

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at 9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.**

PRESENT:	Mr Dominic May	Official Verderer
	Mr R Deakin	Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Elected Verderer
	Mr B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr C Maton	National Park Appointed Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mrs P Thorne	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
	Mrs D Westerhoff	Natural England Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr R Maton	Agister
APOLOGIES	Mr A Gerrelli	Elected Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer

**IN COMMITTEE in the Library**

2013/6586 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013 were approved and signed by the Official Verderer.

2013/6587 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Official Verderer, the Elected Verderers, Mr Maton and Mrs Thorne all declared an interest in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme and the Verderers Grazing Scheme.

Mr Barry Dowsett advised the Court that he is a Forestry Commission Voluntary Ranger.

2013/6588 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Official Verderer welcomed Agister Robert Maton who was attending the Court in place of the Head Agister today.

Agister Maton said that the condition of stock is not as good as it was this time last year. Last year was particularly dry, this year has been colder and wetter. He reported that whilst the Agisters are busy removing animals that have gone back in condition, and many commoners are being pro-active in removing their stock, he felt it will be necessary to undertake a purge on some areas of the Forest in the next few weeks.

Having said this, Agister Maton felt the stock are not continuing to deteriorate to any great extent and as usual it is mares with foals and young ponies which have lost condition during the winter. Fortunately, due to less stallions turned out in 2012, there are less mares with foals, and there are not many slipped foals this year. Ponies generally look better in those areas where a stallion did not run. It has been a challenging winter for the animals. Despite the harsh weather, there are some good-looking ponies on the Forest, and these, said Agister Maton, are the right type to encourage.

The grass, which has been burned off with the cold, is now beginning to

grow, albeit there won't be much on the Forest for a few more weeks yet.

Mr Dowsett commented that the deer seem to be suffering more than the ponies. Mr C Maton remarked that there are 200 plus deer in New Park and he questioned whether the Forestry Commission culls sufficient numbers each year.

2013/6589 STOCK LOSING CONDITION AND REMOVED FROM THE FOREST RESUME

70 animals were removed from the Forest in March as a result of losing condition. This compares with 39 in March 2012. The details are as follows:- 9 mares with yearlings, 18 mares, 34 fillies and 9 geldings.

Agister Maton confirmed the geldings were young animals, changing their teeth.

2013/6590 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE RESUME

	Forest	Common	Total
Ponies	4148	652	4800
Cattle	1167	596	1763
Donkeys	83	44	127
Pigs	0	1	1
Sheep	0	108	108

Total 6799  
Total Ponies, Cattle and Donkeys - 6690

2013/6591 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

One colt remains on the Forest. The owner has requested assistance in catching it.

Marking fees from several commoners are outstanding. A list containing the names of those commoners who are in breach of the byelaws will be provided to the Verderers' Grazing Scheme Manager so that consideration can be given as to whether any penalties should be imposed in respect of grazing scheme payments which may be payable next year. Ultimately, breaches of the byelaws may result in prosecution.

Agister **Maton left the meeting**

2013/6592 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Mike Seddon, Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest  
Mr Mark Street, Area Land Agent (New Forest)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER**

2013/6593 EASTER CAMPSITES OPENING

At our March Court, Graham Ferris, Chairman of the Commoners Defence Association, made a presentment to us, expressing concern about wet ground conditions and thus potential damage to the grazing within those campsites which were due to open.

We had a full discussion in Committee and were re-assured by the Deputy Surveyor that he would contact Camping in the Forest as a matter of urgency to remind them that they must take all possible steps to ensure minimal impact on the ground. The Deputy Surveyor said that he would also ask that campsite managers to direct campers to the most robust areas of their sites, and if necessary to move campers between sites in order to manage the occupancy of each site to ensure damage is minimised. Campsite managers would also be instructed to cordon off areas where damage is most likely to be caused.

Immediately following discussion in Verderers Committee, the Deputy Surveyor held a telephone conversation with a senior representative of Camping in the Forest to relay these concerns and seek assurances that all reasonable and appropriate measures were in place / would be put in place to reduce the likelihood of any serious ground impacts arising from camping activity. Operational management of the campsites is the responsibility of Camping in the Forest, and the Deputy Surveyor was assured that steps would be taken to manage occupancy and site usage according to conditions pertaining. May I thank the Deputy Surveyor for your prompt action.

The Deputy Surveyor has helpfully given the Verderers the management document for the campsites: it is called New Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest; Routine Campsite Maintenance – Methods and Specifications.

Additionally, the Verderers' Clerk Sue Westwood was asked by Camping in the Forest to brief all the campsite managers, and this was done by her on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Thank you, Sue.

Dr Ferris also asked that the Verderers and the Forestry Commission inspect all campsites which were open for Easter. A site visit has been arranged in May, at which David Readhead will represent the Verderers. The CDA has been invited too.

2013/6594 STALLION INSPECTION

May I remind everyone that the Stallion Inspection is taking place at 9.00 a.m. this coming Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April at the Beaulieu Road Sale Yard. The Verderers particularly welcome any stallions and colts which are not closely related to the present stallion pool and will encourage anyone with a horse that meets that criteria to bring him forward. Even if the horse is not selected to run the Forest, the owner may be offered a space in the grazing at Cadland. Please let the New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society, or the Verderers' Office, know if you are going to bring a colt along for inspection.

## **ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT**

2013/6595 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR MARCH 2013

The Agisters attended 12 accidents compared with 9 in March last year.

4 ponies were killed, 3 of which were wearing collars. 3 ponies were reported to have been involved in accidents but nothing was found.

1 cow was killed and another cow and a sheep were injured.

3 accidents occurred in daylight and 9 at night.

9 cars were involved but 3 drivers failed to report having collided with commoners' animals.

9 accidents involved local motorists with the drivers coming from Brockenhurst, Sway, Lyndhurst, Linford, Dibden and Bickton near Fordingbridge. The non local driver came from Poole.

Details of the accidents are as follows:-

On Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March a chestnut filly was injured and subsequently destroyed following an accident at just after 9 o'clock in the morning on Burley Road, Hinchleslea. The filly was wearing a reflective collar.

On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March at 6.46 p.m. a bay mare was injured near Setley Pond.

Also on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March, but in the evening at 7.00 p.m., a bay mare was injured in an accident near Yew Tree Bottom Car Park and Wilverley and had to be destroyed.

On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March a grey pony was reportedly hit by a car at 7.30 in the evening on the B3078 at Godshill Ridge. The pony was not found.

A sheep was injured at 6.20 p.m. at Bramshaw on the B3079. The accident occurred on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March.

Between Appleslade and Moyles Court, on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March an Angus cross heifer was injured in an accident at 7.15 p.m.

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March a dark bay pony was reported to have been hit by a car, the driver of which failed to stop and has not come forward. The incident occurred on the B3054 Beaulieu Road, in the vicinity of Hilltop. Nothing has been found injured.

A bay mare which was wearing a reflective collar was killed at Parc Pale just outside Lyndhurst on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 11.21pm.

Another hit and run incident involving a pony reportedly occurred on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 11.20 p.m. close to the cattle grid at Dibden on the B3054. Nothing was found injured.

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 11.00 a.m, a bay gelding was hit by a car and injured in North Lane Beaulieu. The driver has not come forward.

An in calf charolais cow was killed between Crockford and the Norley Wood Crossroads on the B3054 on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 11.05 p.m. and finally...

A chestnut Shetland pony, wearing a collar, was killed on the last day of March at 12.25

p.m., again at Norley Wood Crossroads.

The total number of animals killed and injured this year to date is now 27 compared with 18 in the same period last year.

The Clerk added that on her way to work this morning, at Sway between the Hare and Hounds Railway Bridge and Marlpit Oak crossroads, she had seen a car about 30 feet off the road. It had apparently struck and killed a pony before leaving the road, crossing a newly dug ditch and come to rest in amongst the gorse.

#### **PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST**

There were no presentments from the Deputy Surveyor at this Court.

#### **PRESENTMENTS**

There were no presentments from the public.

#### **IN COMMITTEE in the Library**

#### **NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

2013/6596    NEW FOREST TOUR BUS – NEW STOPS    DISCHARGE

The New Forest National Park Authority wishes to install two further seasonal bus stops for the New Forest Tour Bus. This is for a new route for the Tour Bus starting in June this year. The new stops are at Wilverley and Burbush.

The proposals were agreed subject to the usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing etc.; and also that the sleeves in which the poles will sit have lids on them; the poles are removed out of season; and the poles are green and not blue.

2013/6597    WASTE AND RECYCLING BINS    RESUME

The Forestry Commission wishes to increase the bin capacity at some of the key visitor sites in the Forest. i.e. Bolderwood, Blackwater, Whitefield Moor, Wilverley Plain, Hatchet Pond, Boltens Bench and Boltens Cricket Pitch. This would be done by increasing the capacity of the existing bins. There is also a desire to increase waste segregation in order to meet waste reduction targets and this would be done by having a two part bin with one part for recyclable materials.

The Court was pleased to accept Mr Barry Dowsett's offer to be the Verderers main contact for consultation on this project.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COURT AND PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

2013/6598 PITMORE LANE MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND RESUME

Mr Deakin, Mr Dowsett, Mr Gerrelli and Mr Pasmore will attend the site meeting on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at 4pm.

A suggestion that the Football Club (which actually uses the field), rather than the Parish Council, should be the licensee may be explored.

2013/6599 EASTER CAMPSITE OPENING DISCHARGE

Several Verderers looked at the campsites over and since Easter. No problems were reported and it was felt that the campsite managers had done a good job in protecting the Forest keeping vehicles off grass areas where at all possible.

The Deputy Surveyor said that Camping in the Forest's management had been swift in sending out the message about taking special care of the sites in wet weather. The Clerk reported she was impressed with the feedback she received from the Wardens and Managers to whom she spoke prior to Easter. All were very keen to ensure no damage was caused on their sites.

The Clerk also reported that the Manager at Hollands Wood had been extremely helpful in identifying a group of DoE students who were responsible for cutting the A337 fence. The group were told to leave the campsite because of problems they caused on the site itself. It is believed compensation for the damage caused will be recoverable from the organisation which arranged the student's visit and consideration is being given as to whether that organisation will be welcome on Forest campsites in future.

2013/6600 BRAMSHAW GOLF COURSE RESUME

Mr Street reported that the Golf Club is engaging the services of a professional course designer in order to try to resolve some of the difficulties on the course.

A bag containing a large quantity of tees (some broken and clearly a hazard to stock), together with an obviously chewed golf ball which had been collected from the course the day before, had been handed to the Clerk in Open Court. Mr Street said he is due to visit the Club and he will take the bag with him and take the opportunity to remind the management that such items must not be left on the course. Mr Street said he felt that the removal of some of the bins from the course will doubtless be used as an excuse, to which it was pointed out that all golfers have large golf bags and so it is not as if they have no-where to put broken tees!

Action  
MStr

Mr Readhead remarked that there is far more damage on the fairways than on any campsite. It is understood that Dunwood Manor Golf Club has closed and this has resulted in an increased membership at Bramshaw. This in turn is putting more pressure on the course. Mr Readhead said he would like to represent the Verderers when the final plans of the new course layout are available.

Mr Readhead also suggested that in the event of another very wet

summer and autumn, the Forestry Commission should consider closing the golf course from November to March.

Mr Street reported that he has recently found a copy of a licence issued to the Club in the 1890's. It seems similar issues were being discussed then as now!

Later in the meeting, Mrs Westerhoff asked if the management plan had been updated to remove the appendix which refers to chemicals which may no longer be used on the course.

Action  
MStr

2013/6601 BROKEN POST AT CADMAN'S POOL

RESUME

Mr Street reported that he is still in communication with British Telecom Openreach regarding a line of posts in this area. Mr Street has also ascertained that asbestos is present. BT Openreach has been told that all the posts must be removed, but at present the company is trying to claim they are nothing to do with them. Mr Street is meeting with the Head of Wayleaves on the 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Action  
MStr

2013/6602 DRIFT MANAGEMENT

RESUME

A meeting has been arranged with Mr Simon Smith (FC Recreation Manager), which will be attended by Mr Deakin, the Clerk and Head Agister. The meeting is on 25<sup>th</sup> April at 10.30 a.m.

Action  
RD/SW/SS

2013/6603 DEAD PONIES IN INCLOSURES – CICADA MONITORING

RESUME  
March 2014

Mrs Westerhoff confirmed that cicada monitoring will re-start in due course under an HLS project. In the meantime the inclosure gates have been locked open.

Action NE  
(DW)

2013/6604 THE WIGGLE NEW FOREST CYCLE SPORTIVE – NEW PARK EVENTS LICENCE

RESUME  
Sept

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that the lease permits shows and events which would include an event such as the Wiggle.

The second day of the event was cancelled because of damage to the fields in New Park caused by vehicle parking. Local entrants in the event were told they could ride the route on their own but there would be no marshalls, refreshment stops or provision for participants vehicles.

In some areas of the Forest route signage was removed or turned round and tin-tacks were placed on the road in East Boldre. The Court considered such sabotage to be unhelpful and dangerous.

Such road based events fall outside the jurisdiction of the Verderers unless they interfere with the stock and/or the drifts. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the organisers of the October event in order to avoid any conflict with the drift which has been arranged for that day.

Action  
SW

Mr Dowsett had expressed concern regarding the number of unauthorised, non-essential event signs which had been placed in the verges. He had asked the Forestry Commission to contact the event organisers to have these signs removed. They were removed promptly.

It was also reported that the litter along some parts of the route which has been left by participants is awful and totally unacceptable.

### SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

- |           |  |              |
|-----------|--|--------------|
| 2013/6605 | SNAGGING LIST  | RESUME       |
|           | An updated snagging list was provided. There is one addition – Queen's Meadow.   |              |
| 2013/6606 | AVON WATER STREAM RESTORATION WORK   | RESUME       |
|           | The Clerk asked whether as part of the Avon Water restoration work between Brownhills and Wilverley Inclosures, the proposals had included felling trees across the stream. She had recently walked along the stream and come across several debris dams, one of which had drastically altered the course of the stream and had resulted in a very deep pool being created. The Clerk considered it to be very dangerous to stock. She also pointed out that the Agisters and commoners have to drift that area. It was confirmed by those Verderers who had attended the site meeting that felling trees across the stream was not part of the approval. The Deputy Surveyor undertook to investigate.  |              |
|           |  | Action<br>MS |
| 2013/6607 | ISLANDS THORNS INCLOSURE RESTORATION   | DISCHARGE    |
|           | The proposals for this restoration project drawn up following the site meeting on 20 <sup>th</sup> November 2012, were circulated for consideration prior to the Court. Mr Pasmore contacted the Clerk prior to this meeting and asked her to pass on his objections to the works on the grounds that in his opinion they are damaging and also mostly unnecessary. Members of the Court disagreed. The Official Verderer remarked that Island Thorns contains the deepest and widest man-made drainage channels in the Forest, which have become deeper and wider in recent years due to erosion, and so it is a prime candidate for restoration. Mrs Westerhoff agreed and said three major benefits will result from the works namely, improvement of the nature conservation interest and the restoration of a badly eroded stream. The works will also help fulfil the Verderers responsibilities under the HLS agreement and there will be improvements for grazing. The proposed works were agreed. |              |
| 2013/6608 | FURZEY LODGE MIRE & HAWKHILL MIRE RESTORATION  | DISCHARGE    |
|           | The site meeting on the 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2013 was well attended. Everyone was content with the proposals for which unanimous approval was given.  |              |
| 2013/6609 | PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RESTORATION WORKS  | DISCHARGE    |
|           | In response to an enquiry by a member of the Court, the Deputy Surveyor said that he is still waiting for clarification as to what scale of works triggers the need for planning permission. He said he will let the Court know as soon as he has further information. Islands Thorns is almost certain to require planning permission whilst Furzey Lodge Mire and Hawkhill Mire may not.   |              |



## ENCROACHMENTS

- 2013/6610 ENCROACHMENT LIST RESUME
- Mr Street produced a new list. Actions  
MStr
- In **Woodlands Road** a major encroachment has taken place where a property owner has taken away a significant area of verge in order to make a new driveway. They were advised by the Estate Keeper that the work must not be undertaken, but he was ignored. Natural England has been informed and a formal letter will be sent. Planning enforcement is also involved. The Forestry Commission will be seeking full reinstatement and compensation.
- At **Broomhill Farm** the farmyard has been redeveloped resulting in a previous access being unavailable. A new entrance has been created which will not be permitted.
- At **Graham Lodge** verge protection work is to be undertaken.

- 2013/6611 VERGE PROTECTION DISCHARGE
- The Estate Keeper will be working with the Beat Keepers to prepare a set of plans to put forward proposals for a programme of verge protection measures especially in villages. This will complement the programme of removal of foreign objects from the Crown Lands – East Boldre being the next community to be checked.

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

- 2013/6612 DISUSED RAILWAY LINE AT DUR HILL – CONCRETE POSTS DISCHARGE
- Miss Macnair asked for clarification as to which posts are to be removed as part of the HLS project. It was confirmed it is the redundant railway fence posts.
- 2013/6613 TRACK TO ASHURST LODGE – CUT TREES RESUME
- Mr Deakin reported that a number of trees have been cut down along the track to Ashurst Lodge. Instead of being removed, whole trees have been pushed back onto the Forest grazing which is unacceptable. There is a large quantity of fallen timber in the area so the trees that have been pushed back are not easy to see. Action  
MStr
- 2013/6614 ACCESS TO WOODS CORNER POUND RESUME
- Problems are once again being experienced by Agisters and commoners trying to use this pound. Because of the proximity of what has become an unofficial car park, it is often impossible to access the pound. The pound is in constant use, particularly at the moment when stock is having to be removed from the Forest due to deteriorating condition. The Deputy Surveyor said he would refer the matter to Gary North to see if a solution can be found. The Deputy Surveyor noted that various initiatives to resolve this issue have been tried and asked if consideration could also be given to whether the pound could be relocated, but this was not met with enthusiasm by members of the Court. It was pointed out that pounds Action  
MS (GN)

have generally been built where it is easiest to catch animals and sometimes a pound that is moved proves to be useless because the animals simply don't run in that direction.

It was pointed out that this is a long standing problem and a solution does need to be found.

2013/6615 DEER DISCHARGE

Mr C Maton said that he feels there are far too many deer. They are now in large herds which create quite a lot of damage and eat considerable quantities of grass and other vegetation. He felt that perhaps there is a need for greater numbers to be culled. In response, the Deputy Surveyor said that Head Keeper Andy Page is looking at cull levels, but it is of course a sensitive subject. Deer must be managed to ensure a healthy population and to properly manage the habitat. Deer numbers are an issue all over the country and there is a danger that if they are culled hard in the New Forest, others will simply move into the Forest from outside.

2013/6616 CAR FREE DITCHING AND UNAUTHORISED VERGE PARKING RESUME

Attention was drawn to Mr Pasmore's recent New Forest Notes article in which he stated that verge parking is not illegal within 15 yards of the highway. The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that it is an offence to park a vehicle off the public highway in the Forest.

The article was considered to be unhelpful when the Forestry Commission, National Park Authority and Verderers are doing all they can to discourage verge parking. Road safety, fire, commoning access, and damage to the SSSI are all good reasons why verge parking is undesirable.

It was agreed an announcement should be made in the next Court explaining why verge parking is not permitted and referring to the Park Wise scheme, and explain the car free ditching works that are carried out in order to protect the Forest.

Action  
MS / OV

### **The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Street left the meeting**

### **OTHER MATTERS ARISING**

2013/6617 ROCKFORD BOOT CAMP RESUME

Mrs Westerhoff has spoken to Jenny Thomas at Natural England, who confirmed that Natural England has consented to the activities of the Forest Fit Club, but with conditions covering noise levels and the use of equipment. Mrs Westerhoff said she will monitor the club's activities and report back to the Court.

Action  
DW

2013/6618 AUDITOR DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer reported that three local firms submitted proposals to become the Verderers' auditor.

Representatives from three local firms were interviewed and Princecroft Willis from New Milton has been selected. The Clerk confirmed that as required under the New Forest Acts, the County Auditor has approved the

firm. The Court's previous auditor has been advised and will assist with a smooth handover.

Mrs Westerhoff proposed the recommendation that Princecroft Willis be appointed the Court's auditor be accepted. Mr C Maton seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously.

2013/6619 NEW FOREST TOUR BUS ADVERT RESUME

The Clerk asked for authority to contribute £1,000 of the Court's funds to a re-run of the advert on the back of one of the New Forest Tour buses. She is seeking support from other organisations to cover the remainder of the cost which is just over £3,000. The Court approved the expenditure.

Action  
SW

### **THE HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME**

2013/6620 HLS AGM DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer reported that unlike last year, the AGM was not well attended. Members of the Court took that to mean that commoners are broadly happy with the way the scheme is being run.

Natural England has confirmed the Scheme is back on track and it has passed the recent health check.

2013/6621 HLS BOARD MEETINGS DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer reported that, due to the high HLS workload, in 2012 he increased the frequency of HLS board meetings from four a year to six a year. As the HLS is now running more smoothly, especially with the policy of budgeting annual sums for the life of the scheme, board meetings will now be reduced back to four a year.

The minutes of the last board meeting will be circulated as soon as available.

Action  
CD

2013/6622 VGS – ADDED AREAS/ADJACENT COMMONS RESUME

The Official Verderer reported that the issue of payments to the National Trust commoners has not yet been resolved with the National Trust. It is hoped a resolution will be reached soon.

Action  
OV/CD

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

2013/6623 OPEN FOREST ADVISORY GROUP (OFAC) – BURNING PROGRAMME RESUME

Mrs Westerhoff attended the OFAC meeting. She said that it was reported that only 46% of the burning programme was completed this year. The reasons are said to be lack of staff, and the wet and windy weather. This matter will be put on the Agenda for next month for discussion with the Forestry Commission.

### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

2013/6624 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR MARCH 2013 RESUME

The financial statement for March 2013 was approved.

## STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)

- 2013/6625 VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME MANAGER RESUME  
May
- The Official Verderer advised the Court that Mr Draper wishes to retire in March 2014 and the process of recruiting his replacement has started. A three month hand over period is planned and Mr Draper has set out a timetable designed to achieve that objective. The VGS Manager also acts as secretary to the HLS Board.
- The Court approved the Official Verderer's proposal that the interview panel should consist of himself, Mr Deakin (as Chairman of the Staff Committee) and the Clerk, all of which have experience in recruiting staff. Action  
OV/RD/SW
- Mrs Westerhoff expressed the view that the ideal candidate will have an ecological background, however, other members of the Court were not sure that is necessary.
- 2013/6626 REPAIRS TO HIGHWAY FENCING RESUME
- At the last Staff Committee, concern was expressed by the Agisters that the quality of highway fencing repairs is less than satisfactory. The repairs are usually adequate at the time, but because of poor quality workmanship a relatively short period of time elapses before the same stretch of fence is in need of further attention. The Clerk will relay the Court's concern to the local Highway Manager. Action  
SW
- 2013/6627 TWO YEAR OLD COLTS RESUME
- Several commoners allowed two year old colts to remain on the Forest well past the deadline. As it is often the same commoners each year whose colts are on the Forest in breach of the byelaws, the Staff Committee feels that the penalties imposed under the VGS should be increased.
- The Court agreed and the level of penalty will be considered at the next Court.

## HEALTH & SAFETY & TRAINING

- 2013/6628 HEALTH & SAFETY REVIEW RESUME
- The review is continuing. Action  
RD/JRG/SW
- 2013/6629 HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING RESUME  
July
- As part of the review an IOSH (Institute of Occupational Safety and Health) course on safety auditing and monitoring has been arranged. The course will be held over two half days on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June. Mr Deakin, the Clerk, the Clerk's Assistant and the Agisters are all attending. Action  
RD/SW

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

2013/6630	ABANDONED PONIES AND MICROCHIPS	RESUME
	<p>The Clerk advised the Court that two ponies which have been abandoned on the Forest, have been caught. The ponies are microchipped: however, all attempts to identify the owner(s) of the ponies have so far failed.</p> <p>This experience indicates that microchips are not a satisfactory method for identifying equines and gives greater weight to the argument that hot branding should not be banned. Mrs Thorne has submitted a report to Defra.</p>	Action SW
2013/6631	ACCESS FORUM	DISCHARGE
	<p>Mrs Thorne handed the Clerk an update on some funding sources for distribution to interested parties.</p>	
2013/6632	BRIDGE AT BALMER LAWN	DISCHARGE
	<p>The Official Verderer reported that the exposed cables and pipes adjacent to Balmer Lawn road bridge have still not been dealt with.</p>	Action SW
2013/6633	RTAs INVOLVING FOREST STOCK – TRIAL OF REFLECTIVE PAINT & STICKERS	DISCHARGE
	<p>The Clerk reported that the New Forest Trust is interested in supporting a trial of reflective paint or stickers to be attached to the backsides of ponies, cattle and donkeys. The Court welcomed the trial.</p>	Action SW

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 13.12 hrs.