



# *Verderers of the New Forest*

*Verderers' Grazing Scheme*

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All Verderers

Advisory Group Members

18 May 2012

## **MINUTES OF THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 MAY 2012**

Present:

Mr D May	- Official Verderer
Mr A Pasmore	- Elected Verderer
Mr R Deakin	- Elected Verderer
Mr A Gerrelli	- Elected Verderer
Mrs P Thorne	- Defra Appointed Verderer
Mr C Draper	- Scheme Manager

<b>Serial</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	<b>Apologies. All members present</b>	
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest.</b> All members declared their applications for membership of the VGS. RD is a member of the Livestock Society. RD & AG are members of the Stallion Scheme	
3.	<b>Approve, subject to any necessary amendment, and sign the Minutes of the last VGS Management Committee Meeting, held on 12 January 2012.</b> The Minutes were approved.	
4.	<b>Report by Scheme Manager. A copy of the Report by the Scheme Manager is attached.</b> The following points were discussed:  (a) The extension to the deadline for applications this year was noted and understood, but it was proposed that there should be no extension next year. (b) The difficulties of identifying which animals are on the commons. This includes both animals which are paid for at the commons rate but which migrate to the Forest, and animals which are paid for at the Forest rate which spend a large part of the year on the commons. It was thought that there may be upwards of 12 Forest ponies which run mainly on the Bramshaw commons. It was agreed that a decision must be made this year on the detail of how the commons are managed. The rules must be seen to be fair. CD confirmed that he is working with Mr Phil Marshall (PM) from the National Trust and is due to have further meetings with him to draft detailed proposals for consideration by the committee this summer. (c) CD agreed to keep members informed over the percentage of cattle in the VGS as more herds are marked and turned out.	<b>CD</b>

	<p>(d) It was noted that the number of animals turned out this year is considerably higher than at this time last year (although still below last year's total). The Advisory Group has asked Graham Ferris (GF) to establish a small working group to make proposals for preventing a large increase in animal numbers, and members agreed to await his proposals/recommendations. Measures need to be in place in time for the drift season</p> <p>(e) It was agreed that yearling colt foals should be excluded from the VGS as this could encourage owners to turn them out. In reaching this decision it was noted that yearling colts can sire offspring and are unlikely to mature into useable stallions without being brought off the Forest onto better grazing/feeding to enable them to achieve their potential. They are thus a potential nuisance and welfare issue, and provide no long term benefit to the breed, so their presence should not be encouraged by VGS payments. A note advising members of this will be included in the next Newsletter.</p>	CD
5.	<b>Grant for ditching/fencing for Mr Bill Howells which was approved at the last meeting.</b> Payment of the invoice for the first phase of the work (ditching) was approved.	CD
6.	<p><b>Response by CDA to revised VGS rules</b> (letter from CDA Chairman, GF). <i>Members are asked to note the comments by the Advisory Group.</i></p> <p>(a) It was agreed that CD would draft a response to the CDA letter for signature by OV, noting that GF was present for the discussion of the concerns raised in his letter at the meeting of the Advisory Group on 10 May, and that a number of the issues have since either been resolved or have not impacted on the VGS.</p> <p>(b) CD to identify and inform members of the possible financial disadvantage of the new Scheme for a commoner who has reduced the number of animals he turns out by 25% in response to incentives under the old CSS.</p> <p>(c) CD to continue to work with PM to draft detailed proposals for payments to commoners turning out stock on the NT commons, including Bramshaw, addressing the outstanding issues raised by GF in his letter.</p>	CD CD CD
7.	<b>Eligibility for VGS membership.</b> It was agreed that commoners must meet the 3 year time qualification which is a conditions for membership of the VGS, and that this must be supported by payments recorded in their name in the Marking Fee Register.	
8.	<b>Bloodline Scheme.</b> It was agreed that owners of mares in the Bloodline Scheme, will receive a similar payment to the amount they would have received under the VGS if the mares had been turned out. The money will be included in the cost of the Bloodline Scheme.	
9.	<b>Stallion Scheme.</b> It was agreed that owners of stallions included in the Stallion Scheme, will receive a similar payment for their stallion to the amount paid by the VGS for a registered pure bred New Forest pony, regardless of whether or not their stallion was selected to run out. The money will be included in the cost of the Stallion Scheme.	
10.	<b>Welfare (Disposal) Scheme.</b> The Welfare Scheme was approved, subject to minor amendment of the detailed proposal. It was agreed that CD would incorporate the amendments that were discussed at the meeting and pass to members for approval. Copy attached.	CD
11.	<b>Grant To Pony Publicity Group.</b> Members gave approval in principle to the	

	payment of an annual grant to the Pony Publicity Group to enable them to continue to publicise and encourage interest in the breed in the hope that more buyers will choose New Forest ponies boosting sales. A detailed bid is being prepared and the annual amount will be agreed when the details of that are known.	
12.	<b>Grant to Livestock Society for advertising/attracting buyers to Beaulieu Road Sales.</b> Members gave approval in principle to the payment of an annual grant to the Livestock Society to enable them to advertise the pony sales and to provide incentives to attract more buyers. A detailed bid is being prepared and the annual amount will be agreed when the details of that are known.	
13.	<b>Grant to New Forest Trust Towards the Future Upkeep of Beaulieu Road.</b> Members noted the concern expressed by Natural England over the proposed payment to the New Forest Trust, of contributions made by the owners of properties which benefit from the new water main at Beaulieu Road; the Trust had hoped to invest this and use the income to support and maintain the sale yard. As the project was largely funded by the VGS using public money, it was agreed that it would be inappropriate to pass on the money in this way. Instead it was agreed that the Trust should be invited to bid to the VGS for an annual sum for running and maintaining the yard, based on an 8 year maintenance plan.	<b>CD</b>
	<b>Hot Branding Project.</b> PT informed members that Kit Thorne was disappointed by the response to the proposal for her project and was considering withdrawing the application. It was agreed that CD would liaise with her to see whether the issues raised by GF at the Advisory Group have been resolved satisfactorily and to establish whether or not the proposal should go back to the committee for consideration.	<b>CD</b>
14.	<b>Any other business.</b> There was no other business.	
15.	<b>Date of Next meeting.</b> No date was set for the next meeting which will be held soon after the next meeting of the Advisory Group.	

C F R DRAPER  
**VGS Scheme Manager**