

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2007 at 9.30 a.m. in the Library, The Queen's House, Lyndhurst.**

PRESENT: Mr O Crosthwaite Eyre Official Verderer  
Mr J Adams Elected Verderer & Chairman of the Staff Committee  
Mr P Frost Natural England Appointed Verderer  
Mr A Gerrelli Elected Verderer  
Mrs D Halford National Park Authority Appointed Verderer  
Mr J F Kitcher Elected Verderer  
Miss D Macnair Elected Verderer  
The Hon R Montagu Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer  
Mr A H Pasmore Elected Verderer  
Mrs P Thorne DEFRA Appointed Verderer

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss S Westwood Clerk to the Verderers  
Mr J R Gerrelli Head Agister

APOLOGIES: None

**IN COMMITTEE**

The Head Agister attended the meeting for the first two items.

2007/3337 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING DISCHARGE

The Minutes of the Courts held on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007 were approved.

2007/3338 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Head Agister reported that stock is in very good condition. The drifts are now well underway and ponies are looking very good. The grass is growing and the ponies will go into the winter looking well.

2007/3339 MANAGEMENT OF THE PONY DRIFTS DISCHARGE

There is a lot of concern about the number of people now attending drifts as spectators and it is getting more and more difficult to ensure the safety of all those present. Many spectators lack knowledge of how a drift works and frequently get in the way. This is causing bad feeling with the commoners who are trying to help.

It was suggested the Verderers could assist with managing spectators at the drifts and to this end some fleece jackets with the Verderers' logo and "Verderer" on them will be obtained in order to assist the public in identifying to whom they are speaking.

2007/3340 PANNAGE SEASON AND FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE RESTRICTIONS RESUME

Some parts of the Forest have a heavy acorn crop whilst in other areas there are hardly any at all. There were reports of a few animals having died from suspected acorn poisoning and others showing symptoms. DEFRA is being asked whether it would be possible for pigs to be turned out but as yet a decision has not been made.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2007/3341 STRANGLES RESUME

Mr Adams said he did not have anything to add to the Head Agister's report on the condition of stock except to say that there are a few cases of strangles in the Forest. The Hurst Hill drift has been cancelled due to strangles at Alum Green, Bank and Hurst Hill.

2007/3342 WELFARE TOUR OF THE FOREST RESUME  
December

The Welfare Tour will take place on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

2007/3343 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

Following a discussion on the advantages or otherwise of asking the public to stay away from drifts it was decided that on balance it is wise to do so. The announcements and decisions were therefore approved.

2007/3344 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

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

Mr Gerrelli declared an interest in any items concerning Campsites and the Official Verderer declared an interest in any matters concerning golf clubs.

Mrs Halford declared an interest in the Encroachment at Rose Cottage, Burley in her capacity as a Burley Parish Councillor.

2007/3345 FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statements for September showed a satisfactory financial position.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Will Parke, Area Land Agent (New Forest)

APOLOGIES: Mr Mike Seddon, Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER**

2007/3346 BYELAWS

As mentioned last month, a new set of byelaws were formally passed by the Court in Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> August and, no earlier than November 1<sup>st</sup>, we intend to ask the Minister to confirm the byelaws

2007/3347 RECREATION POLICY

We have now published a short document which explains in plain English the thoughts and motives behind our own existing Verderers' Policies, and copies of the document are freely available this morning in the Hall.

2007/3348 DRIFTS

The number of people attending the drifts simply to watch has reached unmanageable levels. The drifts are not a spectator sport. They are a vital part of the management of the Forest's ponies. Spectators simply get in the way, and already there have been incidences of those riding on the drifts narrowly avoiding serious accidents because their ponies have been spooked at high speed by onlookers. On other occasions ponies which have involved a lot of hard work to gather together have got away. Drifts take many hours and many miles at a fast pace to set up and complete, and it can all be ruined if spectators are in the wrong place at the wrong time. We therefore publish the dates and places of the drifts not to encourage people to come, but to make sure they know when and where to stay away and avoid any interference. So our message this morning is, unless you are formally assisting the Agisters as a participant in a drift, please stay away!

2007/3349 COLLARS

With the onset of winter we would like to issue a reminder that reflective collars are as always available from the Agisters and the office, and we would especially urge the owners of ponies that are known to haunt the busiest routes through the Forest to use them.

2007/3350 MARKING FEES

We will be deciding on the level of fees for next year in committee this morning, and we will be making an announcement at the November Court regarding the 2008 rates.

2007/3351 SINGLE FARM PAYMENTS

We have been working closely with the CDA and the NPA for well over a year and a half in order to get Defra to acknowledge that those who farm the open Forest using their common rights are entitled to the same level of single farm payment as those who farm privately owned enclosed land in England. This has not been an easy task, however our efforts have at last born fruit.

I am very pleased to announce that the payments due to commoners will be increased threefold with immediate effect. This means that by 2012 an extra £1.7 million a year will be paid directly to commoners who already qualify for this payment. This will have a significant effect on the commercial viability of commoning , and is a positive step in securing a long term future for so many of the Forest's farmers.

We are most grateful for the considerable support that we have received from the National Park Authority, and from Emma Rigglesworth and Rick Manley in particular who have worked tirelessly with us.

I would also like to thank the officials at Defra who have listened to us so patiently, and have helped us achieve this result.

2007/3352 EMERGENCY NUMBER CARD

The Official Verderer announced that the National Park Authority has produced an extremely useful credit card sized card on which is noted the emergency telephone numbers which should be used by members of the public wishing to report sick or injured stock and wildlife. He added that 90,000 of the cards are to be distributed to households in the National Park area.

## **ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT**

2007/3353 ACCIDENT REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2007

The agisters attended 6 accidents, compared with 21 for the same period last year.

4 ponies were killed and 1 cow was injured.  
(2 ponies were killed in one RTA which was not reported)

3 accidents occurred during the hours of darkness.

4 involved private cars or light commercials, 1 involved a motorcycle and 1 was not reported.

3 accidents involved local motorists.

The total killed and injured for the year to date is 73 compared with 97 for the same period last year (i.e. 24 less).

The Clerk went on to say that October has started very badly and that in the first 12 days there have been 12 accidents. 4 donkeys were hit in 1 accident, 6 animals were killed and 6 injured.

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

2007/3354 CROWN LANDS CYCLE NETWORK

The Forestry Commission's cycle network provides sustainable enjoyment for many thousands of people each year, as well as providing traffic free cycle links between some of the Forest's villages and attractions.

The Forestry Commission requests the renewal of the Verderers agreement for the existing network of waymarked cycle routes on gravel tracks of the Crown lands. To enable the Commission, other authorities and local businesses to plan for the provision and management of cycling opportunities in the New Forest, the agreement of the Verderers is sought for a period of five years.

## **PRESENTMENTS**

2007/3355 "PRECIOUS WILDERNESS OR SUBURBAN PARK"  
Presentment on behalf of William Ziegler, New Forest Association

The New Forest Association has for many years supported the work of the Verderers of the New Forest and welcomes their new publication "Precious Wilderness or Suburban Park?".

We agree that it is imperative that we remember what it is that make the Forest so special and to strongly resist unfettered usage and creeping urbanisation which, if unchecked, has the potential to destroy its wilderness quality and all that goes with it.

This publication reminds us of some of the problems the Forest faces, and will hopefully inspire and influence not only the actions and perceptions of the general public but also those statutory bodies whose work now and in the years to come will be influential in shaping the New Forest for the future.

The Verderers hold a unique position in the Forest and in this document remind us not only of their duty to the Forest, but also their powers. These powers have helped protect the Forest for many years, and the Association will actively work for this to remain the case and for the Verderers to continue as a strong and independent force fighting the Forests corner.

2007/3356 ENCROACHMENTS IN THE BURLEY AREA

Presentment by Mr Michael Cooper on behalf of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

Our association is becoming increasingly concerned at the number of encroachments that are being reported, and today we wish to advise you of three more, which we understand the Forestry Commission are aware of –

Beechwood Lane, Burley – New post and rail fence erected 3ft out from the original boundary.

Bisterne Close, Burley – Partial blocking of an existing track, possibly with a view to a small building being erected.

Pound Lane, Burley – Fencing-in of open Forest, and a Yew hedge planted.

We deem these types of encroachments unacceptable, and trust you will pursue your enquiries with the Forestry Commission as to what action is to be taken.

2007/3357 USE OF QUAD BIKES IN FORESTRY COMMISSION INCLOSURES

Presentment by Mr Michael Cooper on behalf of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

It has come to our notice that quad bikes are once again being used to remove commoners stock from the Forestry Commission Inclosures. Our committee do not see this as an appropriate or environmentally friendly way to carry out this task. Perhaps the Verderers would care to discuss this with the commission and our Association in due course, to seek a better way of dealing with the trespassing stock. On these recent occasions, areas that had been cleared, were soon seen to be re-populated and one must assume that the fencing is either broken, or poorly maintained. It is felt that repairs should be instigated in the first instance, before any further roundups are carried out, and that these are only attempted after discussions with the Verderers.

2007/3358 PLANNING APPLICATION 07/91732 – COMMONERS HOUSING ADJACENT TO ANDERWOOD COTTAGE, BURLEY

Presentment by Mr Michael Cooper on behalf of the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

We have received a letter from one of our members who it appears, is likely to lose some 5 acres of land as a result of this development, should it be approved. After some discussion with various parties, we became aware that another area of land in the vicinity, owned by the Forestry Commission, was being used inappropriately by the tenant. After much discussion it was concluded that this provided a solution for our member, and therefore request that the Verderers confer with the Forestry Commission who are the landlords of our members land, and the aforementioned parcel of land, in an effort to resolve this situation to the benefit of our member, and hopefully the eventual owners of the two commoning properties.

2007/3359 NATIONAL CYCLE ROUTE  
Presentment by Peter Sweet, Practising Commoner

"We read in the local papers that Sustrans, the National Cycle organisers are again working with the Forestry Commission to have a cycle crossing across the A35 near Holmsley.

This is obviously a good idea provided that it does not entail more cycle tracks across the Open Forest without consultation and your permission.

There is already too much illegal cycling along the track by the Naked Man and across Wilverley Plain by cyclists, largely local, who cycle there without let or hindrance.

This is due in part to local hirers in some cases issuing their own maps showing many non-waymarked tracks. I have already complained to the Forestry Commission about this but have so far had no reply. There is now at last, 10 years late, a decent map of the way-marked cycle routes.

May I ask the Court to keep an eye on this proposed crossing."

2007/3360 "PRECIOUS WILDERNESS OR SUBURBAN PARK"  
Presentment by Mr Peter Sweet

Mr Sweet congratulated the Verderers on the pamphlet. He said he thought it is first class and suggested it should be sent to every household in the Forest and surrounding areas although he did accept that such an exercise would be expensive. He added that it is the best pamphlet to educate local people.

In reply, the Official Verderer said that 2,000 pamphlets have so far been printed so far. The Court will take on board Mr Sweet's suggestion and will see who else would like a copy.

2007/3361 "PRECIOUS WILDERNESS OR SUBURBAN PARK"  
Presentment by Mr Chris Aldhous on behalf of the New Forest Equestrian Association

Mr Aldhous considered the pamphlet to be an excellent document which he hoped those interested in the Forest would read in full and digest.

2007/3362 RUBBISH ON THE FOREST  
Presentment by Mr Derek Bennett from Sway

Mr Bennett was concerned at the various items of rubbish that are left in the Forest in particular metal and other items which are dangerous to stock. By way of an example he handed the Clerk a piece of wood into which a tent peg was tightly driven. Such an item could easily cause a very serious injury to a Forest animal. Mr Bennett also pointed out that Guy Fawkes night is approaching and there will be the added hazard of fireworks being discharged on the Forest by irresponsible people.

## **IN COMMITTEE in The Library**

### **CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS**

2007/3363 ENCROACHMENTS IN THE BURLEY AREA

DISCHARGE

Mr Parke confirmed the Forestry Commission is aware of all three encroachments. Rose Cottage is on the Agenda for today and so it was decided to deal with this first.

The owner of Rose Cottage has erected a post and rail fence on the Crown Lands approximately 1 metre out onto the Crown verge of Beechwood Lane. The fence is a substantial oak post and mortise oak 3 rail fence which is well built and likely to last a great many years. The cost of moving it will be significant.

It was agreed however, that a bad precedent will be set if the fence is allowed to remain and in any event as it is an illegal encroachment on common land its continued presence would require permission from the Secretary of State.

#### **BISTERNE CLOSE**

Mr Parke has met the occupier on site twice. A garage is being built but on completion it will be sited entirely within a private fenced garden and there will be no encroachment at all.

#### **POUND LANE – YEW TREE COTTAGE**

This property has recently changed hands. Mr Parke will write to the new owner explaining that the new fence must not encroach onto the Crown Land and that yew should not be planted on the boundary where it is accessible to stock.

#### **POUND FARM – POUND LANE**

Mr Parke mentioned a further encroachment which had not been picked up by the Commoners' Defence Association. Spoil and waste has been used to fill in a low lying area on the verge. The occupier will be told to remove it promptly.

#### **ENCROACHMENTS IN GENERAL**

Mr Parke went on to say that most of the time the Keepers report encroachments and endeavour to resolve them. Only when they fail are such matters reported to Mr Parke.

#### **SETTHORNS CAMPSITE**

Mr Parke will pursue the removal of the illegal fence which was erected around the assistant warden's mobile home on Setthorns Campsite.

2007/3364 USE OF QUAD BIKES IN FORESTRY COMMISSION INCLOSURES DISCHARGE

It was agreed that it is futile to drive ponies out of inclosures if there are holes in the fence.

Quad Bikes, if used properly, are considered by the Forestry Commission to be a useful tool.

Mr Adams commented that there had been a past incident when a pony was injured whilst being driven out of an inclosure and it had been agreed that the Agisters would be advised when Forestry Commission staff wished to clear inclosures.

It seems the problem may have been poor communication and Mr Parke agreed that in future the Agisters will be advised before ponies are driven out in order that they or the Commoners may assist.

Mr Pasmore remarked that a lot of gates are difficult to shut.

2007/3365 PLANNING APPLICATION 07/91732 – COMMONERS HOUSING ADJACENT TO ANDERWOOD COTTAGE, BURLEY DISCHARGE

All the land at Burley Fields is let to commoners and the Forestry Commission had made it clear that building the two new dwellings would mean that a commoner would have to be dispossessed of the two fields immediately adjacent.

All agreements expire in December and the grazing will be re-allocated. The two new houses will each have two acres and the remaining four commoners will have reduced areas. The area that is currently being sub-let will be returned to commoning. Mr Parke said the Forestry Commission has done its best to deal with the problem equitably.

2007/3366 NATIONAL CYCLE ROUTE DISCHARGE

The route around Holmsley Tea Rooms is as agreed at a site meeting attended by Mr Adams and Mr Pasmore. There is no net increase in the cycle routes on the Forest.

It was reported that some maps issued by cycle hire businesses do not reflect the official cycle routes. The Forestry Commission was asked to look into this problem and Mr Parke said the Deputy Surveyor or Mr Bruce Rothnie, Recreation Manager, will respond to Peter Sweet. A copy of the response was requested by the Court.

#### **SUBMISSIONS BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

None

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

- 2007/3367 HIGHWAY VERGE/HAUNCH TREATMENTS - INFORMATION DISCHARGE
- Mr Parke advised the Court that the Highway Authority intends to experiment with different verge treatments on the road between Densome Corner and Hale. The verges in that area belong to the National Trust, not the Crown. Mr Fuller from the Highway Authority will be coming along to the December Court.
- 2007/3368 OTHER HIGHWAY MATTERS RESUME
- The following matters were resumed from the September Court but it was decided to hold them over until December when Mr Fuller will be attending the Court:-
- Road Safety Improvements at Bull Hill Crossroads.  
Fencing on the A31, A35 and A337.  
Pinch points on the C10 – Picket Post to Burley.
- 2007/3369 A31 RUBBISH DISCHARGE
- Mr Adams reported that the rubbish has largely been cleared although there is still some around the laybys. It is to be hoped that the new litter bins will be emptied regularly.
- 2007/3370 A31 FENCING RESUME
- The fencing has been repaired but regrettably not to a very good standard. A tree is still across the fence at Hightown, fortunately blocking the hole it has made through one of the few stretches of post and rail fence along the road.
- Cllr Mrs Kathy Heron (former Verderer) has kindly agreed to continue liaising between the Court and the County Council.
- 2007/3371 ELLINGHAM CRICKET PITCH DISCHARGE
- Some detritus remains but Mr Parke assured the Court it will be removed.
- 2007/3372 FENCING BETWEEN BEAULIEU ROAD HOTEL AND THE RAILWAY STATION AND COTTAGES DISCHARGE
- Mr Parke reported that the Forestry Commission has decided to take down the fencing and tidy up the area. The Court was most grateful.
- 2007/3373 RUBBISH OUTSIDE PONDHEAD FARM DISCHARGE
- Work is in progress to prevent illegal parking.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION**

- 2007/3374 COSTICLES POND RESUME
- This matter is progressing. Mr Parke is awaiting a plan of the fencing.
- 2007/3375 REFLECTIVE STRIPS ON POSTS IN RHINEFIELD DRIVE DISCHARGE
- Mrs Thorne remarked that new reflective strips on the posts along the drive are very obtrusive. Mr Parke said he will look and see if they can be changed.
- 2007/3376 MISSING DRAGONS TEETH RESUME
- Dragons teeth have been missing in various places around Crockford Clump, Bull Hill and Beaulieu Aerodrome. The holes which have been left are large enough for a horse to put its foot in and break a leg. The matter has been raised with Forestry Commission staff on a number of occasions but nothing has been done.
- 2007/3377 BEAULIEU AERODROME – DAMAGE TO GRAZING RESUME
- An area in the vicinity of the model aircraft club has been used as a skid pan and damage is being caused to the fabric of the Forest. The Court asked if means of preventing the damage could be investigated.
- 2007/3378 PHOTOGRAPHERS AT DRIFTS DISCHARGE
- Increasing problems are resulting from people trying to take “action” pictures at drifts. Mr Parke advised that formal permission is required for commercial filming but not private photography.
- 2007/3379 CONFLICTS BETWEEN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND DRIFTS DISCHARGE
- Whilst the Ashurst drift was underway, two groups of scouts were on the Forest in the same area. Fortunately no incidents occurred but clearly there was an opportunity for an accident.
- The Court requested that FC staff who issue permissions give closer scrutiny to the drift list which is published well in advance. Mr Parke undertook to pass on the message.
- 2007/3380 RIDE RESTORATION IN INCLOSURES DISCHARGE
- It was requested that ride restoration signs which have been in place for at least 10 years be removed. Roe Inclosure and the area around Shirley Holmes were mentioned specifically. Mr Parke promised to take this matter forward.
- 2007/3381 MEETING WITH FOREST HOLIDAYS RESUME
- The meeting with Forest Holidays will take place in the Library at 2.30 p.m. on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

**Mr Parke left the meeting.**

**OTHER AGENDA ITEMS**

2007/3382 REPORT ON MARKING FEES RECEIVED RESUME

Ponies	4470	Pigs	24
Cattle	2528	Sheep	55
Donkeys	118		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7116</b>	<b>Total all Animals</b>	<b>7195</b>

2007/3383 REPORT ON ANIMALS REMOVED FROM THE FOREST RESUME

**SEPTEMBER**

	POOR	SICK OR INJURED	WANTED BY OWNER	OTHER	TOTALS
MARES WITH FOALS	2	1	5		8
MARES WITH YEARLINGS					0
MARES			1	1	2
FILLIES		1	1		2
COLTS			2	1	3
GELDINGS		1			1
STALLIONS					0
CATTLE			39		39
CALVES					0
DONKEY WITH FOALS		1			1
DONKEYS		2			2
PIGS					0
PIGLETS					0
SHEEP					0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>58</b>

TWO YEAR OLD COLTS 0

**SUMMARY BY SPECIES**

PONIES	16
CATTLE	39
DONKEYS	3
PIGS	0
SHEEP	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 10px;"><b>58</b></span>

2007/3384 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

Mr Cooper's appeal continues.

A summons in respect of the second breach of the byelaws should be issued shortly.

A further commoner was found to have turned out 17 cattle prior to having them marked or paying marking fees. When approached by the Agister he apologised profusely, saying that he had been obliged to keep more cattle than usual on his holding because of the Foot and Mouth Disease animal movement restrictions. As a result he had opened the gate to let the animals out prior to contacting his Agister. The Court considered whether the matter warranted a prosecution but

decided it would not be in the public interest as the commoner had apologised and immediately paid his marking fees and had the cattle marked. It was agreed a strong letter should be sent by the Clerk advising the commoner that any future breaches of the Verderers' byelaws will not be treated so leniently.

2007/3385 MARKING FEES FOR CALVES

RESUME

A discussion took place about the age on which calves are usually marked and paid for. Custom and practise appears to be at variance with the byelaws and it was agreed that instructions should be issued to the Agisters in this respect. The Official Verderer undertook to prepare a paper for consideration at the next Court.

#### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COURT AND PREVIOUS COURTS**

2007/3386 CYCLING ON THE FOREST

RESUME

Mr Montagu and Mr Pasmore have studied the Forestry Commission's cycling survey reports but they do not provide much information which is helpful to the Court.

The tranquil areas are not a widely understood issue and it was agreed that an attempt should be made to explain to the Forestry commission and National Park Authority why the Court is so anxious to protect them and therefore to restrict cycling within them.

2007/3387 REVISION OF THE BYELAWS

RESUME

The revised byelaws were advertised as required. A request to the Minister to approve the byelaws will be made on 1<sup>st</sup> November unless there is a good reason to delay.

2007/3388 HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND – LIFE IN COMMON

RESUME

Christine Dixon, who is administering the project is looking to see how the various proposals can be presented as a coherent project. The Commoners' Defence Association is concerned that a number of their proposals are being classed as subsidies or grants and may not, therefore, be included.

2007/3389 SINGLE FARM PAYMENTS

DISCHARGE

Payments will be retrospective and based on 2004 turnout figures.

2007/3390 IDENTIFICATION OF PONIES (MICROCHIPPING)

RESUME

A meeting with DEFRA will be held tomorrow.

2007/3391 NEW POLICY DOCUMENT

DISCHARGE

The distribution of the new leaflet "The New Forest Precious Wilderness or Suburban Park?" was discussed. It was agreed a supply of leaflets could be provided for Parish Council meetings with Parish Councillors being sent copies now. It was also suggested a sponsor might be found to help with wider distribution.

2007/3392 LYNDHURST BYPASS DISCHARGE

The letter concerning the Verderers position as regards any potential bypass has been sent to Cllr Hutcheson at Hampshire County Council.

2007/3393 STALLION GRAZING RESUME

February  
2008

The stallions are now in the grazing. The majority of agreements having been returned by commoners.

Looking ahead, Cadland has suggested it may have a problem keeping the grazing available solely for stallion grazing unless the period can be increased. The grazing at New Park is not as good as in previous years because of the damage caused by the New Forest Show, however Mr Richard Cuzens has given his assurance that sufficient grass will be available.

The question of whether the grazing period can be increased will be considered.

Miss Macnair suggested a sponsor might be found.

2007/3394 MARKING FEES FOR 2008 RESUME

October  
2008

After careful consideration it was agreed unanimously that marking fees for 2008 should remain the same. An announcement will be made at the next Court.

#### **COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP SCHEME**

There was nothing to report.

#### **NATIONAL PARK**

2007/3395 COMMONING REVIEW RESUME

The document is being printed today and should be available for distribution shortly.

2007/3396 RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY CONSULTATION RESUME

Meetings are due to take place shortly.

2007/3397 STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY GROUP (statutory bodies forum) RESUME

The group will consider the results of the general consultation meetings and advise the Authority in developing the Management Strategy. A draft should be available in March 2008. The aim being to increase understanding of the Forest and the impact of those using the Forest for recreation.

## **OTHER AGENDA ITEMS**

2007/3398 STALLION SCHEME FUNDING DISCHARGE

The National Park Authority has withdrawn its funding. The Countryside Stewardship Scheme, and hopefully the New Forest Trust, will continue to provide support.

2007/3399 STALLION BLOODLINES RESUME  
January  
2008

The response from Edinburgh University is that the cost of investigating the bloodlines and making recommendations will be in the region of £72,000. It will take 10 months to complete.

Mr Adams said he will be convening a meeting of the Stallion Sub-Committee in the next few weeks. In view of the high cost quoted by the University it is likely that a more local study will be carried out using computerised data held by the Pony Society. The hope is that a way will be found to try to encourage stallions with the rarer bloodlines whilst maintaining quality and hardiness.

Proposals will be set out in detail to show how selection will be made.

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

2007/3400 LEADER PLUS – ANIMAL TRANSPORT CERTIFICATE TRAINING DISCHARGE

Mrs Thorne advised the Court that the Local Action Group (LAG) has agreed to subsidise for commoners to obtain Animal Transport Certificates. A CD has been produced explaining what is required and a copy will be obtained.

2007/3401 BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY, BREEDS COMMITTEE DISCHARGE

Miss Macnair reported that there is increasing concern about horse related diseases which may spread from overseas as a result of our warming climate. West Nile Fever affects people as well as horses and is spread by mosquitoes. Concern was expressed that in some places the work that has been undertaken to restore the mires has resulted in stagnant pools of water being left which attract mosquitoes. Whilst the proposals include filling in or draining any such ponds it seems there are insufficient funds for the work to be carried out although the Forestry Commission has reportedly admitted this is bad practice. It was suggested, therefore, that less work should be done in order to ensure that what is done is done properly.

## **STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)**

2007/3402 SALARIES DISCHARGE

The Agricultural Wages Board Agricultural Award is 4.54%. A salary increase for all staff in line with the award was approved unanimously.

2007/3403 AGISTERS PRIVATE MILEAGE RESUME

One Agister's private mileage appears exceptionally high in comparison with his colleagues. He also has the highest duty mileage. Mr Adams was asked to consider a possible cap on private mileage.

#### **TRAINING**

2007/3404 CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE IN ANIMAL TRANSPORT DISCHARGE

The need for training for the Agisters is being considered.

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK**

Nothing to report.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

2007/3405 CAR PARKING AT THE BEAULIEU ROAD HOTEL DISCHARGE

Concern was expressed that the overflow car park at the Beaulieu Road Hotel is visually intrusive and it was suggested the Hotel could be asked to plant a hedge. There was also a concern that as there is a gate leading from the field, cars could be parked on the Open Forest although it was acknowledged that this has not occurred to date.

2007/3406 APPLICATION FOR A LICENCE TO DEPASTURE STOCK DISCHARGE

An application has been received from a couple living in Ashley near New Milton for a licence to depasture stock on the Forest. It is understood that at the present time the couple do not have access to back-up grazing and in any event there is no wish to increase the number of stock depastured on the Forest at the present. For this reason the application was refused.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.50 p.m.