



**Verderers of the New Forest**  
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Official Verderer  
Dominic May

6<sup>th</sup> April 2017

## MINUTES OF THE HLS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Voting Members		
Dominic May	OV	Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest (Chairman)
Sonia Lorenzo-Martin	SLM	Head of Planning and Environment – Forestry Commission
Alison Barnes	AB	Chief Executive – New Forest National Park Authority
Non-Voting Members		
Jenny Thomas	JT	Lead Adviser New Forest - Natural England (NE)
Andy McDonald	AM	Team Leader – Natural England
In Attendance		
Nick Wardlaw	NW	HLS Contract Manager
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator
Willie Manners		Newly Appointed Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from Bruce Rothnie, Deputy Surveyor  
No representative present from the CDA

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

OV is a commoner & a member of the VGS; & is Chairman of the VGS Management Committee.

AB declared an interest in all Wetland Restoration projects because of the NPA's responsibilities as local planning authority.

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESUME

#### Tarmac and Concrete on Open Forest

RESUME

SLM confirmed that the survey of tarmac and concrete on the Open Forest had been completed by the FC keepers. NW reported that the information had been forwarded to Lawrence Shaw for archaeological analysis. LS graded the identified sites 1-4 on levels of significance. AB presented TW with an assessment table to support the grading. AB confirmed that around 50% of the identified tarmac/concrete was of low importance and could be removed. OV felt the organising of the removal programme was a job for the newly appointed Verge Restoration Officer and that the project should progress at haste with the list of low graded areas targeted first. OV requested a copy of the list of identified sites. JT commented that LS must record anything that needs recording before work is started.

Action SLM

## Broomy Plain

OV asked NW if a cost had been established for the removal of the tarmac/concrete on Stoney Cross. NW informed the board only one quote had been received at present. OV informed the board that this restoration needs to be done before the Broomy Plain road works start. JT agreed to the work being started as it was road side subject to agreeing the methodology. SLM agreed to get the project underway.

Action SLM

## Planning Threshold

AB circulated a copy of correspondence received by the NFNPA from a Mr David Steer who questioned the 1000m threshold for the requirement of planning permission for wetland restoration projects. A copy of Steve Avery's response was circulated in which he confirmed that 1000m is the correct threshold for planning and that there is no case to answer over the question of cumulative impact.

## Verge Restoration Officer

SLM confirmed NW has now been appointed Contract Manager for the New Forest HLS. The board gave support to NW in his new role.

## CPRE

AB reported that the CPRE Hampshire had referred to the Latchmore Planning outcome in their recent newsletter, the NPA have offered to meet the CPRE meet to discuss further. OV suggested it should be a site meeting. NW offered FC involvement in the delivery of a site visit.

RESUME

## Engagement and Interpretation Officer Written Update

Matt Stroud supplied a written update as requested by the board at the January meeting. The board studied the report which covered the subject of using video content effectively and updates on general engagement activities.

## APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD TO 31 DEC 2016

The board studied the Statement of Accounts for the period to 31 December 2016. AB proposed the accounts and SLM seconded the proposal. The OV signed the accounts and passed to TW to return to the accountants.

RESUME

Action TW

## NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE INQUIRY

JT updated the board that the NAO has now had correspondences with NE and the FC and the inquiry is on-going.

RESUME

## VERGE RESTORATION OFFICER

OV was delighted with the new appointment of Verge Restoration Officer. He believes the successful applicant has experience and excellent local knowledge. The Officer is due to start on 5<sup>th</sup> June. JT asked SLM to remind the new Officer to ensure that checks for species and impact on habitats are done before any restoration work is undertaken.

RESUME

## STUMPS AND RIDGE AND FURROW REMOVAL

The OV reported that the Verderers agreed in principal to this project. OV asked the proposed time frame of the current project. NW informed the board that 127 hectares were planned over the next three years at a cost of £3000 per hectare. Also that precise methodology was still to be decided with JT. JT felt there was an opportunity to increase the amount over a shorter period. SLM said it would need to be a Winter project and that the project would have to go through the tendering process. OV felt all 127 hectares needed to be done this Winter. JT said it would be an ideal time to rationalise tracks in these areas as part of the restorations. JT endorsed the project saying it will help in the restoration of the SSSI greatly and ease the future management of the New Forest. The board suggested that Matt Stroud release an article to support the project.

RESUME

Action MS

STUDY INTO THE PONIES EATING THE BARK OF BEECH TREES RESUME

NW supplied the board with the final budget report for the Tree Barking Survey. NW confirmed that the contract for the survey had been awarded to the Centre for Ecosystems. OV requested SLM find out the criteria for recording and monitoring damage and also to convey to the recorder the importance of the inclosed artificial grazing nature of the areas of woodland involved in the study. Action SLM

VEHICLES RESUME

The board considered a request from the HLS team for the provision of two additional vehicles to support the new posts of Monitoring Officer and Verge Restoration Officer. The projected cost for two leased vehicles is circa. £8000 per annum. AB questioned whether it was possible to work with the existing FC vehicle fleet. SLM replied that they had tried but it was not working effectively. AB asked for a proposal to include this further cost into staffing costs. OV agreed. JT agreed if it could be shown that it is essential to delivery of projects. OV requested SLM forward a proposal and figures by e mail for early approval by board members. Action SLM

VERGE RESTORATION PROJECT RESUME

OV briefly summarised the current status of the proposed verge restoration projects. Action SLM

LAND ADVICE SERVICE WRITTEN UPDATE RESUME

The board studied the update from the NFLAS which included a summary of advice given and courses provided during 2016.

HLS HEALTH CHECK RESUME

TW to send SLM latest version of Health-check to amend serial 64. NW to add text to serial 84. JT advised AB that the number of educational visits that can be claimed for under HLS agreement has been set at a maximum of 25. Action TW

HLS PRESCRIPTION REVIEW RESUME

JT informed the board that she had now finally completed the revision of the HLS prescriptions. These have been signed off by NE. JT explained that the revisions standardised the wording of the New Forest agreement with NE terminology and where any changes have been made a reference to the management plan has been given. The amendments will next be processed and a new updated agreement will be issued.

GRANT APPLICATION FOR REPRINT OF SALLY THE PONY RESUME

The board considered a proposal for a grant towards the reprinting of Sally the Pony Book 1. The board felt this was a very worthy project but were unfortunately unable to back the funding as the project did not meet the criterion stated within the prescriptions of the HLS agreement. TW to advise applicant. Action TW

AOB RESUME

AM gave a farewell to the HLS Board as this was to be his last meeting. He now has a role within NE at national level. OV thanked him for all his help over the past years.

JT reported she had attended a meeting with Claire Moriarty from Defra where the future of Environmental Stewardship after the EU Exit was discussed. She was assured that Environmental Stewardship schemes were at the forefront of plans for the future and that she understood the importance of commoning to iconic landscapes such as the New Forest.

AB gave a farewell to OV. He was thanked for his work on the HLS board and for his assistance in delivering a wonderful scheme. AM joined in thanking Dominic for his support. AB also thanked Graham Ferris in his absence.

Meeting closed at 5.25pm

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

12<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 8.30am Site Visit to Millersford followed at 10.00 HLS Board Meeting  
Queens House, Lyndhurst

4<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 9am – Queens House, Lyndhurst

10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at 9am – Queens House, Lyndhurst

4<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 2pm – Queens House – followed by HLS AGM 5.30pm

*Dominic May*

*Official Verderer*

*20<sup>th</sup> April 2017*

Delegated Actions to		
Sonia Lorenzo -Martin	SLM	Head of Planning and Environment, FC
Matt Stroud	MS	Engagement and Interpretation Officer, NFPA
Tina Woodley	TW	Verderers' Grazing Scheme Administrator

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