

## Application to rent an 'Ideal Commoning Base' property

Under the instruction of the Forestry Minister, Forestry England - together with the Verderers, CDA, National Park Authority and District Council - undertook a review of its New Forest Housing in 2019-20. This identified three categories of property, each to be used in a different way for the public good. The majority of properties were classified as an 'Ideal Commoning Base' to be let below market rents, calculated by way of a formula, in return for the public benefit realised through a tenant's commoning activities.

These cottages are valuable assets that can help support commoning in the New Forest for years to come. As such we expect each re-letting to be a competitive process whereby a Selection Panel will judge each application on its merits and the prospective tenant's commitment to commoning. The Selection Panel is made up of one Forestry England representative and two Verderers of the New Forest (the Official Verderer or their appointee and an elected Verderer). The Selection Panel will consider all eligible applications but may decide it is necessary to interview some or all of the applicants in order to decide who should be offered a tenancy.

In order to be considered for one of these properties you must demonstrate you are:

- eligible and suitable; and
- have sufficient household income to:
  - meet the required rent;
  - maintain the facilities in good condition; and
  - maintain high standards of welfare of your animals.

Residential industry standards expect an applicant/perspective tenant to have the equivalent of 3 x the annual rental income, this is to ensure the property is adequately heated, maintained and the occupant has sufficient financial headroom.

**Eligibility:** You are able to apply to rent an Ideal Commoning Base property (as outlined in the Report of the Housing Review Group; February 2020) if you:

*"Are actively contributing to the practical management of the land, vegetation or wildlife of the New Forest, or the management of commoning livestock that grazes upon it. Your contribution should be regarded as more than minimal and/or temporary."*

**Suitability:** Each application will be judged against the selection criteria outlined in Section 4. There is no minimum number of animals that you should turn out but you must demonstrate how your activities contribute to the public benefit derived from livestock grazing the New Forest. The Selection Panel's objective is to maximise the public benefit realised from granting a new tenancy on an Ideal Commoning Base.

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**Rent:** If you are turning out livestock onto the Forest and paying the required marking fees, your rent will be calculated using the formula set out in Report of the Housing Review Group; February 2020. This will be explained as part of any tenancy offer.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***Can I apply if I'm not currently Commoning?***

Yes. But it will not be enough to simply start commoning once you rent one of these cottages. Your application will have to demonstrate your knowledge of and commitment to commoning and the New Forest. For example, you may have helped members of your family or other established commoners with their animals. Or you may have undertaken a mentoring scheme or some formal training/apprenticeship. The objective is to maximise the public benefit every single cottage can add by ensuring it is used in the most appropriate way. This may mean someone is able to common in their own name for the first time or that a tenant is able to return to commoning after a period without the means or facilities to common effectively.

### ***Can I apply if I own a property?***

The letting of each cottage should maximise the public benefit realised through commoning. Owning a property doesn't disqualify you from renting one of these cottages but you will have to demonstrate how occupying that property restricts your commoning activity. You will also need to show how this other property will be used if you're renting a Forestry England cottage and the value of any resulting income. The ideal commoning base should make a real and material difference to an applicant's activities, not just make life more convenient. It is therefore likely that an applicant who does not own a house or land within or close to the New Forest will score more highly than an applicant who does but each case will be considered on its merits.

### ***What sort of tenancy will I receive?***

The successful applicant will initially be offered a Farm Business Tenancy for two years. This will include the cottage and any associated back up grazing, yard areas and outbuildings. The value of the cottage rent is set by a formula laid out in the Housing Review report. The value of the land is set at 'open market agricultural values' as laid out in the Illingworth Report – i.e. **not** local pony laddock rates. These will be combined to form a single monthly rent paid in advance. If both parties are happy at the end of the first 2 years, and the tenant is still eligible, then the tenancy will be renewed for a longer term to be negotiated. This tenancy will set out all the obligations for the tenant and landlord (Forestry England) and will be explained as part of the letting process.

If you need any help to complete this application, need it in another format have any queries, please contact: [fergus.robertson-mc@forestryengland.uk](mailto:fergus.robertson-mc@forestryengland.uk) or [ollie.adderley@forestryengland.uk](mailto:ollie.adderley@forestryengland.uk)/03000 674 601.

- Please complete the table below for each adult who intends to live at the property.
- Where income details are requested, if more than two adults are to reside in the property the two highest earners' details should be recorded.

<b>Forestry England Property:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Viewing arranged with (Forestry England staff member):</b>		
<b>1. Tenant Details</b>	<b>Applicant 1</b>	<b>Applicant 2</b>
<b>First Name</b>		
<b>Surname</b>		
<b>Previous name(s), e.g. maiden name</b>		
<b>Current Address</b>		
<b>Postcode</b>		

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<b>1. Tenant Details cont.</b>	<b>Applicant 1</b>	<b>Applicant 2</b>
<b>Current home status</b> (renting, owned, living with family/friends)		
<b>Telephone number</b>		
<b>Email address</b>		
<b>Detail any other land or property you own or have access to</b>  If this includes a residential property, why is this accommodation not suitable?		
<b>Reason for moving home</b>		

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<b>2. Employment &amp; Income</b>	<b>Applicant 1</b> If there are more than two adults, Applicant 1 and 2 should be the people with the highest incomes	<b>Applicant 2</b> If there are more than two adults, Applicant 1 and 2 should be the people with the highest incomes
<b>Occupation</b>		
<b>Employer's name and address</b>		
<b>Employment status</b> (please delete as appropriate)  <b>Contract Status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employed (part / full-time)</li> <li>• Self-employed</li> <li>• Retired</li> <li>• Other (please state)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent</li> <li>• Fixed-term</li> <li>• Other (please state)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employed (part / full-time)</li> <li>• Self-employed</li> <li>• Retired</li> <li>• Other (please state)</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent</li> <li>• Fixed-term</li> <li>• Other (please state)</li> </ul>
<b>Annual Gross Salary</b>		
<b>Length of employment in current role</b>		

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<b>Other income</b>  (including grants, (child) benefits, maintenance payments, investment income, BPS, Universal Credit, etc.)		
<b>Do you own or have access to any other property?</b>  If “yes” how is this accommodation not suitable or limiting your commoning activities?		

<b>3. Use of the property</b>	
<b>Please list all the expected residents and their age.</b>	
<b>Please list any pets or animals to be kept at:</b>  <b>1) the cottage/garden</b>  <b>2) any land let with the cottage</b>	

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<p><b>Do you intend to store any vehicles, trailers or other large items at the property?</b></p>	
<p><b>Are there any improvements / amendments you would like to make to the property?</b></p> <p>How would these be paid for?</p>	
<p><b>How would renting this property benefit you/your family/your commoning activity and/or increase the public benefit derived from your activities?</b></p>	

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<b>4. Selection Criteria</b>	
<b>1. Commitment to Commoning</b>	<p>Evidence of a vocational commitment to commoning. For example, this could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• details of your commoning history including commonable livestock currently depastured</li><li>• work with the CDA or Pony Breeding Society;</li><li>• work alongside Agisters at the Pony Sales, drifts or the New Forest Show;</li><li>• participation in a commoners mentoring scheme;</li><li>• evidence of a real willingness for a vocational commitment to commoning enabled through a new tenancy.</li></ul> <p><b>Maximum word count – 250 words</b></p>

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<b>1a. Marking Fees</b>	<p>Evidence of marking fee payment, such as Agisters signed receipt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holding</li> <li>• depastured</li> </ul>
<b>2. Commitment to high standards of commoning</b>	<p>Evidence of the pursuit of good standards in commoning. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animals kept in good condition;</li> <li>• relevant formal training including animal welfare;</li> <li>• results from livestock sales, pony gradings, livestock showing;</li> <li>• New Forest Marque sales;</li> <li>• good standards of care to existing back-up land.</li> </ul> <p><b>Maximum word count – 250 words</b></p>
<b>3. Commitment to the New Forest</b>	<p>Evidence of active commitment to the New Forest landscape and its cultural heritage. This could include professional or voluntary work on the habitats or engagement with Forest users.</p> <p><b>Maximum word count – 250 words</b></p>

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<b>4. Work commitments</b>	<p>Evidence that the necessary commitments to commoning are deliverable alongside your other work and family life. For example, a tenant's work should not lead to regular or lengthy periods of time away from livestock which require a 24/7 responsibility.</p> <p><b>Maximum word count – 250 words</b></p>
<b>5. Need for housing</b>	<p>Evidence that your current or alternative accommodation is limiting your potential contribution to commoning and the resulting public benefit. For example, this may be due to its nature, location or a lack of security of tenure.</p> <p><b>Maximum word count – 250 words</b></p>

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<b>5. References</b>	<b>Please provide contact details for TWO references to evidence your good character, at least one should be your existing/most recent landlord, if this is appropriate. Do not name your current employer if you have done so above.</b>
<b>Reference 1</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Relationship to you (landlord/ex-employer/friend/colleague) and how long they have known you:</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Email</b>	

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<b>Reference 2</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Relationship to you (landlord/ex-employer/friend/colleague) and how long they have known you</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Email</b>	

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### 6. Declaration

<b>Applicant 1</b>	I confirm I do not hold any criminal convictions, including but not limited to offences relating to animal welfare. I further confirm the information provided herein is true, complete, and honest, and I consent to its processing by Forestry England, including the sharing of this information with the Verderers, and its use for the purposes of references and credit checks prior to any tenancy being offered. I understand if my circumstances change, resulting in changes to any of these details, my eligibility to rent the property, or to continue renting at a rate set in accordance with the formula mentioned above, may be affected and could result in my tenancy not being renewed or the rent being amended.
<b>Print Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>Applicant 2</b>	I confirm I do not hold any criminal convictions, including but not limited to offences relating to animal welfare. I further confirm the information provided herein is true, complete, and honest, and I consent to its processing by Forestry England, including the sharing of this information with the Verderers, and its use for the purposes of references and credit checks prior to any tenancy being offered. I understand if my circumstances change, resulting in changes to any of these details, my eligibility to rent the property, or to continue renting at a rate set in accordance with the formula mentioned above, may be affected and could result in my tenancy not being renewed or the rent being amended.
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<b>Print Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

### 7. Privacy Notice

The personal information you give us will be held by Forestry England and The Verderers of The New Forest. We will use this information to help process your application, create a shortlist of candidates and select a tenant.

If you are selected as a successful applicant and offered a tenancy Forestry England will undertake credit and reference checks with an external credit reference agency. We will process your personal information in accordance with the requirements of current data protection legislation. If you do not provide the required information we will be unable to process your tenancy application.

All information, except for financial, described above will be held by Forestry England for the period of your tenancy and 15 years thereafter. Any financial information will be cross referenced and destroyed after use.

You have the right to request that your tenancy application records are deleted and for any incomplete applications to be withdrawn at any time by notifying Forestry England. The Forestry Commission's personal information charter [can be found here](#).

Forestry England, through the Forestry Commission, is registered as a data controller under the Data Protection Act 2018 (Registration No: Z6542658). The Forestry Commission's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at [informationrights@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:informationrights@forestrycommission.gov.uk).

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You have a right to lodge a complaint with the supervisory authority, the Information Commissioner's Office ([www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)).

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