

One thing I have noticed lately is we are starting to receive, and finding ourselves, more donkeys which require attention to their feet, and this is something we need to keep on top of. Obviously this is the responsibility of the donkey owners, and we must remind them of that.

2022/12079 WELFARE TOUR RESUME
May

A welfare tour will be provisionally arranged for Friday 27th May 2022.

2022/12080 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR RESUME

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Forest Ponies	131	342
Forest Cattle	71	381
Forest Donkeys	7	35
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	209	758
Common Ponies	0	53
Common Cattle	0	723
Common Donkeys	0	0
Common Pigs	0	60
Common Sheep	0	0
Total Common Stock	0	836
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	209	758
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	0	776
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	209	1534
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	209	1594

2022/12081 BYELAW BREACHES RESUME

No byelaw breaches have been reported.

OPEN COURT

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

The Official Verderer offered a warm welcome to all those present and commented it is good to have so many people in attendance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS by the Official Verderer

2022/12082 NEOSPORA

Many of you will have read or heard about the tragedy of the 19 cattle, belonging to a commoner, that aborted their calves. These cattle had been depastured on the Forest over the summer and were found to have been carrying a parasite called Neospora which can be found in dog excrement, and often causes foetal abortion in cattle.

It is likely that the cattle became infected after grazing on grass that was contaminated as a result of dog faeces having been left on the ground. This parasite can survive in the soil for weeks if dog poo is not promptly picked up and removed.

The severity of this goes beyond just the loss of 19 calves although that is serious enough. If an infected cow managed to calve despite having the parasite it is highly probable that her calf will in turn be a carrier for the disease. The only means of eradicating the problem is to cull infected cows, a practise used in previous smaller incidents. Recent research has raised further concerns, as it suggests that this disease may possibly affect our ponies and this is being investigated further.

We have learnt from Covid that swiftly-implemented, simple measures can do much to reduce the transmission of infectious disease.

We therefore ask that dog walkers follow both the New Forest Code and the new Countryside Code by picking up dog poo, removing it and disposing of it safely. There is really no excuse for any dog walker not to follow these codes and this tragedy serves to underline the critical importance of all dog walkers behaving responsibly. The sheer number of dogs walked daily on the Forest means that, unless things change, this may prove to be a growing problem which could render keeping cattle on the Forest unviable.

It is to be hoped that this will lead to change. If it does not and this disease re occurs in Forest stock, we will be urging Forestry England to make the picking up and safe disposal of dog poo mandatory.

2022/12083 OUR OFFICE

I am glad to report that we have reopened the Verderers' office. We are at present asking people not to visit the office in person but to contact the office by telephone, letter or email. As ever we continue to monitor Government rules and guidelines but I am hopeful that Open Courts this year will be held where they should be, in the Verderers' Hall.

2022/12084 SALT BLOCKS IN THE VICINITY OF THE B3078

A number of salt blocks have been installed in the vicinity of the Roger Penny Way. This is an experiment but it is hoped that they will help keep animals away from that busy road by providing an alternative source of salt, to that spread on the road surface, during the winter months.

The Verderers continue to support the installation of average speed cameras on that road. The next step is a feasibility study which will investigate matters such as how many cameras are needed, where they should be sited, how they will be powered and how they will fit in the Forest landscape. There is strong support of this initiative and as soon as I have anything more to report I will make a further announcement.

2022/12085 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JANUARY 2022

The Agisters attended 8 accidents in January, compared with 7 in the same period last year.

4 ponies died.

1 pony and 1 cow were injured.

2 ponies reported to have been involved in accidents could not be found.

1 accident happened at twilight and the other 7 in the dark.

All the accidents were reported by the drivers involved.

The total number of commoners' animals killed and injured to date is 6, compared with 4 in the same period last year.

PRESENTMENTS

2022/12086 USING BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TO ASSIST THE MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE AND ANIMALS IN THE NEW FOREST
Presentment by Ms Sarah Norris DipCABT

'I am a retired Metropolitan Police officer and I have lived in Sway for 4 years. I have a degree in Applied Psychology from Birkbeck, University of London, and I am now a qualified animal behaviourist and trainer.

I would like to speak to the verderers about using Behavioural psychology in approaching a number of challenges that are faced in the management of the behaviour of people and of animals in the New Forest.

What are behavioural insights?

The Government formed the 'Nudge unit' 10 years ago to apply behavioural insights to inform policy, improve public services and deliver positive results for people and communities.

'Nudges' mean thinking about the way people approach the decisions they make and then using these to design policy.

The behavioural insight team has successfully worked on a wide range of public policies, most recently in forming language used to inform people about Coronavirus.

Other areas of interest are the Insights team to promote safer driving. Using a behavioural insight to see that aspects of dangerous driving are not a deliberate intent to break the law but rather as the consequences of biases such as lower risk perception and habit. Addressing these unsafe behaviours can deliver enormous benefits. The threat of a punishment is a powerful reinforcer of behaviour. Reward is also a powerful reinforcer and is also used successfully to reduce speed. Specifically relevant in the New Forest in accident hotspots such as Roger Penny Way.

Behavioural Insights have also been used successfully in many other areas of public policy, particularly in environmental issues and wildlife conservation. Wildlife conservation is often a human behavioural issue. How do we promote cooperation with people who visit? How to protect endangered species from conflict with humans? There is a current study looking at what behavioural science can offer environmental management - this would be of specific interest in the management of the people who visit and the animals that live in the New Forest.'

2022/12087 REPLACEMENT CELEBRATORY TREES AT BRAMSHAW – PROTECTIVE FENCING

Presentment by Miss Sue Bennison on behalf of Bramshaw Parish Council

'The size of the enclosure is 12ft square. Posts will be 4ft 6 above ground. 3 rails will be equally spaced apart. This size is to protect the tree from animals reaching over the top rail as has happened with its predecessor.

It will be necessary to have the protective fence in place for a good number of years whilst the tree gets above graze height and forms a substantial bark covering the trunk at which time the fence will no longer be required. That is the reason for a more aesthetically pleasing style of fence.

The tree will have an inner fence to protect it from grazing animals. Comprising of 4 small posts with stock fencing on the inner side. The tree will also have a stake to prevent rocking until it has established a good root system. A watering point will be inserted in the ground when it is planted which will be inside the inner stock fence. This method will allow animals to graze over the bottom rail and small animals to graze within the 12ft area without damaging the trunk of the tree at ground level.'

2022/12088 TALLY HO RESTAURANT SITE ON THE A31 AT STONEY CROSS

Presentment by Mrs Mary Gray of Bramshaw

Mrs Gray asked if something can be done about the eyesore that is the site of this former restaurant.

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2022/12089 USING BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TO ASSIST THE MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE AND ANIMALS IN THE NEW FOREST RESUME

The Official Verderer said he will write to Ms Norris with an invitation to meet. The Deputy Surveyor asked if one or two representatives for Forestry England could join him. Action OV

2022/12090 REPLACEMENT CELEBRATORY TREES AT BRAMSHAW – PROTECTIVE FENCING DISCHARGE

Miss Bennison came to the Court to argue for a larger (12ft x 12ft) protective enclosure than was previously agreed, to be built round each of two celebratory trees at Bramshaw. One being a replacement Queen's Golden Jubilee tree at Wych Green, the other being a new tree to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, to be positioned adjacent to the Bramshaw sign on an area of grass close to the Fountain Court entrance. The request for the trees and the enclosures was first considered by the Court in June 2021. In July 2021, the Court decided that the Bramshaw trees should be protected with the same design of tree guard as those used at Burley, measuring 7' x 7' x 4'6" high. The Court considered this latest request but is not minded to alter its decision. A letter will be sent to the Clerk of Bramshaw Parish Council advising that the tree guards must be constructed to the same specification as those at Burley but, if felt necessary, with the addition of additional rails across two corners on the inside of the guards, to ensure stability. Action OV/Clerk

2022/12091 NETWORK RAIL COMPENSATION LAND AT NORLEY WOOD DISCHARGE

As no counter presentments were heard today, the Court approved the land transfer required to compensate for the loss of land needed for the enlarged switchgear compound at Woodfidley. The Court asked that some attempt be made to camouflage the buildings housing the switch-gear, possibly by planting screening or adding timber cladding, in order to improve their appearance. Double the area of land actually required has been agreed with any extra banked for future land exchanges. Mr Grugeon will advise Network Rail.

Action PG

2022/12092 TALLY HO RESTAURANT SITE ON THE A31 AT STONEY CROSS DISCHARGE

Mr Grugeon reported that this matter is progressing. Highways England is due to deliver some large concrete blocks to ensure that further vehicular incursions onto the site are prevented. Veolia will then clear the rubbish and the new fencing will be constructed, bringing the area of land into the Forest.

DE MINIMIS UTILITY PROPOSALS

2022/12093 DE-MINIMIS CONSENTS TO BE RECORDED AT THIS COURT DISCHARGE

DM0142 Rainbows End Cott, The Cross, Burley – SSE 50m underground cable
DM0143 The Pig Hotel, Dig and Duct mostly under the tarmac at the road end of the entrance to the Hotel

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COURTS

2022/12094 EVENT ON ROUNDHILL CAMPSITE / PERMISSIONS FOR RECREATIONAL EVENTS ON THE FOREST / REVIEW OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING RESUME

A number of questions and issues arose following a detailed discussion on both the recent event on Roundhill Campsite and permissions in general, which Forestry England grants for recreational events on the Forest.

The Memorandum of Understanding between FE and the Court is now out of date and it needs to be reviewed. This is particularly important following the introduction of Habitats Regulation Assessments for certain events. The MOU will be an item for discussion at the March Court and the Clerk will ensure it is on the Agenda.

Action Clerk

The Deputy Surveyor said he will provide summary information on permissions granted and he welcomes the opportunity to work with the Court to improve understanding and agree a way forward.

Action DS

2022/12095 NEOSPORA & FOREST CATTLE RESUME

The Clerk confirmed she has been in touch with both Southampton University's Biology Student Office and the Royal Veterinary College. To date neither has responded. She will chase them up. It is hoped that a study can be undertaken to ascertain the level of infection

Action Clerk

which may be present in dogs walked on the Forest. The survey may also be extended to foxes.

The Deputy Surveyor said that new signs have been put up in car parks asking the public to pick up after their dogs. A public engagement event aimed at dog owners is due to be held on Boltons Bench on 26th February and further efforts to educate dog owners will be undertaken by Forestry England at the 2022 New Forest Show. The Deputy Surveyor added this is a national problem, and not something confined to the New Forest. More bins are not the solution, as they create more problems than they solve, with people leaving rubbish beside bins which are full.

Action
DS/FE

Mr Dowsett suggested some large, hi-viz signs should be displayed at entrances to the Forest and the Deputy Surveyor agreed to give the idea consideration.

Action DS

2022/12096 SCOTS PINE FELLING PROPOSALS AT SLAP BOTTOM DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor said this work, which was to be done as an HLS project, will not now take place.

2022/12097 FELLING OF OAK TREE IN HOLLANDS WOOD CAMPSITE DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed the tree was felled as an emergency and therefore was not notified.

2022/12098 INFECTIONS DISEASES CONTINGENCY PLAN (ANIMALS) RESUME

Mr Deakin will send his comments to Jonathan Blanco, Forestry England. The Deputy Surveyor said that Mr Blanco is returning to Spain.

Action RD

2022/12099 DIBDEN INCLOSURE RE-FENCING RESUME
April

Mr Deakin expressed his frustration at the length of time this is taking to resolve. He said it had been agreed with the previous Deputy Surveyor that the inclosure would be re-fenced, although agreement as to the precise line of the fencing had not been finalised.

The Deputy Surveyor said he wishes to consider all options as fencing is a big and expensive solution. He will re-send the email to the Official Verderer which contained some comments and requests for information.

Action DS

2022/12100 LONG TERM STRATEGY FOR FORESTRY ENGLAND INCLOSURES & THE FOREST DESIGN PLAN RESUME

Some adjustment to the long-term inclosure fencing requirements are needed to take account of the Animal Infectious Diseases Contingency Plan and the needs of animal management. A marked-up map will then be issued.

Action DS

Mr Pasmore asked whether the Forest Design Plan will still be implemented. The Deputy Surveyor said he will provide an update.

Action DS

SSSI ENHANCEMENT / REPAIR & MAINTENANCE

2022/12101 SSSI ENHANCEMENT / REPAIR & MAINTENANCE LIST RESUME

The list was noted.

2022/12102 PICKET MIRE DISCHARGE

The Court agreed the proposals which are due to go through the Wetland Forum.

ACTION LIST – ISSUES REPORTED TO FORESTRY ENGLAND

2022/12103 ACTION LIST - ISSUES REPORTED TO FORESTRY ENGLAND RESUME

Noted

UTILITY PROPOSALS AGREED VIA EMAIL, REQUIRING RATIFICATION

2022/12104 BT OPENREACH FIBRE TO THE PREMISES PROPOSALS IN THE LINWOOD AREA RESUME

The Clerk advised she has received some proposals for armoured cable, as opposed to the usual ducting, to be used to provide telecommunication connections in the Linwood area. The Court indicated it is happy with this subject to the route being acceptable. The Clerk will circulate the proposals by email, for consideration by the Court. The decisions, if agreed, will be ratified at the March meeting.

Action Clerk/All

The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Grugeon left the meeting

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COURTS

2022/12105 CYCLING RESUME
April

A further meeting with Forestry England is planned. The Leaden Hall area of the Forest is one example of many sites across the Forest which are important for Red Book bird species. They are species particularly at risk. The presence of off network cyclists in these sensitive, designated areas is a significant concern which the Court feels must be addressed.

Action DS

2022/12106 DMMO1335 APPLICATION TO ADD 3 RESTRICTED BYWAYS IN THE PARISH OF RINGWOOD – INCLUDING KINGSTON GREAT COMMON DISCHARGE

At this stage the consultation is all about evidence of use, or not. Once all the evidence has been considered, HCC will make a judgement whether a right of byway access exists.

In the event that the decision is made that an existing right of access should be confirmed, the Court will be advised and there will be an opportunity to object. At that stage, it might be possible to incorporate measures to mitigate any impacts on the designated wildlife features of the SSSI and European sites.

There is a general view that the New Forest's special wildlife, and the common land grazing system on which it depends, is already under high and increasing pressure from recreational use and quiet areas are increasingly hard to find.

2022/12107	NEW FOREST SHOW	RESUME May
	A budget of £8,000 was agreed. Members of the Court were asked to provide ideas for the stand. Something is required to attract people. A mosaic wall is being investigated but it may be prohibitively expensive. Another suggestion is to run a film on a loop and Big Wave's 'New Forest: A Year in the Wild Wood' was suggested, together with, if possible, a visit by Peter Owen-Jones, the narrator.	Action Clerk Action R Stride
2022/12108	FOREST STALLIONS	DISCHARGE
	The stallion grazing should be available until turn out time this spring. Some alternative grazing has been identified and further discussion with the Cadland Estate will take place.	
2022/12109	COMMONERS' RENTED GRAZING LAND AND LOCAL ESTATES	DISCHARGE
	Mrs Westerhoff said the Policy & Conservation Manager at the NFNPA has been made aware of concerns relating to re-wilding and mitigation for developments and their potential effects on back-up grazing.	
2022/12110	GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE GLOVER REPORT	DISCHARGE
	The Official Verderer will send the Court's response.	
2022/12111	VERDERERS' ELECTIONS	RESUME April
	A meeting of the sub-committee will be arranged to take this forward.	Action Clerk
2022/12112	CAMPSITES	RESUME
	The Friends of the New Forest (NFA) and the Court will write jointly to Forestry England regarding the campsite leases.	
ENCROACHMENTS NOT INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND		
2022/12113	PICKET HILL, SHOBLEY	RESUME April
	This significant encroachment was reported in detail recently in the local media.	Action OV
2022/12114	PARTNERSHIP PLAN	RESUME
	The Official Verderer asked for any further comments on his note and the plan which had been circulated.	Action OV

2022/12115 DIONIS MACNAIR DISCHARGE
Action
OV/Clerk

A party will be arranged in April in the Verderers' Hall in lieu of the celebration for Miss Macnair's 90th birthday which was cancelled due to Covid. This will be an opportunity to mark her retirement from the Court

2022/12116 AVERAGE SPEED CAMERAS RESUME

The Official Verderer attended the recent steering group. The next stage is to set up the feasibility study which is estimated by HCC, may cost in the region of £50,000. The Court agreed to contribute £5,000 towards the study.

Action OV

2022/12117 TURF HILL DISCHARGE

The levelling work which is being carried out on Turf Hill is considered to be very satisfactory.

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME

2022/12118 HLS BOARD MEETING / APPOINTMENT OF A REPLACEMENT VERGE RESTORATION OFFICER DISCHARGE

The HLS board met recently. A new Verge Restoration Officer is being appointed in place of Mrs Jayne Albery who is retiring.

2022/12119 HLS ROLLOVER DISCHARGE

It is understood the current scheme will roll over until 2024.

2022/12120 HLS PROJECTS DISCHARGE

Work in Tantany Wood will be carried out. There is more work to do on lost lawns.

VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME

2022/12121 THE NATIONAL TRUST'S HLS RESUME

The Official Verderer will see if he can find out why the National Trust has not renewed its HLS. As a result, from March this year the Trust cannot contribute to the Verderers' HLS/VGS. 144 commoners on the commons pay marking fees, with 100 paying common rate only. As a consequence of there being no NT HLS, there will be no VGS payments associated with commons marked animals.

REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2022/12122 FUTURE FARMING GROUP RESUME

A more up to date draft will be available for comment.

2022/12123 JOINT LITTER WORKING GROUP DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett updated the Court. NFDC has trialled the removal of the bin from the green outside the former Minstead Shop. There is now no longer a problem with litter at that location. 'Intelligent' litter bins are now available which increase their capacity by compacting the contents and sending an automated message to indicate they are full and need emptying! They can also be programmed to give voice messages to users!

STAFF MATTERS INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STAFF COMMITTEE

2022/12124 STAFF COMMITTEE MEETING DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin reported that the Staff Committee met in person in the Verderers' Hall for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

TRAINING AND HEALTH & SAFETY

2022/12125 CATTLE INCIDENT AT OGDENS DISCHARGE

A cow reportedly killed a dog at Ogdens. The incident has been recorded.

2022/12126 CATTLE INCIDENT IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES DISCHARGE

A farmer has been sentenced for health and safety failings after an elderly man was trampled to death by cows (who had calves at foot) in the Yorkshire Dales.

It was noted that this incident occurred on private land and not common land. The NFU is undertaking risk assessments for some commoners/farmers who have public footpaths running through their land.

Action OV

2022/12127 STALLIONS DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin said the stallion committee needs to meet.

Action RD

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

2022/12128 FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statement for January was noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2022/12129 MINISTERIAL VISIT RESUME

The Rt Hon Richard Benyon, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is visiting the Forest on 10th March. The (draft) timetable includes visiting a commoners' holding, a stream restoration project and several other areas of the Forest. A talk will be given in the Verderers' Hall over luncheon, followed by further visits to other parts of the National Park.

Action OV

2022/12130 THE VERDERERS' HALL

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin commented that when he visited the Verderers' Hall recently, it looked unkempt and uncared for. The porch was full of leaves and an old sign had been left there. Inside was a road cone.

As Forestry England's Appointed Verderer, Mr Dowsett undertook to see what can be done to improve the situation.

Action BD

The meeting ended at 13:37 hrs

*Julianne)
16 March 2022*