

**Minutes of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 17th September 2025 at 9.30 a.m.
in the Library, the King's House, Lyndhurst**

PRESENT	Mr E Heron	Official Verderer
	Mr R Deakin	Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman
	Mr A H Pasmore	Senior Elected Verderer
	Mr R Stride	Elected Verderer
	Mrs A Tilbury	Elected Verderer
	Miss K Harrison	Elected Verderer
	Mr M Gammon	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Miss A Sevier MBE	National Park Appointed Verderer
	Mr R Manley	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mr C Chatters	Natural England Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE	Miss J Bayley	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J Gerrelli	Head Agister
APOLOGIES	None	

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2025/14230	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	RESUME
	The minutes of the last Court, held on Wednesday 16 th July 2025 were approved, and signed by the Official Verderer.	
2025/14231	NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RESUME
	Mr Chatters declared that he occasionally works for Footprint Ecology. His work for Footprint Ecology in the Forest is limited to data gathering to describe the character of habitats subject to restoration. He has no role in analysing data or making recommendations.	
2025/14232	CONDITION OF STOCK	RESUME
	The Head Agister said the Agister team are well into the drifts now. Many of the ponies coming in are in really good condition. The recent drought and hot weather conditions have affected the mares with foals, and they are in poorer condition than the Agisters would like at this time of year. They are being caught and removed to their owners' holdings as they come in on the drifts. Cattle are looking well; many commoners are removing their herds from the Forest due to the bumper crop of acorns this year. Pannage started on Monday 15th September, several commoners have already turned their pigs out.	
2025/14233	INCIDENT AT GODSHILL ON MONDAY 21 ST OCTOBER 2024	DISCHARGE
	The Head Agister said he attended the Coroners Court hearing in Winchester where the coroner recorded a verdict of Accidental Death.	

2025/14234 STRANGLES

DISCHARGE

The Head Agister said there have been no more cases of strangles seen on the Forest since two infected ponies were removed from the Bartley area.

2025/14235 STALLIONS

RESUME

The Head Agister said the stallions were happily grazing the water meadows at Mottisfont. The recent rain has meant the grass is now growing in the stallions' usual fields at Newlyn Farm.

2025/14236 BOVINE TB

RESUME

No new cases or updates to report this month.

2025/14237 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

RESUME

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Forest Ponies	4839	4837
Forest Cattle	2454	2396
Forest Donkeys	115	118
Forest Pigs	0	20
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	7408	7371
Common Ponies	572	601
Common Cattle	247	418
Common Donkeys	97	93
Common Pigs	16	17
Common Sheep	14	121
Total Common Stock	946	1250
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	7408	7351
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	916	1112
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	8324	8463
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	8354	8621

Miss Harrison asked why there were so few marking fees paid for sheep when there were at least 80 sheep on the Commons. The Clerk replied that the commoner had paid the marking fees by bank transfer, but a receipt has not been written by the Agister.

The Head Agister left the meeting

2025/14238 BREACHES OF THE BYELAWS

RESUME

The issue with the insufficiently rung pigs on the Northern Commons has been resolved.

OPEN COURT

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Craig Harrison, Deputy Surveyor
Mrs Joan Clark, Land Agent, South East England

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS

2025/14239 PANNAGE & FEEDING OF FOREST ANIMALS

Pannage, when Commoners release their pigs on to the Forest to eat the acorns which are poisonous to the cattle and ponies, is now underway. It is really important that the pigs do not have access to human food or food waste due to the serious risk of them contracting African Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth Disease.

Residents in the areas where livestock roam should have by now been contacted by NFDC asking them to keep their food waste caddies inside their gate for collection. It is important that all residents with properties that are accessed from the grazed Forest follow this advice and do not place food waste bins where they may be accessed by depastured stock.

September is also the time of year where people find they have a glut of apples in the garden. We appeal to residents and other members of the public not to put out anything on the Forest for the animals. Leaving anything for the Forest animals to eat represents a real risk to their welfare, for example consuming too many apples may give a pony or donkey fatal colic.

2025/14240 DRIFTS

The pony drifts are now well underway and we continue to ask the public to avoid the areas where they are being undertaken. The dates, locations and details of car park closures are published on the Court's website as well as on our Facebook page. Please respect car park closures and do not verge park or block gateways or access barriers.

The drifts are an essential part of the management of the Forest herd and the presence of members of the public is a safety risk, both to the public and to those undertaking the drift.

2025/14241 DAMAGE TO BEECH TREES

The Court thanks Anna Lawrence for her Presentment regarding damage to Beech trees, following inspection of the trees the Court will be considering this matter later today and a further announcement will be made at the October Court.

THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2025/14242 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JULY AND AUGUST 2025

The Agisters attended 11 accidents in July and August this year, compared with 18 in the same period last year.

1 pony was killed, 1 pony, 1 cow & 1 donkey had to be humanely destroyed. 2 ponies and a cow were injured, and in 4 instances the animals reportedly involved in an accident could not be found.

3 of the accidents happened in daylight, 1 at twilight and 7 in the dark.

4 drivers have failed to report having been involved in a collision with a Forest animal.

The total number of commoners' animals killed and injured this year is 28 compared with 19 in the same period last year.

PRESENTMENTS BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR

2025/14243 ANDY PAGE'S RETIREMENT FROM FORESTRY ENGLAND

"I'd like to say a few words about Andy Page who is retiring from Forestry England after 38 years of service in the New Forest.

Andy was born and bred in the area and developed a passion for nature from an early age. He worked on the Exbury Estate for 13 years before joining the Forestry Commission in 1987. He learned about the Keeper role quickly and the range of tasks that were involved – lots of people engagement with neighbours, the public, campers and dealing with scallywags – alongside pest management and conservation work.

His hard work and skills led to his role as Leading Keeper, and then in 1987 became Head Keeper for the New Forest North Walk. By 2010 he was Head Keeper for the whole of the New Forest, so fully immersed in the day to day workings and associated politics. He produced and oversaw implementation of the New Forest Deer Management Plan, balancing the need for population management with the historic and cultural importance of Fallow Deer here. He'll deny liking some modern elements of the job, but he has conscientiously and effectively managed the core team needs such as firearms safety, deer larders and advice on wildlife aspects of forestry and heathland operations.

I'd like to highlight 2 key contributions:

Andy has created a strong legacy – that reflects his lifelong passion – in relation to ornithology and the raptors of the New Forest. He has tirelessly worked with ornithological organisations, conducted surveys, ringed birds, installed cameras and much more to better understand raptors. His knowledge is second to none and deservedly gained the respect of colleagues and other partners.

Andy's other key skill is communicating his passion and knowledge so effectively to a wide range of people - Educating and inspiring the public about the forest's special qualities; working with partners outside the forest and internationally; presenting at biodiversity conferences; numerous appearances on television with esteemed presenters; and last but not least, meeting the Queen at the New Forest Show (while fully suited up on a sweltering hot day).

Andy will be missed by the team and by me personally, and we wish him a long and happy retirement. I feel sure he will continue to play a part here and wish him many more years climbing trees and with binoculars in hand."

PRESENTMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

2025/14244 PANNAGE 2025 Presentment by Andrew Parry-Norton, Chair of the Commoners Defence Association

"This year is an exceptional year for acorns, a lot have fallen over the last couple of weeks. The CDA did request that the season be brought forward but unfortunately that didn't happen.

The main crop of acorns is still to fall, a serious risk to our cattle and ponies. We request that the Pannage season is extended until the New Year."

2025/14245 RAILWAY FENCING

Presentment by Andrew Parry-Norton, Chair of the Commoners Defence Association

"In May this year, one of our member's had a steer hit by a train near Sway, the train driver was not aware that he had hit the animal. It was found by a walker and reported.

Network Rail are claiming the fencing was inspected in December 2024 and met their standards. They claim no liability and therefore will not compensate the Commoner.

Several of our members have inspected the fence line; it is in a very poor state and almost non-existent in some places. We have photographic images to show this. The poor condition of this fence has certainly not happened in the time since Network Rail's last alleged inspection; evidence suggests that the rusted wire and snapped posts have been there for some considerable time.

The dilapidated state of this fencing could have severe consequences; the stock on the Forest near these rail lines are not safe; cattle and ponies can easily access the tracks. The plentiful grazing on the embankments entices the stock to simply step over the fence line especially following the recent drought conditions.

We are concerned that without adequate fencing, dogs and children can simply walk on to the train lines with very little to stop them.

There are recorded instances where cattle; hit by a train has caused it to derail. As the evidence suggests, Network Rail appears to have little regard for our stock, the public and its passengers.

Network Rail has failed to fulfil their statutory duties under Section 68 of the Railways Clauses Consolidation Act 1845.

As a matter of extreme urgency we ask the Verderers to join with us, the CDA, by putting pressure on Network Rail to admit liability for the Commoners steer and immediately replace the railway fencing throughout the Forest before any further stock and potentially people's lives, are put at risk."

2025/14246 LEGAL STATUS OF NEW FOREST CAMP SITES

Presentment by Sarah Nield, Chair of the New Forest Association

"Official Verderer and Verderers and the members of public attending court today, I am Sarah Nield, Chair of the New Forest Association (NFA). I am giving this presentment on behalf of the Association to ask the Verderers to clarify the legal status of the campsites on the open Forest with Forestry England. It will give confidence to all if this clarity can be agreed sooner rather than later.

The NFA has been seeking to establish the legal status of the campsites for some years in the face of a complex legislative history. Our understanding is that an undocumented licence of the campsites was granted to the Forestry Commission (as it then was) by the Minister in or around November 1971 following recommendations for the control of camping and car parking on the open forest by a Steering Committee set up for this purpose. By law this licence could not be granted for more than sixty (60) years and thus would expire around the end of 2031. The current arrangement by which Camping in the New Forest Ltd operate the campsites was granted by the Minister, with Verderer consent, at the start of

2023 and we understand is for 10 years. There is thus certainly no more than 8 years before the current licence(s) expire. A relatively short time in Forest matters!

On expiry we maintain that the consent of the Verderers will be required for any licence renewal or extension. That consent to the continuation of campsites on the open Forest can only be given if the Verderers can meet their strict statutory and public law duties for example, their obligations to conserve the Forest, protect commoning and satisfy the environmental standards governing protected landscapes. The court needs to confirm that the legal status as set out is agreed by relevant parties and that any consent to the campsites on the open forest they may give in future meets the strict legal requirements the court must apply.

We recognise the benefits of camping provision in the Forest whether that is affordable visitor accommodation, enhancing visitor's health and wellbeing and their appreciation of the Forest. However, camping, just like other facilities, needs to be in the 'right place' – not on a SSSI or Special Area of Conservation in unfavourable condition. The certainty that agreement on the legal status of the campsites would bring will enable the parties and all those responsible for the favourable conservation status of the Forest to immediately plan for the future. Investment decisions would rest on firm foundations, the relocation of unsuitable sites secured and managed with the minimum of disruption with income flows maintained as far as possible."

2025/14247 FORESTRY ENGLAND'S PROPOSED CAR PARKING CHARGES
Presentment by Sarah Nield, Chair of the New Forest Association

Following a presentment made at the March Court the New Forest Association request an update on Forestry England's proposed car parking charges. There are major concerns regarding displacement parking, The NFA urge the Verderers and Forestry England to be transparent and make all documentation available so it can be assessed if planning permission is required.

2025/14248 NFDC FOOD WASTE COLLECTION DURING PANNAGE 2025
Presentment by Councillor Geoff Blunden, New Forest District Council

"Official Verderer, Verderers, Good Morning. I am Councillor Geoff Blunden, the Council's Cabinet member with responsibility for the Environment and Sustainability, which includes our household waste and recycling collection service.

I am pleased today to reaffirm the Council's valued and longstanding partnership with the Verderers and Commoners during this year's Pannage period. We are grateful for the continued collaboration, which enables us to respond sensitively and effectively to the unique seasonal needs of the Forest, whilst recognising our statutory responsibilities as a Waste Collection Authority.

Throughout the Pannage period, for properties accessible to free-roaming animals, we have jointly agreed a revised approach to the newly introduced food waste collections. To reduce the risk of harm to livestock and ensure safe service delivery, food waste caddies will be collected from behind gates where possible, or outside cattle grids where gates are not present.

To support this change, clear and practical guidance was issued in the form of a letter, hand-delivered to all affected homes. This direct communication ensures residents are informed and able to present their caddies in a way that is both safe and visible to collection crews. We have also invested in additional resources to allow crews the time needed to carry out these collections with care and consistency.

This adjustment sits within the broader context of our district-wide rollout of improved waste and recycling services. We are introducing enhanced food waste and recycling collections to reduce environmental impact, meet national requirements, and improve service quality for all residents. The tailored approach for Pannage reflects our commitment to deliver these improvements in a way that respects the Forest's traditions and safeguards its livestock.

Looking ahead, and beyond Pannage, we are working towards a longer-term solution that balances operational efficiency with the protection of the Forest's character. This will be taken through the necessary Council approval processes, and we will continue to engage with our partners throughout.

We thank the Court for its support and look forward to continuing this constructive and respectful partnership."

2025/14249 DOG CONTROL PSPO
Presentment by Lucie Rowe, Practising Commoner

Good morning, Official Verderer, Verderers and all attending Court this morning. I am Lucie Rowe, lifelong commoner and inadvertent conservationist.

I have come here today to express my support for the presentment that Mr Tarnoff made to the Court back in July about the possibility of introducing a 3rd PSPO in The New Forest regarding dogs. If, as it seems, the Forest Byelaws are no longer effective then perhaps a PSPO is the modern mechanism that would be a more appropriate way to remind dog owners of their responsibilities when out on The Forest?

I understand that many councils already have PSPOs regarding dogs and others are currently considering new rules and regulations which are designed to enhance the safety and welfare of both dogs and the public. This is not just a 'Forest' problem, Dogs have started to cause a variety of issues across the whole country! The truth is that since covid there are more dog owners in Britain than ever before. The New Forest was not prepared for this largescale dog ownership. Due to covid restrictions many of the acquired dogs were not properly socialized or trained as puppies and their owners have little knowledge or understanding of dog behaviors and the disturbance and upset that their canine companions can cause.

The New Forest is no ordinary country park. Here we have an abundance of livestock, these animals, that are enjoyed by so many, and which tourism is sold off the back of, are owned by people with Commoning Rights who pay fees for their animals to graze out there. As animal owners, we commoners have responsibility for the welfare of our livestock whether they are in our fields or out on The Forest. In the past the Forestry Commission's Keeper would have the authority to shoot any dog that was not under control – and in our area he did. It proved a very good deterrent, sending a message to all that there was a serious consequence to ignoring the rules regarding the control of dogs. Farmers can exercise the same rights to protect their livestock if they are being worried or attacked by dogs in their fields. However, it seems that commoners' animals have no protection at all once they are turned out. I have witnessed a large dog pull down a calf at Linford. The poor creature subsequently died from the trauma and the owner of the dog was not even held to account. Every time I walk out on The Forest, I see dogs disturbing ponies by bounding all around them whilst they are trying to peacefully graze. Is this not unfair? After all, the ponies and cattle live there, and they have no voice or opportunity to come to Court to express how irritated they are by these unwanted interactions with dogs.

There are many suggested codes of practice regarding the control of dogs. The Government's Countryside Code is ignored; the National Park Authority's New Forest Code is ignored. The NPA also have a dog walking code, that is ignored. The Byelaws of the Forest are hardly known and not enforced, and the result is that dogs run amok causing livestock to be harassed and distressed and the grazing land to be contaminated by dog urine and faeces. The streams are now polluted too by pet pesticides as the dogs are encouraged to enjoy themselves in the water courses. (Obviously not much of that has happened this summer due to the prolonged drought but all the more reason to keep dogs out of any of the water that might be needed by the livestock).

It has long been recognised that the commoners' stock plays a large part in maintaining the very special habitats and ecology of this exceptional place, in fact one could argue that The Forest would not have survived thus far without the practice of Commoning. Re-wilding projects have used the New Forest as a blueprint as they attempt to replace their monocultured agricultural land with something that can support the amazing biodiversity such as we have here in The Forest. So, if we acknowledge the importance of the commoner's animals and think of them in their modern context as conservation grazers, surely, they should be revered not disrespected. Don't they at least have a right to a quiet life, and shouldn't they be afforded better protection from unruly dogs? Doesn't the very land that they live off and the water courses that they drink from need conservation not pollution?

With the introduction of professional dog walkers there are huge numbers of dogs now being exercised each day in The Forest and it seems the authorities that claim they protect the Forest like to turn a blind eye to the amount of dog mess now being deposited out there, not to mention the disturbance to the livestock and wildlife that so many dogs create. Recently, I saw a response to a post on Facebook where someone local to the Forest stated and I quote: *'I know that you do not have to clear up after your dog in The Forest where the lovely animals roam free. As the ponies, donkeys, pigs etc have "free range" then so do the dogs'* With misinformation such as this being aired what chance do we have of keeping The Forest a healthy environment? With so much dog contamination now in the soil and streams of The Forest the risk of diseases for Forest run livestock is surely ever increasing, we already know there is an issue with Neospora affecting cattle – so what next?

As Forestry England are introducing car parking charges perhaps it is time that they also introduce dog waste bins for the collection of the dog waste, or do we simply have to accept that The New Forest is now nothing more than a pet's toilet? Why are we blindly accepting the contamination of what is supposed to be highly protected and cherished natural diversity? Surely this is not the way to treat an area that has the SSSI designation?

So, with all this in mind, I ask that the Verderers consider consultation with New Forest District Council with a view to instigating a 3rd PSPO to assist with both the control of dogs and the clean up behind them.

2025/14250 FOREST BRIDGES
Presentment by Brian Ingram, Practising Commoner

"Between Culverley Farm and Fernycroft is a passageway with three bridges crossing the bog.

They have been blocked off for some time but now the first bridge has been repaired with new handrails, the second and third bridge have had all the timbers completely removed leaving the crossing in a very dangerous state.

These two crossings are each approximately eight to ten feet wide and three feet deep. At some point two pieces of timber have been placed in the middle ditch and a scaffold board has been placed in the third ditch. If these boards become wet they will become very slippery. If anyone is walking along and slipped in, they would fall into very deep water, probably more than three feet deep. You would not know they were there. Whoever authorised the removal of these bridges need to be taken to task, also show some common sense, you do not leave things like this open. Don't you think it should have remained closed until the passageway was properly repaired not just one bridge out of three?"

2025/14251 PENNY MOOR RESTORATION
Presentment by Brian Ingram, Practising Commoner

Mr Ingram said he was disappointed at the amount of damage caused by heavy machinery being moved into Penny Moor on a very wet day. Especially given the extended dry period we have just had.

The Head Agister closed the Court

IN COMMITTEE (in the Library)

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2025/14252	PANNAGE 2025	RESUME
	The Court agreed that an extension to the pannage season, up until Christmas would be welcome, with a week's grace giving commoners until New Years Eve to remove them from the Forest.	Action DS
	The Deputy Surveyor will check with his Keeper team and respond at the October Court.	
2025/14253	RAILWAY FENCING	RESUME
	The Clerk will write to Network Rail stating that we have received a presentment regarding the condition of the fencing on the Lymington line and include photographs. Network Rail will be invited to respond before the next Court.	Action Clerk
2025/14254	LEGAL STATUS OF NEW FOREST CAMP SITES	RESUME
	The Court deferred the matter to Mr Gammon who will write and circulate a formal report prior to the next Court.	Action MG
2025/14255	FORESTRY ENGLAND'S PROPOSED CAR PARKING CHARGES	RESUME
	An announcement will be made at the October Court.	
2025/14256	NFDC FOOD WASTE COLLECTION DURING PANNAGE 2025	DISCHARGE
	The Court thanked Councillor Blunden for his presentment and the update on the food waste bin situation.	
2025/14257	DOG CONTROL PSPO	DISCHARGE
	The Court reiterated that as there is existing legislation that already covers out of control dogs and livestock worrying, including	

Forestry England's Byelaws it is not felt that NFDC will consider a PSPO for dog control in the Forest.

Mrs Tilbury asked about controls for commercial dog walkers. The Official Verderer again urged the Deputy Surveyor to look at licensing commercial dog walkers using the Forest including checking if they have Public Liability Insurance in place.

2025/14258 FOREST BRIDGES DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor said the bridges were removed as they were unsafe to use. The works programme is in place to replace all three but there are time and financial restraints. The area had been taped off to prevent access but keeps being opened by walkers.

Mr Deakin asked that FE continue to liaise with the Court and the Agisters on the status of bridges ahead of forthcoming drifts.

2025/14259 PENNY MOOR DISCHARGE

The Court expressed its disappointment that the works were not carried out during the dry conditions.

NEW SUBMISSIONS BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

In Attendance: Mr Richard Burke, Ms Karen Guest & Ms Leanne Sargeant from Forestry England joined the meeting for Minute Number 14260

2025/14260 FORESTRY ENGLAND PROPOSED CAR PARKING CHARGES RESUME

The Official Verderer started the discussion saying that anything Forestry England are asking the Court to approve today must be in the public domain.

The Court reiterated that under the New Forest Acts Forestry England do not need Verderers consent to charge for parking in any of the Forest car parks.

The Official Verderer said that some of the Court are concerned about how much engagement Forestry England have carried out before asking the Court to make a decision. Mr Burke said since the last meeting Forestry England have engaged with landowners and have been looking at verge protection and reinstating & repairing existing ditch and bank to prevent displacement parking.

Ms Guest said the new parking team will be key to the roll out of parking charges. They will monitor and identify areas of concern and ensure verges are protected. Prior to the roll out of charges every verge will be photographed and recorded by the parking team.

The Official Verderer asked what timescale Forestry England were working to, Mr Burke replied that they are hoping to have everything in place by the end of March 2026.

The Official Verderer thanked Forestry England for sharing the Footprint Ecology Habitats Regulation Assessment and asked if, as both a consenting body and competent authority, the Court should carry out its own HRA. Ms Sargeant replied that Forestry England

regularly review and adopt HRA's carried out by other 28G bodies so there is no need for the Court to conduct its own HRA to meet its statutory requirements. She continued that the HRA's are a standard process detailing site features, legislation and mechanisms for delivery.

The Deputy Surveyor said the HRA allows the agreement to be conducted in a more streamlined way, avoids the duplication of work and that previous feedback received from the Court has as improved the HRA.

Mr Deakin said that the Court permits open Forest Works all the time that require HRA's which the Court does not collaborate on. The Court is not breaching a procedure that we usually follow.

Mr Chatters said he would prefer Forestry England to offer more certainty than just saying they can be prosecuted if they breach the terms of the HRA and fail in the protection of Forest habitats. He asked for something binding that the Court can look at. The Deputy Surveyor said submission of the HRA includes a presumption we will fulfil the conditions; if Forestry England disagreed with any recommended conditions we would provide our justification. He said he can put something in writing if that is what the Court requires.

Mr Chatters then asked about mitigation with neighbouring landowners. He said he understands Forestry England have no authority over neighbouring land and asked how they planned to deal with difficult neighbours. Mr Burke said he has spoken to larger landowners including Hampshire County Council and the National Trust and that he hoped the Western Escarpment Group would reconvene and cover the western commons. Where damage is caused by what can be proven to be displacement parking from its car parks, Forestry England will work with and support landowners on how to manage the issue and fund the required works, regardless of who owns the land. Mr Chatters asked what would happen if the landowner did not want FE to carry out repairs. Ms Sargeant said that landowners have a duty to protect verges and that it is Natural England's role to ensure they meet their obligations.

Mr Chatters raised concerns about the length of roadside ditching that is proposed especially since the issues at Matley and Longcross. Mr Deakin said that most of the proposed areas had been ditched in the 1960's. He said that a lot of roadside ditching has been carried out recently and the Court has paid very little interest to it. Ms Sargeant said that FE are reducing the impact on habitat by using ditching and dragons teeth and said the ditching specification has been agreed with the Court and updated since the works at Matley. Miss Harrison said she preferred roadside ditching as the scrub that grows around dragons teeth pushes livestock into the roads. The Official Verderer said that if Court approval is given it will be subject to ongoing discussions regarding the specifics on the ground.

Mr Pasmore said that he felt very strongly that this was a controversial proposal and that under the Regulations of the Verderers Court Forestry England should make a public presentment at the next Verderers Court.

Mr Gammon asked about the ecology report and if Natural England have given assent to the scheme. Ms Sargeant said that Natural England have agreed in principle but not to specific measures. The proposal is in the assenting process with Natural England now.

Mr Gammon asked how Forestry England will enforce illegal parking. Ms Guest said that the parking team will carry handheld devices that will scan vehicle license plates and send them to Group Nexus, the parking enforcement agency. Drivers have 48 hours to pay, or an enforcement letter will be sent in the post. No tickets will be placed on windcreens. Ms Guest continued that parking enforcement notices will be placed at all gateways and barriers which will enable tickets to be issued to drivers who block the Forest access points. She said the Ranger method of waiting for people to return to their cars will continue at places where signs cannot be displayed.

Miss Sevier asked how quickly a problem caused by displacement parking will be identified and addressed. Mr Burke said it is important that they recognise habits being formed before damage occurs. This will be managed by the parking team from both their driving around the Forest and from the photographs taken at the start of the scheme. He believes the project will tidy up existing verge parking. Mr Manley asked Mr Burke to expand on his meeting with the National Trust asking if they fully understand the impact Forestry England charging for parking will potentially have on their land. Mr Burke said they are fully aware and are looking at implementing their own scheme and are committed to act on any illegal parking that occurs on their land.

The Official Verderer said that the Court needs to know that there is a mechanism in place that ensures that Forestry England will deliver everything they are saying they will as well as the requirements of the HRA. Ms Guest said that data will regularly be shared with Natural England including any evidence of damage to verges.

Mr Stride asked about parking on Bolderwood Green, he said the car park is regularly full and parking overflows along the verges. He said most of the people there would pay if they could get into the car park. Mr Burke said that once the financial penalty is in place it will deter persistent verge parking.

Mr Stride asked the Deputy Surveyor if all additional money generated by car park charging would be reinvested into the New Forest. The Deputy Surveyor gave an assurance the money would be reinvested in the forest.

Mrs Tilbury asked what Forestry England planned to do about overnight parking which is becoming an issue in a lot of Forest car parks. She asked if the parking team will be working a 24-hour shift pattern. Ms Guest said a penalty charge for staying overnight will be issued with the suggested car park closure times of 11pm to 4am. She said the parking team will be working a 7-day contract with variable hours.

The Official Verderer said the recreational pressure on livestock at night had previously been discussed. The animals have no time to decompress. The Court previously asked for the car park opening times to be reduced but they seem to have been extended. He said

more robust management needs to be introduced to manage recreation at night alongside overnight parking.

Mr Pasmore raised concerns regarding displacement parking on the adjacent commons. He said the western commons were already under pressure from new housing developments in Fordingbridge and Ringwood. He does not believe that local authorities have been consulted and that a comprehensive survey needs to be conducted. Mr Burke said that FE have attended quadrant meetings and have offered to hold additional meetings to give Parish Councils an opportunity to raise any concerns they have with the proposed scheme. The Official Verderer said we have to accept that displacement parking will happen but have sufficient assurance that there will be a mechanism in place to deal with any issues regardless of the landowner.

The Official Verderer asked Forestry England exactly what they are asking consent for. Ms Guest replied 38 new signs to be installed on existing infrastructure and verge protection works.

The Official Verderer asked if Forestry England are asking for consent to start charging for parking in its car parks. The Deputy Surveyor said no, Verderer consent was not required for parking charges.

The Official Verderer said that if the parking charges interfere in the actions of Commoning or commoners it will press into the Courts authority. The Court needs to understand how Forestry England plan to introduce charging to ensure that commoners activities are not affected.

The Official Verderer said that Mr Pasmore has raised this as potentially controversial, he asked if the Court agreed. Miss Sevier said it may be controversial, but the public have been aware of the proposed scheme for a long time, and no opposing presentments have been made. Mr Deakin said that roadside ditching was not controversial and is usually welcomed by the Court. He continued that the signage maybe considered controversial depending on individual opinion but again reiterated that the public are aware and have made no contact with the Court. Mr Pasmore disagreed saying he has had no opportunity to legally discuss the proposal outside of the Court. He again stated that he does not believe the public are aware and Forestry England must be asked to make a presentment to the Court.

The Official Verderer asked the Court to vote based on today's written request from Forestry England, and the Courts procedures as to whether they feel a presentment is required or if they are happy to consider the proposal today. The Court voted 6 to 4 to consider the proposal today.

Mr Pasmore would like to see a plan for the adjacent commons similar to the car free zones report of 1970.

Miss Harrison said she felt the commoners green list wording needs to be stronger.

Mr Deakin proposed that the Court gives consent to the scheme subject to the following conditions.

- Natural England Assent must be obtained by Forestry England prior to the Court giving approval
- A sunset clause is included for all signage for a period of 15 years linked to the Secretary of State licence for all Forest car parks (Section 18 (d) of the 1949 New Forest Act)
- Satisfactory written assurance is provided by Forestry England to the Court that a mechanism is in place to carry out the requirements of the HRA including a commitment to fund such works. This is to include copies of Memorandum of Understanding with other significant landowners regarding how displacement parking will be addressed.
- All roadside ditching is to be agreed with the Court following the usual procedures
- Forestry England are to confirm that they are legally able to enforce parking restrictions

Mr Gammon seconded the proposal.

8 Members of the Court voted in favour of the scheme subject to the conditions above, 1 Member voted against, and 1 Member of the Court abstained.

2025/14261	CAMPING NEW FOREST REQUEST TO EXTEND CAMP SITE OPENING HOURS IN 2026	DISCHARGE
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Camping New Forest's request to open early for the 2026 camping season was approved by the Court.

The request for Holmsley campsite to remain open longer was refused. Holmsley camp site must close on Friday 30th October to avoid a clash with the drift.

2025/14262	CAMPING NEW FOREST HOLMSLEY CAMP SITE - REQUEST FOR WARDENS TO REMAIN ONSITE OVER WINTER	DISCHARGE
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The Court agreed that 3 wardens' units may remain on Holmsley camp site over this winter only. This is not a permanent permission.

2025/14263	WESSEX INTERNET BEAULIEU ROAD PROPOSAL	DISCHARGE
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Mr Chatters said his contact at Natural England has informed him that they have not received a proposal or HRA from Wessex Internet. Mr Deakin said there is an HRA in place and that Forestry England are happy with the proposal.

The Beaulieu Road Proposal is approved with no objections subject to Natural England Assent and the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

Action Clerk

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO FORESTRY ENGLAND

2025/14264 TREE BARKING BY PONIES

RESUME

Mr Pasmore's report on damaged beech trees in Underslea Wood has been circulated prior to the Court.

Mr Deakin said the Commoners Defence Association had requested permission to put out mineral licks to see if they would deter the ponies, but this has not happened. The Deputy Surveyor said that a recent study has shown that mineral licks do not stop ponies from tree barking.

Mr Deakin said the Staff Liaison Committee were concerned that the compensation amount to be offered to commoners does not cover the cost of losing a breeding mare. The Official Verderer said that compensation was not required as the ponies can be ordered off the Forest for being mischievous. Miss Harrison said it was not the commoner's fault that their ponies were accessing inclosures through poor fencing and damaged gates.

It is agreed that the CDA will be invited to put out mineral licks. The situation will be monitored, and the Court will work with the owners of the ponies to remove them from the Forest.

Action Clerk

2025/14265 CAMPING ADVISORY GROUP

RESUME

Camping New Forest have requested informal comments from the Court regarding their proposal to replace the reception buildings at Holmsley camp site. The Official Verderer said it would be helpful if CNF had circulated a plan of the existing buildings as the proposed building appears to have a much larger footprint.

The Court will review the plans when they go to planning, it is expected that any building will be subject to a sunset clause.

Mrs Tilbury said that she has recently visited all the Forest camp sites and was disappointed to see that not all the red food waste bins are not being stored in the agreed pony proof containers. She also said that the current trend of camping and leaving your tent behind has arrived in the Forest. She was concerned to see the abandoned tents left in a pile on the grazing where they pose a risk to the livestock. The Clerk is asked to contact CNF and request the tents are stored in an area where livestock cannot access them.

2025/14266 NEW PICNIC BENCHES AT KNIGHTWOOD OAK

RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor advised that the picnic benches and stools in Holidays Hill inclosure were installed in 2020 as part of the waymarked trail from the Reptile Centre.

The Clerk needs to look at how consents are recorded. Mr Chatters asked if FE have an asset register, the Deputy Surveyor said they would have details of infrastructure for health and safety reasons. The matter is resumed until the next Court.

Action DS

2025/14267 SALE OF LEISURE PLOTS IN LINWOOD

DISCHARGE

Miss Sevier said the National Park Authority have confirmed that planning permission is required for the change of use of the land.

Mrs Clark said Mrs Cook had contacted the Agents to advise that all purchasers will require an access license to cross Forestry England's land to access the plots. The selling agent said that it is the responsibility of the purchasers to conduct their own checks. Forestry England have written to the selling agent and will write to the new owners once the Land Registry is updated.

DE-MINIMIS PROPOSALS

2025/14268 DE-MINIMIS-CONSENTS - UTILITY PROPOSALS AGREED BY THE DE-MINIMIS COMMITTEE

RESUME

DM0225 Jul 25 FE, Millersford Brook & Winding Shoot (Knightwood) Pre and Post wetland restoration water level monitoring at 5 locations along Millersford Brook and a small headwater tributary in Knightwood Inclosure

DM0226 Jul 25 Southern Water, Oaks Villa, Balmer Lawn Road, Brockenhurst replace lead water pipe

DM0227 Aug 25 FE, Pipers Wait Cottage, Pipers Wait, installation of dragons teeth and moving the barrier to allow large vehicle access to the reservoir

DM0228 Aug 25 SSE, Walled House, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst SO43 7DA replacing the overhead service line using the existing pole on FE land

DM0229 Aug 25 SSE, Ipley Manor, Butts Ash, 6 replacement poles

DM0230 Aug 25 SSE, Request to install new apparatus on FE land at Lymington Road, East End SO41 5SY As per DM0221 Jan 25 - the pole for the lame leg now requires excavation

DM0231 Aug 25 SSE, Foxes Hill, Peartree Lane, Lyndhurst, Access for a pole and transformer change.

DM0232 Sept 25 FE, Norlands Cottage, Pikes Hill, Lyndhurst, issue a parking license for up to 2 vehicles and installation of dragons teeth to reduce damage to grazing

DM0233 Sept 25, Southwest Water, install a small self-contained pumping station within the water tower compound to address low pressure issues in Beaulieu

DM0234 Sept 25, Hyde Parish Council, request to install three chestnut posts with reflectors at the roadside at Hyde Common to slow the traffic and prevent further erosion of the verge.

EMERGENCY WORKS CARRIED OUT BY UTILITY COMPANIES

2025/14269 EMERGENCY WORKS CARRIED OUT BY UTILITY COMPANIES RESUME

EM0009 Sept 25 Miss Sevier reported a repair that has been carried out following a water leak near the ford at Blissford.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2025/14270 SSSI REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST RESUME

There are no new updates to add to the summer works programme.

2025/14271 IPLEY RESTORATION PROPOSAL DISCHARGE

The Ipley restoration proposal is approved subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc. and the following conditions.

- The ford crossings are to be suitably surfaced for horse access not filled with rejects.
- Forestry England must accept to undertake the maintenance of the crossing.
- The Court must be consulted and its consent obtained if maintenance of the crossing is to cease.

ENCROACHMENTS ON FORESTRY ENGLAND LAND INCLUDING THE ENCROACHMENTS LIST

2025/14272 ENCROACHMENTS LIST DISCHARGE

Nothing new has been added to the Encroachments List.

2025/14273 FOREST COURT, BISTERNE CLOSE, BURLEY RESUME

The matter will be resumed at the October Court.

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2025/14274 ACTION LIST RESUME

Nothing new has been added to the Action List.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2025/14275 NEW OCKNELL CULVERT (A31) DISCHARGE

Mr Chatters reported that a new team from National Highways are looking at the culvert at Ocknell. They have recently carried out a site visit to understand the location and possible constraints.

Their design team are currently working on the design and all necessary consents. They will be in touch if needed with any questions arising.

2025/14276 CCTV TOWERS

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin said that two CCTV towers had recently been erected on the Forest without Verderers consent. He understands the public safety requirement for the towers but asked that Forestry England obtain Verderers Consent in the future. Consent can be granted quickly via the Courts' De-minimis procedure.

2025/14277 ILLINGWORTH COMMITTEE

RESUME

Mrs Tilbury reported on a disagreement from the last meeting to allocate commoners housing. She said Miss Sevier and herself had reached what they thought was a sound decision to allocate a property to a practicing commoner based on the criteria of the scheme.

Mrs Cook, FE Land Agent, did not agree with the decision and sought for it to be turned around by the Official Verderer and the Deputy Surveyor. Mrs Tilbury feels strongly that the correct decision was made at the time and is very disappointed that it was changed without her and Miss Sevier being consulted.

Mr Deakin said that whole Commoning community is disturbed by the decision process.

2025/14278 CADNAM CRICKET CLUB

RESUME

Mr Deakin said the CDA have recently been invited to visit Cadnam Cricket Club. While there they were told by the Club Chairman that he has no obligation to open the outfield to commoner's livestock. He also shared his plans to plough and re-seed the outfield.

Action JC

2025/14279 BRAMSHAW GOLF CLUB

RESUME

Mr Deakin said there have been reports of excessive mowing at Bramshaw Golf Club. He asked if the Court could have sight of the club's management plan.

Action JC

2025/14280 REVIEW OF CATERING AND ICE CREAM CONCESSIONS

RESUME

Mr Deakin asked for a review of the food concession vans in Forestry England's Car parks. He said that recorded visits should be taking place, and the Clerk needs to be informed of any incidents with livestock.

The concession van at Bolderwood has not been moved into the fenced area as it was agreed it would be.

There being no other business involving Forestry England, the Deputy Surveyor and the Land Agent left the meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

2025/14281 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer said the Local Councils are publishing their preferred options.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2025/14282 MARKING FEE INCREASE

RESUME
JANUARY

There will be no increase in marking fees for 2026.

The possible amendment to the Verderers' Byelaws will be revisited in January 2026.

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

2025/14283 VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME COMMITTEE

RESUME

The VGS Committee are meeting after the Court to discuss the payment uplift to scheme members.

REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2025/14284 ACCESS FORUM

DISCHARGE

Miss Sevier updated the Court following the recent Access Forum meeting. She said Driving for the Disabled complained they were having issues with Forestry England agreeing routes.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2025/14285 FINANCIAL MATTERS INCLUDING THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

2025/14286 POLICY ON ANIMAL AGGRESSION

RESUME

The Court are waiting to hear from the New Forest Commoners Defence Association.

2025/14287 LIVESTOCK PADDLES

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin has bought a livestock paddle to assist with the movement of ponies in the holding pen at drifts. He said they are very effective, and he recommends they are used in place of thumb sticks.

2025/14288 CYCLIST KNOCKED OFF HER BIKE ON THE WILVERLEY/MARKWAY DRIFT DISCHARGE

The Clerk reported a lady had been knocked off her bike by ponies crossing the road on the drift. One group of ponies crossed the road ahead of her and she was hit by the second group. There were plenty of signs at the roadside warning the drift was taking place.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2025/14289 NEW STATESMAN MAGAZINE

DISCHARGE

Mr Gammon said he and Mr Pasmore had met with a journalist from the New Statesman magazine who is writing a piece on the longest running institutions.

2025/14290 MR CHATTERS ABSENCE FROM COURT

RESUME

Mr Deakin asked if Mr Chatters will need a substitute to sit in for him while he is absent for period of time due to a planned medical treatment. Mr Chatters said he is hoping to have his treatment in November or December. He will know more nearer the time.

STAFF MATTERS

2025/14291 STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESUME

The minutes were noted.

2025/14292 AGISTERS VEHICLES

RESUME

The Head Agister vehicle has been back into Balmer lawn Garage several times for testing, but the fault has not been repaired. The Head Agister is going to speak to the company who service the trailers to see if changing the LED trailer lights may solve the problem.

2025/14293 STRAYING AND ABANDONED ANIMALS

RESUME

Mr Deakin said the Staff Liaison Committee have been discussing where we can keep abandoned or stray animals which the field at New Park is not suitable for e.g. sheep and pigs. Agister Robert Maton has suggested we use a commoner who currently assists the RSPCA. Tina Woodley is contacting him to arrange a meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 15:47 hrs



15th October 2025