

**Minutes of the Court of Verderers held on Wednesday 16th October 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 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
Mr D Readhead	Elected Verderer	
IN ATTENDANCE	Miss S Westwood	Clerk to the Verderers
	Mr J R Gerrelli	Head Agister
APOLOGIES	None	

IN COMMITTEE in the Library

2024/13679	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	RESUME
	The minutes of the last Court, held on Wednesday 18 th September 2024 were approved, and signed by the Official Verderer.	
2024/13680	NEW DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	RESUME
	There were no new declarations of interest.	
2024/13681	CONDITION OF STOCK	RESUME
	The Head Agister said that the condition of stock is similar to last month and overall, he is very pleased. The drifts are continuing to go well and the ponies coming in are in very good condition. As usual a few mares with foals are beginning to lose a little condition.	
	There aren't many pigs on the Forest and the acorn crop is generally light. There does, however, appear to be quite a lot of beech mast.	
	Cattle are starting to go home now. The Store sales are coming up soon and the New Forest TB Control Plan TB testing window is open. As with the ponies, the cattle have also done very well on the Forest over the summer. The wet and warm weather is ensuring the grass continues to grow.	
2024/13682	STRANGLES	RESUME
	Strangles, which has been noted in donkeys as well as ponies, continues to rumble around, although in the North of the Forest it does seem to be easing. Most of the drifts in the north have been postponed.	
2024/13683	BLUE TONGUE	RESUME
	The Blue Tongue restriction zone seems to be creeping west and is in Hampshire. As yet, it has not reached the Forest.	

Being in a Blue Tongue zone does mean some restriction on the movement of cattle. Difficulties will arise if the zone is extended now but doesn't include Salisbury as that is the nearest market where commoners sell their animals. Some cold weather would help to control the midges which are the vectors. As the author of the Animal Diseases Contingency Plan for the New Forest, it is to be hoped that Forestry England will consider what precautions may be needed. Ultimately APHA/Defra will dictate what has to happen.

Action DS

2024/13684 BOVINE VIRAL DIARRHOEA (BVD)

DISCHARGE

The request from the New Forest Commoners' Defence Association for the Agisters to assist with vaccinating cattle against Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) at the time they attend commoners' holdings to mark cattle has been very carefully considered by the Staff Liaison Committee. There are clear health and safety implications for all concerned (animals and people) associated with Agisters undertaking this task which requires the handling of drugs and needles, and for that reason the request is declined.

2024/13685 THE AGISTER TEAM

RESUME

Mr Manley raised the problem of the aging Agister team. The Head Agister said this has been mentioned regularly for several years. It is a cause for concern, because being an Agister is a physically and mentally hard job. The suggestion has been made that employing one, or preferably two, apprentices might be a good way forward. The Official Verderer commented that whilst he feels this is a really good idea, he is uncomfortable with taking on Apprentices when there is little realistic chance of jobs being available for them at the end of their apprenticeships.

It was agreed this should be discussed in the Staff Liaison Committee first, and then by the HR Committee.

Action RD

2024/13686 4 X 4 VEHICLES DRIVING PONIES ON FRITHAM PLAIN

DISCHARGE

A report has been seen on social media stating that someone was using 4x4's to round up stock on Fritham Plain. Investigations have revealed this to be true and disappointingly it was a commoner who was responsible. The Court agreed this is inappropriate. It is very bad PR and it brings the commoning community into disrepute. The identity of the commoner is known and will be shared with the Clerk who will write to the commoner stating such behaviour is not acceptable.

Action
Clerk/JRG

2024/13687 BOVINE TB

DISCHARGE

A query was raised regarding TB testing of bulls. It was pointed out that bulls are included in the TB plan and those which move between herds are required to be tested much more frequently than other cattle.

2024/13688 STALLION – WOODFIDLEY TOP GUN DISCHARGE

Woodfidley Top Gun has been found dead in the middle of the stallion field at Mottisfont. The cause of death has not been confirmed but could have been due to lightning strike.

2024/13689 MARKING FEES RECEIVED TO DATE AND COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEAR RESUME

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Forest Ponies	4961	4880
Forest Cattle	2424	2870
Forest Donkeys	123	119
Forest Pigs	77	237
Forest Sheep	0	0
Total Forest Stock	7585	8156
Common Ponies	570	603
Common Cattle	411	1197
Common Donkeys	88	106
Common Pigs	17	35
Common Sheep	121	163
Total Common Stock	1207	2104
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Forest	7508	7869
Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys on the Commons	1069	1906
Total Ponies, Cattle & Donkeys	8577	9775
Total Stock – Forest & Commons	8792	10260

2024/13690 BREACHES OF THE BYELAWS RESUME

There are no new byelaw breaches

OPEN COURT

**IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Craig Harrison, Deputy Surveyor
Mrs Joan Clark Land Agent, South East England**

The Head Agister opened the Court with the usual proclamation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & DECISIONS

2024/13691 PRESENTMENTS

Please can I remind everyone making presentments that a written copy is appreciated and even better an emailed copy to our Clerk, in Word, to facilitate including your presentment in full in the Court minutes.

2024/13692 EXCESS FRUIT AND HALLOWEEN PUMPKINS

At this time of year, there is often a glut of apples and other fruits and in a few weeks' time it will be Halloween. I would like to draw people's attention to the particular dangers associated with leaving anything on the Forest for the animals to eat, especially at the side of the road which puts both livestock and motorists at risk. Apples in quantity, such as a bag of windfalls, can cause colic in horses. A whole apple can cause choking.

Pumpkins are toxic to some wildlife, including hedgehogs. Please recycle pumpkins or compost them at home.

Leaving anything on the Forest constitutes fly tipping, and anyone caught doing so, can be prosecuted.

2024/13693 CLOCKS CHANGE – REMINDER TO FOREST MOTORISTS

With the clocks going back at the end of the month this seems a timely opportunity for us to remind motorists to take extra care on the Forest's roads when driving in the dark, especially at commuter times when the roads are busy and drivers maybe blinded by oncoming headlights.

In addition, as we head into winter, salt will soon be spread on roads in the Forest and that always attracts the livestock. Please be extra vigilant in frosty weather.

2024/13694 VERDERERS ELECTION

I would just like to remind everyone that there is an election of two Verderers on Tuesday, 26th November. Nominations for candidates are required by noon on Thursday, the 7th November. Nomination forms may be obtained from our office but completed nomination forms must be delivered to the Office of the Returning Officer, Mrs Rachel Brooks, at the NFDC offices at Appletree Court in Lyndhurst and not our office. If you wish to stand for election, you must not miss this deadline.

ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT

2024/13695 THE ANIMAL ACCIDENT REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2024

The Agisters attended 14 accidents in September compared with 15 in September last year.

5 ponies, 3 Pigs, a cow and a donkey died

2 ponies were injured and in two incidences the animals reportedly involved in an accident could not be found.

All 14 accidents occurred in the dark.

7 drivers have failed to come forward.

The total number of commoners animals killed and injured this year is 31. That compares with 35 in the same period last year.

PRESENTMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

2024/13696 FORESTRY ENGLAND PRESENTMENT TO THE VERDERERS COURT
18/09/2024 – A PROPOSAL FOR PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE CYCLING AND
IMPROVING THE NEW FOREST OFF ROAD CYCLE NETWORK

The Following presentments were heard on this subject:-

2024/13697 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Caroline Bertram

'My name is Dr Caroline Bertram, retired university lecturer and previously a BHSI – British Horse Society Instructor and senior BHS Examiner.

I am concerned about the proposed increases provision for cyclists in the forest.

In my opinion, for the safety of horses/ponies and their riders as well as for cyclists, there need to be some areas where riders can be certain of not coming into contact with bicycles.

If I may explain – I am in this wheelchair due to an accident involving a cyclist who came up behind me on a bridle path and shouted and used some sort of horn when very close to my horse desiring me in no uncertain terms to get out of his way.

My horse was usually bombproof and well trained (advanced dressage horse), but both he and I were spooked and I was thrown.

I had to have 3 surgeries before I could walk again, though I am deteriorating again now.

I have nothing against cyclists in the forest, but until it is possible to educate everyone regarding safety and manners there should be some areas where segregation is possible.

Young horses in particular have to be educated to become roadworthy and as this does not happen overnight, riders need to know where they can find a safe environment.

Thank you for listening to me.'

2024/13698 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Mr Parry-Norton, Chairman, New Forest Commoners' Defence Association

Cycling proposals – time extension

'Good morning, Official Verderer, Verderers, and members of the Court.

Last month we heard the Deputy Surveyor make a presentment announcing the start of a consultation period for a proposed cycle network.

I am sure the initial reaction from the Cycling groups is to immediately support FE's proposal and I am sure we will hear presentments to that effect, at a glance it all seems a reasonable proposition.

The use of existing gravel tracks would be a sensible option, most routes are used anyway so hopefully this would be a way of encouraging responsible cycling

practices. What isn't clear is some of these tracks do not exist as gravelled roads; the proposal is to create new tracks with the subsequent loss of habitat.

The use of underpasses need addressing, ponies shade in them during the summer months, this could potentially put cyclists at physical risk and the commoner to financial litigation. Underpasses are used during drifts and as a barrier in the event of a disease outbreak, they will need to be locked and access denied to cyclists.

The network needs adequate policing; electric bikes could become a nuisance to other Forest users, and could large cycle events be held with no restrictions?

The amount of questions that need resolving are complex and difficult, the Forest's unique character and ecology must not be compromised and every decision evaluated thoroughly before being implemented.

To consider this proposal in four weeks is unrealistic, to give a reasoned response requires Commoners that live and work in the Forest time to share their views.

We, the CDA strongly advise the Verderers to delay their response to allow a proper unpressurised consultation to take place, open to everyone.

We also recommend to the cyclists groups and individuals to visit the proposed new gravelled tracks and then make an informed decision, we have a large network of existing tracks, is it really worth losing more of this special Forest.

Thank you.'

2024/13699 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Ailsa Farrand

'I'm Ailsa Farrand speaking on behalf of the New Forest Equestrian Association.

After seeing proposals for the new routes on which cycling will be permitted we are very concerned. We are not an association that is against cyclists at all but ...

- There are new routes proposed which will significantly affect the remaining tranquil environment in these areas for existing users, wildlife and general biodiversity.
- Riders and walkers often do not mix well with cyclists due to the speed and element of surprise that occurs when a cyclist comes up behind them, often at speed. It has already reached the stage where there are few places where you could expect to be free of bicycles already, and the proposals will not discourage more cyclists riding over open heath to join up with the new routes. The suggestion of volunteers policing this is clearly unsustainable and better and more specific signage is needed to inform and assist users.
- Included are routes that encompass open Forest areas that should be highly protected, and should require an EIA before any changes are considered.
- The extremely rare "most tranquil area" north of the Forest, west of Fritham now has proposed routes crossing it. This would downgrade it from its "most tranquil" classification, due to greater bicycle use.

We ask that local consultation is undertaken in every area affected by the proposed changes, and that any decision is deferred until this has taken place. Thank you'

2024/13700 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Sarah Richards, NFA (FOTN)

'Official Verderer and Verderers and the members of public attending court today, I am Sarah Richards, Vice Chair of the New Forest Association, also known as the Friends of the New Forest. I am giving this presentment on behalf of the association in response to the Deputy Surveyor's presentment on the proposed extension of cycling routes in the forest made to the September Court.

The New Forest Association welcomes work to create a co-ordinated recreational cycle network and to promote sustainable transport. The Deputy Surveyor's September presentment certainly shows positive elements – the Cycling Code, the Network Ambassadors, Cycling App Engagement as well as some robust routes that serve as convenient links. But there are other issues and routes that cause us considerable concern which we ask the Verderers to consider.

First, what are the processes in place to ensure informed public consultation? The proposals appear to have been formulated by a relatively small group. We urge the Verderers to ensure that proper consultation and processes are followed that meet for example statutory habitat protections which will serve as some guard against environmental damage to the forest.

Secondly, we are unclear how these proposals dovetail with other elements of the Recreational Management Plan for example the proposed relocation of car parks, the preservation of ecologically sensitive areas or compliance with the Verderers' tranquillity policy. To achieve any sense of tranquillity, as an oasis between vibrant urban areas, and to preserve the forest's special qualities consideration must be given to reducing, not increasing, recreational pressure in the more remote parts of the forest. The wider New Forest Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, currently out for consultation, also needs to fit.

Thirdly, has adequate consideration been given to the interaction with other forest users, including walkers and horse riders, as well as forest stock for example the use of underpasses and driftways. It is clear, for example, that certain proposed tracks are heavily used by walkers. A full risk assessment is a necessity particularly if commoners are exposed to additional liability.

Fourthly, the presentment refers to the 'a degree of upgrading' of some tracks. What is envisaged? Will tracks be gravelled, with creeping urbanisation and possible changes to habitat and grazing, and, if so, what of future maintenance?

Fifthly, we see little in these proposals to address off tracking cycling. Indeed, the opening of new tracks across the open forest may tempt more cyclists off-track. This lack of action is despite the Verderers' past pleas to Forestry England. Our own Byelaw surveys reveal worrying levels of off-track cycling as well as the abusive behaviour. For example, 713 instances were recorded in our 2022 Watch, our commoners' survey of 2023 found that off-track cycling was the second most concerning problem to commoners, and it was the third most recorded byelaw breach, after litter and dog waste, in our 2024 Watch.

Last but by no means least what is the evidence upon which these proposed extensions are based? Is there data of existing use of the network and projections of likely increase in use of any extended cycle network and particular tracks? We ask the Verderers to ensure that they have all necessary information to make an informed judgment.

All in all, we do not see how any responsible body can comment on, let alone approve, the proposals as currently presented.'

2024/13701 RECREATION PROPOSALS AND ADVISORY BODIES (INCL FE'S CYCLING PROPOSALS)

Presentment by Brian Tarnoff

'Good morning, I'm here today as a member (not representative) of both 1) the New Forest Local Access Forum and 2) the Recreation Management Strategy Advisory Group. The former is a statutory advisory body established by the CROW Act (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000), the latter by the New Forest National Park's Recreation Management Strategy which is part of the Partnership Plan which includes both Forestry England and the Verderers. Despite that standing relevant to all proposals for recreation in the New Forest, and its publication a month ago, discussion of the FE / Cycle Working Group proposals for offroad cycle network changes on the Crown Lands has not been planned until the last few days, and only at my prompting, which should not have been necessary.

Although the aspiration filled documents that the Park Authority call their RMS and Partnership Plan would suggest joined up thinking, perhaps suggesting the existence of procedure, one of the Partners, Forestry England didn't think to, at best concurrently, present this proposal, years in the making, to key stakeholder groups. I see nothing wrong with the focussed exclusivity of the working group constructing the proposal (it might have been too many cooks), but once published for consultation at the very least official consultees on recreation and access should have been included (if not, also, the New Forest Consultative Panel that I chair). While Verderers consent is key, and this court is a great forum for this community, the bubble of people in this room, it should not be the end of the story for decisions pertaining to a National Asset, internationally important habitat.

I am here simply to ask that the Verderers await feedback from both advisory groups before any final decision on those proposals which deserve wider scrutiny. Further, as members of both the Partnership Plan and the RMS Steering Group, the Verderers ought to insist on a Strategy, that in any way resembles a series of steps, measures and procedures that would deliver Recreation Management in the New Forest.'

2024/13702 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS

Presentment by Alison Ward – PEDAL

'Good morning Verderers, My name is Alastair Ward.

'I am a GP and volunteer for PEDALL, an inclusive cycling project operating here in the New Forest, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and supported by the the charity Friends of Pedall. I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of off-road cycle paths for the additional-needs community. These paths are not just trails; they are lifelines for those with physical disability, including wheelchair users, and others with learning disability, visual or hearing impairment, autism and anxiety.

PEDALL supports riders using two-wheeled and specialist bikes, enabling over 4,000 riders every year to access social group cycle rides. Off-road cycle paths offer a sanctuary from traffic, providing a safe, serene environment where clearly defined routes guide cyclists through the natural beauty of the New Forest. Here, individuals can escape the noise and dangers of the road, immersing themselves in nature, which significantly enhances their mental and physical well-being.

For many, these paths are more than a recreational option—they are essential for fostering independence, confidence, and a sense of belonging. By supporting the development and maintenance of off-road cycle paths, we are investing in a more inclusive, healthier, and happier community. Thank you.'

2024/13703 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Ross Kempson

'Good morning Verderers and members of the court. My name is Ross Kempson and I come before you today as the owner of Cyclexperience, a local hire and sales shop in Brockenhurst and I have also been a member of the Cycling Working Group since its inception back in 2004.

I would like to outline my support for the new cycling network proposals which have been put before you, without repeating the detail which is already well documented.

As a commercial establishment, we already have a great network for our cycling customers but there are missing links which need addressing in order to keep people off the roads and spread people out more evenly on the trails. Our visiting customers will almost universally follow the routes we give them with little request to go trailblazing and by using digital tools, we have managed to reduce the number of cyclists getting lost who struggle to read maps. We do enable many overseas visitors to explore the New Forest on bikes and digital mapping does reduce the reliance on written-based instructions to stop people from getting lost and possibly veering off the recommended network.

The behaviour of our rental customers is mostly easy to manage as they are not typically regular cyclists but they mostly come to the New Forest to spend time amongst nature with friends and family.

As a visitor touch point, we could do more to provide messaging and education about the forest habitat and the traditional commoning practices and I am enthused by the prospect of an improved network which would be a catalyst to inspire the next generation of cycling visitors. If messages are promoted thoughtfully and effectively, it would enable them to embrace the importance of keeping to the trails and developing stories about why there are both restrictions and exceptions. The current status quo on cycling access is not generally understood and many local people I encounter in my shop either have no clue about the cycling restrictions in place or put the restrictions down to institutional nimbyism.

Those of us that have been lucky enough to be part of the recent process to improve cycling access and management know this not to be true but we do need to pass this information on to others.

The final point I want to make is that the fundamental principle of proposing this enhanced network isn't to increase cycling but rather to address present activity where people are already using trails which are not appropriate but where there is a lack of any alternative nearby for their quiet passage.

We want to encourage the existing cyclists to follow permitted trails that allow them to continue their existing activity but shift their movements onto trails that are better suited to mitigate conflict with habitat damage or commoning activities.

I think most people will abide by practical guidance if the messaging is clear and understandable.

In closing I would acknowledge that not everyone is going to keep to the recommended trails regardless of how well designed the network is but we have an opportunity to develop a community where compromise is being served and the health and well-being of our fellow citizens is being considered in balance with the more traditional needs of the New Forest.

And personally, I think more than ever, this world needs a lot more focus on citizenship and living and working together more equitably and harmoniously. I respectfully submit this presentment for the Court's consideration. Thank you for listening.'

2024/13704 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Nic Harris – Go New Forest

'Presentment by Nic Carass, Business & Membership Manager At Go New Forest. Good morning verderers and members of the court. My name is Nic Carass and I come before you today as the Business & Membership Manager at Go New Forest. The official tourist board for the New Forest.

We know that people who are looking to visit the Forest and ride bikes here, want easy to navigate, way marked routes that allow them to connect with this unique and special land we call the New Forest.

In the last 12 months, the 'Cycling' page on thenewforest.co.uk website has had 65,560 page views from 28,142 people.

Data tells us that people want to cycle safely on way marked trails, on traffic free paths, between our towns and villages.

"The Old Railway Cycle" has been the most popular cycle route on our website with 6,133 views. It's a 9 mile route that takes people from Brockenhurst to Burley. The route is majority off road and takes 90 minutes at a steady pace.

Families collect a bike from Ross at Cyclexperience and before setting off, choose a route they want to follow. Their time is limited and they don't want to get lost. They pick up a selection of pastries from the Bakehouse in Brockenhurst before heading to the old Railway to get to Burley. Around 90 minutes later the family arrive in Burley, they visit Shappen Stores for more snacks and supplies, they pop in to see Chris at Burley Fudge Kitchen before heading back to Cyclexperience.

Majority traffic free routes like the Old Railway and those proposed by Forestry England help facilitate people riding bikes between our towns and villages reinvesting in our communities and taking car traffic off the roads.

Typically, three quarters of UK children spend less time outside than prison inmates. As a result, children have frighteningly little knowledge, interest or investment in how to preserve nature for future generations. This has to change and a decision in support of the proposals brought here today, can be a step towards a future where children know the stories of this land, experience it's magic and fight to protect it.

I've spoken about an existing route, the Old Railway between Burley & Brockenhurst but I'd like to describe a route that would be made possible should the proposal be agreed.

Setting off from Abbots Well, we can ride the gravel tracks through Hasley Inclosure, marvelling at all the sweet chestnut trees, before riding up towards Old Sloden, ragged boys hill on our right. We stop to eat some New Forest Shortbread under the branches of 500 year old Elephant Oak before making our way over the heath of Fritham Plain and stopping for a pint of ale at the Royal Oak.

To get back to the 1000 year old Abbots Well, we ride west over the Hampton Ridge, one of a handful of places in the Forest where you can't hear traffic.

This kind of memory making is what we remember for the rest of our lives. We recall fondly the time we spent in the New Forest and the tranquillity and peace we find here.

Little of the Forest's magic can be felt by the people accidentally finding themselves either lost in a bog or on the A35.

We at Go New Forest are dedicated to using our marketing channels, including a database of over 60,000 email addresses and a combined social media following of 70,000 to communicate how to ride bikes responsibly in the Forest and the importance of sticking to waymarked paths.

I acknowledge the dedication and time of the verderers, whose decisions are what have kept the Forest so beautifully unchanged.

This morning, I ask you to support Forestry England's proposal for an improved off road cycle network that will help people enjoy the peace of the Forest for generations to come.'

2024/13705 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Hannah Marsh – British Horse Society

'Good morning, Official Verderer, Verderers and members of the court. My name is Hannah Marsh, and I am the Regional Manager for the British Horse Society. I have a statement from the BHS Director of Access, Mark Weston, who sends his apologies that he is unable to be here in person today.

The British Horse Society is committed to promoting and securing the provision, protection and preservation of access for equestrians, both defending access to historically available areas and lobbying to gain access to new land and pathways in order to increase safe off-road access.

The BHS supports in principle the expansion of the New Forest cycling network. Nationwide, we work closely with Cycling UK and other organisations to promote safe sharing of routes and spaces, with our joint "Be Nice, Say Hi" campaign being the mainstay of this work. We work together to educate cyclists on how to approach and pass horses safely, so that these two user groups – both vulnerable on the roads – can co-exist comfortably.

Although equestrians are not used to sharing the particular forest paths in question with cyclists at present, and any expansion of the network will be an adjustment for some, it should be remembered that there are already various shared paths in the forest and that on the public rights of way network nationwide, riders have always shared bridleways, restricted byways and byways with cyclists. Riders will also still be able to access vast areas of the forest where cyclists will still not be permitted.

There are however two important points we wish to raise to ensure the creation of any new cycling routes goes smoothly for all user groups.

Firstly, all promotion, press releases, maps, publications and signage and so forth should make it abundantly clear that these routes are not "cycle routes" – they are multi-user shared tracks to which cyclists now also have access. We have had reports of riders being told they shouldn't be on the current cycle routes in the forest, which is absolutely not the case, and clarity around this is vital to ensure all permitted user groups can share the trails safely and considerately. Cyclists should be riding these routes fully expecting to come across all types of other trail users, and knowing how to pass them safely is key.

To that end, our second request is that there is an education plan put in place, across all user groups, to coincide with the launch of the expansion of the cycle network, to promote safe use of the shared trails. The BHS has been involved in both face-to-face events and educational films to do this in places such as Windsor Great Park, with great success, and we would like to offer our support for, and assistance with, similar in the New Forest.

We believe that equestrians and cyclists can share these routes safely and we are happy to contribute to the education piece to help ensure all user groups have the knowledge to do this.

Thank you.'

2024/13706 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS

Presentment by Grace Compton –Ride Leader at New Forest Off Road Club and Policy Officer for the University of Southampton Sustainability and Resilience Institute

'I am here from New Forest Off Road Club to fully support Forestry England's proposals for an improved off road cycle network.

New Forest Off Road Club is a women-led, Community Interest Company. We support and enable people aged 6-76 out on bike rides, enabling them to find community, build confidence and experience the beauty and tranquillity of the Forest.

We would ask the Verderers to approve the proposals so that people can experience the Forest by bicycle on a much needed, improved network of trails that join up properly and are easier to navigate with better signposting.

Just as people come to the new Forest on foot and on horseback for its tranquillity, so do we, as people who pedal on bikes. We're advocates for the mental and physical benefits of spending time in nature.

We cycle considerately, stopping often to appreciate and respect the Forest's beauty and calmness. We help people connect with its unique qualities and know that through being immersed in the New Forest landscapes, people are better to better appreciate the landscape, sounds and wildlife.

If the proposals for a revised network were agreed, then members of our group would volunteer to be trained as New Forest Cycling Ambassadors. (Point E).

And as a community group with a large social media following of over 6,000 people, we would be well placed to help communicate effective messages about the implementation of a revised network. (Point F).

To finish, I'd like to share some quotes from people who have ridden with us, to explain what cycling means to them:

"The views and nature were amazing. Riding my bike always makes me feel free, escaping from my busy life."

"It has opened, or should I say, reopened my body to feel active again. I loved escaping and being free to meet new people without being a parent."

"Going through a difficult period in my life, I desperately needed to be in nature, to cycle and let my mind breathe a little. I was filled with a rainbow of feelings, grateful and warm with love and kindness, amid and part of a magical and ancient land."

2024/13707 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Annbell Mellor – Greener Brockenhurst

'Good morning, Verderers

My name is Annabelle Mellor and I am representing Greener Brockenhurst which is a community environmental action group formed in 2019. Greener Brockenhurst makes this presentment in full support of Forestry England's proposals to the Verderers Court.

Greener Brockenhurst is first and foremost an environmental group, not a cycling group (www.greenerbrockenhurst.org). We undertake and support projects and practices which are environmentally-positive including promoting active travel which is good for physical and mental health and for the environment. As a group, we care deeply about the unique and special nature of the beautiful New Forest in which we live and at the same time we acknowledge the health, recreational and enjoyment benefits it offers to residents and visitors alike.

Greener Brockenhurst believes that Forestry England's proposals present a coherent and workable strategy that improve the off-road cycle network and will provide for better usability, connectivity and accessibility for all.

We support Forestry England's proposal for the following reasons:

- With an increasing population and the inevitable corresponding pressure on the Forest, a balance between recreation and conserving the natural environment can be best achieved through a strong structure of management and education endorsed by all the stakeholders
- More joined up routes are likely to keep more people on those designated routes and away from sensitive areas where nature needs to thrive.
- Recreational and utility cyclists who are reluctant to cycle on the road as it is unsafe are more likely to cycle on an extended network of trails which gets them from A to B thus, in time, reducing cars on the road
- By introducing a range of sustainable management and monitoring processes the proposal will help to promote responsible cycling as well as imparting knowledge about the New Forest and raising conservation awareness.

Greener Brockenhurst would respectfully ask the Verderers to consider Forestry England's proposal favourably.

Thank you.'

2024/13708 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Sophie Gordon – Cycling UK

'Good morning. My name is Sophie Gordon, and I'm the campaigns manager at Cycling UK.

Cycling UK is a national charity which works to inspire and enable people to cycle. We provide advice and resources, run community projects to fix people's bikes and teach them to cycle, and we campaigns for better conditions for cycling. We are also a statutory consultee for rights of way modifications.

We were formed in 1878, and were previously known as the Cyclists' Touring Club.

We have over 70,000 members who share our enthusiasm for the enjoyment and health benefits that cycling can bring.

These benefits are multiplied when cycling in beautiful nature-rich National Parks like the New Forest.

For that reason, Cycling UK supports the proposals put forward by Forestry England and the New Forest Cycle Working Group to improve the cycle network in the forest. We understand that the objective of this exercise has been to put in place a robust and fit-for-purpose process that will lead to a better connected, better understood and more logical network. This aims to reduce the incidence of off-network cycling, which often happens through lack of awareness or because the network doesn't go where people want or need to go.

It is clear to me that the proposals are a result of committed and productive discussions over almost two years between the cycle working group, representatives from the Verderers, the National Park Authority and Forestry England. Getting to this point has required consideration and compromise from all sides.

The vital interests of commoning, local residents and the qualities that make the New Forest special have been firmly to the fore, informed by valuable input from representatives of the Verderers.

The principles underpinning the proposals are those embodied in the Recreation Management Strategy and the New Forest Partnership Plan, to which all key stakeholders in the Forest have signed up.

We believe strongly that the benefits to be gained from promoting responsible cycling in the Forest will not be realised unless we can achieve a significantly improved network.

The current network with all its imperfections simply does not lend itself to active promotion of responsible cycling, because it often doesn't make sense to people on the ground.

The new network plans will make it much easier for people to stick to promoted routes if they appear more consistent and logical, and clearer to follow.

This is enhanced by the addition of routes that link to where people live on the edges of the forest. This will make it easier for local people to ride from home rather than driving to a car park to start their ride, and creates options to cycle for practical journeys. Reducing the need to drive will ease congestion, improve health and reduce the risks to wildlife from motor vehicles.

This is a well thought out package of measures, which includes multiple angles to promote understanding of responsible cycling in the forest, including peer-to-peer communication via cycle ambassadors and through local cycling groups.

Ensuring that the network is shown accurately on digital maps is no small endeavour but will have a big impact to make sure that route planning apps are keeping people on track even if the communications haven't managed to reach them.

With these improvements, Cycling UK will feel much more able to assist with explaining the principles and need for responsible access in the forest, to ensure that people understand how they can help to protect the special qualities of the area and co-exist with commoning activities.

In summary, we feel that these proposals to improve the network are a significant step forward. After decades of debate, they present a unique opportunity to move forward in a positive way, based on mutual respect for the special qualities of the New Forest and those who live and work here.

We reinforce our support for these proposals and ask you to approve them.'

2024/13709 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Sarah Fawkes– New Forest Transition

'Good Morning, Verderers

My name is Sarah Fawkes, and I represent the New Forest Transition and the Transition Lymington group. Transition is a local, not for profit, 'green' initiative started in the New Forest in 2008, that uses community engagement projects to create a more sustainable future.

Active travel is one of our major interests, but we are NOT a cycling group as such.

We are fully supportive of Forestry England's proposals to promote responsible cycling and improve the New Forest off-road cycle network. This, alongside a well thought out, on-road system (such as one proposed by HCC in the New Forest LCWIP) will encourage the 'cycling habit' from a young age – giving cyclists confidence and with the sense of responsibility to know where they are permitted to go without causing disturbance.

This complete set of proposals from A-G is very powerful. It confirms a huge amount of buy-in from many local partners. They are all willing this proposal to succeed.

'Utility cycling' - cycling for a purpose, and reducing car journeys - is an important consideration in the New Forest. Destinations such as Lymington and villages across the area are poorly served by public transport, so local people going about their daily lives find themselves obliged to use their cars. The result is traffic congestion, noise and air pollution, road surface damage and, most distressingly of all, animal casualties.

A more usable network of routes across the Forest, both on and off-road, on designated cycle paths will encourage local people, as well as visitors, away from their cars and onto 2 wheels, particularly when the weather and daylight hours are favourable.

Increasing utility cycling - a healthier, safer and more tranquil mode of transport, and reducing the negative effects of motorised traffic, can only be beneficial for the Forest.

How great would it be - to see local deliveries being taken on a e-cargo bike?

- to see a family group cycling into and through the forest, heading for a picnic on Wilverley Plain?

New Forest Transition and Transition Lymington would ask the verderers to seriously consider Forestry England's complete set of cycling proposals and the cumulative benefits that they would bring.

Thank you.'

2024/13710 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Martin Wheat

'Good Morning. I'm Martin Wheat and I ride with the NewForce mountain bike club, from whom you have had many representations over the years seeking improved access to off-road routes for cyclists within the New Forest.

Our comments have often been that the permitted network lacks connections between places cyclists might ride to or from. Sometimes it'd have us riding around in circles. While this is frustrating for leisure cyclists, the effect on utility cycling is even more pronounced.

The absence of trails connecting to Matley campsite and the proscription of Ragged Boys Hill spring to mind.

What we observe is that even locals, faced with apparently baffling restrictions or confusing waymarking, simply make the connections that make sense to themselves. How much more must this be true for visitors.

So what would we like to see?

- Permitted routes that encourage cyclists to leave their cars at home or in their campsite, enjoy the Forest in the open air, and keep safely off the roads;
- A Forest where cyclists can easily find their way from place to place on routes that make directional sense, using waymarking that reassures them that they're on track.

The Deputy Surveyor's proposal addresses exactly these things.

- We applaud the care with which this package of proposals has been assembled;
- we like the revision of the digital map guiding people's plans to within the permitted network, and improved waymarking to keep them on it;
- I feel sure that among our number we shall find willing volunteers to be ambassadors.

Obviously we'd like to see it all as soon as possible, but we can see why it must be phased. Naturally, there are other network extensions we'd like to see, but we're encouraged to see provision for ongoing review.

After so many years with no improvement, we're delighted to see such a serious proposal, and urge you to agree its implementation.

Thank you.'

2024/13711 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS – PROPOSED NEW CYCLE TRACK AT OGDENS
Presentment by Margaret Bunyard

'Official Verderer, Verderers, my name is Margaret Bunyard. I like and turn out ponies at Ogdens. I speak on behalf of myself and the commoners who turn out here. We are concerned about the proposed routing of one of the cycle tracks from the end of Gorley Road at Holland Farm, along the track to the barrier at Purliu Farm and onto Hasley Inclosure.

We believe it is wrong and dangerous on three counts:-

It is wrong and dangerous for the local commoners' stock.

It is wrong and dangerous for local wildlife.

It is wrong and potentially dangerous for the very cyclists themselves.

The track would pose a real danger to commoners' stock.

There are eight properties along this quarter mile stretch with turn-out rights. This includes two sizeable farms. There are very large numbers of cattle and ponies here grazing on Latchmore. Between September and April they congregate on the track proposed for the new cycle route. Although it is not currently a designated cycle track we have had plenty of evidence of how dangerous it can be. Many cyclists use it and enjoy going fast down the slope and round the bends, endangering wild ponies and cattle. They also pose a threat to walkers, dogs, riders and wildlife.

The gravel track finishes more than 200 metres from the gate into Hasley where the proposed route would continue. So there would need to be another gravel track laid, destroying wildlife habitats and a large area of grazing land which you, as Verderers work hard to protect.

The cycle track would pose a real danger to wildlife.

The Ogdens, Latchmore, Hasley area is very important for wildlife. The stream, the Shade, the mires, are all heavily protected (RAMSAR, SPA, SAC, SSSI). Indeed the car park here is closed every summer for the protection of nesting birds (and incidentally is still closed now).

This part of the Forest has been designated a Tranquil Area. But as well as the proposed cycle route through Ogdens there is another proposed through Pitts Wood. There is already a cycle route along Hampton Ridge to Fritham. It would be an irresistible temptation for cyclists to join the three together by taking one of the non-cycle tracks or pony tracks down across Latchmore.

In 2021 the Verderers produced an excellent paper: Tranquillity and the New Forest. It said that large parts of the New Forest are no longer tranquil but there are still a few whose tranquillity could be retained and should be protected. The paper concludes saying "The Verderers regard the remaining element of tranquillity of the New Forest exceptionally important and will use their powers to ensure that it is not further damaged." Tranquillity is the best protection for wildlife.

There would be danger to cyclists themselves.

The Ogdens track is not suitable for bicycles. When it rains the water flows down the track towards Latchmore Brook, turning ruts into streams and very large puddles. The two commoners' farms use modern, heavy tractors as a normal part of their working days. This inevitably creates deep hollows in the track, especially when they are turning in and out. In the winter it is difficult and dangerous to ride a bicycle through the mud, water, slurry and stock. If cyclists have to get off to bush their bicycles – well I'd rather them than me!

This proposed route would be wrong for commoners, wrong for wildlife and wrong for the very cyclists it is intended to benefit.

I urge the Verderers to oppose it.!

2024/13712 FORESTRY ENGLAND CYCLING PROPOSALS
Presentment by Immy Bickford Smith – cycling

'When the cycle network started in 1998 some 300 signposts and waymarkers were erected. Additional car park signs were also erected as mountain bikers nationwide

were encouraged to the area to use the network - and they arrived by car. At that time it was acknowledged all these signs added to the urbanisation of the New Forest.

Additional tracks will require more signposts and result in additional traffic and car parking issues. And there will be additional disturbance of ground nesting birds and wildlife as well as for all those people seeking peace and tranquillity.

This is of particular concern in the North of the Forest where the plan is to have new cycle tracks cutting through an area that has been designated as the most important area of undisturbed and tranquil heathland in the New Forest. Peace and quiet in the New Forest is becoming harder to find and many cyclists travel at dangerously high speed – especially where there are tracks down steep hills.

It seems pointless to have endless Forums, Strategy Plans, Policies and extremely costly surveys/mapping commissioned if they are ignored. For example the 1996 Tranquil Area Report by the ASH Consulting Group. (Please see the maps attached to this presentment).

This identified the area in the North of the Forest between Ogdens in the West, Dockens Water in the South and Fritham in the East and it was given zone E designation – most Tranquil.

Therefore, proposed tracks in the North of the Forest – from Ogdens via Hallicks Hole Hill to Fritham, the track that runs north from Hampton Ridge via Pitts Wood and over Ditchend Brook, and the track via Holly Hatch Cottage to Fritham should not be given permission.

On the Verderer's website under the heading Policies and Byelaws there is a direct link to a paper published by the Verderers with reference to "Tranquillity and the New Forest – the Verderers' Policies".

This explains why the Verderers consider protecting tranquillity here is exceptionally important and why they will use their powers to ensure that it is not further damaged.

Thank you.'

2024/13713 FOREST FARMING GROUP
Presentment by Immy Bickford Smith

'Good morning. My name is Immy Bickford-Smith.

Following my presentment in April it was disappointing to see the response from the Official Verderer confirming minutes are not taken of the Forest Farming Group meetings.

It was also disappointing that the "public consultation" about future funding to replace "income support for farmers" now that the BPS is being phased out was rather limited. Previous advice had been that all those with a legal interest in the common land should be consulted.

For example the Foundation for Common Land webinar 31st July 2023 "Governance Options for Delivering at Landscape Scale on Commons"

It was a shame that those not grazing the common land this year were not asked to contribute to the consultation survey in that they weren't asked to provide information about: What rights they hold. How much private agricultural land they have. Are they farmers. Might they want to turn out animals in the future. Do they make hay

or silage or breed replacement stock sold to other commoners. i.e. They weren't asked to provide any information that may be relevant to the long term sustainable future for common land farming.

As future funding Agreements of up to 30 years are being considered (and a significant number of commoners are 55 or over) it would seem sensible for any such agreements to be attached to private agricultural land holdings (owned or occupied).

The National Trust in its 2019 survey Monitoring the Effects of Grazing on the Commons stated that stock numbers increasing year on year had been driven by "inducement payments under the BPS that can't be regulated by the National Trust" In that report the National Trust also said "This is having a big impact on the ability for the agri-environmental payments administered by the Verderers and National Trust to influence more sensitive management of the habitats."

The New Forest BPS payments had been made based only on grazing activity and the New Forest HLS payments are also made based on grazing activity. Perhaps it is not surprising that the National Trust has withdrawn from the HLS arrangements.

Farmers and commoners with statutory registered rights to turn out stock onto not only the Crown Lands of the New Forest but also over one or more of the Adjacent commons should have their Adjacent commons rights properly protected under any future scheme. '

2024/13714 WHITE LINES ALONG THE EDGES OF THE UNFENCED FOREST ROADS
Presentment by Tony Van der Hoek, Commoner

Mr Van der Hoek asked whether the white lines on the unfenced roads can be renewed.

The Head Agister closed the Court

IN COMMITTEE (in the Library)

In Attendance: Mr Richard Burke, District Recreation Manager/ Recreation Management Strategy - New Forest - South England Forest District joined the meeting for Minute No. 13715

CONSIDERATION OF PRESENTMENTS

2024/13715 FORESTRY ENGLAND PRESENTMENT TO THE VERDERERS COURT 18/09/2024 – A PROPOSAL FOR PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE CYCLING AND IMPROVING THE NEW FOREST OFF ROAD CYCLE NETWORK RESUME

The Court is consulting with Natural England on the proposals and the New Forest National Park Authority is also being asked for its views. Both have been asked to respond no later than 7 days before the November Court. However, the Official Verderer said the Verderers will meet after the December Court Committee to discuss any responses or further submissions. He said he thinks it is very unlikely that all the proposed new routes will be approved, particularly those that pass through or very close to the tranquil areas and those which cross open Forest and will require some additional engineering, such as adding hoggin gravel. Mr Manley suggested the DS might like to come back to the Court with a list of the routes he feels are easily defensible.

Concern was expressed regarding funding and resources for future maintenance of an extended cycle network, especially where ground conditions are unstable.

A request was made for the tranquillity map to be overlaid onto the map of the cycle network in order to assess possible conflicts. To this end, Mr Pasmore commented that there are two maps, one drawn up by Ash Consulting and the other later map, produced by the NFNPA.

Action FE

Mr Chatters asked about the basis for deciding what legislation and tests are needed to assess the impact of the new routes and said he assumes the Court will have the results in order to be able to respond if its decisions are challenged. Miss Sevier wondered whether the additional routes will affect ground nesting birds

Ensuring cyclists remain on the network and don't trespass even further than now is also a concern as it is very clear that some cyclists don't care about the Forest. Mr Burke said the additional routes are an attempt to help reduce off track cycling and details of how it is hoped that can be achieved, including Apps with electronic mapping, are included in the proposal and supporting papers.

In reply to Mr Manley's question as to whether Mr Burke will talk to the CDA committee, the latter said he is happy to talk to anyone.

The DS said FE is discussing the proposals with the CDA, the Friends of the New Forest (NFA), the Access Forum and the RMS Advisory Group.

Action FE

The Court is keen to allow an opportunity for further presentments at the November Court. The DS and OV will now discuss a timetable and the Court will put information in that respect on its website. The OV added that it is unlikely the Court will make a final decision until the New Year.

Action
OV/DS

Mr Burke left the meeting

2024/13716 FOREST FARMING GROUP RECENT CONSULTATION
Presentment by Mrs Immy Bickford-Smith

DISCHARGE

Mrs Bickford-Smith's presentment was noted.

2024/13717 WHITE LINES ALONG THE EDGES OF THE UNFENCED
FOREST ROADS

DISCHARGE

The Official Verderer said that while white edging lines can help with making animals more visible in the dark, they may also actually encourage motorists to drive faster as they also make it easier to see the road. HCC usually only repaints them because a road safety issue is highlighted or because this is requested by a Parish Council or member of the public. They will be repainted when resources permit.

NEW SUBMISSIONS BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2024/13718 STUDY TO MONITOR CHANGES IN MORPHOLOGY AND VEGETATION ON THE HIGHLAND WATER. SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY DISCHARGE

The Court gave consent for the study. However, it is requested that the use of drones be kept to an absolute minimum and for anyone flying a drone to carry written authorisation from FE and to be readily identifiable (for example by wearing logoed clothing) so that members of the public can see it is being flown to support an official scientific study. Some explanation on social media as to who, what and why the study is being carried out would also be useful.

Mr Chatters said he is interested in discussing the breadth of the study and he will get in touch with Leanne Sergeant, FE's Senior Ecologist.

MATTERS ARISING

2024/13719 FORESTRY ENGLAND BRIDGES RESUME

The bridges needed for the Blackfield Drift were repaired before the drift but signs were still erected saying they were dangerous for horse riders. The bridges had to be crossed by the riders or the drift cancelled. If members of the public decide to ignore a sign that is up to them. Employees of the Court, responsible for commoners and others helping and volunteering on the drift could not simply ignore the signs. Commoners on horseback were told by the Agisters that if they chose to cross a bridge with a sign on it saying it wasn't suitable for horse riders would be doing so at their own risk. They were told they would not be criticised if they decided not to. The Court was unanimous in saying FE needs to sort this out. If there are no bridges the Agisters cannot do their job and the stock cannot be managed. In many places, bridges that can be used by horse-riders are essential.

The DS was again asked for the list and map of bridges.

Action DS

2024/13720 PROCEDURES DISCHARGE

I was agreed this matter should be discharged. It will be brought back if necessary.

2024/13721 ACCESS LICENCE TO NEW COMMONERS DWELLING RESUME

The DS said he has noted the Court's concerns. In answer to the question of what is the difference between a commoners dwelling built under the Commoners' Housing Scheme and a dwelling permitted with an Agricultural Tie, the OV pointed out that due to the constraints of the Commoners' Housing Scheme, mortgages are impossible to obtain and therefore virtually no houses are being built. Agricultural Ties are easier to remove which is why FE feels it is justified in charging a commercial fee for a 60 year access licence. The OV said this needs further discussion.

Action OV

2024/13722 FILMING AND OTHER ISSUES ON THE DAY OF THE WILVERLEY DISCHARGE
DRIFT

Permission for a drone was not issued to the film company.

CAMPING

2024/13723 CAMPING IN THE NEW FOREST FOOTPRINT ECOLOGY RESUME
REPORT – ICE CREAM SALES & DOGS

A check will be made in the Court's records to see what was originally Action Clerk
agreed could be sold on campsites.

2024/13724 CNF – HOLMSLEY WINTER WARDENS RESUME

The request for consent for 3 wardens caravans to remain on
Holmsley Campsite for the winter will not be decided until it is
ascertained whether planning permission is required. Holmsley
Campsite is usually unoccupied out of season. The Clerk will write Action Clerk
to the NFNPA.

UTILITY PROPOSALS – DE-MINIMIS CONSENTS

2024/13725 DE-MINIMIS-CONSENTS - UTILITY PROPOSALS AGREED BY DISCHARGE
THE DE-MINIMIS COMMITTEE

DM0208 Southern Water - Open Forest at Rushpole Wood,
Lyndhurst WTW air valve replacement

DM0209 Keir for SW Water - Little Orchard House, Furze Hill,
Fordingbridge,. New potable water main. New meter
cover on private property.

DM0210 FE for Woodgreen CC - Woodgreen Cricket Club pitch.
Request to delay opening of the pitch by one week after
1st October to allow for work on the wicket whilst the
weather is reasonable

DM0211 BT Openreach - The side of Highfield, Godshill Wood,
Fordingbridge, - 2 x maintenace digs

DM0212 Keir for SW Water - Additional large chamber centrally
over the air valve (4x triangular lid 1220mm x 685mm).
Opposite the Royal Oak, Hill Top, Beaulieu

DM0213 Keir for SW Water - New service connection on an
existing water main which is in the Highway. Some works
in the adjacent roadside verge. Jubilee House, Abbots
Well Road, Blissford

SSSI RESTORATION WORKS

2024/13726 SSSI REPAIR & MAINTENANCE/ENHANCEMENT LIST RESUME

There have been no changes to the list.

2024/13727 PENNY MOOR DISCHARGE

This site will be revisited. The holes which were reported at the last Court will be filled in as soon as weather conditions allow. The infill will be obtained from Frame Inclosure where there is a stock of suitable material. Miss Sevier suggested heather bales could be used beneath the hardcore and gravel to reinstate the fords.

The DS said the open forest team and HLS staff will consider the best course of action.

this work be placed on the SSSI Repair & Maintenance/ Enhancement List.

ENCROACHMENTS

2024/13728 ENCROACHMENTS LIST RESUME

The list has not changed. The Estates Officer is working on a problem at Dale Cottage, Bank, where there is a collapsed utility.

2024/13729 SHEEPWASH COTTAGE, EAST END RESUME

The CDA Encroachments Committee has raised concern about a cattle grid at this cottage in East End. The grid has no proper pit as it is sitting on a concrete slab. It is not stockproof but fortunately there is nothing on the other side to encourage animals to cross it. Views differ as to whether it poses an actual hazard to stock.

Mr Pasmore considers the property to be lying on the perambulation of the Forest and therefore the Court should have been asked to approve the grid's construction. The legislation will be checked.

Action Clerk

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY FORESTRY ENGLAND

2024/13730 ACTION LIST RESUME

The list was noted.

It is understood the boards at Denny and Standing Hat have been removed. This will be noted on the Action List.

Action DS

2024/13731 REPTILE MATS DISCHARGE

The reptile mats were laid by National Highways in connection with their proposal to replace the A31 fence. The mats were removed by Mr Stride as they did not have consent.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2024/13732 CONCRETE AT NORTH BENTLEY INCLOSURE DISCHARGE

The concrete area in North Bentley Inclosure has historically been used as a dumping area for bracken. However, there are now 2 heaps of road planings as well. One heap has been removed exposing the plastic that had been placed underneath to protect the vegetation. The plastic has now started to deteriorate and is scattered all over the area. The DS said he will ensure it is tidied up.

Action DS

2024/13733 DENNY LODGE WATER SUPPLY DISCHARGE

Work is going ahead to connect the new supply pipe to the properties in Denny Lodge. It is hope everything will be finished by the end of December. The Clerk will advise Mrs Clark of the date of the Pondhead Pony Drift in order that the contractors can be warned. Action Clerk

There being no other business involving Forestry England, the Deputy Surveyor and Assistant Land Agent left the meeting

ENCROACHMENTS NOT INVOLVING FORESTRY ENGLAND

2024/13734 FENCE AT 153 WOODLANDS ROAD, BARTLEY DISCHARGE

Mr Pasmore reported that the NFNPA has issued an enforcement notice on the occupier of this property because it feels her newly erected fence is of an unacceptable design. The CDA Encroachments Committee has asked the Court to write in support of the NPA as a small part of the fence is an encroachment on common land. Action Clerk

2024/13735 ENCROACHMENT ON FURZEY LAWN LANE, MINSTEAD RESUME

The CDA encroachments committee believes a newly erected fence in Furzey Lawn Lane is outside the original field boundary and therefore represents an encroachment. Further investigation is required. Action Clerk

MATTERS ARISING

2024/13736 SHOBLEY/FOREST OAKS DISCHARGE

The OV said that he feels a workshop is probably not required now. A lot of discussion has taken place. It is agreed that the commoners should never have been expected to take the case as individuals against the land owner and the Court should have pursued it instead. The Enforcement Notice issued by Natural England effectively ensured the encroachment was abated and NE is continuing to monitor the conditions on the ground.

2024/13737 STOCK SIGNAGE ON BEAULIEU ESTATE DISCHARGE

The Clerk reported that the Estate is going to look at providing some additional signage in areas where interactions between stock and people are most likely to occur.

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

2024/13738 SPEED CAMERA FUNDING FOR 2025 RESUME

The question of whether the VGS can assist with funding will be explored. Action OV

2024/13739 MARKING FEES FOR 2025 DISCHARGE

After much deliberation, it was agreed that the marking fees for 2025 will increase by £1.00 for Forest ponies, cattle and donkeys with the rates for other animals being increased in line with the usual calculations. This will be announced in the November Court.

The process for increasing the cap for marking fees will now commence. It is suggested that there may be a 'fee scale' that the fees could be linked to in order that the byelaws don't have to be revised every time the maximum figure needs to be increased.

Action
OV/Clerk

REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

2024/13740 NEW FOREST DOG GROUP DISCHARGE

Mr Manley reported that the rescheduled meeting will be held on 15th November.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

2024/13741 FINANCIAL MATTERS INCLUDING THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT RESUME

The Financial Statement was noted.

With respect to the query regarding corporation tax, the Clerk reported that it is paid on investments and deposit account interest.

2024/13742 CORPORATION TAX DISCHARGE

The Clerk explained that corporation tax is payable on interest from investments.

2024/13743 INSURANCE DISCHARGE

Following a review of the Court's insurance policies, it is evident that no savings can be made.

2024/13744 AGISTERS' VEHICLES DISCHARGE

The OV said that next year, one of the Court's priorities will be looking at how to save money on the provision of Agisters' vehicles.

TRAINING & HEALTH & SAFETY

2024/13745 CYBER SECURITY DISCHARGE

The OV was reminded that he said he would send online security information from time to time. Nothing has been sent for a while.

Action OV

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2024/13746 AUTUMN WELFARE TOUR DISCHARGE

The Welfare Tour of the Forest will take place on Friday, 6th December. A report will be given at the December Court.

STAFF MATTERS

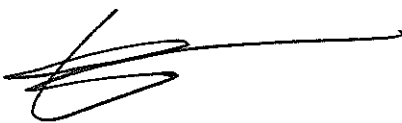
2024/13747 STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE MINUTES DISCHARGE

The Clerk apologised that the Minutes of the October Staff Liaison Committee meeting haven't yet been circulated.

2024/13748 HR / REMUNERATION COMMITTEE RESUME

This committee has not met since the last meeting but will do so shortly.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 13:14 hrs



20/11/2024