentment, I would like to welcome Dominic May as the newly appointed Official Verderer. The Commoners Defence Association looks forward to developing the same constructive relationship that we enjoyed with his predecessor.

MR JEFFEREY KITCHER MBE

CDA members were shocked and saddened by news of Jeff Kitcher's passing and wish to join the Verderers in extending our condolences to all his family and many many friends and colleagues.

The essence of Jeff Kitcher, the man, was the essence of all that is important about the

New Forest. His strength was legendary, both his physical strength and strength of character. His fearless riding was never lessened by regular injuries and his colt catching abilities were called on even by experienced Commoners dealing with tricky animals. His memory of people, events and places in the New Forest was prodigious. His recall of incredible detail about past horses brought his much loved stories to life. His eye for the right type of pony to run on the Forest was unerring and his knowledge of the history of the Forest was detailed. His defence of the New Forest and of commoning was passionate. His generosity with possessions, but above all with time to help others was unselfish. His wisdom was widely recognised and respected. That wisdom came from a lifetime of service to the Forest and was rooted in hands on practical experience of work in the woods and of commoning.

It was a wisdom he wore lightly. Never forcing it on people in the spirit of "knowing better" but rather offering it in the hope that it might contribute to a better future for commoning and the Forest as a whole. And especially in the hope that it might guide future generations in their guardianship of the Forest.

Jeff accepted his MBE with modesty and if he were here now he would probably say something like "Well I don't know about all that that you've just said".

Jeff will be greatly missed by Commoners young and old, but his contribution over so many years to the life of the Forest and of commoning will be a lasting tribute.

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

APOLOGIES: Mr A Gerrelli, Elected Verderer

### **NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

2011/5490 SEMCORP BOURNEMOUTH WATER COMPANY PROPOSED WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT - TRIAL EXCAVATION AT FRITHAM DISCHARGE

The Court considered the water company's proposal to dig four trial holes in anticipation of a scheme to replace an existing water main in Fritham, which has been identified for replacement due to the high number of recent emergency repairs. The holes will establish both the exact position of their existing infrastructure and also establish the soil conditions. The latter will enable them to ascertain the best method that can be used to lay the replacement pipe. It is anticipated that a proposal for the entire scheme will be submitted for approval in advance of an autumn start date, subject to consent and Natural England's guidance.

A plan was provided illustrating the section of the scheme in the vicinity of the reservoir. The full scheme runs from Nomansland reservoir south to Fritham Lodge. Mr Street said he hopes that most of it will be laid in the highway or under the verge.

The proposal confirmed the trial holes will be carried out in accordance with the agreed working protocol with Natural England and no holes will be left open over night. The trial holes will be approximately 3m long by 1m wide and 1.5 m deep.

The Court considered and approved the proposals for the trial holes subject to the usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing etc.

## MATTERS ARISING OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

- 2011/5491 DOGS DISCHARGE
- The Clerk explained that she intends to create and maintain a database in the Verderers' Office in which will be recorded details of incidents between dogs and Forest stock. The Verderers' Office database will include incidents across the whole Forest, i.e. including the added areas. The Forestry Commission will be advised of any incidents which occur on its land to ensure that its database is kept up to date. The CDA will be asked to let its members know that dog related incidents should be reported to the Verderers' Office. In response to a query regarding incidents involving horse-riders, it was agreed these should be reported to the Forestry Commission or the National Trust depending on where the incident occurred.
- 2011/5492 PUBLIC BODIES BILL RESUME
- The letter from the Rt Hon Jim Paice MP in response to Official Verderer Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre's earlier letter has now been received. A copy of the letter will be appended to these minutes. The letter states that all provisions relating to Forestry and the Forestry Commission have been removed from the Public Bodies Bill. The only power which remains is the power to abolish the Home Grown Timber Advisory Committee which has not met for over five years and is defunct. As such there are no bodies in the Bill that exercise forestry functions so the Government cannot envisage any circumstances in which the powers in the Bill would ever be used to change the New Forest Acts.
- Action  
OV
- 2011/5493 INDEPENDENT PANEL ON FORESTRY RESUME
- The Panel met last week. It is at the information gathering stage. It has received lots of requests from organisations and areas of the country to visit. Mr Kevin Penfold was asked to ascertain whether the Independent Panel on Forestry will be visiting the Forest. Post meeting note: Mike Seddon has informed the Official Verderer that the panel will not be visiting New Forest, only the Forest of Dean, Northumberland and Kent.
- 2011/5494 BRAMSHAW GOLF COURSE RESUME
- Mr Street said that the recommendations of the Court set out in Diana Westerhoff's paper of the 15<sup>th</sup> April will be incorporated into the management plan for the course.
- Action  
Mr Street
- 2011/5495 GRIT BINS RESUME
- Mr Street reported that Mr Mike Seed of Hampshire Highways (HHW) is preparing plans identifying the location of all the bins which have been placed on Forestry Commission land in order that formal consent can be sought. The Clerk was asked to write a letter to Mr Seed to say that the grit bins must be removed immediately and if HHW would like to re-install them next winter and subsequent winters, permission from the Verderers must be sought each winter with a detailed site plan.
- Action  
Mr Street
- Action  
Clerk
- The rubbish bins have to be removed from the campsites in the winter and so a precedent has been set.

2011/5496	ROAD HAUNCHING AND RESURFACING	RESUME
	<p>Mr Street is looking at options for dealing with the ongoing problem of the roads being widened as a result of haunch repairs and road resurfacing. He thinks the Commons Act might be useful legislation to refer to as the loss of verge resulting from these repairs undoubtedly represents an encroachment on common land. Mr Street is consulting with lawyers in this respect and he will be writing to Mr Tim Lawton, Chief Eng at HHW. Mr Street is also speaking with Jenny Thomas at Natural England as the works are also causing damage to the SSSI.</p> <p>Miss Macnair reported that Forest Road in Burley has recently been surface dressed and as a result it is now difficult to see where the edge of the road should be. This is a typical example of what happens. Fortunately the office has a number of photographs of the repairs which resulted in widening prior to the resurfacing having taken place.</p> <p>Miss Macnair also commented that in her opinion, the 'Loose Chippings 10 mph' signs are left out far too long. The result is motorists ignore them and they fall over. The Clerk will write to HHW seeking their removal.</p>	Action Mr Street
2011/5497	NETWORK RAIL BEAULIEU ROAD VEGETATION CLEARANCE	RESUME
	<p>It seems Network Rail have fallen silent. Neither the Forestry Commission nor Natural England have been able to make contact with the person with whom they have been dealing. It is believed the project ran out of money. The Agent for many of the contracts has now gone. The consent for felling timber on the SSSI has now expired and the permission for access across the Crown Lands has lapsed. Efforts are being made to find out what Network Rail intends to do concerning clearance of the cut timber.</p> <p>A lot of people spent a lot of time on this project and Network Rail failed to carry out what was agreed. Mr Street said he would be issuing an invoice for any reinstatement works that the FC is obliged to undertake. Mr Pasmore suggested that in future the Forestry Commission should take a bond from any public body or company seeking to operate on the Forest, returnable only on satisfactory completion of the works.</p>	Action Mr Street
<b>SSSI RESTORATION WORKS</b>		
2011/5498	WOOTTON BRIDGE / AVON WATER	DISCHARGE
	<p>Mr Penfold confirmed the Forestry Commission has accepted the conditions contained in the April Court minutes. Clarification was requested by the Verderers regarding the spoil bank, and it was agreed by Mr Penfold that the spoil bank must be retained together with an adequate drain adjoining it.</p>	
2011/5499	PENNY MOOR	DISCHARGE
	<p>The proposals will be re-submitted to the Court in due course. Mr Penfold confirmed he has a copy of the report produced by Mr Pasmore and Mr Deakin and its content will be taken into account.</p>	

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

2011/5500	TRACK AT HOME FARM, BARTLEY	RESUME
	<p>During their recent site visit, Mr Street and the Official Verderer noted that the track to the property has been resurfaced without consent. Limestone has been used which is not permitted on the SSSI. This matter was raised last year but a decision has not been taken as to the next step. In addition there is evidence that an area of grass has been mowed which is not permitted. Mr Street will write to Ms Jenny Thomas at Natural England about these issues and he will ask for her comments as respects the use of the limestone. The Clerk was asked to find the reference to this matter and advise Mr Street.</p>	<p>Action Mr Street</p> <p>Action Clerk</p>
2011/5501	BRIDGE AT MARKWAY	DISCHARGE
	<p>Capt Moore, former CDA Chairman, complained about a bridge between Clumbers and Ferny Knap, (renamed the Markway Crossing) which he regards as dangerous to horse riders. Mr Penfold confirmed that the bridge is moving up the list of outstanding works and will be looked at soon. The bridge may be replaced. The Clerk said she will write to Capt Moore to let him know the latest position.</p>	<p>Action Clerk</p>
2011/5502	RUBBISH ON OPEN FOREST OUTSIDE COMMONER'S HOLDING	RESUME
	<p>Miss Macnair raised the issue of a commoner's holding in the west of the Forest where various old vehicles, machinery and rolls of wire have been left outside the holding. The items are dangerous to stock and unsightly and the situation as it is at present is unacceptable. The Court agreed that consideration should be given to using the Verderers' Stewardship scheme as a lever to persuade the commoner to tidy up. The VGS Manager will, therefore, be asked to write to the commoner warning him that if the area outside his holding is not cleared up, the matter will be referred to the VGS Sub-Committee where consideration will be given as to whether to withhold all or some of his payment for this year. Mr Street and Mr Graham Wilson from the Forestry Commission will also visit the holding.</p>	<p>Action</p> <p>VGS Mgr via a copy of this minute</p> <p>Action Mr Street</p>
2011/5503	DUR HILL	DISCHARGE
	<p>Miss Macnair asked when the Forestry Commission intends to go back and clear up the brash at Dur Hill. She also asked if it was really necessary for the 'totem poles' to be left standing. A number of cut off trees' devoid of all branches or vegetation have apparently been left for the benefit of raptors. In response Mr Penfold replied that the site will be revisited in the autumn.</p>	
2011/5504	BUCKHERD BOTTOM	DISCHARGE
	<p>This area also has a quantity of brash left following felling work. Again, the plan is for further work to be carried out in the near future.</p>	

2011/5505    INSTALLATION OF STILES    DISCHARGE

Mrs Thorne reported that Hampshire County Council has recently announced a desire to replace some stiles on public footpaths in Linwood with metal kissing gates. These gates are unsightly, out of character and considered to be dangerous to stock. In addition, small animals such as little pigs would have little problem negotiating them. It is believed the funding for the replacement of the stiles in other villages may have come from the National Park Authority. The Verderers consider such replacement undesirable in the New Forest and supported Mrs Thorne's concerns.

2011/5506    CONTROLLED BURNING    DISCHARGE

The Court thanked the Forestry Commission for completing the burning programme this year. Burning attracts a lot of criticism from the public but its value was borne out by the comments made by representatives of the outside bodies on the Welfare Tour who remarked how well the grass grows after burning. This makes a very valuable contribution to the ability of the ponies in particular to come through the winter in good condition. Swiping leaves the cut material on the ground which prevents new grass, so is by no means as satisfactory.

2011/5507    LONG MEADOW    RESUME

The New Forest Show Society has asked if they can use Long Meadow for overflow parking for the Show in July. In return the Show Society will lay on water and repair the fencing; works which the Forestry Commission will have problems finding the funds to carry out. The Show Society has also offered to supply water free of charge to the field whilst it is leased to the Verderers. Concerns were expressed however at this proposal, because by that time, the mares from the Bloodline Scheme will be in the field. It was agreed that the best way forward is for Mr Deakin to meet with Mr Street and the Show Society to discuss the issues.

Action  
Mr Deakin  
& Mr Street

**The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Street left the meeting**

**OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

2011/5508    STALLION SCHEME UPDATE    DISCHARGE

21 stallions were released onto the Forest on Saturday (14<sup>th</sup> May). The press kindly issued a short editorial piece to advise the public that the stallions were being put out. The stallions must be off the Forest by Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June.

2011/5509    WELFARE TOUR    RESUME

Mr Deakin returned to the subject of the Welfare Tour. He said that there was a good turnout from the bodies invited to attend. Approximately 600 animals were seen. In the absence of an Official Verderer, Mr Deakin hosted the tour and asked for feedback when everyone had returned to the Verderers' Hall. One person said their organisation had received a suggestion that the Forest should be cleared of all stock that are poor. It was accepted, however, that this is impractical. The British Horse Society representative expressed concern at the number of obviously non New

Forest Ponies that are turned out. It was explained that the commoners breed what they can sell and of course in recent years, there has been a demand for coloured ponies.

The Clerk requested that a date for the next Welfare Tour be agreed at the next Court.

Action  
Clerk

### **VERDERERS' HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME (HLS)**

2011/5510 HLS BOARD CHAIRMAN

RESUME  
May 2012

In accordance with the conditions of the HLS Agreement the Court appointed the Official Verderer as Chairman of the HLS Board for a period of one year at which time the decision will be reviewed.

### **VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME (VGS)**

2011/5511 STALLION BLOODLINE DIVERSITY SCHEME

RESUME  
July 2012

The mares and stallions have been selected. Fifteen mares were originally chosen but one has since been withdrawn. Five stallions have been selected and some mares have already been taken to their respective stallion.

### **NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK**

2011/5512 NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY TRAINING DAY

RESUME

It was agreed that different venues should be visited this time in order to give a broad view of commoning. Everyone was asked to consider suitable holdings to visit and to bring their suggestions to the June Court. In the meantime a date needs to be agreed with the Chief Executive Alison Barnes and an indication of numbers likely to attend would be helpful. An estimate of costs will be made and the NPA will be asked to fund the day.

Action  
OV

Action  
Clerk

### **OTHER AGENDA ITEMS**

2011/5513 CO-OPTION OF ELECTED VERDERER

RESUME

The Elected Verderers present agreed the name of the commoner who will be invited to join the Court until November 2012 when Mr Kitcher would have been due for re-election. It was confirmed that Mr Gerrelli has already indicated he is happy with the person who has been selected.

The Clerk will write to the person concerned asking if he is prepared to join the Court.

Action  
Clerk

2011/5514 AGRICULTURAL WAGES BOARD

RESUME

The Agricultural Wages Board may be abolished. It was agreed that the view of the National Farmers Union should be obtained but it is likely the Court may make representation calling for the AWB to be retained.

Action  
OV

## **MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

2011/5515 COURT REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND DISCHARGE  
WORKING GROUPS

Members of the Court were asked to let the Clerk have a list of the committees and working groups on which they represent the Court.

Action  
All Verderers

## **STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)**

2011/5516 MR JEFFEREY KITCHER'S FUNERAL DISCHARGE

The hearse will be escorted by Agisters in uniform and on horseback. It is understood there is likely to also be a Police escort.

2011/5517 CHAIRMAN OF THE STAFF COMMITTEE DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin was appointed Chairman of the Staff Committee.

## **TRAINING**

No training is taking place

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK**

There are no issues affecting health and safety at present.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

2011/5518 COMMONERS' HOUSING REVIEW RESUME

A report has been received in the office which will be circulated to all Verderers. The matter will then be discussed at the next Court.

Action  
Clerk

2011/5519 ROAD SIGNAGE DISCHARGE

Mr Richard Deacon, a commoner from the north west side of the Forest, working on behalf of the Commoners Defence Association, has produced a very comprehensive report on the signage situation at all the highway cattle grids in the Forest. It has been noted that at some grids on the perambulation there are no signs at all to warn motorists that they may encounter stock on the roads. This is considered to be a serious issue which is being taken up by the CDA.

2011/5520 MINISTERS VISIT DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin represented the Verderers at a recent visit to the Forest by Mr Richard Benyon MP. He will be returning to the Forest in August to formally open the new facilities at the Beaulieu Road Sale Yard.

2011/5521 HIT & RUN REWARD SCHEME RESUME

A claim has been received for a reward from a gentleman whose evidence led to the successful conviction of a hit and run driver who killed a Forest pony on Boxing Day. The Court agreed that this informant deserves to receive the maximum reward payable under the scheme which is £1,000.

Action  
Clerk

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at 9.30 a.m. in the Verderers Hall and the Library, The Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

The Clerk will write to him asking him to attend the June Court to collect his cheque in order that some publicity can be obtained. The Clerk will also ask for contributions towards the reward from the CDA and the New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society as has customary in the past.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 1.05 p.m.