

**MINUTES of the Court of Verderers held on 20th July 2022 at 9.30 a.m.
in the Verderers Hall, the Queen's House, Lyndhurst**

PRESENT	Lord Manners Mr R Deakin Mr A B Dowsett Dr G Ferris Mr R Manley Mr A H Pasmore Mr D Readhead Mr R Stride Mrs D Westerhoff	Official Verderer Elected Verderer & Staff Committee Chairman Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer Co-opted Elected Verderer DEFRA Appointed Verderer Senior Elected Verderer Elected Verderer Elected Verderer Natural England Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
APOLOGIES	Miss A Sevier MBE	NFNPA Appointed Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2022/12366	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	RESUME
	<p>The minutes of the last Court held on Wednesday 15th June 2022 were approved and signed by the Official Verderer.</p>	
2022/12367	NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RESUME
	<p>There were no new Declarations of Interest.</p>	
2022/12368	ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS	RESUME
	<p>The Announcements and Decisions were approved.</p>	
2022/12369	CONDITION OF STOCK	RESUME
	<p>Report from the Head Agister</p> <p>The Head Agister said that overall, he is pleased with the condition of stock. We are having an exceptionally long and dry spell of weather, the grass is brown and the ground is very hard. Worryingly the ponies and foals are starting to eat bracken as it is about the only thing that is green. Bracken poisoning is a risk. Having said that, the animals are finding plenty to eat. The wet areas are a real benefit in this type of weather. There is a lot of grass in the mires.</p> <p>One or two mares, particularly older animals with foals, are beginning to look a little lean with hips and ribs evident but their coats are shiny and they look bright. These ponies will be caught when possible or on the drifts. A lot of mares are looking really well.</p> <p>There are a good number of foals this year and hopefully the drifts will be successful. Trade at the online auction was very strong and it is hoped this will continue into the autumn. There will be a lot of foals for sale and the good ones should do well.</p>	

It looks like there will be a lot of acorns this year and if the weather continues to remain so dry, there is a risk they will come down green, albeit they will be small.

Mr Stride commented that he hopes there will be plenty of pigs turned out this autumn.

2022/12370 STALLIONS DISCHARGE

All the stallions returned home by the deadline. There were no issues this year. It was agreed the communications, especially via social media, greatly helped get messages out to members of the public to stay away from the stallions and their mares.

2022/12371 VETERINARY SURGEONS DISCHARGE

Mr Manley asked if there are any concerns as a result of the closure of one of the veterinary surgeries frequently used by commoners? One of the vets is moving to another practice. TB testing is the main concern. Time will tell if there is a problem.

2022/12372 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR RESUME

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Forest Ponies	4616	4923
Forest Cattle	2386	3038
Forest Donkeys	122	150
Forest Pigs	0	0
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	7124	8111
Common Ponies	619	854
Common Cattle	814	1736
Common Donkeys	107	136
Common Pigs	14	88
Common Sheep	162	195
Total Common Stock	1716	3009
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	7124	8111
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	1540	2726
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	8664	10837
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	8840	11120

2022/12373 BREACHES OF THE BYELAWS DISCHARGE

There are no current byelaw breaches.

2022/12374 RESPONSES TO PRESENTMENTS DISCHARGE

Dr Ferris remarked that not all the presentments made by the CDA at the last Court are mentioned in today's Announcements and Decisions. The Official Verderer reminded everyone that responses to presentments, particularly those where the subject may be controversial, will not usually be made until after the following Open

Court. This is in order to all the opportunity for supporting or counter presentments to be heard.

It was agreed the Deputy Surveyor should be asked to respond to those presentments which are of concern to Forestry England, i.e. overnight camping in Forest car parks and the future management of the campsites.

As respects the hoggin laid in the areas handed back to the Forest in lieu of land lost for the construction of the new road bridge at Holmsley, the agreement was that any holes in the lay-by's etc should be filled in and the areas graded. In some places the contractors do appear to have added new hoggin. It is felt, however, that the areas will take some time to regenerate anyway, and the additional hoggin is unlikely to make a great deal of difference.

OPEN COURT

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Craig Harrison, Deputy Surveyor
Mr Paul Grugeon, Land Agent (New Forest)

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS

2022/12375 ICE CREAM VAN AT BOLTON'S BENCH

The Court was asked to approve the Ice Cream Sales concessions for two years and that it did, in January this year. The Boltons Bench Car Park location was amongst those agreed.

The Court's primary duty is to consider the effect of proposals, such as ice cream sales, on the Forest and commoners' stock. In this case the Court did not feel it appropriate to consider the economic impact such proposals may have on local businesses. Having said that, the Court does feel that publicity should have been given to the Ice Cream Tender process and FE was advised that, in future, any such submissions should be by presentment in Open Court as that will give the public and others an opportunity to hear proposals and support or object accordingly.

2022/12376 CAMPSITES

The Court shares many of the concerns expressed in the June Court, regarding new arrangements for the campsites which operate on the Crown Lands. The Court is actively engaging with Forestry England in an effort to ensure that the interests of commoning and commoners are given appropriate consideration and full protection.

2022/12377 CLAPPING/APPLAUSE DURING OPEN COURT SESSIONS

The system of presentments is a very important part of the Court's workings. A wide range of issues are raised. Some matters require the Court's consent. In other matters we may be able to engage with the appropriate body and use our influence. All presentments are given careful consideration in committee. However, the Court is not influenced by clapping or other audible expressions of support or opposition for any particular proposition. We don't have a 'clapometer'! We believe it is more appropriate for clapping and applause to be kept only for use when outstanding achievements are announced.

2022/12378 ANGRY COMMONER

A commoner who rang our office recently, was unnecessarily rude to a member of our staff. Such behaviour by anyone, but particularly a commoner, is completely unacceptable.

2022/12379 VERDERERS' HALL

The more observant among you might have noticed the new exhibits and plaques adorning the walls of The Verderers' Hall. These are the final stage of the refurbishment of The Hall, which began a few years ago and was interrupted by the Covid lockdowns.

One novel exhibit records the visit of the Queen to The New Forest in 2012, the presentation to her of a memento in the form of a whip, constructed of locally sourced materials, by Dominic May, the then Official Verderer, together with the Perambulation Ride to mark her Diamond Jubilee.

The shoulder mount of a muntjac buck marks the arrival of this fifth species of deer in the Forest in the 1990s following the relentless expansion of its original nineteenth century introduction at Woburn Park in Bedfordshire.

It is hoped these exhibits will provide a historical record of recent events in The Forest which will be appreciated by current and future generations of Forest residents and visitors.

2022/12380 RETIREMENTS FROM THE COURT
(Barry Dowsett & Diana Westerhoff)

This is the last Court for two long serving members, Diana Westerhoff and Barry Dowsett. The Forest and this Court have been fortunate in being served by many who have given unstintingly of their time and knowledge. Diana and Barry fall into that category.

BARRY DOWSETT – THE FORESTRY COMMISSION'S APPOINTED VERDERER

Barry steps down from his appointment as the Forestry Commission's nominated Verderer. He has built strong relationships with Forestry England staff and his knowledge of their views has informed many of our deliberations. He has been tireless in taking on thankless tasks. I mention just two. With others, Barry has shouldered much of the burden of dealing with the various utility companies' proposals for pipes and cables, ensuring that the work is done in such a way that there is minimum adverse impact on both the fabric of the Forest and its appearance. Barry has also been heavily involved in the refurbishment of this Hall and the credit for much of what you see is due to him

DIANA WESTERHOFF – NATURAL ENGLAND'S APPOINTED VERDERER

Diana steps down as the Natural England appointed Verderer. She has brought to the Court her great and long experience in championing the environment. Diana has been a tireless advocate for the Forest and for the benefits delivered by commoning. She has also been a staunch defender of the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, defending its work in the face, at times, of sustained criticism.

I know that both Barry and Diana are proud and glad to have served the Forest and I speak for my fellow Verderers, and I hope everybody present here today, when I say that we are immensely grateful for all that they have done.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2022/12381 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR JUNE 2022

The Agisters attended 5 accidents in June this year, compared with 6 in June last year. All the accidents involved ponies.

2 ponies were killed.

1 pony was injured, 1 was uninjured and 1 was not found.

3 accidents occurred in daylight, 1 at twilight and 1 in the dark

1 driver failed to report having been involved in an accident.

The total number of commoners' animals killed and injured to the end of June is 19, compared with 17 to the end of June last year.

PRESENTMENT BY THE DEPUTY SURVEYOR

2022/12382 PANNAGE

'In accordance with the provisions of Section 7 of the New Forest Act 1964, the Verderers have been consulted on the dates of the pannage season. I notify the Court that the 2022 season will commence on Monday 19th September and end on Friday 18th November, 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.'

2022/12383 FORESTRY COMMISSION APPOINTED VERDERER

'In accordance with provisions in the New Forest Act 1949 (as amended), Forestry England have recently undertaken a recruitment exercise to find a new FC appointed Verderer.

The Forestry Commissioners' approach is that the appointed Verderer is not there to represent the interests of the Forestry Commission and Forestry England but have an understanding of what we do. They are appointed to act in the best interests of the Verderers Court and in doing so should uphold the seven principles of public life. The recruitment process attracted healthy interest and high standard of applications and my thanks go to everyone who applied. I am pleased to announce that the new FC Appointed Verderer will be Mark Gammon, whose term will start on the 1st September and attend his first Verderers Court on 21st September.

Mark is a recently retired senior crown prosecutor who specialised in wildlife crime and animal cruelty offences. Previously he was a solicitor in private practice with a good understanding of enforcement.

Mark is a long-term New Forest resident, knowledgeable about and experienced in local wildlife and conservation. He has held a range of voluntary roles including work as a ranger for Forestry England.

I, on behalf of all the Forestry England team in the New Forest, would like to echo The Official Verderers appreciation for Barry Dowsett, the outgoing FC appointed Verderer. Over the last 10 years he has been fully committed to the role, dedicating many hours in court, committee and on the forest dealing with matters such as utility company proposals. My team have thoroughly enjoyed the strong working relationship Barry has developed with them.

I'd also like to extend our thanks to Diana for her long service and constructive close working with my team.'

PRESENTMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

2022/12384 DOGS AND WILDLIFE
Presentment by Mr Peter Roberts

'My name is Peter Roberts, I am a lifelong resident of the New Forest, consider myself a conservationist and am a regular observer of wildlife.

The recently reported incident in which an unrestrained dog ate Curlew eggs highlights a problem I have seen most of my life here. I think it is time a stand is taken to ensure that dogs are only allowed on the Forest on short leads in the nesting

season. Whilst I appreciate it would take time to change the appropriate bye-laws I would urge the Verderers to pressure Forestry England to do just that.

A first step though must be for dog owners to take responsibility.

New Forest Dog maintains its highly inappropriate motto of 'On the Forest, Off the Lead'. Whatever its organisers say about this, that phrase gives out a message to all, that unaccountable behaviour is acceptable here. It is not. I think that now is the time for responsible members of that group and others to question that motto and remove it.

Saying this incident is lamentable and only a few are the problem is not the correct response. We all know that short sound bites matter. The so-called Dog Walking Code is fine but the transgressors either don't read it or don't care. Change the headline and get the real message across that the New Forest and its wildlife really matters.

Dogs have no rights on the Forest. People do; and with that comes responsibilities. Over my lifetime on the Forest I have seen dog attacks on people, deer, calves and foals as well as witnessing a vast increase in the number of dog walkers and a withdrawal of wildlife. Will our grandchildren see Curlews, Lapwings, Nightjars on the Forest or will this needless carnage continue?

The Head Agister closed the Court

Mrs Westerhoff and Mr Dowsett were presented with paintings by local artist Mr Peter Frost., in recognition of their long and valued service to the Verderers and the Forest.

IN COMMITTEE (in the Library)

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2022/12385 DOGS

RESUME

Everyone present unanimously agreed that dogs must be under proper control on the Forest. On Dartmoor it is understood people are more compliant of the rules which state that on areas of Access Land, designated under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, dogs must be on a short, fixed lead of no more than 2 metres between 1st March and 31st July. Outside of these times dogs must be under effective control if livestock is present.

This is a controversial issue in the New Forest and it was agreed that before any formal response to Mr Roberts' presentment is made, an opportunity must be given to hear supporting or counter presentments.

The Deputy Surveyor said that at this stage, he does not wish to express a view on the control of dogs in the New Forest.

NEW SUBMISSIONS BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2022/12386 EAST BOLDRE VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT

DISCHARGE

The Court has seen plans for the refurbishment of East Boldre Village Hall. The original plan for a shop has been withdrawn. There will be no building extension or demolition. The proposal is to alter

the internal layout to make better use of the existing building. The 1980's brick elevations will be clad with timber. A pitched roof is to be constructed over what is currently a flat roof, to improve the external appearance of the building. The existing parking arrangements will remain unchanged.

The Court gave agreement in principle to the proposals. Mr Grugeon will provide further information as and when it is available.

Action PG

2022/12387 ASHURST HOSPITAL

DISCHARGE

The proposals are understood to be for the redundant buildings to be turned into a high quality care home.

The Clerk suggested a request be made for the drain that currently crosses what was the old Workhouse allotment garden, to be inspected and if possible the drainage should be redesigned so that it does not empty into Forestry England's ditch. Ideally the drainage of the site should be redesigned so that it does not discharge onto the open Forest.

Action RS to inspect drain

The Clerk said she expects the planning authority to advise her when the formal planning application is submitted.

Action Clerk

DE-MINIMIS CONSENTS TO BE RECORDED AT THIS COURT

2022/12388 DE MINIMIS PROPOSALS

RESUME

The following proposals, approved by the De-minimis Committee, were ratified by the Court:-

DM0151 SSEN - Durham Lodge, Rhinefield Road, Brockenhurst. Replacement switchgear within the substation site of Durham Lodge. It will also be necessary to excavate a 1.3x 1.5 hole just outside the sub which is FE land.

DM0152 SSE - Install overhead 3 phase supply to replace existing single phase at Curtle Cottage. Minstead, Lyndhurst SO43 7HA. Overhead cables from existing LV pole. No excavations.

With Mr Dowsett retiring from the Court, a replacement Verderer to sit on the De-Minimis committee is sought. It was agreed to wait until the two new Appointed Verderers are in post before a decision is made.

UTILITY PROPOSALS OUTSIDE THE REMIT OF THE DE-MINIMIS SUB-COMMITTEE

2022/12389 BT OPENREACH PROPOSED CIVIL WORKS AT BANK, OUTSIDE LYNDHURST

DISCHARGE

This fibre to the premises (FTTP) proposal was agreed subject to the usual three conditions. Also, the backfill surrounding an existing chamber situated on the grazing outside the Oak Inn, which has settled, leaving a significant depression, must be filled in. The Clerk will advise BT.

Action Clerk

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO FORESTRY ENGLAND

- | | | |
|------------|--|-------------------|
| 2022/12390 | NEOSPORA | Resume
October |
| | The study being undertaken by Surrey University will commence on 1 st August 2022. | |
| 2022/12391 | PRESENTATION TO FORESTRY COMMISSION APPOINTED
VERDERER | DISCHARGE |
| | The Deputy Surveyor presented Mr Dowsett with an Oak Burr Bowl made by local wood turner, Mr Andy Broome. The DS thanked Mr Dowsett for his long and valued service. | |
| 2022/12392 | COMPENSATION FOR HABITAT LOST DUE TO THE A35
HOLMSLEY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT | DISCHARGE |
| | Earlier Minute 12374 refers. Mr Stride said he thinks the work that has been done is acceptable, providing HCC has done what it undertook to do. Dragons' Teeth in lay-bys is a matter for other agencies. The Clerk was asked to send the announcement regarding gravel to the CDA Chair. | |
| | | Action Clerk |
| 2022/12393 | CAMPSITES ON THE CROWN LANDS | RESUME |
| | The Deputy Surveyor updated the Court on the current position regarding the future of the Forest campsites. He said a lot of discussion has taken place during site visits with potential operators. The Verderers' concerns and the legislative requirements which are imposed on operators have been explained. The possible closure/relocation of Hollands Wood CS has also been mentioned. Mr Grugeon confirmed he has made it clear that there are ecological constraints. New operators will have to work within new heads of terms and FE has done all it can to pass on the concerns which have been voiced. | |
| | However, the DS said indemnity for the commoners and the Verderers has not been written into the new contracts. The Court feels very strongly that the animals are on the Forest by right whereas campsites are there by permission. There can be no justifiable reason why the commoners and Verderers are exposed to potential litigation in the case of an accident and Forestry England, as the land owner, is not. The DS said FE does not have control over the animals. Neither do the Verderers, nor the owners of the animals when they are lawfully depastured. | |
| 2022/12394 | AVERAGE SPEED CAMERAS | RESUME
October |
| | Mr Manley advised the Court that this project is progressing. A feasibility study pre-meeting has been held at which infrastructure, technology, the cameras and other matters were discussed. | |
| | The Court remains supportive in principle. | |

2022/12395	PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)	RESUME
	<p>The Official Verderer said he feels there is now a good chance that a PSPO will be introduced in the Forest in respect of certain damaging activities. Evidence of the extent wildfires and feeding animals is being gathered. Recent examples of feeding of ponies would be very helpful. Members of the Court, including the Agister team are asked to make a note of any such incidents of feeding that they witness and to provide the details to the Clerk so they can be accurately recorded. Some more signage will be needed prior to the introduction of a PSPO.</p>	Action All Verderers and Agisters.
2022/12396	DMMO1231 RINGWOOD & BURLEY – KINGSTON GREAT COMMON (PROPOSED NEW DESIGNATED RIGHT OF WAY)	RESUME
	<p>The Clerk will request a copy of the evidence.</p>	Action Clerk
2022/12397	SQUEEZE GATES	DISCHARGE
	<p>FE has reduced the size of the squeeze gates, such that animals should not be able to negotiate them.</p>	
2022/12398	SOLAR ARRAY AT DENNY WOOD CAMPSITE & REVIEW OF CAMPSITES	DISCHARGE
	<p>The Court disagrees that the solar array does not constitute a material change to the campsite and it feels that an application should be made.</p> <p>The Deputy Surveyor said that FE will conduct a review of all the campsites. Sites are to be left clean and tidy and anything that does not have proper consent will be removed. FE was asked to check against the NFA's survey. An ecological condition survey is to be commenced shortly.</p>	Action CH/PG
2022/12399	NATIONAL GRID WORKS TO REFURBISH PYLONS 61-66 IN THE NORTH OF THE FOREST	DISCHARGE
	<p>The Clerk continues to liaise with the consultants working with National Grid. She will advise the Court of progress.</p>	
2022/12400	ICE CREAM VAN AT STONEY CROSS	DISCHARGE
	<p>The Court approved the revised siting of the ice cream van in Stoney Cross CP providing it is set far enough back from the road so as to not expose people or animals to danger from passing traffic.</p>	
2022/12401	NO CYCLING FROM THIS CAR PARK SIGNS	DISCHARGE
	<p>The DS explained that when FE's signs were replaced following its rebranding, the cycling signs were removed as well. The Court felt they should be put back, given that so many cyclists do not stay on the waymarked network. It was pointed out that the new FE signs are lower than the old ones and there is little space left after the fire risk and no overnight parking signs are added. The Court, however, made a formal request for the 'no cycling from this car park signs' to be reinstated.</p>	

The Clerk said that the cycle map is confusing and extremely difficult to understand, even for someone who knows the Forest well! A lot of the way-markers are not on the map. A recent report of a pony in distress has highlighted this fact as the cyclist who found the pony gave the Clerk the number on the nearby way-marker but the Clerk found it was not on the map. The cyclist had no idea where she actually was. Fortunately, due to her knowledge of the Forest, the Clerk was able to work out the location of the unfortunate animal and send an Agister. The DS did not disagree and said he will investigate.

Action DS

2022/12402 NEW FOREST ANIMAL DISEASE CONTINGENCY PLAN

RESUME

The DS said the plan is now Mr Mike Pittock who is head of the team dealing with this. Mr Graham Nottage is also involved. Mr Deakin will communicate with them.

Action RD

2022/12403 NEW ACCESS AT RUSSETS, NOMANSLAND

RESUME

As no further information is available, this item will be resumed in September.

Action AS

2022/12404 DECAYING AND DEFECTIVE ROADSIDE FENCING

RESUME

The Clerk is in contact with both HCC and National Highways.

Action Clerk

2022/12405 HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

DISCHARGE

A tree will be planted on behalf of the Verderers, in the garden at Queen's House, to mark HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The planting will be carried out in the Autumn as at that time the sapling will have the best chance to establish and thrive. A Copper Beech is the chosen tree species.

In addition, FE has planted three Tulip Trees in the garden and there are plans for more.

2022/12406 BURLEY PARISH COUNCIL

DISCHARGE

As a follow on to the previous minute, the DS reported that FE met with Burley PC at Cott Lane and explained why consent to plant more trees at that location will not be forthcoming. The value of the Open Forest was highlighted. Alternative planting will take place in Dames Slough Inclosure. The A&O woodlands do regenerate but it does take time. Mr Pasmore disagreed. Mr Deakin remarked that the older trees in Cott Lane have now got to the stage where they need thinning.

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2022/12407 SSSI REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE/ENHANCEMENT LIST

RESUME

The list was noted.

Action FE

A discussion took place regarding when remedial works constitute material change and therefore need further consultation and when

repair work can just go ahead. If work is done correctly in the first instance, schemes should look after themselves as many have. Mr Deakin wished it to be recorded that he has huge respect for Miss Sarah Oakley.

The HLS Board decides what terrestrial restoration should be undertaken, depending on the money that is available. The Court feels that ridge and furrow restoration on open Forest sites should be carried out to a good standard immediately after felling has taken place. Stream restoration has been paused at the moment, but there is a desire to move forward with more schemes.

ENCROACHMENTS

2022/12408 ENCROACHMENTS LIST RESUME

There are no new encroachments.

ACTION LIST – ISSUES REPORTED TO FORESTRY ENGLAND

2022/12409 ACTION LIST RESUME

The list was noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2022/12410 ASHURST HOSPITAL REDEVELOPMENT DISCHARGE

The details have been circulated.

2022/12411 POUND BOTTOM LANDFILL SITE PROPOSALS DISCHARGE

Concern was expressed at the impact the proposed new recreational facilities could have on the adjacent Forest. In particular having the access to the site off Forest Road will inevitably increase pressure from people on the area. It was accepted that it is necessary to be open minded about such proposals but the location of such proposals is vitally important. The intention is to divert pressure from the Forest not add to it. This proposal is likely to add to pressure.

Action Clerk

A draft response to the letter received from the firm of chartered surveyors acting for the owners of the site will be circulated for comment.

2022/12412 CAR PARKS AT NIGHT DISCHARGE

Dr Ferris expressed concern at the number of vehicles which can be found in car parks after dusk. The DS said he will respond to the CDA's presentment concerning overnight camping in FE car parks.

Action DS

2022/12413 WILVERLEY CAR PARK RESUME

Mr Deakin advised the Court that a complaint had been received from a walker, because an agister and commoners were catching ponies in the vicinity of Wilverley Car Park. Whilst nothing untoward actually occurred, the walker did not feel it is appropriate for pony catching activities to take place in or near to a car park. The Court

	suggested this is one area where it would be relatively easy to re-fence the car park to exclude commoners' animals and the DS was asked to give it consideration.	Action DS
2022/12414	NEWLANDS ENCLOSURE	DISCHARGE
	Forestry England leases this enclosure from the National Trust. Along the road to Moyles Court, there is a steep bank with a fence on the top. That fence is in poor condition. It is believed the fence may have been replaced or repaired before, using HLS funds. The Court asked if FE can please look at repairing or replacing the fence again as if it falls down, it will constitute a significant hazard to stock which may either become caught in it, or may run down into the path of passing vehicles, the drivers of which would not expect an animal to appear in that way.	Action DS/PG
2022/12415	PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST ON ROUNDHILL CAMPSITE	DISCHARGE
	Mr Grugeon advised the Court that FE has received an application for a telecoms mast to be erected on Roundhill CS. The Clerk said she had also received information about the mast and she told the company proposing it, that the Court will not give consent for it. Mr Grugeon said there is another request for a mast south west of Fritham. He has advised that neither FE or the Verderers will permit masts on the Open Forest and that providers must seek alternative sites on private property.	
2022/12416	REVIEW OF COMPENSATION PAID IN RESPECT OF INCLOSURES	RESUME
	Mr Grugeon asked if the inclosures which have been thrown open are fit to be grazed by commoners' stock. FE was reminded that whilst throwing open inclosures may increase grazing, it also means that in some places, stock pounds are rendered unusable once the fences have been taken down. Given that the stock is essential to the conservation of the Forest, the Court felt that the issue of responsibility for fencing left in situ after inclosures are opened up really does need to be addressed. Mr Pasmore asked to be involved when the throwing open of inclosures is discussed.	Action DS
2022/12417	DEFECTIVE INCLOSURE FENCES	DISCHARGE
	Mr Stride reported that there is a large project to replace the fences around Oakley Inclosure. Tenders for the fencing work are currently being sought. The boundary of the inclosure is to be realigned. Mr Stride added that throwing open this inclosure will make stock management really difficult. It will need to be discussed.	Action DS
2022/12418	ACCESS TO IPLEY POUND	RESUME
	Mr Readhead commented that in winter, the ground conditions in the access to Ipley Pound are atrocious. He asked if it would be possible for the access track to be extended by about 75 yards. It would cause minimal damage and resolve the issue of the small wet patch that renders the pound all but unusable in wet weather. Mr Grugeon undertook to see what can be done.	Action PG

2022/12419 FE CALL CENTRE DISCHARGE

The Clerk asked for something to be done about the call centre currently used by FE. Members of the public are ringing the Verderers' Office because they are either unable to obtain an answer from the 0300 number or, if they do get through, the call takers either don't know how to respond to the queries they are asked, or they tell the callers the matter is not something FE deals with, when in fact it is. This is putting a significant burden on the Verderers' Office staff who then feel obliged to try to deal with the issue because callers are unwilling to go back to FE. The DS was asked to see what can be done. In reply, he said that the call centre provision is under review.

Action DS

2022/12420 DEPUTY SURVEYOR'S ATTENDANCE AT COURT DISCHARGE

The DS apologised that he has not been able to attend all the Courts since he was appointed, but he said he has responsibility for a large area in the South of England and inevitably he will sometimes find he has commitments which clash. He said he takes his attendance at the Verderers' Court very seriously and will always endeavour to attend.

2022/12421 ANIMAL WELFARE, WATER AND WILD FIRE EVENTS DISCHARGE

As a result of the long period without rain in the south of the UK the Deputy Surveyor reported that there have been a number of fire events including one on the eastern side of the Forest which resulted in the loss of 6ha of habitat.

In reply to his query regarding water for the Forest stock, the DS was advised that there has never been a time when water had to be provided to the Forest animals as there is always water in the mires, rivers and larger streams. The Verderers also provide permanent water troughs in certain strategic locations. Stock may have to walk a little further but there is always water available within a reasonable distance. The situation is being monitored by the Agisters.

The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Grugeon left the meeting

MATTERS ARISING

2022/12422 VERDERERS' ELECTION RESUME
October

The Clerk is seeking clarification from NFDC as to whether it can assist with future Verderers' elections.

2022/12423 FOREST CAMPSITES RESUME

Discussions on the future leasing and management of the Forest campsites continue. The OV has set out the Court's main concerns, namely that the future of the three most environmentally sensitive sites, Hollands Wood, Denny and Longbeech, must be addressed as must the issue of indemnity for the commoners and Verderers. In addition, any new arrangements with an operator must give FE suitable powers in the event that the operator fails to manage any of

Action OV

the sites to the required standard. An application for Verderers' consent to the new licence must be made by Presentment.

2022/12424 LONG SERVICE AWARDS RESUME
October
Certificates are being produced and pictures are being commissioned. It is hoped both can be ready for presentation at the October Court. Tina Woodley is arranging everything. Action TW

2022/12425 ILLEGAL CYCLING RESUME
Unfortunately, an impasse appears to have been reached with FE being very reluctant to enforce its byelaws. The Court discussed what its next action might be. In the meantime, photographs of cyclists riding off the waymarked network are requested, but those taking photos must be mindful of the need to maintain individual's privacy. Photos of cycle tracks where they should not be are also needed and are easier to obtain than photos of cyclists.

2022/12426 FE HOUSING RENT REVIEW RESUME
October
The transitional panel has dealt with three cases. The OV feels there is a need to review the system and he will write to Mr Gurgeon.

Questions which need to be answered are:-

1. Is the system which is intended to encourage and support commoners working and,
2. Is the system fulfilling the desired objectives.

ENCROACHMENTS

2022/12427 ENCROACHMENT AT PICKET HILL RESUME
Mr Pasmore has looked at the papers and made some suggestions, which are with the barrister. Action OV

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME & VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME

2022/12428 VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME DISCHARGE
The VGS committee met on Wednesday 29th June 2022.
The small grants scheme is working well.
Mr Stride asked if consideration could be given to increasing the payments for pigs. The OV asked Mr Stride to draft a proposal for the VGS board to consider, copying it to Tina Woodley, VGS Administrator. An extraordinary meeting may be arranged. Action RS

STAFF MATTERS

2022/12429 STAFF COMMITTEE MINUTES DISCHARGE
The minutes had been circulated.

OTHER ADMISTRATIVE MATTERS

- 2022/12430 FINANCIAL STATEMENT & THE COURT'S FINANCIAL POSITION RESUME
- The Financial Statement was noted.
- The Five-Year Plan shows the Court will make a loss this year and in the coming years. The projected losses are not sustainable and consideration will have to be given at the September Court to increasing marking fees from January 2023. Action OV
- The likelihood of future subsidies being available from an ELM Scheme is unknown.

HEALTH & SAFETY & TRAINING

- 2022/12431 FIRST AID DISCHARGE
- Four Agisters attended a First Aid Course, held at Brockenhurst College on Tuesday 19th July. The Head Agister and Mrs Woodley will attend a course later in the year. Action Clerk

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 2022/12432 PARKING ON LAND OUTSIDE THE ALICE LISLE DISCHARGE
- The Clerk was asked to contact the owner of the land outside the Alice Lisle to see if anything can be done to discourage the increasing number of vehicles which are being parked on the grazing. Action Clerk
- 2022/12433 GLEBE FIELD DISCHARGE
- Notice of an application to register a public right of way across this land has been received. The land is private property and it is not a matter for the Court.
- 2022/12434 GILLY JONES DISCHARGE
- Mr Readhead said he feels Gilly Jones does an exceptional job in supporting the commoners and educating the public. Everyone agreed.
- 2022/12435 OFFICIAL VERDERER DISCHARGE
- The OV advised the Court that he does not propose to make himself available for a third term in office. He will retire from the Court in April next year. Members of the Court were unanimous in expressing their disappointment but said they understand his reasons.

The meeting ended at 14:00 hrs

J. Mannell
21 September 2022