


THE COMMONERS' NEWSLETTER

Produced by  NEW FOREST YOUNG COMMONERS COMMITTEE

SOCIAL MEDIA 10 TOP TIPS

Social Media provides us with a great opportunity to promote our key messages and to educate others about commoning. The Commoners' Defence Association (CDA) have recently produced some guidance for members when using social media. Below are some tips that might help you stay out of trouble and allow you to join the CDA's efforts to promote the many positive stories we have to share.

- 1. Weave the CDA's Key messages and campaigns into your social media activities.
- 2. Put a human face on commoning, to help dispel myths. Friendly and interesting posts will make people want to engage with us for

their own enjoyment and understanding.

- 3. Is it worth engaging with anonymous accounts?
- 4. Refrain from criticising other Forest organisations. The CDA and YC work with many groups in the Forest, and mutual respect is vital to our work.
- 5. If someone is clearly using social media to stoke division and conflict, avoid engaging. Hide, remove or, if necessary, block and report such posts.
- 6. Avoid airing grievances with fellow commoners or other Forest users. These are best managed through traditional channels.
- 7. Avoid posting derogatory generalisations about groups of people: If we describe visitors as "grockles", for example, we cannot expect them to like us and

BREED SHOW HELP REQUIRED!

The New Forest Pony Breeding & Cattle Society (NFPB&CS) are looking for people to help with stewarding at the Breed Show. Even if you only have a couple of hours to give, your support would be much appreciated. Please contact the Society directly

Luke Bloomfield

want to learn more about commoning!

- 8. Speculation. It is too easy to start harmful rumours and conspiracy theories on social media.
- 9. Be careful with Images. Consider copyright, privacy, or child protection before posting. Also, avoid Images that could portray commoning in a prejudicial way. Out of context could it raise animal welfare or H&S questions?
- 10. Heated argument: Judge when a discussion is going nowhere and is just making you appear "angry". Politely disagree and walk away.

For more information, please see the CDA's website for copies of their Social media policy and Communications Strategy.

Oliver Cook
Chairman, Young Commoners



This issue's featured Young Commoner;

Honor Humble

Hi my name is Honor Humble and I am 12. I have been a commoner all of my life following in the footsteps of my mum, Kerry Dovey's family tradition of commoning. Whilst most of my friends are shopping in Southampton on a Saturday I am at this time of year out checking mares to see if they have foaled.



(Picture taken by Audrey Scott-Hopkins)

I went for a ride a few weeks ago out near Hill Top, Beaulieu and we found one of our mares Lovelyhill Penelope with a dun foal, it was such a special sight and we managed to get close enough to see if it was a filly. Mum was ecstatic as we haven't had many foals the last few years.

Mum told me that the foals mother goes back to a mare her dad gave her who used to run at Balmer lawn and there is a long line of dun colouring. I just hope the foal stays safe out on the forest, I named her Lovelyhill Chickpea.

Commoning has its ups and downs and this year my own mare Lovelyhill Ambrosia had her first foal but the mother rejected the foal and despite mine and Dads efforts we couldn't save the colt. Although I was sad I have been brought up with the life and sadly death of commoning, although it's never nice losing a pony.

As a young commoner brought up around ponies you get used to helping your parents handle the ponies and foals. Me and my brother are a dab hand at helping load the foals when needed, we know once you grab them you can't let them go until they are in the trailer!

After the really wet winter it is so nice that we have some hot weather although I am worried that the forest grass isn't growing.

I have a really nice 2-year-old filly Crabswood Serena who mum bought for me at Beaulieu Road, she is on the forest and I'm hopefully taking her to the Breed Show in August. Last year she was reserve champion in the Beaulieu Road Championship. Serena was turned out all winter and I used to walk up after school to Culverely Green to check her, I brought her home when it snowed in March so she could have some hay. I am really pleased with her and I am looking forward to breaking her in next spring. She is my future point to point pony, I really want to beat my cousins John and Isaac Lovell but that is a hard task!! This year all of my cousins, John, Isaac and Sonny as well as my brother Hugh will be racing ...so watch this space.

Honor Humble

BEAULIEU ROAD PONY SALES

The New Forest Livestock Society held their first sale earlier in the year which included a pre-show for fully registered New Forest ponies that have been handled. The spring sale attracted some quality animals forward on the day with prices not disappointing throughout all the sections. In particular there were some strong-minded bidders in the registered New Forest Section with a Forest Bred (sired and born on the open Forest) two-year-old gelding fetching 965 guineas (£1.05) and a strong brown Forest Bred three-year-old gelding reaching 850 guineas.

The Beaulieu Road sale yard was reconstructed in 2002, with the support of funding from the European Community New Forest Leader+ 2000-2006 Programme and match funding.

movement of unhandled, semi-feral livestock and has long been recognised as one of the safest and most efficient sale-yards for semi-feral stock in the country. With this in mind, the NFLS committee ensures the maintenance of the sale yard is 'looked after' throughout the year with a number of voluntary working mornings from the NFLS committee to take on minor repairs and general tidying which is vital to keep the site in good working order.

The sale yard is designed in two halves. One half of the sale-yard are the holding pens to allow perspective bidders to view the animals and the other half are the holding pens for animals once they have gone through the sale ring and awaiting collection by their new owners.

move the animals around the yard. Handlers are experienced stock people who understand how to handle semi-feral livestock. They will help to pen up the livestock once through the ticketing area to holding pens and then will move the livestock up to the sale ring. They also then help to load livestock.

Pony Sale Dates

- **Wednesday 26th September**
- **Wednesday 24th October**
(this sale includes a pre-show for fully registered New Forest foals fully halter broken)
- **Thursday 6th December**

Looking forward, the NFLS awaits to see some quality registered New Forest foals coming through the sales later this year. There have been lots of success stories of registered New Forest ponies having been sold through Beaulieu Road going on to be excellent competition ponies not just at local but country level, including a number who have reached HOYS in various disciplines.

If you wish to find out more about the Beaulieu Road pony sales please see our website www.nfls.org.uk



Young Commoners; Amelia Wilding and Alfie Bright at Beaulieu Road Sales.

The new design, made from natural, sustainable materials (timber) mostly produced within the New Forest, ensures safe

The NFLS not only has a strong voluntary committee who all have various duties on sale day but also have a number of 'handlers' who

Lucinda Lang
Chairman, NFLAS

UPCOMING EVENTS –

NFPB&CS Stallion & Performance Shows – 25th August 2018

NFPB&CS Annual Breed Show – 27th August 2018

YC Talk & BBQ – September 2018 (Date TBC)

Young Commoners' OPEN Meeting – Lyndhurst, November 2018 (Date TBC)

Keep an eye our Facebook page for further details!

Behave!

The New Forest is getting scientific in helping people be “Forest friendly”. Thanks to Lottery funding we’ve been able to bring in experts to help us make a difference in tackling problems that have worried commoners for ages. Whether it is driving, feeding or petting, we are starting to be test new approaches, based on evidence of what really works to change behaviour.

The first thing we had to recognise was that “bad” things are done by “good” people. None of us are saints, and neither are those we complain about, but really bad people are really rare. Most people we’ve spoken with love the New Forest. Whether it is for their daily commute, weekend cycle rides or picnics, or just walking the dog, they appreciate how lucky we all are to be here.

The key message in behaviour change is that good behaviour must be an easy and attractive option. Killjoy, rude or aggressive messages just don’t work. Going down that route requires strict enforcement, and we know that constant enforcement isn’t possible in the Forest. We must win hearts and minds. We need to help people want to behave in Forest-friendly ways, and to understand that really their own really small changes can make a big difference.

That is why, last winter, we all pushed the message to drivers to just “add three minutes” to a drive across the Forest: To dispel the false belief that driving carefully takes a lot more time out of a rushed day, but also to emphasise that just a few minutes more will make for a more enjoyable, safer trip.

Gradually we are adopting tactics that recognise the problem from the other person’s perspective. How do we help people get as much or more enjoyment when they’re *not* parking on verges,

letting dogs run completely free, or feeding and petting livestock? Our challenge is to find ways to communicate the positive benefits they’ll get from understanding the real New Forest a bit more and acting in ways that help rather than harm. This is a process of trial and error, and new ideas to test are really welcome.

The social media training that many commoners received in 2017 highlighted that every day each one of us should try to help people know, like and trust commoners. This approach now underpins the CDA’s new Communications Strategy, and we’re really hopefully that over time we’ll win friends and influence people. Our “Shared Forest” campaign is at the heart of this new approach: The title alone, hopefully, that we want to bring people together rather than alienate, building real empathy and understanding around commoning. If we can do this constantly and on large scale then we could make real progress in tackling some longstanding problems. In the end it is down to each of us to put what we’ve learnt into practice.

*Tony Hockley
Chairman, CDA*

