

**Minutes of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 at 9.30 a.m.
in the Verderers Hall, the King's House, Lyndhurst**

PRESENT	Mr E Heron	Official Verderer
	Mr R Deakin	Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman
	Dr G Ferris	Co-opted Elected Verderer
	Mr A H Pasmore	Senior Elected Verderer
	Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer
	Mr R Stride	Elected Verderer
	Mr C Chatters	Natural England Appointed Verderer
	Mr M Gammon	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
	Miss A Sevier MBE	National Park Appointed Verderer
	Mr R Manley	DEFRA Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J R Gerrelli	Head Agister
APOLOGIES	Mr R Manley from after minute No 13380	DEFRA Appointed Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2024/13335 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The minutes of the last Court, held on Wednesday 17th January 2024 were approved, and signed by the Official Verderer.

2024/13336 NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

There were no new declarations of interest.

2024/13337 CONDITION OF STOCK – REPORT BY THE HEAD AGISTER RESUME

The Head Agister said that the continuing wet weather is taking a toll on the condition of stock. From now until the end of April is always considered to be the 'hungry time' on the Forest. This year, although it looks green, there is very little food on the Forest for the animals. As always young ponies who are changing their teeth and mares with foals still on them are the animals which the weather is impacting the most. The Agisters and commoners are busy removing animals as required. The Head Agister said that at the moment he feels they are not overwhelmed.

The condition of stock over the next few weeks and months will be very much weather dependent. A dry spell is desperately needed.

Mr Deakin expressed concern that with the Forest looking green, some commoners may be tempted to turn out animals too early. This is always a problem but may be worse this year.

2024/13338 STRANGLES RESUME

Strangles rumbles on with a few animals in various areas of the Forest showing symptoms. The latest new cases have been seen on Holmsley and Long Cross.

2024/13339 CATTLE

DISCHARGE

The TB testing window is coming to an end. The Agisters have been busy marking cattle and helping commoners when their animals are TB tested. There is not a huge number of cattle on the Forest, only those whose owners have feeding areas. Those are much fewer now.

The Head Agister left the meeting.

2024/13340 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

RESUME

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Forest Ponies	136	104
Forest Cattle	60	7
Forest Donkeys	0	0
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	196	111
Common Ponies	9	10
Common Cattle	0	121
Common Donkeys	0	0
Common Pigs	0	0
Common Sheep	0	0
Total Common Stock	9	131
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	196	111
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	9	131
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	205	242
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	205	242

A discussion place on stock numbers. The Official Verderer said he struggles to explain to other people and organisations, why it is believed commoning is in decline when the number of animals has increased.

Mr Deakin said that commoners are holding onto animals, particularly cattle, because they believe a new headage subsidy will be introduced. The cattle allowance paid last year may also have encouraged some commoners to keep animals that they may otherwise have sold.

Long-standing commoners will probably continue but some are reducing their stock. Some commoners have had cattle marked in order to obtain a receipt in case it is needed to claim subsidies later but they have then sold some, and retained fewer animals. Those cattle may never be turned out and therefore they never benefit the Forest.

Keeping cattle requires significant investment in equipment and, unlike with ponies, if commoners get out of cattle, getting them back is much more difficult. A lot of the cattle are owned by a few commoners and many are getting older. It is very expensive for young commoners to get into cattle.

2024/13341 BREACHES OF THE BYELAWS RESUME

There are no current breaches of the byelaws. Mr Deakin said that all the 2 year old colts that were at large have been caught. He added that this is thanks to the Agisters' efforts and a small number of commoners who helped more than they strictly needed to.

ENCROACHMENTS NOT INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2024/13342 SHOBLEY/FOREST OAKS RESUME

The deadline for the removal of the illegal fencing and other items has not yet been reached and nothing has yet been removed. If the agreed actions do not take place, the land owner will be in breach of his agreement with Natural England. NE is monitoring the situation and if needed, will make a judgement once the deadline is passed.

2024/13343 NEWLY ERECTED FENCE IN WOODLANDS ROAD, BARTLEY DISCHARGE

A new security fence has been erected for which the land owner has applied for retrospective planning permission. Whilst construction was taking place, the property owner received some advice from the Forestry England Keeper, Mr Patrick Cook and Mr Deakin. Despite the advice, the fence has encroached on the open wastes of the Forest in a couple of places and the CDA and Court have submitted objections to the planning application on that basis. It is thought the 8ft fence is out of keeping with the traditional character of the Forest and breaches planning guidance.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

2024/13344 ASHURST HOSPITAL RESUME

The Official Verderer has yet to respond to NHS Property Services.

2024/13345 THE NATIONAL TRUST RESUME

A response to the OV's letter which he wrote in November 2023 has not been received. The Clerk will chase up the NT. Action Clerk

2024/13346 STALLION GRAZING RESUME

Nothing more has been heard from the National Trust. At Cadland, it has been possible to take up an offer of some additional temporary grazing.

OPEN COURT

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Craig Harrison, Deputy Surveyor
Mr Paul Grugeon, Land Agent

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS

2024/13347 ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS & AVERAGE SPEED CAMERAS

We are still seeking clarification from the Department of Transport regarding the status of their Circular 1/2007, as that is the cornerstone of Hampshire Constabulary's Joint Operations Unit for Roads Policing's (JOU) objection to the introduction of Average Speed Cameras. Hampshire Constabulary's other comment, that third-party funding is not acceptable, is surprising given the funding accepted by the Constabulary over a number of years in support of additional deployments of the mobile speed camera van within the Forest. We are expecting confirmation that local police and highway authorities should be adapting Department of Transport guidance in light of local circumstances.

We have extended an invitation to the Chief Constable and Head of Roads Policing to meet with the Court.

2024/13348 CONFLICTS WITH COMMONERS' ANIMALS WITHIN THE NEW FOREST

Everyone agrees that greater effort must be made to reduce the risk of conflict between animals and people in the Forest. A great deal of discussion has and continues to take place, within the organisations and agencies with responsibilities for the management of the Forest, but the problems persist. We are hoping to arrange a meeting of key people from Camping in the New Forest, Forestry England and the other organisations to try to find an effective way forward.

Greater public education is essential. We are seeking a formal strategy, to be put in place before the start of this year's camping season. The risk to people, commoners and the stock cannot remain at the current level. The New Forest National Park Authority will be asked to assist with effective communication.

2024/13349 ILLEGAL ENCROACHMENT AT BARTLEY - FOREST GLADE HOUSE

It is not for the Court to decide the way forward to resolve this dispute. A land swap will be considered, should Forestry England bring forward a proposal that is supported by all landowners concerned. However, it will have to be on a value basis not area for area. The Court has generally only agreed land swaps in exceptional circumstance and where such a swap is in the public, rather than merely a private interest.

2024/13350 ICE CREAM VAN AT BOLTONS BENCH

It is Forestry England which grants licences for ice cream concessions, not the Verderers. We understand the Deputy Surveyor will be making a presentment today. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with Forestry England, the Verderers may not unreasonably withhold their consent for ice cream sales. Matters we consider when agreeing suitable locations include the impact on livestock, risk of increased littering and the effect on the local amenity.

2024/13351 MARKING FEES FOR THIS YEAR 2024

We would like to remind commoners that as announced previously, unfortunately marking fees have had to increase this year.

We are receiving some fees at last year's rate which is causing difficulties for those commoners who are having to make supplementary additional payments as well as our office. The fees for 2024 are on our website and can be found under Announcements. They are also on our Facebook page.

2024/13352 LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

The Verderers would like to remind members of the public that management of the depastured stock is a year round activity and not, as for example in the case of ponies, restricted to the drift season. The office, Agisters and Commoners, all often receive complaints from members of the public when they are inconvenienced by both essential and sometimes routine activities.

Animals are often caught by stealth, using food perhaps moved daily to move them gradually to a pen or the home holding. In the case of cattle, this can result in large numbers congregating in unusual places. More often ponies are caught by being driven to a pen on horseback. It is not possible to erect signage to warn of this activity, as it is not possible to predict where the animal will be found, or in which direction it will choose to try and make an escape. Pens are located in many places, and a decision regarding which one to use will be made once the chase is underway.

These activities must take place to ensure that welfare standards are maintained to a high standard, and that DEFRA requirements are met. They may involve just Agisters, a team of Commoners and Agisters, or Commoners alone. We will do their best not to alarm members of the public, but animals can be unpredictable, and unfortunately there is no longer quiet times when any part of the Forest is devoid of visitors. It should be noted that Commoners also have a "day job" and they have to tend to their depastured stock's needs mostly at weekends.

Ponies, in particular, will sometimes gallop about for no obvious reason, because of their flight instinct. Whether being driven or not, the advice is always to stand still if there are no bushes or trees nearby behind which to seek shelter. It is very rare for a pony to deliberately run into a person. They will generally do all they can to go round you.

In all circumstances, it is important to allow the Forest animals plenty of space.

2024/13353 GARDEN WASTE

Because of the mild winters we are now experiencing early growth on shrubs and hedging is common place. A commoner has recently collected and removed a large bag of yew clippings from the open Forest on the side of the road at Stoney Cross. Yew is lethal to animals and should never be left where Forest stock can eat it.

Lawns are also growing at this time of year now and lawn mowings are another type of garden waste that is extremely dangerous to ponies and donkeys.

Discarding garden waste of any kind by dumping it on the Forest constitutes fly tipping and is illegal.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2024/13354 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JANUARY 2024

The Agisters attended 2 accidents in January compared with 8 in January last year.

1 donkey was killed and nothing was found injured following a report of a pony being involved in an accident with a car.

1 accident happened in daylight, and the other in the dark.

Both drivers involved reported having been involved in an accident with a commoners' animal.

The total number of commoners animals killed and injured this year is 1.

PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR

2024/13355 MOBILE REFRESHMENT SALES

'A number of presentments and wider commentary have been made in recent months regarding the sale of ice creams and other refreshments at a small number of Forestry England car parks. In response to these, I thought it might be useful to provide some information on how Forestry England cares for the New Forest landscape and funds the facilities we provide.

We carry out a wide range of work to ensure the ecological importance of the New Forest is protected and enhanced. We also provide numerous facilities to ensure everyone spending time here can access the benefits of being in nature and provide information so they understand how to enjoy it responsibly.

The vast majority of Forestry England's work is self-funded. Government funding has significantly declined over the past 15 years and now only 12% of our income comes directly from government. All of the funds we raise go directly back into caring for the Forests we look after and providing facilities.

In the New Forest, given the level of protection and support needed for such a special landscape, we spend far more than the revenue we generate. Our work has for many years now been largely supported by funds generated by Forestry England in other parts of the country. This is not a wholly sustainable position and has been recognised by all local forest organisations as needing to be addressed. Specifically, the Recreational Management Strategy for the New Forest includes an action to increase revenues in order to fund environmental and social improvements.

In addition to our forestry and habitat restoration work, in the New Forest we also look after a network of 130 car parks, maintain hundreds of miles of trails, paths and cycle routes, and run visitor-focussed ranger patrols. These activities all play a significant role in making the New Forest a popular destination for visitors, local people and residents which in turn helps support tourism and the local economy.

Specifically in Lyndhurst, the ice cream sales at Bolton's Bench help to support the maintenance of this large car park which plays a key role in supporting parking for the village itself and visitors to the New Forest. The high demand for parking at this location brings with it significant maintenance cost. For example, the most recent tarmac repairs required at this site cost in excess of £80,000. The site is also supported by regular patrols providing educational information, including Public Space Protection Orders, plus regular emptying of bins, litter picking and other maintenance.

To be able to continue to provide these services, and effectively manage the visitor numbers they support, we have to generate revenue. Mobile refreshment sales in some of our car parks have for many years been just one way that we raise funds. These sales will be available at 17 of our 130 car parks. All locations are carefully picked and chosen where existing facilities are in place and the areas are more suitable and robust for visitors.

The tender for these services this year has included a number of changes including looking for more sustainable providers with a positive environmental and social impact. It also highlights opportunities for local business and local produce to be included in the offer.

We have encouraged local refreshment businesses to consider this opportunity. Members of our team have contacted businesses in Lyndhurst High Street and beyond to make them aware of the tender opportunity.

Those companies who are successful will be contractually required to meet conditions around managing litter and helping us to deliver key educational messages including not feeding or petting livestock and the Public Space Protection Order rules.'

PRESENTMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

2024/13356 PLAN B

Presentment by Mr Andrew Parry-Norton, Chairman, The New Forest Commoners Defence Association

'Good morning official Verderer, Verderers and court members

The New Forest Commoner's Defence Association, Andrew Parry- Norton (NFCDA Chairman)

As I am sure you are aware the Forest Farming Group is now making progress with the PA2 study due to start soon. This study on conclusion, will hopefully give us an indication of which scheme would work best for the Forest.

The potential scheme should deliver justifiable rewards for the dedication and hard work the Commoners put into caring for their stock. The foundations of the Forest ecology and landscape are dependent on commoning.

Unfortunately, the future still remains far from certain for Commoning, politicians unlike Commoners never seem to keep their jobs for long. A new Government could trigger a change in funding or schemes.

Therefore, we must have a plan B in the event plan A doesn't deliver for the Commoners. This will require outside of the box thinking by all the Forest Organisations especially the Verderers.

The commoners create the landscape that attracts 17.5 million visitor days a year, a 500 million pound industry, according to figures from Go New New Forest; Tourism might be a potential revenue source but we need to explore all options.

The CDA will remain fully committed to finding a suitable scheme but strongly recommend the Verderers work with us to look for a plan B. The Commoners deserve a secure viable future; let's not trust Defra to supply all the answers.'

2024/13357 **FOOD VANS IN FORESTRY CAR PARKS**
Presentment by Mr Brian Tarnoff

'I wanted to respond directly to the deputy surveyor's presentment, because there are so many ideas in it, that need to be smothered now, as soon as possible.

We've just had an announcement that you are processing the whole issue of interaction with livestock. I stood here probably a little over 10 years ago to counter a similar scheme where they wanted to put shop facilities in the campsites.

To bring in a source of food and litter into our carparks throughout this Forest is counterproductive to the issues we're currently facing.

And yes, I understand the whole funding issue, but there's a legal obligation for Forestry to deal with the habitat and the heritage issues of the Forest, and central government is not funding their work in this endeavour sufficiently. That is the crux of the problem, not putting them in a position where they have to engage in activities in order to create revenue streams that are from activities that are contrary to the mission of preserving the forest.

There is the mandate that Forestry has to manage the Forest, which places the conservation of the Forest above the revenue seeking activities.
Thank you very much.'

The Head Agister closed the Court

IN COMMITTEE (in the Library)

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2024/13358 **MOBILE REFRESHMENT SALES**

RESUME

Whilst the Deputy Surveyor's presentment set out the reasons why Forestry England wishes to expand the current ice cream sales concessions, the presentment did not seek Verderers' consent for these sales and sites. The Court suggested that as this is a contentious issue, more detail is required for public consideration, including the full list of sites. In response, the DS pointed out that all the details are contained in the tender offer on Forestry England's website. The Court, however, regrettably felt that is not sufficient.

Action DS

The Deputy Surveyor was advised that should FE wish the Court to consider granting approval for ice cream and other concessions, a written submission with details of what is being requested must be provided to the Clerk. Upon receipt, this will be published by the Court on its website and Facebook page.

The Court anticipates a response from the Friends of the New Forest (New Forest Association) and others at the next Court.

A decision will not be made until after the March Verderers' Court, in order to allow the opportunity for public comment.

2024/13359 PLAN B RESUME

The current effort to prepare and submit an application for future funding is not progressing with the speed necessary to support the financial viability of Commoning and other options must be considered. The Court will consult with all partners. Once the PA2 funding has been confirmed, a meeting will be set up with the chosen consultant.

Action OV

MATTERS ARISING

2024/13360 ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS & AVERAGE SPEED CAMERAS DISCHARGE

Nothing will happen until after the General Election.

2024/13361 CONFLICTS WITH COMMONERS' ANIMALS WITHIN THE NEW FOREST RESUME

Camping in the New Forest's Livestock sub committee is meeting next week. The Court feels strongly that a strategy must be developed quickly, before the start of this year's camping season. A document is needed setting out what is being done to try to reduce the chance of conflicts with commoners' animals, what evidence is being collated, how incidents are reported and how the strategy will be published in the public domain.

Action MG

Mr Deakin said the CDA's insurance gives commoners who are members £10M public liability cover and £1M environmental liability cover.

2024/13362 ILLEGAL ENCROACHMENT AT FOREST GLADE HOUSE, BARTLEY RESUME

Mr Grugeon said he is meeting with the owner of this property later today. The Clerk advised Mr Grugeon that she received a request from the property owner for details of the July 1995 Oak Cottage land exchange. The information was provided.

Action PG

UTILITY PROPOSALS

2024/13363 DE-MINIMIS-CONSENTS - UTILITY PROPOSALS AGREED BY THE DE-MINIMIS COMMITTEE DISCHARGE

DM0188 SGN - Short length of pipe connecting gas to property from main in the road, Falladon, Kings Copse Road, Blackfield

DM0189 SW Water/B'mth Water - Bournemouth water have a fractured water feeder main outside the property Old Park, Burley Lawn, Burley, BH24 4DL

DM0190 SW Water/B'mth Water - Disconnection of Water Mains - Densom Corner / Woodgeen Hale SP6 2QZ

UTILITY PROPOSALS FALLING OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE DE-MINIMIS COMMITTEE

2024/13364 WESSEX INTERNET DISCHARGE

Wessex Internet has secured a Government funded contract to provide ultra-fast broadband to those parts of the New Forest which do not currently have acceptable broadband speeds. Unfortunately, despite a meeting last year, and another a few weeks ago, Wessex Internet has not obtained the correct consents for works it has carried out in Brockenhurst. Profuse apologies have been received. The Clerk is meeting tomorrow with Wessex Internet, to agree a process for ensuring all the necessary consents are obtained in the future.

CAMPSITES

2024/13365 CAMPSITE FENCES DISCHARGE

The Staff Committee minutes state that Head Agister, Mr Jonathan Gerrelli has asked for it to be recorded again that he believes the campsites must be fenced or moved to off Forest locations due to the dangers they present to the public.

2024/13366 CAMPING IN THE NEW FOREST ADVISORY GROUP MEETING RESUME

A meeting of this group is due to take place on 25th February. Mr Chatters will report back to the March Court

All statutory authorities are now required to further National Park purposes rather than simply have regard to them. Discussions and consultation on the future of the Forest campsites continue.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2024/13367 THE REPAIR & MAINTENANCE/ENHANCEMENT LIST RESUME

The list was noted.

2024/13368 RAVENS NEST INCLOSURE RESUME

The Court requested details of what is proposed.

Action DS

ENCROACHMENTS

2024/13369 ENCROACHMENTS LIST RESUME

The list was noted.

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2024/13370 ACTION LIST DISCHARGE

The list was noted.

2024/13371 ASHLEY WALK CAR PARK DISCHARGE

The lock has been cut off.

Action DS

2024/13372	IRONSHILL LODGE	DISCHARGE
	The barrier has been damaged and cannot be locked.	Action DS
2024/13373	VERELEY HOUSE	DISCHARGE
	This property has been demolished. There are numerous issues including breaches of planning and the FE Access licence. FE, NE and the NFNPA are all involved. This will be added to the Action List.	Action DS
2024/13374	VAN PARKED BY THE CATTLE GRID AT BROOK	DISCHARGE
	A large van is blocking the gate on the Forest side of the cattle grid bypass gate.	Action DS

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2024/13375	NEW FOREST REPTILE SURVEYS - SNAKES IN THE HEATHER	DISCHARGE
	The Court agreed to renew consent and the surveys will now run until the end of 2027. An Annual Report is requested.	Action DS
	Mr Stride noted that the refugia present a risk to commoners when pony catching in the area, his horse having shied at the refugia during the Holmsley Drift resulting in him coming off his horse.	
2024/13376	ROUNDHILL CAMPSITE WARDENS' ENCLOSURE	DISCHARGE
	FE was advised that the new fenced wardens' enclosure gate is often shut and there is a quantity of material including signs, pieces of wood and some plastic boxes. These items must be removed and if necessary the gate should be locked open.	Action DS
2024/13377	ASHURST CAMPSITE	RESUME
	A considerable amount of new hoggin has been laid on existing pitches and tracks. It is quite deep in places and there is concern it may spread. It is felt that in some places the gravel area may have been extended as there appears to be evidence of grass under the edges.	Action DS
2024/13378	PAUL GRUGEON – AREA LAND AGENT FOR THE NEW FOREST	DISCHARGE
	The DS said that the current Area Land Agent, Paul Grugeon, is leaving and March will be his last Court. He added he hopes a leaving 'do' can be incorporated with the March Court buffet.	Action DS
2024/13379	HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PROPOSAL TO CHARCH FOR CAR PARKING AT HYDE SCHOOL CAR PARK AND ABBOTSWELL ROAD CAR PARK	DISCHARGE
	Having briefly introduced this topic, the Official Verderer left the room whilst this matter was debated. Mr Deakin took the Chair.	

The Court agreed unanimously that if parking charges are introduced in these two car parks without significant prior investment in car free defences around each car park and across the wider area, verge parking will be inevitable. Verge parking on the surrounding very narrow roads would damage the SSSI and obstruct emergency vehicles. In addition, vulnerable road users such as walkers, cyclists and horse-riders would be put at risk. The Court is concerned for the knock-on effect on management of the Forest, rather than the principle of charging, and was unanimous in its objection to the introduction of parking charges in these car parks.

Action Clerk

The OV returned to the meeting.

2024/13380 NF DOG

DISCHARGE

Mr Manley said NF Dog has been discussing the potential impact of flea and worm treatments on the Forest's rivers, streams and ponds. He said he is expecting a press release to be issued shortly.

The Deputy Surveyor and the Land Agent left the meeting

Mr Manley gave his apologies and left the meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

2024/13381 LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP & THE RIGHT TO ROAM

DISCHARGE

Clive Chatters advised he is reviewing the right to roam provisions on the commons of the Open Forest. The map and actual access rights and responsibilities are difficult to reconcile. He and Mr Pasmore have yet to consider whether it is a priority to review the risks, costs and opportunities of taking the matter further, given current priorities.

2024/13382 PASTURE MONITORING PHOTOGRAPHY

DISCHARGE

The Court agreed to pay for the photography to be repeated this year. It was agreed to ask the New Forest Heritage Centre in Lyndhurst if it would be able to keep the photographs.

Action
CC/Clerk

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & THE VERDERERS GRAZING SCHEME

2024/13383 VGS MEETING

RESUME

There is a meeting on 28th February to discuss some withheld VGS payments.

Action
OV/RD

REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2024/13384 NEW FOREST PARTNERSHIP PLAN – BEHIND THE SCENES'

DISCHARGE

Work is being undertaken on a new communications initiative called 'Behind the Scenes'. It is aimed at educating the public and involves the NPA, Wilts CC, Test Valley, HCC, FE and the Verderers. It is hoped the CDA and Young Commoners will be willing to help produce video clips.

Action OV

The objectives of the initiative are:

1. To ensure more people understand the Forest as a place to live and visit in an incredibly special landscape with a rich tradition of commoning, a world capital for wildlife and an ark for some of our most rare species.
2. To ensure more people know about those working behind the scenes - professionals, volunteers and communities who love the New Forest and are passionate about what they do to care for it. To explain it's a living, working landscape, which has been managed by people for centuries.

STAFF MATTERS

2024/13385 STAFF COMMITTEE RESUME

The Staff Committee Minutes had been circulated and were noted.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

2024/13386 FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

TRAINING & HEALTH & SAFETY

2024/13387 IT SECURITY TRAINING DISCHARGE

The OV said he has found some useful video links covering cyber security and it was agreed that he should circulate one a month to all Verderers and staff.

Action OV

The OV also recommended that everyone has two factor authentication on all their devices.

2024/13388 CATTLE HANDLING - HEALTH & SAFETY DISCHARGE

The February Staff Committee Meeting minutes record that Mr Deakin instructed the Agisters that if they arrive at a holding to mark cattle and find the cattle handling system is unsafe, they must not continue until remedial action has been taken to ensure the defects are resolved. If it is not possible to make the system safe and secure, the Agisters must walk away. If faced with a commoner who is unhappy with their decision, the Agisters must say that their instructions are from the Verderers. Ignoring these instructions will result in disciplinary action being considered against the Agister(s) concerned.

2024/13389 HEALTH AND SAFETY REVIEW WITH THE COURT'S INSURERS DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin advised the Court that he and the Clerk recently attended an online review of the Court's health and safety controls with the Court's insurers. The insurers are very happy with the Court's policies. Copies of some documents are to be provided to the insurance company.

Action
RD/Clerk

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2024/13390 POLICIES

RESUME
April

It was suggested the Verderers' Policies should be reviewed, in response to current pressures.

Action All

2024/13391 DIAMOND JUBILEE AWARDS AT THE NEW FOREST SHOW

RESUME

It was suggested and agreed that Michael Eccles and James Young should be nominated for an award in recognition of their fight to secure the abatement of the encroachment at Shobley Forest Oaks.

Action OV

The OV will speak to James Young to ensure he is happy to be nominated. Mr Chatters will work with the Clerk to ensure the nominations are submitted.

Action
CC/Clerk

The meeting ended at 13:00 hrs



20th March 2024.