

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 18th April 2006 at 9.30 a.m. in the Library, The Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

PRESENT: Mr O Crosthwaite Eyre Official Verderer
Mr P Frost Countryside Agency Appointed Verderer
Mr A Gerrelli Elected Verderer
Cllr Mrs K Heron Hampshire County Council Appointed Verderer
Mr J F Kitcher Elected Verderer
Miss D Macnair Elected Verderer
The Hon R Montagu Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
Mr A H Pasmore Elected Verderer
Mrs P Thorne DEFRA Appointed Verderer

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J R Gerrelli Head Agister (first four items only)
Mr C F R Draper Verderers' Countryside Stewardship Scheme
Manager

APOLOGIES: Mr J Adams Elected Verderer & Chairman of the Staff Committee

IN COMMITTEE

The Head Agister was present for the first four items.

2006/2214 RE-APPOINTMENT OF FORESTRY COMMISSION VERDERER DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer took pleasure in announcing that the Hon Ralph Montagu has agreed to stay on as the Forestry Commission appointed Verderer for a further term of 3 years, until 2009.

2006/2215 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING DISCHARGE

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 15th March 2006 were approved (and signed after the meeting).

2006/2216 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

Report by Head Agister

The Head Agister reported that the condition of stock had deteriorated significantly in the previous 3 – 4 weeks. As a result, the Agisters have been very busy removing animals which are in poor condition, particularly ponies. The after-affect of the long cold Spring is now causing the ponies to lose condition very rapidly. He noted that there is very little feed available on the Forest and no sign of the grass growing yet. There have been a number of calls from members of the public reporting their concerns over the condition of stock, and any animals in poor condition are being removed as soon as they are found; the commoners are co-operating fully with this.

The problem may be compounded in the next few weeks as some commoners are starting to turn out cattle because they are short of feed. Meanwhile, a number of foals have been born.

The meeting was reminded that the colt inspection will take place on Saturday (22 April). Concerns were raised over the apparent limited

publicity for this event.

It was noted that a total of 114 animals were removed from the Forest by the Agisters, during March.

2006/2217 WELFARE OF STOCK RESUME

In the absence of Mr John Adams, there was nothing further to add to the statement by the Head Agister.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2006/2218 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Elected Verderers and Mrs Thorne declared an interest in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

Mr Gerrelli declared an interest in any items concerning Campsites and in the request for a water supply to fields at Bull Hill, Pilley.

The Official Verderer declared an interest in matters concerning Forest golf courses.

2006/2219 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

2006/2220 FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Official Verderer informed the Court that the he had confirmed the budget for 06/07 and the 5 year plan with the Deputy Surveyor.

The Financial Statements for February and March were approved.

2006/2221 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED RESUME

The following Marking Fees have been received:

Total Ponies – Forest and Common	3,819
Total Cattle – Forest and Common	423
Total Donkeys – Forest and Common	77
Total Pigs – Forest and Common	6
Total	4,325

2006/2222 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

There was nothing to report

OPEN COURT – 10.00 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Mike Seddon Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest
Mr Will Park Area Land Agent (New Forest)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2006/2223 OBITUARY, DALLAS MITHEN CB, FICFOR 1923-2006

We were saddened to hear of the death on 20th February of Dallas Mithen who served as Deputy Surveyor from 1968 to 1971. His term coincided with a particularly troubled time for the Forest, and he played a key role in attempting to reconcile the conflicts between timber production, common rights and conservation. He left the Queen's House in order to continue a distinguished career in the upper echelons of the civil service, which included being appointed as a Forestry Commissioner. We extend our sincerest condolences to his family.

2006/2224 FORESTRY COMMISSION APPOINTED VERDERER

I am very pleased to announce that the Hon. Ralph Montagu has accepted the Forestry Commission's invitation to serve a further three year term as an appointed Verderer until July 2009.

2006/2225 BRANDS

The re-organisation of the brands register is now well underway, and our aim is to create a simple system whereby there will only be one brand per owner. The only exception to this rule will be for a formal business partnership, which may use one brand for all its animals in the same way that an individual owner does.

Please remember that if a new brand is required, then the deadline for applying is May 2nd. If an existing brand is to be retained for future use then the declaration that is contained in the letter that has been sent out to all known holders of brands must be signed and returned by May 31st.

In the case of a partnership, the declaration of ownership must be signed by all partners. Failing to respond to the letter may lead to the re-allocation of an existing brand to another user.

2006/2226 STALLION SCHEME

The stallions are now out on the Forest in their allotted areas, and have all wintered extremely well on the grazing at New Park and Cadland Estate that has been provided for free to the stallion owners under the Scheme.

We are pleased to announce that we have received an offer of funds from the Countryside Agency towards this year's costs of the scheme, hopefully in the region of £7,000. Their offer has been made possible with the help of some expert lobbying on our behalf by the National Park Authority. We have also been given a very welcome donation to the Scheme of £1,000 by the RSPCA, for which we are most grateful.

2006/2227 LYNDHURST BYPASS

We wish to make the following statement:

After the Court held on 17th November 2005 representatives of the Lyndhurst Parish Council gave us a private presentation on the subject of a bypass for the village of Lyndhurst. The presentation was highly informative, and clearly showed that the Council believes that a bypass using an outer rather than an inner route is urgently needed.

It was made plain to us at that time that this was part of an ongoing exercise by the Parish Council to inform relevant statutory and other bodies of their ideas on this sensitive and controversial subject, and we were not expected to respond to the presentation.

Since then the proposition of a bypass has been much discussed, and was considered by Hampshire County Council's New Forest Transport Strategy Panel, which concluded that a bypass was not a possibility. The Council also recently convened a one day seminar at Beaulieu in order to give the subject a full airing, at which the leader of the Council, Ken Thornber, announced in his speech that he believed that a bypass should be considered notwithstanding the Transport Strategy Panel's earlier conclusion.

We feel therefore that, even though we have not yet been formally approached for our opinion on this matter, it would be useful if we made a public statement at this stage.

As we all know, previous attempts to build a bypass have been fatally marred by the fact that the proposed route involved building a new stretch of road across heavily protected tracts of crown land. Such outer routes have always conflicted with the albeit unwritten policy of this court at that time.

Our policies are now in written form for all to see. In order for any roadworks, let alone new roads, to comply with our policies they must first show that they further our primary objective. Our primary objective is to conserve the traditional landscape of the forest, including its peacefulness, natural beauty, wildlife and aesthetic character.

Since we may well be asked in the near future to grant our consent to some scheme for a bypass, we must be careful not to prejudge the matter. However we believe that it is important to remind the supporters of this outer bypass route that those whose function and duty it is to protect the New Forest's special qualities and landscape must be completely satisfied that a bypass will do no avoidable harm to the Forest.

Once land disappears under tarmac it disappears for good. We would have to be very careful when asked to consider sacrificing even the smallest area of the nation's newest National Park. We would need to consider the merits of any formal proposal for a bypass in the light of all the issues and associated evidence, including air quality, transport, environmental and economic. In particular we would need to assess the long term impact upon commoning and the Forest's unique cultural heritage.

We agree with Councillor Thornber's original suggestion that rather than focus upon the traffic problem of one particular area, we should first consider the problem as a whole and seek solutions on a Forest-wide basis. Such an approach must rightly involve the National Park Authority who, as the new planning authority, now have a primary role to play. We believe that to consider Lyndhurst's traffic problems in isolation from the rest of the Forest would be a mistake.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2006/2228 ACCIDENT REPORTS FOR MARCH 2006

The Agisters attended 8 accidents in March which compares with 4 for the same period last year.

3 ponies and 1 donkey were killed and 2 ponies and 1 cow were injured.

6 accidents occurred during the hours of darkness and 6 involved private cars or light commercials.

2 accidents were not reported and 5 involved local motorists.

The total killed and injured for the year to date is 26 compared with 23 for the same period last year.

PRESENTMENTS BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST

None

PRESENTMENTS

2006/2229 AVON WATER BLOCKAGE

Presentment by Mr Michael Cooper, New Forest Commoners Defence Association

Mr Cooper drew the Court's attention to work which has been carried out on a stretch of the Avon Water between Wootton car park and Holmsley Tea Room, where a large number of trees have been felled across the stream. Some of these have fallen into the water. Cut brush has then built up against them, effectively damming the flow of water and causing the stream to flow over its banks and flood the adjacent area. This is causing a hazard for commoners stock and, as it is close to a popular visitor area, also poses a health and safety risk.

The Court was asked to make an assessment and task those responsible to respond.

2006/2230 ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING / WETLAND RESTORATION / WATER BEING CHANNELED ONTO FOREST GRAZING

Presentment by Mr Bob Cooper, Minstead Manor Commoner

Mr Bob Cooper repeated an earlier invitation for members of the Court to attend assertiveness training as he felt that the Court minutes lacked strength of feeling.

He went on to raise the issue of wetland restoration and his concerns over the effect of this in saturating parts of the Forest, and asked the Court to indicate clearly their intention to address this with those responsible.

He also asked the Court to raise the matter of water being channeled onto Forest grazing from blocked ditches on the verges of fenced highways, with English Nature and the County Highways Department.

2006/2231 DAMAGED SSSI
Presentment by Mrs Olive Collins, The Wagon Centre, Brockenhurst

Mrs Collins drew the Court's attention to a 'far more serious case of "Damage" to an SSSI than that recently alleged at Kingston Great Common'. Specifically, to many incidents of damage to the New Forest SSSI caused by a lack of proper maintenance. This has resulted in blocked ditches overflowing onto lawns and pasture woodland; bracken replacing grazing and choking out native flora; streams overgrown and polluted by rubbish often described as 'debris dams'; and forest lawns, saturated and soured.

She gave her opinion that the damage is caused by the various agencies involved ignoring the views of knowledgeable local people, and appealed to the Court to redress the balance before it is too late.

2006/2232 MARKWAY CROSSING
Presentment by Mr T E Moore, Sleepbrook Farm, Alderholt

Mr Moore drew the Court's attention to major works which have recently been undertaken on the access to, and surrounding, the stream crossing between Clumbers and Ferny Nap, recently named the Markway Crossing. He stated that the result will probably mean the loss of access over the green to the adjacent ford, which in itself seems to have widened and become deeper.

He expressed concern that the old bridge which has been left in place has an internal width of only 44 inches, which in his opinion is unsafe for riders on horseback. He asked the Court to investigate this and, if in agreement, to ask the Forestry Commission to widen it to a minimum internal width of 56 inches.

At the same time he suggested that the west protection ditch for this passage should be cleared above the small sleeper bridge to join with the existing ditch higher up, through the obstruction caused by traffic over this ditch from the driftway between Clumbers and Rhinefield Sandys. He felt that this should then protect the access to the new causeway, which at present is at risk in wet weather from spillage from the higher ditch.

IN COMMITTEE in The Library

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2006/2233 VISIT BY NATIONAL PARK DIRECTORS DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer welcomed two Directors from the National Park Authority to the Court: Mr Stephen Trotter, Director of Conservation and Enhancement, and Mr Jeff Haynes, Director of Understanding and Enjoyment. He hoped their attendance would help to give them a greater understanding of the role of the Court and a flavour of the sort of issues with which it deals.

2006/2234 AVON WATER BLOCKAGE RESUME
Presentment by Mr Michael Cooper, New Forest Commoners Defence Association

The District Surveyor agreed to investigate this issue. He pointed out that it would be helpful if such issues could be raised with the Forestry

Commission in advance of the Court, so that they could be investigated in time to inform the meeting.

It was agreed that the Official Verderer would write to Mr Cooper.

2006/2235 ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING / WETLAND RESTORATION / WATER BEING CHANNELED ONTO FOREST GRAZING RESUME
Presentment by Mr Bob Cooper, Minstead Manor Commoner

It was agreed that the Official Verderer would write to Mr Cooper and request details of specific sites so that his concerns could be investigated properly.

2006/2236 DAMAGED SSSI RESUME
Presentment by Mrs Olive Collins, The Wagon Centre, Brockenhurst

The Court felt that English Nature is the most appropriate authority to assess the condition of the New Forest SSSI. As her presentment did not identify any specific areas, it was agreed that the Official Verderer would write to Mrs Collins and seek details of areas of particular concern.

2006/2237 MARKWAY CROSSING RESUME
Presentment by Mr T E Moore, Sleepbrook Farm, Alderholt

The Deputy Surveyor agreed to investigate Mr Moore's concerns and report back at the next Court

SUBMISSIONS BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2006/2238 SOUTHERN ELECTRIC 11KV OVERHEAD LINE – PICKET POST TO CROW ROAD RESUME

Southern Electric wish to replace some of the poles on the existing overhead 11Kv line that runs from Shobley to the Forest End Cottages north of the A31 and then south of the A31 from Picket Hill to the Crow road at Burley Street. In addition, rather than replacing some of the poles and refurbishing the overhead line they are proposing to put a significant length of existing line underground but on a different route, thereby avoiding the bog at Foulford Bottom.

The Court was disappointed that a significant section of overhead line would not be replaced with underground cable. This is a particularly unspoilt area of the Forest where the landscape has remained largely unchanged for centuries – apart from the electricity line. It was thought likely that any area of overhead line that is refurbished will not be considered for replacement with underground cabling for at least 30 – 40 years, so this is an important opportunity which should not be missed. Cost is obviously a consideration and the Court would like to know whether or not all possible sources of additional funding have been fully investigated. Questions were also raised about a box shaped section of overhead line shown on the Southern Electric plan above Little Castle Common.

The Court approved the plans for the replacement of a section of

overhead line with underground cabling. As for the proposed refurbishment of the overhead line, it was agreed that the Forestry Commission should contact the company and raise the concerns itemised above. In the meantime, a decision on this would be placed on hold.

2006/2239 WATER SUPPLY TO FIELDS AT BULL HILL, PILLEY DISCHARGE

The Court approved a request from Verderer Tony Gerrelli for the laying of a water supply pipe from the public main in the highway at Bull Hill to his fields nearby (OS No's 1442 and 1838). The route is approximately 140 metres long and runs alongside an existing gravel track.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2006/2240 GARDEN WASTE DISCHARGE

A copy of a response from the NFDC to concerns raised by the Verderers over the introduction of a garden waste collection scheme, has been passed to all Verderers. In this it was confirmed that users of the Scheme have been clearly instructed not to leave waste bags outside where they may be accessible to Forest animals. Proposals for a 'Wheelie bin' option will be subject to consultation and the Verderers will be invited to submit comments.

Notwithstanding the assurances by the council, Mr Tony Gerrelli remained concerned that the introduction of the scheme could lead to an increase in fly tipping. It was hoped that the heavy financial penalties available to the courts for anyone convicted of this offence, would be a deterrent.

2006/2241 NEW FOREST GOLF CLUB RESUME

In response to a question from Mr Peter Frost, Mr Will Parke confirmed that English Nature had given their approval for the proposed management plan for the golf course. The need for a site visit was agreed and Mr Will Parke undertook to arrange a date for this in the next 2 – 3 weeks (*now confirmed as 9 May at 2.00 p.m. at the Club House*).

2006/2242 HOLLANDS WOOD & ROUNDHILL CAMPSITES PROPOSALS RESUME

Although it had been expected that the 'appropriate assessment' would be ready for signature, a further meeting has been requested to enable English Nature and the Hampshire Wildlife Trust to argue their opposing views. This will be held on 10th May. The Official Verderer explained the role of the 'appropriate assessment' and reminded the Court of the importance of staying focussed on this stage in the process. He confirmed that he would be attending the meeting.

Mr Anthony Pasmore stated that he wished to hear the arguments and suggested that anyone else wishing to hear the debate, should also

attend. It was felt that numbers should be limited and it was agreed that the following Verderers would attend with the Official Verderer: Mr Anthony Pasmore, Mrs Pat Thorne and Miss Dionis Macnair.

2006/2243 A337 BALMER LAWN ROAD JUNCTION, CONSTRUCTION OF FOOTPATH RESUME

An apology has been received from Hampshire County Council for the work that has been carried out at Balmer Lawn without the approval of the Court – a copy of the letter has been circulated to all Verderers. It is noted that the Council has agreed to return three existing informal lay-bys along the A337 to a more ecologically favourable habitat as mitigation against the new footway scheme.

Mr Anthony Pasmore noted that the fencing along the side of the new footway, effectively created a protected area which could be planted with suitable hedging to provide useful screening. It was agreed that the Official Verderer would write to Hampshire County Council with that suggestion.

2006/2244 A337 OPPOSITE THE FILLY INN SETLEY – GORSE CLEARANCE DISCHARGE

Mrs Kathy Heron reported that the gorse in this area has been cleared because of the potential fire risk – noting the hazard it might have posed to traffic backed up on this stretch of road. It is unfortunate that this loss of screening means that traffic noise is now much more intrusive. The issue of screening and noise pollution affects wide areas of the Forest and will be considered by the committee which has been proposed by Jonathan Spencer.

2006/2245 LYNDHURST BYPASS RESUME

See announcements and decisions

2006/2246 STALLION SCHEME DISCHARGE

Nothing Further To Report

2006/2247 BRAND REVIEW RESUME

The Court noted that the brand review is involving the office staff in a great deal of extra work. The review appears to be going well although a number of responses to the letter on this have had to be returned because they were incomplete.

2006/2248 LAND EXCHANGES RESUME

Mr Will Parke informed the Court that some progress was being made and he had received draft documents from the solicitors in respect of the tops of the two reservoirs and the field at Vernalls Farm. He is still following up on the land at Ashurst Lodge.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2006/2249 PROPOSED INTERPRETATION SIGN BOARDS FOR THE TALL TREES TRAIL DISCHARGE

The Court approved proposals by the Forestry Commission for 6 replacement sign boards for the Tall Trees Trail. The new wooden signs are a different design from those they will replace, and are intended to be 'interactive and tactile'. There is no increase in the number of signs proposed for the trail.

2006/2250 PROVISION OF NEW PEDESTRIAN REFUGE AT PIKES HILL DISCHARGE

The Court approved a request from Hampshire County Council for the installation of a new pedestrian refuge at Pikes Hill. The Official Verderer will respond formally to the Council.

2006/2251 ASHURST CRICKET PITCH DISCHARGE

In response to a query from Mr Peter Frost, Mr Will Parke said that the PCT had hoped to complete the fencing in the last financial year, but now plan to do it early in the current financial year. When that is done, the FC will complete its own fencing.

2006/2252 GATE AT MILKHAM RESUME

Mrs Pat Thorne raised the issue of a gate at Milkham which had been unlocked for some time but was recently secured with a rusty chain and a 'non FC' padlock. Mr Will Parke agreed to investigate.

2006/2253 DAMAGE CAUSED BY FORESTRY WORK AT TURF HILL RESUME

The Court noted their concern at the damage being done during current timber clearance operations at Turf Hill. The Forestry Commission agreed to investigate this.

The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Parke left the meeting

2006/2254 MEETING WITH THE NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY RESUME

The Official Verderer informed the Court of an in-depth meeting he has arranged with the National Park Authority on 11 May. The other Verderers were asked to notify him of any issues they would like raised.

An invitation will be extended to the Chief Executive and Directors to attend lunch with the Verderers after the May Court.

2006/2255 COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL OF PLASTIC BAGS AND DISCHARGE WRAPPING

Mr Peter Frost drew the Court's attention to a scheme for the disposal of agricultural plastic bags and wrapping. This is important because many farmers collect large quantities of plastic and it is now illegal for it to be burned or buried. It was noted that Forest Friendly Farming have funded a similar pilot scheme at Copythorne and Bramshaw, which will be extended if successful.

2006/2256 FOXBURY PLANTATION DISCHARGE

Mr Anthony Pasmore informed the Court that the National Trust has completed the purchase of 400 acres of land at Foxbury Plantation. The previous owners will fell and remove the timber on this land over the next 7 – 10 years and it will then be allowed to revert to nature. He expressed concern that priority could be given to recreation and tourism on the site, although the access is very poor. However it was noted that the area is outside the jurisdiction of the Court.

In addition, the Trust has also purchased 40 acres of Land at Hale Purlieu. There is a concern that the boundary fence along the Southern and Eastern edge of this land is essential to the success of the pound there. He agreed to represent these concerns to the Trust in the hope that they would maintain the fence.

2006/2257 KINGSTON GREAT COMMON RESUME JULY

The Official Verderer has written to English Nature requesting details of the basis for their recent prosecution of Mr Lowndes in respect of the fence he has erected at Kingston Great Common. It was noted that they were surprised and disappointed by his acquittal. The Court discussed a range of possible options for a further prosecution. It was thought that local authorities might be willing to support the commoners or that the CDA might take this on with financial backing from English Nature. It was noted that the common is subject to the Verderers' bye-laws.

2006/2258 POUNDS RESUME

In the absence of Mr John Adams, the Courts attention was simply drawn to the minutes of the April Staff Committee meeting.

2006/2259 TUBERCULOSIS RESUME

Concern was expressed over the lack of any clear plan by DEFRA for dealing with an outbreak of TB on the Forest. It was agreed that the clerk should continue to pursue this.

2006/2260 HALF MOON COMMON RESUME

The Verderers continue to be concerned at the appalling condition of Half Moon Common. Proposals for addressing this are still awaited, but the Court found it hard to envisage a workable scheme. It was agreed that the Verderers would assist DEFRA in assessing stocking

densities.

Mr Tony Gerrelli left at this point.

The problem is largely caused by stock belonging to one commoner, but it was noted that other stock also contribute to the damage. There was general agreement with Mr Anthony Pasmore's view that the Northern commons should be dealt with as a single unit.

It was agreed that the clerk should write to DEFRA and confirm that the Court will cooperate with their investigation.

The Official Verderer thanked Mr Pasmore for all his work in this and other areas.

2006/2261 STALLION RESEARCH DISCHARGE

The CE of the NPA has agreed to assist in seeking funding from the Countryside Agency for research into the effect of the stallion scheme on forest ponies. The matter is to be referred to the Staff Committee and the Agisters are requested to note any behaviour in the Forest ponies attributable to the scheme.

2006/2262 VERDERERS' COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP SCHEME DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer reported the decisions of the CSS Sub Committee, following the earlier meeting and recommendations of the Advisory Group which were noted at the last Court meeting. The Sub Committee has:

- Approved the adoption of the DEFRA condition scoring scheme (which is also used by other welfare organisations). It was noted that the Verderers' website will have to be brought up to date to reflect this change.
- Deferred a decision on the use of CSS funds to help pay for some more reflective pony collars, until the issue of funding for Land Rovers for the Agisters, has been resolved.
- Left the ceiling of 7,000 animals unchanged.
- Approved a grant of up to £6,000.00 per year, to cover a shortfall in funding for Land Rovers for the Agisters, should a grant from the NPA for less than the amount necessary to enable this initiative be forthcoming.

2006/2263 NATIONAL PARK TRAINING DAY DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer noted that the recent training day for the NPA had gone well and that feedback from those attending had been positive. It was generally felt that this had been very worthwhile, although it was noted that an opportunity had been missed in not including a visit to see the Stallion Scheme in operation at New Park. All members and the Chief Executive have now attended training sessions and the CE has indicated that the Verderers will be notified of any new members so that they can be given a similar opportunity.

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The Official Verderer informed the Court that he and the Head Agister will be conducting the CE, Mr Trotter and Mr Haynes on a tour of the Forest on 11th May.

2006/2264 MINERALS AND WASTE NPA REPRESENTATION AT WILTSHIRE CC TROWBRIDGE MEETING RESUME

Mrs Kathy Heron informed the Court that there is a consultation document on minerals/waste on its way to her. Comments must be submitted within 7 weeks. The National Park Authority will respond and Peter Nelson has asked for input from the Verderers. There are probably 5 or 6 measures which impact on the Forest – proposals for Pound Bottom and plans for a recycling centre at Downton are of particular interest because of the traffic implications.

It was agreed that Mrs Heron would submit comments to the National Park Authority.

Mrs Pat Thorne asked for a copy of the document.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2006/2265 PROGRESS DISCHARGE

Mr Anthony Pasmore expressed concern about the state of 'PROGRESS'. He noted the departure of Keith Campbell and that Peter Thaxter is now in charge. Work is in hand to consider measures to mitigate the effect of pressures on the Forest, but he questioned whether or not the people in charge are well enough informed.

Mr Peter Frost offered a more optimistic view and suggested that things will improve.

STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)

2006/2266 (Sept 05) MILEAGE PAYMENTS RESUME

Consideration of this Item was deferred until after the NPA announce a decision on the grant towards the provision of Land Rovers.

TRAINING

2006/2267 TRAINING FOR THE AGISTERS ON WORKING ON OR NEAR THE HIGHWAY RESUME

In the absence of the Clerk, there was no further information on this, available to the Court.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

There were no health and safety matters to discuss.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 2006/2268 WELFARE TOUR RESUME
- The Official Verderer reminded the Court that the Welfare Tour will take place on 15 May.
- 2006/2269 DEFRA WOODLAND POLICY WORKSHOP DISCHARGE
- An invitation has been extended to the Verderers, by DEFRA, for a representative to attend a workshop they are holding in London on 22nd May on policies for woods and trees. A copy of the invitation is held by the clerk should any of the Verderers wish to take up this offer.
- 2006/2270 SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING DISCHARGE
- The Court considered a complaint about unauthorised feeding of ponies at Hale Purlieu. A commoner is feeding large quantities of hay to a significant number of ponies in a number of different locations on the common and the Forest. The situation is slightly unusual in that the feeding is provided to support the welfare of these ponies, only a small number of which belong to the commoner herself. It was agreed that no action would be taken this year. The situation will be regularised next year, and the commoner will be required to apply for a supplementary feeding area.
- The Official Verderer will discuss this with the Clerk.
- 2006/2271 CHANNEL FOUR FILM ON DEER CONSERVATION DISCHARGE
- The Court was briefed on proposals by the organisers of a Channel 4 television series on wildlife conservation, which will be screened in the Autumn. One of the programmes will be filmed in the New Forest and will feature work on several areas along the A35. One of the measures which has been proposed is to make the underpass at Holmsley more attractive to deer in the hope that they will choose to use that rather than crossing the carriageway. A site meeting to consider this measure in detail is planned in the near future. It was agreed that the Head Agister should attend.
- 2006/2272 CYCLE CROSSING AT HOLMSLEY RESUME
- Mr Peter Frost informed the Court that there is to be a meeting with Kevin Fuller to consider an alteration to the proposed cycle crossing at Holmsley. He will attend.
- 2006/2273 A338 CLOSURE DISCHARGE
- The Court was reminded that a short section of the A338 from the A31 roundabout to the junction with Ivy Lane will be closed overnight for up to 6 weeks starting in September.

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2006/2274 A31 BRIDGE REPAIRS

DISCHARGE

Mrs Kathy Heron informed the Court of proposed work to repair the bridge parapet on the A31 at Ringwood. The road will be reduced to a single carriageway in each direction and a 50 mph speed limit will be imposed. Work is due to start any time after 24 April and will last for up to 12 weeks.

2006/2275 BRANDS

RESUME

The Court was informed of a proposed meeting which has been requested by the CDA, to discuss their concerns over a number of issues relating to brands.

Mr Jeff Kitcher said that he understood young commoners are now required to pay £85.00 for a brand, and asked why this money is no longer offset against their Marking Fees. The clerk is coordinating attendance and arrangements for the meeting. It was agreed that she should research the background to the current fees and, in particular, identify when the Court made its decision not to offset the cost of a brand against future Marking Fees.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1.05 p.m.