



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

Telephone: 023 8028 3134
Fax: 023 8028 3101

Official Verderer
Lord Manners

13th July 2018

MINUTES OF THE HLS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 11th July 2018

Voting Members		
Lord Manners	OV	Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest (Chairman)
Bruce Rothnie	DS	Deputy Surveyor – Forestry Commission
Non-Voting Members		
Tony Hockley	TH	CDA Representative
In Attendance		
Sonia Lorenzo-Martin	SLM	Head of Planning and Environment – Forestry Commission
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator
Nigel Matthews	NM	Head of Recreation Management and Learning – New Forest National Park Authority
Alison Appleby	AA	Lead Advisor New Forest Team – Natural England

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Alison Barnes Chief Executive – New Forest National Park Authority
Jenny Thomas Lead Adviser New Forest - Natural England (NE)
Nick Wardlaw HLS Contract Manager – Forestry Commission

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

OV is Chairman of the VGS Management Committee.

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

TH is a member of the VGS and a committee member of the CDA.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESUME

Anonymised Mobile phone Data

NM reported that the bid for funding from NESTA was unsuccessful and that currently there are no other options for external funding. After discussion the board agreed to put this project on hold.

Fresh Water & Wetland Restoration Strategy Group

NM expressed that the NPA would like to thank NW for attending the recent Quadrant meetings.

Programme and Summary

NM informed TW that Nigel Stone from the NPA Finance team would be in touch to assist with updating the format of the programme register.

Verge Restoration

NM enquired on the progress of producing a map highlighting the areas of verge damage. SLM reported that a trial map is being produced concentrating on small areas and that it will be used as a visual tool for the project. It was noted that the Verge Restoration Officer and the OV will be making a presentation at the National Park Partnership Plan event in September.

Wetland Restoration Monitoring

AA to confirm with JT the FC's request to supply the narratives to support the end of period evaluation report. Action AA

HLS AGM

NM extended AB's wishes to thank TW for her efforts and congratulations on the success of the HLS AGM Open Day. SLM also thanked TW. OV commented that it was an excellent forum to highlight the HLS works. TH admired being able to experience the entirety of the programme rather than concentrating on a small part of the HLS project.

PROGRAMME AND SUMMARY

RESUME

The board studied the programme register for 2018 and 2019. It was noted that the Nightjar survey had come in considerably under budget as the estimate was based on a previous survey. The survey of the One Grooved Diving Beetle (repeat) has been achieved below budget. TH asked why only ¼ of the allocated budget had been spent on the Terrestrial works so far. SLM informed the board that most of the Terrestrial work takes place from September, during the autumn/winter period (until March). TH also asked about the current under spending on the repair and maintenance budget because the CDA committee believe it is important to the success of the completed projects. SLM assured TH that any repair works needed would be completed.

SLM requested that JT highlight the critical works on the 2019 programme.

Action JT

FC UPDATE

RESUME

Wetland Restoration

SLM reported on the progress of the 2018 wetland restorations that started in May. The good weather has resulted in all projects going well and hopefully this will continue until the end of the season in October.

Terrestrial Restoration

SLM reported on the terrestrial works that have taken place in the second quarter of the year including Rhododendron spraying and Lost Lawns projects (extraction of timber). Ridge and Furrow works and Habitat restorations are planned for the Winter. OV requested a list of Ridge and Furrow restoration sites. SLM will distribute before the next board meeting.

Action SLM

Verge Restoration

The board studied the works achieved so far this year on the Verge restoration projects. SLM confirmed that the VR Officer has been in contact with local Parish Councillors.

Wetland Restoration Monitoring

It was reported that the 2018 data collection survey season is well underway. The Additional specialist species surveys for 2018 include a Spider Survey, Six spotted crane fly (repeat), One-grooved diving beetle (repeat) and Nightjar surveys.

Concrete Removal

The board studied the report on the 2 sections of concrete that have been removed from Stoney Cross and restored to 2000 square metres of grazing. NM asked how the concrete removal is being publicised as a good news story. SLM informed the board that it is scheduled to appear as an article in the New Forest Post. NW & MS to produce. DS asked if there had been any update from HCC on the Broomy road project. TW to request the Clerk to follow up with HCC. SLM to check the spend profile to confirm the HLS element of this project has been entered.

Action NW
& MS
Action TW
Action SLM

The board discussed the recent engagement project for the Broomy Plain mitigation work. OV suggested the FONFA group be added to receive information on upcoming projects

LAND ADVICE SERVICE WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

NM passed on AB's thanks and support to the LAS for their ongoing work supporting commoners and local land owners. The board agreed their work was a positive contribution to the HLS scheme.

ENGAGEMENT AND INTERPRETATION OFFICER WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

The board examined the written report from the E&I Officer. The board had a discussion on the varied social media applications (apps) available and how to interpret the data collected by these apps. TW informed the board on the plans to promote the HLS at the New Forest Show. The Verderers stand is to include participation from FC and NE staff. The DS informed the board that Lord Gardiner & Guy Horsington will be visiting the show.

HIWWT WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

The OV and other board members reiterated what an absolutely fantastic job the HIWWT team do. NM reported that Catherine had given a presentation at one of the Quadrant meetings and wanted to thank her for that. The board asked TW to pass on their thanks again to Catherine and her volunteers for all their efforts.

Action TW

FUTURE NEW FOREST ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME UPDATE

RESUME

AA provided the board with the following update from Natural England reporting that The Forest Farming Group is working on what a new scheme may look like within the New Forest. As part of this work a Robert Deane has been commissioned to examine the full range of public benefits provided by commoning and other land management and what more can be done to improve the stock of natural capital and the benefits it provides. This work will involve Robert meeting with a wide range of Forest stakeholders. Alongside this work NE are starting to work with those organisations

and individuals who have existing or recently expired HLS agreements within the open Forest to draft a "shadow" CS agreement. This work will include investigating not just what option goes where but also the implications of the six parties entering into a single agreement. TH stated that Robert Deane's report is aimed at a long term post Brexit scheme and not an interim CS scheme.

HLS PRESCRIPTION REVIEW

RESUME

AA confirmed all the prescription amendments had been made. OV signed the latest agreement. TW to return the agreement to NE Worcester.

Action TW

AOB

RESUME

The board had a discussion about the possible impact of the New Forest Freshwater and Wetland Habitats Restoration Strategy and Plan 2018-2028. The matter to be considered further when the Plan becomes available, which is likely to be following a further consultation workshop in the autumn.

SLM raised the issue of staff retention towards the end of the scheme and asked if there was the opportunity to offer financial incentives to those with critical roles. DS believed that there is a model included in the FC contracts for retention payments. The board agreed in principle so long as it stayed within the percentage allocated for administration within the HLS agreement. SLM & DS will approach the Forestry Commission HR department.

Action SLM
& DS

SLM requested that the FC invoice the HLS for the extraction of timber felled for HLS works less the value of the timber. The board felt this was logical and the same as if another contractor had completed the work. AA to check with JT

Action AA

TW distributed copies of the 2017 signed audited accounts to the board for their information.

OV asked SLM about the progress of an end of scheme report designed to celebrate the achievements of the HLS scheme 2010-2020. DS informed the board that one was done for the end of the LIFE project and TW passed the NPA examples around to the board. SLM will liaise with TW over possible formats for this report.

Action SLM
& TW

DS informed the board that the annual consultative panel tour is due to take place at the beginning of August and suggested they may like to visit a restoration site. SLM will suggest possible sites.

Action SLM

Meeting closed at 12.15pm

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 3rd October 2018 – 9am at The Queens House

Wednesday 9th January 2019 – 9am at The Queens House

Delegated Actions to		
Jenny Thomas	JT	Lead Advisor New Forest – Natural England (NE)
Bruce Rothnie	DS	Deputy Surveyor – Forestry Commission
Tina Woodley	TW	Verderers Grazing Scheme Administrator
Nick Wardlaw	NW	HLS Contract Manager – Forestry Commission
Alison Appleby	AA	Lead Advisor New Forest – Natural England (NE)
Matt Stroud	MS	Engagement & Interpretation Officer



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