



Verderers of the New Forest  
THE QUEEN'S HOUSE  
LYNDHURST  
HAMPSHIRE  
SO43 7NH

Telephone: 023 8028 3134  
Fax: 023 8028 3101

Official Verderer  
Dominic May

14<sup>th</sup> April 2016

## MINUTES OF THE HLS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016

Voting Members		
Dominic May	OV	Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest (Chairman)
Alison Barnes	AB	Chief Executive – New Forest National Park Authority
Bruce Rothnie	BR	Deputy Surveyor – Forestry Commission
Non-Voting Members		
Graham Ferris	GF	Commoners Defence Association
David Andrews	DA	New Forest - Natural England (NE)
In Attendance		
Leanne Sargeant	LS	VGS Administrator taking minutes.
Samantha Luther	SL	VGS Administrator
Jane Smith	JS	Forestry Commission
Sonia Lorenzo-Martin	SLM	HLS Contract Manager - Forestry Commission

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Jenny Thomas and Andy McDonald of Natural England, with David Andrews standing in.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

GF is a commoner & a member of the VGS.

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

#### Verge Restoration

AB gave an update regarding the quadrant meetings. There are 4 members of the NPA who represent a quarter of the Forest, they are elected by the parishes within these quadrants. The quadrant meetings are held on average each quarter, are attended by at least one representative from each parish and are chaired by the relevant NPA member. The parishes set the agenda with the chairman, and are also offered updates and briefings on topical issues from NPA officers. Sarah Kelly attended each quadrant meeting during the last quarter and talked about the verge restoration project. Woodgreen Parish Council did attend (John Sanger is both NPA Member for North West and Woodgreen parish councillor). AB will check who attended the meetings and ask Sarah for a summary of key points of discussions.

Action AB

### No Cycling signs

The 'No Forest Cycling from this Car Park' signs have been installed.

### Five Rivers

Following discussion about Five Rivers at the previous board meeting, it has become apparent that Five Rivers are working still at other HLS sites. Timber from the felling works at Crockford was stacked on the floodplain, and with the heavy rain earlier in the week, some of the timber stacks had failed. SLM to raise issue with Five Rivers.

Action SLM

### Removal of concrete and tarmac from the Open Forest

AB stated that information from the LiDAR analysis & the World War 2 project shows where there is concrete and tarmac on the Open Forest. The NFNPA will draw up a proposal for the July board meeting. The board can then prioritise the areas for removal.

Action LSh  
and AB

### Latchmore old railway embankment

LS to send details to David Andrews regarding the old railway embankment and land adjacent to the track at Latchmore as this was missed from the HLS scheme area.

Action LS

### July site visit

The next board meeting will include a site visit with Catherine Chatters to Beaulieu Heath to look at the Cotoneaster problem. OV to consider if there is time to visit Latchmore as well, to see the embankment.

Action OV  
and CC

## ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Board approved the accounts, and a set were signed by the Official Verderer.

## PROGRAMME REGISTER AND SUMMARY

### 2016 sheet of the programme register

The Revised Forecast column should be populated with the budget, and only revised when the spend is going to change or has changed.

Action SL  
and SLM

The Board would like the planning costs to be reviewed and updated as soon as possible. SLM is preparing a new framework and this will have revised costs.

Action SLM

## FC UPDATE

### Sports Clubs

Paul Grugeon will be meeting with those clubs that have still not had the cross compliance training.

Action BR

### Bracken Management

The bracken management figures are for November and December 2014 plus January and February 2015, which equates to the 280 ha. November and December 2015 plus January and February 2016 for the 190ha. The area worked is less as the weather and ground conditions were not favourable. The Board would like the figures to be compared against what we planned to deliver. The Board would like to see more bracken management funded by the HLS. SLM to discuss with Dave Morris about delivering more bracken control.

Action SLM

### Verge restoration

Gary North, the keepers, Barry Dowsett and the Parish Councils all agreed on the areas for working as part of the verge restoration project. Gary North had a number of complaints from residents. It appears the Parish Councillors were not backing up what they had agreed to do when confronted by residents. The Board felt that the group who started the project needed to meet again and agree a way forward. AB to follow up with David Illsley.

Action AB

The FC did a similar project in Burley 5 years ago, which was very successful. Newsletters

and leaflets were used to explain why it was happening, and the FC Estates Department was actively involved.

Disappointed by the slow progress, the board agreed to appoint a project officer to map sites, coordinate with parish councils, and liaise with local residents, particularly those affected by verge restoration works. This project officer should also be used to deliver other projects, such as the tarmac and concrete removal.

Action OV  
and BR

It was suggested that Matt Stroud could be used to support with the communication of the project, perhaps filming the differences at Burley where verge parking has been stopped.

Action MS

AB to ask Sarah Kelly or David Illsely to talk with Woodgreen and East Boldre parish councils to progress the project.

Action AB

#### Water Quality Monitoring

The water quality monitoring will be carried out annually from May this year. SLM to check spelling of Millerford.

Action SLM

#### Chamomile Survey

The Chamomile survey has been cancelled as JT didn't think it was worthwhile project, because it is unlikely to provide any clearer answers, and anyway the verge restoration project would do more to support the species.

#### HLS Archaeology

The FC is under investigation from the Parliamentary Ombudsman after a complaint was raised by Anthony Pasmore regarding the methods the FC used to protect archaeology during HLS work.

#### Wetland Restorations

The Board is keen to move the wetland restorations forward, but they are stalled in the planning stages at the moment.

Planning applications have been submitted for Wootton and Pondhead. They are both likely to go before the 21<sup>st</sup> June planning committee.

The Wootton Riverine exhibition at Bashley had very detailed explanations about the plans and the technicalities, but lacked explanation about the benefits and why we were doing it. It would be useful to show members of the public how the site will look before and after, demonstrating other sites, and explaining how it will be better for wildlife and the landscape.

#### LIDAR UPDATE

LSh is well ahead with the LiDAR analysis for this year. The normal pattern of work is spend the winter doing the data analysis and then the summer out checking and verifying the sites, hence why so much has been done in the first three months on data analysis.

The Board were very pleased with the exhibition. There was an underspend of £1,100, which LSh would like to use for creating 2 more 3D prints to support school work and heritage days. David Andrews will confirm whether JT agrees, and if so the Board will support this spend.

#### NON-NATIVE INVASIVE PLANTS PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT

The Living Record is an electronic system for mapping of data by volunteers, who can login remotely and enter data.

Field work has found hundreds of Cotoneaster plants around Beaulieu Aerodrome.

CC is doing a great job.

## ENGAGEMENT AND INTERPRETATION OFFICER REPORT

30,000 people looked at the social media article on wetland restoration, which is really positive. JT had asked about the possibility of MS going to shows and meetings to explain the issues and benefits of the HLS, but the Board felt this was not for him to do.

There was some discussion over the merits of having a model of a river that could be used to show people what happens when a channel is straightened or re-meandered. The Board asked SLM to investigate the costs and put together a proposal for the next meeting.

Action SLM

### HEALTH CHECK

The health check is designed to help Natural England see what work the HLS has delivered under the options of the agreement. The issues column should only be for problems or things not delivered. Any positive savings should be put in the results section. GF asked if lessons learnt can be included in the results section.

### AOB

#### Countryside Stewardship Scheme

The Countryside Stewardship (CS) scheme is the new agri-environment scheme that is replacing HLS. It started in January 2016. Natural England is waiting to see how the scheme evolves before considering it for the New Forest. It combines the current Environmental Stewardships with the English Woodland Grant Scheme and Catchment Sensitive Farming. The whole holding does not have to be entered into the scheme, but the New Forest should enter all the SSSI land and SAMs. Biodiversity and water quality are key priorities. There are 2 tiers, mid and higher. Most options are only for 5 years. It is a competitive scheme. Defra has set the targets by the National Character Areas (NCA), so a familiarisation of the NCA Statement of Priorities for the New Forest will be necessary. The new CS programme will end in January 2020, before the end of the current HLS in Feb 2020 so the New Forest HLS would have to be brought to an early close in order to convert to CS.

#### Freedom of Information request

JS has received an FOI request for the location and data from the cycle counters.

#### Defra visit

BR has been asked to host a visit from the Permanent Secretary to Defra, Claire Moriarty. This will be on 29<sup>th</sup> April, engaging over the wetland restoration, the Board will be invited to help. Action ALL

### DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

6<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at 8.30am for site visit and 10am in the Library

5<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 9am

11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 9am

5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 2pm followed by AGM at 5.30pm

Delegated Actions to		
Lawrence Shaw	LSH	Heritage Mapping and Data Officer, NFNPA
Catherine Chatters	CC	Non Native Invasive Plants Project Officer, HIWWT
Matt Stroud	MS	Engagement and Interpretation Officer, NFNPA

Dominic May  
Official Verderer