

**Minutes of the Court of Verderers held on 19th October 2022 at 9.30 a.m.
in the Verderers Hall, the King's House, Lyndhurst**

PRESENT	Lord Manners	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
	Miss A Sevier MBE	NFNPA Appointed Verderer
	Mr R Stride	Elected Verderer
	Mr C Chatters	Natural England Appointed Verderer
	Mr M Gammon	Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer
IN ATTENDANCE	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
APOLOGIES	Mr R Manley	DEFRA Appointed Verderer

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2022/12503 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING RESUME

The minutes of the last Court held on Wednesday 21st September 2022 were approved and signed by the Official Verderer.

2022/12504 NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST RESUME

There were no new Declarations of Interest.

Declarations of Interest forms have been added to our website in respect of Mr Gammon and Mr Chatters.

2022/12505 CONDITION OF STOCK RESUME

The Head Agister reported that the Agisters are getting through the drifts, with the majority of the ponies caught being in really good condition. As always, mares with foals are easy to see as their condition is not quite as good. There is a good fit and healthy foal crop this year. The animals have had a good summer despite the hot, dry weather and most are looking good going into winter.

A few cases of strangles are still appearing, however, the disease is not widespread and it appears to be affecting individual animals in the Longdown, Deerleap and Ashurst areas with one suspected case on Bolton's Bench. The drifts are being cancelled in those areas to avoid the risk of spreading the disease further, or stressing animals which have the illness.

A lot of cattle are now being removed from the Forest, partly due to acorns and partly as the TB testing window for the Forest herd is now open. There have been difficulties with TB testing where breakdowns affecting the Forest have resulted in TB testing being required outside the window. Generally, DEFRA staff do not understand the difficulties commoners face getting their animals in off the Forest during the summer. DEFRA is generally happy with TB testing being carried out a little early but not late. The situation is frustrating but is beyond the control of the Court or Commoners.

There have been a few cases of acorn poisoning, resulting in the deaths of the animals affected. There are fewer than expected as the acorns have come down steadily rather than all at once. However, deaths due to acorns can continue until Christmas. Cattle as well as ponies are affected.

2022/12506 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR RESUME

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Forest Ponies	4739	4983
Forest Cattle	2836	3152
Forest Donkeys	125	150
Forest Pigs	213	27
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	7913	8312
Common Ponies	640	857
Common Cattle	909	1781
Common Donkeys	107	136
Common Pigs	36	116
Common Sheep	162	195
Total Common Stock	1854	3085
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	7700	8285
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	1656	2774
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	9356	11059
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	9767	11397

2022/12507 BREACHES OF THE BYELAWS DISCHARGE

There are no current byelaw breaches.

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

2022/12508 NEWLY APPOINTED VERDERERS – MARK GAMMON & CLIVE CHATTERS

We are very pleased to welcome Mr Mark Gammon and Mr Clive Chatters to our Court today.

As announced by the Deputy Surveyor in July, Mr Gammon has been appointed by Forestry England as its representative on the Court. Today is, however, Mr Gammon's first time in attendance. Mark is a retired senior Crown prosecutor who specialised in wildlife crime and animal cruelty offences. Previously he was a solicitor in private practice and he has a good understanding of enforcement. Mark has lived in the Forest for many years and he has a good working knowledge of local wildlife and conservation.

Mr Clive Chatters is Natural England's newly appointed Verderer. Mr Chatters brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience of conservation issues in the New

Forest and beyond. He has a considerable understanding of the pressures arising from the need to balance the interests of agriculture, conservation, and recreation in the Forest.

We are confident both will prove to be very valued members of the Court.

2022/12509 DOGS

Peter Roberts made a presentment in July, urging this Court to pressurise Forestry England into changing its bylaws so that dogs are only allowed on the Forest on short leads in the bird nesting season.

There is no doubt that ground nesting birds are under very significant pressure in the New Forest and indeed elsewhere. Loss of suitable habitat, predation and disturbance are the three key factors. All three need to be addressed satisfactorily to ensure that ground nesting birds such as curlew and lapwing can breed successfully.

Mr Roberts objects to the strapline of NFDog "on the Forest, off the lead". However, it is right to point out that its website also says "Keep to the main tracks when birds are nesting on the ground (usually March to July)".

The Verderers have been engaging constructively with NFDog for some time to support and encourage its work which seeks to ensure that all dog walkers exercise their dogs responsibly when on the Forest. That engagement continues and our discussions will focus on, amongst other things, the need to achieve maximum protection for ground nesting birds in the nesting season from disturbance by dogs.

The Verderers do not rule out the possibility of seeking a change in Forestry England bylaws at a future date.

2022/12510 BRAMBLES

Concern was expressed by Mary Gray about the extent of brambles on the open Forest. The Verderers agree that bramble needs to be managed on the Open Forest especially where it encroaches on valuable grazing. I understand that Forestry England manage brambles and will continue to do so. Browsing by deer and commoners' livestock contributes to that management. It may be of interest to those present to know that there are many species of bramble in the Open Forest which straddles two of the richest regional bramble floras in Britain with its heathland and pasture woodland soils.

2022/12511 CYCLING

At our last court the New Forest Association reported from its bylaw watch over 700 instances of cycling off the way marked routes in a period between 25th July and 31st August this year.

Regrettably this came as no surprise. The Verderers have over many years expressed to Forestry England their concerns about the ever increasing amount of cyclists who regularly trespass off the approved cycle routes. In recent months we have expressed those concerns both to the Deputy Surveyor and his team and direct to the Chair of Forestry England, providing information about the scale of the issue and its consequences. The result of the New Forest Association's recent bylaw watch, emphatically reinforces what has been said by the Verderers to Forestry England many times. This is an issue which can no longer be treated by Forestry England as a low priority.

In commenting on this it is all too easy to characterise the Verderers as anti-cycling. That is emphatically not the case. The Verderers are very well aware of the many benefits of cycling and support the existence of the Cycle network. I am not the only Verderer who makes use of the network from time to time.

It is therefore a good time to set out the Verderers' position in relation to cycling off the approved cycle routes.

Cycling on the Forest is prohibited by Forestry England bylaws (bylaw 6). This is to be contrasted with the position of those on foot who have access to the Forest by right as do horse riders. The grazing stock is also there by right and delivers enormous conservation benefits. The grazing stock has shaped and continues to maintain the Forest's mosaic of rare, interesting and important habitats.

The Forest of course provides excellent recreational opportunities. However, it is also a working forest and an area of remarkable conservation importance and rarity designated as a SAC (Special Area of Conservation) and SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). Critically it still retains strong elements of a wilderness with areas where both nature and the stock are left largely undisturbed.

In 2015 a study resulted in the drafting of a map, identifying the level of disturbance across the Forest. The Forest was divided into 5 zones. Zone E was the most tranquil, where there were no well-used cycle tracks and no moderate passive recreation. Zone D in which there were no camp sites and there was no intensive passive recreation. Zone C had no all-year campsites greater than 150 pitches. Zones B and A were the least tranquil. The Tranquil Areas map has been used to reduce and where possible eliminate, disturbance from activities, including organised recreational activities which would significantly impact nature conservation in those sensitive areas.

However, the advent of the mountain bike and now electrically assisted bicycle means that it is ever easier to access vast areas of the Forest. They have contributed to the significant increase in the number of cyclists all over the Forest. Headlamps now throw a beam many metres ahead which can be seen from far away; these facilitate more and more night time cycling, apparently regardless of the impact on nocturnal animals. Tyres often incise into the soft ground, contributing to erosion and as one track becomes impassable another is created. As more and more houses are built within easy driving distance of the Forest the recreational pressure, including cycling, will only increase.

The Verderers recognise that different types of route cater for different cyclists. Some wish to travel from A to B. Others wish to use a circular route returning usually to the car park from where they started. The Verderers do not rule out participating in a review of the Cycle network but such a review must be against the backdrop of control of illegal off route cycling. In any such review preservation of the tranquil and undisturbed areas, links to the car parks, the interests of nature conservation and protection of the fragile environment together with the interest of the commoners must be taken into account as well as the interests of those who wish to use the Forest for recreation.

The issue of concern is not that of the cyclist who gets lost, or the family who inadvertently strays from the network. The issue is those who persistently flout the bylaw. Dog owners whose dogs harass or attack stock are dealt with by the police as are those who drive motor vehicles over the Forest without permission. The Verderers ensure that the commoners comply with our bylaws. Forestry England

must ensure that its bylaws are policed and enforced. That is the only right and proper course and it is in the best interests of the Forest.

The Verderers therefore call upon Forestry England to take the following actions: –

1. Acknowledge that off route cycling is widespread.
2. Ensure that both the free maps and paid for cycle maps are fit for purpose so that cyclists can easily identify and follow the approved route.
3. Sign each and every carpark under its control so that the public is clearly informed as to whether or not cycling is permitted and possible from that car park.
4. Ensure that online mapping records the approved cycle network and unapproved routes are removed.
5. Review and if necessary, improve the physical way marking of the approved routes.
6. State publicly, including in this forum, firstly what its policy is in relation to enforcement of its bylaws, and secondly that it will prosecute persistent offenders.

2022/12512 MARKING FEES FOR 2023

After much debate and discussion in Committee, we regret that marking fees for 2023 will have to increase.

The marking fee for ponies, cattle and donkeys on the Forest will be increased by £2.00 to £26.00 per head.

The Common rate of marking fee, for those commoners whose animals qualify, will be £13.00 per head for ponies and donkeys and £3.25 per head for cattle, which is 1/8th of the Forest fee.

Marking fees for sheep also increase by £2.00 per head. Sheep on the Forest will therefore be £10.00 per head and on the Commons, it will be £5.00 per head.

The marking fees for pigs remain unchanged. On the Forest they are £4.00 per head and on the commons £2.00 per head.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2022/12513 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

The Agisters attended 6 accidents in September this year, compared with 16 in the same period last year.

3 ponies and 1 cow were killed, 1 pony was wearing a reflective collar.

1 pony and 1 cow were injured.

No accidents occurred in daylight, 2 occurred at twilight and 4 in the dark. All the drivers involved reported having been involved in an accident.

The total number of commoners' animals killed and injured to the end of September is 33, compared with 39 to the end of September last year.

PRESENTMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

2022/12514 PANNAGE
Presentment by Mr Brian Ingram, Commoner

Mr Ingram asked if the pannage season can be extended in view of the heavy acorn crop this year. He remarked that animal deaths due to acorn poisoning can go on into February next year.

The Head Agister closed the Court

IN COMMITTEE (in the Library)**CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS**

2022/12515 PANNAGE DISCHARGE

The Court agreed that an extension to the pannage season, up until Christmas would be welcome. The Deputy Surveyor will check with his Keeper team and respond to the Clerk. If agreed, the extension can be publicised via social media and the Verderers' Website as well as the Agisters who can pass the decision to the commoners.

Action DS

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS COURTS OF CONCERN TO FORESTRY ENGLAND

2022/12516 CAMPING IN THE CAR PARK OF THE ROYAL OAK DISCHARGE

FE is not aware there is still a problem and does not propose to take any further action. The Court commented that there are still problems elsewhere.

2022/12517 CAMPSITES ON THE CROWN LANDS RESUME

The DS said FE is still in discussion with its preferred provider.

Action DS

2022/12518 RAINWATER HARVESTING PROPOSAL AT LYNDHURST CRICKET CLUB DISCHARGE

No more details are available. It was agreed to discharge this item from the minutes.

2022/12519 BT OPENREACH PROPOSED UMBRELLA AGREEMENT DISCHARGE

Members of the Court were involved in a virtual meeting to go through this document which sets out the procedures BT Openreach will follow when undertaking works in the Forest. There are no issues of concern in the agreement. Individual proposals will continue to come to the Court for consent in the usual way.

2022/12520 DMMO 1231 SANDFORD (RINGWOOD) TO BURLEY RESUME

The Clerk was asked to ensure this proposal is properly described. It does not involve Kingston Great Common.

Mr Grugeon has asked Hampshire County Council for a copy of its legal advice on the designation of rights of way by prescription over Crown Lands.

Action PG

HCC's Strategic Access Manager will make the decision on behalf of the County Council, as to whether or not any public rights of way should be added to the Definitive Map. HCC will not share the reports prior to making the decision, the report will however be published afterwards. If HCC decides to make an order, the Clerk will be advised and an objection to the order can be made within the advertisement period. If an objection to an order is received, HCC is required to send the application to the Planning Inspectorate for determination on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Action
OV/Clerk

2022/12521	NEW FOREST ANIMAL DISEASE CONTINGENCY PLAN A meeting to discuss this has been arranged for 28 th October.	RESUME Action DS/RD
2022/12522	NEW ACCESS AT RUSSETS A letter of objection has been sent.	DISCHARGE
2022/12523	PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) The proposed PSPO to cover feeding, petting and touching of ponies and lighting fires on the Forest is progressing. The next stage will be a public consultation.	RESUME

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2022/12524	THE REPAIR & MAINTENANCE/ENHANCEMENT LIST The Court questioned why the removal of the remains of a broken culvert at Milkham has still not been completed.	RESUME Action DS
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ENCROACHMENTS

2022/12525	ENCROACHMENTS LIST Both items on the encroachment have been dealt with by FE staff. Item one is being monitored.	RESUME
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ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2022/12526	ACTION LIST A brief discussion took place regarding items reported to FE which should be included on the Action List, as several items raised in the September Court were not added. The DS said he will ensure that issues raised in Court are put on the list.	RESUME Action DS
2022/12527	TREE ON TRACK – PITTS WOOD INCLOSURE A tree is down across the track which forms the loop road in Pitts Wood Inclosure. This is to be added to the Action List.	DISCHARGE Action DS

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2022/12528 THE RECREATION DIARY AND LARGE EVENTS

RESUME

The Court expressed concern that on 25th September 2022, a large recreational event was permitted in one of the Forest's designated tranquil areas. The event, which the Recreation Diary stated involved approximately 150 runners, comprised 4 separate routes, over parts of the Crown Lands, National Trust Commons and Hampshire County Council's Common. The Court asked how this could be permitted by FE. It is assumed the NT and HCC gave consent. A large inflatable arch was seen to have been erected on HCC's common.

The DS said that the event covered a small area of Crown Land and it was subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). It was approved by the local Keeper and FE's Ecologist. However, the Court felt the event violated the tranquil area and that passing an HRA is not the be all and end all. The event was felt to be an unnecessary intrusion which may have involved more runners than was claimed.

The concern of the Court is that the organisers will want to repeat the event next year and the DS was asked to provide some feedback regarding the actual numbers taking part, what monitoring took place and also what weight FE now gives to the principle of the tranquil areas.

Action DS

2022/12529 WOODGREEN CELEBRATORY TREE APPLICATION REVIEW

DISCHARGE

The Parish Council has looked again at its proposal and has suggested a Rowan tree would be more suitable than a larger species.

The Court accepted this revised proposal but stipulated that the Rowan must be a British Native tree species. In future, such applications will have to be accompanied by a plan for both FE and the Court to consider. The Clerk will advise the Parish Council.

Action Clerk

2022/12530 ROADSIDE VERGE CLEARANCE

RESUME

December

A lot of discussion has taken place recently regarding FE's four-year cycle for verge clearance. Unfortunately, this is felt to be insufficient to ensure the safety of Forest stock with two years being much more effective. The Court requested FE to operate a 2 year cycle and to clear a wider strip, in the region of 10m from the roads, in order to provide clear unimpeded visibility for drivers. It is hoped some funding may be available from the HLS to cover the additional work.

Action OV

It was reported that on the corner by Abbotwell, there is a large bramble bush that is seriously impacting visibility.

It was also pointed out that in years gone by, HCC used to do some clearance of roadside verges. Mr Grugeon explained that HCC has a licence to carry out certain activities within 5ft of the highway. This comprises signage, ditch and ragwort clearance. It is thought that verge clearance is no longer carried out by HCC, but is left to FE.

2022/12531	A31 BOUNDARY FENCING	DISCHARGE
	National Highways has put forward a proposal to replace some of the A31 fencing with recycled plastic fence. After very careful consideration of the information provided, the Court agreed to support a trial length. The Clerk will advise National Highways accordingly.	Action Clerk
2022/12532	BRAMBLES	DISCHARGE
	The Court returned to this subject. It was suggested that some 8 acres of grazing on Blackfield Common has been lost to brambles. FE is going to try using the forage harvester on brambles at Stoney Cross and depending on the result, it may be possible to do the same elsewhere.	Action FE

The Deputy Surveyor and Mr Grugeon left the meeting

MATTERS ARISING

2022/12533	PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)	DISCHARGE
	The Official Verderer and Mr Deakin will discuss how the Court's staff may be able to assist with enforcement.	Action OV/RD
2022/12534	CAMPSITES ON THE CROWN LANDS	RESUME
	A meeting is due to be held on Friday, which will be attended by representatives of the NFA and the OV to discuss this matter further	Action OV
2022/12535	WHITE TAILED EAGLE GROUP	DISCHARGE
	Mr Gammon expressed an interest in attending the meetings, most of which are virtual/online. The Clerk will advise the group's administrator.	Action Clerk
2022/12536	COMPENSATION FOR VERDERERS' INCLOSURES	RESUME
	Further discussion is needed. Calculations of the area covered by Hardley Inclosure and Turf Hill Inclosure need to be undertaken.	Action AP
2022/12537	UTILITY COMPANY CONSENTS	DISCHARGE
	The Court receives compensation for loss of grazing, both temporary and permanent via FE.	
2022/12538	NEW FOREST SHOW	RESUME
	The Court feels it should attend the NF Show given its important role in educating and informing the public but the cost is an issue. The Official Verderer will write to the Show Chief Executive to see if the Show Society can help the Court with the cost of the marquee hire. Given its educational role the OV will also ask whether the HLS could assist.	Action OV

2022/12539	SEARCH FEE REVIEW	DISCHARGE
	The Clerk produced a paper showing the proposed increase in search fees. The increases were approved. They will come into effect on 1 st November 2022.	Action Clerk
2022/12540	FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE SPEED CAMERA VAN	RESUME
	It was queried whether the van has been providing coverage in accordance with the Agreement as it hasn't been seen much on the B3078. The Clerk will investigate.	Action Clerk
2022/12541	VERDERERS' ELECTION	DISCHARGE
	The Clerk has made enquiries with NFDC and it is confirmed the Council will be very happy to assist with the next election. Costs should be significantly lower than the 2021 Election. It was agreed to put on hold further consideration of the possibility of a postal vote. The possibility may be revisited after the next election.	
2022/12542	LONG SERVICE AWARDS	RESUME
	This is ongoing. The Clerk said she will try to progress it.	Action Clerk
2022/12543	HOUSING RENT REVIEW	RESUME
	The agreed process is being followed but two tenants are known to remain unhappy. The Official Verderer will look at the housing formula used by the local authority to see whether there is anything in that which could assist. Consideration will be given to whether a further review should take place.	Action OV

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2022/12544	VERDERERS REPRESENTATION ON SUB-COMMITTEES, EXTERNAL SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS	DISCHARGE
	The list of the various groups on which the Verderers have representation was considered and vacancies filled where needed. A copy will be made available to all members of the Court.	Action Clerk
2022/12545	VERGE PARKING IN THE VICINITY OF THE ALICE LISLE	DISCHARGE
	The Clerk reported that the Enforcement Team at the NFNPA has now taken up the issue of parking on the green outside the Alice Lisle Public House. The Clerk will report any developments.	

HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME (HLS) & THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME (VGS)

2022/12546 HLS AGREEMENT RESUME

The Official Verderer reported it is possible the HLS will be rolled over for up to 5 years with options to break if it is decided a different scheme would be more beneficial. Commoners are concerned that with BPS running down, there will be nothing to replace it. An ELMS may be a possible replacement but at present not enough is known about how it would work with the Forest.

Action OV

2022/12547 VGS - PIGS RESUME
December

Letters have been sent out to cattle owners asking for confirmation of what they turned out this year. A meeting of the sub-committee will be held in November. A proposal to increase payments for pigs will be presented and considered at that meeting.

Action RS

REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

2022/12548 A&O WOODLAND MEETING DISCHARGE

Mr Deakin said he attended a multi-agency group meeting convened to discuss regeneration in the A&O woodlands. It is apparent there are differing views. A report questioned whether there really is a problem. In the very long-term it is suggested there is not, with reportedly only approximately four woodlands not being in favourable condition.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

2022/12549 FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

TRAINING

2022/12550 ANIMAL HANDLING LEGISLATION RESUME
December

When the drifts are over, the Animal Handling Legislation will be considered and any additional training that is felt the Agisters require will be arranged.

Action RD

HEALTH & SAFETY

2022/12551 INCIDENTS INVOLVING PONIES & MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC DISCHARGE

A child was reportedly kicked in the head on Stoney Cross, close to the Ice Cream Van.

In another incident, a child was kicked in the stomach on Boltons Bench.

A lady was reportedly kicked at Highland Water a few days before this meeting but the incident has not been reported.

2022/12552 CONFLICTS BETWEEN STOCK AND THE PUBLIC DISCHARGE

A discussion took place regarding what, if anything, can be done to try to prevent the apparently increasing number of incidents involving the public and commoners' stock.

The Court assumes risk assessments are carried out in respect of the ice cream vans and on the campsites. The Court feels FE invites people into the Forest and therefore should bear some responsibility.

The proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which will cover petting, touching and feeding of ponies, donkeys and mules will require more signage and it is hoped that the public will take more notice of the signs, if they think they will be fined if they are caught interacting with the commoners' animals.

A conclusion was not reached on the question of whether incidents that occur, should be given greater publicity.

STAFF MATTERS

2022/12553 STAFF COMMITTEE MINUTES DISCHARGE

The minutes had been circulated.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2022/12554 SOLENT FREEPORT & INVESTMENT ZONES RESUME

The Court will consider potential implications arising from the proposed freeport zones which will include the Waterside and other areas around Southampton Water. NFDC has reportedly objected to any changes in planning policies for the area. The National Park Authority will also be discussing the proposals. Further information is required.

Action AS

2022/12555 NEW OFFICIAL VERDERER DISCHARGE

The OV advised that the recruitment process will commence early in the New Year. The post will be advertised.

2022/12556 LETTER FROM A POTENTIAL COMMONER DISCHARGE

A letter was sent to one of the Elected Verderers requesting permission to depasture pigs next year in the Blackwell Common area, under licence. The Clerk advised the writer had already contacted her and she had advised him to wait until next year as a lot may depend on the acorn crop. The Court agreed the decision should be deferred until next year but it is felt it is unlikely the request will be agreed, due to previous problems when pigs were turned out in the area under a right of common. Those pigs did not remain on the common for long as the owner spent a lot of time retrieving them from private property where fencing was inadequate. There is nothing to suggest the fencing has improved over the years.

2022/12557 PIGS ON THE WESTERN COMMONS

RESUME

The question of whether pigs are allowed on the Western Commons was revisited but once again no firm conclusion was reached. The question seems to be the definition of the right of common of pasture, which appears to vary according the common land involved. Commoners depasturing pigs on, or adjacent to the Western Commons, need to satisfy themselves that they have the relevant right. If they haven't, there may be some associated risks. A letter to affected commoners may be required.

Action
OV/RD/Clerk

2022/12558 CATTLE AT HILLTOP

RESUME

Concern has reportedly been raised in some quarters that not enough is being done to protect the public from a herd of cattle that runs in the Hilltop (Beaulieu) / Dibden area of the Forest. These cattle are said to have been implicated in a number of incidents, some of which have been reported to the Court. Such incidents have been swiftly acted upon and appropriate action taken – such as the Verderers taking action under their byelaws when justified. The Court felt it was not its responsibility to pay the owner of the cattle to remove their horns. The Court does not have the power to insist on removal. The office had been required by HSE to provide details of the cattle owner but it was not known whether any action had been taken.

It was agreed that it may be advisable to write to the owner of the cattle, explaining that a number of reports about the behaviour of his animals have been received.

Action
OV/RD/Clerk

2022/12559 AGISTERS' VEHICLES

DISCHARGE

There is a significant delay in the delivery of the new vehicles which have been ordered and the current vehicles are now out of contract. It may be necessary to make other arrangements.

Action
DR/RD/Clerk

The meeting ended at 14:00 hrs

Julian Mansel
16 November 2022