

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 16th October 2019 at
9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.**

PRESENT:	Lord Manners	Official Verderer
	Mr R Deakin	Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman
	Mr A B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr J Greenwood	Elected Verderer
	Cllr Edward Heron	National Park Appointed Verderer
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Senior Elected Verderer
	Mr R Manley	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer

IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J R Gerrelli	Head Agister

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2019/10706 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of Court held on Wednesday, 18th September 2019 were approved and signed.

2019/10707 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

Declarations of interest can be found on the Verderers' website – www.verderers.org.uk. The Declarations of Interest were reviewed today.

October
2020

2019/10708 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Head Agister reported that overall, stock is in good condition. The drifts are progressing well and have generally been successful. As usual mares with foals are not looking as well as those without. There are quite a lot of foals this year. At Longdown, mares and foals certainly do not look as good as in other places. The site of the old dump is a place where animals don't seem to thrive. It is thought the grass is sweeter and animals are not inclined to move elsewhere.

There are a lot of cattle still on the Forest. The rain came and hasn't stopped. The grass has grown well but there are a lot of acorns this year. A few animals have succumbed to acorn poisoning.

2019/10709 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR RESUME

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Forest Ponies	4991	4894
Forest Cattle	5412	4778
Forest Donkeys	132	124
Forest Pigs	306	263
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	10841	10059
Common Ponies	758	766
Common Cattle	1869	1731
Common Donkeys	136	124

Common Pigs	192	105
Common Sheep	212	213
Total Common Stock	3167	2939
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	10535	9796
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	1763	2621
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	13298	12417
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	14008	12998

2019/10710 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT

RESUME

One commoner is late paying her marking fee and is being pursued.

2019/10711 ANIMALS REMOVED STATISTICS

DISCHARGE

A summary of the animals removed over the past 12 months was circulated.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2019/10712 ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS

RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

2019/10713 TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST ON HYDE COMMON

RESUME

The Court approved the Official Verderer's request to pay up to £3,000 + VAT for legal advice on the issues for the Forest arising out of the new Telecoms Code.

Action OV

2019/10714 LAW OF PRESCRIPTION

DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer had nothing further to report. He confirmed the Law Commission has said it will take on board the comments he made. He added that he will remind the Law Commissioners that we would like to know what happens.

2019/10715 HIT & RUN REWARD SCHEME

RESUME
December

Further information is awaited from the Police in respect of the road traffic collision where an off-duty fireman provided evidence leading to the identification of a driver responsible for hitting a Forest pony and driving off being identified. Mr Deakin confirmed the CDA is happy to contribute to a reward if it is felt one should be offered.

Action Clerk

DE-MINIMIS CONSENTS – ITEMS RECORDED AT THIS COURT

2019/10716 DE-MINIMIS CONSENTS

DISCHARGE

The Clerk reported the following de-minimis consents have been granted:-

DM0068 Sweyns Lease, East Boldre, Beaulieu – new Duct

OPEN COURT – 10.00 a.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest
Mr Paul Grugeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2019/10717 FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY AT DRIFTS

From time to time we receive requests for permission to film or photograph a drift.

Our policy is to refuse permission.

An enormous amount of time and effort is put into the organisation of the drifts and, in particular, care is taken to ensure that they are as safe as possible.

The presence of inexperienced spectators is potentially dangerous to themselves and places an extra burden on those responsible for the organisation.

It is for those reasons that we encourage spectators to stay away from the drifts.

We are commissioning some film of the drifts from an experienced local cameraman and in due course that will be available on our new website which, we hope, will also be up and running shortly.

2019/10718 TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST ON HYDE COMMON

At both our July and September Courts, presentments were made about the sudden imposition of a Telecommunications mast on Hyde common.

Our consent for this was sought and refused.

We understand that the operator invoked so-called emergency powers to place the mast there for up to 18 months.

We question whether being required to remove the mast from its previous location on private land constitutes an emergency within the terms of the legislation.

We understand that Natural England felt it had to consent on the basis that the emergency powers had been invoked. NE is still awaiting a formal notice and supporting Habitats Regulation Assessment from Waldon. Once that arrives NE will request a site meeting with HCC, NPA, CDA, Verderers and Waldon, to discuss the continued presence of the mast in that location. It will be the Verderers' position that the mast should be relocated.

We have requested a meeting with the head of planning at the National Park Authority to understand what protection the planning system can provide to the Forest's important and beautiful landscapes.

We have also raised the matter at the National Common Land Stakeholders Group which was chaired by a senior official from Defra.

Whilst the desire for mobile phone coverage is understood, we believe that there are locations where masts can be sited, not on a heavily protected landscape and in suitably discreet and screened locations.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2019/10719 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2019

The Agisters attended 12 accidents in September. This compares with 16 in the same month last year.

1 cow was killed outright and 3 ponies, 1 donkey and 2 cattle were injured and had to be humanely destroyed and 2 donkeys were injured.

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

1 accident was not reported by the driver involved.

The total killed and injured so far in 2019 is 67 compared with 59 in the same period last year.

PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR

2019/10720 PANNAGE SEASON EXTENSION

'Following requests from both the Commoners Defence Association and the Verderers I can announce that I have agreed to an extension of the pannage season this year in response to the quantities of fallen acorns present this autumn.

The pannage season will now close on Monday 23 December 2019, an extension of 43 days. All pigs must be removed from the Forest by this revised end date.

Breeding sows, that is pigs in pig, may be allowed the privilege of remaining on the Open Forest after the end of the pannage season but only if authorised in writing by the Deputy Surveyor for the period specified in the consent.'

PRESENTMENTS

2019/10721 TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST ON HYDE COMMON Presentment by Dr Tony Hockley, Chairman of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association.

Dr Hockley thanked the Court for the action it has taken regarding the mast on Hyde Common and its ongoing efforts to secure the mast's removal.

2019/10722 PANNAGE SEASON EXTENSION Presentment by Dr Tony Hockley, Chairman of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

Dr Hockley thanked the Deputy Surveyor for agreeing to extend the pannage season this year.

2019/10723 BROOMY WOODS Presentment by Mrs Beryl Bull, practising commoner

'Broomy Woods near to High Corner is a wood planted in 1809 consisting of mainly Beech and Oak in the southern end. It recently has had a huge amount of felling work done in this area.

We all appreciate work has to be done to maintain these woodlands but does it have to be left looking a total mess?

Brash wood has been cut from the trees and just strewn all over this part of the woodland floor and the very large amount of logs that have been cut are stacked along the sides of the path.

I know this I still early days to mention this but Broomy is a most enchanting woods in early Spring and precisely where the wood is all stacked and the brash wood left is exactly where an abundance of bluebells grow.

The Forest needs to be treated with care and sensitivity. The treatment these woods have received recently certainly does not give that impression.

One of the men working on site at the time was asked 'Is all the brash wood going to be left because if so, it would be likely to destroy the bluebell and lose the beauty of them. He scoffed and replied 'they were probably only the Spanish type and not worth worrying about.

A lot of work now carried out on the Forest is contracted out. It is the casual works in this case that need to understand that the New Forest is a very rare area they are working in.

There is a great deal of respect for the older forest workers who take a pride in their work, who appreciated the natural environment they worked in and want to maintain its natural beauty.

Broomy at the south end is where the bluebells and other protected flowers are of an outstanding beauty and have been enjoyed by local people and visitors alike for many many years. The bluebells have attracted quite a few well known photographers as well.

We are aware this work is not on the Open Forest but in an inclosure so hopefully the logs will be removed soon but we do worry the brash wood will just be left and the beauty of the future bluebells lost.

Verderers, we hope bringing this to your attention you will sympathise with our concerns in this part of the New Forest especially about the way that this work has been carried out.'

2019/10724 INCIDENTS BETWEEN FOREST STOCK AND THE PUBLIC
Presentment by Mr Robert Stride, Vice Chairman of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association and cattle commoner

'This court is well aware of the ever increasing pressures of recreation on the Forest. This is increasingly bringing our livestock into conflict with other Forest users and changing their behaviour.

We thank the Official verderer for jointly hosting our recent cattle owners meeting to discuss these issues and the large number of concerned cattle keeping commoners who attended the meeting.

There were two main outcomes of the meeting. Firstly, commoners were extremely concerned that the majority of Forest users were unaware of how they should behave around livestock. There is a lack of clear information given to the public about how to pass livestock safely.

Commoners are keen to do their bit to ensure everyone is able to safely enjoy the Forest. Following the meeting, the CDA have recommended to all commoners that all cattle are dehorned, excluding Highlands and Longhorns which have horns as part of their breed characteristics.

We have also drafted a poster which clearly informs people of their responsibilities. We need the general public to help us and to report any incidents of livestock worrying to the Police or Verderers. We respectfully ask consent from the Verderers and Forestry England to place these posters in the car parks and access points.

We need to remember that the Forest is only like it is because of the animals that graze it. If we don't take some positive steps to preserve our traditions we will lose them forever.'

2019/10725 **DANGEROUS FENCING AT CANTERTON LANE**
Presentment by Mrs Mary Gray, Commoner

'My presentment this morning, concerns a very big defect.

Manorial Waste, land in Canterton Lane, Pipers Lane, Brook/Minstead.

Broken down fencing, rotten piles, therefore barbed wire to the ground, hooped up in many places, endangering grazing animals, plus humans alike.

Canterton Lane problem, opposite housing, often children's play area. Realising Manorial Waste Land, has always been a problem. Surely if dangerous fencing were removed (quite cheaply) left open, to be safe for humans and animals alike.

Having lived and used these lanes for x number of years, it is devastating to see such deterioration, possibly the way late John Jeffery, who owned this land, could be turning in his grave at All Saints, Minstead.

Thank you for your time, once again. Perhaps in this day and age, health and safety could be an asset, if asked kindly to visit the site.'

2019/10726 **HORNLESS BULLS**
Presentment by Mr Mike Eccles

Mr Eccles referred to a recent article in the Sunday Telegraph concerning bulls which are being bred to be polled (hornless).

The Head Agister closed the Court

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest
Mr Paul Grugeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

PRESENTATION BY MS LEANNE SARGEANT, FORESTRY ENGLAND SENIOR ECOLOGIST

2019/10727 **VEGETATION SURVEY**

DISCHARGE

Ms Sargeant gave a helpful presentation on the proposed vegetation survey which is to be carried out on the Forest.

Mr Pasmore was dissatisfied with the proposed survey and asked for the matter to be discussed again later in the meeting.

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2019/10728 BROOMY WOODS

RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor said he will investigate the work that has been carried out in Broomy Woods.

Mrs Westerhoff asked the Deputy Surveyor to let the Court know the policy for clearing up after thinning operations.

Action DS

2019/10729 INCIDENTS BETWEEN FOREST STOCK AND THE PUBLIC AND THE CDA'S PROPOSED SIGN

RESUME

The Court is also extremely concerned at the public's lack of knowledge and appreciation of commoners' stock. Commoners feel they should be doing something to help communications and education.

Signage is always an issue and for some years, the policy has been to avoid the proliferation of signage. There are some differences of opinion between Forestry England and the Court, as respects the way messages are conveyed with many members of the Court feeling that signs need to be forthright and direct.

The Clerk pointed out that experience with RTA signage indicates that signs that are changed/moved regularly work better than static signs which tend to blend into the landscape.

The locations of any new signage must be agreed. HCC will remove any signage put up at the cattle grids or on highway street furniture.

As signage is a controversial matter and the visitor season is pretty much over now, it was agreed that a decision should be deferred until the November Court, in order to allow an opportunity for counter presentments to be heard. This is in accordance with the Court's usual policy.

2019/10730 DANGEROUS FENCING AT CANTERTON LANE

DISCHARGE

The Clerk will undertake a Land Registry enquiry to ascertain the owner of the land and write a letter asking for the dangerous wire to be removed.

Action Clerk

NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2019/10731 SNAKES IN THE HEATHER

RESUME

This is an extension to the study previously known as the New Forest Smooth Snake Survey. It is requested that it should run until 2023.

The Court requested a report on the findings from the study which has now been running for several years. The Court would like to know what has been learned so far and what is to be achieved by extending the study.

Action DS

MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO FORESTRY ENGLAND

2019/10732	INCLOSURE FENCING	RESUME
	Mr Deakin will check the map of existing fences including those which have been retained for drifting purposes.	Action RD
	There is currently 334 km of Inclosure fencing on the Forest. There is 14km of drift fencing shown in a different colour on the map. The pounds are also shown.	
	The long-term maintenance of fencing needs to be considered. The Deputy Surveyor stressed the importance of the Court and Forestry England working together and bearing in mind the need to be realistic with resources.	
2019/10733	NEW FOREST CROWN FREEHOLD PROPERTIES	RESUME
	A meeting is due to take place shortly.	
2019/10734	NEW TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS	RESUME
	The Official Verderer, Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Pasmore are due to meet with Mr Steve Avery, the Head of Planning at the New Forest National Park Authority to discuss the position over new applications for telecommunications masts in the Forest.	Action OV
	Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Pasmore will work up a response to the consultation on changes to Permitted Development Rights for such infrastructure.	Action DW/AHP
2019/10735	DISTURBANCE TO STOCK AT THE POND ON IBSLEY COMMON	DISCHARGE
	The National Trust has been unable to contact anyone at Blunts Barn Activity Centre which was reportedly responsible for the incident where cattle were driven away from the pond. The pond and land surrounding it is managed by the National Trust on behalf of the owner, Hampshire County Council. It was agreed that Blunts Barn Activity Centre should be named in the November Court in the Official Verderer's response to the presentment made by Mrs Gover at the last Court.	Action OV
2019/10736	HALE SCHOOL	DISCHARGE
	The School is running children round the perimeter of Hatchet Green and 'Wardens' are chasing ponies up the road in order to allow this to happen. The Court agreed this is not acceptable. A letter will be written explaining that such action could result in the animals becoming more unpredictable around people. In addition, it was suggested the Head Agister should offer to go and speak to the children.	Action Clerk
2019/10737	CAMPSITE ISSUES	RESUME
	The campsite survey has been located but it is held in electronic form. The files are too large to print.	
	It was confirmed that the marquee being used as the temporary warden's office on Denny Campsite has been removed. The Deputy Surveyor will talk to Camping in the Forest about repairs to the warden's office, the	Action DS

reported cutting of grass/vegetation and the water pipe which was laid without permission.

Mr Pasmore said he will inspect Ocknell campsite to check that the infrastructure is in accordance with the original campsite survey. Mr Deakin will check Denny Campsite.

Action AHP
& RD

The Deputy Surveyor added that a management plan for every site has been agreed with Natural England and Forestry England will undertake some visits from time to time to see if operational practices remain compliant with those plans. A few activities have been identified which are not consistent and are being investigated.

Action DS

2019/10738 PIPERS WAIT WATER LEAK

RESUME

A meeting took place on 10th October, attended by Forestry England and Natural England. However, members of the Court were not invited. Mr Grugeon was asked to arrange a further meeting for members of the Court to attend.

Action PG

2019/10739 INCLOSURE RESTORATION

RESUME

The Forest Design Plan is not yet finalised.

The Verderers invited Forestry England to consider whether retention of some Inclosures, especially on the Waterside, could help separate stock and the public in areas where there is high recreational pressure. The Deputy Surveyor invited the Court to contribute to the discussions. The visitor survey and its analysis, which is being undertaken by Footprint Ecology, will provide information about recreational activities, patterns of use and locations of greater use. This should help inform how these pressures can be diverted or dissipated as part of the Recreation Management Strategy for the Forest.

Action DS

Forestry England is specifically requested to consider re-fencing Dibden Inclosure. It was suggested that the fencing could be arranged so that part of the Inclosure could be thrown from time to time for ecological reasons, whilst still retaining other areas for people to walk their dogs without the risk of coming into contact with the Forest livestock. Natural England will have to be consulted.

Action DS

Whilst the ideal is to provide recreational opportunities off the Forest, it has to be accepted that some on-Forest provision is essential.

Cllr Heron commented that some of the money that is paid by developers for mitigating pressures resulting from new housing, could potentially be diverted to the Forest. At present it is all used for schemes off the Forest. Cllr Heron will investigate the feasibility of this.

Action EH

2019/10740 CONTROL OF RECREATION – WOOTTON BRIDGE & HATCHET POND DISCHARGE

Forestry England was thanked for the prompt work in providing car free defences at Wootton Bridge. The ditching was carried out within days of the September Court.

The Deputy Surveyor said people are ignoring the signs warning them to stay out of the water at Hatchet Pond. Although the Ranger team has been to Hatchet Pond and spoken to people there, as soon as they left, others ignored the signs and entered the pond.

2019/10741 MAP OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES & PROPOSALS

RESUME
December

This will be discussed at the next RMS meeting on 29th November. The Court is concerned at the time it is taking to formulate a plan for managing recreation on the Forest. The Official Verderer said nothing will happen until the Local Development Order (LDO) is in place. Forestry England and Verderers consent will be required for any facilities on the Forest.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2019/10742 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST

RESUME

An updated SSSI Repair and Maintenance List was circulated.

ENCROACHMENTS INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2019/10743 ENCROACHMENTS LIST

RESUME

The list of current encroachments was circulated.

2019/10744 KINGS COPSE ROAD

DISCHARGE

What looks like scalping has been laid in various places along the road. In addition, a fence has appeared on Crown Land on the outside lip of a ditch and an old car has been left on the side of the road.

2019/10745 NORDSLY, NORLEY WOOD

DISCHARGE

A new fence has been erected outside the original boundary of this property. The fence is a danger to stock. The CDA will be writing to the occupier as it is understood the land outside the property is not Crown Land.

ACTION LIST

2019/10746 ACTION LIST

RESUME

The Action List was circulated.

2019/10747 BROOMY PLAIN ROAD

DISCHARGE

HCC's work is almost complete. The white lines will appear to narrow the road which should help to slow down traffic. The passing places are now labelled as such. Further works as discussed with the local residents will be carried out over the coming months.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2019/10748 FORESTRY ENGLAND CONTACT CENTRE & REPORTING SYSTEM

DISCHARGE

Cllr Heron asked the Deputy Surveyor to look at how issues reported to FE are dealt with. Cllr Heron recently tried to report grass cuttings which had been dumped on the Open Forest but received no feedback. In addition, when attempting to ring FE, he was met with an extremely long recorded message and as a result, he ended the call. The Deputy Surveyor promised to follow this up.

Action DS

The Deputy Surveyor and the Land Agent left the meeting.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2019/10749 CATTLE OWNERS MEETING

DISCHARGE

It is thought the meeting was successful. A number of issues were discussed, including whether cattle should be de-horned and whether the type of signage which appears on the Open Forest is appropriate. The meeting felt that the messages about animals on signage erected by Forestry England are not sufficiently robust.

The Official Verderer said he is keen to obtain some definitive legal advice as respects the potential liabilities should a member of the public, injured by a commoner's animal, seek financial compensation. He has a suitably qualified barrister in mind who will charge in the region of £2,500 to £4,000 for a conference followed by written advice. The Court agreed this is an appropriate way forward and the Official Verderer was authorised to arrange the conference with Queen's Counsel as soon as possible.

Action OV

2019/10750 UNDERSTANDING THE NEW FOREST'S NATURAL CAPITAL

DISCHARGE

The Clerk was asked to request copies of this document for each Verderer.

Action Clerk

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME

2019/10751 THE FUTURE OF THE HLS

DISCHARGE

A letter saying that schemes due to expire in 2020 are eligible for a rollover. The letter does not, however stipulate that such schemes will definitely be rolled over. It is understood that our scheme is being considered.

Mr Greenwood commented that an Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) might be a replacement for the HLS. It could potentially run alongside the HLS rollover. The possibilities are being looked into and there is nothing more that can be done at this stage.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

2019/10752 JOINT LITTER WORKING GROUP

DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett reported that the statistics indicate that instances of fly-tipping are decreasing year on year and verge-side litter and litter in car parks is also showing a downward trend.

The usual Forest Spring Clean will be held in 2020.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2019/10753 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

STAFF MATTERS / HEALTH & SAFETY / TRAINING

2019/10754 REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

DISCHARGE

The Remuneration Committee meets this afternoon to review the staff salaries. The Court confirmed it was happy to accept the decision of the committee without further reference.

2019/10755 POLICE ASSISTANCE AT DRIFTS DISCHARGE

The police were unable to assist on a couple of drifts and alternative arrangements had to be made to warn drivers of animals crossing the public highway. No incidents occurred. The request for police assistance will be made earlier next year.

Action RD

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2019/10756 WEST WELLOW NATURAL ENGLAND CONDITION ASSESSMENT DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff commented that a recent study found no invertebrates in dung samples on the common and she questioned whether Ivermectin is being used on Forest stock. In response, it was confirmed that commoners know they must keep stock in for 14 days following worming if ivermectin is used. It was further pointed out that the dung which was sampled may have come from a private riding horse and not a Forest animal. The matter will be raised at the forthcoming VGS meeting.

Action OV

2019/10757 BURLEY LITTER PICK DISCHARGE

Miss Macnair said the village litter pick takes place next Sunday. She remarked that she collects a bag of litter every day when she is out and about in the village. Mr Dowsett will advise the Joint Litter Working Group.

2019/10758 VERDERERS' HALL RESTORATION DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett advised the Court that the large photo showing Verderers in the Hall some years ago is going to be re-framed and displayed. Forestry England's Heritage Officer has confirmed funding is available for the restoration and preservation of the Coat of Arms. Two quotes have been received for this work and a third is awaited because the cost will exceed £1,000. The intention is for the work to be completed between the November and January Verderers' Courts.

2019/10759 MAPPING FOR THE BASIC PAYMENT SCHEME DISCHARGE

Work continues on the mapping for the BPS. Mr Greenwood said there are still some missing areas. Interpretation is proving difficult but there is no real deadline.

2019/10760 NATIONAL COMMON LAND STAKEHOLDER GROUP DISCHARGE

At a recent meeting the question was asked – Is the promotion of recreation by National Park Authorities a problem? The answer is a definite yes.

2019/10761 BEAULIEU ROAD SALE YARD RESUME

Mr Readhead expressed concern about the future of the Beaulieu Road Sales now that ponies have to be microchipped and passported in advance of the sales. He reported that this year, Dartmoor's Chagford Sale had been allowed by DEFRA to microchip ponies at the sale and send them to their new homes on temporary identification documents. This option was withdrawn from the Beaulieu Road Sales earlier this year. As a result, some foals, particularly colts, have been going direct to slaughter because of the difficulties and expense of getting them chipped and passported in advance of the sales. Mr Readhead asked the Court to take up the matter with Defra.

The Clerk pointed out that the sales do not fall within the remit of the Court. In response, Mr Deakin said that the Court has a role in safeguarding a viable future for Commoning. He feels that the Verderers should be involved as the Beaulieu Road Sales operation plays a vital role in the practise of Commoning and it is needed going into the future.

As DEFRA imposes the restrictions, the Court accepted the DEFRA Appointed Verderer Mr Manley's offer to contact DEFRA to seek a practical and workable solution for the Forest.

Action RM

2019/10762 VEGETATON SURVEY

DISCHARGE

During this item, Cllr Heron gave his apologies and left the meeting.

Mr Pasmore raised this matter again. He expressed serious concern about the way in which the survey will be undertaken. He said, in his opinion, the condition of the vegetation (heather) on the added areas is appalling. He feels the proposed survey makes no reference to the natural beauty of the Forest. Mrs Westerhoff, however, disagreed. She pointed out that the photographic survey that it has already been agreed will take place, will significantly contribute towards monitoring changes in the landscape.

Mr Pasmore, however, felt it is essential to look at the history of the Forest and the grazing pressure over the years and the proposed survey won't do that.

The Official Verderer said he is confident the survey which is proposed will be of benefit and he feels the Court should support it.

Mr Readhead referred again to a report produced in 1983 by Don Small but unfortunately to date a copy has not been located.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2.00 p.m.

J. Manley
20/11/2019