

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 15th July 2009 at 9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall & Library, The Queen's House, Lyndhurst.

PRESENT: Mr O Crosthwaite Eyre Official Verderer
Mr J Adams Elected Verderer & Chairman of the Staff Committee
Mr A Gerrelli Elected Verderer
Mr J F Kitcher Elected Verderer
Miss D Macnair Elected Verderer
Mr C Maton National Park Appointed Verderer
The Hon R Montagu Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
Mr A H Pasmore Elected Verderer
Mrs P Thorne DEFRA Appointed Verderer (joined the meeting after the Open Court)

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss S Westwood Clerk to the Verderers
Mr J R Gerrelli Head Agister (Joined the meeting for the second item)

APOLOGIES: Mr P Frost Natural England Appointed Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

The Official Verderer welcomed Mr Clive Maton as the National Park's Appointed Verderer.

2009/4413 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 17th June 2009 were approved.

2009/4414 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Head Agister reported that on the whole he is happy with the condition of stock. The recent rain has encouraged the grass to grow. As reported at the last Court, a small number of ponies have not improved and some have or will be removed.

In reply to a query from the Official Verderer, the Head Agister explained that the problem with the few mares whose condition gives cause for concern is probably the cold/wet spring. Some mares lost condition then and have not been able to pick up because of the dry weather.

The Agisters will shortly be commencing their foal counts which will prove whether or not there are actually more foals this year.

Miss Macnair felt there are; she said the Breed Society has received 1,000 applications for passports for foals off the Forest this year plus another 1,000 from non-Forest-bred stock.

Mrs Thorne asked if there have been any instances of bracken poisoning yet to which the Head Agister replied that he didn't think so but that it is a little early.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

The Chairman of the Staff Committee said he had little to add except he expressed concern that there appears to be two crops of foals.

One crop were born early and another lot have been born later. He suggested the stallions were turned out for too long last year. There are a lot of coloured and spotted foals on the Forest which would have been sired in fields, not on the Open Forest. These animals distort the numbers

2009/4415 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The announcements and decisions were approved.

2009/4416 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

The Elected Verderers, Mrs Thorne and Mr Maton all declared an interest in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

Mr Gerrelli declared an interest in campsites. The Official Verderer declared an interest in matters concerning golf clubs.

2009/4417 FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statement for June 2009 was approved.

2009/4418 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED AS AT END OF JUNE 2009 RESUME

Ponies	4488	Pigs	14
Cattle	2475	Sheep	39
Donkeys	126		
SUB TOTAL	7089	TOTAL ALL ANIMALS	7142

2009/4419 ANIMALS REMOVED IN JUNE DUE TO POOR CONDITION RESUME

Mares with foals	8
Fillies	1

TOTAL PONIES 9

2009/4420 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

No new byelaw offences have been reported by the Agisters.

2009/4421 REVISION OF THE VERDERERS' BYELAWS RESUME

The final draft statutory instrument has been received and copies circulated to all members of the Court prior to the meeting.

The Official Verderer proposed that The New Forest (Confirmation of the Byelaws of the New Forest) Order 2009 be approved by the Court. Mr Gerrelli seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously.

The byelaws will now be advertised in the press and on the Website where they will be available for inspection. Copies are also available for inspection in the Verderers' Office.

Copies will be sent to the National Trust, the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association, the New Forest Association and the New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society.

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)
Ms Julia Burley, Land Agent in Training

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

2009/4422 NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY APPOINTED VERDERER

I am very pleased to announce that Mr Clive Maton has been chosen by the members of the National Park Authority to be their appointed Verderer and I am delighted to welcome him to the Court.

Apart from being a member of the National Park Authority since its inception, Mr Maton is also a committee member of the NFPB&CS, Chairman of Denny Lodge Parish Council and a longstanding practising commoner. I have no doubt that his accumulated knowledge and experience of Forest affairs will be of benefit to us in our work.

2009/4423 COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP SCHEME

Having taken careful advice from Natural England we have now decided to press ahead with our application for an immediate upgrade of our existing scheme to what is classed as a Higher Level Scheme. This will mean that by January 2010 we hope to have a new ten-year agreement with DEFRA. The new HLS scheme will be on the same terms as before, so there will be no changes to the way things are run at present. The most important and only change will be that we will have secured a further ten years of essential funding.

If we had waited until the existing scheme expired in 2012 we were warned that there would be no guarantee of renewal at that time. The payments to practising commoners for the service that their animals provide by grazing the open Forest will thus be secure until 2020, which is very good news indeed.

2009/4424 ANIMAL NUMBERS

We are becoming concerned that the number of animals depastured on to the Forest may start to increase over the next year or so. If this does happen then there could be implications for the ability of the Forest to sustain the herd.

In order to prevent this likelihood we will be considering measures this morning to encourage practising commoners to both remove stock from the Forest and resist the temptation to depasture any additional stock. We intend to consider using incentives through our Countryside Stewardship Scheme to achieve this aim, and full details will be given once any decision on this important issue has been made.

We have given the Commoners Defence Association advance notice of our intention to consider this matter, and we have already received its executive committee's general views. We are anxious that the owners of the animals have ample time to weigh up their options and manage their stock accordingly.

2009/4425 MOBILE SHOP

Further to the presentment made by the FC at our May Court, and the many subsequent presentments that were made by the public at our June Court, we made a decision in committee last month on this matter.

For reasons that are set out in detail in our letter to the Deputy Surveyor of 23rd June (which can be seen on our website) we have declined to give our agreement to the provision of a mobile retail unit at three of the Forest's campsites.

2009/4426 PRE-ERECTED TENTS AND PRE-SITED CARAVANS

Many of the presentments that we heard last month also urged us not to agree to the provision of pre-erected tents and pre-sited caravans which is already taking place at some of the Forest's camp sites.

This is a matter that we have been in discussion with the FC about, and correspondence has been exchanged. We have made it clear that these tents and caravans constitute the provision of a facility which requires our formal agreement under the New Forest Acts, and we have invited the Deputy Surveyor to consider this point, which he is now doing.

2009/4427 AMENDMENT TO THE BYELAWS

We began a review of our byelaws in 2007, and subsequently passed a revised version early that year. However it has taken until now to reach a stage where the DEFRA legal department in London were content with the wording. The expert drafting lawyers have made a number of changes, none of which alter the actual powers contained in the earlier version that we passed in 2007.

At last a final version has been given to us in the form of the Statutory Instrument that the Secretary of State will actually sign. The amended byelaws will be formally approved in committee this morning.

Now that we have made our byelaws, we are required under s.25 New Forest Act 1877 to give notice of our intention to apply for confirmation of the byelaws by the Secretary of State by placing advertisements in one or more newspaper circulating in the county, and this we shall do forthwith.

A copy of the newly made byelaws can be inspected at our offices here in Lyndhurst by interested members of the public, and they can also be viewed on our website.

The byelaws will not be confirmed until at least one month has passed since the giving of the notice.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2009/4428 ACCIDENT REPORT FOR 2009

The Agisters attended 19 accidents, compared with 12 for the same period last year.

4 ponies and 1 cow were killed and 4 ponies and 1 donkey were injured.

3 accidents occurred during the hours of darkness.

12 involved private cars or light commercials and 7 accidents were not reported.

5 involved local motorists.

The total killed and injured in June is 10 compared with 8 for the same period last year.

PRESENTMENTS BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST

2009/4429 EXTENSION TO BURLEY CRICKET & FOOTBALL CLUB PAVILLION

The Forestry Commission has been approached by representatives of the Burley sports clubs who are seeking agreement to the extension of the existing sports pavilion.

The sports club operates under a standard Forestry Commission 60-year licence dating from 1975. The existing pavilion measures approximately 129 sq.m (1388 sq.ft) in external floor area including the veranda.

The club wishes to modernise and extend the pavilion to meet current sporting requirements and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act. Overall the footprint of the pavilion plus veranda would increase by approximately 49 sq.m (533 sq.ft) on the Open Forest. Building works would take approximately four months commencing in late September.

The proposed extension has been approved by the planning authority subject to certain conditions relating to detailed design; the agreement of a construction method statement and a scheme for compensation and enhancement of the SSSI. The Forestry Commission is seeking information from the representative of the club as to how these planning conditions will be met.

Copies of the planning approval and plans for the pavilion extension are mounted on the boards at the rear of the Court.

The Verderers are asked to consider this proposal and agree to the Forestry Commission varying the existing sports club licence to allow the extension to proceed.

PRESENTMENTS

2009/4430 BRACKEN AND RABBITS

Presentment by Dr Graham Ferris, Chairman, New Forest Commoners Defence Association

"The CDA asks this Court to support a request to the Forestry Commission to take urgent and effective action against two threats to the Forest which have serious implications for commoners and their stock. These threats are bracken and rabbits, both of which are spreading uncontrolled, as many of you will have noticed.

The area of bracken infestation in the Forest appears to increase year on year and existing infestations grow more impenetrable. As we know, bracken:-

- reduces diversity, smothers sensitive habitats and produces a dominant monoculture,
- its spreading rhizomes can damage archaeological sites,
- its litter provides a warm moist habitat for ticks and the spread of bracken has been linked to a perceived increase in tick numbers,
- it is poisonous to livestock if ingested and its spores are carcinogenic,
- and from a CDA perspective, it grows at the expense of grazing for livestock.

Rabbit numbers have increased dramatically in the Forest in recent months. Each rabbit eats approximately 0.5 kgs of forage per day, so given the thousands of rabbits in the Forest, many tons of grazeable forage are lost to commoners' livestock every day. In areas where they are prevalent, their burrows and scrapes make riding extremely hazardous especially when commoners are riding at speed to round up

stock. A visit to the area between Longslade and Horseshoe Bottom would make this very clear.

We recognise that control of these pests is not easy under Forest conditions and whilst blowing up rabbit warrens is apparently popular elsewhere, recreating the ancient post of Warrener may be more appropriate in the Forest.

But the loss of grazing needs to stop, the safety of commoners preserved and the obligations of the landowner under the 1954 Pest Act to control rabbits satisfied. This needs constant, large scale action over a sustained period by the Forestry Commission”.

2009/4431 JACK DONKEYS
Presentment by Mrs Maggie Francis

“I live at Bramshaw, and we are having trouble with jack donkeys serving our registered mares. For the last three years we have had a large number of mules being born.

According to your byelaws, donkeys are classed under the same heading as horses, so surely this byelaw should be treated under the same rules as the stallions. We signed a stallion agreement that states the objective was to improve the stock on the Forest and to prevent late foals, all of which is not happening at Bramshaw”.

The Official Verderer replied to Mrs Francis by saying that this matter was raised at an earlier Court. The Verderers are keeping the matter under close scrutiny. The Court is aware there are areas where there may be a problem. He thanked Mrs Francis for coming to the Court.

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

Ms Sarah Oakley was present for the first item.

The Deputy Surveyor asked if the Court had any objection to Ms Julia Burley, Land Agent in training attending the meeting. Ms Burley is shadowing Mr Mark Street. The Official Verderer confirmed that there was no objection.

2009/4432 LONGWATER LAWN RESUME

A detailed discussion took place during which members of the Court were able to discuss certain issues concerning the proposed restoration work at Longwater Lawn and Mallards Mead. Ms Oakley was able to provide further information and some clarification.

As a result a number of outstanding issues were agreed and the Forestry Commission will now produce a further paper setting out the position. This paper will be circulated to all members of the Court and assuming everything that has been agreed is included in the paper, the proposals will be formally approved by the Court in September.

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2009/4433 BRACKEN AND RABBITS DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor said the Forestry Commission is committed to a bracken clearance programme within acceptable cost and time constraints. Consideration will be given to whether the right areas,

and sufficient areas are being cleared but this is an ongoing issue. There is a limited market for bracken. Spraying is an option and it may be that it can be increased. Consideration is being given as to whether a different spray would be more acceptable and effective.

The Deputy Surveyor added that as far as he is aware the SSSI units are not in unfavourable condition because of bracken.

It was suggested that bruising the bracken by use of a heavy roller might be another method of discouraging its spread and apparently this method has been successful in Scotland. However, the Deputy Surveyor pointed out that the Forestry Commission has limited resources and more bracken clearance can only be undertaken if other areas of Open Forest work is sacrificed.

Very limited rabbit control takes place and it is usually restricted to where the Forestry Commission is trying to regenerate tree crops. The Deputy Surveyor said he will discuss the issue with the Head Keepers to see if any more can be done and he will then write to the Official Verderer.

2009/4434 JACK DONKEYS

DISCHARGE

This matter has been raised before. The evidence so far is that there are currently 4 mule foals, mostly belonging to the owner of the jack donkey. The maximum number of mules born on the Forest in any one year to date is 6.

It was agreed that the situation should be monitored and if having jack donkeys on the Forest is felt to be a serious problem, the matter will be reconsidered.

The Official Verderer will write to Mrs Francis.

2009/4435 BURLEY CRICKET CLUB PAVILION EXTENSION

RESUME

This matter will not be decided until the September Court in order to allow time for supporting or counter presentments to be made.

A number of questions need to be answered and a lot of detail is outstanding. Mr Street will request further information and clarification from the Club. Without this, the application cannot be considered.

Members of the Court were surprised and concerned that planning permission had been given for the extension by the planning authority apparently without consultation with the landowner (the Crown) and the Verderers, both of whom will have to give their consent if the development is to proceed.

The Court felt strongly that it should be included in the planning authority's list of consultees in respect of applications involving common land within the New Forest and Mr Maton said he would speak to the relevant officers of the Park.

NEW SUBMISSIONS BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

There were no new submissions.

MATTERS ARISING OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2009/4436 OPEN HABITATS: RESTORING AND EXPANDING OPEN HABITATS FROM WOODS AND FORESTS IN ENGLAND: A CONSULTATION ON GOVERNMENT POLICY DISCHARGE

Mr Frost kindly drafted a letter which was duly sent. A response has been received which states that whilst unfortunately the letter arrived too late to be taken into account in a public way in the report on the consultation, DEFRA will take the Verderers' opinions into account as it develop policy options.

2009/4437 PRE-ERECTED TENTS AND PRE-PREPARED CARAVANS RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor said he is considering the Forestry Commission's position in this respect and will write to the Official Verderer as soon as possible.

2009/4438 BARRIER AT HOLLANDS WOOD CAMPSITE DISCHARGE

A letter has been received from the Forestry Commission in connection with the barrier opposite the campsite reception building at Hollands Wood Campsite.

The Court believes the design of the metal red and white powered barrier is inappropriate on the Forest. It is agreed that the origin of the barrier has been lost in time and that the situation should be formalised.

Forest Holidays and the Forestry Commission agree that if at the end of the current barrier's life, there remains a need to control vehicular access during the operation of the site, it will be replaced with a style more appropriate to the rural Open Forest setting.

In the meantime, and in order to regularise the position, the Court agreed the existing barrier may remain in its current location for as long as it is serviceable.

2009/4439 KNAVES ASH GAS REGULATOR BUILDING ELECTRICITY SUPPLY DISCHARGE

A less prominent position for the transformer is being sought. Proposals will be brought to the Court in due course.

2009/4440 WARDENS CARAVANS ON ROUNDHILL CAMPSITE DISCHARGE

The caravans (except those in the warden's compound) are subject to the same rules regarding movement as other pitches and they will be moved regularly.

2009/4441 PUBLIC FORESTRY ESTATES CONSULTATION RESUME

Mr Pasmore will attend the seminar in Taunton and will bring a report to the next Court.

2009/4442 A31 FENCE RESUME

The Highway Agency contractors are due to commence work in week commencing 20th July at Backley Bottom. Unfortunately the standard of work seen so far leaves something to be desired. The post sizes are rather small and the stock fence has been erected upside down. The specification for such a busy road is far from adequate but to date all efforts to get it upgraded have failed. The contractors will be advised of these concerns.

2009/4443 NETWORK RAIL – VEGETATION REMOVAL PHASE 3 - NEAR DISCHARGE
ASHURST STATION

A letter from the Forestry Commission to the Clerk dated 15th June 2009 explains the works and what has been agreed between the Commission and Homegrown Timber (contractors for Network Rail).

The arisings from the works will be placed on the railway side of the fence and removed via the railway line. Most of the work is, in any case, on the railway side of the fence. Access to the area will be on-foot only. The Forestry Commission will check that everything has been properly cleared up when the works have finished.

The Court agreed the proposals as set out in the letter, subject to the usual three conditions regarding reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2009/4444 RAILWAY COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT RESUME

A site meeting is scheduled for the 16th July. The work is still in the planning stage. The latest proposal is for two masts to be replaced with one. Mr Street will report in September.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2009/4445 TURF HILL DISCHARGE

Some timber stacks have now been mulched. The remainder are rotten and will be left to degrade naturally.

The Deputy Surveyor agreed the logs should have been removed at the time of felling. He added that the Forestry Commission does try to ensure piles of timber are cleared, however, odd piles will inevitably be left which will need to be disposed of later.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2009/4446 ROAD MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT RESUME
December

Mr Street explained that due to pressure of work he has been unable to take this forward. He asked for the matter to be resumed in December by which time he will have a paper available for discussion.

Whilst discussing this topic, Miss Macnair remarked that the back road from Holmsley Cottages across to the crossroads just outside Burley was repaired several years ago and widened considerably. The Court hoped the agreement will address problems such as this.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

2009/4447 PANNAGE SEASON

RESUME
September

Mr Adams explained that the Staff Committee was concerned that because the Court does not meet in August, the announcement of the start of the pannage season is not made until September.

It was agreed, however, that it is difficult to judge too early just how many acorns there will be. At present the crop looks like it will be patchy.

It was agreed the matter should be considered later in August and the Deputy Surveyor said he would set a date in consultation with the Clerk. The date can be announced by way of a press release and by word of mouth to the commoners and it can then be formalised in September.

2009/4448 STACKS OF WOOD OUTSIDE WOODFIDLEY COTTAGE

DISCHARGE

In response to a query as to whether the occupier of the cottage should be stacking wood on the Open Forest, Mr Street confirmed the Forestry Commission has granted a licence in this respect. The wood is covered by a sail-cloth.

2009/4449 MARKWAY RIVER

RESUME

There is a blockage in the stream consisting of gravel and cut timber which has been washed downstream. It all needs cleaning out and the Court requested that the logs be removed completely otherwise members of the public simply throw them back into the water. The Deputy Surveyor agreed to take action to resolve the problem.

The Deputy Surveyor, Mr Street and Ms Burley left the meeting.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE LAST COURT AND PREVIOUS COURTS

2009/4450 HALE PURLIEU – FALLEN TREE

RESUME

The Clerk reported she has at last found out who owns the land and a letter is being written asking for the tree to be removed and the fence repaired.

2009/4451 IDENTIFICATION OF PONIES

RESUME

The Clerk reported that as from 1st July it is a legal requirement that any ponies which do not have passports, must be microchipped before a passport can be issued.

It is thought the derogations in respect of ponies which remain on the Forest will be agreed as will the derogation for ponies to go through the sales on temporary papers.

The full details of what has and has not been agreed with DEFRA will be published as soon as they are finalised.

2009/4452 KINGSTON GREAT COMMON RESUME

No further progress has been made towards securing the removal of the fence on the boundary of the Crown Lands and this private common. Mr Maton said he will speak with Mr Steve Trotter of the NPA to see if he has anything to report.

VERDERERS' COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP SCHEME

2009/4453 HIGHER LEVEL SCHEME (HLS) RESUME

The Official Verderer said there is nothing to report, save that everything is proceeding.

2009/4454 AMENDMENT TO THE RULES OF THE CSS DISCHARGE

The revision of the rules applicable to scheme members have been implemented.

2009/4455 PROPOSALS FOR REDUCING STOCK NUMBERS RESUME

A paper containing recommendations on how to reduce stock numbers had been circulated to members of the Verderers' sub committee.

The Official Verderer explained there is a substantial risk of a significant rise in stock numbers and therefore, regrettably, it is necessary to consider what measures might be taken to stop that happening. One way of doing this is to use the Countryside Stewardship Scheme to reward commoners who reduce their animal numbers, whilst penalising those who do not. The Official Verderer went on to explain in brief how this may be achieved through changes to the payments received by commoners under the scheme.

The New Forest Commoners' Defence Association is considering the proposals as well and has asked the Court not to make a decision today. However, the Court felt it is important that the principle be agreed and to that end the Official Verderer, Mr Adams and the Scheme Manager, Mr Colin Draper, were authorised to finalise the details, so that they can be issued to members and others within the next few days.

The Court also confirmed it is happy for the Head Agister to join the CDA's sub-committee to discuss the issue.

These proposals were adopted unanimously.

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK

2009/4456 TRAINING OF NPA STAFF DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer will speak with the new Chief Executive about setting up a training day similar to those which have been held in the past.

2009/4457 EQUINE FORUM DISCHARGE

Mrs Thorne attended the new sub-committee set up to look into recreational horse-keeping. Mr Maton attended as well. Both thought the forum to be worthwhile and it is thought some sensible proposals will result from the discussions.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2009/4458 THE LIFE ROSEBOWL RESUME

It was agreed the Rosebowl will be presented as in previous years and Miss Macnair was asked to provide the necessary details of the winner.

2009/4459 THE ROWL KITCHER CUP DISCHARGE

It was intended that the cup be presented each year to the owner of the best young stallion judged at the Verderers' stallion inspections. However, as no inspections were carried out the cup cannot be presented this year.

2009/4460 BENEFICIAL USE OF DREDGED SOIL – WIGHTLINK, LYMINGTON RIVER RESUME

Mr Gerrelli, Agister Maton and the Clerk met with a representative of Wightlink to discuss the possible hazards to stock that may result from dumping dredged soil onto the salt marshes if vegetation then starts to grow on the marsh and attracts stock.

The view is, however, that there is unlikely to be a problem due to the deep channel between the foreshore and the marsh. Before responding to Wightlink, Mr Gerrelli, Mr Montagu and Agister Maton will visit the Lyle Court end of site to have a better look and will report back to the Clerk.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2009/4461 NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM DISCHARGE

The Forum is trying hard to develop and improve access all round the Forest and Mrs Thorne has been invited to sit on the Forum. The Court was pleased to agree that Mrs Thorne should represent the Verderers on the Forum.

2009/4462 LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG) DISCHARGE

Mrs Thorne explained that for personal reasons she is no longer able to represent the Court on the LAG. She also felt that as the emphasis has changed, the presence of a representative of the Court may not be as helpful as it once was. The rules have changed and the grants which are available are now mainly for capital works and are not relevant to the Open Forest. Several commoners sit on the Group already and for that reason Mrs Thorne felt the Court probably no longer needs to be represented. The Court agreed and therefore will not send a representative in the future.

2009/4463 THE CONSULTATIVE PANEL DISCHARGE

Mr Kitcher reported that there has been a complaint about overgrazing on Wellow Common and this is being looked into.

A commoner has raised the issue of access to the Beaulieu foreshore for the purposes of inspecting stock. Access to the shore is a national issue. Mr Montagu suggested the commoner should write to him in this connection.

STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)

2009/4464 CATTLE GRID AT WHITLEY RIDGE RESUME

It was agreed this matter should be resumed in the September Court in order to check that the Forestry Commission and Hotel have carried out the promised maintenance work to their grids.

2009/4465 HIGHWAY CATTLE GRID MAINTENANCE. RESUME

It was reported that the cattle grids at the Heath Hotel Roundabout, Hanger Corner, Portmore and Blissford are all loose and breaking up. The Clerk will report the problems to the Highway Authority.

TRAINING

2009/4466 FIRST AID TRAINING DISCHARGE

The Clerk and Head Agister attended an "Appointed Persons" one day First Aid course at Brockenhurst College.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

2009/4467 HEALTH AND SAFETY REVIEW RESUME
June 2010

The review is now complete and the Agisters are being issued with folders containing risk assessments, training sheets and other documents which they will keep in their Land Rovers. A review will take place annually.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2009/4468 NEW FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT ADVICE UNIT RESUME
October

Mr Mark Larter has been recruited to become a Natural England Senior Land Management Advisor and he will be placed into the new partnership unit for the New Forest and Avon Valley land management. A meeting of interested parties is being arranged to discuss what it is thought Mark can most usefully do in his first year in post. The Court has been invited to send a representative and it was felt that Mr Draper, the CSS Manager would be the most appropriate person to attend. Mr Draper will be requested to report back to the Court after the meeting.

2009/4469 HYDE SCHOOL PROPOSED LAND EXCHANGE

RESUME

In order to meet Government requirements for improvements to the National Curriculum, Hyde School requires a larger outdoor learning area. The school has been looking at ways that this can be achieved but it is severely limited in its options because of its very small site.

The only solution to the problem appears to be a land exchange between a piece of land across the road from the school which is situated on a dangerous bend and is therefore not suitable for Early Years provision, and an area of common land adjacent to the school.

The School has discussed the proposal with Hampshire County Council which owns Hyde Common, and the National Park Authority. Both authorities have indicated that in principle they will support the proposal and so the School now wishes to discuss it with the Court. To this end, a site meeting has been requested and Mrs Thorne and Mr Pasmore agreed to attend. The Clerk will therefore contact the school to arrange a meeting.

2009/4470 VERDERERS' DVD

DISCHARGE

The Court agreed that copies of the short film which was made and shown at last year's New Forest Show can be offered for sale by Dr Manuel Hinge, the maker of the film.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 1.15 p.m.