

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at  
9.30 a.m. in the Verderers' Hall and the Library, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst.**

PRESENT:	Lord Manners Mr R Deakin Mr A B Dowsett Cllr Edward Heron Mr J Greenwood Miss D Macnair MBE Mr G M H Mills DL Mr D Readhead Mrs D Westerhoff	Official Verderer Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer National Park Appointed Verderer Elected Verderer Senior Elected Verderer DEFRA Appointed Verderer Elected Verderer Natural England Appointed Verderer
APOLOGIES:	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE:	Miss S Westwood Mr J R Gerrelli	Clerk to the Verderers Head Agister

**IN COMMITTEE in the Library**

2018/9963	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	RESUME
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The Minutes of Court held on 20<sup>th</sup> June were approved and signed.

2018/9964	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RESUME
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From now on, all declarations of interest can be found on the Verderers' website – <a href="http://www.verderers.org.uk">www.verderers.org.uk</a>	Action Clerk
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2018/9965	CONDITION OF STOCK	RESUME
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The Head Agister commented that the very dry spell currently being experienced is beginning to have an impact on stock. Having said that, overall the animals are looking very good. Cattle with calves are doing well. There is more food on the Forest than in some fields. Some mares with followers – foals or yearlings – are beginning to go back in condition and the owners and Agisters are keeping an eye on those animals.

The drifts start soon and any animals seen to be of concern will be removed.

There is still plenty of food in the valley bottoms and around the mires. The mires play a major part in sustaining stock in periods of extreme dry weather such as now.

There are a few problems now with Forest eye, affecting cattle. Acorns could be a problem as with such dry conditions they may fall sooner than normal. They will also be very green and as such are regarded as more of a problem. On the plus side, acorns may well be small due to the lack of rain.

The Forestry Commission is pulling ragwort and Mr Readhead commented that their people are doing a good job in his area. Miss Macnair remarked that in her view, as usual ragwort pulling has been left too late.

2018/9966 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND RESUME  
COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Forest Ponies	4811	4725
Forest Cattle	4028	4770
Forest Donkeys	124	106
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	8963	9601
Common Ponies	726	808
Common Cattle	1535	1124
Common Donkeys	122	124
Common Pigs	24	57
Common Sheep	213	244
Total Common Stock	2620	2357
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	8963	9601
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	2383	2168
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	11346	11872
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	11583	11958

It is hoped the increases of recent years are now levelling off. Most commoners are keeping only the number of cattle needed to fulfil the BPS entitlements they already have. Additional entitlements are no longer available.

The Head Agister reported that there are more marking fees to come.

2018/9967 ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

2018/9968 AGISTERS' HORSE EXPENSES RESUME

The Clerk will be writing to HMRC seeking an increase in the tax free allowance that is currently paid to the Agisters' to assist with their Horse Expenses.

2018/9969 CHANGES TO VGS PAYMENTS DISCHARGE

The changes to the VGS payments were approved. They are aimed at assisting the smaller cattle owners and rewarding commoners who keep registered pure bred New Forest mares. No other equines will receive a payment. The changes will be announced in the September Court and the changes will be applied next year.

**OPEN COURT – 10.00 a.m.**

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor  
Mr Paul Grugeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

**The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER**

2018/9970 30 MPH SPEED LIMIT

Following Mrs Gray's presentment, we contacted Hampshire County Council to ask for its views on introducing a 30 mph speed limit on the Forest roads outside the villages.

The response we received is based on a report that was produced in 2015. It said that that the introduction of the existing blanket 40mph speed limit resulted in a significant reduction in animal accidents. Monitoring of six sites on high risk routes concluded there was general compliance across most of these sites.

The combination of 30 and 40mph speed limits across the Forest is realistic in terms of meeting driver expectation and consequently achieves a reasonable level of compliance. The speed limits are applied in a unique way that reflects the unique and environmentally sensitive nature of the Forest. There is a clear distinction between the village environments and rural routes. Drivers, in the main, appreciate the need for the blanket 40mph speed limit and for this reason it is effective. It is worth noting that speed limit assessment criteria takes account of human road casualty history, the degree of development, the presence of amenities that attract a wide range of road user, vulnerable road user activity, traffic volume and speed. In many cases the Forest roads would not meet the criteria for a lower level 30mph or 40mph speed limit. The blanket 40mph speed limit represents a departure from Department for Transport criteria to offer special protection that reflects the presence of free roaming livestock.

Hampshire County Council says the application of a blanket 30mph speed limit cannot be justified for the following reasons:

There will be no clear distinction between the village environment and the rural routes. Drivers react to the surrounding environment and rely on visual cues to justify a change in speed limit, such as visible development, footways or pedestrian activity. Many drivers are unlikely to appreciate the need for the lower speed limit and therefore compliance levels would be likely to drop causing an unmanageable enforcement task. It could cause further road safety problems with expectations of lower speeds not being met and the potential for misjudgement, tailgating and inappropriate overtaking.

Analysis of accident data involves identifying patterns and considering whether treatment can be applied to reduce the likelihood of a similar occurrence. This can be a complex process. HCC has, however, agreed to look at the data we hold on animal accidents to see whether there is sufficient information to warrant further analysis.

There are many reasons why road traffic accidents happen and this will similarly be the case with animal accidents. At present, there is no clear evidence to suggest that a 30mph speed limit will have a significant impact on animal accidents.

2018/9971 CYCLISTS

I think we all sympathise with the sentiments expressed by Mrs Verdon at our last Court, although of course many cyclists are considerate and it is not fair to tar them all with the same brush.

There is already a widely agreed New Forest Cycling Code which, under the heading of 'Be considerate', includes two specific bullet points:

- Be polite to other cyclists, motorists, pedestrians and residents
- When passing people and animals, use your bell or call out a warning and allow them plenty of room. Be prepared to stop if necessary.

Conveying this to all cyclists everywhere is of course a huge challenge and all the Forest organisations need to be involved.

Looking ahead, we hope the current work will be given fresh impetus through the proposed update to the Recreation Management Strategy.

Hopefully this gives confidence that: the issue has already been identified, appropriate wording has already been agreed and the need to communicate more effectively is recognised. There are no magic wands but there is a joint commitment to progressing the work.

2018/9972 DROUGHT

We understand that residents are becoming worried about water for the Forest animals in this unusually prolonged period without rain.

We would like to assure everyone that the animals DO know where to find water. It is actually rarely far away even if some of the usual watering holes have dried up.

Putting out water in buckets and other receptacles for the animals is very counterproductive and dangerous and we ask Forest residents not to do it.

A story was related to our office last week which shows exactly why putting out water is not a good idea. A commoner who has small herd of cows and some ponies told us that she found that because a neighbour is putting out a small container of water, some of her herd are going without. If her one or two lead animals don't feel they need a drink, the herd does not go to the nearby Moyles Court Stream which is still flowing freely.

We have also found in previous years, that animals have either tipped buckets over or they have injured one another as they argue over access to them.

There are a number of large water troughs in the Forest, supplied by mains water as well as the streams and ponds which we would have to have a drought lasting half the year before they would dry out.

It is far better to allow the animals to find natural supplies of water.

The Agisters monitor the condition of stock and our Head Agister has reported the animals are looking very good.

So, whilst we completely understand the reasons why people may think it is a good idea to put out buckets of water – please don't.

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#### 2018/9973 NEW FOREST SHOW

The Verderers will have a stand at The New Forest show in our usual corner in the Heart of the Forest. A great deal of work has gone into making it informative and fun to visit for all ages. Please do visit our stand and encourage your friends and relations to do likewise.

#### ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

##### 2018/9974 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JUNE 2018 INCLUDING REPORTS ON A RECENT POLICE SPEED GUN OPERATION AND THE SPEED CAMERA VAN

The Agisters attended 11 accidents in May, 6 more than in May last year.

4 ponies and 3 cows were killed, 4 cows reported to have been involved in accidents could not be found.

4 accidents occurred in daylight and 7 in the dark.

2 accidents were not reported by the driver involved. Two of the motorists were local.

The total number of commoners' animals killed and injured so far in 2018 is 36. This compares with 26 in the same period last year. A disappointing increase.

#### POLICE SPEED GUN OPERATION

The Police were out on the evening of Friday 6th July with a speed gun. They concentrated on the area around Turf Hill and Godshill. 40 drivers were given 'advice', 8 received tickets and 1 is going to Court.

Apart from the driver who will be going to Court, all those stopped by the police on this occasion came from outside the Forest.

#### THE SPEED CAMERA VAN

The speed camera van has now been operating in the Forest for 4 years. From April 2017 to March of this year, 2,230 drivers were caught exceeding the speed limit on the unfenced Forest roads. A further 8,693 were caught speeding on the Fenced roads in and around the Forest. This makes a total of 10,923 drivers who, for whatever reason, presumably feel speed limits do not apply to them.

#### PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR

##### 2018/9975 PANNAGE

In accordance with the provisions of Section 7 of the New Forest Act 1964, the Verderers have been consulted with regard to the dates of the pannage season and I hereby formally notify the Court that the season will commence on **Monday 10 September 2018** and that it will end on **Sunday 11 November 2017**, both dates inclusive.

May I remind Commoners who hold the right of Common of Mast that:-

1. Pigs turned out must be levant and couchant in and upon the land from which the right is derived.
2. Pigs may not be turned out until they have been inspected by an Agister, effectively ringed, marked and the appropriate fee paid. This must take place during normal working hours. 48 hours notice must be given and the time and place where the pigs are to be inspected and marked must be agreed.

3. Pigs must be marked before they are put onto the Forest.
4. Pigs may not be turned out into the Inclosures.
5. Breeding sows, that is female pigs in-pig, may be allowed the privilege of remaining on the Open Forest after the end of the pannage season if so authorised in writing by the Deputy Surveyor for the period specified in the consent.
6. Any breeding sow that is granted the specific written consent of exercising the privilege must be inspected, ringed, marked and paid for during the pannage season.
7. Any breeding sow exercising this privilege must return to the holding at night.
8. Apart from the aforementioned privilege of turning out breeding sows with proper authorisation onto the Open Forest beyond the pannage season, no pig will be allowed to remain on the Forest after the end of the season.
9. No period of grace is allowed for the removal of such unauthorised pigs.
10. Any consent granted for the exercise of the privilege is limited to the period following this particular pannage season and cannot be presumed to apply for future years, for which a separate application must be made.
11. Any unmarked animal running on the Forest does so in contravention of the Verderers' Byelaws and the owner is liable to a fine of up to £200.00.
12. Property owners of land adjacent to the Forest are reminded that it is their responsibility to fence out Forest animals from their land.

## PRESENTMENTS

2018/9976 30MPH SPEED LIMIT  
Presentment by Mrs Mary Gray

Mrs Gray expressed regret that it isn't possible to implement a 30 mph speed limit in the Forest but thanked the Court for its time.

2018/9977 IPLEY CROSSROADS  
Presentment by Mr Brian Ingram

Mr Ingram referred to a proposal for a staggered junction at Ipley Crossroad as a way of reducing road traffic accidents at the location. He went onto say that a similar scheme on the A326 some years ago resulted in two people being killed. Eventually a roundabout was constructed.

Mr Ingram said he felt a roundabout at Ipley Crossroads would be better so long as the County Council can provide sufficient land in exchange for the grazing that would be lost. He added the proposals need to be looked at very carefully.

2018/9978 FUTURE FOREST  
Presentment by Ms Alison Bolton

'This is the last Verderers' Court before the closing of the final response to the Recreation Management Strategy consultation.

A good effort seems to have been made to address some of the many issues of concern which were voiced in the first consultation and I would like to highlight two issues from Objective 2 which both come under the heading of "significant and widespread negative impacts caused by recreation".

Issue 1. Feeding of animals. Many visitors really do not know that they should not be feeding them. The notices at popular car parks are insignificant and, even if read, do not give a clear message. There used to be a sign at every entrance to the New Forest with the legend DO NOT FEED THE ANIMALS, let us put it back. The message needs to be stated clearly. Those who know that feeding the ponies and donkeys is wrong may respond to helpful advice more bluntly of course but at least not in ignorance.

Issue 2. Disposable BBQs. Travelling from Bolderwood to Brockenhurst a few weeks ago, when the Forest was already tinder dry, there was smoke and stench of BBQs belching out from every car park. With the many BBQ sites at Bolderwood and Blackwater car parks in use, amid conifers, how is a visitor supposed to realise that this is not allowed everywhere in the Forest? There is a perfectly good byelaw which says it is prohibited to light fires. Why does this no longer apply? I would have thought clean country air was one of the qualities to be expected from a day in the Forest and I urge that this allowing of a dangerous and unnecessary activity is not permitted in future. Although there is now, in small print, a warning about this on the FC website and in some car parks, it is easily missed. Once again, a clear message, is required.

There are many more concerns of course and I am sure those present here today will have already responded or will do so before 12<sup>th</sup> August.'

**IN COMMITTEE in the Library**

**CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS**

2018/9979 30MPH SPEED LIMIT

DISCHARGE

Cllr Heron told the Court that a feasibility report on the potential to deploy fixed average speed cameras is being assessed by HCCs engineering team. The chief issue which appears to be preventing average speed cameras being deployed in the Forest, is the lack of capacity for the Police to process the data that the cameras provide. The County is working towards resolving any other outstanding issues with a view to obtaining the necessary consents so that when the Police do have the necessary resources, cameras can be quickly deployed.

It was agreed the Court is likely to welcome the deployment of average speed cameras but a detailed proposal will be necessary before formal consent can be given.

2018/9980 IPLEY CROSSROADS

DISCHARGE

The Court felt it is unfair to compare the A326 with Ipley Crossroads. HCCs engineering team has done a lot of work to try to reduce the number of accidents that are occurring on this junction.

It was agreed a roundabout is not the preferred solution. Cllr Heron thought suitable planting of vegetation to interrupt drivers sight lines might help slow vehicles and could be an option.

There are no formal proposals yet but the Court anticipated it should be able to support a scheme that improved safety.

2018/9981 FUTURE FOREST

DISCHARGE

Do Not Feed the Ponies signs

It is thought the old 'do not feed the ponies' signs referred to a now defunct HCC byelaw. The signs fell into disrepair and were removed.

The Clerk reported that the Rangers will be distributing new leaflets, designed this year, which are relevant to this issue. Ranger presence at hot spots also helps greatly in educating the public. The issue needs to be included in the RMS debate as it is felt that as much as 90% of the public are ill informed and means of improving knowledge is essential.

Barbecues

Mr Mills said he considers BBQs are dangerous, having seen a child tread on one which had been left on a beach. Mr Mills felt articles in the press are very useful in disseminating information. The Official Verderer commented that much larger Forestry Commission signs in the car parks would help with perhaps 4 or 5 key messages/rules which could be varied from time to time. Mr Deakin said more emphasis is needed on telling people not to do things. The Court felt that in recent times not enough emphasis has been placed on telling people what they must not do.

Mr Grugeon suggested a way forward is to design signage which is moved around the Forest. Signs that remain unchanged tend to blend in with the landscape and are easily ignored.

A further suggestion was that mobile phone technology could be employed with messages automatically appearing on mobile phones when people enter the Forest.

It was agreed that this is another issue that the RMS needs to take forward.

2018/9982 EAST BOLDRE VILLAGE HALL

DISCHARGE

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the proposal to move the East Boldre Village Shop into the Village Hall. There is a plan to demolish the present three extensions, one of which is not being used, and construct a new extension to the original hall which would be more in keeping with the surroundings. The shop, which is due to close, would then move into the Hall.



The Court was concerned about the principal of incorporating a shop into the village hall which stands on Open Forest. Mr Grugeon has been asked to explain the basis on which the Forestry Commission might legally grant permission for a shop but he has, to date, been unable to do so.

The question of planning permission was also raised but it is understood that the National Park Planning Officers have indicated the proposal may be considered favourably should an application be made.

Natural England has also been approached but as yet no response has been forthcoming.

The Court felt that there are several alternative locations for a new shop which have yet to be fully explored. Two possible sites are the currently empty British Legion Hall and also the School field which is in the ownership of the Parish Council and is not Open Forest.

Mr Grugeon was asked to go back to the Village Hall Committee and explain that following today's discussion it does appear unlikely that the Verderers can permit the shop to be moved into the Hall. In any event, the Court doubts the Forestry Commission has the power to allow such a development. Mr Readhead and Mr Dowsett will also go back to the Village Hall Committee and encourage it to look for alternative sites.

Action  
PG

Action  
DR/BD

As respects the possible demolition and replacement of the present flat roofed hall extensions, the Court is likely to look favourably on such a proposal.

2018/9983 BURLEY FLAG POLE

DISCHARGE

The proposal to re-site the flag pole in Burley from private land outside the Working Men's Club to a site adjacent to the War Memorial was approved subject to the three usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions and compensation for loss of grazing. In addition, the Court wishes the pole to be designed such that it can be removed when not in use. It was agreed the Forestry Commission will issue a licence of no longer than 5 years.

It is felt the pole will result in the triangle where the memorial sits in looking even more cluttered than at present and therefore the Parish Council will be asked to ensure the pole is removed and stored off-site when it is not in use.

Action  
PG

2018/9984 CROWN LAND CYCLE NETWORK

DISCHARGE

The Forestry Commission's request for the Verderers' consent for the cycle network to be granted for a further two years was agreed.

The Court once again stressed the need for an improvement in enforcement as significant numbers of cyclists continue to cycle off track.

2018/9985 A35 HOLMSLEY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT DISCHARGE

The proposals to exclude animals from the underpass near to Holmsley Tea Rooms whilst high priority works are undertaken on the bridge were agreed. The Court asked the Clerk to ask HCC how it proposes to ensure that Forest stock cannot enter the work site whilst work is being undertaken. It is understood the underpass will be open at night.

Action  
Clerk

The works will start on 14<sup>th</sup> August and should take approximately 2 weeks.

#### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

2018/9986 WOOTTON STREAM RESTORATION PROJECT RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor was asked to respond to the presentment heard in the June Court concerning the restoration works on Wootton Stream.

Action  
DS

2018/9987 NATIONAL GRID PROPOSALS FOR UNDERGROUNDING THE HIGH VOLTAGE POWER LINES IN THE NORTH OF THE FOREST RESUME

A walkover has been arranged for tomorrow, 19<sup>th</sup> July. Mrs Westerhoff, Mr Dowsett and Mr Greenwood will attend.

Two public drop in meetings have been arranged:-

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2018 between 2pm and 8pm in Hale

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July at the same time in Woodgreen.

2018/9988 NATIONAL GRID PROPOSALS FOR UNDERGROUNDING THE HIGH VOLTAGE POWER LINES IN THE NORTH OF THE FOREST – COMPENSATION SCHEME DISCHARGE

The Court has not been approached in relation to any proposals to pay compensation to commoners for loss of grazing and other people who may be disadvantaged by the works. The Clerk will advise Hale Parish Council accordingly.

Action  
Clerk

The Court is not prepared to administer any such schemes.

As respects water supplies for the animals during the works (if any proposals are approved), the comments contained in the announcement made by the Official Verderer earlier today are equally valid.

#### **SSSI RESTORATION WORKS**

2018/9989 REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE LIST RESUME

The SSSI Repair and Maintenance List was circulated to the Court.

2018/9990 WARWICKSLADE DISCHARGE

A site visit was attended by the Official Verderer, Barry Dowsett, Jim Greenwood, Richard Deakin, Diana Westerhoff and Nick Wardlaw of the FC. Some members of the Court felt that any further work which could practicably be undertaken now, will only improve the situation in the short term. The trees have died. The consequences of the work which has been carried out should have been foreseen by both the Verderers and the Forestry Commission. It was inevitable the area would become wetter.

The Official Verderer said that when he visited the site in the winter, parts were horrendously wet. He felt that remedial work should be attempted, not least because those who are not in favour of stream restoration works in the Forest are using this scheme as an example of such proposals not working. However the Court decided not to ask for any work to be carried out.

2018/9991 PITTS WOOD MIRE RESUME

Ms Nina Menichino, HLS Wetland Restoration Officer, Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Deakin will undertake a further site visit.

#### ENCROACHMENTS INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2018/9992 ENCROACHMENT LIST RESUME

A progress report on the encroachment list was provided.

#### ACTION LIST

2018/9993 ACTION LIST RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor updated the Court on matters remaining on the Action List.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2018/9994 VERDERERS' HALL DISCHARGE

The refurbishment of the Verderers' Hall is expected to re-commence shortly and completion is promised in time for the September Verderers' Court.

2018/9995 FIRE RISK DISCHARGE

The Court expressed concerns at the lack of warnings for the public, indicating the extreme fire risk which is present on the Forest. It was suggested that temporary signs on main entrance points to the Forest would be useful.

The Deputy Surveyor explained that in the case of a fire, the Fire Brigade deals with fires in the first instance, with FC staff undertaking further damping down until the area affected is safe.

Mr Readhead said that an excellent job was carried out in controlling the fire which occurred on his door step. He added that good Forest management helps keep fire in check.

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2018/9996	RAGWORT	DISCHARGE
	Mr Readhead said that thanks to a well planned programme, ragwort pulling in the south of the Forest has been effective.	
2018/9997	PONDHEAD	DISCHARGE
	Mr Readhead felt the works at Pondhead are working well. The levels have been checked and rechecked and everything looks good. Phase 2 is now underway.	
2018/9998	PENERLEY WOOD	DISCHARGE
	Timber has been cut in Penerley Wood but nothing further has happened. As a result felled timber has been left and is taking away grazing.	
	The Deputy Surveyor undertook to take up the matter with Mr Dave Morris.	Action DS
2018/9999	AREAS TO ADD TO THE RPA MAPPING	DISCHARGE
	Mr Greenwood asked whether areas affected by fire will re-mapped for RPA purposes. The Deputy Surveyor confirmed it will, together with areas which have been burned as part of planned burning. All these areas should come back into the BPS. The Deputy Surveyor will discuss with Dave Morris.	
		Action DS

**The Deputy Surveyor, Mr Grugeon and Cllr Heron left the meeting.**

**MATTERS ARISING (NOT INVOLVING THE FORESTRY COMMISISON)**

2018/10000	VERDERERS' INCLOSURES RENT REVIEW	RESUME October
	The Official Verderer will have further discussions with the Deputy Surveyor and the Land Agent.	
		Action OV
2018/10001	MEETING WITH ROBERT DEANE OF RURAL FOCUS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY	DISCHARGE
	A helpful meeting took place and it is hoped that a good outcome for the Forest will be possible.	
2018/10002	POLICY ON FILMING	RESUME
	The Official Verderer reported that he and the Clerk have had a further meeting with Manny Hinge. Mr Hinge will be able to help with some short films. It is hoped the new Website will also be progressing soon.	
	The Official Verderer is making enquiries regarding media training for Verderers and staff.	Action OV
2018/10003	NEW FOREST SHOW	RESUME
	Lord Gardiner is visiting the Show and the Verderers' stand on Wednesday at 2.00 p.m.	

2018/10004 FRANCHISES LODGE ACCESS TO THE FOREST AT BRAMSHAW DISCHARGE  
TELEGRAPH

Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Dowsett reported on their visit to Franchises Wood and their meeting with Mr Nick Tomalin, the Warden.

The gate is still being left open. The suggestion of a cattle grid has not been well received as it is perceived to make vehicular access easier and it is also felt it may encourage more fly tipping.

The fence on the Forest boundary is due for repair/replacement at the end of the bird nesting season.

Mrs Westerhoff noted there is a place west of Hope Cottage where the fence is non-existent. The area is extremely wet. Deer also cross the fence. The RSPB welcomes suggestions for appropriate fencing and are considering placing a replacement fence further in on its land rather than directly on the boundary.

Further consideration is being given to how to secure the track whilst still allowing access on what is a public right of way.

**OTHER AGENDA ITEMS**

2018/10005 RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer reported that he has been advised that to date 289 responses have been made to the RMS consultation, mostly by individuals. Most people agree that the damaging effects of recreation must be controlled and the responses so far are encouraging.

Members of the Court are encouraged to respond to the consultation individually but in addition, a sub-committee will prepare a response from the Court.

Action  
OV

2018/10006 GIS UPGRADE DISCHARGE

The proposal to upgrade the GIS and electronic atlas was approved.

**HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME (HLS)**

2018/10007 HLS BOARD MEETING DISCHARGE

The Minutes will be circulated shortly.

Action  
OV/TW

**MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS**

2018/10008 MEETING WITH NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer, Deputy Surveyor and the Chairman of the NFNPA met with NFDC councillors to discuss the Recreation Management Strategy.

2018/10009 ROCKFORD FARM BARNS – NPA PLANNING DEPARTMENT RESUME

The planning application for two commoners' dwellings has been refused. An appeal is being considered. The view was expressed that the debate at the planning meeting showed a disappointing lack of understanding both of the Forest and of commoning. The planning committee did not appear to understand the need for commoners' housing, despite it being NPA policy to assist with its provision where possible.

Mrs Westerhoff suggested the next step is to speak to the Chief Executive and the Head of Planning with a view to better educating NPA members and some staff. Action  
OV

2018/10010 BURLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - AFFORDABLE HOUSING DISCHARGE

Miss Macnair suggested that affordable housing should be sited on land which does not benefit from common rights, rather than on land which does benefit from rights and may be useful as backup grazing.

#### FINANCIAL MATTERS

2018/10011 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR JUNE 2018 DISCHARGE

The Financial Statement was noted.

2018/10012 AUDITED ACCOUNTS DISCHARGE

The Audited Accounts were approved.

2018/10013 FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS DISCHARGE

The Court agreed that £300,000 should be set aside as a contingency fund. A separate account will be set up to hold this money separate from the day to day finances. This fund will assist the Court if financial difficulties are encountered following the end of the current HLS scheme. Action  
OV/Clerk

#### STAFF MATTERS / HEALTH & SAFETY

2018/10014 STOCK MANAGEMENT DISCHARGE

Catching sick and injured animals outside the drift season is becoming more and more hazardous because of the sheer number of people in the Forest. Recently an anonymous complaint was made to the office after Agisters and commoners had no option other than to drive a lame pony to the pound via the Balmer Lawn beach site. The operation was carried out on foot in order to ensure the safety of the public but a few people were un-co-operative and refused to get out of the way. It was also claimed they had not been warned what was happening. As a commoner had been despatched to the car park with specific instructions to inform the public, there should not have been an issue.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 2018/10015 NEW VERDERERS' WEBSITE RESUME
- The Official Verderer reported that he had attended a very useful meeting with the company which designed the NFNPA's website. They may be able to assist with updating the Verderers website. A quotation is awaited. Action OV
- 2018/10016 ACADEMIC FROM SUSSEX UNIVERSITY DISCHARGE
- Mrs Westerhoff has agreed to meet with Dr Helen Dancer, Lecturer in Law, Politics and Sociology at the University of Sussex. A copy of her final paper will be requested. Action DW
- 2018/10017 INSIDE OUT DISCHARGE
- Mr Greenwood confirmed he is happy to consider being involved in the filming of the episode which will discuss the subject of overgrazing in the Forest. However, to date, no response has been received to the email.
- 2018/10018 FAWLEY WATERSIDE DEVELOPMENT RESUME
- A further public presentation has been held. This one is less specific than the last. It seeks to respond to concerns about additional pressures on the Forest which could result from the development, by providing land for recreational activities, dog walking etc. Action OV
- 2018/10019 LYNDHURST (NEW FOREST) GOLF COURSE RESUME  
October
- Mrs Westerhoff reported she has been asked by the Forestry Commission's Land Agent to talk to the Golf Club as the management plan needs to be renewed. Mr Greenwood reported that he has identified a number of issues recently which need to be addressed, including the spreading of top soil under trees and the use of the Open Forest as a storage area. In addition, there is evidence of materials having been burned, which is unacceptable. Action PG

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 13.40 hrs

*Jan Mannes*  
*19 September 2018*