

**VERDERERS OF THE NEW FOREST
OPEN COURT Wednesday 20th April 2022**

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS

INCIDENTS INVOLVING MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND CATTLE

In each of the last two years, the Verderers have circulated advice to Commoners about depasturing cows, in an attempt to reduce the probability of future incidents.

We are able to report that last year the number of incidents reported to the Verderers between cows and members of the public using the Forest was much reduced.

Commoners should nonetheless continue to bear in mind the advice given, and especially consider carefully when and where to depasture their cows with young calves.

TURNING OUT CATTLE

Spring is here and the weather has improved and it is quite understandable that commoners will be tempted to turn their cattle out after having them home for the winter. However, we would like to remind all cattle owners there is very limited feed on the Forest at the moment, not helped by the dry conditions and still cool nights, and the Forest is always the last place that the Spring grass grows. Cattle turned out too early will wander looking for feed, lose condition and are more likely to test any boundary fences. In this case the grass WILL always be greener the other side of the fence!

So do please think carefully before turning any stock out too early, and wait for the grass to come to avoid any unnecessary problems.

MRS GILLY JONES

I would like to take this opportunity to say a very public thank you to Gilly. As you will have heard from her presentment last month she has put an enormous amount of time and effort into the work of the Animal Accident Reduction Group and in particular the anti speeding operations within the Forest. Operation Mountie which aims to reduce the amount of accidents involving stock on the B3078 has required a great deal of work and it is welcome news that Operation Mountie has been thrown Forest wide.

The Forest has benefited from the work of many volunteers over the years and Gilly sets an example to us all. Thank you again.

THE FORMER TALLY HO RESTAURANT SITE ON THE A31

We are very pleased to announce that this previously very unsightly, neglected area, which was often subject to illegal occupation by Travellers, has now been cleared and the road side fence realigned. The resulting gain to the Forest is an area in the region of an acre. Our thanks again to all the Agencies involved in resolving this long-term issue.

STALLIONS 2022

After careful consideration, it has been decided that 20 stallions will be turned out onto the Forest this year.

The stallions will be turned out this year from Monday 9th May for a period of 8 – 9 weeks. They will start to be taken home from Monday 4th July and must be removed from the Forest no later than Monday 11th July.

The breeding herd of pure-bred New Forest Ponies is reducing year on year and the breed is on the Rare Breeds Survival Trust's Watch List, as a breed considered to be at risk.

The areas in which the stallions run, are carefully decided in order to avoid inbreeding. The list will be made available on our website shortly.

Members of the public are reminded that they should always keep away from the ponies, but that this is particularly important during the stallion season.

It is also worth mentioning that stallions do not always remain in the areas in which they are first turned out and so it is wise to be particularly aware of the behaviour of the ponies at this time of year.

PRESENTATION

PRESENTATION OF THE ROWL KITCHER CUP 2022

In 2007, we resurrected the annual award of the Rowl Kitcher Cup which was kindly donated some years ago by Mr Rowl Kitcher's family. The Cup is awarded each year to the owner of the highest scoring young colt at the stallion inspections held in the spring and to qualify for the cup, the colt has to be selected for inclusion in the Verderers' Stallion Scheme.

Due to Covid, we have been unable to present the Cup for the past few years so I am delighted to announce that this year, we can.

This year we have been able to hold stallion and colt inspections again, at Beaulieu Road, and the Rowl Kitcher Cup has been won by Mogshade Quarryman who was the highest scoring young colt presented to the Verderers for selection. Quarryman is owned by Mrs Jehanna Stride who is here today to receive the Rowl Kitcher cup which will be presented by Elected Verderer and Chairman of the Verderers' Stallion Sub-Committee, Mr Richard Deakin. It is particularly fitting that Mr Deakin should present the cup, as he is Rowl Kitcher's nephew.