

MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 19th September 2012 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
	Mr A Gerrelli	Elected Verderer
	Miss D Macnair MBE	Elected Verderer
	Mr C Maton	National Park Appointed Verderer
	Mr B Dowsett	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Co-opted 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 (to 2012/6167)

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2012/6226	WELCOME TO MR BARRY DOWSETT	DISCHARGE
	The Official Verderer welcomed Barry Dowsett to the Court	
2012/6227	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	RESUME
	The Minutes of the Court held on Wednesday, 18 th July 2012 were approved and signed by the Official Verderer.	
2012/6228	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RESUME
	The Official Verderer, the Elected Verderers, including Mr Readhead together with Mrs Thorne and Mr Maton all declared an interest in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.	
	Mr Gerrelli declared an interest in matters concerning campsites.	
	Later in the meeting, Mr Maton also declared an interest in the timber extraction work being carried out under contract on some of the HLS Stream Restoration Projects.	
2012/6229	CONDITION OF STOCK	RESUME
	The Agisters are now well into the drifts. The Head Agister said that overall the condition of stock is very, very good and he is very pleased. He added that he has never seen the Forest so green, with so much food for the stock. With very few exceptions, i.e. older animals and one or two that have clearly had something wrong with them, the ponies look exceptional, as do the cattle.	
	There are very few pigs on the Forest so far and there are not many acorns.	
2012/6230	PONY DRIFTS	DISCHARGE
	As a result of the excellent condition of the ponies, the drifts this year are proving more difficult to manage. With the ponies fit and well, and with fewer foals running on the Forest they are moving faster. The Head Agister said he is thinking that it may be necessary to make some changes to the way the drifts are run, and some changes may be needed	

in order to make the drifts safer and more effective.

Mr Deakin said that a review of the drifts can be held at the end of the drift season in a Staff Committee meeting.

2012/6231 BEAULIEU ROAD SALES DISCHARGE

The reduction in foals has had a knock-on effect on the Beaulieu Road Pony Sales with fewer entries this autumn. Mr Readhead reported that he has had enquiries from Ireland, France and other parts of the country. The auctioneer is, however, reported to be worried about the reduced number of entries to the sale and the effect that will have on revenue.

Mr Readhead said that a television production company is attending the sale tomorrow with a view to making a film about a foal that they are following as part of the series on British National Parks.

2012/6232 STOCK LOSING CONDITION AND REMOVED FROM THE FOREST RESUME

JULY

Mares with foals	1
Total year to date	208
Total year to date previous year	265

AUGUST

Mares with foals	1
Total year to date	209
Total year to date previous year	267

2012/6233 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE RESUME

	Forest	Common	Total
Ponies	4071	792	4863
Cattle	2278	879	3157
Donkeys	86	68	154
Pigs	0	105	105
Sheep	0	136	136
TOTALS	6435	1980	8415
Total PCD	6435	1739	8174

2012/6234 BYELAW ENFORCEMENT RESUME

There are no byelaw enforcement issues at present.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2012/6235 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS RESUME

The Announcements and Decisions were approved.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Mike Seddon, Acting Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest
Mr Mark Street, Area Land Agent (New Forest)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DECISIONS BY THE OFFICIAL VERDERER

Good morning and welcome to you all after the summer break.

2012/6236 FORESTRY COMMISSION APPOINTED VERDERER

At our July Court, we said goodbye to Kevin Penfold who acted as Deputy Surveyor for 15 months. Today we welcome back Mike Seddon who has returned to his role as Deputy Surveyor after his interesting time on the Secretariat of the Independent Panel on Forestry.

We also said farewell in July to Ralph Montagu after his nine years of service to this Court, and today we welcome his successor Barry Dowsett. Although appointed by the Forestry Commission, Barry is of course an independent Verderer. Barry was a Government Research micro biologist and his work included two tours of Iraq as a weapons inspector. He has lived locally since 1958 and has been riding on the New Forest since 1970. Barry is involved in woodland management of 1,800 acres at Bentley Wood near Salisbury.

2012/6237 VISIT TO THE NEW FOREST BY HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN AND THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE RIDE

In late July we had the privilege of Her Majesty the Queen visiting us at the New Forest Show. The five Agisters were mounted on their horses and escorted the Queen around the show rings. I then had the honour of introducing the Agisters to Her Majesty. After that, I presented the Queen with a whip, a gift from the Verderers and Commoners of the New Forest. In fact two whips were made. The fallow buck antler used in the making of the whips was from Frame Wood in the south of the forest, with a shaft of blackthorn from Sloden in the north of the forest. I would particularly like to thank Keith Fleetwood for making these whips, and I commend his skilled workmanship.

The second whip was carried as the talisman on the ride around the boundary of the New Forest on the weekend of the 4th and 5th August to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. The perambulation started from the Verderers Hall on the Saturday morning, with the Agisters and me riding from here to Bolton's Bench where I read a letter from the Queen and passed the letter and whip to the next team of riders. The Head Agister and I rode the whip back here on the Sunday afternoon. Thank you to the Agisters. This second whip will now hang in the Verderers Hall as a celebration of the Queen's visit to us and her Diamond Jubilee.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2012/6238 THE ROAD ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JULY AND AUGUST 2012

July

The Agisters attended 6 accidents in July. 2 ponies died and 1 pony was injured. There was 1 Hit and Run reported, but no pony was found. 5 accidents occurred in the dark all involved cars. 2 were local drivers. This compares with 11 accidents last July in which 4 animals died and 3 were injured.

For brevity's sake, the Clerk did not read out the details of the individual accidents in July but went on to report on the more recent accidents which occurred in August as follows:-

August

The Agisters attended 12 accidents in August. 5 ponies died and 3 ponies were injured. 9 accidents occurred in the dark and 7 of these involved cars and 1 a moped. 4 involved local motorists. This compares with 17 accidents last August in which 4 animals died and 6 were injured.

On 1st August – At Setthorns, Sway a driver swerved to avoid one pony, but collided with another following behind. Despite the Agister and police searching the location at the time nothing was found. However the following morning an injured pony was located near Yew Tree Car Park by the Agister and dispatched due to its injuries.

On 3rd August – On the B3056 at Matley a driver collided with and killed a foal.

On 8th August – A driver reported striking a pony at Ipers Bridge Road, Hilltop causing substantial damage to the vehicle. The injured pony was wearing a reflective collar and was treated by a vet who was passing by.

On 9th August – A cow was badly injured and had to be destroyed, due to a collision on the B3055 at Pondhead. The driver was from Warrington in Cheshire.

On 12th August – A Forestry Commission Keeper reported a vehicle striking a cow near Stockley Cottage and then driving off. Unfortunately the Black Angus had to be dispatched by the Agister,

On 15th August – A motorist reported seeing a moped rider collide with a cow at Main Road, east Boldre. The rider sustained injuries, but no injured cow was found.

On 17th August – A driver clipped a pony whilst taking action dipping their headlights on being flashed by an oncoming motorist.

On 21st August – in the evening a pony was hit by a tractor on the Main Road at East Boldre. The pony was dispatched due to injuries sustained.

On 28th August – a bay pony wearing a reflective collar was injured at Hatchet Lane, Beaulieu.

On 29th August – Two separate incidents were reported in this evening. A driver collided with a pony at Hill Top Beaulieu, injuring it on impact, it was destroyed by the Agister. Also a filly was injured via a hit and run and found at Shepherds Gutter Car Park.

On 31st August – Several ponies were 'nudged' by a driver whilst passing in their vehicle.

PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR OF THE NEW FOREST

2012/6239 PANNAGE

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 commenced on Saturday 8 September 2012 and that it will end on Sunday 11 November 2012, 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

There were no presentments from the public at this Court.

PRESENTATIONS

2012/6240 THE ROWL KITCHER CUP

In 2007, we resurrected the annual award of the Rowl Kitcher Cup which was kindly donated some years ago by Mr Rowl Kitcher's family. The Cup was to be awarded each year to the owner of the highest scoring 2 or 3 year old colt at the stallion inspections held in the spring.

This year I am very pleased to announce that the Rowl Kitcher Cup has been won by Halestorm Branston Pickle who was the highest scoring 2 year old colt presented to the Verderers this year for selection as a potential stallion for Forest.

Pickle is jointly owned by Miss Nicky Stevens and Mr Jan Puzio. He was bred by Mr Puzio and he is out of Wellhouse Betsy who won the Life Rosebowl last year.

Unfortunately Mr Puzio, who is a local equine vet, is working and is therefore unable to attend Court today. However, I am very pleased that the Head Agister will present the cup to Nicky Stevens, who I understand did all the preparatory work and presented Pickle on inspection day.

2012/6241 PRESENTATION OF THE LIFE ROSEBOWL 2012

Under the New Forest LIFE Project Pony Premium Scheme, which ran for four years from 1998, mares were inspected annually and the owner of the pony judged to be the best each year, was presented with the Rosebowl.

The LIFE Scheme has long since ended and for some years the Rosebowl gathered dust in the Verderers' Office.

The New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society then suggested that the Rosebowl should be awarded to the owner of the top-scoring mare in the annual round of Forest mare grading that is carried out each summer. We are pleased to support the Society's Grading and Elite Scheme, the aim of which is to recognise and reward top quality ponies of good breed type. Registered mares who are a minimum of four years old and have had at least one foal are eligible.

Forest run mares are inspected on the Forest during the summer and assessed individually by three Society Breed Panel judges. They are scored on conformation, breed type and movement at walk and trot. The pass mark is 70%. If they achieve this mark, they are graded and awarded points which are entered into the Society's Elite Scheme.

This year the top mare is Oakfield Daydream, a 6 year old chestnut mare, owned by Mr Roy Hawkins. We are very pleased that Miss Dionis Macnair is going to present Mr Hawkins with the Rosebowl for the second time in three years.

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

NEW SUBMISSIONS AND OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2012/6242 RABBIT PROOF MESHING METHOD TO REPAIR AND PROTECT TWO DISCHARGE
DAMAGED SAMs (Scheduled Archaeological Monuments)

The Forestry Commission proposal to preserve two unique SAMs, one at Whitefield Moor and the other at Beaulieu Heath which have been damaged by rabbits, was approved.

The proposed method, using wire netting covered in soil seeded with locally occurring grass species and surrounded by temporary stock/rabbit fencing was set out in a paper dated 29/08/2012 prepared by Mr Michael Ndeze. The approval is subject to the usual conditions regarding satisfactory reinstatement, safe working conditions, compensation for loss of grazing etc.

2012/6243 SEMBCORP BOURNEMOUTH WATER CONNECTION – SHIRLEY DISCHARGE
HOLMES, SWAY

The proposal for a new water supply pipe to a field close to the railway bridge at Shirley Holmes was approved subject to the usual three conditions.

2012/6244 SEMBCORP BOURNEMOUTH WATER – NEW WATER MAIN DISCHARGE
REPLACEMENT AT EAST BOLDRE

The proposal to replace the water main which serves properties in East Boldre was approved subject to the usual three conditions. It is understood that most of the work will be in the highway but where the grass verges are involved, stop cock covers and markers etc., must be fitted flush to the ground.

2012/6245 SCOTTISH AND SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY (SSE) UNDERGROUND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO ROOKS ACRE, BISTERNE CLOSE, BURLEY DISCHARGE

This proposal was approved subject to the usual three conditions.

2012/6246 SSE UNDERGROUND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO CHERRY TREE COTTAGE, WOODGREEN DISCHARGE

This proposal was also approved, subject to the usual three conditions.

2012/6247 ROUNDHILL WATER TOWER REPLACEMENT, ROUNDHILL CAMPSITE, BEAULIEU RESUME

The water tower at Roundhill dates from 1940. It has been identified as being beyond economical repair and unsuitable for the storage of potable water. Sembcorp Bournemouth Water has, therefore, submitted a proposal to replace the tower with a similar structure.

The Court considered the proposal but decided that it would like the water company to investigate the feasibility of an underground reservoir rather than replacing a structure which is out of place and visually intrusive in the Forest and the request for consent was therefore refused. Mr Street will go back to the water company and ask for proposals to be drawn up and submitted for an underground reservoir.

Action MStr

2012/6248 ROUNDHILL WATER TOWER ELECTRICITY POLE RELOCATION DISCHARGE

This proposal was withdrawn as it is related to the replacement of the water tower.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COURT

2012/6249 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE PLAN RESUME

The Clerk has been unable to progress this matter with the Highway Authority. Mr Maton offered to take up the matter with Cllr Ken Thornber. Due to the forthcoming planned re-surfacing of the B3078 Roger Penny Way, the Maintenance Plan is felt to be important as it will contain prescriptions for a variety of works which have to be carried out on the roads within the Forest – including resurfacing which is frequently problematic.

Action CM

2012/6250 CAMPSITE SURVEY RESUME

Mr Street reported that the Forestry Commission is still waiting for the electronic file from Mr Jonathan Cox of the New Forest Association.

Action MStr

2012/6251 OFFICE MOVE DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer and the Clerk thanked the Forestry Commission for facilitating the office move to the bright, newly refurbished and more suitable accommodation next door.

2012/6252 HAMPSHIRE STREET LIGHTING PFI – STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING RESUME

Mr Dowsett said that he has familiarised himself with the proposals and will attend the first stakeholder briefing which is due to be held on 16th October. The proposals to replace street lighting throughout the Forest do not appear to be of concern but the Court does have a number of points on which it will be seeking clarification and assurance. For example, sodium lighting is considered to be unsuitable for use on the Forest; light should be directed downwards and the design of lamp-posts and lamps, which should switch off in the small hours, should be in keeping with the traditional character of the Forest.

Action BD

2012/6253 SEWAGE DISCHARGE FROM FERNYCROFT DISCHARGE

In August, the Forestry Commission Estates Keeper visited the site together with a representative of the Environment Agency. A fault with the system has been identified. Formal notice is being served to rectify and improve the system which dates from the 1970's.

2012/6254 SWIMMING POOL IN MUDDY LANE DISCHARGE

There is no evidence a present that the swimming pool water has been discharged on to the Forest. Doing so is a breach of environment regulations and is not acceptable on an SSSI. Swimming pool water must be taken away by tanker. The Forestry Commission should be advised if there is evidence that any swimming pool water is being discharged onto the Forest.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2012/6255 FLETCHERS THORNS CROSSING DISCHARGE

The Deputy Surveyor reported that work on this crossing has now been completed.

2012/6256 SNAGGING LIST RESUME

The Deputy Surveyor will provide a copy of the snagging list to the Clerk after the meeting.

During a discussion about the removal of cut timber from some of the stream restoration sites, Mr Clive Maton declared an interest as he has the contract for some of the work.

The Court was concerned that the floodplain for Queen's Meadow has not been properly cleared of cut timber. The Deputy Surveyor said that some substantial trees fallen deadwood had been cut up to make way for the works. Only large pieces of timber should be left with the smaller pieces removed. Mr Maton confirmed that he is still removing wood from the river.

Action CM

The Court expressed concern that some cut timber has been deliberately placed / distributed north of Queen's Meadow, where the channels have been filled.

The Deputy Surveyor said that he believes the wood is being removed, via Mr Maton's contract, and he invited Mr Pasmore to inspect the site within the next 10 days as, if there is still material to be removed, it needs to be done whilst the weather is dry.

Action AHP

Mr Deakin commented that this is an important issue which was the subject of intense discussions during the consultation stage of the project.

The request to remove cut timber from Ocknell, made the day prior to the Court, will be added to the snagging list.

Action MS

It was agreed the snagging list should be restricted to matters concerning Forest management and should not include the Estates issues which are on a separate list managed by Mr Street.

2012/6257 PENNY MOOR

RESUME

Work on the middle part of this scheme has been halted as Mr Neil Sanderson has found an important collection of rare plants in the ditch. The Forestry Commission is waiting for Natural England to decide which takes precedence – stream restoration or the rare plants.

Action MS

2012/6258 LATCHMORE

RESUME

The question of whether planning permission is needed for all stream restoration works has yet to be determined. The Deputy Surveyor confirmed once again that it is the view of the Forestry Commission that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required for Latchmore. The Forestry Commission has decided to make a voluntary planning application in respect of the Latchmore restoration project – it has not been told it must apply. The Deputy Surveyor pointed out that the Forestry Commission asked twice whether planning permission would be required and no response was received. Work on the various schemes undertaken to date has been in good faith.

If planning permission is required, it will have much wider implications and could result in virtually no engineering works not covered by permitted development rights being undertaken on the Forest until permission is obtained. There is insufficient money available for planning applications to be made for everything. This new potential requirement for planning permission could affect the Forestry Commission's ability to properly maintain the New Forest.

ENCROACHMENTS OF INTEREST TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2012/6259 UPDATE ON ENCROACHMENTS LIST

RESUME

No new encroachments have been identified. Mr Street updated the Court on those that are outstanding.

Action M Str

2012/6260 GRAHAM LODGE

DISCHARGE

The Forestry Commission will remove the turning circle created by the occupiers and re-instate the ground. The occupiers will be charged for the work.

Action MStr

2012/6261 DAMAGE TO GRAZING OPPOSITE ROSE COTTAGE

DISCHARGE

Miss Macnair expressed concern at the damage which is being caused to the grass opposite Rose Cottage by vehicles. Mr Street commented that this is not an encroachment but an Open Forest management issue. He went on to say that once all the stones which have been placed outside properties by residents have been removed, work will be necessary to protect the areas that the stones were designed to protect.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF CONCERN TO THE FORESTRY COMMISSION

2012/6262 FLY TIPPING & FUNGHI COLLECTING DISCHARGE

Mr Street reported that there has been an increase in incidents of flytipping in the past weeks and also commercial exploitation of the Forest's funghi. Both these issues are damaging to the SSSI and are taken extremely seriously.

2012/6263 SIGNS ON THE OPEN FOREST DISCHARGE

In reply to a query Mr Street advised that some temporary signage for events is erected with the consent of the Forestry Commission. One of the conditions is that the signs are removed promptly after the event has taken place. Signs that are erected without permission may be removed by the Keepers or other Forestry Commission staff. The Court asked that the Keepers be reminded to remove illegal signs.

2012/6264 CYCLING EVENTS AND THE DRIFTS RESUME

The Official Verderer expressed concern at a potentially serious incident during the Woodfidley Drift where a group of children on bicycles came out of an inclosure at Denny Lodge just as ponies were being driven through. The Clerk explained that a check had been carried out with the organisers of the cycle event and it had been understood that the event was using inclosure tracks only. The Clerk said she will discuss the incident with Mrs Jayne Albery who issues permissions.

Action SW

The Ipley Drift also coincides with another cycling event despite efforts to try to re-arrange dates so that the events avoid one another. The Clerk commented that during September and October there are numerous cycling events and it is proving impossible to find dates for drifts that do not conflict with something.

The Deputy Surveyor pointed out that the Forestry Commission cannot control events that it knows nothing about. Not all cycling events involve Crown Land and in those cases, the organisers frequently fail to advise the Forestry Commission that the event is taking place. Mr Deakin asked if cycle event checkpoints on the Crown Land require consent. The Deputy Surveyor confirmed formal consent is required.

Mr Maton said that the National Park Authority could be more involved in co-ordinating cycling events and he offered to raise the matter with the relevant people. It was also felt that the Recreation Management Strategy Working Group should be able to assist as several cycling representatives sit on it.

Action CM

2012/6265 DUR HILL CABLE RESUME

Miss Macnair reported that the telephone cable on Dur Hill is now even more dangerous as there is now a loop in the cable in which an animal could easily become entangled. Mr Street said he spoke to the Estates Keeper this morning but so far British Telecom have failed to take any action to resolve the problem. It is thought there may be another similar problem at Woodgreen but the precise location is not known at present.

Action M Str

2012/6266 SWINGS AT THE RED SHOOT DISCHARGE

Mrs Thorne reported that there are now three tyre swings suspended from trees close to the Red Shoot Public House. Mr Street said he will take action to get them removed.

2012/6267 DRIFT FENCING DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin expressed disappointment that some drift fencing that the Forestry Commission had promised to erect had not been done in time for the drifts. This was due to a misunderstanding regarding the tendering process for works of a certain value.

In addition, Mr Deakin was concerned that inclosure fences which are no longer required by the Forestry Commission may be dismantled without reference to the Agisters. Some of these fences are essential for the success of the drifts and it was understood that agreement had been reached some time ago about the future maintenance of such fences if they were left in situ.

A third concern was that at Crab Hat, a fence has been dismantled but the wire and posts have been left in a heap which is dangerous to stock which may become entangled in it.

In response, the Deputy Surveyor said he would ensure the old fence is removed as soon as possible.

As respects the removal of redundant inclosure fencing, a map exists which shows which fences need to be retained and who agreed to take on responsibility for ongoing maintenance. Mr Seddon said the map will be located and checked before fences are removed.

2012/6268 CONCRETE BLOCKS AT LATCHMOOR BRIDGE, BROCKENHURST DISCHARGE

The concrete channel/cable blocks have not been removed and Mr Street promised to arrange for someone to collect them.

The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Street left the meeting

ENCROACHMENTS

2012/6269 ENCROACHMENT IN TANNERS LANE DISCHARGE

The Clerk reported that the CDA is now dealing with this encroachment.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING

2012/6270 INDEPENDENT PANEL ON FORESTRY DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer reported that a response to the Report has been sent both to a named individual at Defra as well as the address on the website. It is understood the Government will respond to comments received sometime next year.

2012/6271 NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK OPERATIONAL PLAN RESUME

The Recreation Management Strategy Working Group is no longer tasked with re-defining the tranquil areas. This task is likely to be referred to the National Park's Landscape Officer.

Action
OV/SW

2012/6272 VERDERERS' ELECTION RESUME
February
2013

Reforming the regulations proved too complicated to undertake prior to this year's election. The Electoral Reform Service is assisting with the preparation of the Electoral Register.

The Under Sheriff has confirmed that the two most frequent issues which are raised with him are the minimum voting age of 21 years and a request for a postal vote.

It was agreed that after this election, further consideration will be given to how amendments to the regulations might be achieved.

2012/6273 WELFARE TOUR OF THE FOREST DISCHARGE

The Clerk confirmed that the Welfare Tour will take place on Friday 14th December.

2012/6274 CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING AND REDUNDANT AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS – PROPOSAL TO DE-REGULATE DISCHARGE

Mrs Thorne reported that a response has been sent to a consultation on proposals to remove the current planning requirements in respect of a change of use to redundant agricultural buildings. Mrs Thorne felt that particularly in the Forest, the retention of such buildings for agricultural use is essential because of their value to commoning. The Court thanked Mrs Thorne for submitting the response before the deadline.

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

2012/6275 HLS / VGS UPDATE RESUME

The Official Verderer gave a general update on the HLS/VGS. He advised the Court that he has instigated a new system whereby minutes of meetings are circulated as soon as possible. This will enable actions to be initiated promptly. The next meeting is in the first week of October.

The increase in cattle on the Forest means that more than 30% of the depastured stock is now cattle and therefore an application has been made for the additional Cattle Gazing Supplement that has been offered by Natural England.

MATTERS ARISING FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2012/6276 RECREATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY WORKING GROUP DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin reported on the recent RMSWG meeting. He said under the new Chairman, Mr Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre, the terms of reference are being revisited. The cycling representatives have asked several questions and Mr Crosthwaite Eyre has offered to meet them.

Remedial work on erosion was also discussed following the very effective work that the Forestry Commission has undertaken. It is understood the FC will be applying to the HLS for funding to carry out further work.

2012/6277 ROCKFORD FARM RESUME

Mrs Westerhoff reported that a small informal committee has been set up consisting of representatives of Hampshire County Council the National Trust, the New Forest Association, the National Park Authority, the Commoners' Defence Association and the Verderers to discuss whether it is feasible to try to secure some of the land at Rockford Farm which is currently for sale. Sadly it is felt that the price will be out of the reach of any of the organisations, or combination of organisations which would seek to acquire some land for use in perpetuity by commoners as back-up grazing. The Farm is offered in three lots and is for sale by public auction, due to be held on the 4th October.

Although the group feel this particular farm is out of reach, discussions are taking place with a view to agreeing proper terms of reference in order that other land may be considered for purchase in the future.

FINANCIAL REPORT

2012/6278 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR JULY & AUGUST 2012 RESUME

The financial statement for July and August 2012 was approved.

STAFF MATTERS (including the Staff Committee)

TRAINING

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There were no matters under the above headings to discuss.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2012/6279 LAND OUTSIDE THE ALICE LISLE PUBLIC HOUSE RESUME

Mrs Thorne reported that there are two tree guards in a very poor condition outside the Alice Lisle. Mrs Thorne said the tree guards are a hazard to stock. The land belongs to Cemex.

Although it was felt it may be difficult to arrange for the tree guards to be removed, the Clerk said she will see what she can do.

Action SW

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 12.51 hrs.