



Verderers of the New Forest
THE KINGS'S HOUSE
LYNDHURST
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Official Verderer
Edward Heron

21st July 2025

MINUTES OF THE HLS BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21st July 2025

Voting Members		
Edward Heron	OV	Official Verderer – Verderers of the New Forest (Chairman)
Paul Walton	PW	Head of Environment and Rural Economy -New Forest National Park Authority
Craig Harrison	DS	Deputy Surveyor – Forestry England
Non-Voting Members		
Jenny Thomas	JT	New Forest Nature Recovery Senior Adviser – Natural England
In Attendance		
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator
Charlotte Bartlett	CB	HLS Project Manager – Forestry England

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESUME

Apologies from Alison Barnes – Chief Executive - New Forest National Park Authority,
Andrew Parry- Norton – Chairman – Commoners Defence Association,
Michael Pittock - Head of Planning & Environment – Forestry England.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESUME

OV is Chairman of the VGS Management Committee.
PW 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

None arising due to the April meeting being cancelled. Board reports were circulated to members for their information. No actions arose from the reports.

PROGRAMME AND SUMMARY

RESUME

The board studied the latest Programme Register of spend to the end of June 2025 (QTR 1).

TW and NPA Finance Officer still to meet to discuss policy regarding Treasury and Investment of HLS reserves.

The HLS has received notification from the RPA of an uplift in payment rates backdated to January 2025. The exact amount has yet to be confirmed – TW to chase up clarification of the amount from the RPA. Action TW

The OV proposed that the Verderers Grazing Scheme should have an uplifted amount of £237,600 added to its budget for 2025/26 to disperse to the commoners via the Verderers Grazing Scheme Committee. The voting members of the HLS board agreed to the proposal via email post meeting.

PW requested that the NPA managed projects receive an uplift to their budgets – they did receive the inflation linked uplift given to other projects in 2023. The contribution towards HLS Secretarial Support from the Verderers has not received any uplift since 2019. Board to consider increases at the next meeting when the uplift amount has been confirmed by the RPA.

See programme register and actual spend to date attached below.

FE UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below

VGS UPDATE

RESUME

See attached VGS Committee Meeting minutes from meeting held 5th March 25

ENGAGEMENT AND INTERPRETATION OFFICER WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below
TW & E&I Officer to arrange a date for a HLS Comms meeting.

Action TW

HIWWT WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below

ARCHAEOLOGY REPORT

RESUME

See report attached below;
Plus the additional reports received on;
Enclosure at Picket Mire – Topographic Survey Report
Bank and Ditch Removal- Turf Hill Inclosure
Bank Removal – Dunces Arch
Hawkhill Mire, Furzey Lodge, Beaulieu Channel Restoration
Bishop's Dyke, Penny Moor

NFLAS WRITTEN UPDATE

RESUME

See report attached below

FUTURE NEW FOREST ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME UPDATE

RESUME

Ministers have signalled their ongoing commitment to Landscape Recovery (LR) and continued support for Rounds 1 and 2 in the Spending Review but there are no timescales for round 3, the current focus is on assessing the two previous pilot phases. NE has been appointed the Accounting Officer for the implementation phase of LR.

The Forest Farming Group has begun to prepare plans for the likely extent and governance of a future LR scheme.

AOB

RESUME

Request for Additional Funding

The Non Native Plant Project Officer requested additional funding for the sum of £240 to engage a contractor to treat Sheep Laurel on the Crown Lands this year. The board agreed to the extra funding. TW to inform CC.

Action TW

Funding Contribution for Monitoring Cicada

The board considered a request to contribute funding towards purchasing recording equipment to monitor for Cicadas on the Open Forest. It was decided that this project did not fit with the current HLS objectives and could not be funded at this time. TW to inform the applicant.

Action TW

PA2 Report

The PA2 report has been completed and circulated to board members. TW has received the Capital Claim form from the RPA and requested the final invoices from the NPA. It can then be reclaimed via the RPA.

Removal of Concrete from Airfields

A couple of years ago a report was commissioned to log and record the historical importance of the concrete still in situ at the New Forest Airfields before removal. It was suggested that this project could now be undertaken because of the uplift in the HLS budget. To be discussed further at the next meeting.

Meeting closed 12.00 p.m.

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS 2025

Wednesday October 29th - 9.30 Kings House

DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS 2026

Wednesday January 28th – 9.30 Kings House TBC

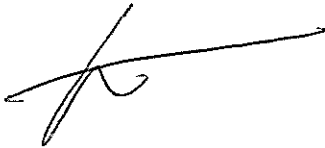
AGM – Jan / Feb TBC

Wednesday April 29th – 9.30 Kings House TBC

Wednesday July 22nd – 9.30 Kings House TBC

Wednesday October 28th – 9.30 Kings House TBC

Delegated Actions to		
Tina Woodley	TW	VGS Administrator



Edward Heron
Official Verderer

Spend profile 2025-2026 1st Quarter

Register Serial number	Task Mgr	Project Title	Budget 2025-2026	Revised Forecast 2025/26	Actual spend to 30.06.2025	Updated by	Comments
Verderers Grazing Scheme STAFF							
1	TW	VGS Project Staff	£39,757.00		£4,250.94	TW	
2	TW	Administration	£10,000.00		£3,343.80	TW	
			£49,757.00		£7,594.74		
Verderers Grazing Scheme							
3	TW	VGS Grazing payments	£792,957.00		£205,531.52	TW	2024 cattle supplement & 2025 VGS
4	TW	Sponsorship of Land Advice Service	£53,905.22		£53,905.22	TW	
5	TW	Small Grant fund	£15,000.00		£2,850.00	TW	
6	TW	Microchipping at Beaulieu Road Sales	£5,000.00		£0.00	TW	
7	TW	Reflective collars	£24,000.00		£0.00	TW	
8	TW	Agister Salary contribution	£57,000.00		£57,000.00	TW	
9	TW	Stallion Scheme	£17,737.00		£9,203.00	TW	
10	TW	Bloodline Scheme	£0.00		£0.00	TW	
11	TW	Futurity Scheme	£8,000.00		£8,000.00	TW	
13	TW	NF Livestock Society (Marketing + £1,000 Foal Shows)	£9,000.00		£9,000.00	TW	
14	TW	NF Trust (Beaulieu Road Maintenance)	£6,500.00		£6,500.00	TW	
15	TW	NF Pony Enthusiasts Club	£1,500.00		£1,500.00	TW	
16	TW	Pony Welfare & Fallen Stock Programme	£25,000.00		£4,050.00	TW	
17	TW	Young Commoner training	£3,500.00		£3,500.00	TW	
18	TW	Drift Fencing	£19,000.00		£3,000.00	TW	
19	TW	Pound rebuild programme	£5,000.00		£5,190.43	TW	
			VGS Sub Total	£1,043,099.22	£369,230.17		
			VGS Grand Total	£1,092,856.22	£376,824.91		
Higher Level Stewardship Overheads - STAFF COSTS							
20	TW	HLS Secretarial Support from Verderers	£15,812.00		£15,812.00	TW	
21	NPA	NPA Staff Costs	£27,594.00		£0.00	TW	
22	NH	FC Supporting Staff & Admin costs	£26,430.00	£26,430.00	£5,641.65	CB	
			£69,836.00		£21,453.65		
Higher Level Stewardship Overheads - Other							
NPA			£32,086.00		£0.00	TW	
23	CB	Communications - Support	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£47.92	CB	
24	CB	FC Office Overheads	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£511.50	CB	
21	CB	FC Staff Overheads	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£1,702.03	CB	
93	CB	FC Vehicle Leasing	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£5,583.24	CB	
Non Native and Invasive Plant Control			£60,132.00		£7,844.69		
33	TW	Non Native plants Project	£37,000.00		£37,000.00	TW	
			£37,000.00		£37,000.00		
Scheduled Ancient Monument							
32	CB	no projects planned	£0.00		£0.00	CB	
			£0.00		£0.00		
National Park Authority							
71	NPA	Lidar Analyst	£44,571.00			TW	
73	NPA	Lidar Non-Staff	£9,423.00			TW	
			£53,994.00		£0.00		
Redundancy Contingency							
60	TW	Project Staff	£4,524.57		£0.00	TW	
			£4,524.57		£0.00		
Forestry England TERRESTRIAL RESTORATION							
63	CB	Open Habitat Restoration	£241,825.00	£241,825.00	£0.00	CB	
1903	CB	Ridge & Furrow removal	£192,545.00	£192,545.00	£0.00	CB	
65	CB	Rhododendron Control	£56,450.00	£56,450.00	£8,436.00	CB	
66	CB	Bracken Control	£41,580.00	£41,580.00	£0.00	CB	
2406	CB	Longdown site	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	£7,668.00	CB	
2408	CB	Consents	£800.00	£800.00	£100.00	CB	
68	CB	Coppicing/Pollarding	£38,000.00	£38,000.00	£0.00	CB	
2201	CB	Conifer removal from A&O woodland	£55,470.00	£55,470.00	£0.00	CB	
2202	CB	Thinning A & O plots	£1,425.00	£1,425.00	£0.00	CB	
69	CB	Lost Lawns	£2,375.00	£2,375.00	£0.00	CB	
70	CB	Verge Restoration	£80,265.00	£80,265.00	£39,245.10	CB	
100	CB	Heather Baling				CB	
			£755,735.00		£55,449.10		
			£0.00		£0.00		
Monitoring							
102	CB	Bats	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£0.00	CB	
25	CB	Botanical Survey	£75,900.00	£75,900.00	£300.00	CB	
103	CB	Water Hydrology	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£180.00	CB	
107	CB	River Habitat Survey	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£0.00	CB	
140	CB	Breeding Wader Survey	£19,000.00	£19,000.00	£0.00	CB	
191	CB	Rare Spider Survey	£11,820.00	£11,820.00	£2,040.00	CB	
2407	CB	Invertebrate Survey	£21,240.00	£21,240.00	£0.00	CB	
105	CB	Riverfly Partnership	£200.00	£200.00	£45.50	CB	
			£141,160.00		£2,565.50		
WETLAND							
Project Staff Costs							
57	CB	Terrestrial Works Supervisor Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£10,311.75	CB	
60	CB	Contract Manager Pb4	£51,414.00	£51,414.00	£13,898.01	CB	
61	CB	Terrestrial Restoration Works Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£11,361.96	CB	
62	CB	Wetland Restoration Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£11,361.96	CB	
622	CB	Monitoring Officer Pb6a	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£11,361.96	CB	
623	CB	Verge Restoration Officer Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£10,311.75	CB	
2206	CB	Works Supervisor Wetland Pb6a	£18,954.00	£18,954.00	£5,193.35	CB	
			£268,089.00		£73,800.74		
Wetland Restoration							
48	CB	Repair and Maintenance	£75,000.00	£75,000.00	£418.24	CB	
47	CB	North Sluifers	£150,000.00	£150,000.00	£0.00	CB	
152	CB	Wetland Restoration Sites - Shirley Holms Mire	£0.00	£866.40	£866.40	CB	
2203	CB	Pickett Bottom Mire	£0.00	£39.39	£39.39	CB	
2405	CB	Anderwood	£0.00	£0.00	£20,388.00	CB	
			£225,000.00		£21,712.03		0.00
T&C Planning Costs							
CB		Planning Application & Site Planning	£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£0.00	CB	
			£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£0.00		
Total Habitat Restoration			£704,249.00	£70,000.00	£98,078.27		
Total FE spend all serials			£1,536,414.00	£146,430.00	£167,013.71		claim 42

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	Planned Spend Estimate	Actual Spend to Date
Total VGS Spend	£1,129,856.22	£413,824.91
HLS Overheads Staff Costs	£69,836.00	£21,453.65
Non Native plants & SAMS	£37,000.00	£37,000.00
Monitoring	£141,160.00	£2,565.50
Project Staff Costs	£272,613.57	£73,800.74
Terrestrial & Wetland Restoration	£980,735.00	£77,161.13
T & C Planning costs	£70,000.00	£0.00
NPA	£53,994.00	£0.00
TOTAL Planned Spend	£2,755,194.79	TOTAL Actual Spend
		£625,805.93

Income from NE		Actual Income from NE	£2,033,229.35
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End of year payment	£2,033,229.35	End of year payment	£2,033,229.35
Budgeted in-year Reserve 2025	-£721,965.44	In-year Reserve	£1,407,423.42
B/fwd Reserve from 2024	£1,443,358.77	B/fwd Reserve 2024	£1,443,358.77
Budgeted accumulated Reserve	£721,393.33	Accumulated Reserve	£2,850,782.19

Education Payment - Annual payment

NPA	Educational Access - payment per visit	£5,190.00	£5,190.00
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Spend profile: 2025-26					
Register Serial No.	Project Title	Budget Apr25-Mar26	Revised Forecast	Actual spend to 30.06.25	Comments / Proposed restoration sites
HLS Overheads - STAFF COSTS					
22	FE Supporting Staff & Admin costs	£26,430.00	£26,430.00	£5,641.65	
60	Project Manager Pb4	£51,414.00	£51,414.00	£13,898.01	
61	Terrestrial Restoration Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£11,361.96	
57	Works Supervisor Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£10,311.75	
62	Wetland Restoration Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£11,361.96	
622	Monitoring Project Officer Pb5	£40,635.00	£40,635.00	£11,361.96	
623	Verge Restoration Officer Pb6a	£37,908.00	£37,908.00	£10,311.75	
2206	Works Supervisor Pb6a (0.5 FTE)	£18,954.00	£18,954.00	£5,193.35	
	Sub-total	£294,519.00	£294,519.00	£79,442.39	
HLS Overheads - Other					
23	Communications	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£47.92	
24	Forestry England - Office Charges	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£511.50	
93	Forestry England - Vehicle Leasing & Business Related Mileage	£30,000.00	£30,000.00	£5,583.24	
21	Miscellaneous Staff Costs	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£1,702.03	
	Sub-total	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£7,844.69	
	Sub-total Overheads	£344,519.00	£344,519.00	£87,287.08	Overhead Expenditure
Historic Environment					
				£0.00	
Option HO2 Restoration of Lowland Heath					
63	Open Habitat Restoration	£241,825.00	£241,825.00	£0.00	
65	Rhododendron	£56,450.00	£56,450.00	£8,436.00	Rhododendron spraying at various locations.
66	Bracken Control	£41,580.00	£41,580.00	£0.00	
1903	Ridge and Furrow	£192,545.00	£192,545.00	£0.00	
2406	Longdown site	£45,000.00	£45,000.00	£7,668.00	Felling and extraction of Timber as part of wetland restoration (following bat surveys).
2408	Consents	£400.00	£400.00	£50.00	Longdown watercourse consents from council.
	Sub-total	£577,800.00	£577,800.00	£16,154.00	
Option HC13 Restoration of Wood Pasture & Parkland					
68	Coppicing/ Pollarding and Holly Management	£38,000.00	£38,000.00	£0.00	
2201	Restoration of A&O Woodlands	£55,470.00	£55,470.00	£0.00	
2202	Thinning A&O Plots (timber clearance)	£1,425.00	£1,425.00	£0.00	
	Sub-total	£94,895.00	£94,895.00	£0.00	
Option HK7 Restoration of Species Rich Grassland					
69	Lost Lawns	£2,375.00	£2,375.00	£0.00	
70	Verge Restoration	£80,265.00	£80,265.00	£39,245.10	Verge restoration project.
2405	Wetland Restoration sites: Anderwood	£0.00	£0.00	£20,388.00	Felling and extraction of Timber as part of wetland restoration (not overspend; new PR number added).
2408	Consents	£400.00	£400.00	£50.00	Anderwood watercourse consents from council.
	Sub-total	£83,040.00	£83,040.00	£59,683.10	
Survey and Monitoring					
25	Botanical Survey	£75,900.00	£75,900.00	£300.00	Field advice and locating habitat images (training).
102	Bat Surveys	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£0.00	
103	Water Hydrology	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£180.00	Testing water via aquaprobe.
105	Riverfly Partnership	£200.00	£200.00	£45.50	Riverfly guides for monitoring volunteers.
107	River Habitat Surveys	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£0.00	
140	Breeding Wader Surveys	£19,000.00	£19,000.00	£0.00	
191	Rare Spider Surveys	£11,820.00	£11,820.00	£2,040.00	April and May rare spider surveys.
2407	Invertebrate Surveys	£21,240.00	£21,240.00	£0.00	
	Sub-total	£141,160.00	£141,160.00	£2,565.50	
Wetland Restoration					
47	North Sluffers	£150,000.00	£150,000.00	£0.00	
48	Repairs and Maintenance	£75,000.00	£75,000.00	£418.24	Tools and supplies for repairs and maintenance across all sites.
152	Wetland Restoration sites: Shirley Holms Mire	£0.00	£866.40	£866.40	Fencing around wetland restoration at Shirley Holms Mire (additional unexpected cost).
2203	Pickett Bottom Mire	£0.00	£39.39	£39.39	Tools for work at Pickett Bottom Mire.
TBD	Planning Application and Site Planning.	£70,000.00	£70,000.00	£0.00	
	Sub-total	£295,000.00	£295,905.79	£1,324.03	
	Operational Expenditure	£1,191,895.00	£1,192,800.79	£79,726.63	Operational Expenditure
	TOTAL Expenditure	£1,536,414.00	£1,537,319.79	£167,013.71	TOTAL Expenditure

HLS Board Meeting Update Jan - April 2025

Actions from HLS Board Meeting held on 22/01/2025

- None required

Overview of habitat restoration delivered April 2025 to July 2025:

HLS project	Habitat restoration work delivered Apr to July 2025
Open habitat restoration	N/A
A&O (Ancient and Ornamental) woodland restoration	N/A
Ridge & furrow	N/A
Rhododendron	Rhododendron spraying has been completed at Hawkhill, Dibden, Marchwood, Black Knowl, Strdogemoor bottom, Dunces Arch, Verely, Common Moor, Acres Down, Swan Green, Allum Green, Pillmore Heath, Shobley, Turf Hill, Dur Hill, Old House, Knightwood, Matley, Whitemoor Little Wootton, Highland water (67.4 Ha)
Bracken control	N/A
Holly coppicing/pollarding	N/A
Lost lawns project	Anderwood Lawn - Timber clearance (2.64Ha) Balmer Lawn - Timber clearance (1.34Ha)
Verge restoration	Boltons Bench - Denny Campsite to Lyndhurst Cemetary - 4 miles of car-free ditching, eroded track edges and areas around properties defined with dragons' teeth, barriers moved forward, 3 redundant track closures and an old timber stack area have been scarified
Wetland restoration and repairs/maintenance	Wetland restoration will begin in July at Longdown Mire & North Slufters, repairs will take place at Penny Moor and Picket Bottom Mire

HLS Forestry England Progress Report

Updates should be read in conjunction with the FE HLS Budget Forecast (Annex A).

Budget Update

Claim 42 has been prepared (April 2025-July 2025). An updated FE HLS budget forecast is attached (Annex A) summarising Forestry England actual spend against the budget.

Staff Update

No Changes.

Restoration of Lowland Heath: Option H02

This option aims to encourage the restoration of lowland heathland, including both dry and wet heathland, and mire habitats on the Open Forest. Such sites are likely to have become degraded by scrub, bracken, secondary woodland encroachment or inappropriate drainage. Management will help to restore and strengthen the vegetation mosaics characteristic of lowland heathland and thus enhance the integrity of the historic landscape character of the area.

Open habitat restoration: PR serial no. 63

The HLS Scheme is funding the restoration of lowland heath on sites that have been used for plantation forestry. This programme of works includes removal of mature conifer, clearance of felled conifer and removal of natural regeneration, on areas of wet and dry heathland open to grazing livestock.

A Rolling programme of work to remove natural regeneration from 'thrown open' Inclosures is complete and work will commence again in September 2025.

- **The following projects are ongoing or in preparation for 2025/26:**
 - North Sluffers - Further regeneration and pine felling on the heath
 - Lodge Heath Mire - Removal of mature conifer and other trees from riparian edge and open habitat and removal of trees on the watercourse to allow for wetland restoration
 - Ipley Inclosure - Felling of mature conifer on bog & woodland, removal of regen from the scheduled monument and open habitat
 - Longdown Inclosure - Birch regen clearance will continue using various methods
 - Matley Bog- Removal of conifer from the bog edge

- Knightwood Inclosure - Felling of trees on and along the bogs and riparian edges alongside regen clearance in open habitat
- Turf Hill/ Millersford Inclosure - Removing the remaining conifer from the clearfell site alongside birch & pine regen clearance
- Fawley Inclosure - Returning to remove stumps on historic clearfell site and clear regen from the mires & heritage features
- Highland Water Inclosure - Removing conifer regeneration and remnant pines on the open habitat
- Elkhams Grave - Birch regeneration removal
- Dames Slough Inc - There is potential to fell trees from the riparian edge alongside the removal of spoil from the drainlines to enable future wetland restoration
- Knightwood Inclosure, Longdown & North Sluifers - Timber clearance

Ridge & furrow removal and stump shearing: PR serial no. 1903

The HLS Scheme is funding the restoration of lowland heath on sites that have been used for plantation forestry. This programme of work includes the removal of ridges and furrows, and shearing of stumps to restore areas of wet or dry heathland, currently open to grazing.

- **Projects planned for Autumn/ Winter 2025**
 - Highland Water Inclosure Phase 2
 - North Sluifers - Continuation of works from 2025
 - Milkham - Revisiting historic clearfell sites
 - Knightwood (Hollidays Hill) - Clearfell of larch
 - Dame Slough - Clear fell in progress

Rhododendron management: PR serial no. 65

The HLS Scheme funds a rolling programme of work to control non-native rhododendron that is encroaching on open habitats. Different methods are used, depending on the size of the plant; smaller plants are targeted through foliar spray, while larger bushes (>1.2 m in height) are cut down and arisings burnt. Many sites have been surveyed, and this work continues to inform the programme.

- **Projects planned for 2025:**
 - The spraying programme for spring has been completed: Hawkhill, Dibden, Marchwood, Black Knowl, Strdogemoor bottom, Dunces Arch, Verely, Common Moor, Acres Down, Swan Green, Allum Green, Pillmore Heath, Shobley, Turf Hill, Dur Hill, Old House, Knightwood, Matley, Whitemoor Little Wootton
 - Sites that will be targeted later in the year for cut and burn include Shirley Holmes, Shobley, Black Knowl, Highland Water, Marchwood, Foulford, Blackensford Bottom, Ridley Wood / Harvestslade, Matley Cottage OF East of Matley inc. Dames slough

- The Rhododendron survey is now available to the public online and can be accessed [here](#).

Bracken management: PR serial no. 66

The HLS Scheme funds a rolling programme of work on areas that have been restored to open habitat where bracken is becoming over-dominant and outcompeting other native species, thus reducing species diversity:

- Sites being considered:
- Highland Water Inc, Dunces Arch inc, Turf Hill/Millersford Inc, North Sluffers Inc, Anderwood Lawn, Woosons Hill, Ravensnest Inc.

Holly holm management: PR serial 2301

This is a one-off project following on from a successful trial to encourage holly holm regeneration by removing grazing pressure via temporary enclosures. Deer-proof fencing will be erected around selected holly holms where regeneration has been in decline. The pens will be in place for at least 5 years to allow time for holly to regenerate around the base and trunk.

Fences have been erected around Seven Holms so far and work is underway to identify six new locations for 2026.

Restoration of Wood Pasture & Parkland: Option HC13

The aim of this option is to restore wood pasture (including the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) habitats of pasture woodland, riverine woodland and bog woodland in the Open Forest) to favourable condition. This applies where land has been planted with conifers or where Scots pine has spread and trees or other non-natives need to be removed.

A project is currently being planned at Puckpits Bog in Holmhill Inclosure, this work will aim to open the riparian edge.

- Puckpits Bog (Bagshot Gutter) within HLS Highland Water - Widening riparian edge by felling various tree species off bog, mostly conifer regen
- Knightwood Oak Inclosure (North of Bolderwood) - Remove conifer regen and birch from bog woodland, pasture woodland and along the Warickslade watercourse
-

Holly pollarding: PR serial no. 68

HLS is funding the restoration of A&O woodlands through a programme of work that aims to reduce the shade from dense holly to benefit epiphytic lichens. This is critical work as the old growth pasture woodlands support an internationally important lichen assemblage.

A rolling programme of work is targeting sites highlighted in a 2018/19 Holly Management and Epiphytic Lichen Conservation Survey Report conducted by Neil Sanderson as 'urgent priority' and 'priority' areas, encompassing 29 woodland areas. Over the last four years 51 sites have

been worked on in 21 of the woodland areas. Once the programme has achieved its targets, a review will evaluate the completed work and identify next steps.

Restoration of A&O woodlands: PR serial no. 2201

HLS is funding the restoration of ancient and ornamental (A&O) oak and beech woodlands by removing conifer trees and other non-natives. Forestry England applies the following principles put forward by Natural England: fell any conifers shading veteran trees; fell regenerating conifer; fell conifer growing amongst young oak and beech; and restore glades or edges of lawns and heathland where conifer have colonised open areas. This will also allow the woodland to naturally expand in future.

- **Projects planned for 2025/26:**
 - Wick wood - Rotational management of pine regeneration
 - Old Sloden - Conifer clump removal
 - Little Wootton - Removal of Western Hemlock throughout the ancient woodland & scots pine from the bog
 - Shave Green East - Removal of conifer regeneration and mature conifer
 - Knightwood Oak Area - Removal of conifer regeneration within the ancient woodland

Thinning A&O Plots: PR serial no. 2202

HLS is funding a programme of work which aims to restore a more natural woodland structure in old planting areas and regeneration pens in A&O woodlands. Felled timber at Brook Wood will be cleared when ground conditions are suitable. (Brook wood has been cleared of Timber now)

Other A&O woodland thinning sites are being assessed for inclusion in future work programmes.

- Brook Wood - further thinning.
- Gritnam and Brinken

Restoration of species-rich grassland: Option HK7

This option is targeted at dry and wet grasslands and associated permanent and temporary ponds in the Open Forest that are potentially rich in plant and associated animal life. They are sometimes on difficult ground and may have suffered from issues such as drainage, invasive species (including bracken, scrub and non-native species), eutrophication and under/overgrazing.

Lost lawns: PR serial no. 69

HLS is funding the restoration of species-rich grassland that has been encroached by scrub and invasive species. This involves a rolling programme of work targeting sites identified in the Lost Lawns Report (N. Sanderson) to restore glades or edges of lawns and heathland.

Natural England are seeking funds to survey the Marl Pits and produce a management recommendation, following which Forestry England will carry out restoration works.

Verge Restoration: PR serial no. 70

The HLS funds a Verge Restoration Officer (VRO) raises awareness of the importance of the verges which are a designated feature of the New Forest's SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The VRO actively engages with local communities and visitors, patrols and assesses SSSI verges across the HLS agreement area, and plans and oversees practical measures to protect and restore the verges from the damaging impacts of vehicles.

Planning is underway for future sites including:

- Bramshaw Wood - Dragon's teeth and ditching
- Shirley Holmes - Dragon's teeth around the properties and opposite the car park area
- Setley - Car free ditching and Dragon's teeth installation
- Burley Cott Lane and surrounding areas - installation of barriers and dragon's teeth
- Parkhill Lawn, Lyndhurst - Car free ditching and the installation of a new barrier
- Longcross to Bramble Hill - Roger Penny Way/B3078 Car free ditching
- Mogshade and Bolderwood - Ditching and Dragon's teeth installation

Wetland Restoration

Where habitats are unfavourable as a result of drainage operations (such as in riverine and bog woodland, heathland and mire habitats), restoration of a more natural physical, geomorphological and hydrological regime by agreed management is required. This might include removal of structures which prevent seasonal inundation, raising of (over-deepened) stream bed levels, restoration of braided channels (watercourses with many small channels) and reinstatement of natural meanders. Such works are undertaken as part of the ongoing programme of wetland restoration projects and are guided by the restoration plan agreed by the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRF).

The programme of wetland sites summer 2025 includes:

- Long Down Mire - Infill the artificial ditch and level the ridge and furrow, removing the spoil
- North Sluffers - Infill the forestry drainage, widening the pinch points along the inclosure boundary and removing the boundary bank

Repair and maintenance: PR serial no. 48

Previously restored wetland sites may need further interventions to help restore natural processes. Forestry England carries out an ongoing programme of work to monitor restored sites, identify any issues and implement works to address them.

Repairs and maintenance projects for summer 2025:

- Penny Moor - Replace the large cobbles at the ford crossing and extend the second ford crossing
- Picket Bottom Mire - Repair the eroding nick points and the gravel ford crossing

Other wetland sites: PR serial numbers 33, 1801, 42, 2401, 2402, 2403

A programme of mire and stream restoration work that aims to restore the natural hydrology of an area, improve the condition of wet habitats, protect streams and mires from further erosion, help to manage flood risk and increase resilience to drought.

Future wetland sites:

The Forestry England team are now looking at future possible restoration sites and exploring site feasibility.

Update: Forest Freshwater & Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRP)

The Forest Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum (FWRP) was set up as an independent and advisory body focused on strategic and long-term freshwater and wetland restoration priorities in the New Forest National Park. Some example objectives include:

- To assist member bodies planning restoration by sharing information, experience and advice,
- help facilitate communication between all stakeholders,
- set strategic level objectives and
- review the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Plan which creates a framework for delivery of restoration projects.

Work is ongoing to finalise the draft Restoration Plan and develop the Communications and Engagement Strategy. Footprint Ecology have synthesised the information collected during this, into a manual of techniques which will form a section of the final Restoration Plan. Footprint Ecology presented the overview of these methods and the work of the FWRP, at the HLS AGM in January.

A FWRP meeting took place in March including a site visit to Picket Mire to discuss the restoration works that have taken place. The meeting took a workshop approach facilitated by Footprint Ecology, to discuss the future shape of the forum considering the production of the Restoration Plan and the resignation of the Chair David Rumble. The consensus of the group included a holding pattern for the forum over the next 12 months.

Heather Baling: PR serial no. 100

An update will be provided later in the year.

Survey and Monitoring

This includes a programme of specialist species surveys - as directed by Natural England - and a monitoring programme to support our restoration work. Examples of previous specialist species surveys undertaken include those conducted for large marsh grasshopper, brown diving beetle, New Forest cicada and various New Forest spiders. Previous reports can be found [here](#).

Breeding Wader Surveys (repeat): PR serial no. 140

The Hampshire Ornithological Society (HOS) are currently undertaking breeding wader surveys. These involve recording the presence of Snipe, Curlew, Lapwing and Redshank in each 1km square within the SPA. The first two survey periods have been complete, and the final survey period will finish 22nd June.

Botanical survey: PR serial no. 25

Habitat and botanical surveys are being conducted on the [wetland restoration sites](#) to assess the habitat and vegetative response to the restoration of a more naturally functioning watercourse. A new vegetation survey protocol has been developed through the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum and aims to pragmatically collect useful and repeatable data. For this, specific New Forest habitats have been defined (referred to as Quintessential Habitats). More information can be found in the [Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Plan](#).

Surveys are currently being conducted at:

- Penny Moor (repeat)
- Picket Mire (repeat)
- Anderwood
- Longdown
- North Sluffers
- Lodge Heath

A survey is planned to take place at Knightwood during the summer.

Wetland monitoring reports: PR serial no. 2303

Case studies on site-based monitoring have been commissioned for Wootton and Harvestslade. These will combine data from various monitoring streams (e.g., botanical surveys, geomorphological surveys and fixed-point photography surveys) to create a succinct narrative of change report for each site. They will build on the suggestions presented in the Freshwater and Wetland Restoration Forum Restoration Plan. Their aim will be to describe the site at 5+ years post restoration in the context of habitats present and relevant measures of success, in a way that's accessible to the general public.

Invertebrate surveys

Rare invertebrate surveys are being conducted at four sites within the New Forest: North Sluffers, Dockens Water, Picket plain/Foulford Bottom and Turf Hill/ Millersford. These are taking place between April and September and are aiming to record rare and unusual species across a range of habitat types using a range of survey methods (light trapping, active searches and pitfall traps). The surveys have already identified some extremely rare and under-recorded species, including *Notochilus limbatus* (only two NBN records since 1961), *Agabus brunneus* and *Formica picea*.

Repeat rare spider surveys are also being conducted, following the same methodology as in [2018](#), with the aim of recording rare mire specialists.

Fixed point photography: PR serial no. 104

A fixed-point photography programme is run by the HLS Monitoring Project Officer to document visible habitat changes following restoration.

The programme uses an app that allows photos to be taken in the field and automatically uploaded to a geographical information system (GIS). This makes it easier and more efficient to take repeat photos.

Water Hydrology: PR serial no. 103

Monitoring water hydrology helps document changes in flow regime and, the impact of river restorations on flow levels and rates.

The HLS monitoring project officer is working with the Environment Agency to redeploy water level gauges linked to Point Orange IoT (Internet of Things) devices. Enabling the collection of continuous live water level data from the field. There is also a collaboration with Freshwater Habitats Trust to monitor water levels at Foulford. The aim of these projects is to collect data that will give us a better understanding as to how wetland restoration impacts water levels.

Riverfly Partnership: PR serial no. 105

Over the last ten years, the HLS scheme has supported the citizen science Riverfly Partnership Project. Volunteers are trained to identify and survey specific groups of freshwater invertebrates, whose diversity and numbers can tell us about the overall health and characteristics of our streams.

This year's surveys (2025) are in progress at Linford Brook and Worts Gutter.

HLS Board Meeting Update Jan - April 2025

This year's surveys (2025) are in progress at Linford Brook and Worts Gutter.



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Verderers' Grazing Scheme
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Edward Heron*

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**MINUTES OF THE VERDERERS' GRAZING SCHEME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON 5th March 2025**

Present:

Mr R Deakin (RD)	- Elected Verderer
Miss Alison Tilbury (AT)	- Elected Verderer
Mr Clive Chatters (CC)	- Natural England Appointed Verderer
Mr Mark Gammon (MG)	- Forestry Commission Appointed Verderer

Item	Item	Action
1. Apologies	Edward Heron – OV Tina Woodley – VGS Administrator	
2. Declarations of interest	RD & AT declared membership of the VGS. RD is a member of the New Forest Livestock Society. RD is a member of the New Forest Stallion Syndicate RD & AT are members of the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society. RD is a committee member of the CDA and AT is a member of the CDA CC is an Officer of HIWWT	
3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising	Minutes of the last VGS meeting were approved – TW to sign and upload to website	Action TW
4. Cattle Supplement 2024	2024 VGS – Committee agreed to pay the annual cattle supplement to the herds that qualified via their 2024 VGS returns. TW to collect TB52 forms (Whole Herd Test) direct from the Ministry Appointed Vets. The payments can then be distributed.	Action TW
5. Commons Contributions 2025	National Trust have not confirmed if they are able to contribute towards the 2025/2026 Commons VGS. TW to follow up with NT as unable to send out VGS forms for 2025/26 until an outcome has been agreed.	Action TW

<p>6. Stallion Grazing, Futurity and Bloodlines</p>	<p>The stallion grazing at Newlyn Farm has been successful but the grass did not last as long as expected and hay has had to be supplied. The checking rosta has worked well.</p> <p><u>Futurity</u> The Futurity Colts were supplied grazing free of charge at Newlyn Farm this year but the HLS are unable to offer it again this year. TW will give the NFPB&CS the annual grant.</p> <p><u>Bloodline Scheme</u> 3 Bloodline mares have been put in foal to underused bloodlines and being grazed at Cadland.</p>	
<p>7. Stallion Consultation</p>	<p><u>Young Commoners Stallion Injury Reimbursement</u></p> <p>Committee happy with the proposed scheme. Not going to offer additional funding assistance, but would be content if Young Commoners chose to use some of their training grant for this purpose. It needs to be a well documented process. TW to inform Young Commoners</p>	<p>Action TW</p>
<p>8. VGS Rule Violations 2024-25</p>	<p>None</p>	
<p>9. VGS Small Grants</p>	<p><u>Future Financial Planning</u></p> <p>The Committee feel that a contingency plan should be developed to cover the ending of the HLS.</p> <p><u>VGS Small Grants</u></p> <p>VGS grants of varying sums were awarded to VGS members</p> <p>Miss A Howells Mr C Maton Mr M Pooley Mr B Mansbridge Mrs JA Tillman Mrs C Smith Mrs A Wilson</p> <p>2 applications were rejected 2 applications were deferred pending more information</p> <p>TW to inform applicants of committee's decisions</p>	<p>Action TW</p>

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Report to HLS Board: July 2025

Jonathan Low, Communications Assistant / HLS engagement officer

Web updates


An article was uploaded to the HLS website to promote the release of the New Forest stallions.

This included an interview with Kerry Dovey-Whiting, one of the judges from the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society.

HLS New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme

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HOME » NEWS AND UPDATES » STALLIONS TO BE TURNED OUT ON THE NEW FOREST



Stallions to be turned out on the New Forest

Stallions will be released on the New Forest for a six-week period this summer.

A total of 21 have been chosen and will be turned out to breed with the free-roaming mares from Monday, 12 May.

A select number of stallions are let out each year to help maintain the New Forest pony bloodlines and control the number of foals born each year.

The stallions are chosen based on their type, conformation and temperament.

Kerry Dovey-Whiting, who [helped judge the stallions](#) for the New Forest Pony Breeders and Cattle Society, explains the background behind the judging. "It is really important the colts are inspected as one colt or stallion can sire up to 40 foals, so if you permitted a stallion with a conformational defect to breed, that fault can be passed on to lots of ponies," she says.

"It is vital for the New Forest pony breed that there are new foals each spring to prevent numbers decreasing and the breeding mare stocks to dwindle. The ponies' grazing help to keep the natural ecology balance on the Forest."

A subsequent press release was also put out about the stallions and why they had been released.

This was in conjunction with a video which was produced and included interviews with Tina Woodley and Robert Maton. This has already had more than 500 views over the past couple of weeks.

HOME » NEWS AND UPDATES » STALLIONS HELPING TO PRESERVE ICONIC NEW FOREST PONY BLOODLINES



Stallions helping to preserve iconic New Forest pony bloodlines

New Forest stallions form an integral part of the area's long and rich history.

They are released out onto the Forest – for a certain period determined by the Verderers each year – to breed with free-roaming mares and improve the quality of the foals produced.

This year a total of 21 stallions were turned out over a six-week period across various locations in the Forest.

"The turning out of the stallions is such an important event in the commoners' calendar," said Tina Woodley, the Verderers of the New Forest Grazing Scheme administrator.

"Stallions are crucial to maintain native bloodlines. The ponies are the architects of the New Forest and they have been here for hundreds of years. Without their input, it would look a very different place.

"They are bred to be hardy and resilient to survive harsh winters, but also dry summers.

An article about rhododendron control was updated with the addition of a survey to allow people to report impacted areas.



Rhododendron control

Although famous for its beautiful flowers during spring, rhododendron can grow many metres tall, allowing very little light to penetrate through its thick canopy. This has been shown to reduce the numbers of earthworms, birds and plants in a site, leading to a reduction in the biodiversity of the area.

The seeds spread so well that areas around it are soon taken over. In the New Forest the fightback is on, with a project to control this invasive non-native plant on the 20,000 hectares of Forestry England managed land in the National Park making significant progress.

As part of the HLS scheme, rhododendron has been managed at 200 sites and an ongoing programme of work by Forestry England will ensure it's kept in check.

The Forestry England team use a range of different techniques at certain times of year to manage the rhododendron.

Clearing rhododendron can sometimes look a little messy but the Forest soon springs back to life and new, native plants are able to regrow and thrive in these areas.

If you have rhododendron on your New Forest property, thank you for keeping it contained and not letting it spread onto the open forest.

The invasive, non-native plants article has been updated with new pictures of some of the plant species thanks to Catherine Chatters.



Invasive non native plants

The ecologically important habitats of the New Forest are threatened by invasive non-native plants which spread rapidly and out-compete the native vegetation.

With funding from the New Forest HLS scheme, the [New Forest Non-Native Plants Project](#) has undertaken control of invasive non-native plants on the Open Forest including:

- Coloneaster
- Himalayan balsam (below, photo credit: Ashley Basil)



Documents

Various documents have been uploaded to the HLS website, including the minutes from the January 2025 board meeting.



Supporting documents

HLS Board Meetings 2025

 [2025 HLS Minutes 22nd January FINAL \(3.77 MB\)](#)

Miscellaneous

The NPA's latest **ParkLife** newspaper for Spring/Summer 2025 included an article about the woodlark survey, which was funded by the HLS scheme.

Record numbers of rare woodlark

Conservationists have recorded the highest ever numbers of woodlark, a protected species of ground nesting bird, in the New Forest.

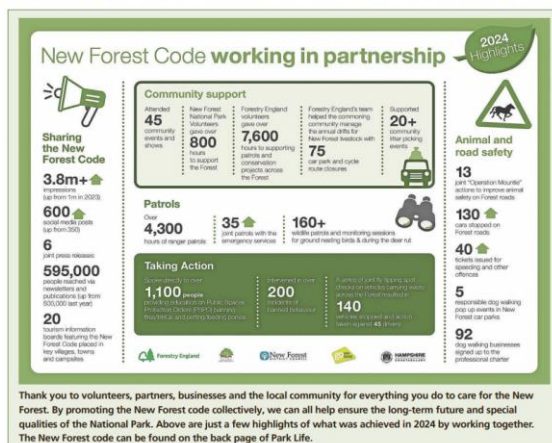
A survey by Forestry England and Hampshire Ornithological Society volunteers revealed that numbers of these birds, only typically found in southern and eastern parts of the UK, have increased by over 50% in the last five years.

Around 100 volunteers surveyed 300 square kilometres of the New Forest. They counted a total of 260 breeding pairs, up from the 167 recorded in 2019. This makes the New Forest one of the UK's most important locations for this species, with around 10% of the population estimated to be found here. The New Forest is an important breeding location for these and several other species of rare ground nesting birds including lapwing, Dartford warbler, curlew and nightjar.



A survey has revealed woodlark numbers have doubled in the last five years. Picture: Steve Laycock

The New Forest is a Special Protection Area for birds and the survey was funded by the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme, which includes Forestry England and the New Forest National Park Authority as partners.



In the NPA's email newsletter – **enews** - for early July, the stallions article and video were both included.

The newsletter is sent out to approximately 26,000 subscribers.

More than 320 people clicked through to the video from the newsletter.



Watch: Stallions released in New Forest

New Forest stallions form an integral part of the area's long and rich history and are released onto the Forest for a certain period, determined by the Verderers, each year to breed with free-roaming mares and improve the quality of the foals produced.

A total of 21 stallions were turned out this year over a six-week period before being brought back in earlier this month.

The stallions are held on a private holding for the rest of the year under the Verderers of the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme, which provides annual funding for their grazing.

Site visits

Jonathan Low (NPA comms) went out with Suzi Egleston and other FE colleagues on several site visits in the Forest.

This was in view to having three interpretation boards put out at sites to highlight where restoration work has been carried out by FE under the HLS scheme.

The sites visited were Highland water (clear fell and old river restoration), Turf Hill (clear fell and future wetland restoration) and Penny Moor (wetland/ mire restoration)

The visits were primarily an information-gathering exercise and there was also discussion as to where the most suitable place would be to place the boards.



Stallion video

The stallion video (as mentioned above) was produced by RCM Media.

Jonathan Low went out with Tina Woodley and agister Rob Maton to film the latter release his stallion, Mallard's Wood Law and Order, onto the Forest at Holmsley campsite.

This was an excellent opportunity for photos and video, as well as interviews with both Tina and Rob. This was then used for a short film for social media and it is also now on the HLS YouTube channel.

Social media posts and engagement

New Forest National ... Fri 5/30/2025 12:30 pm BST		New Forest National ... Tue 6/17/2025 2:01 pm BST	
If you've been enjoying the #NewForest recently, you will no doubt have seen some beautiful...		New Forest stallions form an integral part of the area's long and rich history. They are released to breed...	
			
Total Engagements	3,449	Total Engagements	3,075
Reactions	1,996	Reactions	1,038
Comments	42	Comments	21
Shares	35	Shares	132
Post Link Clicks	81	Post Link Clicks	21
Other Post Clicks	1,295	Other Post Clicks	1,863

Two posts on Facebook performed particularly well. The first was a post promoting the rhododendron survey which had almost 3,500 engagements and almost 2,000 reactions.


The second was to promote the stallions video and had more than 3,000 engagements and 1,000 reactions.

Overall, there were more than 74,000 impressions on HLS social media posts from the past quarter, along with 6,900 engagements and 162 post link clicks.

Several posts were also created to mark Invasive Species Week (12th to 18th May).

This included links to the HLS site, promoting the non-native plants project led by Catherine Chatters.

New Forest National Park Authority's post ✕


 **New Forest National Park Authority** ⋮
17 May · 🌐

🌿 It's Invasive Species Week and we're shining a spotlight on the vital work being done to protect the New Forest's precious habitats. Since 2009, Catherine Chatters has led the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project, tackling invasive species like Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and American Skunk Cabbage - with support from the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship scheme. These plants may look harmless, but they're a serious threat to our rare wetlands, woodlands, and native wildlife. With the help of dedicated volunteers, landowners and partners, Catherine is helping stop their spread through education, hands-on control and community action.

👉 Read the full story and learn how you can help: <https://www.hlsnewforest.org.uk/.../tackling-invasive.../>

#InvasiveSpeciesWeek #NewForest #NationalPark #BePlantWise

📷 Steve Poole



Coming up

Work will continue refreshing the website ahead of the anticipated launch of the new site in March 2026.

Freelance photographer/videographer Matt Rosevaere is being commissioned to film and photo various sites across the Forest to help highlight the role of nature in the Forest.

He will visit several HLS sites and his work will be displayed on the new HLS site and through our social media accounts, among other channels.

Key updates from ongoing FE projects including verge restoration and wetland restoration will be highlighted and publicised as and when.

The New Forest Show at the end of July presents an opportunity to showcase the HLS scheme through the Verderers' Stand. This will have various information boards as well as a video running to show the scheme and its benefits to the wider public.

Further discussion regarding the interpretation board signage has been pencilled in for the autumn.

**NEW FOREST NON-NATIVE PLANTS PROJECT
REPORT TO
THE NEW FOREST HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP SCHEME
BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD 21 JULY 2025**

This report outlines relevant activities of the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project since the previous report dated 14 April 2025 which was submitted for the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS) Board meeting originally due to be held on 23 April 2025. (The Board meeting was not held on 23 April but the documents were shared with Board members on 9 May 2025).

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (which hosts the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project) is very grateful for the funding provided by the New Forest HLS scheme for the control of invasive non-native plants within the Open Forest on the Crown Land.

Work to be undertaken by contractors on Crown Land on Open Forest in 2025

Purchase Orders have been issued by the Project Officer on behalf of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust for work to be undertaken by professional contractors to control invasive non-native plants on the Open Forest on Crown Land during 2025.

Control of Japanese knotweed

- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor adjacent to Hillview, Linwood. £98 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor between Burley and Bransgore. £125 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor off Cott Lane, Burley. £155 + VAT.

Control of American skunk cabbage

- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken downstream of A337. £120 + VAT. Work undertaken on 17 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 7 July 2025.

Control of Yellow Azalea

- Herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor at Blackensford Bottom. £98 + VAT.

Control of Gaultheria

- One herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor south of Fletcher's Hill in May or June 2024. £595 + VAT. Work undertaken on 27 and 28 May 2025. Invoice submitted on 7 July 2025.
- Two herbicide treatments to be undertaken by contractor on Markway Lawn near gate into Rhinefield Sandy's Inclosure (one treatment in April 2025 and one treatment in May or June 2025). £370 + VAT. Work undertaken on 22 May and 26 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 7 July 2025.

Control of Cotoneaster

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of the former WWII Airfield at Stoney Cross. £3,650 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor near Bramble Hill Hotel. £280 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor to north of Hatchet Pond. £150 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Hatchet Moor car park and Little Hatchet Pond. £150 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at Hatchet Triangle. £250 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor to west of Hatchet Gate. £98 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Rans Wood car park. £625 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of Setley Pond. £165 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor on Setley Plain. £165 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor to north of A31 near Minstead. £265.40 + VAT. Work undertaken on 17 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at Pilmore Gate Heath and Acres Down. £150 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at Boundway Hill. £98 + VAT.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor near Shatterford car park £379.28 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor east of Avon Water £567.63 + VAT. Work undertaken on 17 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor south of Wootton Bridge £84.52 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor by post box at Emery Down £85.92 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.
- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to be undertaken by contractor at East Boldre £220 + VAT.

Control of Cotoneaster and Berberis

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster and Berberis to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of former WWII Airfield at Beaulieu Heath. £3,495 + VAT.

Control of Cotoneaster, Montbretia and Variegated Yellow Archangel

- One herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster, Montbretia and Variegated Yellow Archangel to be undertaken by contractor in vicinity of North Gate car park. £195.26 + VAT. Work undertaken on 18 June 2025. Invoice submitted on 19 June 2025.

Control of Parrot's Feather

Early summer herbicide treatment, mid-summer herbicide treatment and late summer herbicide treatment to be undertaken by contractor at East End, Hinchleslea Bog and Silver Stream.

- Early summer treatment £573.30 + VAT
- Mid-summer treatment £573.30 + VAT
- Late summer treatment £573.30 + VAT.

Kevin Ackerman (Food & Environmental Ltd) emailed the Project Officer on 12 June 2025 to report that the first round of herbicide treatment to control Parrot's Feather at the three sites was undertaken on 11 June 2025. He had also checked the site at Castle Hill where Parrot's Feather had previously been treated and confirmed that this "is still clear". Kevin considered that the work undertaken on 11 June 2025 was "A very positive first round of treatments". The invoice was submitted on 12 June 2025. His comments relating to each of the three sites are as follows:

Silver Stream

"All areas treated with no issues. The Parrot's Feather was quite small but in a very thick mat so perfect to treat. We had good engagement with many members of the public, all very receptive, we were surprised how busy that area was! It was also very handy to get the vehicle so close as this easily allowed us to put up signage etc which seeing how many people were about was very helpful".

East End Pond

"10 stems hand removed from the heavily poached area on the eastern edge".

Hinchleslea Bog

"Continued progress from last year. The plants were 4-8 inches tall in approx 6-8 small clumps to the rear of the open area (downstream) with odd single stems just into the willow scrub. The wet open turf to the east of the water still had a few small clumps but these are reduced in size and number compared to last year. This area was again heavily poached.

We did have an interesting conversation with an older lady concerned about all of the wildlife we were killing by using chemicals..... apparently we should be going in with machinery during the winter and digging it out and disposing of it! Just thought I would mention as she struck me as someone who may start making some phone calls..... and we did point out the impracticality of her argument!"



Photo taken by Kevin Ackerman of Food & Environmental Ltd showing his colleague George at the start of the Parrot's Feather treatment in Silver Stream on 11 June 2025. Kevin emailed the Project Officer on 19 June 2025 to say: "There was a smaller patch to the other side of the island area; we also checked further upstream and downstream but found no other areas."



Photos taken by Kevin Ackerman of Food & Environmental Ltd during herbicide treatment of Cotoneaster to the North of the A31 on 17 June 2025. Kevin reported that the area in the photos had been topped some time prior to the herbicide treatment; he emailed the Project Officer on 19 June 2025 to say: "There was some bramble regrowth, so it was carried out a while ago. There were also some very small Cotoneaster shoots in 2 areas which were treated. Previously treated spots were still obvious". Apart from in this open (topped) area to the northeast of the track, all other Cotoneaster plants were found and controlled.

Monitoring control of invasive non-native plants

Monitoring control of American skunk cabbage

On 23 April 2025 the Project Officer walked the Mill Lawn Brook downstream of Rooks Bridge to monitor the work undertaken to control American skunk cabbage plants in 2024.

On 23 April 2025 the Project Officer checked the area upstream of the A337 (in the woodland downstream of the Mill Pond) to assess the effectiveness of work undertaken during 2024 to control American skunk cabbage. No American skunk cabbage plants could be found and the work appears to have been successful.

Monitoring control of Yellow Azalea

On 2 May 2025 the Project Officer monitored the control of Yellow Azalea undertaken by the contractor during 2024 at the following locations on the Open Forest:

- South Oakley (treated successfully)
- In vicinity of Old House near Burley (further treatment required)



Photographs taken on 2 May 2025 of successfully treated Yellow Azalea at South Oakley (GPS device at SU 21635 04991).



Some of the Yellow Azalea bushes recorded on 2 May 2025 on the Open Forest in vicinity of Old House near Burley. These plants had not been treated in 2024. Photographs taken at SU 22168 05971, SU 22170 05972, SU 22087 06029.

Recording invasive non-native plants

Recording American skunk cabbage along the Mill Lawn Brook

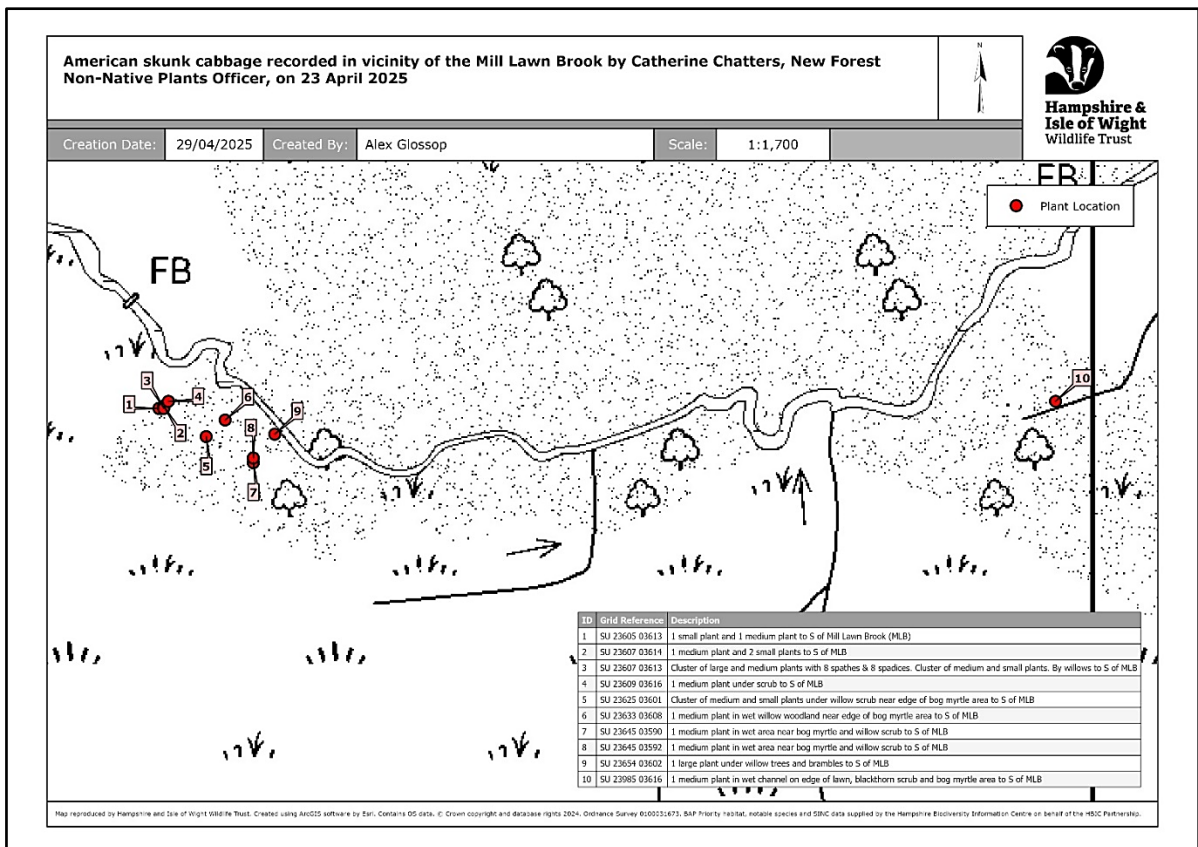
On 23 April 2025 whilst monitoring the control of American skunk cabbage along the Mill Lawn Brook, downstream of Rooks Bridge, the Project Officer discovered American skunk cabbage plants which had not previously recorded by the New Forest Non-Native Plants Project.

They were all growing to the south of the Mill Lawn Brook at the following locations:

- SU 23605 03613 – 1 small plant and 1 medium plant
- SU 23607 03614 – 1 medium plant and 2 small plants
- SU 23607 03613 – cluster of large and medium plants with 8 spathes and 8 spadices, plus cluster of medium and small plants, plus 3 seedlings, by willows
- SU 23609 03616 – 1 medium plant with 2 spathes and 2 spadices, under scrub
- SU 23625 03601 – cluster of medium and small plants; 4 spathes and 4 spadices, under willows near bog myrtle area
- SU 23633 03698 – 1 medium plant with 3 spathes and 3 spadices, in wet willow woodland near bog myrtle area
- SU 23645 03590 – 1 medium plant 3 spathes and 3 spadices, by bog myrtle and willow scrub in wet area with pondweed, starwort, water plantain, marsh pennywort, marsh marigold
- SU 23645 03592 – 1 medium plant with 2 spathes and 2 spadices, by bog myrtle and willow scrub in wet area with pondweed, starwort, water plantain, marsh pennywort, bog St John's wort
- SU 23654 03602 – 1 large plant with 2 spathes and 2 spadices under willow trees and brambles
- SU 23985 03616 – 1 medium plant with 3 spathes and 3 spadices in wet channel by bog myrtle on edge of lawn with blackthorn scrub, bramble, oak trees



Recording the American skunk cabbage plants at SU 23607 03613, south of the Mill Lawn Brook, downstream of Rooks Bridge on 23 April 2025



Recording Sheep Laurel

On 2 June 2025 the Project Officer received a report of Sheep Laurel *Kalmia angustifolia* growing on the Open Forest:

“Hi Catherine

There is a largish bush of Sheep Laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*) growing on the forest edge next to the path north of the Matley Bog Enclosure car park. It's not known as being a very invasive species, but I think as the habitat is right for it in that location it could become a nuisance. It's easily visible from the path as it's currently in flower. It's not far from the car park looking out over the bog to the right as you leave the car park. I have attached two photographs, which I hope are helpful.

Best wishes, Kira Terry”



Photographs of Sheep Laurel *Kalmia angustifolia* sent by Kira Terry on 2 June 2025

The Project Officer responded on 3 June 2025 to thank Kira for the report and to let her know that the NFNNPP had arranged for Sheep Laurel to be controlled elsewhere on the Open Forest a few years ago, to prevent it becoming invasive.

On 8 June 2025 Clive Chatters (volunteer) accompanied the Project Officer to find the Sheep Laurel at Matley. The Project Officer recorded the Sheep Laurel at SU 33375 07504 and asked a contractor to submit a quote for controlling it during 2026.

The quote was submitted by the contractor on 23 June 2025. It would be beneficial for this plant to be treated during 2025 to prevent it shedding seed, so the Project Officer has asked whether additional HLS funding can be provided for this work to be undertaken during 2025.



Photographs on this page show the Project Officer recording the Sheep Laurel at SU 33375 07504 on 8 June 2025. The Sheep Laurel is approximately 2 paces wide x 6 paces long, with small suckering shoots no more than one metre away from the perimeter of the bush (photographs taken by Clive Chatters)



Control of invasive non-native plants by Project Officer and volunteers

Control of American skunk cabbage in vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook

On 23 April 2025 the Project Officer cut off the spadices of the American skunk cabbage plants discovered growing to the south of the Mill Lawn Brook, downstream of Rooks Bridge. A total of 27 spadices were cut off. Three seedlings were also dug up.



Photo on left: the 3 American skunk cabbage seedlings dug up on 23 April 2025 at SU 23607 03613. Photo on right: the 8 spadices cut off American skunk cabbage plants at SU 23607 03613 on 23 April 2025.



The 27 spadices cut off American skunk cabbage plants to south of the Mill Lawn Brook, downstream of Rooks Bridge, on 23 April 2025

During the Himalayan balsam patrol on the Open Forest along the Mill Lawn Brook on 2 June 2025 volunteer Anna Lawrence helped the Project Officer to search for American skunk cabbage plants in the woodland upstream of Rook's Bridge. Two medium-sized American skunk cabbage plants were found and dug up by Anna; one plant was growing under blackthorn at SU 22356 03670; the other plant was growing by brambles at SU 23421 03716.



Anna Lawrence with the American skunk cabbage plant dug up from beneath blackthorn on Mill Lawn at SU 22356 03670 on 2 June 2025



The American skunk cabbage plant which was found growing by brambles at SU 23421 03716 was also dug up by Anna Lawrence on 2 June 2025

Control of Himalayan balsam

On 2 June 2025 Anna Lawrence helped the Project Officer to look for Himalayan balsam on the Open Forest in the vicinity of the Mill Lawn Brook, from Mill Lane downstream to Rook's Bridge. Only three Himalayan balsam plants were found and pulled up:

- SU 22482 03600 – a single plant on the left bank
- SU 22765 03563 – a single very small plant on the left bank
- SU 22808 03575 – a single very small plant on the left bank.



The single small Himalayan balsam plant pulled up at SU 22765 03563 along the left bank of the Mill Lawn Brook on 2 June 2025

On 11 June 2025 volunteers Andy Payne, Ant Allen and Brian Matthews helped the Project Officer look for and pull up Himalayan balsam amongst bracken and brambles on the Open Forest at Shirley Holms. More balsam plants than anticipated were found. All balsam plants seen were pulled up.

Andy, Ant and Brian are shown pulling up the Himalayan balsam at Shirley Holms in the three photos on the following page.



On 30 June 2025 Anna Lawrence helped the Project to check the Beaulieu River for Himalayan balsam downstream of North Gate car park and upstream of King's Hat car park. Only 8 Himalayan balsam plants were found; they were all growing in one area on the east bank in the vicinity of SU 38498 04879.



Anna Lawrence during Himalayan balsam pull along the Beaulieu River on 30 June 2025

Control of Montbretia

The Himalayan balsam patrol on the Open Forest along Mill Lawn on 2 June 2025 was also an opportunity to control Montbretia. A single Montbretia plant was found and dug up on the left bank of the Mill Lawn Brook at SU 22515 03588 and a total of 11 Montbretia corms were dug up on the right bank of the watercourse at SU 23346 03664.



Photos taken on 2 June 2025. Left: the single Montbretia plant dug up at SU 22515 03588. Right: Anna Lawrence with the 11 Montbretia plants dug up at SU 23346 03664.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Aleksandra Piekarska (former Planning and Environment Officer, Forestry England) and Elina Vainio (Environment GIS Technician, Forestry England) for preparing maps relating to work to be undertaken on the Open Forest by contractors on behalf of the NFNNPP during 2025. Thanks to Alex Glossop (former Assistant GIS and Data Officer, HIWWT) for preparing the map on page 7 of this report.



The New Forest Non-Native Plants Project, hosted by Hampshire & Isle of Wildlife Trust, is very grateful to The Verderers and the New Forest HLS Board for the continued financial support given by the New Forest Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

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7 July 2025

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LiDAR and Archaeology Report

July 2025 Board Meeting

Report by: Gareth Owen

HLS Archaeology and Heritage Team:

Since the April 2025 Board meeting the team has been continuing with ongoing works and responding to new requests from FE HLS Team.

The team received six new requests, concluded three and progressed ongoing request for advice, Data Packs (Heritage Impact Assessments) and site mark-ups ahead of ground works for Verge Protection/Restoration, Stream/Wetland Restoration, Habitat Regeneration and Restoration. Presented here for the Board's consideration is a summary of works undertaken.

A review of work undertaken since the previous report:

For requests received the HLS Archaeologists conduct an initial Desk Based Assessments followed by, in most cases, a site visit prior to submitting the Data Pack. Where appropriate the team will then conduct Watching Briefs and/or Monitoring Visits as work progresses.

Stream/Wetland Restoration:

One new request received, Penny Moor, for which advice has been issued. To access the works area Bishop's Dyke will need to be crossed and Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) may be required. However, via the use of the established (2024) protective surface (trackway) and the addition of a temporary protective roadway, SMC may not be needed. Formal consultation with Historic England is now in progress.



Photo 1: Established protective surface crossing Bishop's Dyke and temporary roadway, 2024.

Advice has also been issued for Coomy Lawn and North Sluffers, a site walkover is required for Lodge Heath.

Picket Mire – Topographic Survey



Photo 2: Banked enclosure at Picket Mire.

An archaeological topographic survey of the banked enclosure along with archive research was conducted in June 2025 by Wessex Archaeology.

The historical research established the earliest known usage date and a place name for the enclosure. It indicates that the enclosure was probably constructed in the late 18th century, around the 1770s, by Joseph Agust and his son John. The presence of a tank on the Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map of 1958 indicates there was some continued activity on site in the 1950s, however the enclosure is shown as tree covered by this time and had long fallen out of use in its original form. A clear end date of use was not established by the research. (Wessex Archaeology 2025)

The “Tank” referred to on the OS map is likely to relate to sewage works for Picket House.

An updated Data Pack has now be issued and a Watching Brief will be conducted of the ground works at this location.

Verge Protection/Restoration:

Several sites were assessed ahead of verge protection/restoration work and advice issued.

Clearfell Restoration and Trees & Scrub Clearance:

Five new requests received for Highland Water, Matley Bog, Dames Slough and Knightwood Inclosure (North and South). Initial advice has been issued for these sites and walkover visits will follow.

Previous work:

At the end of 2023, as part of Restoration work several enclosure banks were removed (flattened) at Turf Hill Inclosure and Dunces Arch Inclosure. Prior to the work Measured Surveys of the banks were conducted along with Watching Briefs of elements of the ground works. The reports of these works are included here.

In August 2024 as part of Stream/Wetland Restoration work at Hawkhill Mire, Furzy Lodge near Beaulieu an Archaeological Watching Brief of ground works was conducted. A Watching Brief Statement of this work is included here.

In August 2024, to enable vehicle access to the mire at Penny Moor, an archaeological watching brief was conducted on the construction of a protective surface and temporary roadway over an already heavily eroded and badly damaged section of the Bishop's Dyke Park Pale Scheduled Monument (1009324), a banked earthwork located at Penny Moor. The Watching Brief report is included here.

Final reports submitted:

Wessex Archaeology, 2025. Topographic Survey of banked enclosure at Picket Mire.

NFNPA HLS Archaeologist, 2025. Turf Hill Inclosure - Measured Survey and Watching Brief Report.

NFNPA HLS Archaeologist, 2025. Dunces Arch Inclosure - Measured Survey and Watching Brief Report

NFNPA HLS Archaeologist, 2025. Hawkhill Mire - Furzey Lodge 24-25 - Channel restoration - Archaeological Watching Brief Statement

NFNPA HLS Archaeologist, 2025. Penny Moor Bishop's Dyke - Watching Brief Report

NEW FOREST LAND ADVICE SERVICE

Report to HLS Board meeting July 2025

Progress and Work Programme 1st April to 30th June 2025

Report by: NFLAS

This report summarises the work completed by the New Forest Land Advice Service to support commoning in the New Forest from 1st April to 30th June 2025

- **Proactive work with commoners** to deliver land management advice and support to understand and comply with relevant practices such as Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition and HLS related objectives. **10**
- **Advice to commoners** where HLS land adjacent to their holdings is being affected by inappropriate operations or management, to advise and promote best practice land management. **3**

- **CDA AGM 11/04/25**

Good interaction with the commoners – members spoken with individually. on the evening regarding ongoing issues, concerns, grant opportunity. **10**

- **HLS Commoner Training program**

2 X Cattle evenings run Jan – March 2025

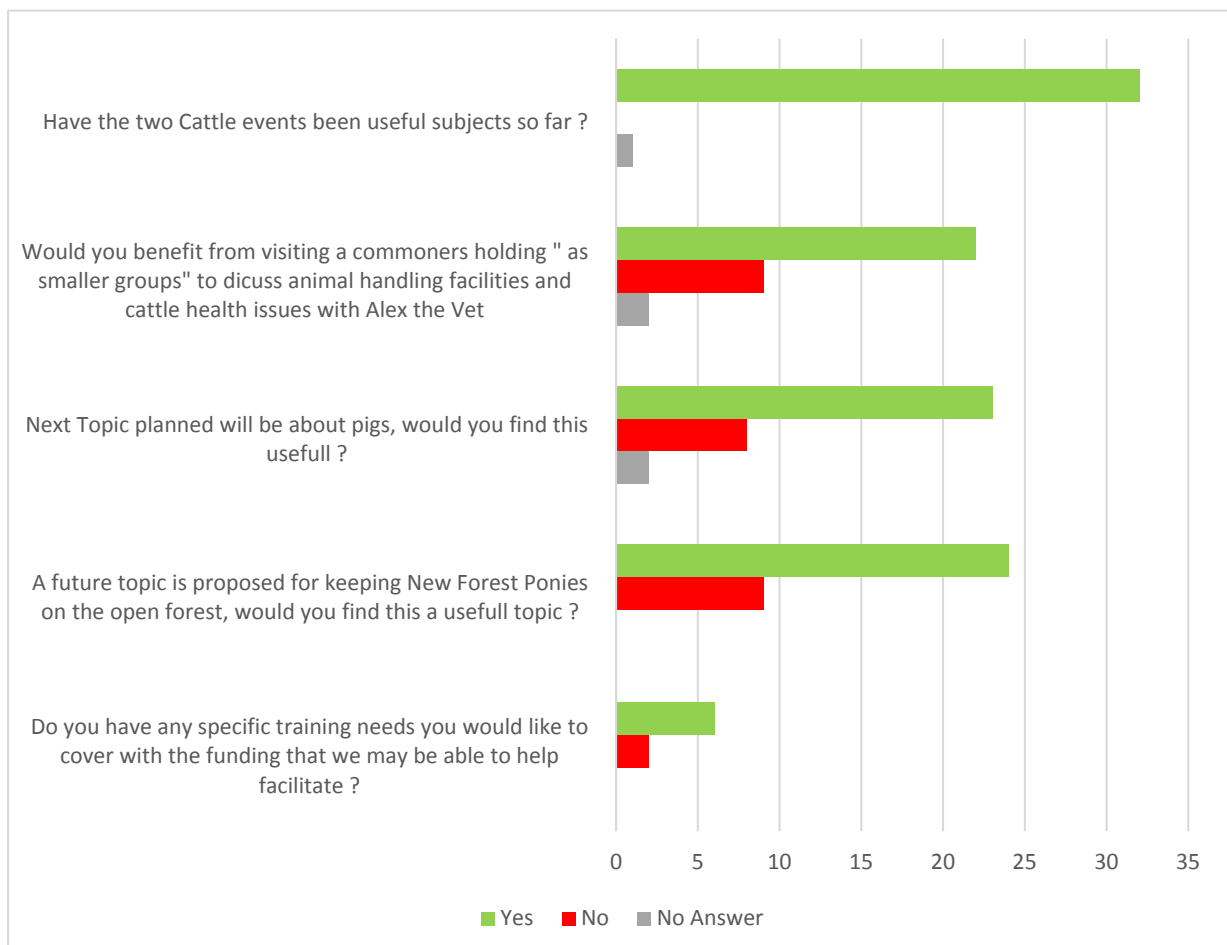
Feedback forms.

33 commoners completed the questionnaire, many on behalf of family groups. This will have affected the results from the 80 in attendance.

The first two events targeted commoners with cattle or interested in keeping them. –This did remove a section of the commoning community who only keep New Forest Ponies or pigs from the questionnaire. However the results are positive.

The next course will be advertised with the similar condition. for those who keep pigs or would be interested in doing so across all the commoners to manage numbers and catering.

- **Approved questionnaire results based on 33 return forms.**



- **Specific training needs requested from the form:**

Iv included all answers below so you can see the range but appreciate not all might be approved for the HLS funding.

- Cattle AI course
- Grassland management
- Transport of livestock / up to date regulations on transportation
- Commoner Housing
- Vermin Control / Rat bait course
- Calf rearing
- Marketing
- Deer management (control

- **How could we improve NFLAS to support the New Forest?**

Iv included all answers below so you can see the range but appreciate not all might be approved for the HLS funding.

- Anything specific that could help young commoners / new entrants' schemes.
- Provide opportunities for young people interested in farming to volunteer / work on commoner holdings.
- Provide leaflet educating for campsites and holiday makers.

- **Next event:**

I have been in contact with Daisy / Young commoners to make sure we are not running similar events independently– the committee have met and are happy for me to organise an event.

“The committee would be more than happy if you wanted to go ahead and get the ball rolling with a pig talk. We have previously done a pig ringing evening which was a success.”27/06/25

Depending on the interest, we will look to see if several dates are needed for smaller groups on a commoner holding. Possibly a third if the young commoners would prefer to do something separately as a group.

- **New forest southern cluster**

This item is separate to the HLS funding but have included. to represent the cross over NFLAS has with projects supporting commoners across the forest.

May 2025, I signed up a further 4 commoner families to the Southern Cluster group- This has increased the balance of Commoner SBI's to the majority over non-Commoner members.

- **Fipl**

2025 – 26 is live with various enquiries from commoners – Discussions are underway for a ring-fenced capital pot to support commoners with this year's applications. We have also guided commoners to other funding pot potentials if the items they are after don't easily fit the criteria for FIPL.

- **Other funding:** Awaiting talks with FHT very soon in July for 2025 -26 opportunity under WEIF to support a commoning homestead with grant opportunity – similar to the previous 5 years.

- Signposting continues to direct commoners towards emerging CS grants.