

## COMMONING AND THE PUBLIC

Presentment by Mark, Nicola and Katie Ferrett, Practising New Forest Commoners

Dear Verderers

May I take this opportunity to thank you for the letter sent by the Official Verderer on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

I would like to raise some points which I feel would be a benefit to the commoners, verderers and the public, with the ongoing worry of animal attacks reference cattle. I believe that all cattle depastured on the Forest and commons should be dehorned with no exception of the breed. This I know will be controversial, but the commoners have to compromise and have a conscience about reducing the possibility of a human being, being gored by a horn. This will show good intent from the commoning community and also will improve the value of their stock.

I feel that there are a lot of requests to the commoners about altering their way of practicing commoning and I appreciate that there is an ever growing population wishing to visit our wonderful Forest, but absolutely nothing is being done to advise them as they enter the Forest that they are entering The New Forest National Park and must not touch and interfere with the livestock which roam and have the right of way. This could be achieved with a sign at every cattle grid entering the New Forest, hence making them aware of their responsibilities and this would be on a par with other National Parks around the world. More certainly has to be done by the National Park Authority and Forestry England to protect the ancient practice of commoning. While we request compromises by the commoners, we need help back urgently from National Park Authority.

Finally, I understand your concerns about animals in early spring accessing private properties and your request for the commoner to withhold his cattle for a few weeks longer. I am sorry to say as you know, it is not the commoners' responsibility to worry about private fences and landowners' boundaries on the Forest. It is their responsibility to fence against and we must not give way in any form on this subject. Again, if an animal is known to be jumping and is identified by our agisters then that commoners should compromise and remove that animal.