

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 15th May 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 A Gerrelli	Elected 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 J R Gerrelli	Head Agister
APOLOGIES	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2013/6634 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 17th April 2013 were approved and signed by the Official Verderer.

2013/6635 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.

2013/6636 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Head Agister thanked Agister Maton for standing in for him at the April Court; he said he understood that Mr Maton did a good job. The Official Verderer confirmed that Agister Maton had deputised very well.

The Head Agister reported on the Welfare Tour which was held on Friday 10th May attended as usual by representatives of various welfare organisations as well as Defra and the State Veterinary Service. The weather was relatively kind and quite a lot of animals were seen. Mr Deakin spoke to those attending the tour before they set off and explained that the winter has been hard on the animals and therefore they would not look as well as we would like.

The comments received when the Tour returned to Queen's House were, however, fairly positive. The welfare bodies explained that conditions on the Forest do not give them cause for concern and reflect conditions elsewhere which have been due to the poor weather over winter. Once more they said that nowadays they receive very few complaints about animals on the New Forest with most problems that they deal with being on farms and in fields; they are confident that anything that is reported on the Forest will be dealt with promptly by the Agisters. Overall everyone present on the Tour was pleased with what they saw.

The Head Agister said that in general the condition of animals is acceptable. He said he would like to see things better, but the number of animals that the Agister team are catching has slowed up now with just the odd one still needing to come in. Problems from now on are likely to be mares foaling. Some mares may have to be removed once they foal. The weather is still cold and whilst the grass is now growing, especially in more sheltered places, the spring is nearly two months late.

Mr Deakin expressed the importance of stressing that the Forest ponies are feral and change condition with the season: therefore they will lose condition in the winter and improve condition in the summer. The ponies are in their natural environment. He was slightly concerned that a couple of people attending this year's Tour, who had not attended before, were expecting to see fat animals. Others who regularly visit the Forest felt things were generally fine. It may be necessary next year to explain that when the animals move from browsing to grazing in the spring, that may be a difficult time with the animals often losing a little condition. This is because the animals get a taste for the limited amount of sweet young grass that is beginning to appear and as a result are reluctant to go back to browsing gorse and other coarse herbage. Once the grass is growing more steadily, the condition of stock improves quite rapidly.

Mr Gerrelli commented that there will always be animals which lose condition but the important thing is that action is taken when they do.

The RSPCA reportedly has over 700 horses and ponies which need homes.

Attendees on the Tour expressed an interest in visiting the Stallions when they come next time and it was suggested that they are given a demonstration of hot branding as there are moves to get it banned. It was agreed that this should be arranged for the autumn.

There are some foals on the Forest now. One was found abandoned on Rockford Common but the Head Agister was pleased to report that he did find a home for it – a nice strong filly.

The Stallions went out on Monday and they will run until Monday 10th June 2013.

2013/6637 ABANDONED ANIMALS RESUME

Currently the Verderers have impounded two mares with foals, one small mare without a foal and a three year old colt. There is also a Kune-Kune pig at large in the Newlands Plantation/Rockford Common area.

Two of the mares are microchipped but the chips have not proved at all helpful in establishing ownership of the animals. The other mare is branded and within an hour it was possible to discover who is her last registered owner (she was sold out of the Forest in 2009).

2013/6638 STOCK LOSING CONDITION AND REMOVED FROM THE FOREST RESUME

10 mares with yearlings, 26 mares, 38 fillies, 2 colts, 3 geldings, 1 cow, 3 donkeys. Total for the year 326 compared with 180 at this time last year.

2013/6639 LOSS OF VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME PAYMENTS IN RESPECT OF ANIMALS REMOVED DISCHARGE

A brief discussion took place on the criteria for withholding VGS payments to commoners who have animals removed from the Forest by an Agister due to poor condition. The Head Agister pointed out that in some cases in winter it is necessary to catch an animal in order to identify its owner. The Agisters know that it is pointless to ring some owners to collect their animals because they do not have any transport, or they are at work. In such cases the welfare of the animal must come first and so the Agister will arrange to transport the animal back to his holding for collection later by the owner, or the Agister may take the animal back to the owner's holding if he knows that transport or time is an issue. This makes deciding when to deduct a VGS payment and when not more difficult. The Court decided the issue should be discussed further at the next Staff Meeting. Meanwhile, the current instructions to the Agisters will remain in force.

2013/6640 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE RESUME

	Forest	Common	Total
Ponies	4271	772	5043
Cattle	1811	853	2664
Donkeys	93	68	161
Pigs	0	35	35
Sheep	0	108	108

Total 8011
 Ponies, cattle and donkeys on the Forest – 6175
 Ponies, cattle and donkeys on the Common – 1693

Total Ponies, Cattle and Donkeys – 7868

The Official Verderer asked the Head Agister if the increased number of stock depastured has contributed to the increased number of poor animals removed this year. The Head Agister stated that the increase in poor animals was solely due to the cold wet weather, and not due to over-stocking.

2013/6641 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

A small number of commoners have not yet paid their marking fees in respect of animals continuously depastured on the Forest. If any of these commoners are in the Verderers' Grazing Scheme, they will lose their payments as a result of being in breach of the byelaws. If they do not pay in the near future they also risk prosecution for non-payment of marking fees.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2013/6642 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

There were no Announcements and Decisions.

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

There were no announcements or decisions at this Court.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2013/6643 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR APRIL 2013

The Agisters attended 7 accidents compared with 4 in April last year.

3 ponies were killed and 1 was injured.

A calf reported to have been hit between Stocks Cross and Bramshaw Telegraph was not found.

1 accident was not reported.

5 accidents occurred in daylight and 2 at night.

6 cars were involved.

4 of the accidents involved local motorists with the drivers coming from Barton, Everton, Beaulieu and Lymington. The non-local drivers came from Fareham and Hove.

Details of the accidents are as follows:-

On the 1st April a Red Hereford cow was involved in an accident at Beaulieu at 10.15 a.m. but escaped injury.

On 3rd April a dark bay filly was injured in a collision at Ironshill at 9.00 a.m.

A dark blagdon (black/brown and white) mare was injured and had to be destroyed following an accident in Main Road, East End on the 13th April. The mare was found at 9.45 in the morning. The driver failed to report this accident and as yet has not been identified.

On the 16th April a chestnut filly had to be destroyed after it was hit by a car between Sway and the Marlpit Oak crossroads. This accident occurred at 8.50 p.m.

Three accidents occurred on the 17th April, as follows:-

The first at just before 1 o'clock in the morning when a car driven by a man from Lymington collided with a pony again between Sway and the Marlpit Oak Crossroads. The car left the road and ended up in the gorse quite a way onto the Forest. The driver ran from the scene and was later arrested. We understand he has been charged with driving whilst under the influence of alcohol.

A second accident occurred on the B3079 at 9.43 a.m. between Stocks Cross and Bramshaw Telegraph. This was the accident where the calf was not found.

The third accident involved a Red Hereford heifer calf which was fortunately uninjured. The accident occurred at 1.00 p.m. in Main Road, East Boldre.

The total number of animals killed and injured this year to date is now 31 compared with 20 in the same period last year.

It is disappointing that we are reporting accidents occurring in daylight when in theory drivers should not have a problem seeing the animals. One can only surmise that these accidents occur because the drivers fail to understand that animals do not have any road sense and will step out in front of oncoming vehicles without warning. It only goes to show how important it is to give animals grazing on or near the verge plenty of room and to pass at a speed where you can stop if necessary. The Clerk asked the members of the Press who attended Court to include these comments in their publications.

PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST

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

PRESENTMENTS

2013/6644 HCC WIDENING OF SINGLE TRACK FOREST ROAD AT LINWOOD
Presentment by Mr Richard Deacon, Appleslade Bottom, Linwood

In April 2013, HCC's term contractor was observed carrying out extensive filling works along both verges of 2 km of classified single track road at Linwood, between the Milkham T- junction and the High Corner Inn access track.

The observed work comprised, the laying and compaction of 'hoggin' fill along the verges, **outside** the cellular concrete hardened edge of the existing road. Over substantial lengths, the filled width now effectively secures up to 1m of additional hardened running surface on both sides of the original road.

In this most recent work, all potholes and low-lying areas along these verges have been made up to road level and all drainage grips leading runoff to the parallel ditches either side of the road are now in-filled and closed. Many 4 X 4 vehicles now simply straddle the original concrete cellular hardened edge (which at speed sounds and vibrates like a rumble strip) proceeding over long distances as if the road were designed for continuous two way traffic. Further, the improved road is now susceptible to prolonged ponding, drowning the original hardened edges and thereby exciting yet further rounds of 'maintenance improvements'.

By the repeated making up of the verges in this manner and particularly this most recent extensive repair, effectively, this 2 km stretch of road is being allowed to evolve from its designated single track status into a *de facto* two way road.

At peak times in the evening, when the A31 is congested, vehicle movements have on occasions now reached 700 per hour in the westerly direction along the Linwood Road and two way contra-flow traffic along parts of this 2km stretch is becoming the norm.

Our local traffic police, have jokingly referred to the Linwood Road as 'the A31 By-pass'. However, there has to be some truth in this observation, as it is notable that the recent HCC improvement works have not been applied to that portion of the single track road east of the Milkham T- junction, back towards Bolderwood.

Several years ago, the Linwood Road from Amies Corner to the Red Shoot Inn was the subject of similar road widening by HCC, using tarmac on that occasion. The Verderers quickly recognised the risk to the single track status of this road and ordered a stop. HCC duly rescinded the improvement and the offending asphalt was cut back to preserve the single track.

Without doubt, any relaxation of the single track constraints along the whole of the Linwood Road can only attract more traffic and it is likely that traffic accidents involving ponies and livestock will increase. To date, as a single track, the Linwood Road currently is probably the least accident prone of any across the Forest.

This presentment asks that the Verderers again intercede with Highway Authority to ensure that the single track status of this road is upheld and that creeping change without due process and reference to Planning and Environmental criteria is avoided. The recent filling and widening work should be revisited and a single track road with discrete passing places should be re-instated together with adequate drainage grip connection to the side ditches.

2013/6645 ROAD WIDENING BY STEALTH

Presentment by Mr Graham Ferris, Chairman, New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

My colleague Mr Deacon has provided the Court with a clear example and clear evidence of road widening by stealth. But it is not an isolated incident, rather it is typical of the sort of effect created by most road treatments in the New Forest.

Road widening of this kind is we believe more a matter of accident and inattention than conspiracy, but nonetheless it has the potential to progressively reduce grazing, increase the speed of traffic and lead to more accidents involving commoners' livestock.

Road widening as a consequence of road resurfacing has become so commonplace that CDA members have almost given up reporting it. One of the more outlandish examples being an unofficial lay-by near the Filly Inn which was tarmacked when the road was resurfaced.

We are very grateful to the Clerk to the Verderers Miss Westwood for her painstaking efforts to try to get Hampshire County Council to recognise the problem and on occasions this has led to the most blatant examples being corrected. But it should not rely on those efforts nor on the vigilance of commoners.

As a professional, public body, the Highways Department of Hampshire County Council could with more detailed specification in tenders for work, more careful inspection and supervision of contractors and a more strenuous resolve to get errors corrected by those contractors banish the practice of road widening by stealth.

We would ask for the support of this Court in addressing the issue.

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

Mr Mark Street introduced Melissa Jones who is the new Assistant Land Agent for the District. The Official Verderer welcomed Ms Jones to the Court.

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2013/6646 HIGHWAY REPAIRS

RESUME

The problem of widening by stealth as a result of repairs beyond the original line of the road edge in order to repair pot-holes is a long standing, ongoing problem.

The Official Verderer advised the Court that he has sent many emails to the Highway Manager, Mr Richard Bastow, on the subject.

The reason given for the problem has been that from time to time it is necessary to use contractors from outside the Forest who do not have an appreciation of the special conditions which apply to road edge repairs in the Forest. As a result there continue to be numerous instances where a repair continues onto the verge well beyond the original road edge. This loss of grazing constitutes an encroachment.

In Burley tarmac has also been laid in some driveway bell mouths which were previously gravel. This practice is considered to be unacceptable.

The road from Milkham to High Corner is a well-used short cut and traffic has recently increased considerably.

There will always be problems on well used single track roads unless a conscious decision is made, and the necessary works carried out, to ensure that they remain single track. This means installing dragon's teeth and passing places which represents a huge investment in the Forest's roads.

The Court wishes to find out whether there is a specified width for a single track road in highway terms and if so, under what authority is Hampshire Highways allowing the Forest's roads to become wider. Mr Street said he will endeavour to find answers to these questions.

Action
MStr

The grass cell blocks laid along the edge of the Linwood Road were approved some years ago and to date have proved to be the most effective way of preventing large potholes re-appearing within an unacceptably short time. However, widening the road outside the grass cell blocks is not acceptable. Efforts must be made to encourage Hampshire County Highways to invest in a scheme to bring such roads back to single track. The Emery Down road which has been subject to such a scheme has proved to be a success.

Mr Street said he would look up the historic agreement between the Forestry Commission and Hampshire County Council governing work on the edge of the highway.

Action
MStr

Mr Richard Deakin asked that whilst on the subject of road widening, the Forestry Commission give consideration to the gravel roads in the Forest which are also gradually becoming wider. Each time they are graded and resurfaced, the gravel creeps further onto the verges. Mr Deakin pointed out that all such works also constitute encroachments on the common grazing and as such should not be considered acceptable.

The Court confirmed its support of the CDA's stance that road widening by stealth constitutes an encroachment and is unacceptable, and that single track roads should remain single track.

The Official Verderer also referred to a helpful letter he received from Mr Stuart Jarvis, Director of Economy, Transport and Environment. This was in response to a conversation between the Official Verderer & Mr Jarvis, followed up by an email sent by the Clerk's Assistant about the poor standard of some highway fencing and the issue of unacceptable road repairs in the Forest. It is hoped that as a result of Mr Jarvis's intervention, matters will improve. The Official Verderer will send Mr Jarvis a copy of today's two presentments.

Action
OV

NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2013/6647 WATTONS FARM, HOLMSLEY ROAD, WOOTTON ELECTRICITY DISCHARGE
SUPPLY

The proposal to lay a short stretch of underground cable from Wattons Farm to a pole outside the property was approved subject to the usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2013/6648 TEMPORARY STACKING OF TIMBER ON THE OLD (CLOSED) DISCHARGE
CASTLE HILL CAR PARK, BURLEY

The Deputy Surveyor advised the Court that the Forestry Commission plans to stack cut timber which is being extracted from Cranesmoor on this old car park. The area has a good solid surface which is very suitable and it will avoid the need to stack the timber along the side of the road.

The Court raised no objections.

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

2013/6649 BRAMSHAW GOLF CLUB – RE-DESIGN OF COURSE AND RESUME
CONFIRMATION OF AMENDMENT TO THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Mr Street advised that the General Manager has been on holiday. He added that he has received reports that conditions on the course have improved dramatically following the ditching work that was carried out. A lot of excess water is now being taken away from the course.

2013/6650 BROKEN POST AT CADMAN'S POOL RESUME

Mr Street said that high level discussions have been taking place with British Telecom regarding their modus operandi in the Forest. BT has been very unwilling to allow the local staff to deal with local issues and has insisted on reports being made via its national system. Unfortunately, however, such reports are usually ignored.

Following discussion, it has now been agreed that two local engineers will be the point of contact, one of whom is a commoner. BT has also been advised that it must give a minimum of 7 days' notice of any works it wishes to undertake on the Forest.

Apart from the broken asbestos post at Cadman's Pool, other things have been reported including a dangerous broken metal bollard on the track from Longdown to Decoy Pond. The Clerk asked whether Rockford Common would be included in the local engineers' areas. If so there is believed to be a loose telephone cable on the common which needs attention.

2013/6651 DRIFT MANAGEMENT RESUME

A meeting has been held attended by Mr Simon Smith and Ms Zoe Cox from the Forestry Commission and Mr Deakin, the Clerk and the Head Agister to discuss closing cycle tracks and car parks on the mornings that drifts take place. It is hoped to agree a structured, risk based approach

which will remove a lot of responsibility from the Agisters. A further meeting between Mr Deakin and the Head Agister has been arranged for Monday 20th May when they will go through the drift list and decide which car parks and cycle routes need to be closed and which can be left open with or without a ranger or drift helper/steward present.

Action
RD

2013/6652 TRACK TO ASHURST LODGE

RESUME
September

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that the trees which have been cut as part of dangerous tree works will be sold and removed as soon as the bird nesting season has come to the end – which will probably be in the Autumn.

2013/6653 ACCESS TO WOODS CORNER POUND – ACCESS TO FURZEY LODGE AND PILLEY POUNDS

RESUME

Mr Gary North (FC) and the Head Agister have yet to meet. The delay is due to holidays. The problem is that the pound is in a good place for catching stock, but the area outside the inclosure and the pound is being used as a car park even though it is not officially designated as a car park.

Unfortunately it seems that similar issues are beginning to arise at both Furzey Lodge and Pilley. At Furzey Lodge, it is relatively easy to resolve by installing dragons teeth and digging a ditch. At Pilley, the verge has been badly damaged and people are parking in the lane. A neighbour is also complaining. The Deputy Surveyor promised that these problems will be looked at as well and suggested the Head Agister could discuss these with Mr North at the same time as Woods Corner.

Action
JRG/
GN (FC)

2013/6654 CONTROLLED BURNING

RESUME

Concern was expressed at the relatively little burning that took place over the winter. The Deputy Surveyor, however, was adamant that the percentage of burning that was agreed against that which was actually completed does not give cause for concern. The weather and lack of resources were suggested as reasons for the smaller acreage having been burned over the last season when it was suggested that only approximately 240 acres out of a planned 500 acres was completed. The Deputy Surveyor gave his assurance that sufficient resources and budget are available to undertake the 700 – 800 acres each winter and he confirmed the Forestry Commission's commitment to continuing this important practice. Members of the Court however expressed concern that as burning can be a contentious issue with some people disagreeing with it, failure to undertake the agreed area each year may result in more people questioning its necessity and objecting to its continuation. As part of this discussion, it was questioned whether the burning programme has diminished over the past 10 years. The Deputy Surveyor thought not and undertook to provide a report covering the past 10 years. He added that he hopes that next year will not be so wet as the weather conditions most certainly had an impact on the area burned this year. He said the teams were burning when they could.

Action
MSe

Following the meeting the Forestry Commission provided the figures for the last three seasons as follows:-

The target figures for the last three cut & burn seasons 2010/11, 2011/12 & 2012/13 are:

2010/11 - 870.5 acres of which 819 acres were achieved (94%)

2011/12 - 717.5 acres of which 692 acres were achieved (96%)

2012/13 - 620.5 acres of which 284 were achieved (45%)

2013/6655 ABANDONED PONIES RESUME

The Clerk gave an update on the situation. Mrs Thorne asked the Clerk to update the paper that she had provided earlier for submission to Defra. This will be done. Action SW

The present system of recording microchips appears to be useless. The database no longer exists and Defra has said it will not fund a new one.

Mr Street confirmed the Forestry Commission will reimburse the Court for the cost of keeping the abandoned colt as it was not possible to put him in the field at New Park. The Clerk will provide Mr Street with details. Action SW

2013/6656 PITMORE LANE, SWAY, MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND RESUME

A site meeting took place attended by representatives of the Parish Council and the Football Club, including Mr Mark Adams, together with Mr Street, Mr Gerrelli, Mr Pasmore, Mr Deakin, and Mr Dowsett.

The fence was found to be in a condition dangerous to animals. However, all but one small length of the fence, which is considered necessary to ensure the safety of children using the ground, and ensure the safety of stock which will need to be driven out from time to time, will be removed. No other infrastructure [such as a pavilion] will be permitted. A management plan for the site will be drawn up and included in the new licence. Such matters as the management of the gorse, maintenance of the small stretch of retained fencing, the gate and parking must also be considered and agreed. Action MStr

Mr Street felt there is now a much greater understanding of the concerns on both sides, but that everything should be kept as simple as possible.

The Parish Council has stated it would rather retain the licence in its name. Mr Street has asked for a copy of a written agreement between the Parish Council and the Football Club, setting out who is responsible for what, and that will form part of the licence terms. The lease will be for a period of 5 years.

The Official Verderer suggested that it might be better for the Forestry Commission to have the licence direct with the Football Club, similar to many other football and cricket clubs around the Forest.

2013/6657 WASTE AND RECYCLING BINS IN FOREST CAR PARKS DISCHARGE

Mr Dowsett has been liaising with Gary North (FC) regarding the replacement of some existing waste bins at Forest sites with new waste/recycling bins. A schematic diagram of the new bins was circulated to members of the Court. The new bins will occupy the same footprint as the existing bins but will be 130 cm high to take 2 household size wheelie bins, one for waste (including bagged dog waste) and the other for

recyclable materials. They will be constructed of locally sourced Douglas Fir and the design has pony proof apertures.

There will be 12 new bin units distributed across 6 sites where the current bin capacity is proving insufficient. At Bolderwood, where there are currently 4 bins, 3 new bins will take their place. At Bolton's Bench and the Cricket Pitch car parks there are currently 3 bins and 3 bins will take their place. At Blackwater and Wilverley the present 2 bins will be replaced with 2 new bins and at Hatchet Pond and Whitefield Moor 1 new bin will replace the current single bin.

The bins will need to be collected by a vehicle designed to pick up wheelie bins and it was confirmed that there is no problem with access.

It is hoped the bins will be in place in good time for the start of the summer season.

Action
BD

The Court was happy with the proposals and authorised Mr Dowsett to continue to represent it in this respect.

2013/6658 CAR FREE DITCHING DISCHARGE

The Forestry Commission's policy is to discourage verge parking and to work with the Police in this respect. The location between Hill Top and Ipers Bridge where a persistent offender continues to park his/her 4x4 will be subject to further work to reinforce the protection.

Action
MStr

The Court felt the Forestry Commission has done a really good job as respects the car free works.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2013/6659 SNAGGING LIST RESUME

An updated snagging list was provided. A copy will be sent to Mr Pasmore who was unable to attend today's meeting.

Action
SW

2013/6660 AVON WATER STREAM RESTORATION WORK DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that when conditions permit, any trees that have been felled over the stream will be removed together with any debris dams which have resulted from the felling. Other, previously existing naturally occurring debris dams will be left. The Court requested that the particularly large dam which is now badly eroding the bank of the stream and is considered to be a hazard to stock be removed.

Action
MSe

2013/6661 BUCKHERD BOTTOM – PROPOSED CHANGE TO ACCESS STRUCTURE AS PART OF REMEDIAL WORKS, AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING CULVERT RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor distributed proposals in respect of the above and asked that it be considered at the next Court. He requested that if any Verderer has any strong views about the works, they contact him in advance of the next meeting. A copy of the proposals will be sent to Mr Pasmore.

Action
All
SW

ENCROACHMENTS

2013/6662 ENCROACHMENT LIST RESUME

Mr Street produced a new list and reported on the encroachments that he is currently dealing with. Mr Street was able to report some notable successes.

Actions
MStr

He added that the aerial photographs that were taken in connection with the HLS's LIDAR survey have proved very useful when dealing with encroachments as it is usually possible to see clearly what was there before.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2013/6663 PROTECTION OF SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS (SAMs) DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin expressed concern that the heaps of gravel and soil which it is intended will be used to protect the pudding barrows at Dibden and Whitefield Moor from rabbit damage, have been on the Forest for months. He felt they could be something of an embarrassment when the Forestry Commission is pursuing other people for also leaving materials on the Open Forest. The Deputy Surveyor explained that no sooner had the materials been delivered than the weather changed and the ground conditions were too wet for the work to be carried out without causing damage to the grazing. The work will be completed as soon as possible.

2013/6664 BURLEY ROAD PINCH POINTS RESUME

Hampshire County Council asked via the Clerk for the Court's views on the retention of the pinch points on the Burley Road, just outside Brockenhurst.

The Court was broadly in support of the retention of the pinch points, but is concerned that vehicles waiting at the pinch point nearest to Ford Farm Cottage are causing erosion of the road edge and are resulting in an increase in the size of an adjacent gravelled entrance with a corresponding loss of grazing. Proposals will be requested.

Action
SW

2013/6665 A31 NEW FOREST LIAISON MEETING – THURSDAY 27TH JUNE – WINCHESTER RESUME
July

The Official Verderer, Mrs Thorne and Mrs Westerhoff will attend this meeting.

Action
SW

2013/6666 DRIFTWAY CLEARANCE VINNEY RIDGE TO THE BLACKWATER POUND DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor confirmed that this work is definitely on the list but the ground has still not dried out enough.

2013/6667 ORDNANCE CLEARANCE – MATLEY BOG DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor advised the Court that warning signs on posts will shortly be installed around Matley Bog as a quantity of World War I mortars have been located and as yet have not been cleared. The area was once a testing range. He added that it would be unwise for the

Agisters to gallop over the area. The Head Agister is aware of the issue and will warn the Agister team.

The Deputy Surveyor said that attempts are being made to identify any other sites where ordnance may still be in-situ.

2013/6668 NATIONAL GRID PYLON REFURBISHMENT – MARCHWOOD DISCHARGE

Mr Street advised the Court that the National Grid will shortly be completing its maintenance works on the pylons at Marchwood, and will restore the damage to the grazing which they caused earlier this year. The compensation claim in respect of the damage caused to the Forest during the winter is underway.

The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Street left the meeting

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2013/6669 ROCKFORD BOOT CAMP DISCHARGE

Mrs Westerhoff said she observed the group on one occasion but as it appeared that everything was in order she has not returned. One instructor and eight people were seen to be running, jumping and doing press-ups. They were using 6 or 8 small plastic discs and were running between each one. There was no excessive noise.

Mrs Westerhoff was content that the activities were being undertaken in accordance with the conditions of the permission granted by the National Trust and she felt that there was nothing that would be of concern to Natural England. Mrs Westerhoff agreed, however, to go back and look again if needed.

The Clerk said that she has received one further complaint in the past week, from local horse-riders whose horses may be upset by people running between gorse bushes.

The Court agreed no further action is required unless evidence is forthcoming that the Boot Camp is not adhering to the conditions contained in its permission from the National Trust, or it is causing damage to the Forest.

2013/6670 NEW FOREST TOUR BUS ADVERT DISCHARGE

The Clerk reported that she has obtained financial support for the animal safety advert from the CDA, NFA, Exxon/Esso and the Beaulieu Estate. In addition the National Park Authority is contributing along with the Court.

The Clerk added that the bus displaying last year's advert has been used around Poole and Bournemouth during the winter which means that the advert got a much wider audience than was originally expected.

2013/6671 REPAIRS TO HIGHWAY FENCING RESUME
(with 6646)

Hampshire Highways has been advised of three stretches of fence where repairs are felt to be inadequate.

- 2013/6672 INDEPENDENT PANEL ON FORESTRY – GOVERNMENT RESPONSE DISCHARGE
- The Official Verderer has written to the Minister, and copied his letter to the two local MPs. It is thought there may be a draft Bill in next year's Queen's Speech.
- 2013/6673 ATLAS PROJECT RESUME
- The Clerk is trying to progress this matter but is awaiting further information from Geodata in Southampton. Action SW
- 2013/6674 NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN DISCHARGE
- The Official Verderer reported that a Leadership Group has been set up to re-write the management plan which is to be half its present size. The new plan will run from 2015.

THE HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

- 2013/6675 HLS DISCHARGE
- The minutes of the last meeting have been circulated.
- 2013/6676 VGS DISCHARGE
- The Official Verderer said that the money from the National Trust and the other adjacent commons' owners has now been received. Payments have been made to the adjacent commons' commoners. Mr Draper has recently met with the owners of the commons and Ms Jenny Thomas from Natural England.
- 2013/6677 TWO YEAR OLD COLTS ON THE FOREST BEYOND THE DUE DATE DISCHARGE
- It was agreed that any commoner who has a two year old colt on the Forest after the 1st February will have £400 per 2 year old colt deducted from his or her VGS payment.
- This will be announced at the next Open Court and a note will be put on the Verderers' website. The Chairman of the CDA will also be asked to mention it at the CDA's next meeting. Action OV, CD & GF

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

- 2013/6678 RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (WORKING GROUP) DISCHARGE
- There is a proposal that the RMSWG should become two groups – an RMS Steering Group and an RMS Advisory Group. The Advisory Group would consist of the Mr Crosthwaite Eyre, the current chair of the RMSWG, the Forestry Commission's head of recreation, the Official Verderer and a representative from Natural England. The Court was happy for the Official Verderer to sit on this group.
- Mr Deakin indicated that he no longer wishes to be involved with the RMS.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2013/6679 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR APRIL 2013 RESUME

The financial statement for April 2013 was noted.

STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)

2013/6680 BRATLEY POUND DISCHARGE

The re-built pound at Bratley looks very good. It was agreed that Mr Danny Bessant will be asked to build the other new pounds this year as he was the best value in the original tender and he has done such a good job. Work for future years will be put out to tender each year.

2013/6681 DEFECTIVE FENCING AT ROCKFORD LAKE DISCHARGE

The Clerk explained briefly that there are serious problems with cattle getting onto a footpath alongside Rockford Lake, from where they are able to gain access to the A338. The owner of the cattle has been advised as to date, and despite considerable efforts by the Clerk, it has not been possible to identify the owner of the land. It was suggested that Natural England may be able to assist as it is part of a SSSI, and the Clerk will enquire.

Action
SW

2013/6682 ANIMAL ACCIDENT SIGN DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer said that he feels the Hit and Run signs are not very easy to read and could be improved. Mr Deakin and the Clerk said the suggestion can be looked into whilst other signage is being reviewed.

Action
RD/SW

HEALTH & SAFETY & TRAINING

2013/6683 HEALTH & SAFETY REVIEW RESUME

The review is continuing.

Action
RD/JRG/SW

2013/6684 HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING RESUME

The Clerk, her Assistant and the Agisters are to attend a two half day Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) course on the 26th and 27th June.

July

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2013/6685 BEAULIEU ROAD SALE RING ROOF DISCHARGE

Mr Readhead reported that Defra, via Leader, has agreed to assist with funding the construction of the roof on the sale ring. It is hoped to have the work completed in time for the September sale, and it is hoped that a roof will encourage more buyers.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 12.58 hrs.