



New Forest  
Commoners Defence Association

**ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS**

**2020**





## OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

<p><b>President:</b> Mr Michael Eccles</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Mrs Charlotte Lines</p> <p><b>Hon. Secretary:</b> Mrs Katie Walding 42 Anderwood Drive, Sway, SO41 6AW 07899 804083</p> <p><b>Membership Secretary:</b> Mr Michael Eccles Reservoir Cottage, Gatewood Hill, Exbury Road, Blackfield, SO45 1XH 02380 892203</p> <p><b>Hon. Auditor:</b> Mr A J Pickles, FCA</p>	<p><b>Vice Chairman:</b> Mr Robert Stride</p> <p><b>Hon. Treasurer:</b> Mr Richard Deakin Elmsdene, Mopley Road, Blackfield, Southampton, SO45 1YJ</p> <p><b>Hon. Solicitor:</b> Mr Martin Pate MJP Law 4 Ringwood Road, Verwood, BH31 7AQ</p> <p><b>Hon. Veterinary Surgeons:</b> (Equine) Laura Trigg BVSc Cert AVP(EP) MRCVS (Farm Animals) Dave Coombs BSc, BVSc MRCVS DBR</p>
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**Carried over 2020:** B Howells, B Ingram, J Pooley, J Tillyer, J Young, O Cook

**Retiring in 2021:** D Readhead, T Hordle, J Greenwood, A Sevier, K Harrison

**Retiring in 2022:** C Moore, A Coutts, S Dovey, C Lines, D Slocombe, R Stride, M Adams

**Co-opted:** J Gerrelli, L Hulin, K Mansbridge, P Stride, E Dovey, A Parry-Norton, D Stokes, L England, A Vanderhoek

**Honorary Life Members:** V Dukes, M Eccles, R Readhead, B Ingram, C Draper, A Stride, P Tillyer, Dr G Ferris, R Stride, W Howells

## CDA DIARY DATES FOR 2021

### **CDA Committee Meetings:**

All start at 7:30pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month except August (unless otherwise agreed).

### **CDA Committee dates for 2021:**

6<sup>th</sup> April, 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 7<sup>th</sup> December

### **CDA Annual General Meeting 2021**

Virtually via Zoom: Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May from 7:00pm

### **CDA Mid-Term Open Meeting 2021**

Venue to be confirmed: 24<sup>th</sup> November from 7:00pm

## OTHER DIARY DATES

### **Beaulieu Road Pony Sales:**

Online Sale: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June  
Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

### **Pony Grading and Inspections:**

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September

Colt Inspections, Mare Grading

30<sup>th</sup> November: Final Date for submission of foal registration applications

### **Breed Show:**

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> and Monday 30<sup>th</sup> August (Entries close 1<sup>st</sup> August)

### **Point to Point:**

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> December



## OBITUARIES

This year has seen the passing of the following members, and we extend our sympathies to their families:

Fred Hollister, Sway

Ivor Kitcher, Furzey Lodge

Ian Readhead, Langley

James Drewett, Wootton



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## CHAIR'S REPORT

What an extraordinary year it has been. Firstly, I would like to thank outgoing chair Tony Hockley who worked hard for our members. Tony transformed our website; gave us a voice on social media platforms ensuring our messages are now heard far and wide; and made many presentments in Verderers' Court, which held forest organisations to account for the benefit of our community.

Not an ideal time to find a chair in the middle of a pandemic, but because I was working from home with less travelling, I thought I could manage until someone could be found on a more permanent basis, but as Mike Eccles rightly pointed out, once you're in the chair it's difficult to get out! And so, I have proven his point and put myself forward on a permanent basis.

Like so many organisations we have had to adapt to the circumstances beyond our control, and our monthly committee meetings have been held virtually. As I write this I have been in the chair for 8 months and they have flown by. There are many areas of work your committee are influencing and investing time in; you can read more about our work throughout this Annual report.

There are three things that I would like to draw your attention to:

**1. Your Committee** - I would like to remind our members that every committee member is a volunteer. Some work full time, some part time and some are retired. But we are all commoners, so every committee member has to manage their time as best they can with other responsibilities associated with commoning. Going forward as an organization, we have to revisit our aims and be really clear on what we should be focusing our time and efforts on, which will benefit our members, protect our cultural heritage and safeguard our commoning community. We do not have an infinite supply of money and resources like our partners but we are respected and have a stronger voice than ever thanks to the efforts of previous committee members. With this in mind we sent our members a survey so that we can begin to understand what you think we should be working on.

**2. Protecting and Promoting Commoning** - whilst I do believe that working with our partners and delivering through others can achieve great results this should not be at the risk of commoning, our rights and our



cultural heritage. Unfortunately, we are beginning to see a weakening position of those that are here to protect us, going forward we will, in some instances as an association, have to get tougher or risk losing the very essence of commoning.

As an association with limited resources we are not in a position to tackle every issue we face so we need to choose our battles carefully. But we can help ourselves. Members can help educate and inform; we have already started to build up our volunteer base, have provided engagement training to some of our members and have a number of tools in our armory to help us, including a mobile exhibition about commoners and commoning. The committee cannot do this on our own - we need your support. More on this further on in the report.

**3. Transitioning from the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) to the new Environment Land Management Scheme (ELM)** - The next few years will see the phasing out of BPS and the introduction of ELM. ELM is still being developed and consulted on, there are a number of test and trials happening which are testing various components of ELM. It's not yet clear how ELM will support commons and commoners, however I think we can assume with some degree of certainty that any financial support received will not be at the same level we have seen over the years of BPS. We have all heard the term 'our animals are the architects of the forest' which I can't imagine any commoner would dispute. Moving forward we have to be able to describe this and tell the story of how our animals and our commoning activities make the forest the unique landscape it's often referred to. If we can't successfully describe how commoning provides a public benefit/value to society then why should we receive any financial support from central Government.

We are trying to build up our evidence and are taking steps to record the costs associated with commoning, so that if we need to we can demonstrate and relate actual costs to the value of the forest.

On a final note I hope you enjoy reading the report and if you need any further information on any work the committee is undertaking then please speak to one of your committee members.

***Charlotte Lines, Chair***  
***charlotte@realnewforest.org***

## MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Despite the situation, subscriptions have come in pretty well, but really this should not have made a lot of difference. I would ask again for members who pay by Standing Order to please ensure they are paying the correct amount as I know some have not been changed since the last increase. Also remember please, when juniors attain their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday they should pay the full rate on 1<sup>st</sup> January following.

On the Committee we had, and have, the hard-working Chairmen, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, who apart from their 'normal' duties are on other sub committees along with other members; housing, Brexit, RPA, encroachments, talking to speeding motorists in wet and cold car parks, and investigating and setting up a new insurance claim method are all being vigorously worked on. What I am saying is this represents excellent value for money, so please, pay up and pay the correct amount.

Subscriptions are due annually on the 1<sup>st</sup> January but will also be accepted at the AGM. Payment can be handed, or posted to me, with cheques made payable to the New Forest Commoners Defence Association; bankers (standing) orders or bank transfers to Lloyds Bank, Lymington; sort code 30-95-32; account 01231542. Please also email a confirmation if you pay by either method.

Please contact me directly with any subscription-related queries; address changes, rates, standing orders etc – not the Secretary or Chairman as they have plenty to do! Please ensure you are paying the correct rate as there are still some standing orders to be changed in line with the 2016 increases.

Landline: 02380 892203

Mobile: 07757 007067

Email: [marlenehall123@btinternet.com](mailto:marlenehall123@btinternet.com)

***Mike Eccles,  
Membership Secretary***



## PROPOSED INCREASE TO MEMBERSHIP SUBS

You will recall that in the 2019 Annual Report we shared the proposal from the Committee to increase subscriptions – and simplify the categories of membership - after many years of no change. Since then we had to cancel the 2020 Annual General Meeting when such a proposal would normally be considered and voted on by members.

Your committee continues to provide all its time and efforts at no cost to the membership, but increasingly there are costs associated with making progress and improvements to the work of the Association as a whole.

This year we will again miss the annual New Forest Show, which is usually our main fund raiser, and the bank account will suffer directly as a result.

Given the unusual nature of this year’s AGM, the committee would welcome members’ support by accepting this proposal to take effect from 2022. Information on attending the virtual Annual General Meeting is on page 10.

	Current Subs	Member No.s	New subs inc. 10% increase in line with inflation over 5yrs
Associate Member	£7.00	102	£8.00
Junior Member	£2.50	13	Combined 3 categories to “Junior member” (63 members) at £5.00
Full Junior member not turning out	£2.50	25	
Full junior member turning out up to 5 animals	£4.00	25	
Full Member not turning out	£10.00	89	£11.00
Full member turning out up to 10 animals	£11.00	248	£15.00
Full members turning out between 11 and 25	£13.00	63	Combined 3 categories to “Full members turning out 10+ animals” (133 members) at £20.00
Full members turning out between 26 and 50	£15.00	32	
Full members turning out over 50	£18.00	38	

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There finally seems to be light at the end of the tunnel in terms of the easing of lockdown. This year we are keen to hold an AGM but still unable to meet face to face. We are therefore holding a virtual AGM on **Friday 21st May from 7pm, on Zoom**. Many of you will have become familiar with meeting 'online' but for those that haven't, if you have a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone, and internet access – you can join us! Details below.

**Questions:** We hope that members will embrace the opportunity to hear from our Executive Committee, and - more importantly! - to ask questions. You can ask questions at the virtual meeting in the question panel, but for those that cannot attend, you are also welcome to send in questions which can be read out on your behalf. Email to [katie@realnewforest.org](mailto:katie@realnewforest.org) or post (my address on page 3). You will be able to cast a vote at the virtual meeting.

**Mid-term Meeting:** We will hold a mid-term meeting and hope that it might be in person. We will make plans nearer the time when we know the status of the pandemic, but in the meantime please hold Wednesday 24th November free in your diaries.

***Katie Walding***  
***Hon Secretary***

## **AGM Zoom Information**

<https://zoom.us/join>

Webinar ID: 973 3658 5563 / Passcode: 711869

## **AGM Agenda, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Obituaries
4. To confirm Minutes from 2019 AGM
5. To receive and adopt the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts
6. Election of Officers
7. Appointment of Auditor
8. Election of Committee
9. Young Commoners Update
10. Questions & Answers



# Members' Survey 2020 – Results Summary



## Commoners Defence Association Survey

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### We want to hear from you!

There are over 500 Commoners Defence Association members and your committee would like to hear from as many of you as possible. Completing this survey will help us shape and guide our work going forward, and make sure we are prioritising the things that are most important to you.

So please spare 5 minutes to make a difference and have your voice heard :)

We received 239 responses, 128 fully completed and 111 partial completions. Over three quarters of our members have been with us for over ten years and it would appear the vast majority are broadly happy with what the committee does, with 90% saying the membership is good value for money. Most members would be happy if we were to increase the Membership fee if we were to do more on their behalf which perhaps opens up an opportunity to consider a paid position(s) as we continually compete with other better resourced organisations.

Interestingly whilst 81% of respondents felt the CDA's aims were still relevant this is not reflected in the answers throughout the rest of the survey. None of the current aims feature very high within the order of priorities within question 7, or any of the open questions. Public and recreational pressure comes across as clearly the highest concern via question 7 and it also comes through on the open question about any new aims, with the top two responses around public and recreational pressure and educating and communicating with Forest users.

The third highest answer in the open questions also supports this as it revolves around responses saying we need to use increased power when representing the CDA trying to get things done. There is also some mention of being too 'cosy with the Verderers' but this specific point does not appear very often.

Around half of the responses think the work the CDA does is about right, 22% think it is reactive and 16% pro-active. **However, 91% believe we should have a plan for the future.**

On communication there is again some conflict in the responses but this area clearly needs work, some of which is already happening. When asked if they heard from the CDA Committee enough 45% said yes and 44% said no.

However, increased/improved communication with members came out a clear first when asked what the Committee could improve upon. The joint second highest answer was that the Committee is doing a good job but alongside this is the issue of being more assertive when representing members.

We don't believe the Survey results should be taken out of context as there are certain areas that clearly remain important (e.g. encroachment and animal accidents) where we are already doing a lot of good work and that work needs to continue.



On a purely factual basis the biggest issues for our members are;

- Improved communication with members
- How we can best deal with public and recreational pressures on the Forest and the impact they have on commoning
- Improved education and communication with Forest users
- Having a harder edge and be a bit more assertive when representing members

**The Committee has agreed that we should work to address these issues within its general operations and also within the plan for the future that is currently being drafted.**

### **Young Commoners Committee**

The specific questions around the Young Commoners Committee concluded that only 22% believed they engaged well and, as with the main Committee, members want improved communication. They also want the Committee to be a bit more inclusive.

When asked about the changes the Committee should be working on there wasn't much between a number of answers but the three joint top ones were around providing training and education, giving more support to new and existing Young Commoners and having more social events. The final question on how the Committee could support them provided similar themes to the above.

Again, on a purely factual basis, the biggest issues for our Young Commoner members are as follows:

- Improved communication and engagement
- Training, education and support of Young Commoners
- Work on being more inclusive
- Have more social events!

The Young Commoners Committee has taken on board these comments and agreed to work on the issues raised and breaking down any perceived barriers.

**Mark Adams**

## Follow the New Forest code

The New Forest is a unique place with rare wildlife and free-roaming livestock. Thank you for helping us care for this special place by following the simple New Forest code.



 <p><b>Keep your distance from the animals</b> – don't feed or touch them</p>	 <p><b>Keep dogs under control. Don't let dogs approach or chase any animals</b></p>	 <p><b>Stick to the permitted cycle tracks</b></p>
 <p><b>Take home litter and dog waste</b></p>	 <p><b>Park only in car parks</b></p>	 <p><b>Drive with care – animals on the road!</b></p>
 <p><b>No fires or barbecues</b></p>	 <p><b>No wild camping</b></p>	 <p><b>Help wildlife by keeping to the main tracks</b></p>








## COMMUNICATIONS

Following my first report in the Annual Report last year, I am pleased that we have made some progress on our communications with members.

With the creation of our electronic newsletter, it is great to see around half the membership have signed up to receive this straight to their email inbox. We would also ask that if you know of local commoning friends or family that have an email address, get them signed up too (just send me an email with their email address if they have given their permission). If they don't have an email address, maybe you would be willing to print a copy out for them?

Our website is regularly updated with new information and our social media channels continue to reach a new and wider audience. Thanks go to the NFNPA for their help and support (through the OPOF programme) in developing both knowledge and material in this regard.

It is important to remember that whilst social media can be very emotive and sometimes frustrating, we should all try to respond in a calm and balanced way for the benefit of the commoning community; your Committee recognises that this is sometimes very challenging for us all!

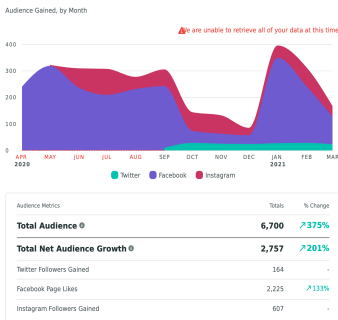
The feedback from the membership survey on our communications was that half of you feel you hear from us enough, and the other half not enough. We will continue to produce the Annual Report in paper copy, and other significant mailings will periodically arrive on your door mat; however, these cost us £100s every time and take many hours in sticking stamps and labels and stuffing envelopes. We hope that wider use of email communications will improve this impression, as we can quickly and cost effectively contact you more frequently.

Please follow our social media channels:  
<https://www.facebook.com/RealNewForest/>  
<https://twitter.com/realnewforest>  
<https://www.instagram.com/realnewforest/>

***Katie Walding***  
***katie@realnewforest.org***

# SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES

Through the Our Past, Our Future (OPOF) landscape partnership scheme, the NFNPA worked with the NFCDA to deliver key messages across a range of social media platforms. Messaging was largely based on a new communications calendar, also created via OPOF, and featured a range of hashtags such as #KeepYourDistance. Audience (followers etc) grew significantly and is now at 6,700, up 375% year on year.



The total traffic for all platforms 1 April 2020 – 15 March 2021 is:

Impressions 4,441,172 (up 240% year on year)

Engagements 475,205 (up 396% year on year)

NFNPA support for the NFCDA through OPOF has now ended, but a handful of NFCDA members are armed with the knowledge and materials required to continue their communications efforts.

The NFCDA has signed up to Sprout Social, a social media management system, which has been funded for one year through OPOF. The volunteers have received training on this and are using it to create social media posts for their Real New Forest Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts.

The NFCDA also now has a wide range of marketing material to use for future print and digital campaigns. The material was created by professional designers and copywriters and includes graphics and photographs. The material has been used in the first posts for a new campaign called 'Ordinary People, Extraordinary Commitment', and their stories will continue to be told via social posts throughout 2021.

The NFCDA was involved in two events for the NFNPA's New Forest Awakening Festival in February. 'A Conversation on Commoning in the New Forest National Park' was a live Zoom webinar featuring NFCDA Chair Charlotte Lines, Head Agister of the New Forest Jonathan Gerrelli and NFNPA ranger Erika Dovey. Questions were asked throughout the hour-long session, which was attended by 60 people. The NFCDA also hosted a Facebook Live event on the Real New Forest Facebook page, in which Lyndsey Stride talked through A Year in Commoning. The live event was watched by 147 people and the video recording has since been watched 10,000 times.

<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>
<b>#ADD3MINUTES</b> - make a resolution! add three minutes to your journey to reduce animal accidents	<b>#LEAVEONLYFOOTPRINTS</b> – never put garden cuttings, food or other waste in the New Forest. Join the Great British Spring Clean.	<b>#KEEPTOTHETRACKS</b> - help rare ground-nesting birds look after their nests. Beware of calves resting beside bushes.	<b>#KEEPTOTHETRACKS</b> - drive carefully across the Forest Help rare ground-nesting birds protect their chicks. Detour to avoid cows & calves.
<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>
<b>#SAVEOURFOALS</b> - drive carefully to protect our rare breed New Forest ponies	<b>#KEEPYOURDISTANCE</b> - be sure to keep yourself and dogs away from livestock & wildlife	<b>#KEEPYOURDISTANCE</b> - don't touch or feed New Forest animals	<b>#KEEPYOURDISTANCE</b> - don't feed or touch the New Forest animals
<b>September</b>	<b>October</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>December</b>
<b>#LOOKDONTTOUCH</b> - marvel at fungi, but leave them for nature	<b>#ADD3MINUTES</b> - Clock change brings higher risks for accidents on the roads. Look out for pony round-ups	<b>#ADD3MINUTES</b> - Highest risk month for animal accidents on the roads. Look out for pigs too	<b>#ADD3MINUTES</b> - every accident hurts. Don't spoil the New Forest Christmas



## COMMUNICATIONS CALENDAR

Under the Shared Forest project, part of the Our Past, Our Future Landscape Partnership Scheme, the CDA has collaborated to produce a calendar showing the priority messages through the seasons, encouraging all forest organisations to align their communications.



# VERDERERS OF THE NEW FOREST

The Queen's House,  
Lyndhurst, SO43 7NH

Office Tel: 02380 282052  
(Mon-Fri, 9-5pm)

Out of Hours: 0300 067 4600  
(Forestry England 24hrs)  
Police: 101 or 999

Email: [enquiries@verderers.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@verderers.org.uk)

Web: [www.verderers.org.uk](http://www.verderers.org.uk)



**Open Court is on a Wednesday from 10am. Dates for 2021:**

21<sup>st</sup> April, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 21<sup>st</sup> July  
August – no Court  
15<sup>th</sup> September, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 17<sup>th</sup> November  
15<sup>th</sup> December – committee only

Advice on presentments can be sought from Sue Westwood, the Verderers' Clerk. Under Covid restrictions the Court is meeting virtually and presentments are accepted in writing.

## AGISTERS

Jonathan Gerrelli – 07836 602163      [JonathanGerrelli@verderers.org.uk](mailto:JonathanGerrelli@verderers.org.uk)

Robert Maton – 07836 500106      [RobertMaton@verderers.org.uk](mailto:RobertMaton@verderers.org.uk)

Andrew Napthine – 07836 203883      [AndrewNapthine@verderers.org.uk](mailto:AndrewNapthine@verderers.org.uk)

Peter Rix – 07721 409755      [PeterRix@verderers.org.uk](mailto:PeterRix@verderers.org.uk)

Mike Lovell – 07836 757579      [MikeLovell@verderers.org.uk](mailto:MikeLovell@verderers.org.uk)

# ANIMAL STOCK & ACCIDENT NUMBERS

## Marking Register

2020	Ponies	Cattle	Donkeys	Pigs	Sheep
Forest	5075	5803	147	559	0
Commons	843	2587	138	149	223
<b>Total</b>	<b>5918</b>	<b>8390</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>223</b>

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Ponies	5918	5869	5733	5558	5446	5364	5038	5116	4956
Cattle	8390	8335	6987	6371	5463	4483	3807	3486	3159
Donkeys	285	269	251	239	202	200	156	165	160
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>14593</b>	<b>14473</b>	<b>12971</b>	<b>12168</b>	<b>11111</b>	<b>10047</b>	<b>9001</b>	<b>8767</b>	<b>8275</b>
Pigs	708	618	413	503	376	435	364	364	286
Sheep	223	212	213	244	293	232	174	113	136
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15524</b>	<b>15303</b>	<b>13597</b>	<b>12915</b>	<b>11780</b>	<b>10714</b>	<b>9539</b>	<b>9244</b>	<b>8697</b>

## Animal Accidents

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Ponies killed	29	35	38	39	42	38	43	54	52
Ponies injured	9	9	11	14	21	12	12	19	13
Cattle killed	8	13	12	9	13	4	14	17	7
Cattle injured	8	11	8	3	8	5	8	9	5
Donkeys killed	7	8	5	5	8	10	10	0	6
Donkeys injured	0	9	6	4	5	3	3	2	0
Pigs killed	1	0	5	2	0	2	0	0	0
Pigs injured	4	3	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
Sheep killed	5	2	3	1	0	1	1	1	0
Sheep injured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Total killed</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Total injured</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>
Accidents at night	68	101	96	82	102	78	86	97	124

Thanks to the Verderers for the records.

**#Add3Minutes**

## DRIFT LIST

Agister	Date	Month	Time	Day	Location
JRG	15 <sup>th</sup>	August	9am	Sunday	Dur Hill (meet at Burbush)
PR	20 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Bratley
ML	22 <sup>nd</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Ipley (meet at Ipley pound)
AN	25 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Wednesday	Hale/Turf Hill (meet at Blackgutter)
AN	27 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Broomy
RM	29 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Backley
RM	1 <sup>st</sup>	September	9am	Wednesday	Latchmoor, Brockenhurst
ML	3 <sup>rd</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Beaulieu Road/Culverley (meet at Ipley Pound)
RM/ML	5 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Beaulieu Aerodrome (meet at Norley Wood pound)
AN	8 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Wednesday	Woodgreen/Godshill (using Turf Hill Pound)
AN	10 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Slusters (meet at Broomy)
ML	12 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Hilltop/Hardley (meet at Crab Hat)
RM	14 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Tuesday	Wilverley/Longslade
ML	18 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Saturday	Blackfield (meet at Crab Hat)
PR	19 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Burley Lawn/Burley Rocks
AN	21 <sup>st</sup>	"	10am	Tuesday	Penn Common
RM	24 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Weirs - Brockenhurst (meet at Latchmoor)
RM	26 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	East Boldre (meet at Norley Wood)
JRG	1 <sup>st</sup>	October	10am	Friday	Wootton (meet at Wootton Bridge)
RM	3 <sup>rd</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Ober
AN	6 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Wednesday	Turf Hill/Telegraph (meet at Black Gutter)
ML	8 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Ashurst
RM/ML	10 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Balmer Lawn
AN/ML	13 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Wednesday	Lyndhurst Racecourse
AN	15 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Stoney Cross
RM	17 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Furzey Lodge
ML	19 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Tuesday	Pondhead
AN	22 <sup>nd</sup>	"	10am	Friday	Amberwood/Turf Hill
AN	24 <sup>th</sup>	"	9am	Sunday	Withybeds
PR	26 <sup>th</sup>	"	10am	Tuesday	Picket Post/Bratley
JRG	7 <sup>th</sup>	November	9am	Sunday	Holmsley

*HEALTH & SAFETY - The Verderers take reasonable precautions to ensure the health and safety of everyone present. For these measures to be effective, everyone must take all reasonable precautions to avoid and prevent accidents occurring. Only bona-fide practicing commoners and persons invited by the Verderers/Agisters may ride or assist on drifts. All riders are strongly recommended to wear protective headgear, e.g. hard hat and have their own third-party liability insurance. The Verderers cannot be held liable for any injury or damage to persons or property and all persons attending drifts do so at their own risk. The use of quad bikes is strictly forbidden.*

**Cattle drifts will be arranged in co-operation with commoners in due course.**

## YOUNG COMMONERS

2020 was a different year for us all. Going into lockdown in March meant that we had to adapt quickly to what would now be the new 'normal'. We began meeting virtually via Zoom and started up our Instagram page to keep in contact with younger members, as well as other forestry organisations. By May it was apparent that with lockdown came unprecedented pressure on the forest. We felt, as a Committee, and after seeing a lot of commoners' views on social media, that we needed to get our message across. We recorded a short video message for social media, echoing that of the 'New Forest Code', to try and ask the public to help look after the New Forest and its livestock. It was extremely well received and shared far and wide.

It became clear that we would have to cancel social events such as the 'Summer Round-up' and branding training we were hoping to put on. The New Forest Show was also cancelled. With this in mind we decided to offer a 'click and collect' style system to give people the chance to still purchase the Branded Plaques that are normally sold on the CDA stand. The committee spent a weekend making up orders that had been purchased and paid for online. We were then able to offer collection from Beaulieu Road or delivery if local. It was very successful with all profits going towards the NFLS.



With lockdown being extended again the decision was made to cancel our Annual Open meeting, which would have been held in November. At this time the then Chairman Ollie Cook decided to step down to concentrate on his work with the CDA committee. Ollie has been a fantastic asset to the committee, providing great leadership and being part of the huge driving force behind securing affordable back up grazing. We wish him all the best with his continued work with the CDA and ELM.

### **Back up Grazing secured for Young Commoners**

We have been working with the Land Advice Service and ExxonMobil at Fawley, to help commoners find much needed back up grazing. ExxonMobil owns land on the edge of the New Forest, and they have generously agreed to rent some of their untenanted grazing land to commoners at a reduced rate. We have established a clear and transparent application and selection process, making sure that those most in need and able to demonstrate a long-term commitment to commoning are prioritised. The first commoners to benefit from the scheme, Louise England and Daniel Drodge, are renting approximately 10 acres (split into 2 plots) of rough, open land at Hardley Halt, after the site had new stock fencing and a pound erected by ExxonMobil. Two more pieces of land have been offered to young commoners who were shortlisted in the original application process, Daisy Slocombe and Matt Pooley. We hope that there will more opportunities in the not too distant future! – **Ollie Cook**



Going forward for 2021, we are now gradually being eased out of lockdown, which means we can start the ball rolling again. We tread carefully as, with previous lockdowns, it can change overnight. We are starting plans to run a Summer Roundup '21 in August and educational tours of commoners land 'My Haunt Walk'. Once we have more of an idea on how a 'post lockdown' New Forest will look, we can begin to plan more social events. We will continue to press for more affordable grazing after the success of the allocation of land at Hardley Halt. We are also very passionate about promoting acceptable behaviour and the #forestfriendly message. We will look to work alongside the forest organisations and the CDA to try and get out and about talking to members of the public about commoning and the livestock.

Please drop us an email if you would like to be added to our mailing list. We look forward to seeing everyone again this year.

***Louise England***  
***Chair, New Forest Young Commoners***  
[Nfyoungcommoners@gmail.co.uk](mailto:Nfyoungcommoners@gmail.co.uk)

## WELFARE UPDATE

Well what a strange year it has been. But of course, despite Covid, lockdowns, face coverings and social distancing, the Forest year goes on, and the stock continue their lives regardless.

As ever, the condition of the Forest run stock is greatly influenced by the weather, and the Winter of 2019/20 was one of the wettest I can remember. It seemed as if it started raining mid-September and didn't stop until March.

This impacted on the condition of the stock, particularly the ponies. As a consequence of this we removed a larger number than usual through the winter and early spring due to a loss of condition. The constant wet took its toll and kept the Agister team and the commoners busy catching up ponies. Not always an easy task, as even thin ones can gallop! However, we kept on top of the situation through our constant monitoring of the animals and responding to the reports from other commoners and the general public.





As for the cattle, the majority are removed from the Forest in the autumn, and those left out either go back every day to the owner's holding to be fed, or to the few designated feeding areas that some commoners have. The rain eventually stopped in March, and then we went the other way and it was too dry. This affected the grass growth and led to a real lack of forage. Ponies didn't pick up as quickly as we would have liked, and some of the cattle that the owners had turned out early lost condition and had to be got back in.

Commoners were also short of feed, back on their holdings. This went on into the summer and led to the hay and silage crops in some cases down 50% of what was expected, and has pushed up the cost of forage locally. The end of the summer and into the autumn was thankfully much kinder to us, and the Forest responded well and became a lot greener. The ponies have put on condition through this time and were looking in quite good order going into the winter.

As well as the cattle and ponies, we of course have several hundred donkeys turned out to graze, and they are affected by the weather in a similar way to the ponies, and particularly don't like constant wet. Their condition overall, however has been good. The other issue with donkeys is

of course their feet, which do require regular attention. Over the last few years we have worked hard with the owners to keep on top of this and to ensure the donkeys regularly have their feet trimmed. There will of course always be the odd one that slips through the net, but the situation now is far improved on a few years back.

This year has seen a bumper crop of acorns and this led to an extension to the usual 60-day pannage season, which began in mid-September, meaning the pigs were allowed to stay out on the Forest until 21<sup>st</sup> December.



We have had several hundred pigs turned out this year and they have really done well, feasting on the acorns, beech mast and crab apples of which there has been an abundance. Once again, the biggest issue with the pigs is the lack of stock proof fencing on so many properties bordering the Forest which led to pigs straying beyond the perambulation; many hours were spent by the owners and the Agisters in bringing them back. Unfortunately, the acorn crop has also led to a number of pony and cattle fatalities due to acorn poisoning, more than last year.

The Agister team has continued our work throughout these strange times, the work and the problems we have to deal with remaining the same as always as far as the animals are concerned.

However, like everyone we have been impacted by the circumstances of this year. We had long discussions as to what to do about the stallions, and in the end decided to turn out ten for six weeks. As we entered lockdown and the restrictions that imposed, the Verderers made the decision to suspend the marking of cattle which the Agisters do before the animals are turned out, because it involves visiting commoners' premises.

And then of course there were the drifts. After much debate, it was agreed that for welfare reasons we should go ahead with our annual round-ups, although with a reduced programme and strict measures put in place to adhere to all Covid regulations and recommendations. Lots of signs, sanitiser everywhere and Agisters and commoners in face coverings around the pound. Such strange times!

But with a great deal of effort on everyone's part we managed to conduct successful drifts, removing ponies where needed, worming and fitting reflective collars and branding the foals that the owners wish to keep.



TB continues to be an issue, and there have been a number of herd breakdowns in and around the Forest. As well as the herd owners directly affected, this also has an impact on all neighbouring and nearby cattle owners, as the policy of APHA is to instigate radial testing in the event of a TB reactor in a herd, leading to a 3km zone being drawn round the holding



and everything within that zone having to be tested, and then retested in six months.

If the herd affected has been turned out, then potentially all cattle they may have been in contact with also fall under the radial test request, and all the extra work that entails.

This again reinforces the need for all commoners to think about where they buy stock from, rigorously follow the guidance of the Forest TB plan, and be prepared to have a contingency plan if the worst happens.



So, as we enter 2021, the Forest animals are going into another winter, and the Verderers and their staff will continue to work hard to ensure that the welfare of the stock is kept up to the high standards we have maintained over the years,

Look forward to seeing you all when we at last can. Stay safe.

**Jonathan Gerrelli,**  
**Head Agister of the New Forest**  
07836 602163  
[JonathanGerrelli@verderers.org.uk](mailto:JonathanGerrelli@verderers.org.uk)

## ENCROACHMENTS

This has been a difficult year to try and deal with encroachments. Site visits have been largely curtailed because of the pandemic and of course the working group has only been able to meet virtually.

Despite this we have tried to follow up all reports of encroachments large and small. The large encroachment at Shobley is particularly frustrating, we thought we had reached a compromise agreement but this now seems to not be the case.

Elsewhere at Moyles Court the question of large boulders on a green outside the property remains to be resolved whereas in Brockenhurst the worrying development of a verge previously available to our stock has been sold and the new owner mistakenly thought they could enclose this verge.

Otherwise we remain vigilant to the potential loss of grazing whether it be to fencing, temporary or permanent, parking on or damage to verges. We are always happy to carry out a site inspection and further investigation so do please contact us if you have any concerns about potential encroachments.

*James Young*



THE BLACK COTTAGE, EAST BOLDRE.

## OPEN FOREST MANAGEMENT

Another year passes us by and one that has been extraordinary for all the wrong reasons. With one of the wettest winters in recent years the open Forest was saturated through the early months of the year which always makes work more difficult. Forestry England managed to get the holly pollarding/coppicing program completed which is a benefit to the ponies in these areas as well as opening up the tracks.



The burning program was again severely curtailed by the wet weather and Covid restrictions which prevented the burning teams working together. We are hoping that this can be resolved this spring, as we are woefully behind in the burning program, having not completed the agreed program over the past two years. Let's hope for a drier spring and that we can get to work managing the vegetation for the benefit of everyone and everything in the Forest.

Forestry England have responded to various jobs all over the Forest, there is always another wind-blown tree on a track, or a blocked culvert to sort out. The Forest is a bottomless pit when it comes to infrastructure management. Thankfully the bridges and passageways are kept in reasonable repair, however the fencing around the inclosures and the gates have become degraded to the point of being dangerous for Forest stock. The CDA continue, on behalf of commoners, to press Forestry England to repair and replace these. It is important that commoners report damaged fences, bridges, passageways and blocked culverts to Forestry England so that they can be added to the program of works.

Due to Covid, FE, the CDA and Natural England were unable to convene their usual Cut and Burn Open Forest meetings, which meant there was a much-reduced cut and burn program, combined with a large carry over of burns from the past two years. We hope that by the early summer we may be able to have the cut and burn meetings again which are a vital tool for vegetation management.



The traditional Forest worker that used to be seen repairing the fences and hanging the gates are now very few on the ground and sadly the result of this is there for all to see. The knowledge and traditional skills that these workers passed down to the next generation of Forest craftsmen are fast disappearing, which regrettably will have a lasting effect on how the Forest is managed and maintained.



Looking to the future, there are many challenges ahead. We, as an association, are going to have to be robust in our defence of traditional land management on the open Forest and educate people about the environmental and access benefits of the many management activities including holly pollarding, burning and grazing.

***Keith Mansbridge  
Robert Stride  
Philip Stride***

## NATIONAL TRUST COMMONS

The past twelve months have presented huge challenges across our society, we've all had some impact upon our lives and loved ones whilst making changes to our ways of life and working.

The almost timeless traditions of life and nature within the New Forest have thankfully continued, many more people have been out and about across the area, taking daily exercise or to find a quiet place for themselves. We've also seen an increase in some irresponsible behaviours and incidents. These have challenged us at times particularly set against the economic impact of the pandemic upon charities and heritage organisations such as National Trust.

With income streams suffering a continuing significant impact, we were reduced to a skeleton staff whilst the nation was asked to stay at home. Many of our team were furloughed alongside our volunteer efforts being paused. A gradual reintroduction of staff was coupled with a restructuring of organisation, with the remit to reduce costs. This has seen our New Forest Ranger team merged with colleagues across our South West Hants properties. We've said farewell to colleagues; Jake White now has a position with Natural Resources Wales working on wetland restorations whilst David Chase has left the 'trust after thirty years' service.

Our team remain focussed and committed to getting back to our strategy for land and nature. We look forward to welcoming back volunteers and working with partners as we still have much to do in order to reverse the decline in nature, restore habitats and wetlands. We must protect our places from the impact of climate change whilst enabling visitors to access our places safely and responsibly.

For further information or to subscribe to our e-newsletter email: [info.newforest@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:info.newforest@nationaltrust.org.uk)

***Lee Hulin,  
Lead Ranger***

# OUR PAST, OUR FUTURE PROJECTS

## The Shared Forest Education Toolkit

This has been widely used and downloaded from both the CDA and NPA websites. It provides schools with easy to use resources to help them teach about commoning and the New Forest. During the early part of 2020 we were able to go in to schools to talk to teachers about planning education about the New Forest in to their curriculum and to deliver sessions with students. From September when schools returned we were able to deliver sessions over Zoom which were surprisingly successful and very easy to do. It brought the children to the farm and the Forest without leaving their classroom and enabled repeat visits and conversations.



Netley Marsh, Copythorne and St Michael and All Angels Infant schools and Hyde, Hale, Blackfield and Breamore Primary Schools have all made excellent use of the toolkit and earned their rewards.

[www.realnewforest.org/education-toolkit/](http://www.realnewforest.org/education-toolkit/)

## Commoning Voices Exhibition

Sadly, COVID brought a halt to the travelling exhibition and all planned events were cancelled. The indoor exhibition and panels will be available for exhibiting in 2021 so if you know of a venue looking for an exhibition please get in touch with Lyndsey.

[www.realnewforest.org/commoning-voices/](http://www.realnewforest.org/commoning-voices/)

## Mobile Commoners Exhibition

We are looking for volunteers to engage with forest users and explain to them who New Forest commoners are and what commoning in the New Forest is like. Volunteers will have the use of a mobile exhibition which consists of a number of water proof boards which attach to a cattle trailer. They depict and illustrate all aspects of Commoning.

These panels are visually appealing and will be a talking point hopefully attracting visitors to the trailer for further conversation.

If you would like to volunteer please contact Diana Kitcher on [01425 403271](tel:01425403271) or email [charlotte@realnewforest.org](mailto:charlotte@realnewforest.org)



The exhibition and toolkit remain powerful tools for communicating to the public. But education is never-ending and we must continually evolve our education offer to the public through schools, face to face and online and it requires the efforts of all of us. If you have a link to a local school, youth group or community group, offer to talk about commoning and the contribution it makes to the biodiversity, social and cultural heritage of the Forest. If you don't feel brave enough to offer yourself please get in touch as we have several members who have completed engagement training and I am always happy to give talks and chat with people.

Please be mindful when using social media or when out and about on the Forest, explaining what and why you are doing something on the Forest can leave a lasting impression on people and as we have discovered personal conversations are the most powerful tool we have. A negative experience with a commoner is very powerful and the experience often lives long in people's memories. A positive experience can be even more powerful.



## Our Past, Our Future Project



The Heritage Lottery Funded Our Past Our Future project has come to an end now, but we have learnt a lot about the best ways to communicate our messages. We have an excellent website which you can use to signpost people to the correct information about the Forest and well followed social media feeds.

The NFNPA website includes videos from the partnership organisations who worked together over the six years of the project, and ran a series of online webinars and events to showcase the great work which has been achieved. Search for 'Our Past, Our Future' on YouTube.

[www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/conservation/landscape-partnership/](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/conservation/landscape-partnership/)

We have built very strong relationships with the officers who work for the National Park Authority in education, communication and interpretation and have been able to work with them to build their knowledge of commoning and the contribution it makes to the Forest as a whole as well as learning from their experience in their respective fields.

We have also worked closely with other education providers to ensure clear and consistent messages about commoning are shared.

**Lyndsey Stride**

**Our Past, Our Future**  
*Working together for the New Forest*

## INSURANCE CLAIMS & ADVICE

The Association holds an insurance policy covering legal liability for its activities (Public Liability). Our level of cover, or indemnity limit per claim, is currently set at £5 Million. The policy covers the CDA's general (and usual) activities such as holding and organising meetings, fund raising events, our mentoring scheme, stock road signs and of course our annual stand at the New Forest Show – when we are next able. In addition, the association also holds Employers Liability for any stewards or helpers assisting directly in connection with association activities.

As an additional membership benefit, the policy is extended to cover legal liability in respect of damage to third party persons or property for all fully paid up 'full' members, in respect of their lawfully depastured stock turned out within the fenced and gridded perambulation of the Forest and adjacent commons.

This is provided for individual members who **do not** have their own, more specific insurance in place covering their stock, farming and commoning activities. Where a member has their own, more specific policy in place, this would take prominence in the event of a claim against an individual member; and the Association's policy would not need to be called upon to respond.

The Association's '*safety net*' policy is therefore a real benefit for paid up members, particularly those who only have a small number of lawfully depastured stock, and for whom arranging an individual policy could be expensive given the very small margins commoners receive. It must be remembered however that it should be regarded as a cover of last resort, and the committee would expect most practicing commoners to be arranging their own, more specific cover if they common at any reasonable level.

It is also important to be aware that whilst the Association's insurance cover includes legal liability arising from lawfully 'depastured' stock on the crown lands and adjacent commons, it **will not** cover any liability, including arising from straying, for stock kept in fenced land owned, rented, occupied or used by members; or from any other common land away from the gridded perambulation of the Forest.



In this ever-increasing world of litigation, it is your Committee's **strong recommendation** that members ensure they have cover in place for such situations that may arise off the open Forest, and therefore out of the remit of the Association's policy cover.

It should be remembered that owning stock that are depastured on the Forest can also mean stock may need to be managed away from the crown lands as well – sometimes at very short notice. Members should be aware of this and ensure they have sufficient cover for these scenarios as well.

This is particularly relevant for cattle keepers, as cattle will be off of the Forest for certain periods (e.g. annual TB testing at minimum) and no cover is in place for scenarios such as this under the Association's cover. The same would also apply in respect of lawfully depastured stallions (for example the stallion grazing scheme falls outside of the scope of the Association's cover, which would only apply for the period any stallion was lawfully depastured and running on the open Forest).

Whether members rely on the Association's blanket safety net cover, or have their own policy in place, it should be remembered that all insurance policies have terms, conditions and limitations that need to be followed in order to ensure that the cover is in place correctly. Ultimately as a stock owner and keeper, members are responsible for the actions of their stock notwithstanding insurance cover that may be in place, and their rights to turn out stock on the crown lands and adjacent commons.

If members have any queries with regard to insurance cover or help that can be provided, please do not hesitate to contact either me, or one of your other Committee members; we are always happy to talk. Any formal insurance queries or requests should be made, without delay, via the Association's secretary.

### **Animal Accidents & Members Uninsured Loss Recovery \*\* Changes \*\***

The pandemic that we have all been dealing with over the last 12 months has been unimaginable for a myriad of reasons and changed our lives forever. The New Forest itself has also suffered in ways that members will be aware, but if there could possibly be a very tiny upside for the forest and its forest run stock, it is that the series of restrictions and lockdowns in England are likely to have influenced the reduction in animal accidents we have seen in 2020.

Figures supplied from the local NFU Office (see full details below) show a reduction of cases presented to them of almost 30% from 2019 levels, which is a small good news story, when there has been little else positive in recent months.

Your committee, a number of members, and many others including some members of the wider community have once again expended considerable time and energy on this subject. This is both practically out on the road (where safe to do so), and also in front of screens continually trying to raise the profile of animal accidents on unfenced roads within the forest.

While there has been a reduction of accidents overall, we have also seen several quite horrific incidents involving multiple numbers of stock; and our blackspot roads continue to shoulder the bulk of accidents even in these restricted, and sometimes locked down times. Therefore, all members and commoners alike owe everyone involved a huge vote of thanks for keeping media and public interest up, and trying to educate the public of the unique circumstances that prevail within the gridded perambulations of the New Forest.

It is important that we keep the public on side and try and educate them, particularly those that pass through the forest on a regular basis (as seemingly the most frequent group involved in RTAs with forest stock) with the hope of reducing the number of injuries and fatalities. This year has shown that numbers can reduce, significantly, so it will be interesting to see if we can maintain these figures going forward.

The local NFU office has confirmed the following figures for 2020:

<b>Year:</b>	<b>2020</b>
Total Cases Received	31
Cases Finalised	24
Cases Outstanding	7
<b>Stock Classes</b>	
Ponies	22 (1 claim for 4 x ponies)
Cattle	9
Donkeys	5 (1 claim for 3x donkeys)
Pigs	0
<b>Value Collected in 2020</b>	<b>£22,178</b>
Total Value Collected Since 2008:	£350,092.25

Continuing in the theme of change, the local NFU office, after many years of dealing with claims on behalf of the Association and its members, have also expressed a wish to change their acceptance criteria for dealing with Uninsured Loss Claims. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 going forward, the New Forest NFU office will only be dealing with claims for its own Full Farming members or clients. For those that fall into this category we understand that the current situation and service will not change, but for those CDA members who are not Full Farming NFU members or clients, the service for Uninsured Loss Recovery of RTAs will no longer be available via them.

We would like to thank the New Forest NFU for the many years' past service they have given to members in this regard, and as the figures show, recovered a not inconsiderable amount of compensation for lost animals.

Given that one of the Association's aims is to '*support any member of the Association for compensation in respect of death or injury to an animal depastured in the Forest*' your committee has been working behind the scenes to ensure that this vital service can remain in place for all members that are unfortunate enough to need it.

We are therefore pleased to confirm that Roger Morgan of Farm and General Insurance Services in Brockenhurst has agreed to take on the role of dealing with Uninsured Loss claims for association members going forward from 01 May 2021.

Roger, being based in Brockenhurst and having many years' experience in both the insurance industry and local farming and commoning matters, is ideally suited to the role, and we are very grateful to him and his team for agreeing to take on this role for the association.

Going forward, if you wish to use the associations Uninsured Loss Service, the process will be as follows:

Principal Contact: Roger Morgan

Correspondence: Preferably via email (fine to scan documents) to keep paperwork to a minimum and email to: [CDAclaims@farmcover.co.uk](mailto:CDAclaims@farmcover.co.uk)

If you are unable to email documents, please send (or drop through the door) to:

**CDA Claims  
Farm & General Insurance Consultants Ltd  
The New Forest Estate Office  
Lyndhurst Road  
Brockenhurst SO42 7RL  
01590 624399**

Member details required:	Full name, address, contact telephone number and email address. Confirmation you are a fully paid up, full member of the NFCDA ( <i>this will be cross referenced with the Association</i> )
Documents:	New Forest Verderers accident report form Carcass Removal / disposal receipt Valuation document (if not valued as part of the Verderers Accident Report Form) Any other supporting documentation or details surrounding the claim (such as veterinary invoices, witness details, driver details).

*All claims documents to be submitted together at the same time and not separately*

Fee: There will be a fee of £50 per claim charged to cover the cost of running and administering the claims service. However, this will not be charged to members in the first instance, it will be added on to the claim against the motorist in question. Subject to this being recovered as part of a claim, members will be invoiced for this via Roger, and the expectation is that it will be paid promptly.

As I have mentioned previously, with the changes to Data Protection laws in recent years it is now harder to obtain information of drivers and their insurers that is not obtained at the time of the incident; and due to the nature of the incidents occurring unexpectedly, usually at night, sometimes the initial information obtained is not sufficient to allow the recovery process straight away so please ensure that you have all the information ready to process a claim before it is submitted to Roger and his team for processing.

As we have stated many times before, it is important to remember that there is **NO** specific 'law' or right making drivers responsible for compensating owners if they are involved in an RTA with an animal on the forest, it is a case of proving the driver's negligence and thus responsibility for the consequential financial loss the stock owner has suffered. This is an important point that should be remembered at all times, no matter how distressing or upsetting the loss is to the commoner's herd.

In most instances the prevailing circumstances do allow a relatively straightforward path to recovery for commoners but this is not always the case; and if the commoner is the one seeking compensation, then they must provide the evidence to substantiate this both in financial terms for valuing the animal in question and also providing sufficient evidence to back up the claim of negligence against the motorist. This latter point is especially important if the motorist – for whatever reason, does not feel they were at fault.

For the purposes of recovery, only information that is supplied by either the commoner, Verderers and in some instances the Police can be used, and each case tends to be slightly different. Therefore, there are times when additional information and assistance is required in dealing with these claims.

If you are unfortunate enough to have a claim for one of your animals where this is the case, please ensure you give as much help as possible as this could be very important. Providing documentary evidence, photos, witness details and statements can all at times have a significant effect on the chances of recovery which can also take a considerable time as quite often there are a number of stages to the process.

In recent times, insurers in particular, are becoming more and more questioning of these claims and requesting further documentary and detailed evidence before they will consider settling. Although the work of recovery is undertaken on member's behalf, it is the stock owner's obligation and responsibility to follow up and obtain this information if compensation is sought.

Stock valuations can be particularly tricky in this regard, and if you are not using the Verderers Accident Report Form valuation estimate completed by the Agister that has dealt with the incident, a full, written independent



valuation letter will be required in order to settle a claim. This must be obtained and submitted along with the accident documentation to ensure the best chance of recovery.

Please do not delay in submitting your claim forms for submission as the sooner they are lodged, the quicker the claim can be intimated to the third party and their insurers which often helps the chances of recovery.

Members will also be aware that the forest is also very fortunate to have an excellent service of stock collection via the New Forest Hounds, who regularly collect stock from all over the forest (not just as a result of RTAs) quickly and efficiently for commoners. Where collections are subject to a known driver RTA, you are also given the option to pay for 50% of the collection fee first, and the balance when recovery has been received. If you do use this service, please ensure that you pay the New Forest Hounds promptly when invoiced, and the same when you receive recovery from the motorist. We are lucky to have this service, so it should be supported and respected.

Finally, it is also important to be aware that there may also be some circumstances where the likelihood of making a recovery from the motorist is slim or non-existent. These cases do arise from time to time and although very frustrating, remembering the principles noted above regarding the lack of a specific law requiring compensation, we would ask members to try and remain reasonable towards those who are trying to assist them, and accept professional advice and opinions when given.

Not all situations are always clear cut, and the law can often be complicated, especially when you are relying on a principle to prove your case and supporting evidence is not available; but from the advice given to the committee these do fortunately tend to be the exception rather than the rule.

Although we hope that the majority of members never have to use this service, we are pleased that this remains a part of your membership, and once again extend our thanks to Roger for agreeing to undertake this role for the association going forward.

***Sam Dovey***

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Last year I mentioned that there was an ever-increasing pressure to move the Association's banking into the electronic world, but little did I know what the year would bring; circumstances where the banks don't really want you to visit, where I'm not sure myself that I want to visit, opening hours are shortened, and at times some branches are closed. We have yet to move to electronic banking and will probably wait until we can meet as a group to arrange things, but it is inevitable. I am fairly certain that the year's very unusual circumstances will be mentioned elsewhere in this annual report, but I'm afraid that I will mention them again several times.

One change in banking standards that has caught us out rather, is a tightening of what is written into cheque payee sections. Apparently only our full account title, "New Forest Commoners Defence Association" is acceptable, with alternatives rejected. For many years numerous variations, including simple NFCDA and CDA have been approved but no longer. It appears that bank staff judgement and application of common sense is not permitted. I suspect that it is something to do with automatic scanning and machine reading of cheques, which reduces the human involvement, but of course I may be wrong. I am trying to get some of the more common payee variations approved, but progress is slow, and there has been much listening to call centre music and automated messages. Meanwhile, if writing a cheque to the Association, please use the full title.

Hall hire costs were reduced this year due to the restrictions preventing the Committee from meeting in person, but the savings were partially offset by the need to purchase a Zoom license in order that online meetings could be held. I often hear people say that the world will be changed forever by the virus, and I suspect that we will maintain a Zoom license long term, as it will at times be sensible to meet while avoiding travel.

You will also know that the New Forest Show was cancelled, so there are no costs or fund-raising income associated with that event. However, the Young Commoners decided to go ahead and take online orders and completed some house name plaque branding, and arranged Covid friendly collection at the Beaulieu Road sale yard.

I'm sure that the details will be in their own report, but they decided to donate the proceeds to the Livestock Society maintenance fund. A worthwhile cause, and a job well done.

The Commoners' Calendar was produced as usual, but unfortunately of course many of the planned events included were cancelled or rearranged. At time of writing the 2021 calendar has been produced but must carry a health warning about its contents, as some dates and planned events are only a best guess.

You may notice that there are no calendar printing costs shown for 2020, because we paid for both the 2019 and the 2020 printing in 2019. This was because a new printing company required upfront payment. The calendar takes quite a lot of effort to compile and we owe thanks to the volunteers involved.

With the vast numbers of Forest visitors, and the increasing number of incidents involving cattle and people, your Association decided to produce and install warning signs in an attempt to educate some members of the public, and reduce the likelihood of an incident. The costs incurred were £570, good value if it only stops one person from being hurt. You may imagine that getting the necessary permissions was significantly more difficult than paying the signage costs.

Another attempt to assist with educating the public came with our annual donation of £500 towards the advert on the back of the Forest Tour bus, which relates to road traffic accidents involving our animals. More significantly perhaps, we supported the Verderers reward scheme relating to information concerning hit and run animal accidents, by paying a third of the £9000 that they paid out in the year. This really does provide a real incentive for any witnesses to come forward.

A very strange year and another to follow it seems. Thank goodness for Zoom!

***Richard Deakin,  
Treasurer***

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS

<b>Income</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Subscriptions	5589	5358
N.F.Show and Fund Raising	0	3620
Donations	93	14
Deposit account interest	9	13
Calendar sales	970	980
Young Commoners Grant	3500	3500
In Memoriam	0	970
Legal fund from Hon Solicitors	403	0
Payment in error	41	0
Young Commoners plaques	1424	2750
	<b>12029</b>	<b>17205</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Insurance	1705	1822
Honorarium	1000	1000
Hire of halls	358	752
Postage	1495	658
Printing	823	460
Stationary	274	137
Miscellaneous	41	42
Zoom licence	144	0
NFU membership	269	269
Commoners Survey	104	0
RTA reward contribution	3000	0
Calendar production	0	1373
Road Safety initiative	500	500
Cattle posters	571	580
Young Commoners Donation	1124	2069
Trailer training	0	2100
Special by Design	0	500
Fund raising costs	0	875
Natural Capital Report	0	500
NFCDA clothing	547	0
Website costs	0	55
	<b>11955</b>	<b>13692</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit) for the year</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>3513</b>

## TB OUTBREAKS

I am sure a large number of you are aware that this year we have had several outbreaks of TB within the perambulation of the Forest. This situation has been simmering for a number of years but what has made this year different is that one outbreak was considerably larger in comparison to other years and within a Forest run herd.

The West counties are a high TB risk; the Forest is classified as an edge area. We traditionally have brought most of our cattle from the West; this can often be linked to small outbreaks that have occurred in previous years.

In the event of a Forest outbreak, the Animal Plant and Health Agency (APHA) rules supersede that of the Verderers, all reactors (TB positive) are culled, and compensation is paid with pedigree cattle at a higher monetary rate.



Cattle whose tests are inconclusive can be retested but if they fail on two consecutive occasions they become classified as a positive result. Forest cattle that are inconclusive on the first test, under Verderers byelaws, cannot be turned out in their lifetime but can enter the food chain if suitable. A post mortem and a culture growth are carried out at the Abattoir.



Once stock has been tested positive, an immediate 3km zone is placed around that holding; if another commoner/farmer's land straddles that area, or if stock has been in contact with infected animals, radial testing every six months takes place.

If instructed by APHA that you are required to radial test, this involves a test immediately (or if you have had one within the previous 60-days that will count as test one) followed by another in six months. Providing all clear, you return to twelve month testing.

The Verderers are asked by APHA to provide information on any cattle that may have been within the 3km zone or grazed with stock from the breakdown herd if they are also a commoner. This information is provided after consultation with the Agisters.

If the results are negative on both occasions then normal testing, every twelve months, resumes. Radial testing can be used as a pre-movement test although stock can still be turned out in the Forest between tests.

The signs of advanced TB are weakness, lethargy, coughing and weight loss. These symptoms are rare to observe as the UK policy of regular testing prevents the cattle from reaching this stage.

A presentment was made to the Verderers court by the CDA with the intention of requesting that cattle which are under movement restrictions could still be marked. This would allow the issue of a receipt; BPS payments could therefore be applied for, with no possible loss of entitlements. The Verderers collectively agreed to this.

The cause of the large infection this year is not clear, one possible source is local wildlife. Wildlife is a potential reservoir of TB, badgers in particular, and deer can pass the infection to each other and to cattle.

Controlling deer and badger numbers has shown to reduce the risk percentage of a TB outbreak. Deerstalkers are advised by the APHA to report lesions on the lungs of any shot deer. Alpacas and Lamas are convectors of the disease; no official records are kept but keeping them separate from cattle is advisable.

Observing the following can reduce wildlife transmissions:

1. Raised field troughs for cattle feeding
2. Fence off cattle from badger sets, runs and latrines
3. Prevent wildlife access to sheds, barns and stored feed
4. Raise mineral licks off the ground

Additional information can be found on the Internet; TB Hub is a very good source: [www.tbhub.co.uk](http://www.tbhub.co.uk)

The Government pledged, in 2014, to eradicate TB from the UK by 2038, we seem a long way off achieving this target. Our combined Forest herd is at risk with how we common. The Forest TB Plan states that all cattle brought in must observe a 60-day quarantine period. Those cattle must not be allowed to mix or share air space with Forest run cattle until a negative post movement test result is achieved.



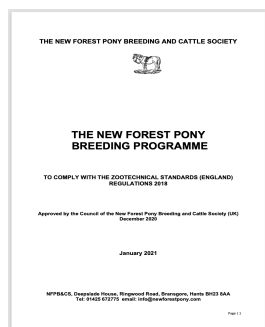
There is a strong case for our cattle to go to six monthly testing, one test possibly in October / November and another in early spring before turn out. This would pick up any infections quickly and before they have had a chance to mix with other herds.

We all have a part to play to try and keep the Forest free from this serious disease.

**Andrew Parry-Norton**  
**[parrynortonfarm@gmail.com](mailto:parrynortonfarm@gmail.com)**

# NEW FOREST PONY BREEDING PROGRAMME

In November 2018 the Zootechnical Standards (England) Regulations came into force, enacting in England, Regulation (EU) 2016/1012 ‘the Animal Breeding Regulation’. The UK competent authority, Defra, confirmed that post-Brexit the Zootech regime, as set out in EU 2016/1012 will continue to apply in the UK.



Since then, New Forest Pony Breeding and Cattle Society (NFPBCS) has been working on re-formatting its Breeding Programme. As part of this work, some sections have been updated, some sections have been written to conform with the Animal Breeding Regulation, and there are two new policy documents, and all were approved by the Society Council throughout the autumn of 2020 and came into effect on 1 January 2021.

Of necessity, this is a detailed technical document, as it has to meet the requirements of both UK and EU legislation and has to set out clearly all the rules and principles which not only our breeders/members, but also our European filial breed societies must follow. However, there are no changes, or new items, which affect the running of the Forest herd.

A few points are highlighted below:

## **Chapter 3: Recognition of the Breed Society following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU**

Following the UK's decision to withdraw from the EU, the UK became a Third Country on 1 January 2021, at the end of the transition period. The EU has recognised NFPBCS as a third country breeding body under Article 34 of (EU) 2016/1012, enabling trade in New Forest Ponies on equivalent terms under the Zootech regime.

However, ponies and germinal products will still be subject to additional movement requirements, and buyers/sellers will need to check what additional documentation, such as Export Health Certificates, is required.

## **Chapters 5 and 6: Rights and Obligations of Breeders and the Breed Society**

These chapters are new, and are requirements of the Animal Breeding Regulation. Breeders should note the rights they enjoy under the legislation.

## **Chapter 7: Structure of the Studbook and Chapter 8: Requirements for Entry into the Studbook**

Although there is nothing new in these chapters, breeders should remind themselves of the registration requirements.

## **Chapter 9: Breed Description**

Palomino stallions were permitted in 2019. No changes have been made to the permitted range of colours or extent of white markings, but the new wording will ensure accurate registration and enable the use of genetic testing in the case of a dispute.

## **Chapter 13: Assisted Reproduction**

This is a substantial new policy document and although it is of little immediate relevance to the Forest-run herd, it should be read very carefully by all breeders.

## **Chapter 16: PSSM1 Breeding Policy**

This is a new policy document and draws on the Public Statement released in 2018, and the experience gained by the 2013 Myotonia policy. Forest breeders are encouraged to test their mares so that we can move as quickly as possible to eliminating this condition from the breed.

The full New Forest Pony Breeding Programme is posted on the NFPBCS website [www.newforestpony.com](http://www.newforestpony.com)

**Jane Murray**  
**Society Secretary**

[info@newforestpony.com](mailto:info@newforestpony.com)

*New Forest Pony*  
*Breeding & Cattle Society*



## NEW FOREST LIVESTOCK SOCIETY

Like other organisations, 2020 was a challenging year for the New Forest Livestock Society (NFLS) with all the planned sales cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions. This is probably one of the first times in history no sales have taken place at the sale yard for an entire year. This did leave the NFLS with a challenge of how to support the New Forest Commoners who rely on using the sales for their stock.

With careful consideration and planning from both the NFLS and Southern Counties Auctioneers, the idea of an online timed pony sale was conceived. The NFLS worked closely with the auctioneers to adapt the sales and provide an opportunity for the New Forest Commoners to market their Forest run stock in line with the aims of the Society. This, of course, did not come without its complications and strict regulations, which meant having to narrow down entry criteria to support New Forest Commoners and their Forest run stock.

The NFLS Directors and committee members worked hard to create terms and conditions that ensured a sale could go ahead and ultimately help commoners find some wonderful homes for their ponies during these unprecedented times. Unfortunately, the second lockdown in November did hamper the original date set for the online sale and, again after much consideration, it got moved back a month to meet the changing pandemic regulations.

The auctioneers created an easy-to-read online catalogue from their website, detailing guidelines on viewing, collection, and transfer of all paperwork for the lots presented for the sale. The NFLS was truly fortunate to have a volunteer within the local community who was able to build and manage a page on Facebook to help promote the online sale entries and answer queries, working alongside the auctioneers. With all the hard work of many, the online sale was a thriving success with some fantastic ponies available with prices reflecting their quality.

### Online Sale

A small entry of 29 ponies were entered which included three fully registered New Forest filly foals who all attracted attention and some fierce bidding with prices ranging from £1220 to £980.



The New Forest registered colt foals did not disappoint either with top price of £1300. There was also a small number of New Forest registered youngstock with the top youngster making £2060.

Although a great new revolution for the sales, the NFLS, along with the local Forest community, are all looking forward to the normality of being gathered around the sales ring again at the Beaulieu Road. Having experienced this online sale, the NFLS will not be ruling out future online sales going forward. 2021 sale dates are currently being worked and will be available on the New Forest Livestock Society website once agreed [www.nfls.org.uk](http://www.nfls.org.uk)

### Microchipping

The NFLS held a successful microchipping morning in October for commoners. Appropriate social distancing requirements were put in place to meet the government regulations which included people given time slots to attend. Many thanks to Jonathan Gerrelli for organising and to all helpers on the day who made this event happen.

Finally thank you...a big thank you to Kate Readhead, who stepped down as Secretary and the sterling work she did for many years. The NFLS wish her all the best. Katie Herbert has taken up the role going forward.

***Lucinda Lang  
Chairman, NFLS***





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