

**Minutes of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 21st January 2026 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
IN ATTENDANCE	Miss J Bayley	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J Gerrelli	Head Agister
APOLOGIES	Mr C Chatters	Natural England Appointed Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2026/14455	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	RESUME
	The minutes of the last Court, held on Wednesday 17 th December 2025 were approved, and signed by the Official Verderer.	
2026/14456	NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RESUME
	There are no new declarations of interest.	
2026/14457	FOOD WASTE BINS	DISCHARGE
	The Official Verderer updated the Court following a meeting he had with New Forest District Council. The Court welcomed NFDC's decision to permanently collect Food Waste Bins from inside the boundary of all properties within the New Forest Perambulation.	
	Mr Deakin said he had driven through Brockenhurst recently and all the food waste bins had been emptied but left outside properties. The Official Verderer said any ongoing issues must be reported on the NFDC website.	
2026/14458	CONDITION OF STOCK	RESUME
	The Head Agister said the ponies are looking really well. There are a few mares with foals at foot and the Agisters are catching and removing them as necessary.	
	The Official Verderer asked if all Pannage pigs have been removed from the Forest. The Head Agister said that a few commoners have been chased, but he is confident that they have all now been taken in.	
2026/14459	STALLIONS	RESUME
	The Head Agister said there were 19 stallions in the grazing at Newlyns Farm. The stallions are being rotated between the available fields and it is a better grazing situation than last year.	

Mr Stride said Forestry England have carried out repairs to the New Park Inclosure fence which will hopefully stop the two persistent mares getting to the young stallions that are currently grazing at New Park.

2026/14460 BOVINE TB

RESUME

Two TB breakdowns were discussed, neither commoner involved had informed their Agister.

Mr Deakin said a meeting has been arranged with APHA Vets to discuss information sharing and the Verderers TB Plan on Friday 6th February.

2026/14461 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

RESUME

	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>
Forest Ponies	52	128
Forest Cattle	5	46
Forest Donkeys	0	0
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	57	174
Common Ponies	0	0
Common Cattle	0	0
Common Donkeys	0	0
Common Pigs	0	0
Common Sheep	0	0
Total Common Stock	0	0
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	57	174
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	0	0
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	57	174
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	57	174

The Head Agister left the meeting

2026/14462 BREACHES OF THE BYELAWS

RESUME

Two billy goats were found in the north of the Forest. An advert has been placed in the Lymington Times and the Clerk has contacted the RSPCA to see if they can rehome them.

OPEN COURT

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Craig Harrison, Deputy Surveyor
Mr Ollie Adderley, Land Agent, South West England

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS

2026/14463 MAISY MANSBRIDGE

We were saddened to hear that Young Commoner Maisy Mansbridge had a serious fall in the children's race at the Boxing Day Point to Point. Our thoughts are with Maisy, her family and friends at this time, and we send our best wishes to her for a full and speedy recovery.

2026/14464 FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS

The Court is pleased to have been advised by New Forest District Council of their decision to continue their collection of food waste bins from behind property gates permanently for all properties that are accessed from within the grazed perambulation. However, we are concerned at the number of food waste bins that are still being left outside of property gates despite this policy having been in place ahead of pannage and will continue to urge the District Council to do more to communicate the importance of keeping them inside gates for collection to relevant property occupiers.

2026/14465 COUNTY PARISH HOLDING NUMBERS

We are grateful to Ms Bickford-Smith for her presentment regarding County Holding Numbers. The Court has asked Mr Manley, the DEFRA appointed Verderer investigate the matter with the Department, however we would assure Ms Bickford-Smith that we are confident that accurate information is held in respect of the Forest's disease control plans.

2026/14466 MARKING FEES 2026

For 2026 the marking fees will be: -

Ponies, Cattle and Donkeys £29.00 per head.

Sheep £12.00 per head

Pigs £5.00

The concessionary marking fees for animals depastured on the adjacent commons ceased with the end of the Commons Agreement at the end of December last year.

Please remember that marking fees were due from the 1st January. Under our Byelaws, the deadline for payment of all marking fees for continuously depastured animals is 31st March.

If not paid by 31st March, you will not be eligible to join the Verderers Grazing Scheme. Marking fees for animals which are not continuously depastured are due before the animals are turned out. It is the responsibility of commoners to volunteer payment of marking fees, not the responsibility of the Agister to chase you for them.

2026/14467 2-YEAR-OLD COLTS

We would like to remind commoners that the Verderers' Byelaws require uncastrated colts which were born in 2024 or earlier, to be removed from the Forest by 1st February.

If such a colt is found to be on the Forest after 1st February, the owner will be in breach of the Verderers' byelaws and could be prosecuted. In addition, the owner may forfeit some or all of any Verderers' Grazing Scheme entitlement to which they would otherwise be entitled.

2026/14468 VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME PAYMENT

I am happy to report that the Verderers Grazing Scheme Payments were made before Christmas, and the remittance letters have been posted. If you have any queries regarding your VGS payment, please contact Mrs Tina Woodley in the Verderers Office.

2026/14469 THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE TREE

The Court would like to thank Sean Marsh for his help in sourcing and planting a replacement copper beech tree for the garden at King's House after our previous tree was damaged.

2026/14470 PRIVATE FOREST BOUNDARIES

The Agisters have been called out several times this month to remove ponies from private property. The ponies have gained entry to fields through poorly maintained fencing. I would like to remind property owners that it is their responsibility to fence against all Forest Livestock including pigs. Please regularly check your Forest boundary fencing and ensure that cattle grids are regularly emptied of debris.

THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2026/14471 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR 2025

The Agisters attended 109 accidents last year compared with 97 in 2024.

47 animals died and 18 were injured.

31 accidents happened in daylight, 14 at twilight and 64 in the dark.

18 drivers failed to report having been involved in an accident with a commoners' animal.

The total number of animals killed and injured last year was 65 compared with 52 in 2024.

PRESENTMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

2026/14472 NEW CATTLE GRID INSTALLATION THE DOWER HOUSE, CHAPEL LANE, BURLEY Presentment by Mrs. Melanie Allen, Burley Resident

"We are one of the few properties in Burley without a cattle grid which has been causing problems for some time; but is now becoming increasingly unmanageable due to the congregation of ponies/cattle in our entrance driveway to our house. We are concerned for the safety of both the horses/cattle, road users and our own

safety. Our driveway entrance is the only access to our house; it is both a driveway for vehicles and pedestrian access combined.

Our driveway entrance is not grazing land it is a gravel driveway so there is no impact on grazing; the area immediately opposite is a huge open area of common land so there is no need for the ponies or cattle to be in our driveway and no adverse impact on them by not being in our driveway, in fact just the opposite - they will be in a safer environment by not being in our driveway entrance.

We can get up to 15 ponies or cattle congregating in our driveway at any one time. In spring and summer, it is very difficult to exit or enter our property at various stages during the day whilst in autumn and winter this happens less but still at least on a weekly basis.

When a vehicle exits or enters through our entranceway it causes the horses to run and because there is forest land immediately opposite they not only run into the road but run across the road at speed to get to the open area of forest land immediately opposite. We have witnessed a number of incidents where a horse ran at an oncoming vehicle and many near misses where drivers need to break sharply or go into the verge to avoid the sudden rush of ponies. Of these there were 2 incidents last year within the same week when on exiting our property the ponies ran out into the road which had they done 4 seconds later there would have been a serious accident.

As we need to drive through the ponies or cattle to exit, even if we do this slowly, it startles them and 15 ponies or cattle running out onto the road into incoming traffic, pedestrians and dog walkers is dangerous for the road users. Additionally, our entranceway is blind to drivers and cyclists approaching, so they have no forewarning of the horses running out.

We have lived in the New Forest for many years and we value, enjoy and understand the environment we are in - but not being able to gain access to our home due to a lack of cattle grid in a confined entrance way is both frightening and unworkable. Trying to walk our dog and bring her home with cattle blocking our entrance or trying to walk around horses to get into your property and not get kicked in a confined space is unsafe.

We wish to install a cattle grid from the width of the gates on one side to a narrow pedestrian access on the other side, entered through a pedestrian gate with self-closing gate spring and side fence guard. We have contracted Triangle to design this, who we understand works with county councils in the area, to ensure a solution that safeguards the New Forest environment and its animals.

We have already consulted with Forestry England who have no objection as the cattle grid will be constructed within the original driveway entrance to our property; New Forest Planning Authority and Hampshire Highways also have no objections."

2026/14473 SIGNAGE Presentment by Andrew Parry-Norton, Chair of the Commoners Defence Association

"Good morning, Official Verderer, Verderers, and members of the Court. As visitor numbers increase the risk of stock interaction with public becomes increasingly more common, as part of the education of the public, signage plays an important role.

Another reason for the signs as recently advised by Forestry England's Health and safety officer to the CDA committee, is to reduce the risk of litigation to a Commoner in the event of an incident. It is a basic requirement of the HSE that

signs should be clearly and prominently displayed informing the public of not touching, feeding or going near the stock. We cannot afford to ignore this advice. The CDA paid for approximately 50 yellow metal A boards that were then displayed at prominent locations around the Forest. Although looking industrial and unsightly, these signs are very noticeable and clearly display the message of not interacting with the animals. We must do all we can to encourage Commoners to turn out their stock and not be dissuaded by the risk of legal action.

The Commoners defence association will purchase, hopefully with the help of the New Forest Trust, more of these signs but request from the Verderers their support and permission to locate them at all car parks and main entrances into the Forest."

The Head Agister closed the Court

IN COMMITTEE (in the Library)

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2026/14474 NEW CATTLE GRID INSTALLATION THE DOWER HOUSE, RESUME
CHAPEL LANE, BURLEY

Mr Pasmore said he did not believe Verderers Consent is required as the area was not open to stock in the 1970's. Mr Deakin argued saying he believed prescriptive rights applied, that giving away land is contentious and he believes the CDA should be allowed time to comment.

Mr Stride said a grid will not stop animals congregating in the road outside the Dower House as they shade against the wall. Miss Harrison raised her concerns that the grid will just push animals further into the road.

The design of the grid is unlikely to be considered suitable, as a side fence needs to run the entire length of the grid for the safety of stock. The Clerk is asked to contact Mrs Allen explaining that we will need to publish details of her presentment including the address of the property to enable anyone concerned about her request to make a Presentment at February Court before the Court makes a decision, and to also give her an opportunity to amend the proposed design in response to the concerns raised regarding its safety to stock.

Action Clerk

2026/14475 SIGNAGE RESUME

Mr Deakin said the CDA signs are prominent, noticeable, and he agreed they should be in every car park.

The Court discussed different Forest Organisation's views on signage. The Deputy Surveyor is asked to arrange a meeting with the Verderers, CDA, Forestry England Comms & the New Forest National Park Comms team to discuss the matter further.

Action DS

NEW SUBMISSIONS BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2026/14476 GAS MAIN REPLACEMENT, RHINEFIELD ROAD, DISCHARGE
BROCKENHURST

Mr Deakin said that a significant proportion of the proposal is outside Verderers and Forestry England's interest.

The proposal was approved with no objections subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing etc.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO FORESTRY ENGLAND

2026/14477	COUNTY PARISH HOLDING (CPH) NUMBERS	DISCHARGE
	Mr Manley said as there has been no counter presentment he will meet with Tina Woodley to draft a letter of response to Mrs Bickford-Smith.	
2026/14478	BRAMSHAW GOLF CLUB	RESUME
	Mr Adderley said the club are waiting to hear back from Natural England and he will chase for an update. Mr Deakin said the fencing of two of the three fenced off greens are a risk to livestock and need to be properly repaired. The Official Verderer asked Mr Adderley to give the club a strong push to proceed urgently.	Action OA
2026/14479	RAILWAY FENCING	DISCHARGE
	The Official Verderer asked the Clerk to try again with Network Rail regarding the poor fencing on the Lymington Line. The matter will be resumed once we receive a reply to our second letter.	Action Clerk
2026/14480	CAMPING ADVISORY GROUP	RESUME
	The Court thanked Mr Chatters for the report he circulated prior to the meeting.	
	Mrs Tilbury said she has been told that at Roundhills campsite groups of campers have been allowed to create a circle of tents and caravans which has resulted in some ponies getting trapped inside the circle.	
	The Official Verderer said he hoped the spring walk around would give the Verderers an opportunity to speak to the campsite staff.	
	Mr Deakin said that we need to be sure that CNF don't think the Camping Advisory Group can give them permission to make changes on the campsites. The Deputy Surveyor said he does not believe that to be the case.	
	The Official Verderer said while he is happy to continue the informal chats, we need to impress on CNF that any proposals they wish to submit to the Court must come via Forestry England.	
	Mr Pasmore asked if permission had been sought for the storage containers that are on site all year round. Mr Deakin said that at Roundhills two unsightly sheds had been demolished and replaced with a container, but that permission had not been sought at Court.	Action DS
	The Official Verderer said hopefully the requested mapping and inventory of all sites are being produced. The Deputy Surveyor said he will check on their progress.	

2026/14481	CADNAM CRICKET CLUB	RESUME
	<p>Mr Adderley said progress was being made with the club albeit slowly. He said the management plan is vague, the club have told him the spoil heap will be removed once conditions allow vehicle access. The other issues regarding the mess and equipment on site will be dealt with at the end of season wash up meeting.</p> <p>The Club say they had to close the ground to stock before the end of the three months required by their license as they had to carry out repairs to the wicket.</p> <p>Mr Adderley said the club's license permitted them to enclose 1 & 1/4 acres for a wicket. The Official Verderer said it would be interesting for the Court to work with Forestry England to produce a template for sport club licences.</p>	
2026/14482	FOREST BRIDGES	DISCHARGE
	<p>Mr Stride said the re-decking of the bridge at Woodford has been agreed by Forestry England and the work is scheduled to be carried out.</p>	
2026/14483	MONITORING OF ISSUES ON CROWN LAND	DISCHARGE
	<p>Mr Deakin said it is frustrating that the landowner heavily relies on Verderers and Commoners to notice and report issues. The Deputy Surveyor said he has sent a message to his team reminding them that they are the eyes and ears in the Forest.</p> <p>Mr Stride said he is disappointed that after a large tree fell from private property on to the Forest at Woodlands, the property owner was incorrectly told by the Estates Officer that Forestry England would carry out the clearance.</p>	
DE-MINIMUS PROPOSALS		
2026/14484	DE-MINIMIS CONSENTS - UTILITY PROPOSALS AGREED BY THE DE-MINIMIS COMMITTEE	RESUME
	<p>DM0240 Dec 25 Wessex Internet, Fibre internet installation using existing BT infrastructure in Landford/Nomansland</p> <p>DM0241 Dec 25 Acoustic monitoring of the effects of recreational disturbance on bird species richness, functional diversity and on individual bird species, as well as understanding the role of habitat type on recreational disturbance mediation. Woodland devices will be tree mounted with the 12 heathland devices requiring a pole.</p>	
	<p>Mr Adderley is asked to add the acoustic monitoring to the Action List to ensure the poles are removed at the end of the study.</p>	Action OA
EMERGENCY WORKS CARRIED OUT BY UTILITY COMPANIES		
2026/14485	EMERGENCY WORKS CARRIED OUT BY UTILITY COMPANIES	RESUME

- EM0019 Dec 25 South West Water, Water Leak, Hale Purlieu
EM0020 Dec 25 SGN, Gas Leak, Lawn View, Chapel Lane Burley
EM0021 Jan 26 SGN, Gas Leak, Pound Gate, Pound Lane Burley

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2026/14486 SSSI RESTORATION WORKS RESUME

The Summer restoration works are all complete and works are being planned for 2026.

ENCROACHMENTS ON FORESTRY ENGLAND LAND INCLUDING THE ENCROACHMENTS LIST

2026/14487 ENCROACHMENTS LIST RESUME

Nothing new has been added to the Encroachments List.

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2026/14488 ACTION LIST RESUME

The Official Verderer thanked Mr Adderley for producing the Action List.

Mr Deakin said the excavation pit that had been left open following an emergency water leak repair outside the Pig Hotel in Brockenhurst has now been closed.

The Heras fencing that has been left for a long-time following water main works along the A337, directly opposite the main entrance to New Park is still to be removed.

Action OA

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

Mr Richard Burke joined the meeting

2026/14489 FORESTRY ENGLAND'S PROPOSED CAR PARKING CHARGES RESUME

Mr Burke updated the Court on Forestry England's proposed car parking charges.

The Parking Managers are in post and interviews have been carried out for the Parking Wardens. The roadside ditching spec has been agreed, and verge protection works are being carried out.

Mr Burke said Forestry England is continuing to liaise with landowners, including the National Trust and Hampshire County Council as well as the local Parish Councils.

The Official Verderer thanked Mr Burke for the update and again reiterated that the Court would intervene if the conditions attached to the Court's consent are not adhered to, or if any of the proposals have a negative effect on Commoning.

2026/14490 MOBILE REFRESHMENT SALES

RESUME

The Official Verderer said in March 2024 the Court granted consent to Forestry England for the sale of ice creams, hot drinks, unwrapped cakes and sweet pastries at 5 sites for a period of 2 years. Forestry England are now asking for a further two year extension on these sites.

Mr Deakin said that he requested a review of the Food Concession vans at the September Court to include any interactions between the public and livestock, but this has not been provided by Forestry England.

Action
DS/RB

The Court also discussed that some of the conditions linked to its consent have not been adhered to and that an extension cannot start until the conditions have been met.

The Court decided by a majority that the proposal for the extension could come direct to the Court Committee without the need of a presentment.

The Official Verderer requested that Forestry England submit a written proposal within 7 days so the Court can inform other Forest Bodies, including the relevant Parish Councils for the 5 sites, that an extension is being considered.

Action
DS/RB

2026/14491 ROADSIDE DITCHING AT MATLEY

DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin reported that some remedial works were being carried out at Matley following erosion of the ditch and banks in the recent very wet weather.

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

MATTERS ARISING2026/14492 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1877 NEW FOREST ACT

RESUME

Miss Sevier said a meeting is being arranged with the New Forest Association and the CDA in February to discuss plans.

Action Clerk

2026/14493 NEWLANDS CROSSING

DISCHARGE

The Clerk has received an email from Hampshire Rights of Way confirming that they have met with the National Trust and that repairs will be carried out to both sides of the crossing when conditions allow.

Mr Pasmore asked the Clerk to ensure that they know it is both a footpath and a horse crossing. The Official Verderer asked the clerk to offer a potential site visit with HRW and the National Trust before they start repairs.

Action Clerk

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

2026/14494 VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME DISCHARGE

The 2025 Verderers Grazing Scheme figures and calculations were noted.

REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2026/14495 REVIEW OF APPOINTMENTS TO EXTERNAL COMMITTEES DISCHARGE

Verderer attendance on External Committees were reviewed. A few changes were noted by the Court. The Clerk will circulate the updated list in due course. Action Clerk

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2026/14496 FINANCIAL MATTERS INCLUDING THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

2026/14497 COW AND CALF AT BLACKGUTTER DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin reported that a dog walker had been charged by a cow at Blackgutter after he and his dog found themselves between her and her calf. The herd were already in the process of being removed from the Forest by the commoner.

2026/14498 LONE WORKER SAFETY RESUME

Mr Deakin said the Agisters current mobile phones do not have an SOS facility. Mrs Woodley has been looking at lone worker mobile applications and has arranged an online meeting with "Peoplesafe" who are used by Forestry England.

STAFF MATTERS

2026/14499 STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE MINUTES RESUME

The minutes were noted.

2026/14500 LIVESTOCK POUNDS RESUME

Mr Deakin said the Agisters are producing a detailed plan for a new pound at Bolderwood.

2026/14501 AGISTERS VEHICLES RESUME

Agister Michael Maton's Musso has been repaired and returned to him. The Clerk has submitted an invoice to KGM for the agreed replacement hire vehicle costs.

The company that services the Agisters trailers will be asked to look at the lighting issue on the Head Agister's livestock trailer.

Mr Deakin said he is planning to hold a vehicle audit with the other Verderers at the next Staff Liaison Committee.

2026/14502 TREE BARKING BY PONIES RESUME

The mineral licks have been put out at strategic locations. The Agisters are continuing to monitor the situation.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2026/14503 PROTECTION OF LIVESTOCK ACT 2025 RESUME

Mr Deakin said a new Protection of Livestock Act is coming into force this spring. Mr Gammon will read the act and report on any changes that may impact Commoning.

Action MG

2026/14504 FLOCK NUMBER DISCHARGE

Miss Harrison asked if the Court should obtain a flock number to enable the taking of abandoned goats or sheep to market. The Official Verderer expressed concern that this would be unnecessarily burdensome for the Court and that existing arrangements are currently effective. It was agreed that this would be revisited in the future should it be necessary.

2026/14505 REFLECTIVE COLLARS RESUME

Mrs Tilbury said that she has been looking at the accident figures on Roger Penny Way last year and none of the ponies that died were wearing a reflective collar.

Mr Deakin said that most collars are fitted to ponies on the drifts. The northern drifts are poorly attended compared to the ones in the south of the Forest and therefore fewer ponies are caught.

The Official Verderer asked that the discussion be resumed at the next Court to decide on the Verderers position on collars.

2026/14506 COPPICE OF LINWOOD DISCHARGE

Mrs Tilbury asked if any of the Verderers were attending the site visit to the Coppice of Linwood on the 19th February. Mr Deakin said he will be attending.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 13:30 hrs


18th February 2026