

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 14th SEPTEMBER [1977] at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. C.R. Balfour-Smith, E.Y. Miles, J. Gent, R.J. Glover, M.G. Hall, L.C. Hardy, U.L. Kavanagh, A.J. Miller.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Mr. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, Mr. J.A.A.S. Logan, Mr. M.S. Phipp, M.G. Taylor.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Balfour-Smith back to his duties after his serious illness.

**2. MINUTES:** The minutes of the meeting held on the 13th July 1977, which had been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**3. MATTERS ARISING:**

(a) Conservation Corps. The Clerk reported that the team of twelve young persons from the Conservation Corps had completed their work on the pond at Colemans Hatch. They had worked with commendable enthusiasm and as a result this very pleasant Forest feature was now saved. He further reported that the final account from the Conservation Corps had not yet been received so that the amount to be paid by the County Council had not yet been agreed.

(b) Forest Row Recreation Ground. The Clerk reported that he was in touch with the Forest Row Parish Council and the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club concerning the proposal to create a new football pitch. Discussions were proceeding and he would report back at the next meeting.

(c) The Vice-Chairman reported on a visit of the Recreation and Countryside Committee of the County Council which he and the Clerk had accompanied. The Committee had been shown many of the problems facing the Forest and he hoped that this closer understanding would lead to a more sympathetic view for future financial support.

(d) Landscape Indicator. The Clerk reported that The Friends of Ashdown Forest had generously agreed to finance the provision of the proposed landscape indicator to be placed on a high point of the Forest south of Gills Lap corner. They had indicated that their support would only be given if the distances marked on the plaque were in miles; this being the unit of measurement in use in the country during this Jubilee year. In order to ensure that the indicator was erected during 1977 the Clerk had made the necessary order for production.

(e) Job Creation Programme. The Clerk reported that the Manpower Services Commission had approved an extension of the programme to run up to the 31st March 1978 for one supervisor and four workmen.

**4. TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP:** The Clerk reported that a meeting of the Group had taken place on the 26th August attended by Officers of the Countryside Commission, the East Sussex County Council, the Nature Conservancy Council and Mr. David Streeter, in addition to himself and the Project Officer. It had been agreed that plans should be prepared for certain detailed work on the Forest, principally in car parks, with a view to commencing these on the 1st April 1978. Provided that these plans were in line with the general ideas of the Commission and the County Council and were approved by the Conservators, application would then be made for grant aid from the Council. A timetable had been agreed so that the detailed proposals could be put before the Conservators at their January meeting. A sum would be agreed in the annual estimates prepared in November 1977 and submitted to the County Council to cover the County Council's share of the cost of these works, with the proviso that this sum would be amended after detailed costing had taken place and the Conservators had given their approval.

Both the Commission and the County Council representatives stated that their Authorities would consider the request for finances but they were unable to commit their Authorities to definite aid and were unwilling to forecast the likelihood. The Clerk stated that he would be reporting progress to the November meeting of the Conservators

and that he would request meetings of the General Purposes Committee to consider detailed plans before they were put to the Conservators on the 11th January.

**5. PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT:** Mr. Wright made a brief verbal report of his activities in the past two months. He had been employed largely in familiarising himself with the Forest, visiting other areas with similar management problems, such as the New Forest, and establishing contacts with all departments in the County Council and with many other advisory services. He had been surveying the Forest car parks and carrying out counts of visitors every weekend.

**6. RIDING REGULATIONS AND CHARGES FOR 1978:** It was agreed that the General Purposes Committee should consider this matter and report back to the Conservators at their next meeting.

**7. TRAFFIC HAZARD, PRIORY ROAD:** The Clerk reported a letter from the East Sussex County Council requesting that an area of loose filling, such as sand, be made at the bends at the lower end of Priory Road so that any motor cars failing to negotiate these dangerous bends would be prevented from hitting trees and repeating one fatal accident that had already taken place. It was decided that the County Council be asked to look further into the question of warning signs, which appeared to be inadequate, before taking this defeatist step. The Conservators would consider the matter further on receiving the County Council's observations.

**8. ROADWAY TO MISBOURNE FARM TREKKING CENTRE:** The Clerk reported that the access road to Misbourne Trekking Centre was in a deplorable state and was unlikely to be passable during winter. This road served three other properties en route and the owners of these properties were anxious to make up the road to an acceptable and usable standard. In view of the fact that some 90% of the traffic on the road was directly in connection with the Trekking Centre, these other residents were unwilling to spend large sums of money without support from the owner of the Trekking Centre. Mr. Osborne, of Misbourne Farm, had been warned in writing on several occasions that the Conservators would have to consider the renewal of his trekking licence for next year in the light of the accessibility of his establishment by road across the Forest. Despite warnings Mr. Osborne had failed to take any action. Miss Willard reported that she had been informed at 12.00 this day that positive action had now been agreed and that work would start within two days. It was agreed that a committee consisting of Miss Willard, Mr. Miller, Mr. Kavanagh, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman as ex officio members, should be set up to consider the matter should the work not be proceeding as reported.

**9. CLERK'S REPORT:**

(a) Secretary. Mrs. Berry was absent from the present meeting due to sickness. She had suffered certain eye troubles and had been off duty for three weeks and it was not yet known when she would again be fit. The Clerk was employing temporary help as and when necessary and the Chairman was being kept informed of Mrs. Berry's progress.

(b) Forest Way Ranger. Mr. Royal, the Ranger shared for the past two years with the Forest Way Linear Park, had tendered his resignation and left on the 1st August. No relief had yet been appointed but the East Sussex County Council had advertised the position and it was hoped a new man would be working within a few weeks.

(c) Plant a tree week. A week was being set aside nationally for the planting of trees to replace some of those lost in last year's drought and fires. The Clerk suggested that donations should be invited from visitors to the caravan towards the purchase of trees for selective planting of hard woods in wooded areas. Miss Willard suggested that it would be advantageous to involve donors themselves in the planting of trees and that greater support was likely in this event. It was agreed that this should be investigated but there were certain difficulties in organising, advertising, etc., which might make this difficult.

(d) Morris Men. The Ashdown Forest Morris Men had been given permission to hold displays on the Forest one Sunday afternoon. This had proved a popular attraction and the Morris Men were considering putting the Forest on their programme of events for next year, in which case any collection they made would be handed over to the Conservators for tree planting purposes. It was agreed that permission should be given.

(e) Fairwarp Village Green. A dispute had arisen within the Village of Fairwarp concerning the parking of cars on the edge of the area now being transformed into a Village Green as a Jubilee Commemoration. The posts being erected to stop cars driving and parking on the edge of the Green had annoyed some local residents who stated that they had nowhere else to park. Mrs. Maudsley reported on the situation and suggested that should these three

local residents wish to park their cars on the area of Forest up Back Lane the Conservators might accept this on an unofficial basis. It was agreed that the question of parking within the Village was a matter for the Parish Council, but that the plans as approved for the Village Green should go ahead and, in the meanwhile, no action would be taken against these persons if they used the Back Lane area.

(f) Forest News letter. Mrs. Gabriel had been writing a news letter after each Conservators meeting and distributing it to Parish Councils, Parish magazines, etc. The Clerk proposed that Mrs. Gabriel should relinquish this duty (with her agreement) and that the question of dissemination of information should be investigated by the Project Officer as part of his brief in preparation of detailed management plans. This was agreed.

(g) King's Standing Corner. The East Sussex County Council had requested permission to realign the roadways at King's Standing corner to improve the safety at a notoriously dangerous junction. This would involve taking part of the natural Forest into roadway on the eastern side and reverting part of the existing roadway back to natural Forest on the western side. The proposed works would close both existing entrances to the car park at this corner and in order to maintain the use of this car park, one of the most popular on the Forest, it would be necessary to create new accesses. It was agreed that the County Council should be given permission to carry out the proposed road works and the restoration of the Forest on the western side, but that a condition of this permission being granted would be that they would undertake the construction of new accesses into King's Standing car park and such other works as this necessitated.

(h) The Clerk listed forthcoming events for the information of the Conservators.

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** Mr. Hall proposed that a vote of thanks should be recorded for Mr. and Mrs. Scott for the most enjoyable party which they gave for the Conservators end staff. This was unanimously agreed.

The Conservators then went into Committee.

It was agreed that all minutes of items taken 'In Committee' should be separately recorded and kept in a confidential minute book under the charge of the Clerk.

Certain confidential matters were discussed and the conservators came out of committee.

The meeting closed at 16.30 hours.

**Chairman**

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 16th NOVEMBER [1977] at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. C.R. Balfour-Smith, R.G. Edwardes-Jones, R.J. Glover, M.G. Hall, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M.G. Taylor

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Mr. T.W. Ellison and Mr. J. Gent. The Clerk reported that Mr. M.S. Phipp had resigned, and that the East Sussex County Council would make a new appointment in the near future.

**2. MINUTES:** The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th September 1977, which had been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING:**

(a) Conservation Corps. The Clerk reported that the East Sussex County Council had made a donation of £200 towards the cost of employing the Conservation Corps at the Coleman Hatch pond in the summer. A letter of appreciation had been sent. The Nature Conservancy Council had indicated that they would be willing to finance a two week task by 24 members of the Conservation Corps next year to clear encroaching birch, pine and gorse from the heather areas. This proposal was agreed.

(b) Forest Row Recreation Ground. The Clerk reported that the Forest Row Parish Council had decided to call a public meeting on 8th February 1978 to sound out the views of the villagers to see if they wished an extension of the Recreation Ground for a second football pitch. The Conservators were invited to attend this meeting to hear

the arguments put forward and to gauge the feelings of the village.

(c) Landscape Indicator. This would be ready for erection shortly, and it was proposed that Lady Aberdeen, Chairman of The Friends of Ashdown Forest, should be invited to unveil it at 2.30 on Friday 16th December. This was agreed. The Clerk was instructed to write to Earl De La Warr inviting him to be present at the ceremony, and also to write The Friends of Ashdown Forest expressing the Conservators gratitude for their generous gift.

(d) Traffic Hazard, Priory Road. The East Sussex County Council had now decided not to proceed with the previous proposition for dealing with this matter.

(e) Roadway to Misbourne Farm. Miss Willard reported that very little progress had been made in repairing the road. It was decided that the Committee appointed at the last meeting should hold a site inspection on 22nd November, when Mr. Osborne would be invited to be present.

**4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT:** The Financial Statement had been previously circulated. The Clerk reported that we no longer had an overdraft on the Clerk's No. 2 Account.

**5. FOREST RATE 1978/79:** The Chairman stated that a figure of £2,500 had been included in the proposed estimate for the Forest Rate for 1978-79. This was an increase for this year's figure of £1,709, which had stood unchanged for three years. Mr. Edwardes-Jones stressed the importance of the Conservators being seen to increase their own income in line with increased costs at a time when the East Sussex County Council grants were becoming larger each year. It was agreed that the five elected members should form a Committee to recommend the method of raising this extra sum.

**6. MODEL AIRCRAFT LICENCES FOR THE YEAR 1978:** The Chairman reported that the question of model aircraft flying on the Forest had been raised at the Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Ashdown Forest, and that he had recently received two letters of protest. The Clerk reported that the two societies had behaved responsibly during the past years and kept within the rules laid down. There were undoubtedly a few pie rate operators, but the Rangers had few reports of these. Mrs. Maudsley suggested that the complainers should be sent copies of the licences so that they could know the rules and could report any breaches to the Rangers. This was agreed. Mr. Taylor proposed, Mr. Edwardes-Jones seconded a resolution that the licences should be renewed for 1978, but that the fees should be increased to the following sums:

Wealden Model Aircraft Society	£60
Society of Aeronautical Engineers	£35
Competition Meetings	£12

**7. REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE ON RIDING:** Mr. Hardy presented the report and proposed the adoption. Mr. Balfour-Smith and Mr. Hall both asked questions as to the extent of the fire rides, Mr. Hall alleging that over 1,000 acres had been cut. Mr. Hardy stated that this represented nearly one sixth of the Forest and clearly could not be true. Mr. Hall suggested that the donation by the Hunt should be increased. The Clerk was instructed to approach the M.F.H. The adoption of the report was unanimously agreed.

#### **8. SUNDRY MATTERS:**

a. Geological Survey. The Clerk reported that he had just received information from the Wealden District Council that an oil survey was being proposed over a wide area of East Sussex and Kent, and that one line of observation would cross the Crowborough section of Ashdown Forest. The survey would necessitate drilling to a depth of 60 feet, and exploding small charges in the drill holes. The firm carrying out the survey would be approaching land owners, and as yet the Conservators had received no request to permit the survey over the Forest. The Conservators took note of the proposed survey, but decided that no action should be taken until a positive approach was made to them.

b. Memorial to A.A. Milne and E.S. Shepherd. The Clerk reported that he had had a request from Sir Henry Chisholm, Chairman of the Winnie the Pooh Trustees, for a memorial to Messrs. Milne and Shepherd to be placed upon the Forest. At a preliminary meeting it was suggested that the memorial should take the form of some form of public amenity, such as a seat or group of seats on the north side of Gills Lap Clubs looking down the valley over Cotchford Farm where Mr. Milne lived. Approval was given in principle, subject to a detailed proposal being

submitted to the Conservators in due course, and an undertaking that the Trustees would maintain the memorial after erection.

e. Mrs. Machin, a Commoner living in Twyford Lane, had requested that sheep warning signs should be placed in Twyford Lane as her small flock of sheep were at hazard. It was proposed by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Kavanagh that this request should be refused as there were already an adequate number of signs on the Forest.

f. Experimental Car Park on Stonehill Road. The Clerk reported that, with the Chairmen's approval, work was in progress to reconstruct the Pond Car Park, using the budget provided by the Countryside Commission for the Conservation Officer for experimental purposes. Work should be completed by early December except for sowing grass which will be done in the spring. If the principles employed in the construction of this park are acceptable to the Conservators it could form the basis for many future car parks on the Forest. The car parking strategy would be on the Agenda for the General Purposes Committee and for the Board of Conservators at their next meeting.

e. Sponsored Walk. Chiesmans Ltd., a subsidiary of the House of Frazer, had held a large sponsored walk on the Forest and had raised a figure in the region of £5,000 for charity. It had been suggested to the sponsors that in view of the success of this event a donation would be acceptable to the Conservators whose staff had been of considerable assistance in organising the event. Indications are that a donation of at least £100 may be forthcoming.

**9. ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE:** The following estimates, which had already been circulated to the Conservators, were considered:

- a. Revised Estimates 1977/78.
- b. Estimates 1978/79.
- c. Provisional Estimate for experimental work on car parks in 1978/79.

Among points raised were:

Mr. Taylor considered that the Forest was probably better kept than he had ever seen it and that we should not ask for additional manpower.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones disagreed and stated that he had been in close consultation with the County Council in efforts to get them to approve an additional ranger.

Mr. Balfour-Smith asked why Mr. Royal, the Forest Way/Ashdown Forest Ranger, had left. The Clerk reported that this was largely due to the unsatisfactory nature of his duties in serving two masters.

Mr. Kavanagh stated that he was endeavouring to persuade the Wealden District Council to increase their contribution.

The Clerk stated that the estimates showed an increase in the Golf Club rent of £350 to the Conservators, a like sum being payable to the Lord of the Manor. The Golf Club had requested that the Conservators should reconsider this increase and had asked that it should be limited to £500. It was agreed that the increase should remain at £700; £350 of which was payable to the Conservators. Mr. Taylor proposed and Mr. Edwardes-Jones seconded a resolution that the estimates be approved. This was unanimously agreed.

**10. PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT:** The Project Officer, now renamed the Conservation Officer, reported that he had been working on the ecological side with the designation of the 'Quiet Zones' and on the recreational side with the Car Parking Strategy. He also reported that, in order to gain practical experience of the work involved and the actual cost of constructing a car park on Ashdown Forest, an experimental car park was being constructed at The Pond, Stonehill Road. It was noted that the completed car park would demonstrate to the Conservators the principles of design and lay out which will be incorporated in the Strategy for most of the parking areas.

## **THE CONSERVATORS THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

Confidential Minutes Numbers 1 and 2, which had been previously circulated, were approved.

## THE CONSERVATORS THEN CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE

11. There being no further business the meeting closed at 1710 hours.

Chairman

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

At a meeting held on 21st September [1977]

1. Mr. L. Hardy was unanimously elected to be Chairman of the Committee.
2. The Committee discussed the following points concerning horse riding on the Forest in 1978.
  - a. The restriction of riding to the fire rides and other designated and marked tracks.

The Conservators had imposed a winter restriction on riding in 1977 when all horses were banned from the footpaths. The Clerk reported that the restriction in the early months of the year had been observed by the majority of the riders, who had also accepted the necessity. There was a minority of riders who objected to regimentation, and who would probably always do so. From the question of the conservation of the Forest the Clerk reported that an all the year round restriction was desirable, but he thought that there might be some dissatisfaction with summer restrictions from those who had ridden the Forest for many years.

The Head Ranger was asked for his views, and he stated that the Rangers would welcome a year round restriction. He stated that most riders had come to accept that the fire ride complex on the Forest was both extensive and fair, and that it was a privilege to have the use of Ashdown Forest for recreation. In addition he stated that the rides were much easier to maintain and restore than damaged foot paths, and that from the point of view of the safety of pedestrians it was very desirable to keep the horses off the foot paths.

Mr. Jennings, representing the East Grinstead Riding Club, was then invited to address the Committee. Mr. Jennings informed the Committee that he had lived at Hindleap Farm for some 23 years, had ridden over the Forest for most of that time, and he and his wife started the East Grinstead Riding Club which had 250 members, a proportion of whom were Forest riders.

He was of the opinion that a permanent restriction to the rides was both fair and desirable. The network of rides had increased yearly, and now offered very much better riding than the footpaths did some years ago when they were all that was available. He thought that the average rider would willingly give up the footpaths if told to do so, particularly if the riding network was improved, and covered the few areas where gaps existed and where at present footpaths were the only alternative. He also considered it undesirable to change the regulations on arbitrary dates each year. Riders would understand the system much better if they had a simple and single set of rules. He undertook to give the Conservators all the support he could through the East Grinstead Riding Club, should they decide to bring in a permit restriction.

The Committee discussed the problem at length and unanimously recommended that the Conservators should restrict all riding to the fire rides and designated and marked rides from 1st January 1978 onwards.

b. The Committee then discussed the capacity of the Forest to take increased numbers otherwise It was agreed that the numbers of individual ridden horses did not present a problem at present, and in view of the Conservators' policy of restricting the Riding Establishments to those already using the Forest, they had no recommendation to make at present.

c. The Committee considered that in, view of the fact that the fees for riding permits were doubled last year, it would be inappropriate to make general increases.

Present fees are:

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) Commoners        | Free                     |
| (2) Commoners family | £8 for second horse      |
|                      | £4 for subsequent horses |

(3) Non Commoners	
Single permit	£10
Family permit	£5 per each subsequent horse
(4) Riding Establishments	£25
(5) Pony Club	£1.50

In view of the difficulty in establishing whether children were members of a pony club or not, coupled with the fact that some children rode on the Forest when too young to join a pony club, it was recommended that the special fee for pony club members be abolished and that all children under the age of 16 be charged a fee of £5 (half the single riding permit).

It was further recommended that the Riding Establishments be informed that their fees would be reviewed next year and that it was highly probable that they would face substantial increases in 1979 in order to bring their charges into line with other Forest riders. It was agreed that the question of Commoners free permits and Commoners reduced family permits would be discussed at the next Commoners Annual General Meeting in March to sound out the Commoners as to their views should the Conservators decide to bring the Commoners riding fees into line with other recreational riders on the Forest. Commoners riding while actually exercising their rights of common and tending stock have a right to ride on the Forest, but recreational riding is a privilege.

d. Badges. The Committee recommend that the use of riding badges as issued in 1977 be continued.

e. Special cases:

(1) Day tickets. The Committee recommend that day tickets should not normally be issued to local riders in view of the administrative problems involved, but that the Clerk should have discretion to issue day tickets to riders coming from afar on a 'once only' basis.

(2) Summer camps. The charge at present made for parties of children camping on private ground adjacent to the Forest is £15 for one month for up to 12 horses. The Committee recommend that this charge should be reviewed next year in line with riding establishments.

f. The Hunt. The Old Surrey and Burstow are the only Hunt to meet on the Forest. The Eridge move onto the Forest from time to time. The Old Surrey and Burstow give a donation of £50 to the Conservators each year. There is no set sum for the Bridge but last year they gave a donation of £20. The Hunts obey all Forest riding regulations so far as is practical and work very closely with the Clerk. The Rangers attend each meet and few troubles are experienced. The Committee recommend that the present arrangements for hunting on the Forest should stand.

g. Sponsored rides. There are normally three or four sponsored rides on the Forest each year for which a fee of up to £10 has been charged. The Committee recommend that no set fee should be charged, but that the organisers of sponsored rides and all other sponsored events, whether connected with horse riding or not, should be invited to make a donation to the Conservators which it is hoped might reflect the success or otherwise of the event.

h. Riding route from Barnsden to Browns Brook, Fairwarp. The Clerk reported that a special problem existed in this area due to the narrowing of the Forest in the vicinity of the access road to Barnsden. The Committee decided to hold a site meeting and report back.

## **CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE AND INCOME FOR 1977/78 (Revised) and 1978/79**

### **1977/78 EXPENDITURE**

1977/78  
1<sup>st</sup> est: Additional: Saving: Rev. Est: Exp

#### **SALARIES & WAGES**

Administration	9884	770	--	10654
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Rangers	12663	789	--	13452
Workmen	<u>3281</u>	<u>176</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>3457</u>
	25828	1735		27563

#### ADMINISTRATIVE

Office	1210	--	13	1197
Postage & Telephone	410	15	--	425
Printing & Stationery	220	--	--	220
Professional	500	--	20	480
Miscellaneous	<u>250</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>276</u>
	2590	41	33	2598

#### FOREST

Forest Superintendent	100	--	--	100
Rangers	800	--	300	500
Transport & Machinery	3500	1000	--	4500
Maintenance	1580	--	--	1580
Depot	<u>220</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>310</u>
	6200	1090	300	6990

#### CAPITAL

Swipe	600	330	--	930
Tractor	--	--	--	--
	600	330	--	930

#### CONSERVATION OFFICER

Salary	5841	--	1460	4381
Transport	600	--	150	450
Experimental Budget	500	--	--	500
Administrative Expenses	<u>500</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>500</u>
	7441	--	1610	5831
Less Countryside				
Commission Grant	<u>5770</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>4373</u>
	1741	--	--	1458

TOTAL COMMITTED EXPENDITURE 42659 3196 1943 43912

ADJUSTED FOR GRANT 36959 -- -- 39539

#### 1977/78 INCOME

1<sup>st</sup> est: deficit: Additional: Revised

Rates	1709	--	--	1709
Acknowledgement				
Rents	3350	--	--	3350
Horse Riding 2000	--	300		2300
Sundry Receipts	<u>350</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>350</u>
	7409	--	300	7709

#### ESTIMATED



**COMMITTED**  
**DEFICIT**

29550

31830

**1977/78 EXPENDITURE**

**SALARIES & WAGES**

Administration	10735	
Rangers		13618
Workmen	<u>3500</u>	
		27853

**ADMINISTRATIVE**

Office	1080	
Postage & Telephone	450	
Printing & Stationery	250	
Professional	450	
Miscellaneous	<u>300</u>	
		2530

**FOREST**

Forest Superintendent	100	
Rangers		500
Transport & Machinery		4850
Maintenance		1750
Depot	<u>350</u>	
		7550

**CAPITAL**

Swipe		--
Tractor	<u>8277</u>	
		8277

**CONSERVATION**

**OFFICER**

Salary	6034	
Transport		600
Experimental Budget	500	
Administrative Expenses	<u>500</u>	
		7634
Less Countryside		
Commission Grant	<u>5725</u>	
		1909

**TOTAL COMMITTED**      53844  
**EXPENDITURE**

**ADJUSTED FOR**      48119  
**GRANT**

**UNCOMMITTED**  
**EXPENDITURE**

Additional Ranger		
Wages		3426
Additional Ranger		

Expenses	220
Additional Ranger	
Motor Bicycle	375
Additional Ranger	
Transport &	
Machinery	500

Additional Workman  
Wages 3002

7523

TOTAL COMMITTED AND UNCOMMITTED NORMAL EXPENDITURE .	55642
EXPERIMENTAL WORK RE. FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN.	<u>2950</u>
TOTAL COMMITTED,	

UNCOMMITTED AND EXPERIMENTAL EXPENDITURE  
(Includes gross capital cost of tractor) 58592

### 1978/9 INCOME

Rates	2500
Acknowledgement	
Rents	3700
Horse Riding	2300
Sundry Receipts	<u>350</u>
	8850

<b><u>ESTIMATED COMMITTED DEFICIT</u></b>	39269
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<b><u>TOTAL COMMITTED&amp; UNCOMMITTED NORMAL DEFICIT</u></b>	46792
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<b><u>TOTAL COMMITTED, UNCOMMITTED &amp; EXPERIMENTAL DEFICIT</u></b>	49742
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### APPENDIX EXPERIMENTAL WORK

Estimate of the cost of experimental work on car parks to be undertaken in 1978/79 in order to gain necessary experience for the completion of the Management Plan.

Six car parks representing six different Forest parking problems:

Materials	£4800
Hire of equipment	£3000
Labour	£4000

Total cost of proposed works:

Using contract labour	£11,800
Anticipated Countryside Commission	
Grant of 75%	£8,850

Estimated cost to County Council	£2,950
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b. Using direct labour under	
Job Creation Programme	£7,800

Anticipated Countryside Commission

Grant of 75% £5,850

Total cost to County Council £1,950

NOTE: This estimate is provisional. Detailed planning and costing is being undertaken and a firm figure will be submitted in mid-January 1978.

## NOTES

**GENERAL.** Due to increases in the Conservators' activities in recent years, the Annual Estimates have been getting larger and more complex due to the additional new items. The form of the estimates has been altered to give a simpler presentation and many items have been bracketed – notably:

**SALARIES & WAGES.** National Insurance and Superannuation have been included with the appropriate estimate. Administration now includes the Clerk, Secretary and office cleaner. Rangers' wages will include part-time patrolman.

**ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.** The office expenses include rent, equipment maintenance and sundries. Professional expenses includes solicitor, accountant and audit fee. Miscellaneous expenses include insurance, advertising, room hire, irrecoverable debts, etc.

**FOREST EXPENSES.** Radio Maintenance has been included with Transport and Machinery.

**INCOME.** Temporary Licences have been combined with Acknowledgment Rents.

1. The estimated over-expenditure is due to the greatly increased Forest maintenance carried out under a Job Creation Project, coupled with ever increasing repair bills on the ageing tractor.

2. The present tractor is now worn to a state where it is no longer economical to repair up to a standard for heavy Forest duty. It is only fit for use as a work horse towing trailers, etc.

3. An additional Ranger has been urgently needed for some years. Sharing a man with the Forest Way Linear Park is an undoubted help, but does not meet the Forest needs.

4. With an ever increasing amount of maintenance required, additional workmen are essential. This need has been met in the past twelve months by a Job Creation Programme. This is due to end on 31st March 1978. If there is no extension the minimum requirement is for one man. If the Job Creation Programme is extended the provision of additional workmen can be postponed.

## **CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR HALF YEAR ENDED 30th SEPTEMBER 1977**

INCOME TO DATE	TO DATE	EST. 1977/8	BILLS OUTSTANDING
Acknowledgment			
Rents & Licences	1,623	3,350	
Riding	541	2,000	
Rates	1,444	1,709	
Wood Reeve	270	350	
Miscellaneous	<u>119</u>		
	3,754	7,409	

## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

East Sussex  
County Council 13,483

Wealden District Council,	550
Countryside Commission	535
	15,568
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>19,322</b>

#### **PAYMENTS TO DATE**

Salaries & Wages	11,514	25,828
Office	1,370	2,590
Forest Expenses	4,017	6,200
Capital	930	600

**TOTAL PAYMENTS**                      **17,831   35,218**

#### **CASH AND BANK POSITION**

Bank Balances	1,998
Bills Outstanding	1,098
<b>BALANCE IN HAND</b>	<b>1,000</b>

#### **INFORMATION SERVICES**

Bank balance                      75 O/D

### **MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON TUESDAY 13th DECEMBER [1977]at 10.00 A.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.N. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Hon. G.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. C.R. Balfour-Smith, J. Gent, R.J. Glover, M.G. Hall, L.C. Hardy, D.Z. Kavanagh, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, A.L.H. White.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Mr. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, Mr. E.W. Ellison, M.G. Taylor.

#### **2. CLERK'S REMUNERATION**

The Chairman reported that Mr. Edwardes-Jones, acting on his behalf had been in consultation with the Personnel Officer of the East Sussex County Council to investigate the possible re-grading of the Clerk's salary. The Personnel Department had assessed the situation in exactly the same way that they would assess a County Council grading and had recommended to the Conservators that the Clerk should be re-graded as a Principal Officer Range 1, Spinal Column Points 36 to 40, and that he should be assimilated into the grade on Spinal Point 38 with effect from the 1st April 1978. This re-grading was approved by twelve votes to one.

#### **3. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY:**

A proposal for a survey to investigate the possibility of oil or natural gas being found in the Crowborough section of the Forest was considered. A letter from Conoco North Sea Inc. dated 6th December 1977 had been circulated and that firm was represented by Mr. R.C. Weatherill at the meeting. Mr. J. Hawkins, S & A Geophysical Ltd., was also present. Mr. Hawkins presented a film showing a similar survey in another part of the country, and afterwards answered questions-from the Conservators.

Mr. Grimston stated that the fees resulting from the survey would be payable to the Conservators and that the Lord of the Manor would forego any right to these.

It was unanimously agreed that the survey on the lines set out in the letter of the 6th December should be permitted, subject to Conoco informing the Conservators of the results of the survey. Assurances were given by both Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Weatherill that all precautions would be taken and that restoration of any damage to the Forest would be completed to the satisfaction of the Conservators.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.15.

Chairman

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 11th JANUARY 1978 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, R.J. Glover, M.G. Hall, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M.G. Taylor

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Mr. E.W. Ellison, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Mr. A.L.H. White

The Chairman opened the meeting by inviting the Conservators to stand in silence in memory of the late Mr. C. R. Balfour-Smith, Vice Chairman.

The Chairman proposed that Mr. D. L. Kavanagh, who had been appointed Deputy Chairman when Mr. Balfour-Smith had been ill earlier in the year, should do duty as Vice Chairman until May, when the Conservators would be considering the election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Committee Members for the next year. This was unanimously agreed.

### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on the 16th November and 13th December 1977, which had been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a. Appointment of Conservator. The Clerk reported that Mr. A.L.H. White had been appointed a Conservator by the East Sussex County Council to fill a vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. M.S. Phipp.

b. Landscape Indicator. The Clerk reported that the Indicator had been placed on the Forest approximately 200 yards south of Gills Lap Corner. It had been unveiled on 16th December by Lady Aberdeen, Chairman of The Friends of Ashdown Forest who had donated the Indicator as a commemoration of Her Majesty the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

c. Roadway to Misbourne Farm. The Chairman reported a site meeting held by the Committee formed to report on this question. The meeting had been attended by Mr. Osborne and one of the other residents using the roadway. The Chairman stated that in his opinion there was no action which the Conservators should or could take. It was for the road users to settle their differences and make arrangements between themselves for the repair and maintenance of the road. Mr. Miller disagreed. He considered that the Conservators should restrict the use made of the track in winter by clients at the Trekking Centre. Due to the slope of the road and the difficulty of providing adequate drainage the road would never stand up to heavy winter use. The legal implications and the terms of the licence were discussed at length. The Clerk was instructed to obtain legal advice on the question of issuing a restricted licence.

d. Forest Rate - 1978/79. Mr. Hall reported that the Elected Conservators had held a meeting and that they recommend that all assessments for Forest Rates for 1978/79 should be increased by the sum of £1, bringing the minimum rate up to a sum of £2.50. Mr. Hall asked that the Agenda for Commoners Annual General Meetings should be circulated to all Commoners, and that if possible the new rate should remain unchanged for a further three years. The Chairman replied that it had been decided by the Conservators not to circulate the Agendas for Commoners AGMs as a general rule, but that this year the Forest Report was to be sent out and Agendas could be enclosed. The Conservators could not give undertakings on the future level of Forest Rates, but Mr. Hall's remarks would be noted. Mr. Hall proposed the new rate, Mrs. Maudslay seconded and it was unanimously agreed.

e. In reply to a question from Mr. Taylor, the Clerk stated that the Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt had not yet given a donation to the Conservators in the current year, but he had been informed that an increase over 1977 would be made.

### **4. REPORT OF AUDIT**

The Clerk reported that the following letter had been received from the District Auditor:

"Dear Sir

1976/77 AUDIT

The audit of the accounts of the Conservators for the year ended 31 March 1977 has been completed. There are no matters on which it is necessary for me to make a report to the Conservators under section 157 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The appropriate certificate has been entered on the Balance Sheet in accordance with regulation 12 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1974.

My thanks are due for the courteous assistance afforded at the audit.

Yours faithfully

Signed: E. S. Sant

E S SANT  
District Auditor"

## **5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Clerk presented the Financial Statement for the Financial Year up to 31st December 1977.

## **6. REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13th DECEMBER**

Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4a, 4b, and 4c were proposed by Mr. Hardy, seconded by Mr. Taylor and unanimously agreed.

The Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. Winter, Manager of the Plaw Hatch Country Club, informing him of the Conservators' decision, and proposing a meeting between himself and Mr. Winter to explain the Conservators' policies. The Clerk was further instructed to obtain legal advice as to the Conservators' powers in issuing or withholding licences.

Mr. Kavanagh stated his appreciation of the comprehensive and thorough work done by the Conservation Officer in preparing the Car Parking Strategy. The Conservators endorsed this.

## **7. RIDING ESTABLISHMENT PERMIT**

The Clerk read a letter from Mr. Turner of East View Fruit Farm & Riding Centre, Danehill, requesting a riding establishment permit. Mr. Turner had been refused such a permit in 1977, but now reapplied, contending that by adhering to the new riding regulations his horses would not cause excessive wear to the fire rides. It was generally agreed that the issue of an additional riding establishment permit would be contrary to the Conservators agreed policy. Mr. Kavanagh proposed that the request be refused. This was seconded by Miss Willard and unanimously agreed.

## **8. CLERK'S REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Chairman addressed the Board on the question of the Clerk's title, suggesting that 'Forest Superintendent' might now be more applicable to the duties undertaken, and also more readily understood by the public at large.

After discussion it was agreed that the full title should in future be 'Clerk and Forest Superintendent', but when used in conversation the title most appropriate to the circumstances should commonly be used.

a. Riding. The Forest Superintendent reported that after consultation with the Chairman he had ordered some printed forms to be issued to horse riders who flouted the Riding Code. These forms would give warning of a three months suspension of a riding permit, or for repeated offences a complete withdrawal of the permit. The Superintendent asked authority to act in suspending permits for up to three months, and bring repeated offences to the notice of the Conservators for consideration as to withdrawal of permits. This was agreed.

b. Trees at Tompsetts Bank. The Forest Superintendent reported a request from Lady Aberdeen to fell or have

felled some trees near the boundary of Sycamore Cottage. The trees had been inspected by the Wood Reeve and those recommended for felling had been marked by him. It was agreed that the Chairman and Mrs. Maudsley should carry out a site inspection with delegated powers to authorise the work if they thought fit.

c. King's Standing Corner. The East Sussex County Council had decided that they must make a compulsory purchase order for the small area of land to be used for realignment of the road, and had agreed that a similar acreage of land would be exchanged back into the Forest. Detailed proposals would be presented to the Conservators in due course.

d. Highgate Green. The Forest Row Parish Council had requested permission to plant some trees at Highgate Green. This was agreed subject to the trees being indigenous to the Forest, and also that the Parish Council being assured that the proposal met with the approval of those living immediately adjacent.

e. Extra facilities for Model Aircraft Flying. The Society of Model Aeronautical Engineers had requested permission to carry out trials with model aircraft taking off from the surface of the pond near the Stonehill Road. The models concerned would be free flight, i.e. with an engine run of only ten seconds. It was agreed that this should be permitted on one Sunday only in 1978. Notice of the trial to be given to the Forest Superintendent so that Conservators interested could be informed.

f. Forest Row Recreation Ground additional football pitch. It was confirmed that a meeting called by the Forest Row Parish Council would be held on 8th February at 8.00 P.M. to hear the views of the inhabitants of Forest Row.

## **9. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Conservation Officer reported that having completed the Car Parking Strategy and the experimental car park he was now concentrating on the vegetation of the Forest. He was aiming to produce a map showing the most important areas of heathland and the boundaries of the woodland. He planned to undertake experiments to determine the best method of managing heathland in the future.

It was agreed that a Special Meeting of the Conservators would be called to consider the Heathland Management, the date to be fixed at the March meeting.

The Superintendent requested permission to plant 100 larch trees as the beginning of a programme to provide suitable timber for Forest maintenance in future years. The trees would be protected by spraying with AA Protect. This was a deer and rabbit repellent, offensive but harmless to these creatures. This was agreed

**10. ROYAL ASHDOWN FOREST GOLF CLUB** It had been reported to the Forest Superintendent that the Club had sprayed several fairways with DDT in order to control leatherjackets. This spraying had caused great consternation locally, both from environmentalists and from commoners, one of whom had been told to remove her cattle from the contaminated area. The Chairman reported that he had written to, and later met the Captain of the Club in order to ascertain the facts and evaluate what damage may have been caused.

A report written by Mr. S. H. Arthur, a leading Golf Course agronomist, was circulated and read by Conservators. Mr. Arthur contended that spraying with DDT in the quantities advised was the only practical method of leatherjacket control, and was not harmful to the ecology in the long term. Many Conservators were unable to accept this assumption, and it was agreed that a special Committee be formed to meet with the Golf Club Committee to go further into the matter, with a view to safeguarding the future against the possibility of the use of possibly harmful chemicals without prior consultation with the Conservators. It was agreed that the Committee should consist of the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Messrs. Hardy, Hall and Miller.

10. There being no further business the meeting closed at 16.30 hours.

Chairman

## **CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR PERIOD ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 1977

INCOME TO DATE

TO DATE

EST. 1977/8

Acknowledgement Rents & Licences	1,757	3,350
Riding	1,135	2,300
Rates	1,532	1,709
Wood Reeve	96	350
Miscellaneous	<u>124</u>	
	4,644	7,709

## CONTRIBUTIONS

East Sussex County Council	20,083
Wealden District Council	3,100
Countryside Commission	<u>951</u>
	24,134

TOTAL INCOME	28,778
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## PAYMENTS TO DATE

Salaries & Wages	20,029	27,563
Office	2,205	2,590
Forest Expenses	5,141	6,990
Capital	930	930
TOTALS PAYMENTS	28,305	38,073

## CASH AND BANK POSITION

Bank balances	2,304
Debts	<u>1,692</u>
	3,996
Less Bills outstanding	3,443

BALANCE IN HAND	553
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## INFORMATION SERVICES

Bank Balance	12.90
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## **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

At a meeting held on 13th December 1977 the Committee considered the following matters.

1. The construction of a horse ride from the Poundgate Road to Browns Brook.

Although the proposed ride would effectively link up the Poundgate and Fairwarp areas of the Forest, and provide an authorised route for those riders who have been in the habit of using the footpaths and roadways in the area, members of the Committee felt that on environmental grounds it would be wrong to allow, and by implication, encourage horse riding through this narrow section of Forest. The difficulty of policing the area was appreciated and the matter might need to be reviewed if it is found impossible to keep horses clear of the footpaths.

The Committee RECOMMEND that no riding should be permitted from the Poundgate Road to Browns Brook.

2. Fire rides north of the Poundgate Road.



In the light of past difficulties in controlling fires in this area, and on the recommendation of the Nature Conservancy Council the Committee RECOMMEND that a new fire ride should be cut parallel to the Poundgate Road, linked to the public bridle ways.

### 3. Riding Permit for Plawhatch Stables.

A request for a Riding Club Permit had been received from the new tenants of the Stables. The Club is to be run in conjunction with the Trades Union Country Club at Plawhatch Fall. In view of the Conservators' policy of restricting the number of Riding Establishments using the Forest to their present number, and the transfer last year of her permit from Plawhatch Stables to Marsh Green by Miss Miller, the Committee RECOMMEND that the request from Plawhatch Stables be refused.

### 4. Car Parking Strategy.

The Committee carried out site inspections on the Pond Car Park and the four other parks to be included in the experimental programme for 1978/79. They then considered the Car Parking Strategy.

a. The principles set out in the Car Parking Strategy be approved, subject to the retention of a number of small car parks for use by local residents for walking their dogs; etc (see Amendment Sheet No. 1).

b. That the Clerk shall give notice to the Conservators before the commencement of major works on any car parks and that a plan of the improved car park shall be displayed on the Notice Board in the Conservators office for seven days before the appropriate Conservators' Meeting.

c. That the estimates provisionally agreed in the Appendix to the Conservators Estimates 1978/79 be confirmed with the proviso that the estimate will only cover work on four car parks, namely Numbers D21, 849, J55 and L63.

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## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE COMMONERS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE NUTLEY WAR MEMORIAL HALL ON FRIDAY 11th MARCH 1977 at 7.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** There were over 100 Commoners and their spouses present. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Inns and Mr. Foster representing the Mid. Sussex Water Company, Mr. Wells representing the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology And Miss Bees from the Countryside Commission.

### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING**

The Clerk asked for nominations for Chairman. Mr. Balfour-Smith was proposed by Mr. Mover seconded by Mrs. Willard. There being no other nomination, Mr. Balfour-Smith took the chair.

### **2. NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING**

The Clerk read the notice convening the Meeting.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12th MARCH 1976**

It was agreed that the minutes should be taken as read.

### **4. ELECTION OF CONSERVATOR**

Mr. R.J. Mover offered himself for re-election. There being no other nominations, Mr. Mover was declared as having been re-elected.

### **5. CONSERVATORS REPORT:**

Mr. C.R. Balfour-Smith, Vice Chairman of the Conservators, reported on forest activities during the past year. He stated that there had been a serious year for forest fires. In the driest summer on record, there had been numerous fires, burning some 600 acres of forest. He paid tribute to the fire fighters, particularly the Rangers who had spent many nights camping in the Information Caravan in between putting out fires.

The extremely wet weather had followed the draught, and the Conservators had been very concerned by the mud and erosion. Riding had therefore been restricted during the winter months to the fire rides, and certain other marked tracks. The restriction was having limited success, and the Conservators would be giving further thought to the problem.

The Government Job Creation Scheme had provided much needed additional manpower, and a team of men and boys had been employed on cutting and tidying with considerable effect. As a fire precaution and road safety measure, gorse and scrub had been cut back along the verges.

A large amount of work had gone into the preparation of a draft Management Plan. The final plan will take at least 2 years to produce, and opportunity would be taken to amend as we went along, taking into account the views of all parties, including commoners.

Mr. Balfour-Smith paid tribute to the Friends of Ashdown Forest, who had presented an Information Caravan, together with a gift of maps of the forest. Various leaflets are now being produced. He also thanked the Clerk and the Rangers for their hard devoted work throughout the year. He then mentioned the sad death of Mr. Oliver.

## **6. UNDERGROUND RESERVOIR NEAR GREENWOOD GATE CLUMP**

Mr Foster outlined the plan to build an underground reservoir at the for Crowborough. Water would be piped from Horsted Keynes through a pipeline under the forest, and the feed from the reservoir would be by gravity. On completion of the works, which were expected to take 12 months from the time of commencement, all that would show on the surface was a mound approximately 1 metre above the present surface level. This would be permitted to grow natural vegetation, and there would be full access over it. There would be an access track from the highway and some 4 manholes for access to the tank. Many questions were asked by the commoners which were frankly answered by Mr. Inns and Mr. Foster. Some commoners expressed concern, others accepted that an adequate water supply for Crowborough was in the public interest, and that the long term disturbance to the forest would be minimal.

## **7. HEATHLAND VEGETATION CONTROL EXPERIMENT**

The Clerk reported that a request had been received from the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology for them to conduct a Heathland Vegetation Control experiment on the forest. The Conservators wished to sound the opinions of the commoners on this proposal before coming to a decision.

Mr. Wells outlined the proposals. The experiment would run for five years. It could entail temporary enclosure of 40-50 acres of forest. The proposed site was to the east of Priory Mead. This area was ecologically suited to the experiment, being a mixture of all types of heathland vegetation, and one that was little used by the public. The experimental management would consist of cutting grazing and control of bracken by ASULAM. The results of the experiment should be of great value to the Conservators in their future management of the forest and to other authorities in the management of all areas of lowland heath in the county.

There was a very lively question and answer session in which Mr. Wells and Miss Bees gave fuller details. Objectors to the experiment ranged from the interference with the exercise of rights of common, particularly from one commoner who claimed that the experiment was to be carried out in the exact spot from which he gathered estovers, from naturalists who regretted the aesthetic or ecological interference with this particular area to those who considered that either enough was known on heathland management to render the experiment a waste of public money and those who did not wish the forest managed at all. Many commoners welcomed the experiment as a positive step towards the future which would be of value to both the Conservators and the commoners.

Opinion in the hall remained divided.

## **8. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA**

Mr. Balfour-Smith reported that the Conservators had decided that they were not able to circulate agenda for commoners' AGM's in future, unless there were items on the agenda which were of sufficient import that they should be brought to the attention of all commoners, but that copies of the agenda would be available from the Conservators Office and at the meeting.

There was considerable criticism of this from the meeting, and many suggestions were put forward as to possible methods of financing the production and posting of agendas, and even of creating a Commoners' Committee with its own secretary.

The Clerk explained the Conservators duties as set out in Acts of Parliament. These consisted solely of calling a meeting to elect Conservators. They had no further responsibility for the conduct of Commoners Meetings.

## **9. ANY OTHER GENERAL BUSINESS**

The state of the footpaths, particularly in the Nutley Areas was criticised. Horses had made every footpath unusable by pedestrians.

The new winter riding regulations were explained, and the chairman hoped that riders would respect the rules and that there would be a consequential improvement in the state of the footpaths.

## **10. NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

It was agreed that the next AGM should be held at HARTFIELD and in March, the date to be arranged.

There being no further business the meeting was closed. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24th JANUARY 1978 at 5.15 P.M. in the CONSERVATORS' OFFICE AT FOREST ROW**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Messrs. M.G. Hall, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, A.J. Miller, representing the Conservators, Messrs. W.N.D. Drury, G.H. Wills, E.F. Hall, P.F.C. Hobden, T.L. Griffith, representing the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club.

The Chairman opened the meeting by expressing the Conservators' concern at the recent spraying of the fairways on the Golf Course with DDT. He stated that the object of the meeting was to establish some procedure so that the use of controversial chemicals would not take place without prior consultation with the Conservators who had a special responsibility for the protection of the rights of the commoners and the ecology of the Forest. The Conservators regarded the advice given to the Golf Club as somewhat suspect, having been differently advised by the Nature Conservancy Council and the M.A.F.F. Letters from these two organisations were read out, and a general discussion followed.

The following points were agreed by all present on behalf of the Conservators and the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club.

1. No action could be taken to rectify any damage that may have already been caused by the spraying of DDT.
2. The use of all chemicals on the Golf Course should in future be subject to the agreement of the Conservators. Chemicals should be divided into three categories.
  - a. Harmless substances used in day to day management of the Course. The Golf Club would prepare a list of substances which they were likely to use, and the Conservators would agree those which could be used at any time without further consultation.
  - b. Chemicals which might be of a controversial nature, and which were subject to a M.A.F.F. code of practice. Special consideration would be given by the Conservators to limited use of these chemicals after consultation with the Nature Conservancy Council and other advisory bodies.
  - c. Chemicals required for immediate treatment of specific problems. The Conservators would treat a telephoned request for permission for immediate use of such a chemical with urgency, and would make every endeavour to authorise use in time to prevent continuing infection and damage to the Course.
3. The Golf Club would use every endeavour to ensure that their ground staff keep to the letter of terms of the Golf Club Licence, realising that minor breaches, which themselves might seem minor, cumulatively constitute a breach of the Licence which leads to considerable local ill feeling, both towards the Golf Club and the Conservators.
4. There should be meetings between the Conservators and the Golf Club at approximately half yearly intervals in order to avoid any further misunderstandings or controversy by improved communication.

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# **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 15th MARCH 1978 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, R.J. Glover, M.G. Hall, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Mr. L.C. Hardy and Mr. A.J. Miller

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming Mr. Kennard as a new Conservator elected in place of the late Mr. Balfour-Smith.

## **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11th January 1978, which had been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a. Roadway - Misbourne Farm. The Superintendent reported that he had taken advice from the County Council and had been advised that the Conservators could, if they wished, issue a conditional Riding Permit which would limit the use made of the roadway. This would, however, be difficult to enforce.

Miss Willard reported that at present there was a sign reading "road closed".

It was agreed that no further action should be taken for the time being.

b. Old Surrey & Burstow Hunt. The Superintendent reported that the Hunt had doubled their donation to £100 this year.

c. Plawhatch Hall - Riding Permit. The Superintendent reported that Mr. Winter had not made any reply to his suggestion of a meeting to try and resolve the problem. At the present time horses from the stables were not using the Forest, but it was anticipated that they would wish to do so as soon as the weather improved. Plawhatch Hall had three horses stabled at present, although the original request was for a licence for six horses. It was agreed that Mr. Winter should be reminded that the matter had not been resolved, and that if he required any form of riding permit he must put his proposals to the Superintendent.

d. It was agreed that a Special Meeting of the Conservators would be held on Tuesday 11th April to consider Heathland Management and the general distribution of Heathland and Woodland areas on the Forest.

e. Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club. The Chairman reported on a meeting held with representatives of the Golf Club, the minutes of which had been circulated. The Superintendent stated that he had received a list of chemicals which the Club would like to use, and had forwarded it to the Nature Conservancy Council and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for their observations.

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting be adopted.

## **4. REPORT ON THE ELECTION OF NEW CONSERVATORS**

The Superintendent reported that at the Commoners Annual General Meeting held on 10th March, Mr. F. Kennard had been elected to serve as a Conservator for a period of one year in the place of the late Mr. C.H. Balfour-Smith, and that Mr. G.H. Wills had been elected to serve for five years in the place of Mr. M.G. Hall who retires by rotation on 31st March 1978.

Mr. Hall stated that he had an objection to the method of election at the Commoners Meeting. The Chairman read a letter from Mr. Hall stating that objection, but affirmed that the election of Conservators was a matter for the Commoners and not for the Conservators of Ashdown Forest.

## **5. REPORT OF FINANCIAL PROGRESS**

The Superintendent reported that with the Chairman's agreement he would not present a financial statement to this meeting. The present financial year was due to end in two weeks time, and there was little merit in a 'progress report' at this stage.

It was agreed that reports should be presented at future meetings as follows:

May Annual Accounts for the preceding financial year.

July Financial Statement as at 30th June.

Sept Financial Statement as at 31st August.

Nov Financial Statement as at 31st October.

Jan Financial Statement as at 31st December.

March Nil.

## **6. FOREST ROW RECREATION GROUND EXTENSION**

The Chairman stated that the matter had been discussed at meetings held in Forest Row and at the Commoners A.G.M. and there was now a considerable amount of evidence as to local feeling on the matter.

The Clerk summarised as follows:

a. Public Meeting at Forest Row. This had been very well attended, and all speakers had been constructive. Opinion had been divided between those in favour of a new football pitch for juniors, and those against, either on the grounds of ruining part of Ashdown Forest or of depriving the very young of a safe and natural playground. This division was illustrated by two petitions subsequently presented, one signed by 134 persons in favour of a football pitch, another signed by 104 who were against it.

b. A letter had been received from the Forest Row Parish Council informing the Conservators that the Council had passed the following resolution:

"This Council supports the Forest Row Football Club's application to the Board of Conservators of Ashdown Forest for an extension of the Sports Ground to the west, as outlined at the Public Meeting held on 8th February 1978 providing that no other reasonable alternative site is available."

c. Commoners A.G.M. When the question was discussed at this meeting it was evident that the overwhelming proportion of those present was against any extension of the recreation ground which would detract from the natural aspect of the Forest.

A very full debate then took place, with all Conservators present expressing their views. Miss Willard, Mrs. Maudslay and Mr. Hall spoke against the proposal, largely on the grounds of the commoners rejection of the idea. Mr. Hall was also concerned with the car parking problem and the cost to local residents of the upkeep of the roads. The remaining Conservators took the general view that this was a small area of Forest, some 60 yds x 90 yds, which would provide facilities for the youth of Forest Row which were not available elsewhere. Mr. Kennard, declaring an interest as President of the Football Club, stated that there was no other suitable area for a football pitch in Forest Row.

It was proposed by Mr. Ellison and seconded by Mr. Grimston that:

The Conservators should give permission for the extension of the Forest Row Recreation Ground to the westward for the construction of a football pitch for use by juniors, limited to an area 60 yds x 90 yds;

The car parking should be controlled so as not to be detrimental to the amenities of local residents, and that should cars use the roadway maintained by local residents at their own expense, arrangements be made for the Football Club to share in the upkeep.

The motion was carried by 10 votes to 3.

## **7. TO CONSIDER THE ISSUE OF LICENCES FOR MAKING UP ROADWAYS OVER THE FOREST**

- (1) Hillside Cottage, Coleman Hatch -approved.
- (2) Camphill Cottage, Duddleswell - approved.
- (3) Crabtree Farm, Crowborough - not approved.

b. A request to tarmac part of the Forest track between the A22 and Balfour Gardens was granted.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

a. Mounted Ranger. The Superintendent reminded the Conservators that when they had considered the idea of having a horse and instituting mounted ranger patrols, the idea had been favourably considered but had been shelved on two counts, The Conservators had no field or stables, and the time was inappropriate to ask the County Council for an increased budget to pay for winter keep, etc. The Superintendent had recently received an offer by a local resident to loan, for an indefinite period, stables and a six acre paddock, and to provide £100 annually towards the cost of winter keep. Should the Conservators approve the principle of having a mounted ranger, the Friends of Ashdown Forest could be approached with a request to purchase the horse.

A committee consisting of the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Mr. Glover and Mr. Logan was appointed to study the problem and report back to the next Conservators meeting.

b. 1978/79 Estimates. The East Sussex County Council had approved the estimates for the next financial year. This included the employment of a fourth ranger, provided that the Conservators continued to run a Job Creation Project.

c. Job Creation Project. The present scheme, which had been due to *end* on 31st March, had now been extended until 28th April. Approval was being sought for a Project Based Work Experience Team to be employed during the summer, principally on the reconstruction of car parks.

d. Information Caravan. An offer had been received from Mrs. Kirk, of Little Foxes, Duddleswell, to help run the Information Services. The Superintendent had discussed the proposal, and it was hoped that Mrs. Kirk, and possibly other volunteers, would be helping the Rangers before long.

e. Forthcoming Prosecutions. The Police had decided not to proceed with a prosecution re. taking a deer off the Forest.

A prosecution was pending for a breach of the Bye-laws for flying a model aircraft by an unauthorised person, and from an unauthorised part of the Forest.

f. Oil Survey. The survey being undertaken by CONOCO had been completed. Minimal damage had been caused for which £30 had been paid in compensation, together with a fee of £130. The Lord of the Manor had generously agreed that this fee should be paid to the Conservators. He had stated this should not be taken as a precedent for any fees which might be payable for similar operations.

g. Restrictions on horse riding and the use of car parks. The Superintendent reported that during the recent spell of wet weather the condition of the Forest had become unduly waterlogged. He had, with the agreement of the Chairman, stopped the Riding Schools from using the Forest for a period of seven days, instructed the Old Surrey & Burstow hunt to cancel hunting on the Forest, and had closed twenty of the worst affected car parks. With the return of comparatively dryer weather the restrictions had been lifted.

h. Voting by Commoners in the Election of Conservators. The Ashdown Forest Act 1974 makes provision for a system of proxy voting for commoners unable to attend the A.G.M. It was apparent that the majority of commoners did not understand the difference between proxy and postal voting, and at the A.G.M. held on 10<sup>th</sup> the commoners present had set up a committee, consisting of the five elected Conservators, to study the possibility of a change to Postal Voting. Any such change would need the approval of the Conservators. If the Conservators approved the change the East Sussex County Council could be asked to include an amendment to the Ashdown Forest Act 1974 in legislation which they are promoting this year. The County Council would wish to be assured that the commoners approved the change, and that it was unlikely to generate concerted opposition. In view of the

fact that the commoners had no separate organisation or funds at their disposal, the Superintendent indicated that the cost of sending out a questionnaire on the proposal would need to be met by the Conservators. This was agreed.

i. Barbecue at Fairwarp. A request had been received for permission to hold a barbecue in aid of the Pre School Play Group on the Jubilee Village Green at Fairwarp. This was approved.

j. Fires. There had been two fires so far this spring burning three acres of Forest.

## **9. REPORT OF COMMONERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Miss Willard reported on the A.G.M. The main item of interest had been in the election, and the complications in the system of voting. This was being studied in the manner already reported by the Superintendent. A Forest Report had been circulated to all commoners which, although received with interest, had to some extent taken interest out of the meeting by answering questions beforehand, resulting in a rather dull meeting.

## **10. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT:**

The Conservation Officer reported that he had been examining the vegetation of the Forest and had identified the conservation of the pure stands of heather and the areas of damp and wet heathland as the most immediate management task. He had commenced the removal of naturally regenerating Scots pine and birch from some of these areas with the assistance of volunteers from Sussex Ornithological Society and Beacon School Conservation Club. He also reported that he had been involved with a number of the routine matters such as the Ashdown Forest Newsletter, the election of commoners' enclosure of car parks during the period of very wet weather, and the spraying of D.D.T. on the golf course,

## **11. DATES OF CONSERVATORS' MEETINGS FOR 1978/79**

17 <sup>TH</sup> May	20 <sup>th</sup> September	24 <sup>th</sup> January
19 <sup>th</sup> July	22 <sup>nd</sup> November	21 <sup>st</sup> March

These dates were agreed.

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman reported that Mrs. Balfour-Smith had requested permission to plant an oak tree in memory of the late Vice-Chairman. He had agreed to the request and would be present on the occasion.

The Conservators then went into Committee.  
See Confidential Minute No. 3

The Conservators then came out of Committee.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16.55. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON TUESDAY 11th APRIL 1978 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, R.J. Glover, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M.G. Taylor, G.H. Wills.

### **1. ROYAL ASHDOWN FOREST GOLF CLUB - USE OF CHEMICALS:**

The Superintendent reported that the Club had requested permission to spray the 8th fairway with DDT or some other substance for the destruction of leather jackets. The Superintendent had inspected the fairway and confirmed that it was in urgent need of treatment. It was agreed that an urgent meeting be sought with representatives of the Nature Conservancy Council and that the Chairman be given authority to decide on behalf of the Conservators what treatment should be allowed.

### **2. MEMORIAL TO A. A. MILNE**

A diagrammatic layout of the proposed memorial and stone was inspected and approved.

### **3. VEGETATION PLAN**

Papers on Heathland Management had already been circulated, and one on Woodland Management was presented.

The Superintendent outlined the proposed vegetation distribution on the Forest. The basis for this is as follows:

a. Woodland. There should be some slight increase in the woodland areas. Where regeneration was taking place this should be stopped at certain agreed places, either at existing fire rides or at new rides cut along the boundaries. The fringes of the woodland areas should be cut periodically in order to avoid a sudden break from woodland to heathland, and in order to maintain areas of scrub and young growth.

b. Heathland. The prime stands of heather should be retained. This will necessitate the removal of invading vegetation, principally Scots Pine and Birch, and the rotational management of heather, probably by cutting.

Other areas of open heathland should be retained so as to keep the landscape value as well as the existing habitat for wild life. The control of game and bracken will need further consideration.

Despite firm lines of demarcation on the map, necessary for management purposes, existing areas of heather within the woodland areas, as well as specimen trees or coppices within the heathland areas should be maintained.

It was agreed that

- a. The outline vegetation map of the Forest should be presented at the Conservators Meeting on 17th May.
- b. Detailed maps of the proposed vegetation plans of each area of the Forest should be presented at subsequent meetings.
- c. Detailed costing, both in financial expenditure and manpower, should be prepared to cover
  - (1) The work involved in achieving the required vegetation state
  - (2) The future maintenance required to retain this state
  - (3) The extent to which voluntary help can be employed.

Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 17th MAY 1978 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, R.J. Glover, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, G.H. Wills.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Mr. J. Gent, Mr., M.O. Taylor, Mr. A.L.H. White.

### **2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 1978/79:**

a. Chairman. Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that Brigadier Scott should be re-elected as Chairman. This was seconded by Miss Willard and unanimously agreed. Brigadier Scott took the chair, and expressed his thanks to the Conservators for their continued support.

b. Vice-Chairman. The Chairman proposed that Miss Willard be elected; Mrs. Maudslay seconded. This was unanimously agreed.

c. Deputy Chairman. The Chairman spoke of the valuable contribution Mr. Kavanagh had made as Deputy Chairman, in the absence through sickness, and later on the death of the late Vice-Chairman, Mr. C.R. Balfour-Smith, and thought it would be advantageous to elect a Deputy Chairman again this year. Mr. Ellison proposed and Mr. Logan seconded a resolution that there should be a Deputy Chairman and that Mr. Kavanagh should be re-elected. This was agreed.



d. General Purposes Committee. Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed and Mr. Kavanagh seconded a resolution that the serving members of the Committee be elected en bloc. Mrs. Maudslay and Mr. Kavanagh were proposed to fill the vacancy in the Committee. Mrs. Maudslay was elected on a show of hands.

3. **MINUTES:** Subject to the following amendments, the Minutes of the Meetings held on 15th March 1978 and 11th April 1978 were agreed and signed by the Chairman:

15th March 1978:

8.h. Line 5 - for May read March

8.i. Line 2 - for Barbecue read Fete

10 Line 8 - after the word 'commoners' add 'to the Board'

#### 4. **MATTERS ARISING:**

a. Plawhatch Riding Stables. The Superintendent reported that he had seen Mr. Winter who wished to have a riding permit for six horses to be used on the Forest by members of the First Trades Union Country Club. At the suggestion of the Chairman, the Superintendent was authorised to issue a Special Club Permit, subject to the following conditions:

(1) The permit should be provisional so that both the use being made of the Forest and the impact on the Forest could be monitored.

(2) Not more than four horses be permitted to use the Forest.

(3) Horses should only be ridden by bona-fide club members and stable staff.

(4) The fee should be as for four individual permits, namely £40

It was further agreed that in no circumstances would it be permitted for Plawhatch Stables to develop into a riding or trekking school giving facilities to other than members of the Club.

b. Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club, The Chairman reported that a meeting had been held with members of the Club and representatives of the Nature Conservancy Council and the Ministry of Agriculture. A list of approved chemicals had been agreed, allowing all necessary treatment to the greens, but restricting treatment of fairways to the control of leatherjackets. The chemicals approved would have minimal effect on animal, bird and insect life, and cause negligible interference with the rights of the commoners.

c. Extension to Forest Row Recreation Ground. The Superintendent reported that he had heard, through Mr. Geoffrey Johnson Smith, M.P., that the Secretary of State had decided that he was unable to take any action on behalf of the local residents who opposed the approved extension. It was agreed that the licence permitting the football club to commence work should now be issued.

d. Amendment to the Ashdown Forest Act. The Superintendent reported that, acting on behalf of the commoners he had conducted a referendum on the proposal that the 1974 Act be amended to permit commoners to use a postal voting system as opposed to proxy voting. There had been a 70% response to the questionnaire, with 94% of those replying voting in favour of the suggested change. The East Sussex County Council had approved a supplementary estimate to cover the cost of the referendum.

Mrs. Maudslay proposed and Mr. Wills seconded a resolution that the East Sussex County Council be asked to promote legislation to effect a change from proxy to postal voting in the election of Conservators. This was unanimously agreed.

b. Mounted Ranger Patrols. The Chairman reported that the committee appointed at the previous meeting had considered the proposal, and they recommended that, subject to the Friends of Ashdown Forest being prepared to purchase a horse and horse box, the Conservators should accept the Hon. Simon Stuart's kind offer of grazing and stabling, together with a sum of £100 per year for winter keep, and should then institute mounted ranger patrols on the Forest

c. Prosecution. The Superintendent reported that Mr. George Sanford had been fined £10 in the Uckfield Magistrates Court for unauthorised flying of model aircraft from the Forest.

**5. OUTLINE VEGETATION MAP:** The delineation of woodland and heathland areas as shown on the vegetation map were approved in principle; subject to detailed approval of individual areas being given at subsequent meetings.

## **6. ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1977/78**

The Superintendent presented the accounts for the previous financial year. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mr. Ellison, seconded by Mr. Kavanagh, and unanimously approved.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones drew attention to the amount of money in the Current account on 31st March 1978, and the Superintendent was instructed to consult the Bank with a view to arranging automatic transfers to Deposit, so as to keep the Current account at a minimum level.

**7. JOB CREATION PROGRAMME:** The Superintendent reported that the previous scheme had now ended, it that authority had now been given by the Manpower Services Commission to commence a new scheme employing two supervisors, ten 16 to 19 year old young people and one bookkeeper for a period of thirty weeks. There was a possibility that this period would be subject to extension. Details of the scheme had not yet been received, and the starting date had not been fixed. The Superintendent had, with the Chairman's authority, retained the services of Mr. Gladman, the supervisor with the previous project, as a temporary workman on the Conservators staff, in order to provide continuity when the new programme started.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA:**

a. East Grinstead Scouts Litter Collection. The Superintendent reported that the Scouts had held a very successful sponsored litter collection on the Forest. This had been very well organised and the resultant clean up of the Forest was remarkable. A letter of appreciation had been sent on behalf of the Conservators.

b. Fires. There had been 18 fires, burning approximately 57 acres this spring. Apart from two fires of 25 and 15 acres, all the remainder had been minor. It was probable that half these fires had been deliberately started, the remainder accidental.

c. Sponsored Ride. A very well supported sponsored ride in aid of "Action Research for Crippled Children" had been held on 14th May. Several thousand pounds had been raised for the charity, and the organiser had promised a substantial donation to the Forest in appreciation of the help given by the Rangers.

d. Litter on the Golf Course. There had been a number of complaints concerning litter on the new course. The Friends of Ashdown Forest had indicated that if the Conservators were to request a donation for litter baskets they would be willing to provide these. The Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club had undertaken to arrange the emptying of baskets if they could be provided. It was agreed that a formal request be made to the 'Friends' for the purchase of six baskets.

e. "In Deepest Britain". The BBC had made a nature film on the Forest to be shown on BBC 2 on Thursday 18th May. A fee of £5 had been paid to the Conservators.

f. Sheep. Mr. H. Osborne had made complaints regarding dogs worrying his sheep grazing on the Forest. The Chairman had authorised temporary notices warning the public, to be placed in the Nutley-Fairwarp area.

g. Chairs for Conservators Meetings. The purchase of twelve new stacking chairs was approved.

h. Radio Broadcast. The Head Ranger had, with the Clerk's authority, taken part in a countryside broadcast concerning Ashdown Forest. Further programmes in the series would be broadcast at approximately two monthly intervals.

i. Commemoration Tree in Memory of Mr. C.R. Balfour-Smith. The Chairman, accompanied by Mr. Glover and the Superintendent had been present when a commemorative oak had been planted at Fairwarp. Mrs. Balfour-Smith had written expressing her appreciation to the Conservators.

j. Visit of Countryside Commission. Mr. Patrick Leonard, Deputy Director (South) of the Commission had visited the Forest. Mr. Leonard had expressed the Commission's satisfaction with the progress of the Management Plan, and had indicated that the Conservators could expect continued grant aid in the implementation of the Plan.

k. Commemorative Seat. Mrs. Perry who, with the Conservators' consent, had presented a seat in memory of her late husband, had now presented a second seat to be placed near the Friends Clump.

l. Information Caravan. Mrs. Kirk, who had volunteered to assist in manning the caravan, would start working with the Rangers next week.

m. Secretary. The Superintendent reported that Mrs. Grace Berry would be retiring at the end of June. The Conservators expressed their appreciation for Mrs. Berry's services to the Board for the past five years, and wished her happiness in her retirement.

9. **CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT:** The Conservation Officer reported that since the last meeting he had done further work on the vegetation plan and looked at how it might be implemented. It was apparent that much of the vegetation management will be relatively labour intensive and will require an on-going commitment of resources. Unlike the car parking problem, it appeared that it would not be possible to make a capital investment now which will reduce the annual maintenance requirement of the future.

He was examining the future staffing of the Forest and the likely cost as well as possible methods of financing the proposals.

The Conservators received offers of grant aid from the Countryside Commission for materials for the four car parks in the 1978 programme and from the Nature Conservancy Council for a three year programme of clearance of regenerating birch and Scots pine from the prime area of heather.

#### 10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Hardy stated that he was concerned as to the future financing of the Forest, with particular reference to the increased expenditure that would be inevitable if the vegetation was to be properly managed. He considered that the Conservators should study all possible means of increasing their income, and that, in conjunction with the Superintendent and the Conservation Officer, he was preparing a paper for the Conservators' consideration. This action received general support. Mr. Edwardes-Jones considered that there should be very close consultation with the East Sussex County Council with regard to the costing of future work.

Mr. Glover queried the bank erected at the new roadway into Camphill Cottage at Duddleswell, which might result in danger to pedestrians using the roadway. The Superintendent undertook to investigate the matter.

THE CONSERVATORS THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE

Confidential Minute No. 3 of the meeting held on 15th March 1978 was approved and signed by the Chairman.

THE CONSERVATORS THEN CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16.50. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 19th. JULY 1978 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. J. Gent, R.J. Glover, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, A.J. Miller, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, M.G. Taylor.

## **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Meeting held on 17th. May 1978 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Plawhatch Riding Stables. The Superintendent reported that a special club permit had been issued at the agreed fee of £40.00 for four horses. So far very little use had been made of this permit and no problems had arisen and none were anticipated in the foreseeable future.

b) Ashdown Forest Golf Club. The Club Secretary had requested permission to spray parts of the fairways on the new course to kill annual weeds. The area affected at present was relatively small, amounting in all to not more than two acres. The weedkiller to be used was of the hormone type already approved for use on Greens. It was agreed that spraying would be permitted for killing of weeds on the fairways. The Superintendent was instructed to liaise with the Secretary of the Golf Club so that he was informed on every occasion when the Golf Club wished to carry out this type of spraying.

c) Recreation Ground. The Superintendent reported that work on the construction of the new football pitch would be starting in the near future. The problem of future parking of cars had been the subject of a Meeting between himself and the Secretary of the Football Club. It had been agreed that a notice would be placed at the top of Chapel Lane directing cars to the Recreation Ground Car Park situated behind the sports pavilion. The Football Club had undertaken to check on all cars parking along the roadway and to see that their members did not offend. The Clerk would be supplied with a fixture list so that he would know when matches were being played and could arrange for Rangers to carry out spot checks on the parking problem.

d) Mounted Ranger. The Superintendent reported that the Friends of Ashdown Forest had agreed to give a donation to purchase a horse and horse box. Mr. D. Smith of Forest Row had loaned a horse for a period of assessment, after which, if all parties were happy consideration will be given to the purchase of 'Byron'. The Hon. Simon Stuart had sent a cheque for £100.00 for the upkeep of the horse and will be making arrangements for a Bankers Order in favour of the Conservators to be paid annually. The Hon. Simon Stuart's offer of a field and stables had already been taken up. Before the horse was put out a quantity of hay was made ready for the winter. Mr. White proposed that letters of thanks be sent to The Hon. Simon Stuart, the Friends of Ashdown Forest and Mr. Smith. This was unanimously agreed and the Chairman asked the Clerk to arrange this.

e) Job Creation Programme. The Superintendent had very little to report as, although the project had been approved, manpower resources did not appear to be available. There was a general discussion on ways that the scheme could be made more attractive to participants. The Superintendent was instructed to continue negotiations with the Manpower Services Commission with a view to arranging some scheme which would provide manpower as soon as possible. Transport difficulties, possible provision of meals and direct approaches to schools to interest them in the scheme were to be investigated.

## **4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Superintendent presented the Financial Statement as at 1st, July. He reported that the income and expenditure was according to schedule for the time of the year. The Superintendent reported that the East Sussex County Council had agreed to meet the £70.00 deficit incurred last year by over expenditure on the estimates.

## **5. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT**

He had visited Epping Forest where he was given a guided tour and discussed Forest management problems.

He had been looking into the need for an interpretative service on Ashdown Forest and the subject was covered in the paper which was handed to the Meeting. The Conservation Officer reported that he had been examining and costing future staffing requirements of the Forest as well as considering possible methods of raising the necessary financial resources. This work is to be incorporated in the detailed paper, "The Brave New Forest 1984".

Arrangements had been made for additional items to be produced for sale in the Information Caravan. A leaflet on The Birds of Ashdown Forest was being produced in conjunction with the R.S.P.B. and a series of colour postcards was being printed.

A number of groups from local schools had been carrying out conservation work on the Forest, such as clearing litter, cutting back vegetation and repairing an eroded fire break. In addition, one boy from Sackville School had been working with the Rangers under a Work Experience Programme and a forestry student from France had been giving his services to the Forest both in a practical way out on the ground and by assisting the Conservation Officer with the vegetation plan.

#### **6. CAR PARK PLANS**

Detailed plans for the proposed layouts of car parks J56 and L55 were displayed on the board. The Conservation Officer described the plans and answered questions. Both plans were approved.

#### **7. DETAILED VEGETATION PLANS**

A plan for the proposed vegetation control of the Twyford Lane /Hindleap/Goat Gross Rides area was displayed on the board. Mr. Wright gave brief details of the plan and the work involved and answered questions. Implementation of the plan depended very largely on the availability of labour from the Manpower Services Commission schemes. When not employed on car park work, they could be diverted on to vegetation management. Mr. Hardy stated that he knew this particular area of the Forest well and had made a close study of the plan. He considered it to be a practical approach to the problem in this area. The plan was approved.

#### **8. LICENCED ROADWAYS**

a) Little Furnace Farm, Coleman Hatch. Mr. Wellbourne has requested permission to construct a new licenced roadway from his property to join up with the Colemans Hatch to The Splash road. The present access to the property was by via a road leading to the Colemans Hatch to Wych Cross road. The Superintendent stated that, whereas it was the Conservators normal policy to refuse permission to construct a second or alternate access road to any property, there was a certain advantage to be considered in this case. The route of the proposed new road was along an old Forest track, at present unmetalled. This track was at present very wet and needed a considerable amount of drainage work beyond the capacity of the Conservators staff at present. It was, however, used as a riding route on to the Forest, and formed an essential part of the riding network. If Mr. Wellbourne were permitted to make a new road, he would undertake the drainage and thus provide a dry route for horses on to the Forest. It was agreed that a licence should be issued for the construction of this new road subject to a condition that horses continue to use this access out to the Forest over the new roadway and that the roadway would be available for use by owners of neighbouring property

b) New Layout of Entrance to Streatfield Farm. Following a general discussion on the need for a new layout, it was proposed by the Chairman that some members of the Board carry out an on-site inspection. This was seconded by Miss Willard. It was agreed that The Chairman, Mr. Glover and Mr. Wills would carry out this inspection.

#### **9. IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT PLAN FUTURE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME**

It was agreed that the General Purposes Committee should study the problem and report back to the Conservators. The Committee were given authority to co-opt other members of the Board as they should think necessary.

#### **10. SUNDRY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

a) Fires. The Superintendent reported that the main fire danger period was now over. There had been a spate of small fires recently, all or which were probably deliberately started. The Police had co-operated in investigating the source of these fires and although it was very probable that the name of the fire raiser was known, no concrete evidence could be produced to take the man to Court.

b) Planning Application Wrens Warren Kennels. Mr. Cook of Wrens Warren had a planning application before the District Council to expand the present Kennels into use as a quarantine kennel. The Conservators decided that they had no observations to make on this planning application.

c) Planning Application Whitehouse Farm, Duddleswell. Mr. Ingles has submitted an application to build a covered riding school on his property at Whitehouse Farm. The likely effect of such a structure would be that during periods of wet weather the numbers of rides from Whitehouse Farm on the Forest would be reduced, as opportunity could be taken for instruction under cover. The result would be a likely reduction in the erosion of the riding tracks in the vacuity of Whitehouse Farm and the construction of such a riding school would therefore be beneficial to the Forest. It was agreed that no objections should be made to this application.

d) Commoners Voting - Proposed Amendment to the 1974 Ashdown Forest Act. The Superintendent reported that the matter was to be discussed in Committee in the County Council at the end of August and should the County Council agree to forward the amendment, the Bill would be deposited in the Autumn of 1979. It could therefore receive the Royal Assent in July 1980 and the amended form of voting could therefore be operative in March 1981.

e) Courses for Rangers. The Countryside Commission was arranging various courses which might well be suitable for Rangers. These courses included such items as Public Relations and Interpretation. The cost of the courses would be in the region of £40-£50 but a subsidy of 50 per cent would be available. It was agreed that Rangers should be sent on suitable courses provided that they could be spared from the Forest.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 16.45 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 20th. SEPTEMBER 1978 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT** • Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, B.J. Glover, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Messrs. E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th. July 1978 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Job Creation Programme. The Superintendent reported that the programme was now under way, having started on 4th. September. We have six young people and two Supervisors who are working on Car Parks at Chelwood Gate and Hindleap.

b) Mr. Edwardes-Jones enquired how the arrangements with the horse were progressing. The Superintendent reported that it was going quite well and that the horse box would be arriving next day. When this was in use it would be possible to assess the full potential of the scheme.

### **4. REPORT ON AUDIT**

The Superintendent read the following report from the District Auditor:

"The audit of the accounts of the Conservators for the year ended 31 March 1978 has been completed. There are no matters on which it is necessary for me to make a report to the Conservators under section 157 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The appropriate certificate has been entered on the Balance Sheet in accordance with regulation 12 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1974.

My thanks are due for the courteous assistance afforded at the audit."

Signed E.S. SANT - District Auditor

The Board's attention was drawn to the new Balance Sheet which showed the amended figures under income and expenditure. The amendment being due to an error in presentation on the V.A.T. account by the Accountant: The amended figure showed that instead of an over expenditure of £70.00, the true position was that expenditure was £91.00 under the estimated figures.

### **5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Superintendent presented the Financial Statement as at 1st. September. There were no specific points to draw to the Board's attention.

He advised the Board that the estimates for 1979/80 would shortly have to be submitted to the County Council although the County had not yet given a date for this. It was probable that the date would be before the next Board Meeting and he suggested that an Estimates Committee be set up to agree the provisional estimates, which would then be presented to the Board for final approval at the next Meeting. It was agreed that a Committee consisting of the Chairman, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Edwardes-Jones, and Mr. Wills and should have authority to agree the provisional estimates for submission to the East Sussex County Council. At Mr. Edwardes-Jones' suggestion, it was further agreed that a representative of the County Planning Department or County Treasurers Department be invited to sit in

on the Estimates Committee Meeting in order to give advice.

## **6. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Conservation Corps were working on the Forest between 21st. July and 14th. August. Although they did about 200 man days (or nearly 1 man year) of work on clearing naturally regenerating birch and Scots pine from three of the prime areas of heather on the west side, approximately \*\* acres of heather were cleared but these ranged from areas which required relatively few man days to those which required a very large number of man days.

When not working with the Conservation Corps he was preparing proposals for the Interpretation of Ashdown Forest, the results of which were forwarded to the Board with the Agenda for this Meeting. Since this paper was prepared further discussions on interpretation have been had with both East Sussex County Council and DART.

The first of the Car Parks on the current year's programme of work was started at the beginning of September when the new Manpower Services Commission Team was recruited.

## **7. LAYOUT OF CAR PARKS H49 and G44**

Detailed Plans for the Car Parks were displayed on the board and were described by the Conservation Officer. The question of commercial vehicles using the Poundgate Road Car Park was raised as this is quite a popular Car Park with lorry drivers. Mr. Wright advised the Board that small commercial vehicles would be able to get in and out without causing any damage, but a problem might exist with the heavy vehicles. The access to the park would be deliberately constructed so as to discourage large vehicles entering. The Superintendent suggested that it might be possible that the County Council would make a lay-by near the car park and the Chairman asked him to investigate this.

## **8. VEGETATION PLANS**

A plan for the vegetation control of the Twyford Lane/Wych Cross area was displayed on the board. Mr. Wright gave brief details of the plan and of the work which had already been carried out by the Conservation Corps. There was general discussion and suggestions regarding the sale of trees or wood from the site and the Conservation Officer reported that this had been investigated but it was not a viable proposition:

## **9. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ASHDOWN FOREST ACT**

The General Purposes Committee recommended that an amendment should be sought to the Ashdown Forest Act 1974 in order to give the Conservators power to engage in management of camping and caravan sites on land not being part of Ashdown Forest. The Superintendent reported that there was a shortage of camping sites in the immediate district around Ashdown Forest and that many people visiting the Forest had nowhere to go to stay overnight. The Rangers were inundated with requests for directions to the nearest camp site and in many cases people had to move on, almost to the coast. There had been two instances in the last few years when it might have been possible for the Conservators to be involved in running a camp site in the vicinity of the Forest. In both these instances the Conservators could, with the minimum of work have achieved a financial gain from these operations. They would not have operated the camp sites on their own but would have engaged the Camping Club or some similar organisation to do so on their behalf. He considered that it was advisable that this matter was discussed at the next Commoners Annual General Meeting in March 1979. Although an operation of this nature would have no affect whatsoever on the Rights of Common of Ashdown Forest, it was possible that some people felt so strongly about camping of any nature in their district that there might be some opposition from Commoners, in which case it was unlikely that the East Sussex County Council would proceed with an amendment to the Act. Mr. Kavanagh proposed that the East Sussex County Council be asked to include an amendment of this nature in their legislation, which was to be put before Parliament next year, with the proviso that, after the Commoners Annual General

Meeting in March, the Conservators could withdraw the request if they considered it advisable. This resolution was passed by 10 votes to 1

## **10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

a) Riding. The Superintendent reported that Fairholme Riding School was closing down and Mr. Turner of Dane Hill had written asking the Board to consider the transfer of the riding permit to him. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the Riding Committee consisting of Messrs. Gent, Glover and Hardy with the Chairman and Vice Chairman as ex-officio members should consider this application and also look into the question of an increase in fees for riding establishments' permits for 1979. Mr. Kavanagh stated that he wished to attend the Riding Committee meeting.

b) Trees at Duddleswell Cross Roads. The County Engineer had asked that in the interest of road safety the Yew trees at the cross roads be cut down. The Superintendent had met a representative of the County Engineer on site to discuss the problem and had seen various accident reports concerning road traffic accidents at this point. None of the reports had made any mention of the trees. The Board was unanimous that the trees would not be cut down and it was agreed that the County Engineer be asked to consider improving the safety at this corner by the use of more positive road signs. The Superintendent reported that he would shortly be having the hedges cut back so as to improve visibility.

## **THE CONSERVATORS THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 4

## **THE CONSERVATORS CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.35 p.m. Chairman

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## **CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 1978**

<u>INCOME TO DATE</u>	To date	Rev. est. 1978/79
Acknowledgement Rents & Licences	934	4050
Riding	476	2875
Rates	2147	2435
Wood Reeve	313	1000
Miscellaneous <u>409</u>	4279	10360

## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

East Sussex County Council	34009
Wealden District Council	4100
Countryside Commission	<u>2120</u>

TOTAL INCOME	<u>44508</u>
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## **PAYMENTS TO DATE**

Salaries & wages	20713	37517
Office	1667	3140
Forest Expenses	5659	9875
Capital Expenses	<u>8530</u>	<u>8530</u>

TOTAL PAYMENTS	<u>36569</u>	<u>59062</u>
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## CASH AND BANK POSITION

Current Accounts	3063
Deposit Accounts	<u>5824</u>
	8887

Less Bills Outstanding	<u>1647</u>
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BALANCE IN HAND	<u>7240</u>
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## INFORMATION SERVICES

Current Account	51
Deposit Account	<u>308</u>
	<u>359</u>

## CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE AND INCOME FOR 1978/79 (Revised) and 1979/80

### 1977/78 EXPENDITURE

	1977/78 1 <sup>st</sup> estimate	Additional Expenditure	Saving	Revised estimate	1979/80 Note
SALARIES & WAGES					
Administration	10735	561	--	11296	11752
Rangers	16618	--	--	14	16604 18050 1
Workmen	<u>3500</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>3530</u>	<u>3656</u>
	30853	591	14	31430	33458 2
ADMINISTRATIVE					
Office	1450	50-	--	1500	1230 3
Postage & Telephone	570	--	--	570	600 3
Printing & Stationery	250	25	--	275	300
Professional	450	--	25	425	500
Miscellaneous	<u>300</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>370</u>	<u>400</u>
	3020	145	33	3140	3030
FOREST					
Staff Expenses	1200	--	--	1200	800 1
Transport & Machinery	5850	150	--	--	6000 6500 1
Maintenance	1750	--	--	1750	1925
Depot	350	50	--	400	440
Radio	<u>--</u>	<u>525</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>525</u>	<u>575</u> 4
	9150	725	--	6990	9665
CAPITAL					
Tractor	8277	--	147	8130	1
Motorcycle	400	--	--	400	
Replacement					3400
vehicle	--	--	--	-	50
Spinner	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>		
	8677	--	-	8530	3450

## CONSERVATION

## OFFICER

Salary	6034	53	--	6087	6416
Transport	600	--	--	600	600
Experimental Budget	500	--	--	500	500
Administrative Expenses	500	--	--	350	<u>500</u>
	7634	--	1610	7537	8016
Less Countryside					
Commission Grant	<u>5725</u>	--	--	<u>5653</u>	<u>6012</u>
	1909	--	--	1884	2004

TOTAL COMMITTED      59334      1514      336      60512  
EXPENDITURE

ADJUSTED FOR      53609      --      --      54859  
GRANT

## EXPERIMENTAL WORK – CAR PARKS

Estimated cost      £10,000  
Less Grant from Countryside  
Commission      7,500

Cost to County Council      2500

**TOTAL COMMITTED & EXPERIMENTAL EXPENDITURE**      56109

## UNCOMMITTED EXPENDITURE

Tractor Driver Wages      3162  
Expenses      50  
Transport & Machinery      350  
Flail cutter      3455

Trainee Ranger Wages      3162  
Less grant from  
Countryside Commission      2372  
Cost to County Council      790  
Expenses      220  
Transport & Machinery      500  
Motorcycle      400

Feasibility Study on Interpretation  
Estimated cost      5000  
Less grant from  
Countryside Commission      3750

Cost to County Council      1250

Proposed Purchase of Land  
Estimated cost      20000  
Less grant from  
Countryside Commission      15000

Cost to County Council      5000  
TOTAL UNCOMMITTED EXPENDITURE      15177  
TOTAL COMMITTED, UNCOMMITTED  
AND EXPERIMENTAL EXPENDITURE      69284

## INCOME

	1 <sup>st</sup> estimate	Deficit	Additional	Revised	1979/80
Rates	2500	65	--	2435	2435
Acknowledgement					
Rents	3700	--	350	4050	4150
Horse Riding	2500	--	575	2875	3175
Sundry Receipts	<u>350</u>	--	<u>650</u>	<u>1000</u>	<u>600</u>
	8850	65	1575	10360	10360

## SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED DEFICITS AFTER ALLOWANCE FOR COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION GRANTS

	1 <sup>ST</sup> ESTIMATE	REVISED
<b>TOTAL COMMITTED EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>53609</b>	<b>54859</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>8850</b>	<b>10360</b>
<b><u>TOTAL COMMITTED DEFICIT</u></b>	<b>44759</b>	<b>44499</b>
 <b>TOTAL COMMITTED &amp; EXPERIMENTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	 <b>56109</b>	 <b>57359</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>8850</u></b>	<b><u>10360</u></b>
 <b><u>TOTAL COMMITTED AND EXPERIMENTAL DEFICIT</u></b>	 <b>47259</b>	 <b>46999</b>
 <b>TOTAL COMMITTED, EXPERIMENTAL AND UNCOMMITTED EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		

## TOTAL COMMITTED EXPERIMENTAL AND UNCOMMITTED DEFICIT

1. Includes additional Ranger previously shown as uncommitted expenditure (£5,000 allowed).
  2. 1978/79 Estimate increased by 1st. July pay award.
  3. Includes Supplementary Estimate 1978/79
  4. Estimate for radio expenses (Licence, G.P.O. Line and maintenance) was inadvertently omitted from the 1978/79 Estimates.
  5. Flail cutter is urgently needed for vegetation management and control, but its use is entirely dependent upon a Tractor Driver being available.
  6. The Countryside Commission have indicated that a grant of 75 per cent would be available.
  7. There is presently an opportunity to purchase approximately 76 acres of Forest type heathland contiguous with Ashdown Forest.
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# **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW ON WEDNESDAY 22nd. NOVEMBER 1978 at 3.20 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. E.W. Ellison, R.J. Glover, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, M.G. Taylor

## **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendments, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th. September were agreed and signed by the Chairman: Page 2 - item 6 - Para 2 After the word DART add (Dartington Amenity Research Trust)

Page 2 - item 9 - Line 10 For vacinity read vicinity

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Lay-by Poundgate Road. The Superintendent reported that the County Engineer had been approached and has agreed to put the matter to the appropriate County Council Committee in the near future, together with proposals for improving the lay-by on the Wych Cross/Coleman Hatch Road which, at the present time, is not big enough for large commercial vehicles.

b) Trees at Duddleswell. Mr. Miller enquired whether there had been any further approaches by the County Council. The Superintendent confirmed that there had not. The Chairman advised the Board that, on his way to the Meeting, he had passed another accident at the Cross Roads and he instructed the Superintendent to make enquiries to ascertain whether the trees were mentioned in the Accident Report.

## **4. FOREST RATE**

There was a general discussion on the subject of the Forest Rates. Mr. Wills proposed that the rates remain unchanged for the coming year. This was seconded by Mrs. Maudslay and carried unanimously.

The Superintendent reported that a number of Commoners still had not settled their Forest rates and he had written to them advising that, if the rate was not paid by 22nd. November the matter would be put before the Board for them to consider recovering the debt in a Court of Law. Twenty-two Commoners still had not replied to this letter, seven of whom owed rates for two years. Mr. Kennard proposed that these people be taken to Court and this was agreed.

## **5. REPORT BY THE RIDING COMMITTEE**

The Board had received the Report of the Riding Committee which recommended that riding permit fees for individuals remain unchanged for 1979. This was agreed. It was further recommended that fees for riding establishments should be increased to £125 in 1979 and £250 in 1980. Mr. Ellison proposed that this recommendation be referred back to the Riding Committee as he felt that an increase from £50 to £125 was too high. This was seconded by Mr. Logan. Mr. Glover also agreed and suggested a rise of £50 each year until the figure of £250 was reached. Mr. Hardy proposed that the Fee of £125 as recommended by the Riding Committee should stand. This was seconded by Mr. White and the resolution passed eight votes to three.

The Riding Committee had considered a request by Mr. Turner of Danehill to be issued with a riding establishment permit for 1979 and recommended that the permit be granted. This was agreed

## **6. PURCHASE OF LAND**

The Superintendent advised the Board that 75 acres of land which abuts the Forest and is indistinguishable from it could possibly be purchased by the Conservators. The Countryside Commission have assured that grant aid of 75 per cent of the purchase price would be available. A supplementary estimate has been submitted to the County Council and this has been approved. It was unanimously agreed that negotiations should proceed as quickly as possible.

## **7. ESTIMATES OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE**

a) Revised estimates 1978/79 - The Superintendent gave brief details on the revised estimates, there were no specific points to be raised and these were agreed.

b) Estimates 1979/80 - The normal expenditure was very much in line with this years estimates the only notable point being that the Forest Row Village Hall Management Committee had asked for an increase in office rent from £830 to £1,000, The Estimates Committee recommended that a rent of £980 should be agreed, this representing a fair percentage increase in two years to allow for inflation. One major capital requirement for the year 1979/80 was the replacement of a vehicle. The Superintendent reported that the General Purposes Committee had looked into the need for a more suitable vehicle to replace the Renault Vans, the first of which was due for replacement in 1979. The vehicle which seemed to meet this requirement and which is readily available is a Japanese Daihatsu. The suggestion of buying Japanese met strong opposition from some members of the Board. Mr. Hardy, as Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, stated that his Committee were aware that such a vehicle was not the most acceptable choice but so much depended on availability. No guarantees could be given on the delivery dates of Land Rovers. It was felt that a Daihatsu could be used on a test basis and further thought could be given to reverting to Land Rovers when the next vehicle was due for replacement. Mr. Logan suggested that the possibility of purchasing a re-built Land Rover should be investigated. This was supported by Mr. White and agreed by the Board. It was, however, agreed that the figure of £3,400 for a vehicle should remain in the estimates.

Uncommitted Expenditure - The Feasibility Study to be removed from the estimates following discussions In Committee - see Confidential Minute No.5. The proposed purchase of land was also to be deleted from the estimates as this had been submitted as a supplementary estimate for the current year and has been approved. The remaining two items of uncommitted expenditure being a tractor driver and flail cutter for use with the tractor and a Trainee Ranger. If approval is given to the Trainee Ranger a grant of 75 per cent of his salary would be available from the Countryside Commission. Mr. Ellison suggested that if this item was turned down by the County Council, an approach should be made to the District Council who may be able to help.

c) Supplementary Estimates - Purchase of Land and Trainee Ranger. The Superintendent reported that he had submitted two supplementary estimates for the current year. The purchase of land having been dealt with in item 6 of the Agenda. The second being for the employment of, a Trainee Ranger but the County Council had been unable to grant this.

## **8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement as at October 31st. had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. There were no specific points to draw to the Board's attention.

## **9. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT**

Mr. Wright reported that the Manpower Services Commission Team was progressing well with the work on the car parks. Most of his work over the past two months had been in connection with Part II of the Management Plan. He had also been working on the next stages of the Vegetation Plan and the Car Parks.

## **10. VEGETATION PLAN**

Plans for the vegetation control of Wych Cross/Chelwood Gate area and Priory Road west were approved.

## **11. CAR PARKS H.46 and I.54**

The Conservation Officer described the Plans which were displayed on the board and these were approved.

## **12. SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT**

The Royal Aircraft Establishment had requested permission to fly a balloon in the vicinity of the Radio Station to carry out technical trials for a two week period. Permission was granted.

Mid Sussex Water Authority had requested permission to sink four experimental boreholes on the site of the proposed reservoir. Permission was granted.

Two requests for licenced roadways across the Forest had been received, namely at Gale, Forest Row and Streatfield Farm, Nutley. It was agreed that a sub-committee of three members of the Board should carry out on site inspections.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.50 p.m.

Chairman

**CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD  
ENDED 1ST DECEMBER 1978**

To Date                      Rev. Estimate  
1978/79

**INCOME TO DATE**

Acknowledgement		
Rents & Licences	1438	4050
Riding	676	2875
Rates	2359	2435
Wood reeve	435	1000
Miscellaneous	<u>542</u>	
	5450	10360

**CONTRIBUTIONS**

East Sussex County Council	34009
Wealden District Council	4100
Countryside Commission	<u>2559</u>
	40668

**TOTAL INCOME**                      46118

**PAYMENTS TO DATE**

Salaries & Wages	26303	37517
Office	2425	3140
Forest Expenses	9080*	9875
Capital Expenses	<u>8530</u>	<u>8530</u>

**TOTAL PAYMENTS**                      46338                      59062

**CASH AND BANK POSITION**

Current Accounts	624
Deposit Accounts	825
Debts	<u>408</u>
	1857

Less Bills Outstanding                      2267

**OVERDRAWN BALANCE**                      410

**INFORMATION SERVICE**

Current Account	74
Deposit Account	<u>358</u>
	<u><u>432</u></u>

Includes £1,467.00 reclaimable under Countryside Commission Grant

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**MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL,  
FOREST ROW ON WEDNESDAY 24th. JANUARY 1979 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair) Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, B. J. Glover, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.

1. The Chairman opened the Meeting by thanking Mr. Hardy for the splendid party he had given in honour of the Head Ranger being awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year Honours list. Mr. Arnold was also formally congratulated.

## **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd. November were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Page 1 - Item 5 - Para. 2 Delete "This was agreed" and substitute "It was agreed that a provisional permit be granted".

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Lay-by Poundgate Road. The County Engineer had confirmed that the lay-by on the Poundgate Road has been approved together with lengthening the existing lay-by on Ridge Road subject to consultation with the County Secretary concerning the ownership of the land. It is possible that the Council might recommend compulsory purchase and exchange of land.

b) Trees at Duddleswell. The Superintendent reported that he had investigated the circumstances of the accident at the cross roads on 22nd. November and he confirmed that the Yew Trees were not mentioned in the accident report.

c) Forest Rates. The Superintendent reported that he had not yet taken Court action regarding rate arrears. Owing to pressure of work he had not yet been able to consult with the Clerk of the Court in Lewes.

d) Purchase of Land. There was nothing to report at present. The valuation had not yet been received from the District Valuer. He had been made aware of the urgency with regard to grants being available in this financial year.

e) Replacement Vehicle. The Superintendent reported that he had investigated the possibility of purchasing rebuilt Land Rovers. These vehicles are not completely re-built but are only prepared to M.O.T. standards. The General Purposes Committee had looked at the Daihatsu and found it to be very suitable for use on the Forest. Although the purchase of a Japanese vehicle was not universally popular, the possibility of getting a Land Rover was extremely unlikely as a delivery date of about one year had been quoted.

Mr. Miller resolved that a Daihatsu be ordered immediately, this was seconded by Mr. Wills and the resolution passed 10 votes to 1

Mr. Hardy suggested that a Land Rover be ordered now ready for the replacement of a vehicle in 19\$0.

## **4. RESIGNATION OF THE CONSERVATION OFFICER**

The Board was advised that Mr. Wright had resigned and that there had been a Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee to look into the problems of continuing with the work. It was agreed that discussions on this subject should be transferred to the Confidential Agenda - See Confidential Minute No. 6

## **5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement as at 31st. December had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The Superintendent advised that the cash flow position was not good at the end of December. The Acknowledgment Rents and Riding Permit fees were now being paid and £\*\*\* had been received since \*\* January.

## **6. REPORT OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE**

Mr. Gent, Chairman of the Committee reported on a Meeting held on 17th. January. Due to very bad weather, the Riding Establishments had been stopped from riding on the Forest since Christmas, and individual riders should have severely restricted their riding in compliance with the Riding Code. The Ashdown Forest Riding Association, whose secretary, Mr. R. Franklyn had attended the Meeting by invitation, requested that the restriction be lifted, and that the establishment of an all weather riding route be considered. The Committee recommended that, as a gesture of goodwill, after 1st. February there should be no further bans enforced for the remainder of this winter. The Ashdown Forest Riding Association should be informed that this would be regarded as a trial period the success of

which depended upon the co-operation of their members in observing the Riding Code. The Committee considered that the possibility of a winter riding route should be studied, but they appreciated that there would be considerable difficulties in establishing a route that was readily available to all riders. The Committee's recommendations were approved, and they were asked to consider the long term winter solutions and report back.

## **6. SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT**

There have been some cases of sheep and deer being worried by dogs and some sheep had in fact been killed. Where local dogs are involved the problem can, and has been dealt with. The isolated cases of visitors' dogs worrying animals are not so easily dealt with. It was impracticable to place an excessive number of warning notices. The Press was asked to give the problem full coverage so as to warn dog owners of the problem.

There had been an allegation made that an encroachment has occurred at the site of a new bungalow at Putlands Farm. Both Mrs. Maudslay and the Head Ranger had visited the site but the complainant is still not satisfied. The Superintendent requested that a small Committee carry out an on-site inspection. This was agreed. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Mrs. Maudslay, Mr. Gent and Mr. Kavanagh agreed to serve on the Committee.

The inhabitants of Fairwarp village had purchased a field for recreation purposes and had requested permission to make up the track leading to the ground. It was agreed that a Licence be granted at a peppercorn rent.

The Superintendent reported that, shortly before Christmas, a number of Scots Pine had been cleared from heather areas and that these had been sold as Christmas Trees and a total of £100 had been made.

Purchase of a Projector. The Superintendent reported that we now have a good selection of slides which could be used for lectures and he therefore wished to ask the Friends of Ashdown Forest for a Projector and Screen. It was agreed that this should be done.

Uckfield By Pass. A letter had been received from some residents at Fairwarp complaining that the Conservators had not considered the effect of the proposed by-pass on the Forest. The Superintendent reported that the present proposed route presented no threat to the Forest, and would in fact reduce the weight of traffic from the present level. Due to objections from residents of Maresfield, the East Sussex County Council was now carrying out ground surveys to the East of Maresfield village. Should these surveys result in an alternative route being suggested, the Conservators would then have to consider any possible effect of the Forest. The Superintendent had, in any event, written to the County Engineer stating the Conservators' duties on the protection of the Forest from encroachments under Section 16 of the Act, and their policies of opposing any increase in road traffic as agreed in the Management Plan. Several Conservators, who were also County Councillors, informed the Board that they were watching the interests of the Forest when proposals were discussed at County Council level. The Superintendent was instructed to convey this information to the complainers.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 6

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE.**

The date for the May Board Meeting was fixed for 23rd. May.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.40 p.m.

Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE COMMONERS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT MARESFIELD VILLAGE HALL ON FRIDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 1978 AT 7.30 P.M.**

PRESENT: There were over 100 Commoners and their spouses present.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING.** Nominations were put forward for Miss B. Willard and Mr. D. Harman. After a tied first vote Mr. Harman was elected on the second show of hands.

2. **NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING.** The Clerk read the notice convening the Meeting



3. **ELECTION OF TWO CONSERVATORS.** The Clerk explained to the meeting that there were two vacancies to be filled, one for a five year period in the place of Mr. Hall who retired by rotation, and the other for a one year period to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. C. Balfour-Smith. Commoners were asked to cast separate votes for each election. Voting papers were collected and the meeting continued while counting was in progress.

4. **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 1977.** It was agreed that the minutes should be taken as read.

5. **FOREST REPORT.**

a) Riding. There was a full discussion concerning the problems of riding on the Forest, and in general the meeting accepted the need for a better control of riding to combat erosion. Almost all present felt strongly that the concession of a free permit to Commoners should not be withdrawn.

b) General: a number of questions concerning other items in the report were discussed.

6. **FOREST ROW RECREATION GROUND** The Clerk outlines a proposal to extend the Forest Row Recreation Ground to provide a small extra football pitch for juniors. The Conservators wished to sound out the opinion of the Commoners before making a decision. The overwhelming opinion of the meeting was against any extension of the Recreation Ground.

7. **KINGS STANDING CORNER.** The Clerk reported that the east Sussex County Council wished to realign the highway at Kings Standing Corner in order to improve road safety. This would involve taking in a small part of the Forest but at the same time some of the existing carriageway would revert. The meeting accepted the need for this work.

8. **OTHER GENERAL BUSINESS.** Proxy voting: The Clerk reported that there was considerable confusion amongst the Commoners with regard to Proxy voting. Very many Commoners had issued proxy forms to two, and in some cases three persons, with the result that many votes were invalidated. He suggested that it might be advantageous to seek an amendment to the Ashdown Forest Act 1974 so that Commoners should be entitled to a postal vote instead of voting by proxy. It was decided that a Committee consisting of the five elected Conservators should investigate the proposals, and advise the Conservators.

9. **DATE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.** It was noted That the next Annual General Meeting should be held at the Village Hall, Forest Row at 7.30 p.m. on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> march 1979.

The Meeting adjourned to await the declaration of the poll.

3. CONTINUED. The voting in the election of Conservators was announced as follows:

a) 5 year Term

G.H. Wills	149 (Elected)
M.G. Hall	107
H. Osborne	93
F. Kennard	18
P. Cruise	13
V.W. Beadle	6

b) 1 year Term

F. Kennard	*** (Elected)
P.C. Cruise	13
M.G. Hall	83
G.H. Wills	34
H. Osborne	30
V.W. Beadle	16

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING WAS CLOSED

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW ON WEDNESDAY, 21st. MARCH 1979 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (In the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, R. J. Glover, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M. G. Taylor, A.L.H. White, H. Wills.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Hon. C.A.S. Grimston.

## **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes of the Meeting of 24th. January were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Item 3 penultimate paragraph - Delete 'resolved' and substitute 'proposed'.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Forest Rate. The Superintendent reported that the seven Commoners who had owed Rates for two years had been given a final warning that Court action would be taken for recovery of the debt. All seven had paid thanks to the persuasive efforts of the Head Ranger. The Chairman thanked Mr. Arnold for his efforts.

b) Purchase of Land. The Clerk reported that there had been a delay in this matter on the part of Lord Gage's Agents. The price of £20,000 had now been agreed by the District Valuer. Unfortunately, due to the delay the Countryside Commission were unable to make a grant in this financial year and were not yet certain of the availability of funds next year. As well as the 75 acres being purchased, Lord Gage is including two small pieces of Manor Waste of about 3 acres each. There will be no charge made for this extra land.

c) Conservation Officer. The Clerk reported that, following consultation with the Chairman, he had arranged for Paul Millmore, the County Council's Heritage Coast Conservation Officer to be seconded to the Forest for six months commencing 1st. April. As with the previous Conservation Officer, grant aid will be available from the Countryside Commission.

d) Encroachment at Putlands Bungalow. The Superintendent reported that, following the meeting on 24th. January the elected Committee had visited the site, but the problem was not yet finally resolved. It was decided that the boundary as laid down on the Award Map should be adhered to and our Solicitor was instructed to communicate this to the owner. It has been agreed that an independent surveyor should stake out the boundary in accordance with the map; this in fact had been done this morning. No further problems were now anticipated.

e) Purchase of Projector. The Friends of Ashdown Forest had been approached and had agreed to pay for a projector and screen. The Conservators asked the Clerk to convey their thanks to the Friends.

## **4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement as at 28th. February had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. Although the balance in the current accounts was high at the end of February all outstanding accounts have now been received and paid leaving a balance just sufficient to cover the end of month salaries.

## **5. REPORT ON THE COMMONERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Mr. Wills had been elected as Chairman of the Commoners Annual General Meeting and he reported on the Meeting to the Board.

There were about 80 Commoners and their spouses present but only 8 or 10 of these actually vote.

There were two candidates for the vacancy on the Board, Mr. M.G. Hall and Mr. F. Kennard. The result of the vote was:-

Mr. Hall	151 votes
Mr. Kennard	159 votes

Mr. Kennard therefore being re-elected for a period of five years. The Chairman congratulated Mr. Kennard and welcomed him back. Mr. Kennard briefly addressed the Board and thanked the elected Conservators for their support.

Other matters reported to the Commoners were, Proxy Voting, The Proposed Purchase of land and the Commoners' Newsletter. None of these items were met with any enthusiasm on the part of the Commoners.

The proposal by the Conservators to seek an Amendment to the Act to give them powers to control and manage camping sites not on the Forest was discussed at some length and the proposal finally put to the vote, the result being 42 for and 43 against.

The Commoners had been sent details of the proposed Fund Raising Campaign prior to the Meeting and this was discussed at length. No strong opposition was met and the general opinion was that it should be a success.

It was suggested by the Commoners that, at future Meetings, all elected Conservators should be on the platform to answer questions. Miss Willard felt that it would also help to bridge the gap between the Conservators and the Commoners if some of the appointed members of the Board were also invited to the Meeting. Most members of the Board felt that this was a good idea. Failing this, Mr. Taylor suggested that a public gallery be made available at Conservators Meetings. The Chairman requested that this be put on the Agenda for discussion at the next Conservators Meeting.

#### 6. Promised Amendment to the Act. re. Caravan Sites

Following a general discussion and taking into consideration the result of discussions at the Commoners Meeting, Mr. Kavanagh proposed that the Conservators do not seek this Amendment. Seconded by Mr. Wills and carried 12 votes to 2

#### 7. LAYOUT OF CAR PARK H.50

A detailed plan of the Car Park was displayed and described by the Clerk. It was to be a "Summer Only" grassed car park with two entrances. One of the existing entrances would be moved as it was close to a dangerous bend. When completed there would be space for approximately 50 cars. A general discussion ensued and the plan was approved.

#### 8. REQUEST FROM MR. FORSYTH FOR AN EXTENSION OF HIS RIDING PERMIT

Mr. Forsyth runs a residential Language Study Centre at Friars Gate Farm and at present has a permit for four horses. He has requested that consideration be given to this being increased to six horses. After a brief discussion and by a majority decision the increased permit was refused.

#### 9. LICENSED ROADWAY AT FOREST HOLME

Mr. Taylor declared an interest in this matter and agreed not to take part in any discussions. The Clerk briefly outlined the proposal for the roadway and it was decided that a Sub-Committee carry out an on-site inspection and make a decision at that time.

#### 10. APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS FOR AN INTERPRETATION STUDY

The Superintendent reported that, subject to availability of funds at the time, the Countryside Commission would be prepared to give a grant toward the Interpretation Section of the proposed Ashdown Forest Centre. They would, however, insist on a professional opinion before doing so. Full details had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. Although a proposal to employ the Dartington Amenity Research Trust to carry out the study had previously been shelved, it was now desirable to reconsider their appointment. The Countryside Commission had indicated that they would grant aid 75 per cent of the fee and the Friends of Ashdown Forest had been approached to finance the other 25 per cent. Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that, subject to the finances being available, the Board go ahead with the study. This was seconded by Mr. Wills and passed unanimously.

#### 11. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The Superintendent reported that there had been a break-in at the Depot and a tractor battery stolen. The Police were notified and a claim will be made to the Insurance Company.

A request had been received from Beacon School, Crowborough, to create a Nature Trail on the Forest below the Horder Centre. After a full discussion it was agreed that permission should be granted. The project would be regarded as a trial scheme, and was to be under the close supervision of the Superintendent.

A local hang-gliding enthusiast had requested permission to practice on the Forest. The Clerk outlined some of the problems that might occur. Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that, as the Forest was extensively used for recreation, permission should be granted. This was seconded by Mr. Gent, but when put to the vote the resolution was lost 5 votes to 7.

The Superintendent reported that, although we were well into the Fire Season, there had been only one small fire. This had been caused by pupils from Tonbridge School who were orienteering on the Forest, lighting a picnic stove which was subsequently knocked over. The boys had put the fire out themselves by the time a Ranger arrived. As compensation for the damage they had caused, the boys had returned to the Forest and carried out some conservation work.

Mr. Henry Osborne had, just prior to the Meeting, sent a letter to the Clerk reporting a further incident of dogs worrying his sheep during the morning. He requested that better notices be posted warning dog owners of the consequences of sheep worrying. Miss Willard suggested that large notices be put up for short periods of time. This was agreed.

## **12. DATES FOR FUTURE CONSERVATORS MEETINGS**

The following dates were agreed:

23rd. May	25th. July	19th. September
21st. November	23rd. January 1980	19th. March 1980.

## **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Edwardes-Jones requested that Sundry Matters be listed on the Agenda. The Clerk advised the Meeting that this was not usually possible. Of the sundry matters dealt with at today's meeting, only one was known about prior to the Agenda being circulated.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 7.

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.50 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, FOREST ROW ON WEDNESDAY, 23rd. MAY 1979 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, The Hon. C.A.B. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, R.S. Glover, L. C. Hardy, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.L.B. White, G.H. Wills.

As the election of a Chairman and Vice Chairman was to take place during the meeting the Chair was vacant and the Meeting was, therefore, opened by the Superintendent.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Messrs. E.Y. Ellison, J. Gent, D. Kavanagh, A.S. Miller, M. Taylor.

### **2(a) TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1979/80**

Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that Brigadier Scott take the Chair for a further year. This was seconded by Mr. Glover and agreed unanimously. Brigadier Scott took the Chair and thanked the Board.

### **2(b) TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1979/80**

Miss Willard proposed Mr. G.H. Wills, this was seconded by Mr. White and agreed unanimously. Mr. Wills took the seat of the Vice Chairman and thanked the Board.

## **3. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM MICHAEL HOOKER & ASSOCIATES AND TO CONSIDER THE FORMATION OF AN ASHDOWN FOREST CONSERVATION TRUST**

Dr. Hooker was invited to join the Meeting. His report and recommendations had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. It was recommended that an Appeal be launched with a target figure of £350,000.

Before discussing the recommendations, Dr. Hooker thanked the Superintendent and his staff, on behalf of Christopher Crowcroft, for all the co-operation he had received whilst carrying out the appraisal.

A general discussion followed regarding the target figure. It was felt that, in view of the County Council being unable to make a substantial contribution £350,000 was a more realistic figure. Dr. Hooker advised the Board that people would not stop giving as soon as the target was reached and the Appeal Literature could include details of the "Target of Need" of £454,000. It was therefore agreed that the appeal be launched.

Mr. White suggested that, as a target figure of £450,000 had already appeared in the newspapers, the Press should be given an explanation for the need to reduce the figure. It was agreed that the Clerk should issue a Press Statement the next day.

Dr. Hooker further recommended that he be retained for the equivalent of 12 working days during the period from June to September 1979. He also offered the services of a senior executive to act as Appeals Director from September 1979.

It was agreed that Dr. Hooker's services should be retained, but the offer of an Appeals Director was declined as Barclays Bank had agreed to second one of their Managers.

Dr. Hooker said he felt confident that the Appeal would be a success and hoped that the Conservators were happy with his company's services. Mr. Edwardes-Jones expressed the opinion that Mr. Crowcroft had done a first class job and the Board were most appreciative of his efforts. The Superintendent endorsed what Mr. Edwardes-Jones said and asked that his thanks be conveyed to Mr. Crowcroft.

Dr. Hooker left the meeting.

#### **4(a) TO ELECT A GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 1979**

It was agreed that the following members sit on the General Purposes Committee:

Mr. L.C. Hardy (Chairman), Miss B. Willard, Mr. J. Gent, Mr. H.J. Glover ex-officio Brigadier L.M. Scott and Mr. B.H. Wills.

#### **4(b) TO ELECT AN APPEALS FINANCE COMMITTEE**

It was agreed that the Committee should remain as last year, namely: Brigadier L.M. Scott, Mr. L.C. Hardy, Mr. A.L.H. White, Mr. G.K. Wills.

#### **4(c) TO ELECT A HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE**

It was agreed that the following members form the Horse Riding Committee: Mr. J. Gent (Chairman), Mr. R.J. Glover, Mr. F. Kennard, Mr. J.A.A.S. Logan. Ex officio Brigadier L.M. Scott and Mr. G.H. Wills.

### **5. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1979 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **6. MATTERS ARISING**

(a) Purchase of Land. The Superintendent reported that, because of delays by the District Valuer and the Vendors Agent the Countryside Commission were no longer able to grant aid the purchase of land owing to lack of funds in the private Sector in this financial year. The County Council had given us £5,000 towards the purchase but without the £15,000 from the Countryside Commission we could not complete the purchase. The Superintendent had written to Lord Winstanley, Chairman of the Countryside Commission pointing out the difficult position we now face and requesting any help he may be able to offer.

(b) Encroachment at Putlands Bungalow, Fairwarp. The Chairman reported that a further side meeting had taken place, attended by Mr. Hobden, the Conservators' solicitor, the owner of the bungalow and Mrs McNair representing local residents. It has been impossible to establish the exact boundary in accordance with the Award map, and an arbitrary line had been agreed. The fence would be moved back to this line.

(c) Interpretative Study. The Superintendent reported that the Friends had been approached to finance 25 per cent of the fee but were unable to help. The Countryside Commission are also unable to help with the 75 per cent. It was, therefore, agreed that an approach to the Dartington Amenity Research Trust be held in abeyance.

(d) Sheep Worrying. Notices had been erected as agreed by the Board at the previous meeting. Sheep were still being worried by dogs and Mr. Osborne had had occasion to call the Rangers for assistance when an Alsatian was

savaging his sheep both on the Forest and on his own land. The dog was finally shot by Mr. Osborne on his own land.

## **7. TO CONSIDER PERMITTING THE PUBLIC TO ATTEND CONSERVATORS MEETING**

The Clerk advised the Board that it was becoming increasingly difficult to accommodate a full Board Meeting in his office and that, even if they decided not to allow the public to attend it was desirable that an alternative venue be used. He had, therefore, made enquiries locally and confirmed that the Holy Trinity Church Hall would be available for meetings. The Chairman opened the discussion by stating that he personally was against the public attending Conservators meetings. Mr. Logan felt that, as the Conservators were funded by public money, the meeting should be open. A general discussion ensued and it was finally agreed that, as an experiment, the next three meetings would be open to the public, the situation would then be reviewed. On the question of the time of day that the meeting should take place, it was unanimously agreed that it should not be altered from 2.30 p.m.

## **8. REPORT OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE**

The report dated 17th. January, containing the Riding Committee's recommendations had been circulated prior to the meeting. The experimental work recommended was briefly discussed and it was agreed that the work should be carried out. The Superintendent reported that a problem had arisen regarding the number of horses using the Forest at any one time by riding establishments. Horses kept at livery were joining rides, thereby increasing the number above the permitted 12. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the maximum number should be 12 whether they belonged to the riding establishment or were livery horses.

## **9. PROPOSED SITES FOR THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

A report setting out the availability of services etc., and the desirability of the two available sites had been circulated prior to the meeting. The site at Broadstone Warren was considered to be the most desirable of the two, despite the fact that the Manor Charitable Trust would not lease the land for more than 21 years. It was therefore agreed that a lease should be negotiated.

## **10. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ASHDOWN FOREST ACT**

The Superintendent reported that he had provisionally agreed a draft of the proposed amendment to the Ashdown Forest Act 1974, giving effect to the change in voting procedure for the Commoners from Proxy to Postal Voting. Copies of the draft clause would be distributed to all elected Conservators.

## **11. TO CONSIDER THE LAYOUT OF CAR PARK H.48**

A detailed plan of the car park was displayed and described by the Clerk. This horse box park has one entrance at present and it was recommended that it should now be constructed with two. The middle of the car park will be of stone with grass all round and banked edges to stop cars driving on to the Forest. The plan was approved.

## **12. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT**

Mr. Millmore reported that the present job Creation Scheme was due to end on 15th June and he had applied for an extension to the end of August. The Conservation Corp. is continuing work on the vegetation management and contacts were being made with local schools in an effort to involve them in work on the Forest. Visits had also been made to local Careers Offices in order to recruit more young people to the Job Creation Scheme.

## **13. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Fires. The Superintendent reported that, although we were now well in to the fire season, there had only been seven fires so far this year. The largest of these was near Chelwood Vachery and damaged approximately 30 acres. The cause could have been a cigarette or it was possible that the fire was started deliberately. There had been a fire at Hardens Hill, destroying approximately four acres. This was caused by a member of the public using a picnic stove and will result in a prosecution by the Police. Another small fire had been started deliberately by children. The Police have been asked not to prosecute but to issue a firm warning to the children. The Head Ranger will also arrange to visit the local school to talk to the children about fires.

b) Litter Collection. The Superintendent reported that two sponsored wombles had taken place and had been successful both from the point of view of the Forest and the organisations concerned.

c) Use of Power Saws on Sundays. The Conservation Corps have been working on the Forest at weekends and in order that they can carry on with the vegetation management it is desirable for them to use power saws. This is prohibited by the Bye Laws. The work being carried out by the Corps is in isolated areas and well away from

houses. They would only be working on the Forest for six weekends throughout the year. It was therefore agreed that they should be allowed to use the saws.

d) Golf Club. The Club will be holding a Sponsored Pro-Am competition on 12th. June. The Sponsors had requested that they be allowed to display some discreet advertising. The present flags would be replaced by ones bearing the Sponsors name and Tee Boxes bearing the name were also to be used. The advertising matter would be displayed for 24 hours only. The Board had no objections to this

### **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 8

### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.45 p.m.

### **MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP**

Attended by: The Superintendent

Mr. Ian Mitchell, Countryside Commission

Mr. David Harvey, Nature Conservancy Council,

Mr. W. Lanning, County Planning Department

Mr. David Streeter

Mr. Paul Millmore

A Meeting of the Group was held on 11th. July to review progress on the Management Plan and the input of Mr. Paul Millmore.

Interpretation. Very little progress had been made on the development of Interpretive Plans. A possibility now exists that finances might be available from the Countryside Commission to finance the study by the Dartington Amenity Research Trust. A verbal report will be made at the Board Meeting.

Voluntary Work. There is a prospect that the Job Creation Scheme will be extended until 31st March 1980, thus providing a continual work force for the immediate future. Endeavours are being made to involve schools in conservation work on a regular basis, allocating certain areas of the Forest to individual schools. Use is being made of various voluntary groups on an ad hoc basis, as well as the Conservation Corps. It was agreed that Mr. Millmore should devote most of his time during the remaining ten weeks of his secondment to the Conservators in setting up the nucleus of a Voluntary Ranger Service.

Vegetation Management. The Group discussed the problems highlighted by the Vegetation Management Meeting held on 11th June. Mr. David Streeter stressed that, unless there was a very great increase in the degree of vegetation management, large tracts of the Forest would revert to woodland over the remainder of this century. The alternative to physical management by men and machines was the control of vegetation by grazing. Mr. Streeter considered that the time was approaching when the Conservators should, in the light of their agreed policy that the balance between woodland and heathland be maintained in approximately the present proportions, consider how this can be achieved, or else make a positive decision that the Forest should be permitted to revert to a predominantly woodland area.

The Superintendent outlined the problems, largely financial, of physical control of vegetation, and other problems which would arise if positive steps were taken to Control by grazing. He considered that before the Conservators were in a position to make such a fundamental decision as to permitting the larger part of Ashdown Forest to revert to woodland, it would be necessary for them to carry out a very detailed study of all the issues, which might take 12 months or more to complete. He undertook to ask the Conservators to consider setting up a Working Party to study and advise the Conservators on this issue.

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### **MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 1979 RE: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

A meeting was held to consider progress and to make recommendations on Vegetation Management, attended by:-

Mr. J. Gent

Mr. D. Harvey, Nature Conservancy Council  
Mr. I. Deans, County Ecologist  
Mr. Denver, County Forestry  
The Superintendent  
Mr. Millmore  
The Head Ranger  
Ranger Linton

After a wide ranging discussion the Committee carried out an extensive tour of some of the more obvious problem areas of the Forest.

It was generally agreed that it was necessary to draw up a priority list of work that needed to be done for the conservation of heather, wet heath and the maintenance of views from car parks etc. It was considered that with the manpower and resources available and likely to be available only those areas which were most vulnerable could be controlled, and that an inevitable result, short of extensive fires or a fundamental change in circumstances, would be that the balance between woodland and open heathland would change in favour of woodland.

It was decided that priority should be given to the preparation of a list of short term remedial work, indicating the degree of urgency of each task. The Superintendent stated that he would allocate Ranger Linton to this task as his main duty for, the next three months. He would be assisted and advised by Mr. Millmore.

The Committee agreed to meet again at the end of September to consider Ranger Linton's report and to make any recommendations to the Conservators they felt to be necessary.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 25th. JULY 1979 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair) Messrs. J. Gent, R.J. Glover, L.C. Hardy, D. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A. J. Miller, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.

The Chairman opened the Meeting by welcoming the lone member of the public attending the first open Meeting of the Conservators. He advised the Board that Miss Willard could not be present as she had been in hospital and was still unwell. The Superintendent informed the Conservators that he had written to Miss Willard on their behalf wishing her a speedy recovery.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Miss B. Willard, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. L.G. Edwardes-Jones, E. W. Ellison, M.G. Taylor.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd May 1979 were approved, subject to the following amendment, and signed by the Chairman.

Item 4(a) General Purposes Committee: Please add Mrs. C.M. Maudsley. The Clerk apologised to Mrs. Maudsley for this omission.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Horse Riding. At the meeting on 23rd. May it had been agreed that certain wet areas of fire rides be the subject of ditching, grading and reseeded. The Superintendent and the Rangers had now looked closely at these areas and felt that it might be possible to solve the problem by extensive draining without grading and reseeded. It was, therefore, suggested that the experimental work be postponed for one year and that the drainage work be carried out and the situation reassessed in a year's time. This was agreed.

b) Fires. Following a fire at Mardens Hill which destroyed approximately four acres (reported to the Board on 23rd May) the Police had prosecuted the person responsible and he had been fined £20.

c) Purchase of Land. The Superintendent reported that it was now definite that a grant would not be forthcoming from the Countryside Commission in the foreseeable future. The Superintendent had, therefore, written to Lord



Gage's solicitor to advise him of the problem and to enquire whether Lord Gage would be prepared to delay the sale or perhaps make a gift to the Conservators as a contribution to the Appeal. The £5,000 from the County Council toward the purchase of the land was being held in a Deposit Account. If Lord Gage does not look at the problem sympathetically he suggested that consideration could be given to money from the Appeal being used to fund the purchase.

#### **4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement as at 30th June 1979 had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The only item requiring explanation was Capital Expenditure. This figure was some £300 higher than the estimated figure which was due to the price increase of the Daihatsu. The Head Ranger reported that so far the performance of this vehicle was up to expectations.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE AUDITED BALANCE SHEET AND STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1978/79**

The Superintendent reported that the Balance Sheet had been approved but the Certificate of Audit had not yet been issued as the stock list, which proved the figure for Information Services Stock had been mislaid by the Accountant and had to be re-written and forwarded to the Auditor.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the figure for Contributory Authority had been divided up, one part of the money was in respect of the Experimental Budget for Car Parks which was linked to the Countryside Commission grant. Because of the bad weather earlier in the year it had been impossible to complete the work on the Car Parks and the Countryside Commission had, therefore, agreed that the unspent money of the 75 per cent grant could be carried forward to this financial year. It is hoped that the County Council's 25 per cent contribution will also be on this basis. The figure of £1,226 under expended is largely due to the Conservation Officer resigning before the end of the Financial Year. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mr. White, seconded by Mr. Glover and unanimously approved.

#### **6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPEAL**

The Superintendent reported that the Trust was now being set up. Lord Abergavenny had consented to be President, Mr. Edwardes-Jones Chairman of the Trustees and the first six Trustees had now agreed to serve. Sir Peter Matthews had agreed to be Chairman of the Appeals Committee. Two candidates from Barclays Bank were to be interviewed later in the week for the position of Appeals Director. The East Sussex County Council had made a donation of £500 toward the Appeal and a total of £1,825.00 was now in the Trust Account; a very generous donation of £1,000 having been received from Lord Samuel.

#### **7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD TO CONSIDER VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

A report of the Meeting had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. As this was also closely linked with item 8 on the Agenda - TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (also circulated prior to the Meeting) the two items were taken together.

There was a general discussion on the points raised in these reports. The Clerk outlined the work being carried out by Ranger Linton on the mapping of vegetation. This work should be completed by September when consideration could be given to how the problems could be dealt with. It was unanimously agreed that any consideration of the long term problems of vegetation control should be dealt with by the General Purposes Committee and that no special working party should be set up.

With regard to Interpretation, it now seems fairly certain that grants will not be available from the Countryside Commission for a study by the Dartington Amenity Research Trust. It was agreed that we have sufficient resources and knowledge within the organisation to set up an Interpretive/Nature Centre without wasting money employing "experts" to do this work, but that advice should be sought at all stages.

[item 8 does not appear]

#### **9. CONSERVATION OFFICERS REPORT**

Mr. Millmore gave details of the assistance he had been giving to Ranger Linton in the mapping of vegetation and of the work he had arranged with local schools etc. in vegetation clearance. He had also been looking into the possibility of setting up a Voluntary Ranger Force and the ways of training volunteers.

#### **10. TO CONSIDER THE CONTINUATION OF A LICENCE FOR TEMPORARY FENCING NEAR SNUFF COTTAGE, SHARPTHORNE**

The Superintendent reported that a fence had been erected approximately 13 years ago on the boundary between Snuff Cottage and the Forest. A stream runs along this boundary and the Fence had been erected on the Forest side of the stream. It was the subject of a dispute soon after it had been erected and following an enquiry at that time the Board agreed that the fence be allowed to remain but that it should be under Licence to the Conservators. The Clerk read out the terms of the current Licence.

Mrs. Lloyd of Old Plaw Hatch had now asked that the situation be reviewed. The Clerk suggested that a small sub-committee carry out an inspection. It was agreed that Mrs. Maudslay and Mr. Kennard, together with the Chairman and Vice Chairman as ex-officio officers form this Committee to inspect the site and make recommendations.

#### **11. TO CONSIDER A FURTHER REQUEST FOR A LICENCED ROADWAY AT FOREST HOLME**

This property had recently been divided into two lots and a previous request for the drive to be extended had been considered and refused by the Board. The owner of Forest Holme had now offered to donate to the Conservators a piece of land equivalent to the area that the new roadway would take. A brief discussion followed in which Mr. Kennard advised that the proposed new road would necessitate the felling of two or three mature Oak trees and Mr. Glover considered that the piece of land offered in the exchange would be of no real value to the Forest. Mr. Kennard proposed that the Board's previous decision should stand. This was seconded by Mr. Glover and agreed unanimously.

#### **12. TO CONSIDER A LETTER FROM THE EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONCERNING THE YEW TREES AT DUDDLESWELL CROSS ROADS**

The Police had requested the County Council to fell the trees. The County Council had been in touch with the Superintendent by telephone and had promised to submit full details in writing. This letter had not yet arrived and the Superintendent requested that the item be deferred until the next Board Meeting. This was agreed.

#### **13. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

The Head Ranger had recently been contacted by a local Vet who had been treating an injured Fawn. The Fawn had been injured on the Ridge Road and the Police had taken the animal to the vet, who had treated the Fawn's fractured pelvis and other minor injuries and now faced the problem of what to do with the animal. After discussions with Mrs. Arnold, Mr. Arnold agreed to take the animal as it could not go back on to the Forest. The Fawn is now being cared for at Whitehouse Farm jointly by Mrs. Arnold and Mrs. Ruxton and is making good progress.

A letter had been received from Mr. Geoffrey Johnson Smith M.P. enclosing a copy of a letter from Mr. Henry Osborne which had also been sent to the Council Council, District Council and the Police. requesting that cattle grids be placed in the vicinity of his property to stop his sheep from straying as some 30 sheep were killed on the roads each year. After a general discussion it was agreed that the Conservators would have no objection to cattle grids but the financial implications were too great for the Conservators to aid the suggestion. Cattle grids alone would not solve the problem and some fencing would also be needed. It was felt that the problem was more that of the County Highways Department than that of the Conservators, and that any question of erecting fences on Forest land should be approached with caution. The Superintendent was instructed to convey these opinions to Mr. Johnson Smith.

The District Council had requested permission to erect a name board at Legsheath Lane. The Board has, in fact, already been erected. The general opinion was that this should not be allowed. Mr. Kennard suggested that the Committee carrying out the inspection at Snuff Cottage should also look at this. This was agreed, and that the Committee should have delegated authority to order the removal of the board if they thought fit.

S & A Geophysical Limited had requested permission to carry out further Seismic Surveys on the Forest in the Fairwarp area. Mr. Logan advised the Board that surveys of this kind had been carried out on his land and he confirmed that they caused no disturbance to the soil etc. Mr. White proposed that the survey be permitted, seconded by-Mr. Glover and this was carried unanimously.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 9

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.40 p.m.

Chairman

## **COPY OF A LETTER RECEIVED FROM MR. B.C.P. MAYHEW, HUNTERS FARM, NUTLEY 29th. August 1979.**

Dear Commander Angell,

Sheep on Ashdown Forest.

I had occasion to write to you in detail and at some length in 1975 about the problem of sheep straying on to the roads that adjoin or go through Ashdown Forest and the great danger that this is to human life. I know that at that time an effort was made to try and find a solution, but I gather to no avail. The problem of the sheep is still continuing and it is only a miracle that more accidents and further loss of life have not occurred on a greater scale. Over the last few days the problems round Nutley have been very great, about which no doubt both the police and local residents have informed you already.

I now understand that the number of sheep on the Forest is to be dramatically increased which, will, because of the static and limited amount of grazing on the Forest, increase the problem not two-fold, but by many times as the sheep range further to find grazing. Action to avert accidents that can only lead in the near future to tragic loss of life must be taken by the bodies responsible for the regulations of the Forest. I know that the ancient rights of the Commoners, of which I am one, including the right to graze, should not be given up lightly, but where circumstances have changed so dramatically since they were first granted - the motor car taking the place of the horse and cart - a review of these rights should be undertaken in the interest of other people's right to life.

It is not an answer to say that nothing can legally be done about this problem as there is no law in this land that cannot be altered, amended, or revoked by a majority of one in the House of Commons, together with the Royal Assent. There has already been one Ashdown Forest bill in recent years and I see no reason why there should not be a second if this is the only way to protect the life, limbs, and property of the people who live on or pass through this area. The ancient but archaic rights of a handful of people should not be allowed to endanger the safety of the populace at large.

I feel that the continuing Pontius Pilot act cannot be continued by the people who have responsibility for the Forest. Human blood will be spilt and the responsibility for it will morally, if not legally, be on those people's hands.

I would be grateful for a reasoned reply to this letter.

Yours sincerely,

B.C.P. MAYHEW

Copies to: Geoffrey Johnson Smith, Esq., M.P.  
The Chief Constable, East Sussex Constabulary  
The County Secretary, East Sussex County Council.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW ON-WEDNESDAY, 19th. SEPTEMBER 1979**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C. M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E. W. Ellison, R. J. Glover, L.C. Hardy, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, G.H. Wills

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Messrs. J. Gent, D. Kavanagh, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th. July were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Drainage Work on Fire Rides. The Superintendent reported that he had written to the Chairman of the Friends of Ashdown Forest requesting £500.00 toward the work. No official reply had yet been received, but the request had been unofficially agreed. The Superintendent had also had discussions with the Treasurer of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association, who considered that some financial assistance probably would be available and would put the matter forward to the Association. It is hoped that work will commence in a month or so. There are three particular areas where drainage work is necessary, one extensive area and two smaller.

b) Licence at Snuff Cottage. The Licensee had given the required three months notice of termination of the Licence and would be removing the fence. No further problems were therefore anticipated.

c) Yew Trees at Duddleswell. The County Council are no longer considering the removal of the trees. New road signs have been erected and the situation will be monitored. Accident records do not justify the removal of the Trees.

d) Name Board at Legsheath lane. As agreed at the last meeting, a small Committee visited the site. They were of the opinion that the sign should not be allowed on the forest. The Superintendent had conveyed the decision to the District Council and the sign has been removed.

e) Seismic Survey. The Superintendent reported that the survey had been carried out under close supervision by the Rangers and there had been only one slight problem in the Chuck Hatch area, when it had been necessary to re-blast and unfortunately the residents had not been advised. The Superintendent confirmed that S & A Geophysical would be making a payment to the Conservators in respect of Rangers time, plus the cost of any necessary repairs to the Forest, as well as the normal payment for each borehole. Mr. Edwardes-Jones advised the Board that he was trying to arrange an illustrated talk on Seismic Surveys for local residents in Wadhurst and would inform the Board of the venue as soon as arrangements were made. Mrs. Maudslay requested the information for inclusion in the Commoners' Newsletter.

## **4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement as at 31st. August had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. There was nothing unusual to report.

## **5. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT AUDITOR,**

"The Audit of the accounts of the Conservators for the year ended 31 March 1979 has been completed. There are no matters on which it is necessary for me to make a report to the Conservators under section 157 of the Local Government Act 1972. The appropriate certificate has been entered on the Balance Sheet in accordance with regulation 12 of the Accounts and. Audit Regulations 1974. A memorandum of matters of details discussed at the audit will be forwarded. My thanks are due for the courteous assistance afforded at the audit.

Signed E.S. SANT District Auditor"

The Chairman thanked the Superintendent and Book-keeper for their efforts.

## **6. TO CONSIDER A LETTER FROM MR. R.C.P. MAYHEW**

A copy of the letter from Mr. Mayhew, suggesting that grazing rights should no longer be allowed on the forest, had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The Chairman advised the Board that the problems caused by sheep had been looked at in great detail prior to the Ashdown Forest Act 1974. He, therefore, suggested that, either the General Purposes Committee look into the matter again, or that the Conservators might feel that no further legislation be considered so soon after the passing of the Act. A brief discussion ensued regarding the

number of sheep now on the forest and the dangers to road users. Mrs. Maudslay proposed that no further legislation be considered. This was seconded by Miss Willard and carried 10 votes to 1.

#### **7. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE APPEAL.**

James Longley of Crawley had agreed to design the building at half the normal cost, and had submitted preliminary plans for the Board's consideration. He stated that it was important that some plans for the building should be agreed in principle as the launch date of the Appeal was set for 26th. November and a picture of the proposed Centre had to be incorporated in the Appeal Brochure. The Superintendent outlined the details of the plans and copies were passed round to members of the Board. After a discussion on the interior design of the building, Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that the design of the building be accepted and this was agreed unanimously. It was further agreed that members of the Appeal Committee meet with a representative from Langleys to discuss the interior detail.

#### **8. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A LICENCE ROADWAY AT LITTLE CROFT COTTAGE, FAIRWARP.**

The Superintendent reported that there was no vehicular access to this property at present, the previous owner having parked his car outside the boundary. The new owner wished to construct a garage and therefore requested permission to construct wheel tracks in mono blocks for a distance of approximately 10 yards. Mrs. Maudslay had inspected the site and recommended that permission be granted. This was agreed.

#### **9. TO REVIEW THE TERMS OF LICENCES FOR MODEL AIRCRAFT FLYING IN 1980.**

The Superintendent had again received complaints from local residents and suggested that the situation should be reviewed, together with a possible revision of the licence fee. It was agreed that Mr. Kennard, Mrs. Maudslay and Mr. Kavanagh form a Committee, together with the Chairman and Vice Chairman as ex-officio members, to look into the problems. It was further agreed that Mr. Kennard be Chairman of this Committee. Representatives of both Model Aircraft Societies should be invited to attend the meeting.

#### **10. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM THE FRIENDS OF ASHDOWN FOREST TO PLANT A "MACMILLAN CLUMP" ON THE FOREST.**

Lady Aberdeen had requested that the Friends be permitted to plant a clump of hardwoods to be known as the "MacMillan Clump". The Superintendent and Lady Aberdeen had provisionally agreed a site near the corner at Chelwood Gate. It was agreed that permission be granted, subject to a final decision on the site.

#### **11. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT**

Mr. Millmore reported that, since the last Board Meeting, he had been looking into the possibilities of setting up a Voluntary Rangers Service on the forest. He had organised and designed a training course which would be run by the Head Ranger. There were at present a dozen or so potential Voluntary Rangers willing to attend the course which will start at the beginning of November. The Chairman thanked Mr. Millmore for the work he had done during his six months secondment from the County Council, which was due to end on 30th. September.

#### **12. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent informed the Board that Mr. Townsend of Yew Tree Cottage, Colemans Hatch, who was the only member of the public attending the meeting, had been a Commoner for 40 years. He was selling his cottage and moving away from the area. The Conservators unanimously wished Mr. Townsend much happiness in his new home. The Superintendent, on behalf of the Rangers, asked that the staff might also register their good wishes.

A request had been received from the Provincial Insurance Company for permission to have a bonfire and fireworks on Forest Row Recreation Ground on 10th. November. After a brief discussion regarding safety, permission was granted.

The Milne Memorial at Gills Lap was now completed and the Conservators are to be invited to the private opening ceremony. As numbers would have to be limited, it was felt that the Board should be represented by the elected Conservators. This was agreed.

The Superintendent reported that Mr. Gent had stated that he would like to call a meeting of the Horse Riding Committee. It was suggested that this take place in the Clerk's office on 18th. October at 5 p.m. This was agreed.

#### **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

Confidential Minute No. 8 was approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.20 p.m. Chairman

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## **REPORT OF A MEETING HELD ON 16th. OCTOBER 1979 re VEGETATION.**

**A Meeting of the Ad Hoc Vegetation Management Advisory Committee was held to review progress since June, and to make recommendations to the Conservators. The Meeting was attended by:**

Mr. J. Gent  
Mr. D. Streeter  
Mr. I. Deans - County Ecologist  
Mr. A.J. Denyer - County Forester  
The Superintendent  
Ranger Linton

Ranger Linton reported that he had completed a survey of the whole of the Forest and presented a paper in which he produced a map showing areas which were desirable to clear and keep clean to conserve heather, wet heath and views. Also shown were areas where no work was intended as it was thought sensible to let them revert to forest - mainly Oak, but in part Birch and Scots Pine, which would in the long term be dominated by Oak. This would increase the percentage of wooded areas in the forest by approximately 20 per cent. He estimated a total of 1,600 man days should be spent cleaning up the heather areas and divided this total into Priorities 1, 2 and 3. Priority 1 had something over 600 man days.

The Committee considered this paper. Mr. David Streeter was opposed to such a large area being allowed to revert to Oak, but the meeting as a whole accepted that this change was inevitable, given the present availability of manpower, even if the "naturalist lobby" considered it to be undesirable. It was generally considered that 1,600 days was out of the question and that the Conservators be advised to write to the various authorities, Countryside Commission, Nature Conservancy Council and County Council saying that, in their opinion, the desirable balance of vegetation in Ashdown Forest, as stated in the Management Plan, was probably impossible to achieve in view of the present unlikelihood of obtaining grant aid. The main question at the moment was whether it was practically possible to save the heather areas.

Ranger Linton felt that he might be able to achieve about 700 man days during the course of the next year. It was pointed out that it could well take two or three boy/girl days to achieve one man day. It was appreciated that even if this total was achieved the outstanding balance of 900 days would have grown considerably during the course of the first year, and any backlog would increase correspondingly on subsequent years.

He had already received certain undertakings for conservation work from some local schools, and was pursuing further contacts. The Voluntary Ranger training scheme being started in November by the Head Ranger includes conservation work, and it is hoped that this may produce the nucleus of an Ashdown Forest Conservation Corps.

At the Superintendent's suggestion, it was agreed that Ranger Linton be allowed to proceed, using his Priority 1 schedule as a programme of work. He was to use as many voluntary organisations, schools, etc., as he could persuade to give days or weekends. Mr. Denyer suggested he might see if Parish Councils would adopt areas of forest to stimulate parish interest.

It was arranged that the Committee would meet again in a year's time. Mr. Linton would then report on progress and produce schedules showing achievements against plan. If at that time progress was very much behind schedule then other methods, mechanical or controlled burning, would have to be seriously considered.

**Report of Meetings of the Model Aircraft Committee held on 10th and 20th October 1979.**

**A Meeting of the Model Aircraft Committee was held on Wednesday, 10th. October at 5 p.m. in the Conservators' Office, and was attended by:**

Mr. F. Kennard            Chairman  
Mrs. C.M. Maudslay  
Mr. D. Kavanagh  
Brigadier L.M. Scott - ex officio  
The Superintendent

The Clerk reported to the Committee that he had received some further representations from residents in the Poundgate area. This area was designated by the Conservators for flying radio controlled model aircraft by members of the Wealden Model Aircraft Society. The same area had been used for a number of years, and the gist of the complaints was that they had suffered the harassment of continual noise, particularly on Sunday mornings, for many years, and that it was now "someone else's turn". The Committee decided that their complaint was reasonable and considered the alteration of permitted flying hours to avoid Sunday mornings. Mr. Winter, representing the Wealden Model Aircraft Society, accompanied by Mr. Jones and Mr. Golding of the Society of Model Aeronautical Engineers were then invited to attend the meeting, and the proposal to change the hours was discussed. Mr. Winter explained the habit pattern of club members, particularly allied to their employment, and pointed out that the Sunday morning meeting was the focus of the Club activities, and that without it many members would be unable to exercise their hobby.

An alternative site, which had previously been reconnoitred by Mr. Kennard and the Superintendent was then considered. It was agreed to hold a site meeting on Saturday, 20th. October at 2.30 p.m. when there would be a demonstration flight, in order for the Committee to judge the noise levels likely to be experienced by residents and the possible impact on other forest users, particularly walkers and riders.

The Committee informed the Society that they would RECOMMEND to the Conservators that the Licence Fee should be increased from £ to £80. The Committee then discussed the terms of the Licence to the Society of Model Aeronautical Engineers, concerning the flying of free flight model aircraft in the Old Lodge Valley area. It was decided to RECOMMEND that the Licence should be renewed for 1980, but with an increase of the basic fee from £35 to £45 and with an increase of the competition fee from £12 to £15. At the request of the Society the Committee also RECOMMEND that the Summer and Winter flying times should be on a May to August and a September to April basis, as opposed to British Summer Time and Greenwich Mean Time as at present.

### **SITE MEETING 20th. OCTOBER**

A meeting was held on the forest in the vicinity of Greenwood Gate Clump, attended by the Committee members present at the meeting held on 10th. October, with the addition of Mr. Wills (ex-officio member) and also the Head Ranger and Ranger Linton. A number of representatives of the Wealden Model Aircraft Society were present.

The proposed site, approximately 500 metres North East of Greenwood Gate Clump, was inspected and a demonstration flight from this point was carried out. Members of the Committee judged the noise level at this point, and else at varying distances down wind. The Committee considered that the noise interference to both local residents and large numbers of forest visitors would be minimal, but there could be some conflict with walkers and riders. This was unlikely to be significant.

The Committee RECOMMENDS that, for a trial period of one year, a Licence should be issued subject to the following conditions:-

The Society be permitted to clear a small operating square in the bracken, some 25 yards clear of the adjacent fire break, the precise location to be marked out by the Rangers. The Society be permitted to cut away young birch or Scots Pine growing within 100 yards of the operating square (the area concerned is designated by the Conservators as heathland). The Society shall undertake to take every precaution when starting engines, taking off or landing aircraft to ensure that danger to those using the nearby fire rides is minimised, and in particular not to frighten horses. The Society shall have the exclusive use of an adjacent car park, which was closed to the public in 1973. They shall keep the roadside barrier locked, and be responsible for the maintenance of the park.

### **HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE**

## **A Meeting of the Committee was held on Thursday, 18th. October, attended by: -**

Messrs. J. Gent - (Chairman), J.A.A.S. Logan, R. J. Glover, F. Kennard, Brigadier L.M. Scott - ex officio, G. H. Wills - ex officio, The Superintendent, The Head Ranger, Ranger Montague

The Committee discussed the fees for Horse Riding Permits. The Superintendent reported that the present scale of fees, with the exception of the Riding Establishments had remained unchanged for three years. The Committee considered that there was a case for a substantial increase in 1980, but after a lengthy debate, decided to RECOMMEND to the Conservators that there should be no change, but that notice should be given to the riders, through the channel of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association, that there would be a substantial increase in 1981. The thinking behind this recommendation was that any notification of increase would coincide with the launch of the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust Appeal. One prime target for the Appeal would be the riding community. Any family who could afford to buy and keep horses must be relatively well off, and as some of the principal users of the forest they might be persuaded to give generously. If, however, they were simultaneously presented with an increased riding fee, the accustomed resentment to such an increase could well be detrimental to the hoped for level of donations, leaving the Conservators less well off on balance.

Mr. P. Cruise, representing the Ashdown Forest Riding Association, and Mr. D. Jennings representing the East Grinstead Riding Association and the B.H.S. were then invited to join the Meeting. They were informed of the Committee's recommendations, but not of the reasoning behind it. The following points were then discussed.

**Winter Riding Regulations** The Superintendent reminded the Committee that it had been agreed last winter that the Conservators would not impose a total ban on riding in wet weather, but that the riders would be "put on their honour" to show proper respect to the Forest by restricting their riding activities to suit the ground conditions. This policy had resulted in a considerable decrease in the damage to the surface of the forest from that which might have been expected in a wet winter if no restrictions were in force. He pointed out, however, that all damage was cumulative, and that it was not restricted to winter. Wear and tear continued in the Summer and ground cut up in the Winter continued to erode, largely due to dust blowing in the wind during the Summer months.

The Committee and their two advisors discussed the problem at great length, looking for both short and long term solutions. It was agreed that the feasibility of installing an "Ansaphone" system in the Conservators' Office should be investigated, so that the responsibility could be put upon riders and riding establishments to dial and receive instructions which could vary from normal use to total ban, and between these extremes the system could be programmed to apply limited restrictions. It was suggested that any restriction imposed should be decided on a weekly basis, decisions being taken by a small Committee which might consist of one Conservator, the Superintendent and one representative of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association. Both the visiting advisors gave their support to this suggestion, and Mr. Cruise undertook to report back to his Committee, and communicate their views to the Conservators. It was also agreed that the question of supplementing the proposed telephone system by notices or signs on the forest be investigated. The Superintendent advised that, should the Conservators agree to this method of control, it would not be possible to implement the system until 1st. January 1980, to coincide with the new licensing period.

**Restriction of the Number of Rider Permits.** 480 Permits had been issued in 1979. The Committee RECOMMENDS that a ceiling of 500 Permits should be set for 1980, and that this number be reviewed each year.

**Horses at Livery.** The Superintendent reported that there were an ever increasing number of horses kept at livery in the forest area. Stables were being built or converted for this purpose, thus increasing the number of riders wishing to use the forest, many of whom did not live in the district. The Committee RECOMMENDS that the Superintendent be instructed to amend the application forms for Permits so as to identify the number of livery horses, and that the Committee should make any recommendations they thought fit next year in order to control the problem.

**5. Membership of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association.** The Committee felt that on the matter of principle it was undesirable at this stage to recommend that compulsory membership of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association should be a condition of issuing a Riding Permit. They do RECOMMEND that the Conservators should actively encourage riders to become members. This could be done by a notice on the application form or in the Ashdown Forest Riding Code.



## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

There should be no change in the fees charged for permits in 1980, except in the case of Riding Establishments, whose fees would be increased from £125 to £250 as already agreed by the Conservators.

The control of winter riding by means of a telephone answering system be investigated, possibly supplemented by signs.

Riding Permits be limited to 500 during 1980

The use of the forest by horses at livery should be monitored.

Membership of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association should be encouraged by the Conservators.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 21st. NOVEMBER 1979.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, R.S. Glover, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th. September were approved and signed by the Chairman.

IN ORDER THAT MR. BEASLEY WAS NOT DETAINED ANY LONGER, ITEM 15 WAS BROUGHT FORWARD ON THE AGENDA.

15. Mr. Beasley reported that arrangements for the Press Launch on 26th. November were now complete and that donations and gifts amounting to £75,000 will probably have been made by launch date. The first of the mailing shots had been completed, 1,000 letters having been sent out to Commoners, Licence holders and riders.

The Chairman advised the Board that Sir Peter Matthews had suggested that, as the Superintendent would be closely connected with the organisation of the Appeal, he should be given a suitable title. Appeal Co-ordinator had been suggested, and this was agreed by the Board.

The Superintendent reported that the plans of the Ashdown Forest Centre had now been submitted to Wealden District Council for planning permission, and these would be considered at the Council Meeting on 3rd. January.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Licence at Snuff Cottage. The Superintendent reported that Mr. Kennard had inspected the line of the new fence and felt that there could be no objection to this.

MacMillan Clump. A meeting had taken place with a number of Conservators on the site of the proposed MacMillan Clump. It had been agreed that the site was suitable and the planting of Oaks, Rowan and Scots Pine should be completed by the end of November.

### **4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement for the period ending 31st. October had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. There was nothing unusual to report.

### **5. TO FIX THE FOREST RATE FOR 1980**

The Chairman suggested that the rate remain unchanged for the coming year as it is administratively difficult to make a yearly increase to keep pace with inflation. It would be preferable to look at the rates on a three year basis when a substantial increase could be made by taking three years inflation into account. A brief discussion followed and it was resolved that the rate remain unchanged for 1980.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE AND INCOME**

Copies of the Estimates had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The Clerk drew the Board's attention to the note regarding salaries and reported that, at the request of the Finance Committee, the County Personnel Officer had been asked to review the present grading of all members of staff in the light of the increased responsibility they now had. This review would be taking place in the very near future. It was agreed that the Finance Committee should consider any recommendations made by the County Personnel Officer and be given the authority to amend the Estimates should they think fit. This was agreed.

All other items in the Estimates were straightforward. Mr. Taylor proposed that they be accepted. This was seconded by Mr. Logan and carried unanimously.

## **7. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON AN ACCIDENT INVOLVING THE DAIHATSU.**

Ranger Montague had been called out to despatch an injured deer, and whilst his vehicle was parked a car hit the Daihatsu causing extensive damage. The Chairman stated that he had been informed immediately and had investigated the incident fully. Repairs to the vehicle would take about a month and this will create a problem with transporting the Job Creation Team. It was, therefore, necessary to hire a vehicle. The problem had been discussed with the County Treasurer who had agreed to the expenditure involved.

## **8. REPORT ON THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING.**

The report of the Meeting held on 18th. October had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. Mr.-Gent, as Chairman of the Riding Committee, briefly outlined the details of the Meeting and the recommendations that were made for the Board's consideration.

It was recommended that the Permit fees for 1980 remain unchanged, except in the case of riding establishments, whose fees would be increased to £250 as already agreed by the Conservators last year. This was agreed.

In order to save the forest from further serious damage during the winter months it was recommended that an Ansaphone system be installed so that information was available to all riders about any current restrictions on the whole or part of the forest. A small Committee, consisting of Mr. Gent, The Superintendent and a member of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association should monitor the state of the forest and impose restrictions in bad weather should this prove necessary. After a brief discussion Mr. Miller proposed that the Ansaphone system be installed for a trial period of one year. This was seconded by Mr. Logan and carried 8 votes to 2. It was further agreed that the figure of £200 for the Ansaphone should be included in the Estimates.

The Committee also recommended that Riding Permits be restricted to a maximum of 500 in 1980. A general discussion followed in which Mrs. Sheldrick, Secretary of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association, who was attending the Meeting as a member of the public, was asked to comment. Mrs. Sheldrick advised the Board that her Association would be carrying out a survey to see who used the forest and the Association would be pleased to inform the Board of their findings. The Association was concerned that by restricting the number of permits, young children might be forced to ride on the roads. It was finally agreed that Permits be limited to 500 for 1980, but that the Conservators would welcome the assistance of the Riding Association in this matter and would be willing to look again into the question of restricting numbers when the results of the survey were available.

The Committee recommended that the Application Form should be redesigned in order that horses at livery could be identified. It would thus be possible to assess the impact on the forest of livery stables. This was agreed.

## **9. REPORT ON A MEETING OF AN AD HOC COMMITTEE ON VEGETATION MANAGEMENT.**

The report had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The Superintendent reported that Ranger Linton had now completed his survey and had produced detailed maps of the priority areas to be cleared, where vegetation was invading heather and wet heath. The Board recognised that it would probably not be possible to carry out all the work that was felt to be desirable owing to lack of manpower, but agreed that work should proceed with any manpower that became available, and that the Conservators should be informed of progress made.'

The Committee had come to the conclusion that with the labour available in the foreseeable future it would not be possible to maintain the existing balance between woodland and open heathland on the forest as set out in the Management Plan. There would inevitably be a swing from heathland to naturally regenerated woodland. It was agreed that the Conservators should take note of this conclusion, and that the Countryside-Commission, the Nature Conservancy Council, and the East Sussex County Council should be informed of the Conservators' observations,

The Clerk reported on a visit he had made to Brighton Polytechnic. There is a possibility that a student engaged on a three year PhD study could be given the vegetation of Ashdown Forest as the subject of his thesis. This would provide the Conservators with an invaluable detailed vegetation study, monitored by the Polytechnic, the Nature Conservancy Council and the County Ecologist. Part of the student's expenses would be the responsibility of the Conservators, but a grant from the Nature Conservancy Council would probably be available. The Board agreed that this be investigated further.

#### **10. REPORT OF THE MODEL AIRCRAFT COMMITTEE**

The report of the Meetings on 10th. and 20th. October had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Kennard, as Chairman of the Committee, outlined the recommendations made in the report. The Committee recommended that the licence fees be increased from £60 to £80 for Wealden Model Aircraft Society and from £35 to £45 plus £15 competition fee for the Society of Model Aeronautical Engineers. This was agreed.

Mr. Kennard proposed a change of site for Wealden Model Aircraft Society. The Poundgate area had been used for many years. This had been generally satisfactory, but had caused continual annoyance to a few local residents. A new site north of Greenwood Gate had been inspected and it was recommended that this area should be used for a trial period of one year. This was agreed.

#### **11. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON DUTIES OF THE RANGERS**

##### **DEFERRED TO NEXT MEETING**

#### **12. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON VOLUNTARY RANGER TRAINING**

The Superintendent reported that the 14 volunteers were now being trained. Not only were the volunteers giving their weekends for training sessions, but all the Rangers were involved every weekend for a four week period. It is hoped that by April 1980 there will be sufficient trained volunteers to help with weekend patrols.

#### **13. TO CONSIDER THE LAYOUT OF CAR PARKS D21, F41, H46, I54 DEFERRED TO NEXT MEETING**

#### **14. TO CONSIDER THE VENUE OF FUTURE CONSERVATORS MEETINGS.**

It was unanimously agreed that the meetings continue to be held in the Church Hall and that the public should be allowed to attend.

#### **15. SUNDRY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Reservoir. The Superintendent reported that work would commence in the near future on the laying of the main pipeline from Chelwood Gate to the A22 at Millbrook. Discussions had taken place regarding the financial terms of the Licence but had not yet been agreed. The Water Authority wanted to classify the forest as low grade land for which they pay a lower rate than for prime agricultural land. Both Mr. Grimston, on behalf of the Lord of the Manor, and the Superintendent had strongly disagreed with this classification. When a figure is agreed it is likely that any capital payment made will be equally divided between the Conservators and the Lord of the Manor.

Compulsory Purchase Kings Standing. The Superintendent reported that the East Sussex County Council was now proceeding with the compulsory purchase order for land for the realignment of King Standing Corner. The Superintendent presented maps showing the land to be taken out of the forest at King Standing, and the land to be given in exchange behind the Isle of Thorns. It was resolved that the Conservators raised no objection to the proposed exchange of land.

Public Meetings. The Superintendent proposed that in order to acquaint local residents with the Conservators policies, and the reasons for the Appeal, he considered it desirable to hold a series of meetings in local village halls. This was approved. Various Conservators volunteered to chair the meetings in their own villages.

Purchase of Land. The Superintendent reported that he had received a letter from the Countryside Commission offering a grant not later than 1981. Mr. Edwardes-Jones was going to talk to Lord Gage, but if he was not willing to delay the sale until the grant was available it may be necessary to consider other methods of financing the purchase.

Road at Forest Holme. The Chairman reported that Mr. Le Fevre had requested that the question of his roadway be re-considered. The Chairman had visited the site and informed Mr. Le Fevre that he would ask the Conservators if they wished to reconsider their decision. It was agreed that the matter should not be re-opened. Mr. Gent informed the Board that Mr. Le Fevre had in any event just sold Forest Holme.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No.10

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 5.25 p.m.Chairman.

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## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMONERS OF ASHDOWN FOREST AT FOREST ROW VILLAGE HALL ON FRIDAY 16th. MARCH 1979.**

### **PRESENT**

More than over 90 Commoners and their Spouses present.

### **1. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING**

Miss B. Willard nominated Mr. Humphrey Wills, this was seconded by Mr. B. Glover. There being no other nominations Mr. Wills was elected.

### **2. NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING**

The Clerk read the Notice Convening the Meeting.

### **3. ELECTION OF ONE CONSERVATOR**

The Clerk advised the meeting that there was one vacancy to be filled in the place of Mr. Kennard who retired by rotation. The Clerk asked the Commoners not to vote again if they had already voted by proxy unless they wished to change their vote to another candidate as a duplicate vote for the some candidate invalidated their proxy and caused complications in the vote counting.

Mrs. Gabriel asked whether it was legal for a candidate to send out proxy forms with stamps for their returnee [as] this was an inducement to vote for that particular candidate. The Clerk confirmed that legal advice had been taken and that this procedure in no way contravened the 1974 Act under which the election is held.

The Commoners requested that, before voting commenced they be allowed to put questions to the candidates. This was agreed.

Voting papers were distributed and Mr. Stevenson suggested that the candidates be allowed to elect scrutineers to oversee the Vote counting. This was agreed and Mr. Hall elected his scrutineer. Mr. Kennard was happy "To rely on the integrity of the Conservators staff".

The Voting papers were collected and the Meeting continued while counting was in progress.

### **4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup>. MARCH**

The Clerk read the minutes which were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

### **5. PROXY VOTING**

The Chairman stated that Proxy Voting had in the past caused considerable problems. Ten Commoners gave a proxy vote to more than one candidate. It is therefore thought desirable to change to postal voting. The elected Conservators ea. the instruction of the last Commoners A.G.M. had investigated the desirability of the ahs and recommended it. The Clerk reported that the East Sussex County Council are preparing a Bill to be deposited before Parliament later this year and this would include an amendment to the Sot, If the Bill is passed it will become Law in July 1980 and the Election of Conservators will change to postal voting, fart the Commoners Nesting in 1981.

## **6. AMENDMENT TO THE ASHDOWN FOREST ACT IN ORDER TO GIVE THE CONSERVATORS POWERS TO MANAGE CAMPING AND/OR CARAVAN SITES ON LAND NOT PART OF ASHDOWN FOREST**

Details of the Conservators' wish to seek this amendment had been outlined in the Newsletter which had been sent to all Commoners prior to the Meeting. The main reason for this decision was to help to increase the Conservators income. It was again stressed that any Caravan or camping site run by the Conservators would be on land that is not part of the Forest. A general discussion ensued and the question finally put to the vote, the outcome being 42 for and 43 against.

**7. PROPOSED PURCHASE OF LAND** The Chairman reported that, for the first time in over 100 years an opportunity had arisen to buy land to add to the Forest. The land abuts the Forest near Chelwood Beacon and amounts to about 75 acres. The County Council had agreed to make some money available toward this purchase and it is very probable that the Countryside Commission will make a grant available.

## **8. COMMONERS NEWSLETTER**

Over the last year, two Newsletters have been sent to all Commoners. Those involved in preparing the Newsletter are willing to continue but owing to the expense involved they would have to confine circulation of the Newsletter to those willing to pay a small subscription. Full details of this were contained in the first newsletter the response to-date had been poor. Mrs. Gabriel suggested that this could be due to the subscription slip being on the back of the Newsletter which a number of Commoners wished to bring to the Annual General Meeting.

## **9. TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN**

Details of the need to raise more money to maintain the Forest and the ways in which Fund Raising could help were outlined in a circular which had been sent to all Commoners prior to the meeting. The Chairman stressed that the Conservators had no intention of developing the Forest but must have more manpower to repair the damage caused by erosion and the pressures of some 1½ million visitors each year. This extra manpower will cost money and the Conservators are looking to the Commoners for support in this campaign. A lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Keeble stated that he had been approached by Mr. Crowcroft, who is looking into the feasibility of Fund Raising Campaign. Mr. Crowcroft had quoted a breakdown of the sums of required and Mr. Keble felt that this information should be made available to all Commoners. The Chairman pointed out that the figures quoted were only tentative and that if, after carrying out his initial soundings of which the interview with Mr. Keeble was part; Mr. Crowcroft felt that the target figure originally decided on was impossible to achieve those figures could be meaningless. The Commoners were assured that, when the Conservators know whether the campaign was a feasible proposition and what target they could expect to redo full details would be given to them.

Before moving to item 10 on the Agenda the Chairman declared the result of the Election.

Mr. Kennard 139 votes

Mr. Hall 151 votes

Mr. Kennard being duly elected for a four year period.

Mr. Kennard thanked all those who voted for him and reassured the Commoners that he would work for the good of the Forest and their interests. •

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Maresfield By Pass This matter had been covered in the Newsletter but Commoners were still anxious that this will have a serious affect on the Forest . They were again assured that the Conservators would keep a close watch on any developments. Mr. Carter drew attention to a "Private" notice which had been erected by the owner of a property whose drive crosses the Forest. The Clerk assured him that steps would be taken to have this removed.

## **11. TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Commoners of Ashdown Forest will be held at Nutley Village Hall on 14th. March 1980.

THEIR BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.55 P.M.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 23rd. JANUARY 1980 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (in the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, R.J. Glover, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Brigadier L.M. Scott and Hon. C.A.S. Grimston.

**ITEM NO.7 ON THE AGENDA WAS TAKEN FIRST**

**7. TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF A QUANTITY SURVEYOR**

In amplification of a paper prepared by Mr. L. Hardy and circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting, Mr. Graham Baird, Technical Director of James Longley & Sons was invited to address the Conservators to outline his Company's proposals for the pricing on the proposed Ashdown Forest Centre, and the placing of building contracts. Mr. Baird stated that, in his opinion, the most advantageous course for the Conservators to take was to receive the detailed plans and a firm estimate from Messrs. Longley & Sons to build, and to have this estimate independently checked by a Quantity Surveyor appointed by and working directly in the interests of the Conservators. If the Quantity Surveyor was able to assure them that the estimate, after negotiation should that prove necessary, was fair and acceptable, the Conservators would then be in a position to place a contract with the builder. This method of proceeding could result in economies on two fronts. Firstly, the work undertaken by the Quantity Surveyor would be very much less than would be required in preparing schedules for going to tender, and secondly, Messrs. Longley & Sons, although treating the building as a commercial venture, were already charitably disposed to the Conservators in that they were undertaking the professional side of the operation at half the normal cost, would be looking to keep material costs to a minimum through gifts in kind, etc.

It would be necessary for the Conservators to appoint a Quantity Surveyor in any event, the work would vary according to a decision as to either the design and build or competitive tender approach. In the event of the Quantity Surveyor being unable to recommend acceptance of a building contract from James Longley & Sons, the Conservators would be in no way inhibited from seeking competitive tenders from other firms.

The Conservators put many questions to Mr. Baird to clarify points of detail. Mr. Baird then withdrew, and after further discussion Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that a Quantity Surveyor be appointed to act on behalf of the Conservators. This was seconded by Mr. Ellison and it was agreed that Mr. Owen Perry, County Architect should be approached and asked if his department would be able to undertake this work.

It was also resolved that, subject to a satisfactory recommendation from the Quantity Surveyor, and the necessary funds being available, to enter into a contract with James Longley & Sons to build the Ashdown Forest Centre.

**2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st. November 1979 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) MacMillan Clump. The Oaks had now been planted together with Scots Pine and Rowan as nurse trees. The Friends of Ashdown Forest wish to invite Mr. MacMillan to an informal opening ceremony in March and hoped that the Conservators would be present for a joint ceremony. The Clerk undertook to inform Conservators when a date had been fixed.

b) Wages & Salaries. The County Personnel Officer had now carried out the job evaluations but the Finance Committee was not happy with two of his recommendations and had asked for them to be reconsidered.

c) Winter Riding Restrictions. Copies of a letter sent out to all riders with their application forms were circulated to the Board together with the new riding code. The Superintendent informed the Board that the Ansaphone had been installed and was now operating.

d) Compulsory Purchase King Standing. The Superintendent reported that this was proceeding normally and that the Statutory Notices had been posted giving a closing date for public objection.

e) Purchase of Land. Lord Gage had confirmed that he is willing to` delay the sale to coincide with the Countryside Commission grant.

#### **4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement for the period ended 31st. December had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. There was nothing unusual to report.

#### **5. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE APPEAL**

A proposed Press Release was distributed to the Board for approval.

The Superintendent reported that the next phase, contacting Sussex Industry and London based companies, was now underway. Mr. Wills was writing to all members of the Golf Club.

Following a brief discussion, the Press Release was approved for distribution. The Superintendent also reported that several special events were being planned in connection with the Appeal, namely, Stands at Ardingly and Heathfield Agricultural Shows, a Horse Show at Crowborough which is being organised by Dr. Winter who will donate half the proceeds to the Trust, and subject to the Board's approval, a Lottery and an Ashdown Forest Sponsored Walk. This was approved.

#### **6. TO CONSIDER A REPORT OF THE APPEAL/FINANCE COMMITTEE ON THE PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE EXPENDITURE FROM THE ASHDOWN FOREST CONSERVATION TRUST**

A report on the Meeting held on 3rd. January had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The report set out, in order of priority, the cost of the various requirements over the next seven years. As the Trustees will be meeting on 10th. March, the Board's approval of the priorities was now sought. Mr. Logan felt that it would be extremely dangerous to use money to employ staff when there is no guarantee of funds being available to continue their employment after the seven year period, as it is very difficult to dismiss staff without sound reasons for doing so. A general discussion ensued and it was finally agreed that the recommendations made by the Appeal/Finance Committee should be put before the Trustees. It should be noted that it may become necessary to change the order of the priorities which would be regularly reviewed.

#### **7. SEE PAGE 1 OF MINUTES**

#### **8. THE SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS ON DUTIES OF THE RANGERS**

The Superintendent reported that it had become necessary to bring about some changes in the Rangers working arrangements.

The Head Ranger was responsible for co-ordinating the Rangers duties, Transport supplies and equipment, special events, and recruiting and training volunteers.

The three Rangers were now of equal status, each having been given particular areas of responsibility:

Ranger Linton - Conservation Ranger - responsible for all Vegetation Management and Vegetation Surveys, highway safety, schools and societies carrying out voluntary work on vegetation etc.

Ranger Pedder - Maintenance Ranger - in charge of the MSC Team and recruiting youths to join the Team, responsible for construction and maintenance of car parks, banking, ditching, drainage, litter collection, etc.

Ranger Montague - Recreation and Riding Ranger - responsible for displays etc. in connection with the information services. All problems relating to horse riding and all boundary walking, much of which could be done on horseback.

All Rangers are still required to carry out weekend duties and all of the above responsibilities are interchangeable between Rangers to cover off duty periods.

In view of the fact that an increasing amount of the Rangers work now takes place out of standard working hours, the Rangers were now working "Flexitime". Each day is divided into a morning, afternoon and evening work period, and regardless of weekday or weekend, these periods are balanced to achieve a 40 hour working week. Rangers continue to meet emergencies such as fire fighting without compensation unless the turnouts become excessive.

#### **9. TO CONSIDER THE LAYOUT OF CAR PARKS D21 F41 H46 I54.**

Plans of the Car Parks were displayed and the details outlined by the Superintendent.

Car Park D21. The access to this car park - where the Information Caravan is normally sited - is on the brow of a hill and is rather dangerous. It is, therefore, proposed that the car park, which will accommodate approximately 36 cars, be moved toward King Standing Corner and part of the existing car park be allowed to return to Forest. This car park will still be used for the Information Caravan. Mr. Taylor suggested that direction signs to the caravan be erected at least 100 yards before the entrance to the car park.

Car Park F41. It is recommended that a small hard surfaced car park for about six cars be constructed and that the Roman Road be properly staked out and used as a feature of the car park. There was a general discussion on the size and parking capacity and it was considered that accommodation for 10 cars should be provided. Mr. Glover raised the question of the methods to be used for staking out the Roman Road. He felt that a low fence would be used as a jump by the horse riders and that consideration should be given to a fence of at least 3'6" being constructed, which the public could go under. This was agreed.

Car Park I54. This is at present a large park with two entrances. -it is recommended that only one entrance be constructed as the car park is on a very busy road. Mr. Taylor suggested that, before construction commenced, the highways authority should be consulted regarding the best point of access in the interest of road safety. This was agreed.

Car Park H46. To be constructed as a summer park only with a hard surfaced through road with grass parking and picnic areas. This was approved.

#### **10. SUNDRY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

i) Water Splash at Colemans Hatch. The Superintendent reported that the weir which diverts water from the river at Pippingford, under the road, through the Splash had carried away. If it is not repaired the Splash will eventually dry up. The Superintendent had been in touch with the owners of adjoining property, Wealden District Council, and the Department of the Environment, but has not yet been able to establish who owns the weir. He will continue with his investigations.

ii) Transport. One of the Renault Vans requires extensive repairs. As this vehicle is due for replacement in April, it is considered to be practical, to buy the new replacement vehicle now rather than spend a considerable sum on repairing the old one. The County Council have agreed that the sum allocated in the 1980/81 budget for a new vehicle can be used in this financial year. The Board unanimously agreed to the vehicle being purchased now.

iii) Poundgate Road. The Superintendent reported that the County Council were now constructing the new lay-by to accommodate large lorries. Hopefully, lorry drivers will not now use the car parks.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 11

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.35 p.m.

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#### **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 19th. MARCH 1980 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (In the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Miss B. Willard, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, R.J. Glover, L.C. Hardy, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M. G. Taylor, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.



## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Kavanagh.

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd. January were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Appointment of Quantity Surveyor. The Superintendent reported that Mr. Perry, County Architect, had agreed to undertake the work within his Department and one of his Quantity Surveyors was now working on the Plans and costings submitted by Messrs. Longleys. At a preliminary meeting with the Superintendent, Mr. Perry indicated that Longleys costs were fair.

b) Harold MacMillan Clump. The Superintendent reported that Mr. MacMillan unveiled the name board to the Clump on 14th. March and that the ceremony was attended by some members of the Board.

c) Salaries & Wages. The Clerk reported that further discussions with the County Personnel Officer were necessary regarding certain recommendations that he had made following the recent job evaluation. A further report would be made.

d) Car Parks. The Clerk reported that the Countryside Commission had agreed to grant aid work in the next financial year. Work will now commence on the four car parks approved by the Board at the previous meeting. A new Manpower Services Scheme had been approved for the employment of two supervisors and eight youths as from 1st. April. He anticipated that work on the Car Parks should commence soon after that date.

e) Water Splash. The Superintendent reported that a representative of the Ancient Monuments Department of the Department of the Environment had visited the site and was of the opinion that the weir should be rebuilt. They had agreed to draw up plans and costings. They advised that the work involved would be expensive but felt that grant aid would probably be forthcoming. The grant could be up to 50 per cent of the cost, but as a figure of £12,000 had been given as a likely cost of the repair other grants would have to be sought. The Superintendent had still not been able to establish who actually owned the weir, but local residents had indicated a willingness to do much of the work.

## **4. REPORT OF THE ROADWAY COMMITTEE**

Mr. Kennard, as Chairman of the Roadway Committee, briefly outlined the recommendations made in the report which had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The Committee had carried out inspections at five sites where roadways had been requested and their recommendations were:

1) Highgate Green. Planning permission was being sought for the erection of 31 houses and permission had been requested to construct an access road over Highgate Green. The Roadway Committee recommended that the Conservators raise no objection to the construction of the roadway subject to final agreement on the alignment of the new road. After a brief discussion the Board agreed to raise no objection to the Lord of the Manor entering into an agreement, subject to the portion of Highgate Road, north of the new road, being returned to forest and grassed over.

2) Little Tompsetts. The Board had previously considered a request for a new access to this property which had now been divided and at their meeting on 23rd. January they refused to grant a new access. The Roadways Committee recommended that this decision should stand. This was unanimously agreed by the Board.

3) Timber Yard, Fords Green. Planning permission was being sought for the erection of two houses and access was requested over the forest at the edge of the recreation ground. The Committee considered that such access to the site would be acceptable if the road was constructed close to the fence line. Miss Willard considered that the access should be through the Timber Yard on to the A22. Although visibility is poor this is due to some 20 yards of hedge in the Timber Yard. If the hedge was cut back visibility would be opened up to 100 yards of clear road. She felt very strongly that the proposed new roadway should not be granted. A brief discussion ensued and it was unanimously agreed that permission should not be granted.

4) Fields Behind Duddleswell Stores, Fairwarp. The fields were served by one access which led into the upper field. The two fields were now in separate ownership and the owner of the lower field had requested a separate access. The Committee recommended that this be refused. This was unanimously agreed by the Board.

5) Forest Holme. The Board had already considered the access problem at Forest Holme and had agreed to a new access, provided that the existing one be returned to forest. The Committee recommended that this decision be adhered to. This was agreed by the Board.

## **5. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE HELD ON 12th. MARCH**

Mr. Gent, Chairman of the Horse Riding Committee reported on a "long and complicated meeting". Representatives of both the Ashdown Forest Riding Association and the East Grinstead Riding Association had been present at the meeting. The main object of the meeting was to review the effectiveness of 500 Riding Permits and also to consider whether the limit should be raised during the drier months of the year.

Mr. Gent reported that the condition of the forest was as good as could be expected in view of the recent wet weather. The Ansaphone system had proved a success and Mrs. Sheldrick, Secretary of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association had advised the Committee that, although the Association was originally against such a system being installed, they felt that it had proved to be extremely successful and her Association was willing to donate £150.00 towards the cost.

The fire rides were, on the whole, in good condition, although some areas were badly eroded and others wet. The Ashdown Forest Riding Association had indicated a willingness to carry out a survey of the bad spots and report back to the Riding Committee. The Association had also offered to hold meetings for young riders, of whom there had been some criticism, in an effort to educate them.

The Committee generally agreed that the issue of 500 Permits was enough for the winter months but felt that this number could be increased during the drier months of the year. It was therefore recommended that a further 50 permits be issued during the Summer, but that these be restricted to local residents. This suggestion was not readily accepted by members of the Board. Among the points raised against such selective issuing were that it could deflate the value of houses locally and that it would preclude those who were not able to afford to live within hacking distance of the forest. Furthermore, a number of horses were kept at livery stables close to the forest and if permits were to be issued only to people with a local address these would also be precluded. After a brief discussion it was agreed that there should be no restrictions on Summer Permits but that the situation be reviewed if numbers snowballed. It was agreed that the fee for Summer Permits be £6.00.

Mr. Gent also reported that the Committee felt that some changes should be made for the coming year, such as changing the permit period to 1st. October until the 30th. September, and that the fees for children, commoners and second horses should be reviewed together with the basic annual fees. These points would be discussed at the next meeting of the Horse Riding Committee and detailed recommendations would then be submitted to the Board.

## **6. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE APPEAL**

The Superintendent reported that money was coming in at a reasonable rate. Sussex Industry was now being contacted and various Clubs and Societies were making their mailing lists available to us. The Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt was among these and one of the Joint Masters had written a letter to be sent out to all members asking them to contribute. Preparations for the Sponsored Walk were now going ahead, together with the organisation of the Lottery.

As yet, no approach has been made to the vast number of people who visit the forest at weekends. Volunteers were, therefore, needed to go around the car parks and ask the visitors for donations for which they could be given a suitable "car sticker". Such collections could bring in a considerable amount of money. Local residents feel strongly that the visitors should be asked to donate. The Superintendent asked for volunteers from the Board to help with these collections. Miss Willard and Mrs. Maudslay readily agreed to help.

## **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

i) Fires. The Superintendent reported that there had been four fires so far, all of these had been small and involved a total of approximately five acres. All were believed to have been started deliberately.

## **8. TO FIX THE DATES OF CONSERVATORS MEETINGS FOR 1980/81**

The proposed dates were:

21st. May, 30th. July, 24th. September 19th. November 21st. January 1981 and 18th. March 1981

With the exception of 21st. May, which is to be changed to 28th. May, all dates were agreed.

## **9. REPORT OF THE COMMONERS' ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Mr. Kennard had been elected to Chair the Commoners' Annual General Meeting and was, therefore, invited by Brigadier Scott to report on the Meeting. Mr. Kennard informed the Board that the Meeting was poorly attended and he felt that the only point of real interest was that Miss Willard had been re-elected. There was limited comment from the Commoners on the subject of the Appeal, but there were a number of complaints that there was a lack of communication between the Board of Conservators and the Commoners. Mr. Wills had reminded the Commoners that not only could they subscribe to the Commoners' Newsletter, but they could always contact their elected Board members and could also attend Board Meetings.

Mr. Kennard also reported that a vote of thanks to the Board and their staff had been proposed by Mrs. Gabriel. This was met with limited applause.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 12

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.50 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 7th. MAY 1980**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott (In the Chair) Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. B.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Alison, L.C. Hardy, J. Gent. D. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, N. C. Taylor, A.L.H. White, G.H. Wills.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Miss B. Willard and Mr. R.J. Glover

### **2. THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Superintendent reported that, due to inflation, coupled with the slow progress of the Appeal, it would not now be possible to build the new Centre to the plans prepared by Messrs. J. Longley & Co. Ltd. He outlined a plan for the phased building of a redesigned centre based on a Rangers Depot, which could be a prefabricated agricultural type building, and a large grain barn for the Administrative/Information Centre. The barn, at present situated at High Hurstwood, could be dismantled, transported and re-erected on site.

The Superintendent presented the following phased building programme, based upon a possible sum of £50,000 which the Trustees might be able to provide in the immediate future.

PHASE I - Erection of the shell of the Rangers Depot and barn

a) Rangers Depot	£16,000	
b) Barn purchase	£6,000	
re-erection	£25,000	
c) Architects fees	<u>£1,600</u>	
		£48,600

PHASE II – Completion of buildings

a) Rangers depot	£15,000	
b) Barn	<u>£27,000</u>	
		£42,000
PHASE III – Car Park, landscaping etc.		£13,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST		£103,600

The Superintendent reported that this total estimated expenditure could well be reduced by the possibility of grant aid from the Countryside Commission and the Nature Conservancy Council.

A lengthy discussion ensued and it was resolved to ask the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust to finance the following works:-

A.	The erection and completion of the Rangers' Depot	£31,000
B.	Purchase of Barn	£6,000
C.	Electricity, water, etc.	£5,000
D.	Professional fees	<u>£1,600</u>
		£43,600

The re-erection of the barn would be put back to a later date.

### **3. THE APPEAL**

The Superintendent reported that both Mr. Beasley, Appeal Director, and Miss Gilles, Appeal Secretary, had left the organisation, and that at the present time he himself and Mrs. Button were managing the Appeal to the best of their abilities. He outlined steps being taken to secure new staff. A meeting was due to take place on 9th. May with Sir Peter Matthews, Chairman of the Appeal Committee, and it was hoped to put proposals before the Trustees on 12th. May in order that they might authorise the salaries of new staff.

### **4. INTERPRETIVE STUDY**

The Chairman reported that discussions had taken place with the Countryside Commission, who had indicated that considerable grant aid could be made available towards the cost of the buildings and the Interpretation of the forest. Before this could be agreed they would require a professional survey of all aspects of the interpretation of the forest. Such a study would cost £3,000, but the Commission would provide grant aid for 50 per cent of this sum. The Chairman pointed out that in addition to this possibly opening the door to grant aid, the study would enable the Conservators to complete the Interpretive Section of the Management Plan.

It was resolved to ask the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust to provide a sum of £1,500 in order to commission an Interpretive Study.

### **5. TRACTOR DRIVER**

It was agreed that the proposal for the early employment of a Tractor Driver should be put to the Trustees.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.00 p.m. Chairman

## **MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 28th. MAY 1980 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Brigadier L.M. Scott, Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. E.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, L. C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White, G. L. Wills.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston and Mr. J. Gent.

### **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1980/81**

Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that Mr. G.H. Wills be elected Chairman for the coming year, this was seconded by Mr. Ellison. There being no other nominations Mr. Wills was declared elected and took the Chair.

Before taking any further items on the Agenda the Chairman advised the Board of the Death of Mr. Reg. Glover. Mr. Wills said that "This loss would leave a large gap which would be difficult to fill. Reg was truly a man of the forest". The funeral would take place on Friday, 31st. May at Hartfield Church at 2.30 p.m. Mrs. Glover had expressed the wish that there should be no floral tributes, but would prefer that donations be made to provide a small memorial to Reg at the new Ashdown Forest Centre. The Chairman asked the Board to stand for a moment's silence in memory of Mr. Reginald Glover.

The new Chairman called upon Miss Willard to say a few words on behalf of the Board in appreciation of the services of Brigadier Scott, the retiring Chairman. Miss Willard thanked Brigadier Scott for being a "Tower of strength and inspiration" over the years, and "With fond and respectful love from the Board and members of the staff" presented him with an oil painting of the Gills Lap area of the forest.

The Head Ranger, on behalf of the Rangers, presented Brigadier Scott with a plaque, made by the Rangers entirely out of materials from the forest, to commemorate his years as Chairman to the Board of Conservators.

Brigadier Scott thanked the Board and the staff.

### **3. TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1980/81**

Brigadier Scott proposed Mr. Edwardes-Jones, who had been a great help to him during his time as Chairman. Mr. White seconded this proposal, and it was agreed unanimously. Mr. Edwardes-Jones thanked the Board and said he was delighted to accept.

### **4. TO CONSIDER THE ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

As there had not been a Deputy Chairman for several years, Mr. Kennard suggested that this position should be allowed to lapse. This was agreed unanimously.

Mr. Dowse, Manager of the Caravan Club was present at the Meeting and in order not to detain him, Item 12 was brought forward on the Agenda.

### **12. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM THE CARAVAN CLUB FOR A ROADWAY AT CHUCK HATCH FOR A POPULAR CARAVAN SITE**

The Caravan Club were negotiating the purchase of the freehold of 20 acres of Possingford Wood for a caravan site. Details of their proposals had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting.

The Site is not part of the forest but the track leading to it is forest land. The Caravan Club therefore were requesting permission to make up the trail to allow vehicular access.

In answer to the various questions put by the Board, Mr. Dowse advised that the site would probably not open before 1982 and would then accommodate approximately 90 caravans. No caravan would be allowed to stay for more than three weeks, but the average stay by their members was probably three days. It was appreciated that it would not be desirable to have a number of caravans using certain roads in and around the forest to gain access to the site, and members of the Caravan Club would be issued with specific routes as they are to other sites in Great Britain.

Brigadier Scott raised the question of campers illegally using forest car parks being allowed to use this site. Mr. Dowse advised that the sites are usually reserved for members only but it may be possible to make an exception in this case to a limited extent. It was agreed that the general question of the suitability of the site was a matter for the District Council, the Planning and Highway Authorities, but the principle of having a caravan site adjacent to, but not on, the forest was in accordance with the Management Plan.

A brief discussion ensued and Mr. White proposed that the Board approve this application subject to a site inspection by the Roadways Sub-Committee, and that the terms and conditions of the licence be made at that time. This was seconded by Mr. Taylor and approved by the Board.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Dowse for attending the Meeting and answering the questions put to him.

## **5. TO ELECT COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR 1980/81**

a) General Purposes Committee. Members of the Committee during 1979/80 were: Mr. L.C. Hardy (Chairman) Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. J. Gent, R.J. Glover; Brigadier Scott and Mr. Wills ex officio. Mr. Edwardes-Jones as Vice Chairman of the Board would become an ex officio member. After a brief discussion it was agreed that Brigadier Scott, who had been an ex officio member in his capacity of Chairman of the Board should be elected. It was further agreed that, when a new Commoner is elected to the Board in place of the late Mr. Glover, this should not preclude the possibility of electing him or her to the Committee.

b) Finance Appeal Committee. It was agreed that the members of this Committee remain as last year, namely Brigadier Scott, Mr. Hardy, Mr. White and Mr. Wills. Brigadier Scott proposed that Mr. Edwardes-Jones be asked to join the Committee, this was seconded by Mr. White and agreed unanimously.

c) Horse Riding Committee. It was agreed that the Horse Riding Committee be made up as follows: Mr. Gent, Mr. Kennard, Mr. Logan with Mr. Wills and Mr. Edwardes-Jones ex officio members.

d) Model Aircraft Committee. It was agreed that this Committee remain unchanged. i.e. Mr. Kennard, Mrs. Maudsley, Mr. Kavanagh. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman ex officio.

e) Roadways Committee. It was agreed that Miss Willard take the place of the late Mr. Glover. The other members of the Committee being Mr. Kennard, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Mr. Gent, Mr. Kavanagh. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman ex officio.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19th. MAY and 7th MAY**

Both Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **8. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Wages and Salaries. The Chairman reported that full agreement regarding certain increases in salary had now been agreed with the County Council. The Chairman requested that any further discussion on this matter take place In Committee.

b) Car Parks. The Superintendent reported that Four Counties Car Park (No. D21) was now virtually finished and should prove very successful.

c) Water Splash. The Superintendent reported that ownership had still not been established, but local residents had formed a group to carry out repairs to the bank. A Surveyor from the Ancient Monuments Department of the Department of the Environment had visited the site and would be submitting his report in due course. The D.O.E. will probably make a grant of £300 toward the cost of repairing the bank.

d) Roadway at Highgate Green. At the last Meeting the Board had approved this new roadway provided that the existing road be returned to forest. The Superintendent reported that it would not be possible to return the whole of the road to forest as there is one house still requiring access from this road. This was only a small part of the roadway and the remainder would be returned to forest.

## **8. TO CONSIDER SUBMITTING A SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE FOR REPAIRS TO THE LAND ROVER AND IN RESPECT OF SALARIES AND WAGES IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANY DECISIONS MADE UNDER ITEM 7 ON THE AGENDA**

The Superintendent reported that the sum of £3,500 had been provisionally put into the Estimates for the salary increases which were at that time under review. This had been struck out by the County Council who had asked that a supplementary estimate be submitted when the figures had been finalised.

The electrical circuit of the Land Rover had shorted out whilst the vehicle was being used to fight a fire. The circuit caught fire causing damage costing £275 to repair. The repairs had to be done quickly as it was in the middle of a very bad fire situation. It was agreed that Supplementary Estimates for these two items be submitted to the County Council.

## **9. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE APPEAL**

The Superintendent reported that due to the administrative difficulties caused by the lack of an Appeal Director, the flow of monies into the Appeal had slowed down. Arrangements were now in hand for a completely new Appeal organisation. A professional fund raiser, Mr. Christopher Mann, would be joining the organisation on a part time basis in an advisory capacity, and Mr. Richard Berry had now been engaged as a full time Appeal Organiser. Mr. Berry, who was attending the Meeting, was introduced to the Board. Mrs. Grace Berry (former Secretary to the Superintendent) would be providing the necessary secretarial back up. The Chairman welcomed Mr. Berry to the organisation.

#### **10. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CONSERVATION TRUST**

The report, setting out the items of expenditure authorised by the Trustees, had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting.

- i) It was anticipated that the Tractor Driver would be employed in the near future.
- ii) Rangers Depot. The Superintendent reported that he had already received a number of estimates for prefabricated buildings and firm proposals should soon be forthcoming.
- iii) Administrative/Information Centre. Some problems had arisen regarding the purchase of the Grain Barn, but other barns were being looked at and firm proposals would be put before the Appeal/Finance Committee, as soon as possible.

#### **11. CHAIRMAN TO REPORT ON A VISIT OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL AND THE COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION**

The Chairman invited Brigadier Scott to report on the visit. Brigadier Scott advised the Board that both the Nature Conservancy Council and the Countryside Commission were impressed with what they saw and indications were that future grant aid would be forthcoming from the Countryside Commission on completion of the Interpretive Study by the Dartington Amenity Research Trust. The Nature Conservancy Council would probably give a grant for the Information displays.

#### **12. SEE PAGE ONE OF MINUTES**

#### **13. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON MEETINGS OF THE HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE HELD ON 6th. AND 19th. MAY.**

The Superintendent reported that there had been a very long meeting to discuss a number of ideas on how to solve some of the riding problems. No proposals were made at this meeting, but there will be a further meeting in the near future and the Riding Committee's recommendations will then be put before the Board.

The second meeting of the Committee took place on the forest. The Ashdown Forest Riding Association had carried out a survey of the bad areas of the forest and these areas were visited by the Committee to formulate ideas of how to tackle the problems.

#### **14. SUNDRY MATTERS**

- a) Fires. The Superintendent reported that there had been a total of 41 fires this year involving 168 acres. It is believed that at least 30 of the fires were started deliberately. Over the past few weeks there had been virtually no rain and the situation had been critical. The Rangers had been on watch until midnight on some nights and the Voluntary Rangers had, when necessary, assisted with an all night watch.
- b) Proposed alteration on 8th. Fairway at Golf Club. Under the terms of their Licence the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club cannot increase the size of any fairway. They had requested permission to lengthen the fairway by 20 yards but will decrease the width, therefore, the total area will remain the same. This was approved.
- c) Proposed change of date for Conservators Meeting of 24th. September. The Superintendent requested that the meeting of 24th. September be changed to either 10th. September or 1st. October. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the meeting should now take place on 1st. October. It was further agreed that the meeting of 19th. November should now be held on Tuesday, 18th. November.

#### **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Superintendent had received a request from a Mrs. Wiltshire for consideration to be given to a seat being placed at the Airman Grave in memory of her late husband. The Superintendent reported that he had received a number of requests for similar memorials on the forest and, therefore, sought the Board's guidance on the siting of these. After a brief discussion it was agreed that these seats could be placed near to picnic areas but should not be put too far into the forest. Placing a seat at the Airman's Grave could not be approved.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 13

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.40 p.m. Chairman

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 30th. JULY 1980 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.E. Wills (In the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A.J. Miller, A.L.H. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. E.W. Ellison, L.C. Hardy, M.G. Taylor.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th. May were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Proposed Caravan Site, Chuck Hatch. The Chairman reported that the Caravan Club had not been successful in purchasing the land for the site and that the project had now been abandoned.

b) Weir at Colemans Hatch. Work had now been completed and was a splendid achievement on the part of the local residents. The Superintendent reported that we had received a grant of £300 from the Department of the Environment and £150 from the County Council toward the cost of repair. Accounts for the work had, therefore, been settled by the Conservators.

c) Supplementary Estimate. Mr. Edwardes-Jones asked whether the Supplementary Estimate agreed under Item 8 of the Minutes of the previous meeting had been approved. The Superintendent advised that the Assistant County Treasurer had asked that this item be held in abeyance due to the County Council cuts in expenditure, but he felt sure that this would be approved later in the year.

### **4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement for the period ending 30th. June had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. There was nothing unusual to report. The Chairman suggested to the Board that in future the Financial Statement only be presented half-yearly. After a brief discussion this was agreed.

### **5. TO RECEIVE THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1979/80**

Copies of the Final Accounts had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The Superintendent reported that there were only two items on the Income & Expenditure-Account which were considerably higher than the estimated figure. Capital expenditure for the year included the purchase of the vehicle scheduled for 1980/81. This had been agreed by the County Council. Experimental Work included expenditure in respect of the unused grant carried forward from 1979. This also had been approved by the County Council.

The Superintendent further reported that the Accounts had been audited and he had received the following letter from the District Auditor:



Dear Sir,  
1979/80 Audit

The audit of the accounts of the Conservators for the year ended 31 March 1980 has been completed. There are no matters on which it is necessary for me to make a report to the Conservators under section 157 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The appropriate certificate has been entered on the Balance Sheet in accordance with the regulation 12 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1974.

A memorandum of matters of details discussed in the audit will be forwarded. My thanks are due for the courteous assistance afforded at the audit.

Yours faithfully,  
E.S. SANT  
District Auditor          July 2nd. 1980.

Mr. White enquired whether it would be possible to have information on the level of Income and Expenditure over the past 10 years. It was agreed that this information be made available for the next Board Meeting.

Whilst dealing with financial matters the Chairman suggested that items 7 and 8 be taken before item 6. This was agreed.

**7. ESTIMATES. THE CHAIRMAN TO REPORT ON ANTICIPATED CUTS IN THE CONTRIBUTION FROM THE EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL.**

The Clerk reported that he had been informed by the East Sussex County Council that there would be a reduction in the Council's contribution of £2,000 in the present financial year, and that the Conservators were asked to identify cuts of £4,000 in the next financial year. The Finance Committee would be meeting in the immediate future to consider whether the East Sussex County Council should be approached with a proposed arrangement whereby the effect of these cuts could be offset by increased Conservators income, and agreement sought so that any increase in income over and above the amount of the cuts should be retained by the Conservators.

**8. TO FIX THE FOREST RATE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1981/82**

Details of the 1980/81 Rates were put before the Board. These have not been changed for three years. The Chairman advised the Board that it is desirable that any change proposed should stand for the next three years.

Mr. Kennard reported that the general feeling was that the Rate should be doubled and, therefore, proposed that all rates be doubled with effect from 1st April 1981. This was seconded by Mrs. Maudsley and agreed unanimously.

Miss Willard requested that Commoners be advised that the new Rates would remain unchanged for the next three years. It was agreed that the 1981 Rate Demand would state "The Conservators policy is to review the rates at three yearly intervals and it is hoped that this practice will be possible in future". The Board also agreed that they would wish to continue giving a reduction in Rate to hardship cases at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Items 6 and 9 being closely related were taken together.

**6. 9. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE APPEAL ASHDOWN FOREST CONSERVATION TRUST**

The Superintendent reported that Richard Berry was now "Firmly in the Saddle" as Appeal Organiser and was in the process of contacting Sussex Industry. 850 letters had already been sent out.

Collections from Car Parks etc., co-ordinated by the Head Ranger, were still going well. Approximately 53,000 had been collected to date. Tickets for the Raffle were selling well, 10,000 having been distributed. Applications for Sponsorship Forms for the Great Ashdown Forest Walk were now coming in large numbers. The Press had been extremely helpful in publicising the event.

The Superintendent reported that it had not been possible to agree on a price to purchase the barn at High Hurstwood. Mr. Taylor had advised on the value of the barn which was considerably less than being asked by the

Vendor. The Vendor was not prepared to reduce the asking price. Other barns had been looked at and two Sussex Barns had now been purchased for £10,000 and a third barn is being given, as a gift in kind, by the Company supplying the two. It is not possible to apply for planning permission until the Interpretive Study has been completed, as they may have some bearing on the siting of the buildings.

The Interpretive Study was now underway and, although the Dartington Amenity Research Trust originally gave a completion date of mid August, it has now been given as mid September.

It was reported at the previous Board meeting that it was anticipated that the Tractor Driver would be employed in the near future. In view of the forthcoming cut to be made by the County Council in the Conservators' budget, the General Purposes Committee have agreed that the employment of extra staff, which would increase running expenditure, should be deterred.

#### **10. MEETING OF THE HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE**

The Report of the Committee was circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Gant, Chairman of the Horse Riding Committee, outlined the recommendations contained in the report. The Committee had recommended that there be no restriction on the number of permits issued in the coming year. Some members were strongly against this recommendation. After some discussion Mr. White proposed that all recommendations made by the Committee be accepted and reviewed in a year's time. This was seconded by Mr. Edwardes-Jones. Mr. Kennard proposed an amendment that the recommendations be accepted, except that there should be a limit to the number of annual permits issued. Miss Willard seconded the amendment which was carried by 5 votes to 1 with 3 abstentions. It was then agreed that annual permits be restricted to 600, with no restriction on the number of summer permits issued.

#### **11. LICENCE ROAD AT "THE FOLLIES" FRIARS GATE**

The Superintendent reported that he had received a request for a licenced roadway to the above mentioned property. It was agreed that the Roadway Committee carry out a site inspection and make a decision at that time.

#### **12. SUNDRY MATTERS**

Purchase of Land at Chelwood Gate. The Superintendent reported that a grant from the Countryside Commission had now been offered and accepted and, although this was £2,500 short of the original grant anticipated, Mr. Edwardes-Jones had discussed the problems with Lord Gage who had agreed to give the Conservators some latitude in the payment of the outstanding £2,500. It was agreed that the purchase should be proceeded with. The Chairman thanked Mr. Edwardes-Jones for his efforts.

Election of One Conservator. The Superintendent reported that he would, after consultation with the elected Conservators, be convening a meeting of the Commoners on Friday, 17th. October at Fairwarp Village Hall, for the purpose of electing a Conservator to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. B.J. Glover.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

Confidential Minute No. 13 was approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.25 p.m.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON DAY 1st. OCTOBER 1980 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair), Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, D. L. Kavanagh, A.L.H. White.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, and M.G. Taylor.

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th. July were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Income and Expenditure details for the ten year period 1979 to 1980. This information had been requested by Mr. White and the details had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting.

b) Horse Riding Licences. The Superintendent reported that 265 licences had been issued to-date and the indications were that the 600 limit would be more than sufficient for the year.

Mr. Gent enquired how many members of the Riding Association had applied. The Superintendent advised that this information was not available at present, but would be made available for the next Board Meeting.

c) Purchase of Land. The Chairman reported that the contract was now being drawn up with a proposed completion date of 30th. November.

## **4. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE APPEAL**

The Superintendent reported that the Ashdown Forest Walk had been a success, although the exact income is not yet known. Tickets for the Draw were still selling well, as were tickets for the Wine Tasting Evening.

Christopher Mann, through Sir Peter Matthews, was making contact with large companies and will soon be making contact with Charitable Trusts. Now that the Summer fund raising activities were nearly over, Richard Berry will be concentrating his efforts on local residents, industry, etc.

Richard Berry, Christopher Mann and the Superintendent would be meeting with Sir Peter Matthews on 16th. October to review the progress of the Appeal and it is possible that a revised target for the Appeal would be put before the Board at their next meeting. The Trustees would be meeting on 27th. October, when it was hoped that agreement would be reached on some money being released for the building. The Superintendent presented the plans of the three Sussex Barns. These were only preliminary plans and were not yet ready for submission to the local authority for planning consent. He reported that the Countryside Commission were happy with the basic plans and, provided that the general concept of the DART study was pursued, grant aid would probably be available. A general discussion on the size and layout of the various offices ensued. Mr. Hardy felt that the general concept was right and proposed that detailed plans should now be drawn up, and that the Appeal Finance Committee would have delegated powers to approve and initiate a planning application. This was seconded by Mr. White and agreed unanimously.

## **5. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE INTERPRETIVE STUDY CARRIED OUT BY THE DARTINGTON AMENITY RESEARCH TRUST.**

The Chairman reported that he had read the preliminary DART report and felt it to be fair and sensible. It was anticipated that the final report would be received in the near future and a full report made at the next meeting.

## **6. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Roadway, Fords Green. The Roadways Committee had visited the site and did not agree to the proposed new access across the Green. They had suggested that the new roadway be made through the timber yard. The planning authority had turned down this proposal and the developers were, therefore, requesting that the Board re-consider the original access. It was agreed that the Roadways Committee carry out a further site inspection.

b) Planting of Trees by Wealden District Council. It had been reported in the local press that Wealden District Council were proposing to plant a clump of trees to commemorate the Queen Mother's 80th. birthday, and that Gills Lap had been suggested as a possible site. No approach had been made by Wealden, but the Superintendent felt that it might be sensible to sound the opinion of the Board, so as to advise Wealden of their views. It was agreed that any decision should await a formal application.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS,**

i) Maresfield By Pass. The Superintendent reported that he, in addition to several Conservators had attended a public meeting on the proposed Maresfield By Pass. Provided that the A26 link to the Uckfield By Pass was maintained, the Superintendent considered that none of the Maresfield alternative schemes presented a threat to the forest. Certain individuals were, however, campaigning against the proposed plans, and the situation would be watched.

ii) Mrs. Maudslay advised the Board that a planning application for stables, loose boxes and tack room had been submitted in respect of Barbary Barn, Pippingford. It was agreed that the Superintendent should make enquiries to ascertain whether this could be for a riding establishment.

### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 14

### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.00 p.m.

### **INTERPRETATIVE STUDY BY THE DARTINGTON AMENITY RESEARCH TRUST**

There is no doubt that there is much to be interpreted.

Interpretation is already a significant element in the work of the Clerk and Rangers.

The production of a Management Plan and the development of the new administrative and maintenance Centre offer an opportunity to improve and extend these services to a wider audience of local people and others who already visit the forest.

The audience for interpretation:-

- a) Local people and those with a special interest in the forest.
- b) Educational and other groups
- c) Casual visitors.

The nature of the forest - its resources on the ground, its use as an informal recreation area, the nature of the audience, the rights of common, the restriction on encroachments and the constraints of the management policy imply a relatively low key approach to interpretation. The management constraints and the limited resources available also imply that it should be a relatively low cost provision. In the circumstances it would seem appropriate to extend and improve the service already provided by adding new facilities and services over a period of time.

### The Role of the Ashdown Forest Centre

- a) A Centre to which local people and others with a special interest in the forest should be encouraged to come and find out more.
- b) A focus for volunteer activity.
- c) A focus for educational and other groups.
- d) A centre to which the casual visitor interested in learning more about the forest might be directed.
- e) A focus for special interpretive events such as demonstrations and temporary exhibits.

To include:-

- a) A small exhibition for visitors and others seeking an introduction to the forest.
- b) A programme of talks, occasional demonstrations, and temporary exhibitions, primarily for local people and specialists but some for the casual visitor.
- c) Study facilities, workspace, lecture room for use by volunteer interpreters, local people, school and other groups.

### On the Forest

- |  |          |
|--|----------|
| a) A guided walks programme for the casual visitor and specialist                      | NOTE 1   |
| b) A mobile information caravan with staff to tour various car parks at peak times     | NOTE 2   |
| c) A limited number of interpretive Board's, a demonstration trail and waymarked walks | NOTE 3 % |

### Publications

A range of publications and educational material. Publications

## Implications

The interpretive service should for the most part, be allowed to evolve in response to local interest. However, there are certain critical elements in the provision which need specific action and should be given priority.

- a) Appointment of, and brief for an interpretive planner
- b) Allocation of a certain amount of staff time to work with the interpretive planner in recruiting and training volunteers and establishing the guided walks programme. NOTE 5
- c) Agreement on the design of the Centre NOTE 6

## **NOTES BY SUPERINTENDENT**

### **General**

The complete report recommends a low key interpretive service in line with the Conservators policies and the Management Plan. The report is generally acceptable to the Countryside Commission, and its adoption by the Conservators, at least as to the greater part, will undoubtedly influence the granting of aid in the building of the Centre and may be other projects.

NOTE 1. A development of a very limited service given at present.

NOTE 2. Entirely dependent upon volunteer labour. The Rangers will administer the forest from the Centre at weekends.

NOTE 3. These would be a new feature. There are no waymarked walks, and only a forest map at Gills Lap.

NOTE 4. Professional help is highly desirable in order to make the best possible use of the new Centre. It is estimated that a one year appointment would suffice, after which the Rangers and volunteers would run: the service.

There is no money in the Conservators budget to meet any salary or expenses, but it is possible that grant aid might totally finance this appointment.

NOTE 5. This could be arranged.

NOTE 6. Plans have been agreed with the Countryside Commission.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON TUESDAY, 18th. NOVEMBER 1980 at 2.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. C.M. Maudsley, Miss B. Willard, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. E.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A. J. Miller, A.L.H. White.

### **1. ELECTION OF MISS A. LUMSDEN AS A CONSERVATOR**

The Chairman reported that Miss Lumsden had been elected as a Conservator by the Commoners at an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 17th. October. The Chairman welcomed Miss Lumsden to the Board.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Ellison and Hon. C.A.S. Grimston.

### **3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st. October were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

- a) Horse Riding. The Superintendent reported that 58 of the 75 members of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association had applied for Permits. A total of 382 permits had been issued to date, giving an income of approximately £6,000.

b) Purchase of Land. The Chairman reported that the Contracts had now been exchanged and completion was due on 28th. November. The Chairman suggested that the General Purposes Committee should meet in the New Year to look into the future management of the land.

c) Roadway - Fords Green. Mr. Kennard reported that the Roadways Committee had carried out a further inspection of this site and had agreed the new line of the roadway, provided that it was constructed from granite blocks.

d) Barbary Barn. The Superintendent reported that the Planning Application for a stables at Barbary Barn was for domestic use only.

## **5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The half year financial statement had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. There was nothing unusual to report.

## **6. TO RECEIVE ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

The Superintendent reported that for the current year, and for the next two years, the County Council would be making a fixed grant to the Conservators. The grant for the current year would be £44,200, plus £5,200 from Wealden District Council, and for 1981/82 at £7,200 and £6,100 respectively. The fixed grant would enable any surplus of income over expenditure to be carried forward.

### **a) Revised Estimate 1980/81**

The Superintendent reported that, since the Estimates were prepared, certain changes have occurred with regard to the computer. Instead of hiring the machine, the County Council have agreed to make a loan to the Conservators in order that the computer may be purchased outright. No repayments against the loan will have to be made in this financial year and, therefore, the Revised Estimate will be amended to show only £1,625 under the revised Estimate for

Training, Software and Stationery. No maintenance agreement will be necessary in this financial year, as the purchase of the machine gives a six month guarantee. The total estimated expenditure for the year will, therefore be £63,444 giving a surplus of income over expenditure of £1,091 to be carried forward to 1981/82.

The Superintendent also reported that the salaries and wages for both the Revised and the 1981/82 Estimate would be increased in the near future. The pay award due in July had not been agreed between the local authority and NALGO and therefore went to arbitration. This has now been settled, and although official notification for payment had been received, it is believed that the increase will be 13 per cent backdated to 1st. June with a further rise in April 1981. The Superintendent asked that the Board approve payment of these increases in order that the staff may benefit from them as soon as official notification was received. This was agreed unanimously.

### **b) Estimates 1981/82**

As with the Revised Estimate, certain alterations were now necessary in respect of the figures shown for the computer. A total of £2,210 will be payable against the loan making the total expenditure in respect of the Innovation for the year £3,260. The County Council grant should be amended to read £47,200 instead of £48,066 and the Total Income to £73,170. The total expenditure for the year would now be £74,160 giving a deficit of £990 which would be offset by the £1,091 carried forward from 1980/81. A surplus of income over expenditure of £100 was now budgeted.

After a brief discussion the Estimates were approved by the Board.

## **7. ASHDOWN FOREST CONSERVATION TRUST**

a) To receive a report from the Dartington Amenity Research Trust on Information Services.

An extract from the report had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting and the Superintendent outlined the points set out in the extract. It was important to note that the main emphasis of the report was on the use of the forest by local residents. The Superintendent advised the Board that the Countryside Commission were happy with the report and that grant aid for the Interpretive Section of the Ashdown Forest Centre would probably be forthcoming if funds were available at the time of building.

The Chairman stated that he had read the full report and was impressed with the contents. He recommended that members of the board should arrange to borrow a copy from the Superintendent. As the full report ran into 17 pages, it would not be economical to supply a copy to every member but arrangements would be made for one or two copies to be available.

Some of the recommendations made in the report were in fact only an extension of the services now given. Waymarked walks and demonstration trails would be new to the forest. The report also recommended the appointment of an Interpretive Planner, and the Superintendent reported that, as the Conservators had no funds available for such an appointment, it may be possible to secure a 100 per cent grant from the Countryside Commission.

After a brief discussion on the recommendations made, the Chairman requested that consideration be given to approving the report in principle. Mr. Hardy proposed that the report be accepted in principle, this was seconded by Mr. Kennard and agreed by the Board.

#### b) Progress of the Appeal and (c) The Ashdown Forest Centre

The Superintendent reported that the Appeal was progressing steadily. The Trustees had authorised expenditure of £10,000 on ground work for the Centre. The site for the building had now been pegged out and the trees to be felled had been marked. The Plans would be submitted to Wealden District Council for planning consent within the next two weeks.

In order to keep the building costs as low as possible, 'Gifts in Kind' were now being sought. Bricks and concrete had already been promised. The Superintendent would be preparing a "shopping list" so that all contacts for gifts of this nature could be permed.

### **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) The Superintendent had received a request from the Wealden Way Steering Group to place a limited number of markers on the forest showing the route of a planned walk from the North to South Downs. Most of the walk is on Public Footpaths but in order to link footpaths in the vicinity of the forest it is necessary for walkers to cross the forest from the Five Hundred Acre Wood to Camphill and on to Fairwarp. The Superintendent presented a copy of the proposed marker. After a brief discussion Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that permission be granted, this was seconded by Mr. Legs, and approved by the Board."

b) Application for Roadways at Poundgate and Duddleswell. The Superintendent reported that he had received applications for roadways to 3 Poundgate Cottages and to a plot of land adjacent to Duddleswell Tea Rooms. The Chairman requested that consideration be given to the Roadways Committee inspecting the sites with delegated powers. This was agreed.

c) Planning Application - Bank Cottage. Emerson College were applying to Wealden District Council for permission to increase the use of Bank Cottage to accommodate ten residential students and ten more day students. If permission were granted, this would increase the number of vehicles using the roadway which crosses the Golf Course. Extra traffic on this road would increase the danger to walkers and would cause inconvenience to golfers, with the possible added danger of golf balls hitting cars. Mr. Kennard felt that, if the Council passed this application, Emerson College might in future request even further increases. He considered that any such further use should be resisted. It was agreed that these observations be brought to the attention of Wealden District Council.

d) Radio. The Chairman reported that the present Radio system which was presented by the Friends of Ashdown Forest eleven years ago now need replacing. He had, therefore, approached the Friends again who had agreed to donate £3,500 toward the cost of new equipment. The new system will cost approximately £6,000 and Miss Lumsden thought that the Fitton Trust might be willing to donate £1,000 toward the cost. This would leave a deficit of £1,500 but as the Radio was scheduled amongst the priorities of the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust, it is possible that the Trustees would be willing to meet the deficit. It was unanimously agreed that a letter expressing the Board's gratitude be sent to the Friends.

### **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman reported that, at the Board Meeting of 28th. May, it was agreed that consideration should be given to the new member of the Board being appointed to Committees on which Mr. Glover had served. It was unanimously agreed that Miss Lumsden be appointed to the Riding Committee and the General Purposes Committee.

### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

Confidential Minute No. 14 was approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.20 p.m. Chairman

### **RIDING COMMITTEE**

**A meeting of the Riding Committee was held at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, 15th. December in the Conservators Office, Forest Row.**

**Present:** Mr. J. Gent (In the Chair) Miss A. Lumsden, Mr. F. Kennard, Mr. G.H. Mills.

The following members of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association were present by invitation:

Mrs. A. Sheldrick

Mr. A. Baird.

The Committee reviewed the present riding situation on the forest, with particular reference to the state of the rides and crossing places, the impact of the current riding regulations, with suggestions from the riders for improvements. A summary of the results of a questionnaire sent to all riders was discussed, and a broad ranging discussion took place as to future policies. Particular points considered included:

State of rides. It was agreed by all present that in certain areas there was cumulative deterioration each year. In certain specific areas erosion was already reaching unacceptable levels, and action to prevent this was becoming urgent. There was considerable support for suggestions that alternative rides should be cut so that walkers, who also used the fire rides extensively, could be separated from riders, and that opportunity could then be taken to close some rides for a period of up to two years for re-seeding. This suggested solution had great merit in solving the long term problem, but in itself presented other problems. While seeming to solve the walker/rider conflict, it was inevitable that many walkers would use the new rides and some conflict would remain. The control of erosion would undoubtedly be easier. There would, however, be great opposition from the environmentalists to the creation of even more rides, with the effect of creating a recreational park and. further destroying the natural aspect of the forest, both visually and ecologically. The cost in money and manpower would be very large, and could not be met in 1981.

An alternative solution suggested was the re-seeding of existing fire breaks half at a time, restricting riders and walkers to one side only while the new sward was established.

Crossing Places. Riders complained that many road crossings were dangerous, partly due to restricted visibility, and partly because of the state of the ground where horses stood ready to cross. Much work in improving visibility is already in hand, and more will be done. Experiments will be carried out to find a suitable surface material for crossings, which, if successful, could provide a solution to certain other wet spots on the forest. The use of wood chippings laid on a bed of heather, on top of birch/alder is a possible solution.

Freedom for riders to use footpaths or ride through the bracken. This often repeated request was opposed by the Committee, the Superintendent and the Rangers, who considered that it would bring a rapid return to the state of a few years back when every path was unusable by walkers during the winter months.

Winter riding by the Riding Establishments. It was generally agreed that much of the problem of mud and erosion on the rides was caused by the horses from the riding establishments. Some views were expressed that the riding establishments should not be allowed to use the forest during the winter months. Miss Lumsden refuted the view that it 'would necessarily put them out of' business. She quoted many other establishments with no winter facilities such as the forest.



The Committee RECOMMEND that the Conservators should consider altering the priority for grant aided work on the forest. It was generally considered that the car park reconstruction programme could be slowed or postponed in order to make money available for major restoration work on the rides, which would include draining, levelling and re-seeding.

The representatives of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association consider that it might be of value to the Board as a whole to be given a clear picture of the objects and activities of the society. Their report reads:-

'The Ashdown Forest Riding Association was formed on 1st. November 1978 with the following objectives:

To assist in conserving the Forest in its natural state for the benefit of walkers and riders alike.

To work in liaison with the Conservators to improve riding conditions.

To ensure that Ashdown Forest is kept available for use by horse riders with the minimum of restrictions.

The Riding Sub-Committee of the Conservators allowed the Association's Acting Chairman, Secretary, and other committee members representing the British Horse Society to attend meetings of the Sub-Committee and there has been a full discussion of all riding matters at these meetings. As a result, those Conservators on the Riding Sub-Committee have a good understanding of the views of the Association and vice versa. Whilst any decisions of the Riding Sub-Committee are of course theirs alone, the Sub-Committee has agreed not to make any change in the regulations concerning riding on the Forest without prior knowledge of the Association's representatives.

In order to improve conditions for walkers and riders alike, the Committee members of the Association carried out a survey of all the boggy patches on the firebreaks and discussed these with Lt. Cdr. Angell and the Head Ranger. At a meeting on the Forest detailed plans were agreed for improvements at the worst area near the Horder Centre in Crowborough.

Whenever restrictions on riding or on the number of permits to be issued has been discussed it became clear, that very little was known about how much riding there was on the Forest. The Association therefore agreed to design, print and collate the replies to a questionnaire to all permit holders, if the Clerk to the Conservators would issue it at the time of renewing permits. The result of this survey is attached,

The Conservators have recently greatly increased the fee for riding permits and the Association pressed the Riding Sub-Committee strongly to give an assurance that some of the extra revenue be spent to help the riders. All permit holders were therefore asked in the survey what reasonable development they would like to see most to improve their enjoyment of riding on the Forest. A full list of these suggestions has been given to the Riding Sub-Committee. The most frequently made were:

To improve access points and make them safer. To improve drainage of firebreaks for the benefit of walkers and riders alike. To allow riders in small groups or alone to ride on some footpaths which have become overgrown (as they are no longer used at all) thus reducing the wear and tear on the firebreaks.

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 21st. JANUARY 1981.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.B. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R. G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.J. Miller, A.L.H. White.

1. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th. November were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **2. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Purchase of Land. The Chairman reported that the completion of purchase of the Land at Chelwood Gate took place on 28th. November. The General Purposes Committee had not been able to meet to discuss the future management of the land owing to the Christmas break, but Mr. Hardy, chairman of the General Purposes Committee was asked to fix a date for the meeting.

b) Roadway, Fords Green. No action has as yet been taken by the builders, and it is believed that the planning application has been withdrawn.

c) Salaries & Wages. The Chairman reported that the expected pay award had now been agreed giving an increase of 13 per cent, backdated to 1st. July, with a further increase of 2 per cent from 1st. April 1981.

d) Computer. The Computer had now been installed and existing records were being transferred to the Computer. It was anticipated that computerised Acknowledgment Rent Demands would be sent out within the next week or two.

e) Radio. The Chairman reported that enough money to meet the estimated cost of £6,000 for the new equipment had been promised. The Friends of Ashdown Forest had agreed to donate £4,500, which included £1,000 from the Fitton Trust. Thanks were due to Miss Lumsden for obtaining this gift. A further £1,300 was promised by a donor who, for the time being, is to remain anonymous. Quotations had been received from two companies and trials would be taking place. The Superintendent explained that the new equipment will be more versatile than the existing equipment as the sets can be removed from vehicles and become hand held "walkie-talkie" sets. This will be of considerable benefit when fighting fires.

f) Bank Farm, Forest Row. The Superintendent reported that the Local Planning Authority had refused the application for increased use of Bank Farm for educational purposes.

#### **4. The Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust Appeal**

a) Report on Progress. The Superintendent reported that the Appeal was making reasonable progress in view of the difficult times. £143,000 had already been given, with promised gifts amounting to £1,500 and bank interest of £3,600, making the Appeal total £150,000.

b) Report on the Meeting of the Trustees held on 29th. December. The Trustees had decided to review the situation of the Appeal and its future at a meeting to be held on 23rd. March. Brigadier Scott considered that, as the Appeal was originally set up by the Conservators, they should examine the future, and suggested that the Appeal/Finance Committee meet to discuss the matter and to consider whether the Appeal should end at the end of March. Mr. Edwardes-Jones thought that it would be wrong to close the Appeal this early in the year.

It was agreed that the Appeal/Finance Committee meet before the next Board Meeting and put their recommendations to the Board on 18th. March.

The Trustees had agreed to expenditure of up to £10,000 for site work and foundations for the building with a further £18,300 for the re-erection of the main structures of the barns.

Expenditure of £4,500 for the employment of a Tractor Driver had also been approved.

c) Building Plans. The Superintendent reported that the trees on the site had now been felled. The Plans were due to be considered by Wealden District Council on 4th. February and no great problems with regard to Planning Permission were anticipated.

#### **d) To consider the employment of a Tractor Driver.**

As this item was closely linked with item 6 on, the Agenda it was agreed that the two be taken together.

#### **6. The Superintendent to report on the state of and replacement plans for transport and machinery.**

The Superintendent reported that the tractor purchased in 1960 was now in need of extensive repairs, the estimated cost of which was £1,000, and it is, therefore, recommended that this tractor be sold.

In order to make full use of the other tractor, a Hydraulic Bucket is needed. A bucket would cost approximately £1,000 which could be raised by selling the old tractor. The \*\*\*\* offered by B.A.T. Industries, can also be used with this tractor, but the use of such machinery required a qualified Tractor Driver and has, therefore, not been purchased.

The Trust had authorised funds for the employment of a Tractor Driver and the Superintendent asked the Board to consider the employment of an experienced and qualified driver before expensive attachments were purchased for the tractor. This was agreed.

The Superintendent outlined the present transport and the proposals for replacement. The Land Rover, which was purchased in 1975, will soon need to be replaced and should be considered for replacement in 1982/83. It could then be retained for use as a fire tender only.

The Renault 4 and the Transit should both be replaced this year. There are not sufficient funds to replace both with new vehicles, but the Renault could be replaced by a good second-hand vehicle.

It was agreed that these vehicles be replaced and that the Chairman and Vice Chairman authorise specific vehicles prior to purchase.

The continuation of the Manpower Services Commission's Youth Opportunities Programme placed a heavy burden on the Conservators' transport. The Superintendent stated that he had requested the Commission to supply a minibus in conjunction with a new scheme proposed for 1981/82. It seemed probable that the Commission would finance this purchase.

## **5. Report of a Meeting of the Horse Riding Committee held on 29th. December.**

The report had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Gent reported that lengthy discussions took place regarding the state of the fire rides where erosion was getting steadily worse. The Committee recommended that the Board consider the possibility of the Car Park Programme being slowed down and money and manpower being used for work on the fire rides. The Superintendent advised the Board that grant aid had already been approved by the Countryside Commission for two car parks for 1981. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the work on the car parks should go ahead.

It was also agreed that the Countryside Commission should be approached to see if they could grant aid work on the fire rides, so that more emphasis could be given to this in future.

## **7. Sundry Matters not on the Agenda**

a) The Superintendent reported that Ranger Linton was attending a course on Interpretation and that the Head Ranger would be attending a course in March in connection with the use of Voluntary Rangers.

Eight new volunteers had received their basic training and would be operational, giving a total Voluntary Ranger force of 18.

b) Experiment with new system of Litter Collection. The Superintendent reported that Wealden District Council would be having a new vehicle designed to automatically pick up and empty large litter bins. It may be possible that this system could be of use on the forest. The possibility of a free trial would be investigated.

c) Request for sign to Public House at Fairwarp. The Landlord of the Foresters at Fairwarp had requested that a sign to "The Village Inn" be erected. This had been discussed by the Parish Council, who had stated that they would prefer not to have such a sign, but as the suggested site was on the forest, it is the Board's decision. After a brief discussion it was unanimously agreed that permission should be refused.

The Superintendent had received a request from the Golf Club for permission to place three seats on the old course. This was approved.

The Beech woodland at Legsheath is getting old and has caused some damage to the boundary fence. The Superintendent requested that Mr. Gent and Mr. Grimston be asked to look at the problem to advise what should be done with the ageing trees. This was agreed.

Clerks Account. This account is funded by transfers of money from the General Account up to a maximum of £5,000. The Superintendent advised the Board that this sum is no longer sufficient to cover even one month's expenditure. It was, therefore, requested that the maximum sum be increased. The Chairman suggested the increase should be up to £10,000. This was agreed.

A letter, addressed to The Board, had been received from Mr. Osborne, regarding the problems of sheep being harassed and savaged by dogs. Copies of the letter were placed before members of the Board. In his letter, Mr. Osborne noted several attacks on his sheep, but only two such incidents had been reported to the Head Ranger.

over the last few months. Mr. Osborne requested that strongly worded notices be put up immediately, warning dog owners of the consequences of their dogs worrying the sheep. The Chairman suggested that, as the General Purposes Committee would be meeting in the near future, they should investigate the problem and make recommendations to the Board. Miss Willard and Mrs. Maudslay felt very strongly that such a matter should not be delayed. The lambs would soon be born and the ewes would not wait for Committee decisions. Mr. Logan supported these views. It was, therefore, agreed that suitable temporary notices would be erected as quickly as possible.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.20 p.m.

Chairman

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 18th. MARCH.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. R.G. Edwardes-Jones (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. C.M. Maudslay, Miss B. Willard, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, J.A.A.S. Logan, A.L.S. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Wills and Mr. Miller.

### **2. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21st. JANUARY**

The Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Employment of Tractor Driver. The Superintendent reported that an experienced Tractor driver, Mr. Waddington, had commenced employment on Monday, and when his probationary period has been completed, consideration will then be given to the purchase of the Flail.

b) Replacement Vehicles. The Superintendent reported that the Manpower Services Commission had financed the purchase of a Minibus for transporting the Teams from 1st. April.

The Transit had recently broken down and would be very expensive to repair, and as this vehicle was used for the litter collection arrangements were in hand for the purchase of an Austin Sherpa. The Renault 4 is also due for replacement but no decision on the type of vehicle to be purchased to replace the Renault had yet been made and this will depend on available funds.

c) Woodland at Legsheath. Mr. Gent reported that he and Mr. Grimston had visited the site and felt that the "Magnificent old trees" should be kept as intact as possible. It was recommended that six trees be felled, all of which are dead or dangerous. The trees could be sold as firewood giving a possible income of £175.

d) Sheep Warning Notices. The Superintendent reported that the temporary notices had been put up the day after the last Board Meeting and that the design of the permanent notices had been approved. 24 new signs have been ordered but no delivery date is yet known. The erection of 12 notices will probably meet the requirements and the positioning of these will be discussed with Mr. Osborne.

e) Grant Aid for Fire Rides. The Superintendent reported that he had spoken to the Countryside Commission who may be able to grant aid some work on the rides next year. They are not able to grant aid maintenance work but can give grants for new work, and any application would have to be carefully presented.

f) Mr. Edwardes-Jones enquired on the progress with the Computer. The Superintendent advised that existing records were in the process of being put on to the Computer and hopefully it will be fully operational from 1st. April.

g) Brigadier Scott asked what progress had been made with regard to the experiment with the new system of litter collection. The Superintendent advised that nothing had happened yet, but that it was hoped to start the experiment before long.

#### **4. THE ASHDOWN FOREST CONSERVATION TRUST**

a) Report on progress of the Appeal. The Superintendent reported that the total raised to date was £165,000. Letters had been sent to all Licence holders when the Acknowledgment Rent demands were sent out and the response had been very good. Collections would again be made on the forest at weekends and new Car Stickers are being designed. The Appeal Committee felt that people should get something for their donation and the possibility of "Ashdown Forester" badges being produced was being investigated.

b) The Ashdown Forest Centre. The site was now being levelled ready for Messrs. Durnells to erect on the foundations in about a week's time. The building should be up by the end of June and should be weatherproofed before next winter. Further, it was originally decided that the roof should be of old clay tiles but it is now felt that the barns should be thatched with heather. This would cost approximately £4,000 as opposed to £18,000 for tiles. A Thatcher has been found and he will be ready to start work in June. He is also willing to use our M.S.C. Team as labourers. There are two minor disadvantages with heather thatch. It will cost a little more to insure the building, probably £200 more than for a building with a tiled roof, and secondly, thatch does not last as long. The outer layer will need replacing in about 20 years and the whole roof in 70 years. However, the saving on the initial cost is more than sufficient to compensate for these minor problems. After a brief discussion Mr. Logan proposed that the barns should be thatched. This was seconded by Mr. Kavanagh and agreed unanimously.

#### **5. REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ACQUIRED LAND AT CHELWOOD GATE.**

Mr. Hardy, Chairman of the General Purposes Committee reported to the Board. He described the land as being mixed woodland to the South and typical forest to the North with about 20 acres of excellent natural heath which would need clearance of regenerating scrub. The land had three main access points.

A general discussion took place on the pros and cons of declaring the area to be part of the forest or not. The Superintendent was instructed to ascertain the legal position regarding Bye Laws, Rights of Common, and the possibility of declaring the major part to be part of the forest, and retaining a portion outside the forest in order to give the Conservators a greater flexibility in management. It was agreed that the General Purposes Committee should look into these matters and report back to the Board at the next meeting.

#### **6. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Interpretive Planner. The Superintendent reported that the Countryside Commission had agreed to fund the employment of an Interpretive Planner. The post had been advertised and it is anticipated that interviews will take place within the next two or three weeks. The Superintendent requested that consideration be given to appointing an Interview Panel. It was agreed that Mr. Gent and Mr. Kavanagh together with the Chairman and Vice Chairman form the Panel. It was suggested that Mr. David Streeter also be invited.

b) Roadways. The Superintendent had received requests for two roadways, one in Forest Row and one at Duddleswell. He requested that the Roadways Committee carry out inspections.

c) Use of the forest by Tremain's Stables. The Superintendent had received a request from Tremain's for permission to operate their riding school from the Stables at Birch Grove. At present the stables at Horsted Keynes use the forest a limited amount in the Summer. The amount of use by this riding establishment would increase if they are based at Birch Grove. After discussion Brigadier Scott proposed that permission be refused. This was seconded by Mr. Gent. Mr. Logan proposed that permission be granted for a summer only Licence for use of the forest from Birch Grove and that this be reviewed after a trial period. This was seconded by Miss Lumsden. Mr. Logan's proposal was put to the vote, the result being 5 for and 6 against. It was resolved that permission be refused.

d) Commoners Annual General Meeting. The Superintendent advised the Board that the Commoners Annual General Meeting would be taking place on Friday, 20th. March. Mr. Stride has requested that three resolutions be bought up for debate, these were:-

- i) That proxy votes cast at meetings of Commoners be open to scrutiny by or on behalf of the persons concerned therewith.
- ii) That an objection be raised to the Department of the Environment as to the doubling of the rates on Commoners, currently proposed by the Board of Conservators.

iii) That a demand be made to the East Sussex County Council to withdraw from their Bill to be presented to Parliament, the section referring to the change, as regards election of Commoners, from proxy voting to postal voting, in that the system laid down in the Bill does not conform with the normally accepted principles of postal voting.

The Chairman reported that Mrs. Maudslay would not be standing for re-election to the Board and this was her last Board Meeting. He asked that a vote of thanks to Mrs. Maudslay be recorded.

## **7. TO FIX THE DATES OF THE MEETINGS DURING 1981/1982**

The proposed dates had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting, It was noted that the 17th. May was not in fact a Wednesday, this should have read 20th. May. It was agreed that the meetings would take place on:-

Wednesday, 20th. May, Tuesday 28th. July, Wednesday, 30th. September Wednesday, 18th. November, Wednesday, 20th. January 1982.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential. Minute No. 15

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.35 p.m.Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW ON FRIDAY, 22nd. MAY 1981 at 2.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (in the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. R. G. Edwardes-Jones, L. C. Hardy, D. L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A.L.H. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Mr. E.W. Ellison, Mr. J. Gent and Mr. M. Taylor.

### **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1981/82**

Brigadier Scott proposed Mr. G.H. Wills, this was seconded by Mr., Kavanagh and unanimously approved.

Mr. Wills thanked the Board and took the Chair, but he advised the Board that his hearing had deteriorated considerably and he could not guarantee how long he would be able to continue, however, he would carry on as long as possible.

### **3. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1981/82**

Mr. Wills proposed Mr. Edwardes-Jones, this was seconded by Mr. White and carried unanimously.

### **4. TO ELECT THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR 1981/82**

a) General Purposes Committee It was agreed that the members would be Mr. L.C. Hardy, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mr. J. Gent. Ex Officio Mr. G.H. Wills and Mr. R. G. Edwardes-Jones.

b) Finance/Appeal Committee It was agreed that this Committee would be as follows:- Brigadier L.N. Scott, Mr. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, Mr. L. C. Hardy, Mr. A.L.H. White and Mr. G.H. Wills.

c) Horse Riding Committee, It was agreed that the members would be Mr. J. Gent, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Mr. F. Kennard, Mr. J.A.A.S. Logan, Ex Officio Mr. G.H. Wills and Mr. R.G. Edwardes-Jones

d) Model Aircraft Committee It was agreed that the members would be Mr. F. Kennard, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Mr. D.L. Kavanagh, Ex Officio Mr. G H. Wills and Mr. R.G. Edwardes-Jones.

e) Roadways Committee It was agreed that the members would be Mr. F. Kennard, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Miss B. Willard, Mr. J. Gent, and Mr. D.L. Kavanagh. Ex Officio Mr. G.M. Wills and Mr. R.G. Edwardes-Jones.

### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18th. MARCH**

The Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **6. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Replacement Vehicles. The Chairman advised the Meeting that the Land Rover urgently needs a Reconditioned engine, and has now had to be taken out of service. A replacement van is needed so that the Land Rover can be used only for fire fighting.

The Superintendent reported that he had three quotations for vans, the lowest being a second-hand Mini Van at £1,485 other possibilities were a new Mini Van at £2,346 or a Morris 440 Van at £2,796. It was felt that Mini Vans would not be very good on the forest as they are too low. He therefore recommended the purchase of the Morris 440. Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that the purchase be made, this was seconded by Mr. Kavanagh and agreed unanimously.

b) Forest Rate. The Superintendent reported that the Department of the Environment had not yet approved the Forest Rate, which was causing a serious cash flow problem. If the Rate is not approved, the Finance Committee will have to consider amending the budget for the year.

c) Interpretive Planner. Miss Diana Shipp, the recently appointed Interpretive Planner, was introduced to the Board. Over the next year Miss Shipp will be putting her ideas forward for Board approval.

d) Sheep Warning Notices. The Superintendent reported that there had been a delay in the production of these Notices, but they will be put up as soon as they arrive.

## **7. REPORT OF THE COMMONERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Chairman reported that Mrs. Sheldrick had been elected following the retirement of Mrs. Maudslay. He formally welcomed Mrs. Sheldrick to the Board.

Mr. Kennard had been elected to Chair the Commoners Meeting and was asked to report. Mr. Kennard described the atmosphere of the Commoners Annual General Meeting as being acrimonious. There was strong objection to the doubling of the Forest Rate and a resolution was passed that the Chairman of the Commoners Annual General Meeting should write to the Department of the Environment advising them of the Commoners views. There had also been strong objection to the Conservators allowing access to the Caravan Site at Colemans Hatch and a resolution passed "That the Conservators should not sanction any new roadway or the making up of any existing roadway to allow access to caravan or camping sites and that any Planning Application for such a site in the vicinity of the forest be opposed by the Board".

## **8. ASHDOWN FOREST RATE**

This item was taken under MATTERS ARISING.

## **9. REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10th. APRIL**

A copy of the report had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The Committee met to consider alternative courses with regard to the new land at Chelwood Gate. The Committee recommended that the Conservators should resolve that the land be declared a part of Ashdown Forest in accordance with the Ashdown Forest Act 1974 - Section 20

The Superintendent advised the Board that the Bye Laws would automatically apply to the land, but that the Rights of Common would not. A Deed of Declaration could be made to allow existing Commoners to extend their Rights over this land. The Committee felt this to be desirable. After a brief discussion, Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that the question of Common Rights being extended be re-considered, this was seconded by Mr. Kavanagh. It was agreed that the land be declared as part of Ashdown Forest but that the question of a Deed of Declaration being made be considered at a later date.

## **10. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE**

Mr. Kennard, Chairman of the Roadways Committee reported on applications that were considered on 12th. May.

i) Stallards, Forest Row. There is at present one access serving two houses, Stallards and one adjacent house. The owner of Stallards had requested permission to create a new access over the forest to his property. Following the site meeting the Committee recommend that this be refused as the existing access is adequate.

ii) Little Tompsetts, Forest Row. A request had been made to widen the access. The Committee felt that the existing access was adequate.

iii) Land at Duddleswell. The Committee were not convinced of a need for this access and therefore recommend that it be refused.

iv) Spinningdale, Colemans Hatch. Mrs. Armstrong had asked for permission to extend the Lay-by by 16 ft. This was felt to be justified.

v) The residents of Bank Farm had requested permission to put sleeping policemen in the road. The Roadway Committee could see no reason to deny permission.

vi) Bracken Cottage, Fairwarp. The elderly owner of this property had requested permission to extend the roadway by about twelve feet. It was considered that this should be approved.

The Board agreed with all recommendations made by the Roadway Committee.

## **11. REPORT OF THE HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE**

The Committee met on 13th. May and Mr. Kennard reported the main points discussed.

Mrs. Sheldrick felt that some of the rides were showing an unacceptable amount of wear and should be closed. Riding Schools should be allowed to use certain other tracks over the forest and not be restricted to fire rides. However, the Committee considered that with the existing number of staff, policing such activity would be impossible.

Some members of the Committee also felt that the Riding Ban was not used enough and that the Ban should be enforced for longer periods when the forest was really wet.

The Committee discussed possible ways of solving the erosion problem and further discussions would be taking place and the Committee a further recommendation put before the Board.

## **12. REPORT ON THE APPEAL**

The Superintendent reported that the Appeal total now stood at over £200,000 which included a £25,000 grant from the Countryside Commission toward the cost of the Centre.

The Centre. The foundations and substructure had been laid ready for the first barn to be erected. Self help would start in July when the Thatcher commenced work. Mr. S. Comber, a local builder, and a retired Quantity Surveyor, Mr. A. Wells, had agreed to help with the building and will be giving their advice free of charge. The Manpower Services Commission had approved a Scheme for the employment of one Supervisor and four workers.

## **13. TO APPOINT MR. F. KENNARD AS AN AUTHORISED SIGNATORY FOR GENERAL ACCOUNT.**

It was agreed that Mr. Kennard be authorised to sign cheques.

## **14. TO CONSIDER THE PURCHASE OF A FLAIL AND A WOOD CHIPPER**

The Superintendent reported that the Tractor Driver was proving extremely satisfactory and the purchase of the Flail was now of high priority. The money for the purchase had been given to the Trust by B.A.T. and the Superintendent requested the Board give approval for the purchase. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the Trust should be requested to make money available for this to be purchased now.

The Superintendent asked the Board to consider asking the Trust to purchase a Wood chipper for use with the Tractor. The implement would serve a dual purpose (i) to provide wood chips for use on fire rides (ii) to provide wood chips for use with the central heating boiler for the new Centre. After considerable discussion it was agreed to defer a decision until alternative methods of heating the Ashdown Forest Centre had been investigated. The Superintendent was instructed to seek the advice of the National Coal Board.

## **15. SUNDRY MATTERS**



- a) Fires. There were several fires over the Easter Holiday. One of the fires was caused by a member of the Conservation Corps throwing a cigarette away. Prosecution was considered, but as the young man concerned has offered to do some conservation work next year as compensation, and also to raise funds for the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust, it was considered to be inappropriate in this case.
- b) Car Parks. The new Car Park at the Goat Crossroads had been designed with one entrance/exit. Experience shows that people driving in to the car park when full were having to back out into the road. The Superintendent will be investigating a solution to this problem in conjunction with the County Landscape Architect and the Countryside Commission.
- c) Lease of land at Millbrook, The County Council had offered a new lease for this land for the sum of £20.00 per year. The rent on the previous lease having been £1.00 per year. The Superintendent informed the Council that the Conservators were considering raising the annual rent on the "Council Dump" at Wych Cross from one Peppercorn to £25.00. It was decided that both proposed increases should be shelved.
- d) Alleged Encroachment at Browns Brook, Fairwarp. The Superintendent reported that he was investigating a possible encroachment, and that in order that this problem be solved it will be necessary to employ a Surveyor to mark out the boundary so that a Committee could then have a look at the problem. This was agreed.
- e) Application for Diversion of Bridle Path at Hartfield. The Wealden District Council were considering an application for the diversion of a bridle path at Hurstlands, Hartfield. The proposed new route would make use of the track which leads into the site of a previous application for a caravan site, and connects well with the nearest fire ride. It was agreed that the Conservators raise no objection.
- f) Land at Barbary Hatch. The owners of this piece of land wish to sell 10 acres to the Conservators. The Friends of Ashdown Forest have been sounded out, but would not be willing to make funds available for this purchase. The Chairman suggested that the General Purposes Committee look into this matter. This was agreed.
- g) New Ashdown Forest Map. The Superintendent reported that the new map was in the process of being prepared. It will be more comprehensive than the existing one and will sell for approximately £1.00

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No.16

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.50 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON TUESDAY, 28th. JULY 1981.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair) Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, The Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. E.G. Edwardes-Jones, E. W. Ellison, L.C. Hardy, D. L. Kavanagh, A.J. Miller, T. Morgan, M. G. Taylor.

The Chairman opened the Meeting and welcomed Mr. Tom Morgan who had been appointed to the Board in lieu of Mr. Lagan, who had retired.

Before commencing with the Agenda, the Chairman suggested that a telegram should be sent to Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer expressing the Board's good wishes on their marriage. This was agreed.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Gent and Mr. White. Mr. Kennard also sent his apologies as he would be late arriving.

It was agreed that item 8 on the Agenda would be taken as soon as Mr. Kennard arrived as Mr. Grimston, who was closely concerned with this item, had to leave the Meeting early.

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd. May were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Replacement Vehicle. The Chairman reported that the Morris 440 van had been purchased and was performing satisfactorily.

b) Land at Chelwood Gate, The Chairman reported that Whitley Hughes & Luscombe will be making contact with the Home Office and the Department of the Environment in order that the Bye Laws are formally extended over the new land.

c) Flail. The Chairman reported that the Trustees had agreed to make the money available for the purchase of the Flail. B.A.T. Industries had donated £3,000 to the Trust, specifically for the purchase of a Flail. The total cost of this piece of equipment would be £3,072, but as the original gift had been earning interest the total cost would be met by the Trust. The machine was on order and delivery was expected shortly.

d) Encroachment at Browns Brook. The Superintendent reported that a local Surveyor had been asked to check the boundary and the owner of the property had been advised and asked to co-operate with the Surveyor. He had refused to allow the Surveyor on to what he considered to be his land. Whitley Hughes & Luscombe have been instructed to take up the matter with the owner of Browns Brook, but it could be a slow process, as the boundary shown on the Land Registry has to be agreed or otherwise. If it is established that the Land Register is not correct, a challenge will be made.

e) Land at Brabary Hatch. The Superintendent reported that he had arranged several meetings with the owner of this land but for various reasons they had had to be cancelled. Another meeting was scheduled for 30th. July, after which a meeting of the General Purposes Committee would be called.

Ashdown Forest Map. A proof of the new map was shown to the Board. The new map carries much more information than the original Ashdown Forest Map, including the Fire rides, and such details as given in the Ashdown Forest leaflet. The cost of the production of the Map has been met by Arka Graphics. It is hoped that supplies will be available in about two weeks.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1980/81**

Copies of the Accounts had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. The Superintendent reported that the following letter had been received from the District Auditor:-

Dear Sir, 1980/81 AUDIT

The audit of the accounts of the Conservators for the year ended 31 March 1981 has been completed. There are no matters on which it is necessary for me to make a report to the Conservators under section 157 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The appropriate certificate has been entered on the Balance Sheet in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1974.

A memorandum of matters of detail discussed at the audit will be forwarded.

My thanks are due for the courteous assistance afforded at the audit.

Yours faithfully,

R.U. DAVIES District Auditor

The Superintendent advised the Board that in the Memorandum of matters of detail' the District Auditor had recommended that the number of Bank Accounts held by the Conservators be decreased. The Superintendent explained what the three Bank Accounts were for and after a brief discussion it was agreed that the General Account be closed and all monies previously paid into this account go direct to the Clerks Account. It was also agreed that the Clerks No. 2 Account should continue to operate, at least for the current financial year.

Mrs. Sheldrick requested that the Annual Accounts give more information than at present. The Superintendent advised the Board that this may be possible next year when the accounts are fully computerised, but the full capabilities of the machine are not yet known, as Mrs. Buxton has not yet had sufficient time, without interruptions, to carry out the work involved. It was hoped to overcome this problem in the near future.

The Superintendent outlined the details of the Income & Expenditure Account. The only item which was not in line with the estimates, namely the expenditure on Salaries & Wages was due to re-grading certain salaries, which although recommended by the County Personnel Officer, were not fully compensated for in the County Council grant.

After a general discussion Mr. Ellison proposed that the Accounts be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

Mr. Kennard joined the Meeting and Item 8. on the Agenda was taken next.

#### **8. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE REGARDING AN APPLICATION TO THE LORD OF THE MANOR FOR A LEASE FOR DIVERSION OF THE ROADWAY OVER HIGHGATE GREEN, FOREST ROW.**

Mr. Kennard reported that a developer was again seeking permission for an access over Highgate Greet. A similar proposal had been agreed by the Board in March 1980, but the previous developer did not proceed.

Mr. Kennard presented a Plan showing the proposed access and the part of the existing roadway which would be returned to forest.

After a detailed discussion Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that the Conservators raise no objection to the proposed new roadway, subject to all necessary Planning Consent. This was agreed unanimously. Mr. Taylor declared an interest in this matter and, therefore, declined a vote.

#### **5. FOREST RATE**

The Chairman recapitulated the events of the past four months with regard to correspondence with the Department of the Environment. The Superintendent had recently had further discussion with the Department and had ascertained that a 30 per cent increase in the Rate would probably meet with their approval. The Department of the Environment would not take into account any increase to cover the last three years or for the next three years. It will, therefore, be necessary in future to review the Rates annually.

If a 30 per cent increase is approved, the estimated income will be £1,700 short of the annual estimate. The Finance Committee will review the situation in October.

Mr. Taylor proposed that the Department of the Environment be asked to consider a 30 per cent increase to the Rate for the current year. This was seconded by Mrs. Sheldrick and agreed unanimously.

#### **6. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE APPEAL**

The Superintendent reported that the Appeal total was now over £200,000. The Head Ranger was collecting from visitors at weekends and doing very well averaging £200.00 per week. There was now no staff employed by the Trust and major fund raising events have ceased, although the Appeal was not being closed.

#### **7. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Superintendent reported that the framework of the first barn had now been erected and the Manpower Services Commission team, consisting of a Carpenter, builders, and semi-skilled workmen would now continue with the work. The work done by the team would be supervised by Mr. Comber, Mr. Wells and Ranger Pedder.

The sub-structure of the second barn should be completed in about a week and the framework erected in a further two weeks.

The thatchers had started work on the first barn and it is hoped that all the building will be weatherproof before winter.

The Superintendent asked for the Board's guidance on the Central Heating System to be installed. He had investigated using wood chips, burnt in a Swedish designed stove. There was a possibility that the Sainsbury Charitable Trust might donate a wood chipping machine, which would be tractor mounted. If this transpired, wood

chips could be used on certain muddy sections of the fire rides, as well as for central heating. A discussion took place and various alternative methods of heating were discussed. It was decided that the matter be resolved by a special Committee appointed for the purpose. Mrs. Sheldrick, Messrs. Hardy, Kennard and Miller agreed to serve, in addition to the Chairman and Vice Chairman

### **9. REPORT OF INTERPRETIVE OFFICER**

Miss Shipp reported to the Board that she had been talking to local experts and visiting sites of interest on the forest to learn more about the area. She had visited other Information Centres in the South East in order to formulate ideas for the presentation of information at the Ashdown Forest Centre. She had organised a guided walk as an experiment to ascertain the demand for a Guided Walks Programme and had asked all walkers to complete a questionnaire. Everyone had enjoyed the walk and would like to attend more in the future.

Miss Shipp presented a design to the Board for an experimental sign for the Roman Road. It was envisaged that the simple sign would be mounted on a low post and would be unobtrusive on the landscape. This was approved.

### **10. SUNDRY MATTERS**

i) The Superintendent reported that the Amendment to the Ashdown Forest Act 1974, to change Proxy Voting to Postal Voting, which was included in the East Sussex County Council Bill had received Royal Assent.

ii) The Superintendent reported that the new Radio should be installed in early September.

iii) The Superintendent asked the Board to note that Local Authority Wage Award had been agreed at 7.3 per cent payable as from 1<sup>st</sup> July. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW ON WEDNESDAY, 30th. SEPTEMBER 1981**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (in the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mr. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A.J. Miller, A.L.H. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. Ellison, Hardy, Morgan and Taylor.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 28th. July were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Land at Chelwood Gate. The Superintendent reported that the Home Office were willing to proceed with the Bye Laws and have asked for a Draft of the necessary amendments to the Bye Laws.

b) Flail. The Chairman reported that the Flail was now in service and that evidence of its use could be seen on the Ridge Road.

c) Encroachment at Browns Brook. The Superintendent reported that the Surveyor had submitted Plans showing the three positions of the boundary:

i) as shown on the Award Map, ii) The Ordnance Survey Map, iii) The Land Registry. It is apparent that the Land Registry boundary is wrong and should, therefore, be challenged. Messrs. Whitley, Hughes & Luscombe were in touch with Mr. Master's Solicitor.

d) Land at Brabary Hatch. The Chairman reported that no price had been mentioned for the purchase of this 11 acres of land. The Superintendent thinks a figure of around £500 per acre is likely. The possibility of grant aid has been explored and it is likely that a 50 per cent grant might be forthcoming.

e) Ashdown Forest Map. The Chairman reported that the new Map is now available.

f) Roadway at Highgate Green. The Chairman advised the Board that there was nothing new to report. The Planning Application had not gone through yet and, therefore, the question of the roadway was held in abeyance.

g) Forest Rate. The Chairman reported that a 30 per cent increase in the Rate had now been agreed by the Department of the Environment and the Rate Demands had been sent out.

h) Mr. White requested that a vote of appreciation to the Head Ranger be recorded for his efforts in collecting money from visitors for the Appeal Fund.

#### **4. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE.**

The Superintendent reported that the Central Heating Committee had met and had come to the general conclusion that a Multipurpose Boiler should be used. The Committee had appointed two members to look at the actual type of boiler recommended by Mr. Stokes, but they had felt that this particular boiler would not be satisfactory and would be looking for alternatives.

The first Barn was now complete and the end result very good. The second building, which would house the Visitor Centre, had been handed over by Durtneills and thatching had started. Durtneills were experiencing some delays on the third Barn as some timbers had to be replaced, but these should arrive soon.

Miss Willard enquired what plans were being made for the furnishing of the Centre. The Superintendent reported that existing furniture would be used. Mr. Kennard suggested that a Committee be appointed to decide on the interior finish. It was agreed that this Committee be made up of The Chairman, Miss Willard and Mr. Angell.

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Mrs. Sheldrick asked what finish would be used on the exterior. The Superintendent advised that trials had taken place with a Berger preservative in a mid brown colour. Three coats of this should be sufficient with a given life of 9-10 years.

The Superintendent further reported that the Finance Committee had recently discussed and agreed to a change of use within the building. The Superintendent's and Secretary's offices were to have been within the Visitor Centre building and the Conservation Room and Library were in the other building. It was now apparent that the Secretary cannot be constantly interrupted by visitors and therefore the Superintendent's and Secretary's office would now be where the Conservation Room and Library were, and vice versa.

#### **5. TO CONSIDER THE LAYOUT OF GILLS LAP CAR PARK**

The Superintendent outlined the details of the Plan for this Car Park. The Countryside Commission had agreed to grant aid but they have requested that the County Landscape Architect be consulted with regards to design, and in view of the sensitive treatment needed for this Car Park, should be asked to advise during construction. Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that the Plan be accepted. This was agreed.

There was a brief discussion regarding the stone used for the Car Park. Experiments in toning down the Kentish Ragstone had taken place which included mixing road chippings and gutter sweepings with the ragstone, and these would continue. Mr. Kennard suggested that a covering of Philpotts Stone Dross be considered.

#### **6. HUNTING - TO RECEIVE A PETITION SIGNED BY 569 PERSONS**

A copy of the wording of the Petition had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting, and the Chairman asked for the views of the members of the Board.

Mrs. Sheldrick, the only member of the Board who rode with the Hunt, advised that the Hunt only used the forest five or six times during the Season. The Master always requested the Field to keep to the rides and always consulted the Superintendent before a Meet. The Petition referred to damage to plant and wildlife. Mrs. Sheldrick felt that the Hunt was unlikely to cause damage to plant life as it was dormant during the hunting season. Mrs. Sheldrick had looked at the figures for accidents involving Deer and there is no evidence that the figures increase or coincide with the Hunt using the forest.

Mr. Gent advised the Board that the use of the forest by the Hunt had been discussed by the Horse Riding Committee who felt that the present level of use by the Hunt be permitted, but that Saturday Meets be avoided if possible, in order to limit the size of the field.

After a full discussion Mr. White proposed that no action be taken by the Board but that further information be made available at the end of the Hunting Season. This was agreed.

## **7. REPORT FROM THE INTERPRETIVE ADVISOR**

Miss Shipp reported that the design for the Roman Road sign had been finalised and would be manufactured in G.R.P. She had done a further three experimental guided walks since the last Board Meeting, with one more scheduled for 18th. October.

Miss Shipp further reported that she had been working on preliminary plans for the displays and exhibitions for the Centre and the Plans were presented to the Board. The Superintendent advised the Board that detailed Plans would be produced for approval as the Plans presented by Miss Shipp today were in outline only. After a brief discussion the Board approved the outline plans, and agreed that a Committee be appointed to approve future detailed plans. It was further agreed that the Committee would be made up of The Chairman and Vice Chairman and Mr. L. Hardy, if he was willing to serve on the Committee.

## **8. TO CONSIDER APPOINTING A PERMANENT VEGETATION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

A report giving details of the present Ad Hoc Vegetation Committee and the work carried out had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting. After a brief discussion it was agreed that Mr. Gent, Mrs. Sheldrick and Mr. Kennard form the Committee with the power to co-opt outside experts such as Mr. D. Streeter, Mr. D. Harvey, Nature Conservancy Council, and Mr. Ian Deans, County Ecologist. Mr. Gent asked what funds would be available for vegetation management in the next financial year. The Superintendent stated that he would make this information available as soon as the 1982 Estimates had been prepared.

## **9. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON THE HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26th. AUGUST.**

Mr. Gent, Chairman of the Horse Riding Committee, reported that the Meeting had discussed the fees for the Riding Year commencing 1st. October and considered that these should not be increased. The use of the forest for sponsored rides and the use by the Hunt were discussed and it was agreed that the Committee would recommend that there be no change to the existing policy.

Work on the fire rides had started and as soon as the two Car Parks at present under construction were completed, the rides would take priority over other maintenance work.

## **10. SUNDRY MATTERS**

i) Roadway to Misbourne Farm. The track from the Stonehill Road to Misbourne has caused problems in the past and various Committees have looked at the problem. There is now a new owner of Upper Misbourne who has started making up the roadway. The Superintendent therefore requested an urgent meeting of the Roadway Committee. This was agreed.

ii) Roadway. Forest Holme. This had been looked at by the Roadway Committee and a new roadway agreed for the House and Lodge. The owners of Honeybee Lodge had requested that they be permitted to re-open the original driveway. The Superintendent reported that there had been no change since the Board made their decision. The Board decided that the original roadway should remain closed.

iii) Forest Row Junior Football Pitch had requested permission to erect a temporary structure for changing rooms. After a brief discussion permission was denied.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Miss Willard asked whether it would be possible to allow the general public to cut bracken, and not only the Commoners. It was agreed that the legality of such action should be investigated.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute 17

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5 p.m. Chairman

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 18th. NOVEMBER 1981.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, L.C. Hardy, D. L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A.J. Miller, A.L.H. White

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. J. Gent, Mr. T. Morgan and Mr. M.G. Taylor.

#### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th. September were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Encroachment - Browns Brook. The Superintendent reported that a copy of a letter from Mr. Masters' solicitors had now been received from Whitley Hughes & Luscombe, which stated that, in their opinion, there was no case to answer. He felt that unless Mr. Masters agrees to the boundary shown on the Ordnance Survey Map, the Conservators should challenge the Land Registry. This was agreed.

b) Roadway to Misbourne Farm. Mr. Kennard reported that an informal meeting had taken place between the elected Conservators and Mr. Wickham and Mr. Osborne. Limited progress was made and Mr. Kennard requested an urgent meeting of the Roadways Committee to discuss the matter further. Miss Willard felt that Mr. Wickham should be asked to take no further action until the Roadways Committee had discussed the problem again. The Superintendent was asked to write a "Low Key" letter to Mr. Wickham instructing him to desist from further road making activities until a Licence had been agreed.

c) Cutting of Bracken by the general public. This had been suggested at the previous meeting. The elected members had discussed the point further and felt that the idea should be put to the Commoners at their next Annual General Meeting. This was agreed.

d) Land at Chelwood Gate. Mr. Kavanagh enquired whether the amendments to the Bye Laws had been concluded. The Superintendent advised that our Solicitor had been ill and had only just returned to office, the matter had therefore been delayed.

#### **4. REPORT ON PROGRESS OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Superintendent reported that Durnells had completed the oak structure on the third building and had now left the site. The link between the two buildings was progressing well. The thatching, which was two-thirds completed, had now ceased until the Spring.

The Superintendent, together with Mrs. Sheldrick and Mr. Kennard, had visited Lodebrook Limited to look at boilers. It was considered that the Passat Boiler which is a multi-fuel boiler was the most sensible to have and this would be linked in with the oil burner which would take over if the wood burner failed.

#### **5. REPORT OF THE INTERPRETIVE ADVISOR**

Miss Shipp reported that she had continued planning the experimental guided walk programme. She had organised one walk since the last Board Meeting to gauge the demand out of the main tourist season. The experience gained from this will help to plan walks for next year - the amount of advertising needed, length of walk, level of information, frequency of walks etc.

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that the last guided walk had attracted a large number of people and asked Miss Shipp how the walk had been advertised. Miss Shipp advised that it had been advertised in the Caravan and that a Press Release had been issued to local Newspapers. It had also been mentioned on the Radio on the morning of the

walk. A general discussion on advertising ensued and it was felt that care must be taken on publicity, as this could result in the Conservators being criticised for attracting tourists to the forest.

Miss Shipp further reported that, having presented the outline plans for the Interpretive Centre at the last Board Meeting, she was now working on the more detailed plans, to be submitted to the Committee when they are complete. She was liaising with the Graphics Section of the County Planning Department and with a landscape specialist.

Miss Shipp said that she proposed to set out an experimental walk during the winter starting from the Ashdown Forest Centre and invited members of the Board to walk around it in the spring to see if it meets with approval. The walk will be on the lines of a nature trail, about 2½ miles long, with the minimum of markers on the ground with unobtrusive posts. There will be a leaflet to accompany the walk to interpret features of interest which would be on sale at the Centre. She had discussed the route for the walk with the Superintendent and Mr. David Harvey of the Nature Conservancy Council. Apart from the interpretive value, there is also the value of conservation, keeping the pressure off a very fragile area of wet heath.

The Superintendent advised that Miss Shipp's Interim Report would be available to the Board at the January Meeting. One of the recommendations in the report was that, when the Centre is in use, a caravan should still be used on the forest. The present caravan is getting old and falling apart. The Superintendent would like to know the Board's feelings on this point as money would have to be set aside when the 1982/83 Estimates were prepared. After a brief discussion it was agreed that any decision be deferred.

## **6. GIFT FROM THE FRIENDS OF ASHDOWN FOREST**

The Chairman reported that the Friends had donated £1,000 toward the cost of refitting the Land Rover in order that it could become an efficient fire fighting vehicle. The Board recorded their appreciation of this generous gift.

## **7. FIRE RIDES GRANT AID**

The Superintendent reported that the Countryside Commission are willing to grant aid 50 per cent of the cost of work on fire rides. It is hoped that £3,000 can be allocated in the Conservators' budget for this work in 1982/83, making a possible £6,000 available. This figure could not be confirmed until the Estimates for next financial year had been prepared and agreed.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman reported that copies of the Forest Newsletter had now been circulated to various shops in the area. He felt that the Board were deeply indebted to Miss Willard and Mrs. Maudslay for their work on this project, and requested that a formal vote of thanks be recorded. This was unanimously agreed.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 18

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.45 p.m. Chairman

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 20th. JANUARY 1982.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.B. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E. W. Elliman, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy B. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A.J. Miller, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, M.G. Taylor, A.L.H. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Hon. C.A S. Grimston and Brigadier Scott.

## **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment, the minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

'page 4 Para 2, third line - delete "which burns wood" and invert "which is a multi-purpose boiler".



### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Browns Brook. The Superintendent reported that no further progress had been made with regard to this encroachment. Messrs. Whitley Hughes & Luscombe had not received any co-operation from the owner of the property and were awaiting evidence of Land Registration. After a brief discussion Mr. White proposed that the Solicitors be instructed to take action against the Land Registry. This was seconded by Mrs. Sheldrick and agreed unanimously.

b) Roadway to Misbourne Farm. Mr. Kennard, Chairman of the Roadways Committee reported that a great deal of work had been done in an effort to solve this problem, but the matter was still not concluded. At present, Lower Misbourne has a licensed access from the A22, Upper Misbourne has access, but not a licence for the roadway from the Nutley/Crowborough Road. The Roadways Committee recommend that the licence for the roadway from the A22 to Lower Misbourne be revoked and that both properties have a licence to maintain the roadway from the Nutley/Crowborough Road. This road is at present not made up and vehicles using it are straying off the track on to the fire ride which runs parallel to it. The track is also used by lorries carrying stone from the quarry which is about half way along the track and owned by the Lord of the Manor.

The Roadways Committee propose that the Conservators should dig a drainage trench on one side of the track and create a bank on the other lower side, in order to contain vehicles to the track, and that Mr. Osborne and Mr. Wickham carry out the work required on the track. As the stone carrying lorries also use this track the Lord of the Manor has agreed to allow Mr. Osborne and Mr. Wickham to have stone from the quarry, free of charge. Mr. Osborne had agreed to this proposal but Mr. Wickham had, as yet, not.

After a lengthy discussion the proposals of the Roadways Committee were approved, and it was further agreed that the owners of the two properties should be set a time limit in which to do the work on the roadway. It was agreed that the Roadways Committee should have delegated powers to fix the exact alignment of the road.

Mr. Taylor had declared an interest in one of the properties and took no part in the discussions.

c) Letter from Mr. P.B. Stride. Mr. Stride had written to all Conservators advising them that he would be appealing to the Local Ombudsman for an investigation into the election procedure at Commoners Meetings.

The Chairman invited the Superintendent to read out his report to the Board on the allegations made and the action taken by him. The Superintendent stated that Mr. Stride's complaint had arisen from the results of three elections held in 1978, 1979 and 1980.

"First, I should like to state that there is no truth in the implications that there was manipulation in these elections. All elections held since I have been Clerk have been conducted openly and honestly.

There had, amongst many Commoners, been a failure to understand the system of appointing proxies to vote at meetings in their absence. As a result, with the approval of an overwhelming majority of the Commoners the Conservators sought an amendment to the Ashdown Forest Act 1974. The amendment, incorporated in the East Sussex County Council Act 1981 abolishes Proxy Voting and substitutes Postal Voting. This will be operative in the forthcoming election in March.

In every election I have pointed out the pitfalls of proxy voting to all candidates. With one exception the candidates have co-operated with me in trying to sort out the problems before the election took place.

I have consulted both the Solicitors to the Conservators and the East Sussex County Council Solicitor to ensure that the procedures followed were sound. I have also ascertained from the Wealden District Council what procedures are laid down for the retention and disposal of voting papers and documents to Local Government Elections. After the vote all papers are sealed and are not available for inspection by anyone without instructions from the Court. The only proper method of investigating is through the Court. Mr. Stride has been advised of this by myself, and I understand also by the Chairman and others. The Department of the Environment have also informed him that they cannot take action and that he should go through the Court. Local Government regulations demand that election papers should be kept for six months and then be destroyed. I have followed this procedure and there is, therefore, no evidence relating to voting at elections held two, three and four years ago.

While it is my duty as Clerk to call elections and receive forms of proxy, now replaced by applications for postal votes, it is neither my duty nor that of the Conservators to conduct those elections. The Ashdown Forest Act 1974 states that the Chairman of the Meeting at which the election takes place shall report to the Clerk to the Conservators, in writing, the result of the election. It is, therefore, quite clearly the responsibility of the Commoners themselves. I have, nevertheless, with the agreement of the Commoners, conducted the Poll for them, as they have no offices or organisation of their own.

The Chairman of any Commoners meeting at which I have voluntarily assisted has never seen fit to query the voting arrangements".

The Chairman invited comments from members of the Board. Members of the Board agreed that the allegations were not a matter for them to discuss and furthermore that it was extremely unlikely that the Ombudsman would be in a position to take any action. Mr. Ellison felt that the letter cast doubt on the honesty of the Chairman and the Conservators staff and Mr. White stated that it was "Disgusting that these allegations are made".

The Chairman advised that if any further allegations are made it may be necessary to take legal action.

#### **4. TO FIX A FOREST RATE FOR THE YEAR 1980/1**

As the Department of the Environment would not sanction a three yearly increase it was generally considered that the Forest Rate should be fixed yearly to take account of inflation. It was, therefore, felt that 123 per cent would be the correct sum for the increase in respect of the coming financial year. Mr. Taylor proposed that the Rate be increased by 125 per cent, this was seconded by Mr. Edwardes-Jones and agreed unanimously

#### **5. TO CONSIDER ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

The Chairman reported that the Estimates had been considered by the Finance Committee, and copies had been circulated to members of the Board prior to the meeting. He invited the Superintendent to go through the detail.

The Superintendent advised that, under the heading of Revised Estimate for the current year, it had been necessary to decrease the Rate Income due to the Department of the Environment not approving the 100 per cent increase requested. Some Riding had also been decreased due to the number of permits issued to date being lower than anticipated. Income from Acknowledgment Rents had been increased as the Rent for the Ice Cream Licence had increased. There were no major changes in the revised estimates of expenditure.

The Estimates for 1982/83 had been calculated to allow for inflation. The County Council had agreed to grant the Conservators £99,600 with the request that the Council absorb the wage increases due on 1st. April. The figures shown for the Ashdown Forest Centre were very much guess work, as it is impossible to find out as yet what the rates and insurance are likely to be.

After a brief discussion the Estimates were approved.

#### **6. TO AUTHORISE THE PURCHASE OF 11 ACRES OF LAND AT BRABARY HATCH**

The Chairman reported that the Countryside Commission had agreed to grant aid the purchase of this land, provided that the purchase was completed in this financial year. The District Valuer had valued the land at £5,500 and the Countryside Commission had, therefore, agreed to pay £2,750, being 50 per cent of the cost. In view of the time limit imposed by the Commission, the Chairman had instructed the Clerk to proceed with the purchase. After a brief discussion the Board unanimously authorised the purchase.

#### **7. REPORT OF THE HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE**

Mr. Gent, Chairman of the Horse Riding Committee reported that the condition of the fire rides had been discussed at length. Work on the rides in the next financial year would be confined to the first priority areas with some work on the second priority areas.

The Committee had discussed the possibility of allowing riders to use the roadside verges at times when riding on the forest was banned, and recommended to the Board that this be allowed. It was agreed that this should be allowed at times of an otherwise total ban, but not when normal riding regulations were in force.

The Committee had considered two requests for Sponsored Rides, and had agreed to these taking place, but had decided that the Action Research Ride, to be held in May, would take place over higher ground than in previous years.

The Committee also considered a request from Tremain's Stables for a permit to operate from their new Stables at Birch Grove. The application was rejected.

It had been suggested that all Permit holders should have to be members of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association, in order that riders could be self disciplined by the Association. Members of the Association present at the Committee Meeting were not in favour of this idea, but agreed to put it to their Annual General Meeting.

The Committee discussed the fees for the riding permits for the coming year and recommended that these be increased by 122 per cent.

After a brief discussion Mr. Kavanagh proposed that all the recommendations made by the Riding Committee be approved. This was seconded by Mrs. Sheldrick and agreed by the Board.

#### **8. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE VEGETATION COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that, at the meeting held on December 15th. Ranger Linton gave details of the progress made on the original vegetation plan drawn up in 1979 to protect the main areas of dry and wet heath. He estimated that about 10 per cent of the scheduled areas had been cleared, mainly by volunteers, and that it would take another two years to complete the work.

The Committee had considered what other methods of vegetation control could be used, which included increased grazing, controlled burning, and spraying.

Discussion had taken place on the need to re-assess the ratio of woodland to open heathland that it was desirable and practicable to maintain. The Committee agreed that the possibility of finding a post graduate student or similar to prepare a Conservation plan should be looked into. In the interim period, it was felt that the present clearance programme should continue and that plans should be formulated for producing a specie map of the Forest. It was also agreed that the Committee should have a series of on-site meetings to look at specific problems and possible solutions.

#### **9. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REGARDING THE INTERIM INTERPRETIVE REPORT**

A copy of the report had been circulated to all members of the Board prior to the Meeting.

Mr. Hardy, Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, congratulated and thanked Miss Shipp for a well presented report. Mr. Hardy drew the Board's attention to the wording of Section 16 of the Ashdown Forest Act and to the DART study, which recommended a low key approach.

The Committee felt that Miss Shipp was proceeding along the lines which had been broadly agreed. With regard to Interpretation on the Forest, it was felt that guided walks should be kept to small numbers and should not be widely advertised, and that Waymarked walks should be experimental only until a decision is made regarding the future. The first Information Board, at the Roman Road, which was approved by the Board at the last meeting, would be erected shortly and further Information Board's should be considered individually. Miss Shipp had recommended that a small mobile caravan should still be used on the forest after the Centre had opened. This could tour the forest during peak visitor times. It was felt that a decision on this point be deferred until a later date. The General Purposes Committee recommend that the Board take note of the Interim Report and that Miss Shipp continues to plan on the lines indicated, but that Board approval be sought at each stage.

After a brief discussion Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that the General Purposes Committee recommendation be accepted. This was seconded by Mr. Morgan and agreed unanimously.

#### **10. TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL BY THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE TO HOLD AN OPEN PUBLIC MEETING AT NUTLEY VILLAGE HALL ON FRIDAY 26th. FEBRUARY**

The Chairman reported that he had received a letter from Mr. Alan Farrington who had chaired the Public Meeting recently held at the Roebuck. Mr. Farrington had raised several points in his letter and had suggested that a meeting

of about 20 participants of that Meeting and the Board should be arranged. The General Purposes Committee had discussed the points raised by Mr. Farrington and felt that the meeting suggested would be impractical, but they recommended that the Conservators arrange a Public Meeting to explain to all interested parties the reasons behind the Conservators' policies. It was recommended that the meeting be split into sections of about 20 minutes to deal with specific points and allowing some time for questions from the floor in each section.

After discussion the Board agreed that such a meeting should be arranged for Friday, 26th. February at 8 p.m., to be held. at Nutley Village Hall.

#### **11. REPORT ON PROGRESS OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Superintendent reported that the building was still going well and congratulated the members of the C.E.P. Scheme who had continued to work extremely well in the recent unpleasant weather.

#### **12. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent requested a meeting of the Roadways Committee to look at an application for a Roadway at St. Johns, Crowborough.

#### **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Superintendent reported that he had received a letter from the Ashdown & General Land Company suggesting that the Rate should be a fixed sum per Commoner regardless of acreage. The Board unanimously agreed that such a system would be impractical.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No.19

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.10 p.m. Chairman

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD ON 10th. MARCH 1982 AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair), Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. B.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, D. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A.J. Miller, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, A.L.H. White.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Miss A. Lumsden, Mr. L. Hardy, Mr. M. Taylor.

#### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th. January were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Browns Brook. The Chairman reported that our Solicitors had contacted the Land Registry, but say that any negotiations will inevitably be lengthy.

b) Roadway to Misbourne. Mr. Kennard reported that progress in reaching an agreement was slow and another meeting would be taking place on Friday. The trenching work to be carried out by the Conservators would be started this month but the owner of Upper Misbourne was reluctant to agree at this stage.

#### **4. RE-ELECTION OF MISS A. LUMSDEN**

The Chairman reported that Miss Lumsden, who had offered herself for re-election at the Commoners Annual General Meeting had been unopposed and was, therefore, re-elected to the Board for a further five years. In her absence, he welcomed her back.

#### **5. PURCHASE OF 11 ACRES OF LAND AT CHELWOOD GATE**

The Chairman reported that purchase of this land had now been completed. It would now be necessary to decide whether the land should be declared as part of the forest. The Chairman advised the Board that he felt strongly that

it should be declared as part of the forest. Mr. Ellison asked whether it was possible to declare only part of the land as being within the forest. The Superintendent advised that, although this was technically possible the nature of the land made it difficult. After a brief discussion Mrs. Sheldrick proposed that the land be declared as part of Ashdown Forest, this was seconded by Miss Willard and agreed unanimously. It was further agreed that the General Purposes Committee meet to discuss the question of extending the Bye Laws over this land, and also the Common Rights.

## **6. REPORT OF THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT NUTLEY ON 26th. FEBRUARY**

The Chairman invited Mr. Morgan to report. Mr. Morgan informed the Board that he felt the meeting was an overall success with a wealth of information being presented to the public. Mr. Morgan expressed disappointment in only one section of the meeting. He felt that the financial aspects should have been explained in more detail with possible visual back up.

Mr. Morgan further reported that the usual objectors were present at the meeting but they were firmly dealt with under the "Masterly Chairmanship" of Mr. George Edwardes-Jones.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones felt that Public Meetings of this kind should become an annual event. After a brief discussion the Board agreed that these should take place in November.

## **7. REPORT OF THE COMMONERS MEETING**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that the Meeting, held in Forest Row, was not very well attended, probably due to the Public Meeting being held so soon before the Commoners Annual General Meeting. Air Marshall Sir Frederick Sowrey was elected to Chair the meeting and did an excellent job. The report from the Chairman of the Conservators was well received with particular interest shown in the purchase of new land. The question of Common Rights being extended over the new land was discussed.

The increase in the Forest Rate by 124 per cent was reported to the Meeting. This was met with acceptance but not enthusiasm.

Questions raised and matters discussed by the Commoners were:-

Horse riding - A view was expressed, and was well supported that Permits should only be issued to members of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association and Commoners.

Bracken Cutting by the public was discussed but it was felt that this would be too difficult to control.

Cattle Grids - The pros and cons were discussed, some Commoners feeling that these were necessary together with some fencing of the forest.

The date of the next Commoners Annual General Meeting was fixed for 11th. March 1983 to be held at the Ashdown Forest Centre, if practicable.

## **8. REPORT ON PROGRESS OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Superintendent reported that progress was still good. All services were now being put in, and it was hoped that the office accommodation will be ready for occupation in June.

The Manpower Services C.E.P. Scheme is due to end in May and indications are that an extension to this scheme will be granted. It therefore seems likely that October will see the buildings completed.

The Committee formed to decide on the interior of the building will be meeting in a week or two. The Chairman suggested that they should be given delegated powers and this was agreed.

## **9. REPORT OF INTERPRETATION ADVISOR**

Miss Shipp reported that she was continuing to plan the displays for the Centre including an outside demonstration area of forest plants. She was also preparing some displays for the Caravan which would be sited at the Centre this summer.

Maintenance work on the Broadstone self-guided trail had now been completed and Miss Shipp reported that she would be finalising a leaflet to accompany the walk. Copies of this would be sent to the Board as soon as completed.

#### **10. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Sheep Worrying. A recent incident of sheep worrying had been witnessed by Rangers and members of the MSC Team. Messrs. Whitley Hughes & Luscombe had, therefore, been instructed to start proceedings against the probable owner.

b) Purchase of a Wood chipper. The Superintendent reported that the Trust had been given £2,000 as a specific gift for such a purchase. He and the Chairman would be going to see a Chipper in the near future and hoped that it would be suitable. Work on the fire rides could then proceed with wood chips being put down on heavily used parts of the rides.

#### **11. DATE OF MEETINGS**

The following dates for the 1982/83 Meetings were agreed: May 26th., July 14th., September 15th. November 17th., January 19th. 1983 and March 23rd.

#### **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Gent requested that consideration be given to taking a firmer line with riders who did not obey the rules and felt that it was now time that Permits were taken away from offenders. After a brief discussion this was approved.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute 19

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.30 p.m.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 26th. MAY 1982.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair) Mrs. A. Lumsden, Miss B. Willard, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, L.L. Kavanagh, M. Kennard, A.J. Miller, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, A.L.H. White

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Sheldrick, Hon C.A.S. Grimston, Mr. J. Gent, Mr. L.G. Hardy, Mr. M. Taylor.

#### **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1982/83**

M. Kavanagh proposed Mr. Wills. This was seconded by Mr. White and agreed unanimously.

Mr. Wills thanked the Board and said he was honoured to be the Chair again. He then asked the Board to observe a short silence and pray for the Soldiers fighting in the Falkland Islands - "May God be with them".

#### **3. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1982/83**

The Chairman proposed that Mr. Edwardes-Jones be elected Vice Chairman for a further year. This was seconded by Mr. Ellison and agreed unanimously.

#### **4. TO ELECT THE VARIOUS COMMITTEES**

The Chairman proposed that the Committees remain unchanged, with the exception of Mr. Morgan being asked to join the General Purposes Committee. This was agreed unanimously.

#### **5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10th. MARCH**

The Minutes, which had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman advised the Board of the death of a former Chairman, Mr. John Mountain, and requested that the Board's appreciation for his efforts as Chairman be recorded and the sorrow at his passing.

## **6. MATTERS ARISING**

- a) Browns Brook. The Chairman reported that the matter had now been completed and the Land Registry map confirms that the boundary shown on the conveyance has been correct for over 30 years. No further action can therefore be taken.
- b) Roadway to Misbourne Farm, Mr. Kennard, Chairman of the Roadways Committee, reported that the work of ditching and banking on the ride adjacent to the roadway had been carried out for half the length of the roadway. Nothing had as yet been done by Messrs. Owen and Wickens but Mr. Osborne had assured Mr. Kennard that work would start on the construction of the road in about a week.
- c) Land at Chelwood Gate. The Chairman reported that the question of Bye Laws and Common Rights was still awaiting a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee and it was hoped that this would be available at the next Board Meeting.
- d) Public Meeting. At the last Board Meeting it had been agreed that Public Meetings should be an annual event and a meeting for 1982 had been arranged for Friday, 26th. November at Forest Row Village Hall.
- e) Sheep Worrying. The Chairman reported that the solicitors had now started proceedings in this case and were awaiting a date for the Court hearing.
- f) Wood Chipper. The Chairman reported that the Wood chipper was now in operation and doing valuable work. The Chairman suggested that members of the Board should look at the Road crossing onto the fire ride at the top of Millbrook which had been treated with wood chips as an example of the use to which the machine would be put.

## **7. REPORT OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE**

As Mr. Gent was not able to be present at the meeting, he had submitted a brief written report, which was read by the Superintendent.

The Committee had had two meetings, both of which were attended by representatives of the Riding Association. Members of the Association felt that more signs should be erected when riding on the forest was suspended. The Committee felt that they could not recommend this to the Board as some 2 more notices would be necessary to cover all entrances to the forest. On the other hand they felt that one or two more would be desirable. The problem of people not being aware that Permits must be obtained before riding on the forest was also discussed and the Riding Committee recommend that when the Ashdown Forest Sign Board's were renewed they should include "Riding By Permit Only". This was agreed.

At the previous Board Meeting the Board had approved a tougher line being taken with riders who disobeyed the riding regulations. As a result, four Permits had been suspended for riding whilst a total bar was in force.

The Committee considered that it was desirable for as many riders as possible to be members of the Riding Association and felt that when Riding Permit renewal notices were sent out in September something should be included to encourage membership. The style of the Riding Badges was also discussed as the Permit number on the badge was not large enough for easy recognition. Other means of identification were being looked into but this may prove to be a difficult problem to solve.

The Committee had carried out an inspection of the work being done on the Fire Rides and were very pleased with the results to date.

## **8. REPORT ON PROGRESS OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Chairman reported that the office accommodation was now close to completion and will be ready for occupation within the next month. Notice of termination of the lease of the accommodation at the Village Hall had, therefore, been given.

The Superintendent requested permission to officially close the office to the public from 21st. June to 5th. July to make the move as easy as possible. This was agreed.

The Formal Opening of the Centre had been fixed for Tuesday, 5th. October and would be conducted by the Lord of the Manor.

## **9. REPORT OF THE INTERPRETIVE ADVISOR**

Miss Shipp reported that she had been continuing the work on the interpretive material for the Centre. She had arranged with the East Sussex County Council for them to carry out the work for the cost of the materials only.

A number of Conservators said they had walked the Broadstone Trail having received a copy of the draft leaflet, and all were of the opinion that Miss Shipp had done an excellent job. Mr. Ellison did however feel that it might be preferable not to mention specific rare species in the leaflet, and it was agreed that amendments should be made.

Miss Willard thought that the leaflet was excellent but registered disapproval of the principle of having waymarked walks on Ashdown Forest

## **10. TO CONSIDER THE EXTENSION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF SIX MONTHS TO COMPLETE THE VEGETATION SECTION OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Superintendent reported that the Vegetation Committee were anxious that the Vegetation Section of the Management Plan and species map were completed. Miss Shipp was qualified to do the work and had the advantage of already knowing the forest. Grant aid would be forthcoming to fund three quarters of the cost of employing Miss Shipp for a further six months and it would be possible to alter the Conservators' budget by \*\*\*\* over the cost of the Conservators share of the project.

It was unanimously agreed that Miss Shipp should be employed for a further six months from November 1982 until May 1983.

## **11. APPOINTMENT OF A CONSERVATION OFFICER/DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT**

The appointment had been advertised and the response had been overwhelming 14 applicants were finally invited to attend a one day Seminar and four of these had already been interviewed by a Panel of Conservators and a further four candidates were to be interviewed in June.

## **12. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Letter from Mr. P.B. Stride sent to all members of the Board. The Chairman drew the attention of the Board to a letter which had been sent to all members by Mr. Stride. Mr. Stride had opined at length about the extent of cutting chestnut coppice south of the ridge road. The Chairman read a letter from Mr. Gent stating, that in his professional view the coppicing was completely justified as the chestnut was deteriorating rapidly, much was being killed off and aesthetically this area was being ruined. The majority of chestnut stools would re-grow, although would never produce good quality coppice. Mr. Kennard supported Mr. Gent's view, and proposed that as soon as the extent of recovery of the stools had been established, some interplanting of Beech or other specimen trees be undertaken. This was unanimously agreed.

b) Report on Fires. The Superintendent reported that there had a total of 29 fires so far this year, destroying a total of approximately 400 acres. Two of the fires had been large, one on 16th. April burning 120 acres and one on 15th. May of 200 acres.

The Superintendent further reported that, during the fire on 15th. May the Land Rover Fire Tender had been totally destroyed by fire. The Head Ranger had been called to the fire and was in charge of the Land Rover at the time of the incident. The incident had been investigated by a Board of Enquiry consisting of Mr. Kennard, Miss Willard and the Superintendent. They had fully investigated how the fire occurred and had interviewed the Head Ranger, Ranger Linton and the Voluntary Rangers who were also at the scene. During the course of fighting the fire, flames were seen under the Land Rover. The Head Ranger immediately tried to move the vehicle but the engine stalled and would not restart, probably due to the air intake being smoke logged. The Rangers tried to push the Land Rover clear, but due to the weight of water this was impossible. The Head Ranger salvaged the radio but had to abandon the vehicle.



Mr. Kennard reported that he and Miss Willard found that, while it was not possible to establish directly how the fire had spread under the vehicle, normal fire fighting techniques were being used, and the degree of risk taken by Mr. Arnold and his crew was acceptable. No blame should be attributed to Mr. Arnold.

c) Voluntary Conservation Work. The Superintendent reported that a group of voluntary workers were clearing Scots Pine and opening up footpaths at Chelwood Gate. It was hoped to continue this on a regular basis. The Committee expressed their appreciation to the group of residents from Chelwood Gate.

d) Work on Fire Rides. The Superintendent reported that Countryside Commission had approved grant aid for this work.

e) Financial. The Superintendent advised the Board that, due to the build there was at present a cash flow problem. He had, therefore, arranged for a £5,000 overdraft with Barclays Bank.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 21

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 5.15 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 14th. JULY 1982.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, A.J. Miller.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, A.L.H. White.

### **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th. May were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Item 12(b) Add "The Board recorded a vote of appreciation to the Rangers for their efforts in fighting fires and the Press were asked to give coverage to this in an attempt to stop some local sniping by people saying that the Rangers had not been doing their job properly."

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Roadway, Misbourne Farm. Mr. Kennard reported that work had been delayed due to Mr. Wickham losing his job. Some stone had been extracted from the Quarry ready for use on the road. Mr. Kennard stated that he was confident that Mr. Osborne was determined to complete the work required.

b) Sheep Worrying. The Superintendent reported that a date for the Court Hearing was still awaited.

c) Appointment of Diana Shipp. At the last meeting the Board had agreed to an extension of Miss Shipp's contract. The Chairman was now sorry to have to report that Miss Shipp would be leaving immediately to take up a Post with the Broads Authority. The Chairman thanked Miss Shipp for all the work she had done and extended the Board's good wishes for her future.

d) Replacement Fire Tender. The Superintendent reported that the Courier Appeal, which was still running, had raised over £1,000. The Insurance Company had offered £1,400 and the Friends of Ashdown Forest and an anonymous donor had offered up to £1,000 each toward the fund. Mrs. Anne-Marie Ross was collecting money from forest visitors at weekends, and would also be making approaches to British Leyland Agents in an effort to get a special reduction in the cost of a new Land Rover. The Board requested that the Superintendent send a letter of appreciation to Mrs. Ross.

e) Appointment of Deputy Superintendent. The Chairman asked Mr. Edwardes-Jones to report. Mr. Edwardes-Jones advised the Board that he and a panel of Conservators had interviewed eight candidates and had chosen Mr. P. Donnelly. Mr. Donnelly was extremely well qualified having worked on the Goodwood Estate for many years. He would be taking up his Post on 2nd. August. Mr. Donnelly's appointment was subject to one months notice on either side for the first three months, thereafter three months notice. No commitment had been made to him automatically becoming Superintendent in two years time, but it was hoped that this would ensue.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE INTERPRETIVE PLANNER**

Miss Shipp's report had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting.

The Chairman suggested that the Board receive the report and debate the contents at a later date. Miss Willard suggested that the General Purposes Committee be asked to look at the report in detail and make recommendations to the Board. This was agreed.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Mr. Morgan had chaired the meeting and was invited to report.

Mr. Morgan reported that the Committee had discussed the points raised by the Commoners at their Annual General Meeting. The main topic being the provision of cattle grids on the forest. The General Purposes Committee recognised the problem and Mr. Morgan had agreed to discuss the matter with the Highways Authority. He had only recently started discussions with them but reported that the Authority normally only take action where the lives of road users is at risk, however, the possibility of a grid being placed on the B2026 would be discussed. Mr. Morgan further stated that the cost of one grid was approximately £5,000.

Bracken Cutting by the Public had also been discussed by the Commoners and the General Purposes Committee suggest that the new Deputy Superintendent give some thought to this matter in view of his experience.

The Committee had also been asked to discuss the question of public/commonable access to the 11 acres of land recently purchased. The Committee recommend that this should be treated as if it were a Nature Reserve and although the public cannot be excluded they should be guided onto footpaths. They further recommend that Common Rights should not be extended over the land. After a brief discussion both recommendations were approved by the Board.

#### **6. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF BUILDING AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Chairman reported that the Lord of the Manor had been asked to officially open the Centre on 5th. October. Unfortunately, progress. had been delayed and it was now apparent that the building would not be ready in time. The official opening would, therefore, be postponed.

The Superintendent reported that much of the work to be done required skilled labour and skilled tradesmen do not very often become unemployed, so the C.E.P. Scheme had been unable to recruit the required labour force.

Although the Administrative Barn was not finished, the offices had been moved from Forest Row, but working conditions were difficult. As soon as the Admin Barn was complete, all efforts would be switched to the Information Barn. The County Council were already working on exhibits for this Barn.

#### **7. REPORT ON A PLANNING APPLICATION TO BUILD ADJACENT TO HIGHGATE GREEN AND THE PROBLEM OF ACCESS.**

The Chairman reported that, although the Board had agreed in principle to a new access road to Chequer Farm, a new Planning Application had been put before the Wealden District Council and the Superintendent felt that the access road shown on the new Plans would not be acceptable to the Board. The Superintendent therefore requested that the Roadways Committee be asked to look at the proposed road and that they be given delegated powers. This was agreed.

#### **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) The Superintendent advised the Board that he had written to Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith on their behalf to congratulate him on the honour bestowed upon him.

b) Organised Barbecues. The Superintendent requested the Board to consider allowing organised Societies to hold barbecues in one of the stone finished car parks, provided they were governed by certain rules and that a notice was displayed stating that barbecues were only permitted by special permission from the Board of Conservators. After a very brief discussion the Board refused to give any such permission.

c) Orienteering. Mrs. Sheldrick asked what was happening with regard to the National Orienteering meeting which would be using the forest next May, as she had been given to understand that approximately 16,000 people would be participating.

The Superintendent advised that he had been in touch with the organisers and understood that they would be using Pippingford Park and were also negotiating with other local land owners. It was agreed that the General Purposes Committee should be informed of progress at their next meeting.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute 22

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.35 p.m. Chairman

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 15th. SEPTEMBER 1982.**

**Present:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Messrs. L. Edwardes-Jones, L.C. Hardy, D L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A. J. Miller, A.L.H. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.A. Scott, Messrs. E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, Miss Willard.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th. July were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING,**

The Chairman introduced Mr. Peter Donnelly, the Deputy Superintendent and welcomed him to "the family".

Roadway to Misbourne. Mr. Kennard reported that about one third of the stone had been laid but had not yet been levelled, therefore the fire ride was still being used. Mr. Kennard felt that no marked improvement was likely before this winter.

Fire Tender. The Superintendent reported that it was estimated that the cost of purchasing and equipping the vehicle would be £4,300. The Courier fund now stood at £1,300 and, as previously reported, the Friends and another donor had offered up to £1,000 each and the Insurance Company had paid over £1,400 for the loss of the old Land Rover. The Chairman thanked the Courier for their help.

Sheep Worrying. The Chairman reported that the case had been heard but regrettably the case was not won. He asked the Superintendent to give a brief resume.

The Superintendent reported that the problem was of establishing who owned the dog. Four witnesses had identified the animal which was later seen at Forest Holme, but Col. Rumsey said that he was not the owner. He stated that the dog belonged to a student who had worked for him and when he left had sold the dog to someone unknown, but the dog occasionally returned to Forest Holme and this had happened on the day in question. The Court had accepted this statement. It was considered that the case had been well conducted by our solicitor in Court.

### **4. APPOINTMENT OF COLIN CORFIELD**

The Chairman introduced Mr. Colin Corfield to the Board and advised members that he would be working on the Vegetation Section of the Management Plan. He was undertaking the work on a voluntary basis but would be paid out of pocket expenses. The County Council had agreed to make a grant of £500 towards these expenses, and the likely cost to the Conservators would be of the same nature.

Mr. Corfield would be preparing a Vegetation Plan showing the forest as it is now, with recommendations for future management. The forest would be divided into 12 sections, and it was proposed to complete one section per month. He would also be preparing a species map showing the rarer and most important plants. The Chairman proposed that, as this work progresses, the Vegetation Committee should have delegated powers to approve and report back to the Board. This was agreed.

## **5. ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Superintendent reported that the building was on schedule for completion by the end of the year. He proposed that 30th. March be fixed as the date for the official opening. This was agreed.

The present estimate for the cost of the building was £85,875 which did not include the value of any gifts in kind. On several occasions a figure of £300,000 had appeared in local newspapers as being the cost of the building. The Chairman therefore asked the Press to mention the correct figure.

## **6. REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

In the absence of Mr. Morgan, the Superintendent was asked to report.

At the last Board Meeting the General Purposes Committee had been asked to look at the Interpretive Report in detail. The Committee felt that, although many of the recommendations made in the report should be implemented, no action should be taken until the Centre was open and the demand had been assessed. This was agreed.

Further discussions took place regarding cattle grids and the Committee considered one of the proposed sites. The practical place for a grid was at the junction of Old Forge Lane and the A2026, although this would not be straightforward. It was felt unlikely that the County Council would be willing to fund this.

Mr. Kennard asked whether the County Council would allow the siting of a grid if funds were available from other sources. The Superintendent felt sure that they would. Mr. Kennard therefore suggested that perhaps approaches could be made to Parish Councils bordering the forest which might be willing to fund such a project over a period of say two years.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the General Purposes Committee continue with their investigations.

The General Purposes Committee considered that it would be advisable for the Board to have a joint General Purposes/Finance Committee with small sub-committees for particular discussions, i.e. Estimates. Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that this should be adopted and this was seconded by Mr. Kavanagh. It was agreed that the two existing Committees amalgamate and will be known as the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The forthcoming National Orienteering Championships were also discussed. The one day event, starting on private land will cross parts of the forest. The organisers had not yet established parking places for approximately 600 vehicles which were expected and it was felt that in an emergency Gills Lap car park could be made available to them.

Some members of the Board were of the opinion that, by allowing this to take place, more people could be attracted to the forest and that this was undesirable during May as it was nesting time.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the use of the forest would be permitted, but that the organisers should be asked to consider changing the date to September or October. The Superintendent advised that a change of date would not be possible, but that sensitive areas could be avoided.

## **7. REPORT OF THE VEGETATION COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that the Committee met on the site where the Chestnut had been coppiced last winter to discuss interplanting of other species, but this was felt to be unproductive as they would be overshadowed by Chestnut. The Committee had agreed to plan to fell a small remaining area of overgrown chestnut, and several single chestnut trees remaining amongst the coppice. It would then be possible to manage the coppice on a planned cycle.

The Committee had also inspected an area of heather burnt in the Spring of 1981, and noted the excellent regrowth. They also observed the beneficial results of heavy grazing by sheep on a small area burnt in the Spring of this year.

#### **8. REPORT OF THE HORSE RIDING COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that the Committee had inspected two rides East of Wrens Warren. These were very wet for most of the year and therefore it was important that these were drained. The ride from the Enchanted Place to Chuck Hatch was steep and badly eroded. It was agreed that work should proceed in the improvement of these rides. The Committee felt that Ranger Linton should be complimented on the work done on the rides.

The Committee discussed the fees for riding permits for the coming year and recommended that there should be a 10 per cent increase with a 20 per cent rebate to Riding Association Members. This was agreed.

#### **9. REPORT OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE**

Mr. Kennard reported that the Roadways Committee had met on site at Highgate Green. Representatives of the East Sussex County Council Highways Department had also been present.

The Committee had inspected the alignment of the proposed new roadway, which if granted would serve the development at Chequer Farm and which would, in any event, be the route chosen by the County Council when Highgate Road was adopted and made up to approved standard. The proposed route encroached marginally more on to Highgate Green than the route previously chosen by the developers and approved by the Board. This route was, however, not acceptable to the Highways Authority. The new route would involve felling some trees, principally birch, which were not outstanding specimens.

The Committee, which had been granted delegated powers by the Board to finalise the matter, voted by five votes to one to accept the proposed route, and to authorise the developer to negotiate the licensing of the roadway with the Lord of the Manor, subject to the following proviso –

that detailed plans showing gradients, drainage etc. should be submitted to the Conservators for approval.

that the Conservators would stipulate replanting as necessary to compensate for trees felled, and to preserve the visual and acoustic screening of the houses adjoining Highgate Road.

Miss Willard recorded her dissent from the Committee vote. The Conservators noted Mr. Kennard's report and the Committee decision on behalf of the Board. Mrs. Sheldrick recorded her dissent.

Mr. Kennard reported that he had inspected the access tracks to Providence House, St. John's Crowborough. The new owner had requested permission to improve one track, already partially made up, Mr. Kennard considered that this request should be granted, and that the three other tracks leading to the property, and thence on to two further small properties should be closed over the following months. This would regularise traffic over the forest and do much to tidy up the whole area.

**THE CHAIRMAN SUGGESTED THAT, AS ITEMS 10 and 11 WERE CLOSELY RELATED, THEY SHOULD BE TAKEN TOGETHER.** This was agreed.

#### **10.&11. REALLOCATION OF RANGERS DUTIES AND REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Deputy Superintendent was now taking charge of the Rangers work and consequently the Head Ranger would be carrying out the duties of an ordinary Ranger for at least the next two years. The forest had been divided into four and each Ranger was responsible for his Chase. He would look after all maintenance, vegetation, general work and horse riding problems within his own area and get to know the people in that area. Each Ranger will also have other specific duties, i.e. Ranger Linton - Conservation, Ranger Arnold - recruitment and training of voluntary staff, Ranger Pedder - Information, and Ranger Montague - repair and maintenance of the Centre.

The new system could not fully operate until the building is finished as two Rangers were at present employed on the building, but it should be fully operational by January.

It is part of a Ranger's job to answer emergencies. In the past, most of the calls had gone to and been dealt with by Ranger Arnold. It is felt that the emergency cover should now be properly split between the Rangers, and that they should receive some compensation either financial or in the form of time off to compensate for their being required to be on stand-by duty one day in four. Time off in lieu reduces normal work on the forest and the Finance Committee were therefore asked to consider payment. They recommended that a payment of £2.00 per night should be made. This was approved.

## **12. TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR SALES OF WOOD ETC. FROM THE WOOD REEVE TO THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT**

Mr. Kirby had been paid a small retainer of £1.00 per week, plus 20 per cent of the value of his sales. It is considered that this arrangement should be terminated and that Peter Donnelly be responsible for all wood sales. The proposal had been discussed with the Lord of the Manor who was in agreement with Mr. Kirby being retired, subject to his being fairly treated. It was recommended that he should continue to be paid £1.00 per week as a retainer in order that he may be consulted if necessary. The Chairman stated that Mr. Kirby had done a tremendous amount for the forest for many years and he asked the Superintendent to write to Mr. Kirby to convey the Board's great appreciation.

## **13. PLANNING APPLICATION FOR LIVING ACCOMMODATION AT THE CENTRE**

The Superintendent stated that a formal Planning Application had now been made to Wealden District Council. There were no proposals as yet as to when the building should be erected or how this could be financed. The cottage will be joined to the Information Barn and will be similar in external appearance. The Chairman stated that he felt that the building should not be done with our own labour as the Rangers must get back to their proper work.

## **14. APPORTIONMENT OF RIGHTS OF COMMON**

The Superintendent had had further discussions with Solicitors who had now answered the questions without seeking Council's opinion. The Superintendent reported that the Solicitors confirmed that when land is subdivided, it is necessary for the new owners to register an apportionment of rights with the East Sussex County Council, who are the registration authority. Until this is done, the new owners of portions of land having Common Rights attached were not entitled to exercise Rights of Common, and should not, therefore, be included on the register of Commoners, and consequently would not be entitled to vote in the election of Conservators.

Mr. Hall had been advised to apply for an apportionment of rights between himself and Mr. Markham in respect of the very small area of land which he has rented for a nominal sum. Any decision as to the viability of rights and the consequent registration should be the responsibility of the Registration Authority.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones considered that the question of registration needed further clarification, and that the Conservators should agree a firm policy. It was agreed that the Finance & General Purposes Committee be asked to study the problem and report back.

## **15. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Use of motorcycles when tending commonable animals on the forest. Mr. Henry Osborne had requested permission to use a motorcycle to assist with shepherding on the forest. He had written to the Board setting out the problems he has to deal with and this was read out to the Board. Mr. Osborne stated in his letter that 27 sheep had already been killed or badly injured on the roads this year.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the Rangers had in fact only been advised of four incidents of road casualties, although he accepted that the total must be much higher. He felt that if Mr. Osborne was permitted to use a motor cycle this could attract other riders and in fact three other motorcycles had already been seen in the area. The Superintendent had spoken to both Epping and the New Forest and in both cases they only permitted the tending of animals on foot.

Mrs. Sheldrick stated that Ashdown Forest could not be compared with either Epping or the New Forest as both had fencing and cattle grids. Furthermore, Mr. Osborne often used a Land Rover on the forest and she felt that it would be far better if only two wheels were used, which would cause much less damage to the surface of the forest.

After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Edwardes-Jones proposed that Mr. Osborne be granted a Licence to use a motorcycle for shepherding for a trial period of four months and that the motorcycle should be of a specific colour so as to be easily identified. This was seconded by Mr. Kavanagh and agreed by the Board.

b) Unauthorised selling of Hot Dogs at Millbrook. On two occasions a Hot Dog seller had set up operations at Millbrook. He was moved off and has not since reappeared, but as the Car Parks at Millbrook are leased from the County Council, this area could be vulnerable as it could prove difficult to enforce the Bye laws on this particular land.

c) The Superintendent reported that, Mr. Drew who is moving away from the area, had presented the Board with a book of maps. The Chairman requested that the Superintendent send a letter of thanks to Mr. Drew.

d) Experiment with new litter bins. The Superintendent reported that a total of six bins would be needed, and that these would be housed in a compound at the East Sussex County Council Dump at Wych Cross (leased from the Conservators). This new arrangement would obviate the necessity of burying litter on the forest.

e) Action Research for Crippled Children are organising a Sponsored Walk on 17th. October, of which 40 per cent of the funds raised will be given to the forest.

f) Uckfield Bye Pass The Public Inquiry will start on 26th. October. A number of people are opposed to the link road as favoured by the County Council. Arrangements will be made for the Conservators to be represented at the Inquiry to oppose the abolition of the link.

g) The General Purposes Committee had discussed and approved an outline plan for the Public Meeting to be held on 26th. November. Draft Agendas were circulated to the proposed speakers. It was agreed that the Agenda should be finalised at the next meeting of the Committee.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.30 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY 17th. NOVEMBER 1982.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. C.B. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A Lumsden, Mrs. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Hon. ,C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. R.G Edwardes-Jones, L.C. Hardy, J. Gent, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, A.I.H. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Ellison and Mr. Miller

### **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendments, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th. September 1982 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

PRESENT - delete Miss B. Willard

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - add Miss B. Willard

Before proceeding with the Meeting, the Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting to be held in the new Ashdown Forest Centre and thanked the Superintendent for all his efforts with the building.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Replacement Fire Tender. The Chairman reported that this was now underway. The vehicle had been purchased and was in the process of being fitted out. The total cost would be £4,700.

Mrs. Sheldrick asked whether the vehicle would be used solely for fire fighting and the Superintendent confirmed that it would.

b) Uckfield By Pass. The Chairman advised the Board that the Deputy Superintendent had attended the Inquiry, and he, therefore, asked him to report.

Mr. Donnelly reported that he had attended on three occasions on behalf of the Board to fully support the route approved by the East Sussex County Council and to strongly oppose any increase in traffic on the B2026. The Deputy Superintendent further reported that a Mr. Grant of Maresfield was strongly opposed to the approved route and questioned him at some length. When given the opportunity to question Mr. Grant, he found that he had no constructive answers.

The County Council, Maresfield Parish Council and the Conservators were the only supporters of the route present at the Inquiry and Mr. Donnelly felt that local residents could have shown their support by being present.

c) Planning Application for living accommodation at the Ashdown Forest Centre. The Superintendent reported that the Planning Committee of Wealden District Council had approved the application subject to a Section 52 Agreement. The Superintendent therefore requested the Board's permission to sign the Agreement. Permission was granted.

#### **4. TO FIX A FOREST RATE FOR THE YEAR 1983/84**

The Superintendent reported that, as the Estimates had had to be submitted to the County Council, he had estimated for an increase of 8 per cent in the Forest Rate. After a brief discussion, it was felt that the increase should be at the present rate of inflation, which was 7 per cent.

Mr. Morgan proposed that the Forest Rate for the year 1982/83 be increased by 7 per cent to give the new Rate for 1983/84. This was seconded by Mr. Kennard and agreed unanimously.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE ESTIMATES OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE - REVISED 1982/83 and ESTIMATED 1983/84**

Copies of the Estimates had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The Chairman drew the Board's attention to the fact that the County Council were no longer making a fixed grant and were reverting to the old system of deficit financing.

The Superintendent advised the Board that some savings had been made with regard to the cleaning of the Centre. Mr. Streeter, who was previously employed on litter collecting and general forest maintenance, was not now so effective on outside work, partly due to his age, but also because of a back and neck injury. He still collects the litter, but now does all the cleaning at the Centre.

Mrs. Sheldrick asked what proportion of Mr. Streeter's time was spent on the cleaning. The Superintendent advised that, at the present time he was only cleaning the admin. block, which only takes a few hours each week and until the entire Centre was fully operational it could not be estimated how much time this would take. The Superintendent agreed to monitor the situation and report back.

The only major increase in the estimates was on wages and salaries which was due to the 5.7 per cent pay award made from 1st. July 1982.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Morgan proposed that the Estimates, both Revised 1982/83 and Estimates 1983/84 be approved. This was seconded by Mr. Kavanagh and agreed unanimously.

#### **6. REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th. NOVEMBER**

a) Cattle Grids – A representative of the National Farmers Union had been invited to attend the meeting, who presented a case for grids and fencing on certain parts of the forest, inspired by Mr. Henry Osborne.

The Committee considered that it was necessary for a close inspection to be made of the exact places where cattle grids would be effective and what also would be required, i.e. gates, fences, etc. They considered that the main area requiring attention was the South West corner of the forest, and had, therefore, asked the Deputy Superintendent to carry out a survey and report back.



The Committee felt that serious consideration should be given to speed restrictions on forest roads and the matter had been taken up with the County Highways Department. Their reply was awaited.

The Committee also considered that the existing Ashdown Forest signs should be looked at to see if they could be made more effective, as the present signs were \*\*\*\*\* by motorists. The Superintendent would be investigating and reporting back to the Committee.

b) Apportionment of Common Rights. The Committee felt that this somewhat complex matter should be discussed by a small Sub-Committee. Mrs. Sheldrick, Miss Willard and Mr. Morgan had agreed to serve on this and would present a draft policy for the Committee's and subsequently Board approval.

b) Public Meeting. The Committee discussed the proposed Agenda for the meeting which would take place on 26th. November at Forest Row Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. It was proposed that the Agenda be in two main parts, the first part being entitled The Ashdown Forest Centre. This would be taken in three sections, 1) Background, presented by Mr. Edwardes-Jones, 2) The purpose and future use - Speaker Mr. L. Hardy (3) An insight into how the Centre was built and the cost, presented by The Superintendent. There would then be an opportunity for the public to ask questions. The second part of the Agenda would be The Financing of the Forest, presented by Mr. Morgan and this would also be followed by questions.

It was proposed that Mr. Edwardes-Jones should Chair the Meeting. This format was approved by the Board.

A brief discussion ensued on the question of Cattle Grids and the Chairman stated that the Board were extremely concerned at the number of casualties. The Board approved the Committee's recommendation that the Deputy Superintendent carry out a survey.

## **7. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Superintendent apologised for the low temperature in the main Barn. Plumbing was proceeding and the heating in the main barn would soon be installed.

The Superintendent reported that the exhibition should be completed by the end of December, a few of the display Board's already being in situ. All building should also be completed by the end of the year but there would still be some finishing work to be done. An extension of the C.E P. Scheme for one Supervisor and two labourers for a period of three months had been requested.

The Friends of Ashdown Forest had held their Annual General Meeting at the Centre a few days prior to the Board Meeting, and the Superintendent felt that the local residents who attended the meeting were impressed with the building.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent had no Sundry Matters on which to report.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Hardy congratulated the Editors of the Ashdown Forest Newsletter. He felt that it was improving the communications between the Board and local residents. Miss Willard thanked Mr. Hardy but said that they were disappointed in the lack of response to the Correspondence Column, which was probably due to the fact that the publication was only produced twice a year.

Mrs. Sheldrick reported a problem with rubbish being dumped at Fairwarp. The Deputy Superintendent was aware of the problem, and a lot had been cleared for the Bonfire. Ranger Pedder would be treating this as a priority matter as soon as he was on his Chase in January.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

Confidential Minute No. 23

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.40 p.m. Chairman

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY. 19th. JANUARY 1983.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.H. Wills (In the Chair). Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. B.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, D.L. Kavanagh, F. Kennard, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, A.L.H. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Millar. Mr. Taylor was not present but no apology had been received. Mr. Edwardes-Jones suggested that, as Mr. Taylor rarely attended the County Council should be asked to replace him.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones further suggested that as Wednesday was a difficult day for some members, an alternative day should be considered. It was agreed that when the dates of the meetings for the coming year were arranged this would be considered. The Superintendent requested that members let him know their preferences before the next Board Meeting, bearing in mind that the meetings were held every two months, normally around the third week of the month.

Mr. Kavanagh advised the Board that he would not be standing for re-election to Wealden District Council in May and would not therefore be a Conservator after that time. The Chairman thanked Mr. Kavanagh and said he would be greatly missed by everyone.

## **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the Meeting of 19th. January were approved and signed by the Chairman: Item 6(a) final para., line 3 - delete 'observed' substitute 'heeded'

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Fire Tender. The new Fire Tender had been parked in the Centre Car Park for members to see prior to the meeting. The tender was fitted with the latest equipment including foam for fighting forest fires. The Forestry Commission had offered a two day course for the Rangers in the use of foam. The Course would cost £300 and the Chairman thought that such training was desirable. The cost of the Course had not been included in the Estimates and would, therefore, necessitate the submission of a Supplementary estimate to the County Council. The Superintendent advised that he had spoken to the Assistant County Treasurer who felt that a Supplementary Estimate might not be favourably received, but suggested that one should be submitted for consideration. This was agreed.

b) Planning Application for Living Accommodation at the Centre

The Chairman reported that the Section 52 Agreement had been submitted but had to be amended to embrace the Manor Charitable Trust. This was in hand.

c) Estimates. Copies of the revised Estimates together with correspondence with the County Planning Officer had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. The Chairman reported that, in order to contain expenditure within the County Council allowance, £2,700 had had to be trimmed from the original estimates approved by the Board at the previous meeting. The Superintendent reported that he had cut the expenditure on Transport & Machinery, Radio, Staff expenses and Capital. The original estimate for Radio included the new equipment for the Fire Tender, the Superintendent suggested that the Friends might be approached to help with this item. The other reductions meant that Rangers uniforms would be cut from jackets to pullovers and savings could be made on transport by purchasing ex W.D. Land Rovers. The Experimental Budget had also been reduced which would mean a decrease in grant aid from the Countryside Commission. The revised estimate was approved.

d) Cattle Grids. The Chairman reported that the Deputy Superintendent was carrying out a survey and was assembling data for his preliminary report which would be submitted to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

e) Apportionment of Common Rights. The sub-Committee of the General Purposes Committee had held a meeting with Mr. Hobden of Whitley Hughes & Luscombe and subsequent to this Mr. Morgan and the Superintendent had visited the County Secretary to discuss the problem. The Chairman invited Mr. Morgan to report.

Mr. Morgan reported that Mr. Hobden had explained possible courses of action and these had formed the basis of discussions with Mr. Hemmings, Assistant County Secretary. Mr. Hemmings had been in touch with the Department of the Environment, but as yet nobody had been able to give a positive answer. Mr. Hemmings feels that the County Council may wish to take Counsel's advice before making a positive rule. Mr. Morgan therefore proposed holding a further meeting of the sub-Committee in three or four weeks time.

f) Public Meeting. The Chairman reported that that meeting had been poorly attended, with only about 40 people present. Mr. Edwardes-Jones had chaired the meeting and was asked to report.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones said that he felt those who were present were genuinely interested and the atmosphere was very much better than the last Public Meeting. Those present felt that such meetings were well worth while.

Some members of the Board felt that the meeting was poorly advertised and most felt that it should be held later than 7.30. The Board unanimously agreed that further Public Meetings should take place and Mr. Hardy suggested that consideration be given to these meetings being publicised in Parish Magazines. It was agreed that they should commence at 8.00 or 8.30 p.m.

g) Mrs. Sheldrick enquired what was happening with regard to the problem of litter at Fairwarp that she had reported at the last meeting. The Deputy Superintendent advised that Ranger Pedder had only just started working on his Chase and would be dealing with this matter as soon as possible.

#### **4. TO AUTHORISE THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT TO SIGN CHEQUES ON THE CLERKS ACCOUNT AND CLERKS NO. 2 ACCOUNT IN THE ABSENCE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT.**

The Board unanimously agreed that the Deputy Superintendent be given such authority.

#### **5. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

The Chairman advised the Board that the main point to report was that the building was virtually complete and that the Manpower Services Commission had agreed to the C.E.P. Scheme being extended until the end of March. The 30th. March had been set as the completion date although outside landscaping work would not be fully complete.

The costings for the building were on schedule and Arthur Wells would be advising the Superintendent of the up to date figure in a few weeks time.

#### **6. NATURE RESERVE AT OLD LODGE AND PIPPINGFORD PARK SCHEME**

The Castle Stewart family had now definitely agreed to part of the land at Old Lodge becoming a Nature Reserve, which would be run by the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation. The County Council have made funds available.

The Superintendent had attended the first meeting of the Reserve's Management Committee who had requested that the Conservators consider one of the forest car parks, on the edge of the Reserve. being developed into an "all weather" park at the expense of the County Council, so that visitors to the Reserve could use it. The Superintendent suggested that, if the Board approve in principle, the Roadways Committee be asked to study the plans produced by the County Council and that they be given delegated powers. The preliminary drawings show part of the car park with an all weather surface and a large portion left as a grass parking/picnic area.

A lengthy discussion ensued, some members of the Board being of the opinion that the car park should not be developed. Other members felt that as the County Council had offered to fund the project and the car park would still be a forest car park, they should accept the generous offer.

Mr. Morgan proposed that the Board accept the County Council's offer and that the Roadways Committee be given delegated powers to approve the final details. This was seconded by Mr. Edwardes-Jones and carried 10 votes to three.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the County Council were also taking an interest in the conservation of a large part of Pippingford. This did not directly affect the forest, but as Pippingford was within the bounds of the forest it would reflect back.

## **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Meeting of the Riding Committee. Mr. Gent reported that the Committee had discussed the work being carried out on the fire rides. Half of the programme had been completed and was well within the budget.

The possibility of having an all weather circuit had also been discussed and it had been agreed that the Deputy Superintendent should carry out a survey before the next Riding Committee Meeting.

b) Roadway property on Mardens Hill. The Superintendent had received a request for a roadway to a property on Mardens Hill. The Chairman of the Roadways Committee had visited the site and requested that the Committee look at the problem. It was agreed that the Roadways Committee carry out a site inspection and that they be given delegated powers

c) Golf Course. The Golf Course had requested permission to vary the layout of one hole on the old course. The Superintendent requested that a Committee carry out an inspection. As this request did not come under the bounds of any of the existing Committees, the Superintendent suggested that the seldom used Model Aircraft Committee be redesignated the Recreation Committee, and be asked to look at this problem. This was agreed.

d) Land at Chelwood Gate. The Superintendent reported that progress was now being made with regard to the Bye Laws being extended over the land. The Deed of Declaration and Grant had been received for sealing and the sole existing Commoner, Mr. K. Hall, had raised no objections. The Board agreed that the Deed be sealed.

e) Report of the Vegetation Committee. Mrs. Sheldrick reported that the meeting held on November 23rd. was attended by Mr. D. Harvey of the Nature Conservancy Council and Mr. I. Deans, County Ecologist. Mr. Corfield presented to the meeting the detailed vegetation maps and management plans for Conservation Area 3 and Area 6. These were discussed and approved by the Committee subject to a site meeting to finally approve woodland management for the area adjacent to the Five Hundred Acre Wood.

The Committee were informed that the County Council were concerned about the condition of beeches growing on land adjoining the A22. The Committee carried out a site inspection when the Deputy Superintendent advised that the area should be clear felled and replanted. This was questioned by the Conservators present and it was agreed that the County Council should be asked to put their concern about the trees and road safety in writing before the matter was discussed further.

Mr. Donnelly informed the Conservators that the County Council had issued a dangerous tree order and that, in his opinion, the felling of the roadside trees would expose the remaining trees to wind blow, and it would, therefore, be safer to clear fell. The Superintendent supported the recommendation on financial grounds. If the trees could be sold this would cover the cost of the work on the roadside trees and would probably show some profit. No provision had been made in the Estimates to cover the-roadside work, which by itself would cost several hundred pounds.

The Board directed that the suspect trees should be dealt with as a matter of urgency. It was agreed that the Vegetation Committee should meet the officers of the East Sussex County Council Highways Department as soon as this could be arranged, and should be given delegated powers to act.

The Superintendent advised the Board that a few slides would be shown after the meeting to any member of the Board wishing it, showing the use of foam in fire fighting.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute 24

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.45 p.m.

Chairman

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 11th. APRIL 1983.**

**Present:** Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, M.P. Wright, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, D Kavanagh, F. Kennard, A.J. Miller, D.G.L. Monnington, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, G.W.H. Osborne. A.L.H. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Hon. C.A.S. Grimston and Mr. L. Hardy.

## **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1983/84**

The Superintendent invited nominations for Chairman. Mr. Ellison nominated Mr. Morgan this was seconded by Mr. Edwardes-Jones and agreed unanimously.

Mr. Morgan took the Chair and said that he was extremely privileged to be elected and would do his utmost to succeed and keep up the reputation of the Board as was so admirably done by the two previous Chairmen, Brigadier Scott and Mr. Wills.

## **3. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 1983/84**

The Chairman requested that the Board should be willing to elect Mr. Edwardes-Jones to remain as Vice Chairman for the coming year. Mr. Kavanagh proposed that Mr. Edwardes-Jones be so elected and this was seconded by Mrs. Sheldrick and agreed unanimously.

The Chairman then welcomed the three new Conservators to the Board:

Mr. Henry Osborne, who had been elected by the Commoners, and the two new County Council appointments, Mrs. Pat Wright and Mr. David Monnington.

## **3. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

At the previous Board Meeting it had been agreed that consideration should be given to Board Meetings being held on Mondays instead of Wednesdays. Monday morning had been suggested but some members stated that they would find this difficult. The Superintendent requested that members should let him know their personal preferences. Taking these into consideration the Superintendent had drawn up a calendar for both Board and Committee Meetings for the coming year and this had been circulated to the Board, together with suggestions for the Committee structure. It was suggested that Board Meetings should be reduced to five per year and should take place at 9.30 a.m. on Mondays.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that Board Meetings should be held five times per year but that they should take place at 3.00 p.m. on Mondays The dates for the Meetings to be:

27th. June, 19th. September, 14th. November, 20th. February 1984 and 9th. April 1984.

It was suggested that there should be five Committees and that these should meet at regular intervals. The proposed dates accompanied the Committee Structure Paper.

Mr. Ellison felt that the number of Committees might be reduced to three by combining some of the existing ones. It was however agreed that the Recreation Committee combine with the Conservation Committee and that Finance and General Purposes, Riding and Roadways Committees remain separate. The dates given in the report were agreed.

It was also suggested that with the exception of the Conservation Committee each Committee should consist of one County Councillor, one District Councillor, one Elected Member and one Independent Appointed Member, together with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Conservators and the Representative of the Lord of the Manor as ex officio members. This was agreed.

It was further suggested that the Conservation Committee consist of two Elected Members, two other Members ex officio as for other Committees, plus the County Ecologist and a representative of the Nature Conservancy Council, co-opted and non voting. This was agreed.

It was further agreed that each Committee should elect its own Chairman and the Chairman be empowered to call additional meetings if required or to cancel meetings should there be insufficient business.

The dates of the Meetings were structured to enable written Minutes to be produced and sent out with Agendas for Board Meetings. .

The Chairman congratulated the Superintendent and his Secretary for the succinctness of Board Meeting Minutes and whilst he appreciated that the production of Minutes for each Committee Meeting was increasing the workload, he hoped that this would continue.

## **5. TO ELECT MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES**

After a brief discussion it was agreed that Committee members would be as follows:-

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES      Mr. E.W. Ellison, Mr. L.C. Hardy,  
Mr. D.G.L. Monnington, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mr. A.L.H. White, Miss B. Willard.

ROADWAYS   Mr. F. Kennard, Mr. A.J. Miller, Miss B. Willard  
District Councillor to be elected

RIDING      Mr. J. Gent, Mr. F. Kennard, Miss A. Lumsden, Mr. A.J. Miller, Mr. G.W.H. Osborne.

CONSERVATION   Mr. J. Gent, Miss A. Lumsden, Mr. G.W.H. Osborne, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright  
It was agreed that Agendas for Committee Meetings would be sent to all Conservators in order that they may attend if any specific item was of interest or that they may make their views known to the Chairman of a particular Committee.

Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON WEDNESDAY, 23rd. MARCH 1983**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G H. Wills (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Brigadier L.M. Scott, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, F. Kennard, G.T.M. de H. Morgan, A.L.H. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Kavanagh and Mr. Taylor.

### **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Item 1 delete "Mr. Edwardes-Jones suggested that as Mr. Taylor rarely attended the County Council should be asked to replace him

Substitute      It was suggested that as Mr. Taylor had difficulty in attending meetings he might care to resign to allow another County Councillor to take his place

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

a) Fire Tender. The Chairman reported that the Ranger Training in the use of form for fighting fires had now taken place and a Supplementary Estimate for the cost of the training had been submitted to the County Council.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1981/82**

The Audited Accounts had already been considered by the Board, but at that time the Auditors Report had not been received. This had now been circulated to the Board and the Chairman, therefore, suggested that the Accounts now be formally received. This was agreed.

Mr. Stride, who was present in the Public Gallery, had brought a letter which he asked to be distributed to all members of the Board. This letter was in reply to the follow up request for payment of the account sent to Mr. Stride in respect of the extra Audit Fee incurred by his investigation. The Chairman proposed that the Board formally receive the letter for discussion at a future Board Meeting.

Mr. Morgan proposed that the letter should first be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. This was agreed.

## **5. REPORT OF THE RECREATION COMMITTEE**

The Committee had met on 31st. January to consider an application from the Golf Club to move the position of the Third Tee. The Committee met on site with the Secretary of the Golf Club. The Committee unanimously decided that as the plan involved cutting both young and mature Oaks they could not agree to the Tee being moved.

## **6. REPORT OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE**

The Committee met on 31st January to consider the proposed Layout for the car park redevelopment adjacent to the Old Lodge Nature Reserve. After studying the Plans the Committee carried out a site inspection and considered that the County Council's proposal was reasonable and, therefore, recommend that the Plan be approved. All works carried out on the car park would be paid for by the County Council. The Plan was approved by the Board.

Mr. Kennard further reported on a site meeting at The Haven, Mardens Hill, to consider the proposed new roadway. The Committee considered the proposal reasonable and, therefore, recommended that the new access be approved. This was agreed.

## **7. REPORT OF THE VEGETATION COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that on 26th, January the Committee held a site meeting on the Exchange Land North of the Lewes Park Straight to discuss further the treatment of this area with regard to road safety.

Mr. Walter of the County Highways Department was present at the meeting and stated that, in his opinion, the trees were dangerous and should, in three or four cases, be felled. Other trees needed large limbs removed.

Mr. Donnelly stated that, in his opinion, this was not sufficient. He gave the trees a five year life span and said that the entire section needed clear felling and replanting. Mr. Denyer, County Forestry, said that there was an ongoing problem but thought that the work outlined by Mr. Walter would solve the immediate problem. He gave the area life of fifteen years or more. Mr. Gent agreed in general with Mr. Denyer, but thought that the Beech in that section was probably some of the best on the forest and that consideration should be given to clearing and replanting certain areas first, where trees were much older and many dead or dying. Legs Heath was instanced. The Superintendent mentioned the serious financial position and that he would need to get a supplementary estimate from the County Council to cover the cost of felling. The Committee suggested that there were certain areas of soft woods on the forest which needed thinning and the proceeds might be put towards the cost. In conclusion, Mr. Donnelly was asked to obtain estimates for the work outlined by Mr. Walter.

The Superintendent reported that the Estimates for the work had now been received and a Supplementary Estimate submitted to the County Council.

Miss Willard asked why some Beech had been felled at Twyford Lane. She was advised that they were diseased with Honey Fungus and Mr. Peter Donnelly felt it necessary to fell them and replant. Miss Lumsden requested that, in future, the Board should be advised of any proposal to fell a number of trees in order that Conservators could answer questions from local residents. The Superintendent suggested that, in future, if any group of trees required major surgery it should be referred to the Vegetation Committee and if they are in doubt they should refer the matter to the Board. In the case of individual trees this should be left to the staff. This was agreed except that in the case of a tree of exceptional landscape value the Committee should be consulted.

## **8. REPORT ON THE COMMONERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Chairman reported that Mr. Henry Osborne had been elected as a Conservator. The Chairman then invited Mrs. Sheldrick to report on the meeting.

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that approximately 90 people attended the meeting which was held at the Ashdown Forest Centre. Air Marshall Sir Frederick Sowrey was elected to Chair the meeting and introduced the candidates, Mr. Hall and Mr. Osborne, to the meeting. The Forest Superintendent as Returning Officer explained the voting procedure to the meeting and assisted by Mrs. Ruxton and Mr. S Kenny carried out the poll. Both candidates appointed scrutineers to oversee the counting of the votes, and while this was in progress the meeting continued. The result of the Poll was announced as soon as the counting had been completed: Mr. Osborne 139 votes: Mr. Hall 68 votes.

Mrs. Sheldrick further reported that a number of questions were raised by Commoners including queries on Horse Riding, the Golf Club, etc. and these were answered by the Conservators present.

The Forest Newsletter was also discussed and the meeting unanimously agreed that they wanted it to continue.

A good deal of the meeting was spent discussing the question of cattle grids and fencing on the forest.

The Commoners felt that the Centre was not large enough to accommodate a large meeting and it was therefore, suggested that the Commoners A.G.M. should revert to the old system of being held in the villages around the forest. It was agreed that the next Commoners Meeting should take place on 9th March at Nutley Village Hall.

## **9. REPORT OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

The Committee met on 25th February to discuss the Deputy Superintendent's report on cattle grids and also the question of Commons Registration. Copies of the report on Cattle Grids and a paper on Commons Registration had been circulated to all members of the Board. The Chairman invited Mr. Morgan to report on the Meeting. Mr. Morgan reported that the Committee had discussed the report at length and recommends that the Board should, as a first step, approach the County Engineer to obtain Department of Transport approval, to experimental Rumble Strips being used on some of the roads through the forest.

Mr. Morgan had already had informal discussions with the County Engineer who said he would be prepared to put such a proposal forward on the condition that he agreed the exact locations and extent of the lines to be used in each location, and on the condition that the cost would be met by the Conservators. The Committee agreed with the conclusions drawn in the report and recommend that consideration of the total problem should be maintained but the Rumble Strips should be a first step in trying to solve the problem. The Committee had discussed the possibility of cattle grids together with some fencing of the forest and agreed that the possibility should not be dismissed. It would, however, cost a great deal to implement and no funds were available at present.

A lengthy discussion ensued and Mrs. Sheldrick suggested that the possibility of grant aid from the Countryside Commission should be investigated. The Superintendent advised that the Countryside Commission would require specific information regarding the exact-location of grids, etc., before considering grant aid. Mr. Morgan felt that, although the Board were not in a position to put forward a firm proposal at this stage, the possibility of grant aid should be sounded out. This was agreed.

Mr. Morgan further reported that the Committee had discussed the details of the Registration of Commoners, as set out in the paper circulated to the Board. This was in line with the requirements of the East Sussex County Council and the Registration Authority and the Committee therefore recommend that this be adopted. This was agreed.

## **10. ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE**

a) Building Progress. The Superintendent reported that the building was progressing well and would be completed on schedule and good weather should also allow the outside work to be finished. The C.E.P. Scheme would end on 31<sup>st</sup>. March. The Superintendent felt that all the staff deserved the highest praise for their efforts with the building and this view was endorsed by the Chairman.

b) Costs. The final costings were not yet complete. but the Superintendent reported that the cost to the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust would definitely be under £90,000. The total cost of the building was difficult to assess because of free labour, gifts of materials and generous discounts but the cost of £120,000 had been accepted by the



Countryside Commission as a basis for giving grant aid of £25,000. The Nature Conservancy Council had also made a grant of £3,500 toward the cost of the display.

c) Official Opening. The Superintendent reported that the Opening by Earl De La Warr would take place at 12 noon on 31st. March. Members of the Appeal Committee and the Committee of the Friends, together with the Trustees of the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust had been invited and a small number of other distinguished guests. Mr. Wills would make the first speech followed by Earl De La Warr. Drinks would then be served. The Rangers would be on duty to answer questions and Information Assistants would be on duty from 2.30 p.m., when the Centre would be open to the public.

d) Visitor Access. As from Friday 1st. April, the Centre would be fully operational and it was intended to open the Information Barn at weekends from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekdays during the Summer from 2 to 4.30 p.m. but this would depend on having voluntary staff available. 24 Information volunteers had been trained together with 18 Voluntary Rangers.

## **11. MANPOWER SERVICES SCHEME**

The Superintendent reported that both Manpower Services Schemes would end on 31st March. A new C.P. Scheme would start on 4th April with one full time Supervisor and other members working on a part-time basis. A Secretary/Bookkeeper would be employed by Manpower Services for two days a week.

Mrs. Sheldrick enquired what the plans were for members of the team, as she felt that the Vegetation Committee might look at the work to be carried out and draw up a list of priorities. The Superintendent advised that, initially, the team would be fully employed on general forest maintenance and work on the fire breaks.

## **12. SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Fires. The Superintendent reported that there had been a total of five fires destroying 15 acres. Three of these were probably deliberate. The new Fire Tender had been used in all fires but only one necessitated the use of foam.

b) Radio Station. The Superintendent reported that the Radio Station would possibly be closing and enquired whether the Board would wish to take any action. It was suggested that Mr. Grimston should write to the Secretary of State to register an interest in the area. As it was originally Common Land it was felt that it should be offered back to the Lord of the Manor. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that a joint approach from the Lord of the Manor and the Conservators should be made.

c) Memorial tree planting. The Superintendent reported that a Mrs. Harrison wished to donate some Oaks to the forest in memory of her late husband. These would not be in the form of a permanent 'Clump'. Mrs. Harrison had arranged for English Woodlands to plant and maintain the trees and Mr. Gent reported that 350 small trees had been planted. Pine, Oak and Beech had been planted and although the ground was not particularly suitable for hardwoods it was hoped that some would survive. The site has been temporarily fenced but this would be removed when the trees were established and the areas incorporated into the forest. No name board would be erected.

d) Orienteering. The Superintendent reported that arrangements were going ahead for the event, but it was now known that only about 400 participants will be using the forest. Some parking facilities will be made available.

e) Car Park Thefts - Warning Notices. The number of thefts from cars parked in forest car parks had been increasing and the police had carried out a special operation without success. The police have asked whether the Conservators would be prepared to put up notices in six car parks warning the public of the dangers of leaving valuables in cars. Mr. Kennard was firmly against the idea but Mr. Gent was strongly in favour. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the notices should be erected for an unspecified limited period.

f) Cabinets of Butterflies. The Superintendent reported that two cabinets of butterflies and moths had been presented to the Conservators for the Information Centre by Col. Rowe. The Board expressed their appreciation.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 25

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.05 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 27th. JUNE 1983**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, E.W. Ellison, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, F. Kennard, A.J. Miller, D.G.L. Monnington, G.W.E. Osborne, I.L.H. White.

The Chairman opened the Meeting by welcoming Mrs. Gabriel to the Board as the new Conservator appointed by Wealden District Council.

The Chairman then extended the Board's congratulations to Mr. Ellison on his appointment as Chairman to Wealden District Council. The Chairman advised the Board that, owing to the arduous duties ahead of him, Mr. Ellison had decided to resign from the Board. He thanked Mr. Ellison for all his efforts over the past years.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

As all members of the Board were present there were no apologies.

### **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23rd. MARCH 1983**

The Minutes, which had been circulated prior to the Meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL AND 9<sup>th</sup> MAY**

Copies of the Minutes had been circulated prior to the Meeting and Mrs. Sheldrick moved that they be adopted.

Mr. Hardy enquired whether the detailed Vegetation Plans approved by the Committee on 25th. April could be implemented. Mrs. Sheldrick replied that, on completion of the sectional plans, the overall scheme would be discussed and the proposals for the implementation of the Plan would be put to the Board.

The Superintendent advised that much of the work was in hand, and although it would never be possible to do it all, a system of priorities would be worked out. He further advised the Board that Mr. Corfield may need to work slightly longer than the one year originally planned, but he had undertaken to finish the task. Mr. Corfield would not, however, be able to complete the Rare Species Map, but a voluntary successor had been arranged.

Mr. White moved that the Board's appreciation to Mr. Corfield be formally recorded, and this was unanimously agreed by the Board.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9th. MAY**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting and Mr. Miller moved their adoption.

Mr. Miller advised the Board that the Sponsored Ride scheduled for 15th. May was cancelled owing to the wet condition of the forest but was allowed to take place on 5th. June.

The Superintendent reported that, although it rained on 5th. June, no serious damage had been done to the forest. The Deputy Superintendent had inspected the course the morning after the ride and reported to the Chairman that, although there were some muddy patches, the surface would easily be restored by Chain Harrowing.

The Superintendent advised that there had been no criticism from either Commoners or members of the public following the event.

Mr. Osborne stated that, in his opinion, the vehicles used for moving the jumps after the ride caused more damage than the horses. This view was supported by Mrs. Sheldrick. It was, therefore, suggested that the ride should be a non-jumping event in future and that it take place on a less used area of the forest.

The Chairman asked the Riding Committee Chairman to discuss these suggestions at a future Committee Meeting.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16th. MAY**

Mr. Kennard moved that the Minutes, as circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting, be adopted.

The Superintendent reported that the owner of Shepherds Well had decided not to implement the scheme that had been agreed, but to revert to the first simpler plan which was acceptable.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23rd. MAY**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting and Mr. Kennard moved that they be accepted.

The 'Horror' signs, referred to in Item 3 of the Minutes had now been erected and Mrs. Sheldrick reported that they were not clearly visible at night. It was also felt that they should be sign written on both sides. Mr. Osborne stated that, although traffic speed had reduced in the first two weeks after the Board's were erected, it is again on the increase. Miss Willard enquired when the 'Rumble Strips' would be placed and was advised that the original costings by the County Engineer were extremely high and he was now going to have another look at the problem.

Several members felt that the possibility of restricting the flow of traffic across the forest, particularly to the Crowborough/Nutley road should be explored.

The Chairman asked the Superintendent to explore this possibility. He also advised the Board that he proposed to follow up previous suggestions to the Highway Authority to press the Ministry of Transport for speed limits in certain areas of the forest.

The Superintendent advised the Board that he had now had discussions with Messrs. Whitley, Hughes & Luscombe regarding the 'tea bus' (Item 5 of Minutes) who had now agreed to write to the owner to advise him that he is liable for prosecution under the Bye Laws.

The Chairman reported that the letter from Mr. Stride which had been referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee was not fully considered at the last meeting, but would be discussed at the next Committee Meeting.

## **7. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Fires. The Superintendent reported that fires had been minimal, with only two small ones. This was the best year ever and the worst danger period was now over.

b) Special Exercise. The Constabulary had carried out a major incident exercising using CB Radio enthusiasts and involving the Rangers. The Superintendent advised the Board that all Conservators' personnel called reached the scene within 40 minutes, even though off duty.

c) M.S.C. Team. The Superintendent reported that the Team had been continuing the work on the fire rides and general forest maintenance, together with work on the vegetation management. The team was still four short of the approved numbers.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Sheep Worrying. Mr. Osborne requested that, in any case of dogs worrying sheep, the Rangers be instructed to call the Police.

The Chairman advised the Board that there were three ways of dealing with Sheep Worrying:

- i) The Board could prosecute
- ii) The Police bring prosecution under the 1953 Act
- iii) The owner of the animal could prosecute

The Chairman asked that he be consulted on any cases where there was a query regarding prosecution.

Mr. Osborne reiterated that, in all cases involving his sheep, he wished the Police to be called.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 27

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.10 p.m.

Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY 19th. SEPTEMBER 1983**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. F. Kennard, L.C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, D.G.L. Monnington, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

Mr. Kennard reported that Miss Lumsden's mother had died suddenly on Saturday. The Board expressed their sympathy.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Messrs. R.G. Edwards-Jones, G.G.C. Barrett and J. Gent.

### **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th. June were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Item 8 - Para .2 "The Chairman asked that he be consulted on any cases where there was a query regarding prosecution. Delete 'query' and substitute 'question of'

### **3. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE; MEETING HELD ON 8th. AUGUST AND A VERBAL REPORT ON THE MEETING OF 12th. SEPTEMBER**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that at their meeting on 12th. September the Committee had discussed the now completed Vegetation Management Plan, drawing up a list of priority areas. Top priorities were areas of Wet and Dry Heath which were to be kept clear of Birch and Pine. It was recommended that all available manpower be deployed on these areas and that the use of chemicals should be experimented with. Lower priority areas would receive attention if work was being carried out in the area. Local volunteer groups could also work on the low priority sites.

A list of chemicals for use on the various types of vegetation had been drawn up, all of which were fully approved by the Nature Conservancy Council and the County Ecologist, and all were of low toxicity.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the use of chemicals on the forest and the possible adverse effect on wildlife.

It was finally agreed that the manufacturers, the Forestry Commission, the Nature Conservancy Council and the Ministry of Agriculture be consulted and that when their views were received the Conservation Committee discuss the matter further.

The Committee also recommended that grazing experiments should also be carried out and that consideration should be given to temporary fences being erected to safe guard the animals and to enable stock to be concentrated in suitable areas to control vegetation. Mrs. Sheldrick advised the Board that it may be sensible to obtain a grant of 22 per cent of the cost of fencing from the Ministry of Agriculture, provided no other grant is sought

The Chairman asked that the Conservation Committee give more thought to enclosure experiments, and felt that the matter would then have to be considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Committee also recommended that the percentages of woodland and heathland stated in the Management Plan should be amended. These will change if the recommendations made are carried out.

The Chairman expressed the Board's gratitude to Colin Corfield for the excellent work he had done and it was agreed that he should be presented with a Framed map of the forest as an ex gratia gift, the cost of which would be £40.

The Superintendent advised the Board that a collection was being made to buy a personal gift for Colin and any Conservators would be welcome to donate to this.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 15th. AUGUST AND 6th. SEPTEMBER**

The Minutes of the two meetings had been circulated to the Board. Mr. Miller reported that the meeting of 15th. August was sparsely attended.

At the meeting on 6th. September, the Riding Association had undertaken to carry out some of the experimental work on ride diversions for which the Board expressed their gratitude.

The Minutes of the two meetings were approved and the Chairman recorded a vote of thanks to the Chairman of the Riding Committee for the way the riding problems were being "well gripped" by his Committee.

#### **5. TO NOTE THE SALARIES & WAGES AWARD PAYABLE FROM 1st. JULY 1983**

The Superintendent advised the Board that the wages and salaries of all staff had been increased by an average of 4.7 per cent in accordance with the recent NALGO pay award.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING OF 5th. SEPTEMBER**

The Minutes of the meeting had been circulated to the Board and the Chairman invited Mr. Kennard to report. Mr. Kennard stated that the Committee recommended that Mr. Stride should again be requested to compensate the Conservators for the additional cost of last years Audit. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the matter should not be pursued through the Courts, but that this information should not be imparted to Mr. Stride.

The Chairman requested the Superintendent to write to the District Auditor with regard to the forthcoming audit, asking for an undertaking that there would be no delay in completing the audit due to Mr. Stride making allegations.

Mr. Kennard also reported that the Rumble Strips had not been laid for sufficient time for the Committee to draw any firm opinion or make any further recommendations.

The Chairman stated that he was disappointed in the Rumble Strips, which if crossed at speed were ineffective. He undertook to contact the County Engineer and request that the strips be improved.

Mr. Osborne advised the Board that five sheep had been killed since the strips were laid, and he, therefore, felt that consideration must be given to certain areas of the forest being fenced so that sheep could be driven into the forest and would not reach the roads for 4-6 hours.

Mr. Kennard also reported on the proposals drawn up by the Superintendent for changes in the vehicle fleet. The Committee recommended that these be approved and this was agreed by the Board.

The Committee had discussed the principles for the 1984/85 Estimates which the Superintendent would be producing in the near future. The Committee had authorised the Superintendent to negotiate on behalf of the Conservators with the Golf Club regarding the increase of the rent.

The Superintendent advised the Board that it was proposed that the rent be increased from £4,000 to £6,500 p.a. The Lord of the Manor would not be prepared to consider an increase below £6,000 p.a. This action was approved by the Board.

The Committee recommended that the Forest Rate should be increased by 5 per cent in the next financial year. This was agreed.

The Committee considered what action should be taken to recover some long overdue payments for Forest Rates. They recommended that the Superintendent write demanding immediate settlement and that non payment should result in Rangers calling to collect the money. This action was approved by the Board.

## **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

Swipe. The Superintendent reported that the Friends of Ashdown Forest had agreed to fund the purchase of a new 'Swipe'. The cost of the new machine would be £1,095. The Board recorded their appreciation to the Friends for this generous gift.

Fires. Although the fire season was officially past, the recent hot weather had created a fire risk. There had, however, been only four small fires on the forest during this period.

Security. The Superintendent reported that someone had recently entered the Centre site and stolen approximately 100 gallons of diesel from the tank. Problems of this nature would be alleviated when the security fencing and electronic device were installed. The Trust had agreed to finance this and the Superintendent therefore requested the Board's authority to proceed with the fencing. This was approved.

Sign at Foresters, Fairwarp. The new landlord of the public house had requested permission to erect a sign on the forest at the junction of the Fairwarp road with the A2026. A similar request had been made by the previous landlord. The Superintendent requested that the Roadways Committee consider this. This was agreed.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Oil exploration. The Chairman reported that he would be attending a Council meeting regarding the exploration for Oil and Gas in Sussex. The Secretary of State had granted licences to the oil company, who have to make at least one borehole. A borehole at Ditchling had been approved by East Sussex County Council and was being used as a test case by the Environmental Committee. With the Board approval, Mr. Morgan intended to put forward the view that serious thought should be given to the prohibition of any such boreholes on the forest. This was agreed.

Radio Station. At their meeting on 23rd. March the Board asked Mr. Grimston to write to the Secretary of State regarding the possible closure of the Radio Station and to register an interest in the land. A reply had now been received stating that no definite date had been set for the closure and it would remain in Crown ownership for the foreseeable future.

Military Vehicles. Mrs. Sheldrick reported that there was an increasing number of army vehicles going on to the forest and enquired what the arrangements were for the use of the forest by the army. The Superintendent advised that all vehicles were restricted to car parks. It was, therefore, suggested that a letter of complaint be sent to the appropriate authority. This was agreed.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 28

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.15 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 14th. NOVEMBER 1983**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, F. Kennard, L.C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, D.G.L. Monnington, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. G. Barrett

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 19th. September, which had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Mr. White enquired whether any information was available regarding the enquiries being made on the chemicals which the Conservation Committee had proposed to use on the forest. Mrs. Sheldrick advised that the information was still being collated.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24th. OCTOBER**

Copies of the Minutes had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. Whilst moving that the Minutes be adopted, Mrs. Gabriel felt that one or two items required some explanation. She reported that, although exceptional, due to the steep slope and heavy traffic using the roadway to Hole Farm, the Committee recommended the use of concrete on the new section of roadway.

Mrs. Gabriel also reported on the site inspection at Fairwarp. The Committee recommended that subject to planning permission being granted, the Conservators should agree to the Lord of the Manor entering into a lease for the access.

After a brief discussion the Minutes and Recommendations of the Roadways Committee were agreed by the Board.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE A REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7th NOVEMBER**

Mr. Kennard reported that the Accounts for the year ending 31.3.83 which had been audited but not yet signed had been presented. It was anticipated that they would be signed in the near future, provided that a member of the public raised no objections.

The Balance Sheet showed a deficit of £1,310 which was due to the unexpected increase in the fee for the previous years audit and two Supplementary Estimates, which the County Council had not paid but had held in abeyance until the submission of the annual accounts.

The Committee had also studied the Revised Estimates for 1983/84 and the Estimates for 1985.

The Superintendent reported that since the Committee meeting, he had discussed the estimates with the County Treasurer, especially with regard to the Computer Loan. In the light of these discussions, certain amendments had had to be made and the Superintendent advised the Board of these in detail. A lengthy discussion ensued, and Mr. White advised the Board that he was not totally happy and would like to discuss the matter with the County Treasurer. The Chairman requested the Board to approve the Estimates in order that they may be formally presented to the County Council, who may ask for further amendments to be made. This was agreed.

Mr. Kennard also reported that the Committee had considered a request from the Ministry of Defence to allow military personnel to carry side arms when crossing the forest. Mr. Kennard read out a letter received from Col. Rockett. After a brief discussion, the Board granted permission.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were accepted.

#### **6. SUNDRY MATTERS**

Superintendent Designate. The Chairman reported that the Selection Committee had interviewed four candidates on Friday, 11th. November and had offered the post to Lt. Col. John Nicholls, who it was hoped would take up his position on 1st. January.

Sheep Casualties. The Superintendent reported that the number of sheep casualties on the forest had considerably reduced over the last two months, but this was probably due to there not being so many sheep out at present.

Deer Casualties. The Superintendent reported that 71 deer had already been killed on the roads this year. Mr. White enquired whether this very high number was due to the increased size of the herd. Mrs. Wright enquired whether culling should be considered.

The Superintendent advised that, as far as it was possible to assess, the herd had not increased by any great number and that the British Deer Society, in conjunction with local farmers, do carry out a cull.

Voluntary Staff Training. The Superintendent advised the Board that another Training Course would be taking place for new Voluntary Ringers and Information Assistants during February. All members of the Conservators' permanent staff would be engaged in the training.

Soil. The Superintendent reported that a local haulage company had offered a large quantity of soil, free of charge, and this was being used to fill eroded areas on fire rides and to construct banks around certain car parks.

Security System. The Superintendent reported that as from 12.55 today the external security System was in operation.

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Miss Willard enquired whether it was necessary for each Commoner to register rights over the new land at Chelwood Gate, and if so, how Commoners were being informed. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the first opportunities of advising Commoners would be at their Annual General Meeting and a notice would be included with the next Rate Demand.

Mr. Osborne advised the Board that Mrs. Hitchcox from The Birches had increased her flock of sheep to 30 and was getting some trouble from dogs worrying the animals. He suggested that warning notices should be erected in the area. This was agreed.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 29

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.10 p.m.

Chairman

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST, HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 13th. FEBRUARY 1984.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. S.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Miss B Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, F. Kennard, L.C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, D.G.I. Monnington, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.N. White.

The Chairman opened the meeting by officially welcoming Lt. Col. John Nicholls, Superintendent Designate, who was attending his first Board Meeting.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. G. Barrett

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 14th. November, which had been circulated prior to the Meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Mr. Edwardes-Jones enquired how many Deer had been killed since the last report. The Superintendent advised that 12 had been killed this year.

## **4. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2nd. DECEMBER**

Before inviting Mr. Kennard to move the adoption of the Minutes, the Chairman advised the Board that Mr. Kennard would not be standing for re-election at the forthcoming Commoners' Annual General Meeting. The Chairman felt that he spoke for the whole Board in saying that he was sad that Mr. Kennard would not continue. The Chairman expressed the Board's appreciation to Mr. Kennard for his work as a Conservator and especially as Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.



Mr. Kennard thanked the Board and stated that he had enjoyed every minute.

Mr. Kennard reported that the Finance & General Purposes Committee had held a special meeting on 2nd. December to discuss the possibilities of oil exploration and development on the forest, to which members of Parish Councils and local Preservation Societies had been invited to put forward their views. The Lord of the Manor also attended the meeting.

Mr. Kennard stated that item 2 of the Resolution summed up the meeting. He reported that in order to have the authority of the Conservators a letter had been written to each member requesting observations. There was no dissent, and it was, therefore, taken that the Committee resolution should be regarded as Conservators' policy, and the East Sussex County Council was so informed. Mr. Morgan reported that the County Council had taken careful note of the views expressed and as a result the Policy and Resources Committee of the County Council had approved a document to go before the County Council on 21st. February, recommending that the development of oil should not be permitted on Ashdown Forest or its environs. The document did not however state that the exploration for oil should not be permitted.

A number of Conservators felt strongly that this would not be sufficient to safeguard the forest as, if oil was found, Central Government could well be persuaded to allow its development.

After further discussion, the Chairman suggested that the following resolution be passed and the County Council so informed:

The Conservators of Ashdown Forest welcome the exclusion of Ashdown Forest and its environs from oil and gas development, but seriously depreciate the differentiation drawn between exploration and development and ask that the County Council should amend Policy One by the inclusion of the words "EXPLORATION OR" prior to the word "DEVELOPMENT".

The Resolution was carried with 14 votes and one abstention.

## **5. REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 7th. NOVEMBER**

Again, the Chairman invited Mr. Kennard to report and move the adoption of the Minutes which had been tabled.

Mr. Kennard reported that the Committee had noted the District Auditors' report on the Accounts for the year ending 31st. March 1983 and recommended their adoption. This was agreed.

The Superintendent reported that the following letter had been received from the District Auditor:-

Dear Sir,

1982/83 AUDIT

The audit of the accounts of the Conservators for the year ended 31 March 1983 has been completed. There are no matters on which it is necessary for me to make a report to the Conservators under Section 157 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The appropriate certificate has been entered on the Balance Sheet in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1974.

A memorandum of matters of detail discussed at the audit will be forwarded. My thanks are due for the courteous assistance afforded at the audit.

Yours faithfully,

R.O. DAVIES

Mr. Kennard further reported that the Chairman, Clerk and himself had met the District Auditor to discuss the presentation of the accounts and ways in which the amount of work required at the audit could be reduced, especially with regard to the Computer work. The Committee recommend that a sub Committee be set up to carry out an investigation into the accounting procedures and propose that Mr. Barrett, who has a good deal of knowledge on computers, and Mrs. Sheldrick for this sub Committee. -This was approved.

The Committee had noted the final figures for the Estimates and Mr. Kennard reported that the County Council would be making a contribution of £65,900 for the current year and for the coming financial year. Mr. Morgan expressed his appreciation to Mr. White for his part in the outcome of the County Councils decision in this matter.

Mr. Kennard briefly outlined the problems of drainage at St. Johns, Crowborough and although Mr. Mitchell Sadd had threatened to take Court action it was felt that this was in fact very unlikely.

Mr. Kennard stated that the report on the review of the rent for the Golf Club was self-explanatory. Mr. Grimston reported that he had had no further approaches from the Golf Club.

The minutes of the Meeting were approved.

#### **6. REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 16th. JANUARY**

Mrs. Sheldrick proposed that the Minutes, which had been circulated, be adopted and invited questions from the Board. Referring to the Committee's recommendation that herbicide be used to control Birch, Miss Willard asked whether it was really necessary to cover an area as large as five acres. Mrs. Sheldrick advised that although the total area was five acres, in many cases the birch was widely spread so that the true area was more like one acre.

The Chairman stated that he strongly supported the recommendation made by the Committee. There was no further discussion and the Minutes were adopted.

#### **7. REPORT OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23rd. JANUARY 1984**

Mr. Miller proposed the adoption of the Minutes and invited questions from the Board. Mrs. Wright enquired where the free soil, referred to in item 3 of the Minutes, had originated from. The Superintendent advised that a local haulage company had offered the material which was excavated from the local Council sewage pit. He further stated that the laying of the soil was immediately followed by bad weather, but felt that when the weather improved the condition of the ride would be satisfactory.

Mr. Osborne advised the Board that he had received a number of complaints from walkers, who now found it impossible to walk on this section of the ride.

#### **8. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th. JANUARY**

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated, most of which were self explanatory.

With regard to Highgate Road, Mrs. Gabriel advised the Board that a member of the public had slipped into the ditch and may be considering taking action against the Conservators. The correspondence on this matter had only be sent to the Superintendent on the morning of the Board Meeting, therefore, no further information was at present available.

Mrs. Gabriel also outlined the problems with regard to the new Dustbins being supplied by the local authority, and after a brief discussion it was agreed that the District Council should be informed that the Conservators cannot allow these to be left on the forest.

#### **9. TO AGREE THE DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 1984/85**

Details of the proposed dates for Board Meetings and Committee Meetings had been circulated. The Chairman pointed out that, in order to save administrative work and the Conservators' travelling time, it was being suggested that the Roadways Committee and Riding Committee Meetings be held on the same day. The Chairman suggested that the time of these two meetings should be 14.15 hours Riding 15.15 hrs. plus Roadways

The proposed dates were agreed.

#### **10. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) Fires: The Superintendent reported that there had been a fire of approximately three acres in the Millbrook area, the cause of which was unknown.

b) Manpower Services Scheme. The Superintendent had been in conversation with the Manpower Services regarding the possibility of a further scheme, and after several alternative suggestions, the Commission were now considering a further scheme of the same nature as the one at present in operation. However, this had not yet been confirmed.

c) Grant Aid. The provision for £3,000 experimental budget had been made in the estimates to match grant aid from the Countryside Commission and/or Nature Conservancy Council. The Countryside Commission had indicated that a grant of at least £1,500 was possible for further car park works. It was proposed that this should not be for further hard surfaced car parks but improvements on grass parks. The Superintendent hoped that he would be able to obtain the full £3,000 grant aid between the two authorities.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Gent enquired whether there were any plans for further landscaping at the Centre. The Superintendent confirmed that there was, but it was a question of time. It was hoped to increase the heather this Spring.

Miss Willard asked why the numbers of sheep killed shown on the notices at Duddleswell keep going up and down. The Chairman advised that the boards reflect the deaths over 12 months and were, therefore, changed monthly. The Chairmen suggested that consideration should be given to the numbers being removed until the sheep were again out on the forest. This was agreed.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 30

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.50 p.m.

Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY 9th. APRIL 1984**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In The Chair), Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshall Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. G.G.C. Barrett, R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, L. C. Hardy, A. J. Miller, G.W.O. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

The first Board Meeting of the year was opened by the Superintendent, who asked for nominations for the election of a Chairman for the year. Mrs. Sheldrick nominated Mr. Morgan, this was seconded by Mr. White and agreed unanimously. Mr. Morgan took The Chair.

Mr. Morgan then proposed that Mr. Edwardes-Jones be re-elected as Vice Chairman for the year. This was unanimously agreed.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Gabriel and Mr. Monnington.

## **2. ELECTION OF AIR MARSHALL SIR FREDERICK SOWREY AS A CONSERVATOR**

The Chairman welcomed Sir Frederick to the Board, he having been elected, unopposed, at the Commoners' Annual General Meeting to serve for a period of five years commencing 1st. April 1984.

## **3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th. February had been circulated prior to the Meeting. Subject to the following amendments, the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman:

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no MATTERS ARISING from the Minutes that were not covered by items on the Agenda.

#### **5. REPORT ON THE COMMONERS' ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Chairman advised the Board that Mrs. Sheldrick had been elected to Chair the meeting, he therefore invited her to report.

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that approximately 85 people had attended the meeting. The Clerk, the Returning Officer, declared Sir Frederick Sowrey elected as a Conservator for a period of five years. Lady Aberdeen paid tribute to the Clerk, who was attending his last Commoners' Meeting before his retirement.

Mr. Morgan had also been present at the meeting and had given the Commoners a very comprehensive report on the Board's activities over the last year, which was very well received.

Mrs. Sheldrick further reported that the Commoners had considered a resolution, proposed by Sir Frederick Sowrey and seconded by Miss Lumsden, stating that the Commoners of Ashdown Forest opposed the exploration and development of oil or gas on Ashdown Forest. The resolution was carried with only three Commoners opposing.

The Commoners were informed of the proposed increase in the Forest Rate for the coming year, and this was accepted.

The Commoners were also advised of the proposed experiments with herbicides on the forest. This caused considerable discussion and criticism, and although the Commoners expressed the opinion by a large majority vote that herbicides should not be used on Ashdown Forest, there were a number of abstentions, and the overall impression was that the Commoners fully appreciated the Conservators' problem on the control of Birch.

The question of the forest being used for orienteering was also discussed.

Mr. Morgan thanked Mrs. Sheldrick for giving the report and stated that he felt it important that the Commoners should know that the points raised by them are properly considered by the Board. He, therefore, proposed that the items covered in Mrs. Sheldrick's report should be placed on the Agendas of the appropriate Committees for detailed discussion.

#### **6. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING OF 26th. MARCH**

The Chairman advised the Board that, in the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee he had chaired the meeting and moved that the Minutes, which had been circulated, be adopted.

The Board approved the ex—gratia payment to Mr. North which had been recommended by the Committee.

The Chairman advised the Board that the Committee had noted the Rates for the Ashdown Forest Centre buildings, which had been assessed at a considerably higher figure than anticipated. When the estimates had been prepared it was thought that the buildings would be rated in the same way as Village Halls, and that the Conservators' charitable status would be taken into account. The Board discussed the matter at some length and it was suggested by Sir Frederick Sowrey that consideration might be given to the Conservators becoming a Trust. It was also suggested that enquiries be made of other visitor centres to find out what rates they paid. Mr. White agreed to make enquiries with regard to Queen Elizabeth Country Park.

The Board noted the appointment of Mr. Marrable and approved the Committee's recommendation that he be paid £500 toward moving expenses.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

The Chairman invited Miss Lumsden to raise a matter which, if requiring further discussion, would be a matter for the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Miss Lumsden requested that Conservators be told in advance of day to day work to be carried out on the forest. Local Conservators were being questioned by Commoners on some of the work which had been carried out and about which the Commoners were complaining, and it was felt that advance warning would help Conservators in dealing with these complaints. Miss Lumsden referred in particular to the-areas where soil had been brought in and where heavy plant had been used on the forest during wet weather.

In reply, the Chairman stated that he felt it was the Board's duty to lay down policy and that the day to day running and decisions should be made by the executive. If members felt that management had acted against the policy of the Board, the problem should be raised with the appropriate Committee.

Mrs. Sheldrick in supporting Miss Lumsden enquired why heavy machinery had been used on the forest when conditions were unsuitable.

The Superintendent advised the Board that, with the end of the financial year being 31st. March, it was often found that by February a surplus of funds were available to be spent before that date. In some cases, it was necessary to take the risk of booking heavy plant to carry out work when the weather could turn against this being ideal.

It was further suggested that a schedule of work could be circulated to local Conservators or that Conservators be allowed to walk round the forest with Rangers to see what is being done. A lengthy discussion ensued. The Chairman suggested that, if the Superintendent felt it necessary he could telephone local Conservators to advise them of major works being carried out.

#### **7. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19th. MARCH**

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated to the Board and Mr. Miller invited questions. The Committee's recommendation in respect of the roadway from Wych Warren was briefly discussed and a sketch plan presented to the Board. This was approved and the Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

#### **8. REPORT FROM THE RIDING COMMITTEE ON AN APPLICATION FROM MRS. PARKER FOR A PERMIT TO RIDE FROM BIRCH GROVE STABLES**

Details of the request and the Riding Committee's recommendation had been tabled. Mr. Miller advised that the Riding Committee recommended by a majority vote that a Summer Permit for eight horses should be issued for this year, and that the effect be monitored before any decision with regard to renewal of the permit for next year be made.

A lengthy discussion ensued. Mr. Gent stated that he felt it would be wrong to change the long standing policy of the Conservators to allow another riding establishment to use the forest. Mrs. Wright proposed that the status quo be maintained. The Chairman suggested this proposal be put to the vote, the proposal being carried 9 votes to 2.

#### **9. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the Friends of Ashdown Forest and the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust had jointly funded the purchase of Chain Harrows and a new Trailer. The Board requested the Superintendent write a letter of thanks to the friends and the Trustees.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the Information Centre would be opening on weekdays as from April 10th for the beginning of the Summer Season. A number of new leaflets had been produced for sale in the Barn and copies of those were presented. The leaflets, five of which were for walks on the forest, had been cheaply produced and would be selling for 10p each. Some members of the Board felt that this was too cheap and it was suggested that the price should be increased to 20p. It was agreed that the price should be increased, initially for a trial period.

The Superintendent further reported that there had been 10 fires on the forest to date, four of which were during the evening of 16th. March. These had burnt 167 acres. Foam had been used very effectively to deal with one of these fires. He was of the opinion that all these fires had been deliberately started.

The Superintendent reported that, as the sheep were not out on the forest at present, there had been no casualties, but nine deer had been killed this year. This was considerably lower than last year when 24 were killed during the same period:

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Gent enquired whether it was possible to do anything to the Harrison Memorial Clump which had been destroyed by one of the fires on 16th. March. The Superintendent advised that he had spoken to Mrs. Harrison, who was not in a position to replant the Clump at present, and it had been agreed that it should be left until the Autumn to see whether any of the trees had grown back. Mr. Gent suggested that Scots Pine could be planted immediately, and if seedlings were made available to him he would arrange the planting. Miss Lumsden offered Oak seedlings, and it was agreed that these would be planted in the very near future.

Sir Frederick Sowrey advised the Board that the Air Training Corps had agreed to take permanent care of the Airmen's Grave.

Mr. Osborne informed the Board that the sheep would be turned out on the forest in about three weeks time, and he enquired whether any further protection for the animals would be available. Mr. Osborne advised the Board that he would be willing to erect some fencing and had drawn up a proposal of where this should be erected.

In order to discuss the proposal in detail the Chairman suggested that a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee be called. This was agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.45 p.m. Chairman

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, JULY 2nd. 1984.**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In The Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Air Marshall Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. G.G.C. Barrett, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, G.W.H. Osborne, A.E.H. White.

The Chairman opened the Meeting and advised the Board that after Item 1, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, the Officers and the Press would be asked to leave and the Board would go into Committee.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Edwardes-Jones, Mr. Grimston and Mr. Monnington.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 31

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

#### **3. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th. April, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman:

Item 6 - Para 7 Line 1 Delete 'day to day work'  
Substitute 'work causing obvious change'

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no MATTERS ARISING from the Minutes which were not covered by the Committee reports circulated to the Board.

The Chairman then reported that the Board had unanimously agreed to an announcement that was handed to the Press, stating that Lt. Col. John Nicholls commences duties as Clerk and Forest Superintendent with effect from

today, and that Lt. Cdr. J.P. Angell be granted three months' leave, but would be available on a consultancy basis until his retirement on 30th. September.

The Chairmen paid tribute to Cdr. Angell for all the work he had done over the past 16 years. He went on to say that, if had not been for Peter Angell there would be no Ashdown Forest Management Plan, no Ashdown Forest Centre, and no Appeal, which raised almost 1 million pounds. The Chairman wished Cdr. Angell an enjoyable and well earned leave and expressed the Board's appreciation with "A Heartfelt Thank You".

Cdr. Angell thanked the Chairman and the Board and said it had been a most enjoyable and satisfying time. He felt sure that John Nicholls would do every bit as much for Ashdown Forest in the future.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th. MAY 1984**

Mr. Miller proposed that the Minutes, as circulated, be adopted and invited questions from members of the Board.

Mrs. Sheldrick enquired whether the cinder track at the bottom of School Lane was in fact being closed. The Superintendent advised that this was not the case, but a division between pedestrians and horses had been created.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were approved.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING OF 4th. JUNE**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting and Mrs. Sheldrick moved their adoption.

Mrs. Sheldrick felt that Item 6 — Apportionment of Rights of Common should be clarified with regard to writing to the Commons Preservation Society. Mrs. Sheldrick advised the Board that the Society was studying the problems being experienced to pay the way for the second stage of legislation.

The Superintendent advised that the letter had been sent to the Society.

Mrs. Wright enquired whether, as the savings in the 1983/84 accounts were being used to pay the Centre Rates, were the Rates for the current year estimated for. The Superintendent advised that, following an objection raised to the rate assessment, reductions on the two years rates had been agreed and rebates of £183 and £193 respectively would be made. The Estimates only covered £300 for Rates for the current year, so the shortfall will have to be found. Future estimates will take account of the full amount.

Mr. Hardy suggested that copies of the unaudited accounts should be made available to all Board members and not just to Committee members. This was agreed.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were approved.

#### **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7th. JUNE**

Mr. Gent moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated. He thanked Mrs. Sheldrick for her sterling work as Chairman of the Committee over the last year. Mr. Gent invited questions from the Board.

Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested that consideration should be given to making the general public more aware of the reasons why herbicides have to be used on the forest.

A brief discussion ensued and it was suggested that a display in the Barn or a leaflet along the lines of the walks leaflets be produced explaining the problems and long term policy for Forest Management.

Mr. Osborne felt that other methods of vegetation control, in particular controlled burning and grazing, should be seriously considered.

The Chairman stated that the whole question of vegetation control should be considered stage by stage and Mr. Gent would be producing a report on possible alternatives for consideration.

The Chairman advised the Board that he had written a letter of thanks to the Chief Fire Officer for the brigades support through the fire season. He asked the Superintendent to convey the Board's' gratitude to the staff and volunteers and members of the public who helped throughout this extremely bad season. He suggested that a suitable notice be posted in the Barn. The Press were also asked to take note.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the Schools Pack had now been completed at a material cost of £94 for 100 copies and would be selling for £3 per copy.

The Superintendent advised the Board that a tractor and swipe had been hired to cut the gorse of the burnt areas and had done 50 hours work at a cost of £475.00. Our own tractor had also suffered damage while doing this work amounting to £125.00. The Friends of Ashdown Forest had agreed to pay for the hire of the second tractor.

The following exhibitions had been arranged for the Information Barn:-

July	Sussex Archaeological Society
August	World Wild Life Fund
September	Men of the Trees

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Miss Willard enquired whether the temporary Sheep Notices were to be erected this year and suggested that the emphasis be put on the lambs which were out on the forest.

Mrs. Gabriel enquired how timber cutting by Commoners was controlled as she had received complaints about certain cutting in the Golf Course area.

Cdr. Angell replied that cutting is controlled and Commoners are aware that they should contact the Chase Ranger or the Office in order that an area of timber can be allocated to them. Unfortunately, not all Commoners played the game, and this was the case in the area referred to. The Superintendent said that he was aware of this problem and would be looking into ways of tighter control before the cutting season starts in November.

The Chairman informed the Board that the oil drilling at Godstone was underway and that the exploration at Wallcrouch would be starting soon. He suggested that Conservators wishing to find out more about the oil exploration arrange to visit Wallcrouch. The affect of increased traffic, etc. through Wadhurst was being carefully monitored and the oil company was restricted in their movements of heavy vehicles through the village at certain times of day.

Mr. Barrett enquired whether the oil company had given any indication of a specific interest in Ashdown Forest. The Chairman confirmed that they had not.

Mrs. Sheldrick enquired when the Ice Cream licence was due for renewal. The Superintendent confirmed that tenders would be invited in September.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.50 p.m.

Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE ON MONDAY, 1st. OCTOBER 1984**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, D.G.L. Monnington, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Barrett and Mr. Edwardes-Jones.



## **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd. July, which had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman:

Item 6 - Delete second para. Substitute:

Mrs. Sheldrick thought that The Open Spaces Society should be advised of our problems, and told the Board that the Society was the Secretariat of the Commons Forum, which was recently formed to pave the way for second stage legislation on Common Land.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman thanked Mrs. Sheldrick and Mrs. Gabriel for their efforts to make the party for Peter Angell such a success. He read to the Board a letter of thanks received from Cdr. Angell.

## **4. MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. SEPTEMBER**

The Chairman reported that, in the absence of the Committee Chairman, he had chaired the meeting and, therefore, moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated. He invited questions from the Board.

Mr., Gent enquired what the cost to the Ashdown Forest Riding Association had been for the work done at Fairwarp. The Superintendent advised that he thought the cost would be approximately £100 for one days JCB hire. The necessary pipes had been supplied by the Conservators at a cost of around £80.

## **5. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. SEPTEMBER**

The Chairman advised the Board, that he had also chaired this Meeting owing to the absence of the Committee Chairman, and moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated. He further advised the Board that the subject covered by Item 2 of the Minutes was now being considered by the Secretary of State and was, therefore, now subjudice. The Chairman also drew the Board's attention to the Superintendent's note on Item 6 of the Minutes.

Referring to Item 6 - Licence for a sign at Ashdown Forest Farm - Mrs. Sheldrick enquired whether any application had yet been received. The Superintendent advised that it had not, and that there was some doubt on whether the sign was actually on Forest land.

## **6. MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20th. AUGUST**

Mr. Gent moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated prior to the Meeting. A general discussion took place regarding the certification of woodland areas for insurance purposes.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the New Forest have all trees inspected and certificated for insurance, but the Conservators' insurers had never asked for this. The Superintendent further advised that arrangements were in hand for the County Forestry Officer to come and inspect the trees near main roads and advise of any necessary action.

The Chairman stated that this was a difficult problem, and felt that the Conservators should extend the life of trees provided they were in the bounds of safety.

Mrs. Sheldrick felt that particular attention should be paid to trees on roadsides and around car parks.

Sir Frederick Sowrey enquired whether the areas of scorched Scots Pine and Birch could be made available to the Commoners. The Superintendent advised that the trees were not of cord size, being only 1-3 inches in diameter.

Mr. Hardy enquired of the contents of the Draft Conservation Paper referred to under Item 6. Mr. Gent explained that this was merely a discussion paper for the Committee. Miss Willard enquired whether this meant that the Management Plan was now out of date. Mr. Gent advised that this was not the case, but that some areas may require amendment, as there was very little chance of keeping to the proportions outlined in the original Plan.

## **7. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17th. SEPTEMBER**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board and Mrs. Sheldrick moved their adoption.

Referring to Item 2, Mr. Hardy enquired whether contract litter collection could be accommodated within the present budget. Mrs. Sheldrick replied that some additional savings may be possible to allow for litter collecting, and the County Council would probably look more favourably on contracted out work than on replacement staff. Furthermore, Wealden District Council may be able to help with some of the litter collecting.

The Superintendent advised that he had written to Wealden asking them to consider collecting litter from six major car parks, but as yet no reply had been received.

With regard to the proposed purchase of a new computer, Mrs. Wright enquired why it was going to be as expensive as £6,000.

Mrs. Sheldrick advised that the actual hardware cost would be around £3,000, but special programmes would be necessary and these are expensive. She further advised that no final decision had yet been made and a further meeting would be taking place.

The Chairman stated that he felt the Board should support the proposal in broad terms and that when a firm proposal was reached this should again be put before the Board. A further discussion ensued. The Chairman proposed that a full paper, giving a precise proposal be put before the Board on November 26th. This was agreed.

Referring to Item 9, the Superintendent advised the Board that the Manpower Services Team would be starting on Wednesday, for a period of three months.

#### 8. SUNDRY MATTERS

The Superintendent reported that, between 17th. and 25th. September T.V.S. had been making a film on Ashdown Forest which would be screened on 23rd. November at 6.30 p.m. under the title of "Countryways".

#### 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Gabriel advised the Board that, to mark the Greenwich Meridian Centenary, the Forest Row Parish Council wanted to plant trees on the Meridian Line, part of which was on Forest land. The Chairman suggested that this item be put on the Agenda of the next Conservation Committee.

Mr. Osborne enquired whether the Fire Brigade had been given permission to carry out trials on the Forest, which, in his opinion, were causing considerable damage. The Superintendent advised that Crowborough Fire Station had recently taken delivery of a new four wheel drive tender, costing £30,000, which had been commissioned mainly to support Ashdown Forest. They had, therefore, requested permission to carry out trials on the Forest, in order that they could judge the capabilities of the new appliance before the next fire season.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 32

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.10 p.m.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 26th. NOVEMBER 1984**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Miss B. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. G.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. L.C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, G.W.D. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

The Chairman opened the Meeting and advised the Board that, unfortunately, due to business and health reasons, Mr. Gavin Barrett had resigned from Wealden District Council and from the Board. The Chairman stated how grateful the Board were to Mr. Barrett for his input to the Board.

In a letter to the Chairman, Mr. Barrett had asked him to convey to the Board how much he had enjoyed working with "such a dedicated group of colleagues".

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. J. Gent and Mr. D. Monnington

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st. October, which had been circulated to the Board, were approved and signed by the Chairman

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman advised the Board that we were still awaiting a reply from Wealden District Council on the question of letter collection on the Forest, as referred to in item 7.

Mrs. Gabriel advised that she had spoken with Wealden who were awaiting the next phase of collection before replying.

Mrs. Gabriel further advised that Lady Aberdeen had offered a prize of £50 for young people collecting litter on the Forest next Summer, if some form of competition could be organised.

The Superintendent stated that a number of groups of Scouts, Cubs, etc. already do this on the Forest but a competition would be administratively difficult to organise. He felt that a sub Committee would be required to undertake the organisation of such an event.

### **4. MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 15th. October had been circulated to the Board and, in the absence of Mr. Gent, Mrs. Wright moved their adoption.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the Wellingtonia trees had now been planted by the Merman of forest Row Parish Council.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones enquired whether all Board members could receive a copy of the paper on woodland referred to in item 4 on the Committee Minutes, together with a copy cf. the Vegetation Map referred to in item 2. The Chairman advised that the woodland paper was merely a discussion paper, from which a woodland policy would be drawn up by the Conservation Committee for Board approval in the future.

Mrs. Sheldrick advised that the Vegetation Maps had to be hand coloured and it would be a lengthy process to produce enough for all Board members. This again was merely to assist members of the Committee in their discussions.

### **5. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Sheldrick moved the adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th. November, which had been circulated to the Board.

Referring to Item 3, the Chairman thanked Mrs. Sheldrick, Mr. Barrett and Mr. Hardy for the work they had done in connection with the selection of a new computer.

Mrs. Sheldrick advised the Board that she, together with the Clerk and Mr. Goram, had attended a demonstration of the type of machine under consideration. She was very grateful to Mr. Hardy for making Mr. Goram available.

Referring to item 7 of the Minutes, Miss Willard stated that there were a number of "secret places" on the Forest and she felt that these should be avoided on any official guided walk. The Chairman replied that the Rangers were well aware of these areas and would ensure that these remained protected.

With regard to the Planning Application in respect of Phie Forest Garden - item 4 - the Chairman advised the Board that the Superintendent had written to Wealden District Council to relay the points raised by the Committee.

Mrs. Wright felt that several of the points raised could well be acceptably answered by the applicant, and, in her opinion, the Planning Application had an even chance of going through.

The Committee had recommended to the Board under item 1, that the Forest Rate for 1985-86 should be increased by the declared rate of inflation as at the end of November 1984. This was agreed, and the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **6. REPORT OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Gabriel advised the Board that the Committee had not held a formal meeting but had carried out a site meeting, the details of which were described in the report which had been circulated to the Board. Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the report, and this was agreed.

## **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the number of motorcyclists riding illegally on the Forest was causing increasing concern. He had recently written a number of warning letters to riders and letters of apology had been received.

There had been a further incident where two or three riders had frightened horses causing a young child to be unseated. Unfortunately these offenders were not caught or identified.

Mr. Hardy suggested that reports in Parish magazines informing the public of what to do if they see motorcyclists on the Forest may help.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) Long Distance Driving Event. A copy of a letter received from the South of England Agricultural Society requesting permission to hold the event on the Forest had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting. After a brief discussion the Board unanimously agreed that permission should not be granted.

b) Chelwood Common Registration. Mr. Hardy enquired whether there had been any further developments. The Chairman advised that he was hoping to set up a meeting with the County Council's legal department in the next week or two.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

Confidential Minute No. 32 was approved and signed by the Chairman

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4. 2.0 p.m.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE ON MONDAY, 18th. FEBRUARY 1985**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Miss W. Willard, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. R.G. Edwardes-Jones, J. Gent, L. C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, D.G.C. Monnington, G.W.H. Osborne.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. White

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th. November, which had been circulated to the Board prior to the meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Before continuing with the Agenda the Chairman welcomed Mrs. Alexander to the herd, who had been appointed by Wealden District Council to replace Mr. Barrett.

The Chairman advised the Board that this would be Miss Willard's last meeting as a Conservator, as she had decided not to stand for re-election. The Chairman paid tribute to Miss Willard's work on the Board over many

years, but felt that we would still have contact with her with regard to the Forest News. The Board also joined him in congratulating Miss Willard on recently receiving the Whitbread Award.

The Board also joined the Chairman in congratulating Peter Angell on receiving an MBE in the New Years Honours. The Chairman drew the Board's attention to an article about the Forest which had appeared in a recent edition of the East Grinstead Courier. He felt it was an excellent article and congratulated Mark Gay on his efforts.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

i) Phie Forest Garden. The Chairman advised the Board that the Planning Application had been refused. Mr. Hardy enquired on what grounds and Mrs. Wright advised that the Wealden District Council had serious reservations regarding access to the site.

ii) Estimates. The Chairman advised that the Conservators' Estimates had been approved by the County Council.

### **4. MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21st. JANUARY 1985**

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated to the Board and were adopted.

### **5. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28th. JANUARY**

Mrs. Gabriel proposed that the Minutes as circulated be adopted. With regard to Item 4 - 'Otto' Dustbins, Mrs. Gabriel stated that the Committee felt strongly that Ottos should not be allowed on the Forest and that further discussions should take place with Wealden District Council on the problem. The Superintendent advised that a list of properties leaving Ottos on the Forest was being compiled and this will be forwarded to Wealden in the near future.

With regard to Forest litter, the Superintendent advised the Board that an experimental bin would be put at the Friends Clump car park and would be suitably camouflaged.

### **6. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th. FEBRUARY**

Mrs. Sheldrick proposed that the Minutes as circulated be adopted. The Committee recommend that approval be given to the purchase of the audio-visual system. This was agreed.

The Committee had further discussions about the Computer and now recommend that the purchase be authorised and that the final details be left to the Superintendent. This was agreed.

Referring to the work on the A22, Miss Lumsden asked what had happened to the Milestone. The Superintendent agreed to investigate.

The Chairman advised the Board that the area would be covered with topsoil, seeded, ditched and the deer mirrors erected. The Superintendent produced a sample of the deer mirrors.

Mr. Osborne enquired where the topsoil would be coming from and what type of seed would be used. He felt that good topsoil would produce better grass and this would attract animals to feed on it and possibly defeat the object of clearing this stretch of land.

The Superintendent felt that the area would very soon go back to bracken, but the best type of grass seed to use to stay in keeping with the forest, was being investigated.

Referring to Item 2 of the Minutes, Miss Willard felt that the proposed donation to Garden Hill of £100 was rather a small sum. The Superintendent advised that the support in kind being offered would add up to a considerable sum but as the dig would be taking place over two years, a further donation could be made if, at a later date, it was considered to be desirable.

### **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute Number 33

### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.20 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, ON MONDAY, 15th. APRIL 1985**

**Present:** Mrs. N. Alexander, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. R. G. Edwardes-Jones J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, A.J. Miller, D.G.C. Monnington, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.H. White

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Gabriel

### **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

Mr. White proposed that Mr. Morgan be elected as Chairman for a further year. This was seconded by Sir Frederick Sowrey and carried unanimously. Mr. Miller proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Morgan for his efforts as Chairman last year.

Mr. Morgan thanked the members of the Board and took The Chair.

Mr. Morgan advised the Board that the Mr. Edwardes-Jones, who had been Vice Chairman for a number of years, felt it was now time to stand down. The Chairman felt that the Board should be extremely grateful to Mr. Edwardes-Jones for all the work he has done over a considerable number of years. Mr. Edwardes-Jones thanked the Chairman for his kind remarks

The Chairman then proposed that Mrs. Sheldrick be elected as Vice Chairman, as he felt that if the Chairman was an appointed member of the Board, the Vice Chairman should be a Commoner Conservator. This proposal was seconded by Mr. Edwardes-Jones and carried unanimously.

### **3. TO NOTE THE ELECTION OF MR. V. FACER AS A CONSERVATOR FOR THE FIVE YEARS COMMENCING 1.4.85**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Facer to the Board who had been elected by the Commoners in the place of Miss Willard.

### **4. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendment, the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman

Item 3 i) - line 3 - delete 'access to'

### **5. MATTERS ARISING**

The Superintendent reported that the Milestone had not, as yet, been found. Sir Frederick Sowrey advised that the Sussex Archaeological Society had asked for a replacement.

Mr. White felt the loss of this Milestone was caused by gross negligence on the part of the contractors, who should be asked to make a contribution to the County Council toward the cost of replacement stone.

### **6. MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th. MARCH**

Subject to the following amendment, Mr. Gent moved the adoption of the Minutes: Item 1 c) Should read ...."leaving the Oak coppice singled."

Mrs. Wright requested that 1 d) line 3 be amended to read ... old felled trees should be left...

Mr. Grimston requested details for the Lord of the Manor on the proposed felling in Five Hundred Acre. The Minutes, which had been circulated to the Board were adopted.

### **6. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18th. MARCH**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting, and in the absence of Mrs. Gabriel, the Committee Chairman, Mr. Morgan moved their adoption.

The Chairman expressed the Board's gratitude to Mrs. Gabriel for her continuing efforts within the offices of Wealden District Council with regard to litter disposal.

The Superintendent advised that a further letter had been sent to Wealden District Council.

The Superintendent described the camouflaged Otto now sited at Friends car park and felt it worth noting that the car park had been much cleaner since this installation.

Mrs. Sheldrick questioned whether this would encourage residents who still left their bins on the forest to try to camouflage their Ottos. The Chairman suggested that this point should be considered by the Roadways Committee.

Under Item 3 of the Minutes the Committee recommend that a part-time litter collector be engaged during the Summer season, at a cost of approximately £600. This was approved.

With regard to Memorials on the Forest - Item 2. Mrs. Wright suggested that perhaps the garden at the Centre might be used for memorials. The Chairman felt that this was possibly not the right place for memorials and the number of seats or picnic tables which could be sited at the Centre would be minimal. He felt that seats or picnic tables, with small plaques, suitably placed on the Forest were acceptable. This was agreed.

## **7. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25th. MARCH 1985**

Mrs. Sheldrick moved that the Minutes, which had been circulated, be adopted and invited questions from the Board.

Mr. Hardy enquired whether it would be possible for the film shown at the Commoners' A.G.M. to be shown to the Board. The film had been arranged by Sir Frederick Sowrey, who agreed to see whether this would be possible.

Mr. White moved that the Minutes be adopted and this was agreed.

## **8. TO AGREE THE DATES OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 1985/86**

The suggested dates had been circulated prior to the Meeting and these were agreed.

The Chairman advised that the County Council elections did not take place until May 2nd and this may cause some changes to the Board.

## **9. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent advised that Highgate Green was still causing concern. Despite having written to the contractors objecting to the building materials being left on the Green and to the replanting which had been carried out against the Conservators' wishes, the problems had still not be rectified. The Superintendent requested that Mr. Grimston be asked to take up the matter with Federated Homes.

The Friends of Ashdown Forest had offered prizes to value of £50 for 'Wombles' on the Forest. The Superintendent advised that the competition is now being started and leaflets will be distributed.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 34

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.20 p.m. Chairman

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, ON MONDAY, 1ST. JULY 1985**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, O.E.B. Hughes, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Alexander, Miss Lumsden, Mr. Edwardes-Jones and Mr. Hardy.

The Chairman formally welcomed Mr. Cumming and Mr. Hughes who had been appointed to the Board by East Sussex County Council to replace Mr. Miller and Mr. Monnington.

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th. April were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Milestone. The Superintendent reported that he had received a letter from East Sussex County Council confirming that the stone would be replaced in due course.

## **4. MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13th. MAY 1985**

Mr. Gent moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated prior to the Meeting. Mr. White requested information regarding the size of Oaks referred to in item 5 of the Minutes. Mr. Gent advised that most of the trees were small and extremely poor specimens that would never mature into good trees. Referring to Item 6, Mrs. Gabriel enquired whether the New Forest had been able to say why 7 out of 10 instances of controlled burning went wrong. The Superintendent replied that they had not. The burning was carried out in February under ideal conditions, but still fire got out of control. The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

## **5. MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20th. MAY 1985**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting and in the absence of Miss Lumsden, the Committee Chairman, The Chairman moved their adoption.

The Superintendent advised that the work referred to in Item 3 had been completed and a Quarry, near the A22 had been excavated, the stone being suitable for ride improvements. He further advised that he would be meeting Mr. Ian Mitchell of the Countryside Commission on Wednesday, 3rd. July, to discuss grant aid for the proposed work at Glenmore Road.

The Chairman advised the Board that further discussions would be taking place with the Ashdown Forest Riding Association with regard to winter riding problems.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

## **6. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20th. MAY 1985**

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes and advised the Board that there had been some further developments since the Minutes were circulated. He invited the Superintendent to report.

The Superintendent reported that he had had further correspondence with the solicitors acting for the owner of Bracken Cottage, Fairwarp - Item 2 - and following consultation with the Committee Chairman and Mr. Grimston a Licence had now been issued.

Referring to Item 4 of the Committee Minutes, the Superintendent advised the Board that the trees had now been felled and no adverse comments had been received from local residents.

Mr. White enquired whether there had been any further progress with regard to the Wealden District Council emptying Ottos on the Forest. The Superintendent reported that they had agreed, but a formal letter of confirmation had not yet been received.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **7. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. JUNE 1985**

The Minutes, together with the audited accounts, had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting and Mrs. Gabriel moved their adoption. Mrs. Gabriel read out the Audit Certificate and invited questions on the accounts.



The Chairman advised the Board that the Finance & General Purposes had gone through the accounts in detail. It was worthy of note that the outstanding debts for Rent and Rates had been considerably reduced from previous years and he congratulated the staff in their efforts to bring about this reduction.

The Superintendent advised that it had been necessary to write off some of the outstanding Rates in cases where people had moved without paying the outstanding debt. In many cases the new owners of property were not aware that they had bought land with Common Rights attached and were not liable for the payment of outstanding rates.

Mr. White felt that Rates should not be written off and that the searches carried out at the time of purchase should show that the property was commonable and a rate debt was outstanding. The Superintendent replied that the County Council had advised that searches did not include the Commons Register.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that:

a) the Fire Season had now ended. There had been a total of nine fires involving a total of 17 acres; the largest fire being 10 acres. It is believed that seven of the fires had been lit deliberately.

b) Manpower Services Team had been obtained to work on the Forest until September.

c) 15 school parties had visited the Centre during June.

d) A Planning Application had been made to Wealden District Council for a large car park, functions rooms and play area at the Red Lion at Chelwood Gate.

The Chairman advised the Board that he and the Superintendent had inspected the Plans and it was felt that the proposed development would be detrimental to the Forest.

The Superintendent had written to the District Council and he read out the letter to the Board.

Mr. Cummings advised the Board that the applicants were proposing an Americanised Franchise fast food enterprise which would undoubtedly be widely advertised, thus attracting more people to the area. Unfortunately, the Planning Authority is only concerned with the actual building, car park, etc., and has no jurisdiction over the type of business carried on within the building.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that the Conservators should raise objections to the Application, although the grounds for an objection could be difficult to argue.

With regard to Schools visiting the Centre, the Chairman advised that he has received favourable reports from some of the schools he is associated with, and the Teacher Pack is much appreciated.

Mrs. Wright enquired whether a charge was made to schools for visits. The Superintendent replied that no fixed charge was made, but a donation was always requested. Donations ranged from £20 to nothing. Mrs. Wright felt that a standard charge should be made.

Biannual Public Meeting. The Superintendent advised the Board that a meeting was due to take place this year. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the meeting be arranged for Friday, 29th. November at 8 p.m. and should be held at the Centre.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 35

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.35 p.m. Chairman

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, ON MONDAY, 30th. SEPTEMBER 1985**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, R.G. Edwardes-Jones, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, G.W.N. Osborne, A.E.N. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Facer and Mr. Gent.

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st. July 1985 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Superintendent reported that the 'Otto' litter bins, suitably camouflaged, had now been placed on the selected car parks. The bins would be emptied by Wealden District Council free of charge, but an annual rental was charged for the bins.

## **4. MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19th. AUGUST 1985**

Mrs. Wright moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated prior to the Meeting. Mrs. Wright reported that the Committee had been most impressed with the heather cutting.

The Superintendent advised that the two Scots Pine at Nutley, referred to in item 2 had been felled and replaced by two Beech. The Wych Elm referred to in item 3 had been sold.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

## **5. MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2nd. SEPTEMBER 1985**

Miss Lumsden moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated. Mrs. Sheldrick enquired whether the work had started on the Glenmore Road track. The Superintendent advised that it was due to start later in the week. The Superintendent also reported that the Action Research Sponsored Ride had taken place without any problems and without damage to the forest.

The Chairman drew the Board's attention to item 4 of the Minutes and advised that he had written to the Hunt Masters with regard to them adhering to any riding restrictions. The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

## **6. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2nd. SEPTEMBER 1985**

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated. The Superintendent advised that there had been no further developments with regard to the Foresters or Rare Breeds Farm signs.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **7. RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9th. SEPTEMBER 1985**

Mr. Hardy moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Superintendent reported that the M.S.C. Team was experiencing recruitment difficulties. Advertisements were being placed in local newspapers in an effort to increase numbers up to the scheduled 12 workers.

The Superintendent further reported that arrangements were in hand for the Conservators to take over the running of the Quarry on 1st. October and a charge of £6.00 per cu. m had been agreed.

Referring to Item 6(b), The Chairman advised that the Superintendent's brief for the public examination would be discussed under the Confidential Agenda.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the Friends had donated a book, 'The Iron Industry of the Weald', to the Centre library. The Chairman expressed the Board's gratitude to the Friends for this very useful contribution.

The Superintendent further reported that, following the completion of the dig at Danes Graves, he had received a letter from Garden Hill enquiring whether the Conservators would be willing to make a further contribution toward their costs. Their total expenses were £2,624 and they were some £200 - £300 short.

The Conservators had made a donation and had given a lot of help in kind, it was, therefore, felt that no further donation could be made in this financial year but further help could be given next year. It was suggested that Garden Hill be advised to approach the Friends who may be able to help with this year's shortfall.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman invited Mr. Edwardes-Jones to address the Board. Mr. Edwardes-Jones advised that, after 16 or 17 years as a Member of the Board he now felt it time to resign. As well as being on the Board, he had been Chairman of the Trust since it began. The Trust had now completed its task and the Trustees had decided to change the nature of the Trust and reduce the number of Trustees.

Mr. Edwardes-Jones went on to say that he would remain Chairman of the Trust, the main function of which would be to ensure the future of the Centre. It was intended to transfer the balance of the income from Covenants to the Friends and when Covenants expired the Friends could try to resecure them in their favour. The Friends had invited him to join their Committee and, as they were not allowed to have Conservators on their Committee, he felt it an appropriate time to retire from the Board.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Board, thanked Mr. Edwardes-Jones for his many years of service and although sorry to see him go, fully understood his reasons for doing so.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 36

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE'**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.45 p.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 25th. NOVEMBER 1985**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (in the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. V. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.H. White

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Grimston and Mr. Cumming

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th. September, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Superintendent advised that the M.S.C. Team now had eight members. He explained that the M.S.C. Rules on recruitment were that anyone under 25 years old had to be unemployed for six months before they could be considered and over 25 year olds had to be unemployed for one year. Several people who did not meet this criteria had shown an interest and some of these would be eligible to be considered after Christmas. It was therefore hoped that the Team would be up to strength in the New Year.

The Chairman asked County Council members to take note of these rules with regard to any discussions they may have with M.S.C. officials.

#### **4. MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28th. OCTOBER 1985**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting and Miss Lumsden moved their adoption.

Mrs. Sheldrick enquired whether a contribution had been received from the Riding Association for the work carried out at Gleaners Road which had been mentioned at the Riding Association's Annual General Meeting. The Superintendent advised that nothing had been received to date.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

#### **5. MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28th. OCTOBER 1985**

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated and invited the Superintendent to amplify on Item 2.

The Superintendent reported that the Solicitors acting for the Brewery had been in touch and had advised that they would be making application to Wealden District Council for permission to extend the car park to give space for 20 cars. After a brief discussion the Conservators felt that the proposed car park would be too small and the Roadways Committee should investigate further when plans were available. The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

#### **6. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11th. NOVEMBER 1985**

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated and invited questions from the Board.

Mrs. Gabriel advised that the Committee had had considerable discussions on the Estimates and hoped to look closely into the pay structure in the near future.

The Chairman drew the Board's attention to the figures for Forest Maintenance and Experimental Budget which he considered to be the most important items, but the funds available for which were very low. It will therefore be necessary to look toward the Friends of Ashdown Forest for help in these areas.

Mrs. Wright enquired whether it was possible to make increases in the income for Forest Rates and Acknowledgement Rents. The Chairman explained that the Forest Rate had been increased by the rate of inflation and the major Acknowledgement Rents had been considerably increased last year and were not due for further reviews until 1987.

Sir Frederick Sowrey advised that some years ago, the Conservators had recommended a substantial increase in the Forest Rate, which had to be approved by the Department of the Environment. Some Commoners raised objections with the D.O.E. and these were upheld by the Department.

The proposed increase in the Forest Rate was approved.

With regard to the Security System at the Centre, the Superintendent had now received estimates of £510 for work on the internal system and £1,250 for the external system. The quote for the internal work had been accepted and the Committee would be considering the estimate for the remaining work at their next meeting.

The Chairman requested the Board's agreement to the Superintendent approaching the Trust for the necessary finance to implement the necessary work. This was agreed.

The Superintendent advised the Board that he now had further information regarding the land at Chelwood Gate, Item 6, which had given rise to further complications as the Commonable land owned by Mr. Hall had been sold off in several lots. Further investigations were, therefore, necessary.

Mrs. Gabriel advised that the Committee had been most impressed with the demonstration of the Audio-visual system. The Chairman expressed the Board's gratitude to the Superintendent and the Rangers for getting the system arranged. He felt sure it would be a very popular addition to the Information Centre.

A brief discussion ensued on the possibility of making a charge for admission to the audio-visual display, but it was finally agreed to continue on a donation only basis but the possibility of some of the scenes shown on the audio-visual system being used for postcards for sale at the Centre would be investigated.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported an alleged incident of a dog killing a deer. The matter had been referred to the Police.

The Superintendent further reported that the Army had on a number of occasions broken the terms of their licence in driving vehicles on the Forest and digging Slit Trenches. A meeting would be taking place with the Army and the P.S.A. on 16th. December.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman drew the Board's attention to the Public Meeting being held at the Centre at 8 p.m. on Friday, 29th. November and briefly outlined the format for the meeting.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 37

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.35 p.m.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 17th. FEBRUARY 1986**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, V. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, F.W.H. Osborne, A.I.H. White.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Grimston

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25th. November, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairmen reported that the M.S.C. Team was now at full strength with 12 workers and a Supervisor.

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that last week the Army had again taken vehicles onto the Forest. The Superintendent advised that this had not been reported to him, but he would endeavour to investigate the incident. He understood that improved Orders had been posted at Crowborough Camp with regard to the use of the Forest and that a new Commandant would be at Crowborough toward the end of March. It was hoped that this would help solve the problems.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20th. JANUARY**

Mr. Gent explained that the meeting had been very lengthy and he outlined the discussions. Members of the Committee considered that LUC had produced an extremely good report and Mr. Gent felt it important that all members of the Board should have an opportunity to discuss it fully.

Whilst agreeing with Mr. Gent, the Chairman felt it important firstly to take legal advice on the implications of fencing and to consult the public as widely as possible before discussing the report at a Board Meeting. The first

steps towards this were being taken. An outline of the report would be presented to the Commoners at their Annual General Meeting and the Friends of Ashdown Forest had also been asked for their views.

Referring to item 4 of the Committee Minutes, the Superintendent reported that since the Meeting, the Forage Harvester had been tried and was found to be unsatisfactory. Mr. Gent moved the adoption of the Minutes and those were approved.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27th. JANUARY**

Miss Lumsden reported that the Committee had had lengthy discussions on the problems of Livery Stables and will be having further discussions in an endeavour to solve the problem. Miss Lumsden moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated and these were approved.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20th. JANUARY**

Referring to item 3 of the Committee Minutes, Sir Frederick Sowrey reported that a meeting was being arranged with Hartfield Parish Council regarding the proposed car park near Pooh Bridge and the matter would be further discussed at the next Committee Meeting.

Sir Frederick Sowrey then moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated and these were approved.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. FEBRUARY**

Referring to item 4(h), Mrs. Gabriel explained that our Maps show the land on which the sign is erected to be Forest and the owners of the Farm are disputing this. Legal advice may, therefore, be necessary to conclude the matter. Mrs. Gabriel further reported that the Children's Book - item 4(k) - is now with the printers and should be available at Easter.

Referring to item 4(a) the Superintendent reported that the 6.69 acres of land had now been sold, but the 14 acres had been offered to the Conservators for £250 plus legal costs, and an offer had been made for the purchase of this land.

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes and these were approved.

#### **7. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that:-

Deer Casualties for 1985 had totalled 65, which was a reduction of 19 over the previous year. The Deer Mirrors on Millbrook had reduced casualties and more were proposed for erection at Pippingford Corner/Chelwood Vachery.

A donation of £100 toward the audio-visual system had been received from the Forest Row Relief in Sickness & General Benefit Trust. The installation of the system was progressing well and would be ready for Easter.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 38

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.30 p.m.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 14th. APRIL 1986**

**Present:** Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, V. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, G.T.M. de M. Morgan, G.W.H. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

Being the first Meeting of the year and that at which a Chairman is elected, the Meeting was opened by the Superintendent.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Miss Lumsden.

### **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Superintendent asked for nominations for a Chairman. Mrs. Gabriel proposed that Mr. Morgan again be elected as Chairman to the Board. This was seconded by Mr. Cumming and further supported by Mr. White. Mr. Morgan was unanimously elected.

Mr. Morgan took The Chair and thanked the members. He said he felt privileged to be re-elected and would do his best in the coming year, which already looked like being a challenging one.

The Chairman then went on to say that he had found it of great assistance having Mrs. Sheldrick as Vice Chairman in the past and would be grateful if the Board would propose her continuing as Vice Chairman. This proposal was seconded by Mrs. Wright and agreed unanimously.

### **3. TO NOTE THE RE-ELECTION OF MRS. SHELDRIK AS A CONSERVATOR FOR FIVE YEARS COMMENCING 1st. APRIL 1986**

The Chairman reported that Mrs. Sheldrick had been re-elected by the Commoners with an overwhelming majority. The Chairman extended the Board's congratulations to Mrs. Sheldrick.

### **4. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th. February, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **5. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairmen asked the Superintendent to report on the present position regarding the use of the Forest by the Army. The Superintendent reported that the new Commandant, Lt. Col. Legg, had arrived at Crowborough Camp and had made himself known to the Superintendent.

Referring to the LUC Report the Chairman re-emphasised the need to have a process of consultation with the various bodies before any decisions are made. The group of 12 Commoners referred to under Item 3(f) of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Minutes had now studied the report and would be raising their views, which would then be reported to the Committee.

Referring to item 7, Mrs. Gabriel reported that the Children's Book was now on sale at the Centre and proving very popular. The Board were extremely grateful to the author, Miss Barbara Willard.

### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. MARCH**

Mr. Gent reported that the first part of the Meeting covered the conservation tasks undertaken on the Forest. The Committee then went on to discuss the Redesignation of the Forest as an SSSI. Virtually all operations carried out on the Forest are covered by the list of damaging activities and therefore require NCC approval.

Mr. Gent further reported that the Forage Harvester had now been purchased and has been cutting heather very successfully.

Mr. Morgan stated that he was delighted that the whole of the Forest was now designated an SSSI, which will help to safeguard it in years to come.

The Minutes as circulated were adopted.

### **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10th. MARCH**

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated and Sir Frederick Sowrey outlined the discussions which took place. With regard to the problems at Nutley Recreation Ground he enquired of the Superintendent whether there had been any response from Maresfield Parish Council. The Superintendent replied that there had been no response to date.

Mr. Facer advised that the Nutley Recreation Committee had been without a Chairman but a new one was being elected in the near future, this may help to solve the problem.

Mr. Morgan suggested that the Committee look again at the problem at their next meeting. Sir Frederick moved the adoption of the Minutes and these were approved

#### **8. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10th. MARCH**

In the absence of the Committee Chairman, Mrs. Sheldrick moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated. She reported that the new track at Old Gorge Lane had been done but barriers had not been erected as proposed. These may be erected at a later date if the need arises.

The Minutes as circulated were adopted.

#### **9. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24th. MARCH**

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated and Mrs. Gabriel felt these to be self-explanatory, before moving their adoption she invited questions from the Board.

Referring to item 5(e), Mrs. Wright felt that the developers of the Highgate Pond site should pay the legal costs, and she further questioned the delay in the solicitors' account being submitted. The Superintendent explained that the account had been received when the Conservators had dispensed with the services of Whitley Hughes & Luscombe. A brief discussion ensued, and it was agreed that Mrs. Gabriel and the Superintendent should investigate this matter. A further discussion ensued regarding an approach being made to Wealden District Council with a view to placing an Article 4 Direction on farm buildings within the Forest Pale and it was resolved that the Board supported the recommendation of the finance & General Purposes Committee.

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes and these were approved.

#### **10. TO AGREE THE DATES OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 1986 87**

The Suggested dates had been circulated and these were agreed.

#### **11. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that:

a) A request had been received from Nutley British Legion to plant a tree on Fords Green. There was a suitable site on the Green where some Elms had had to be felled and the British Legion was proposing the planting of a Copper Beech. Mr. Morgan proposed that the request be granted and this was unanimously agreed by the Board.

b) Last year there had been 16,431 visitors to the Barn as opposed to 14,709 last year. The most visitors in any one day had been 498 on an August Bank Holiday.

#### **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Osborne enquired whether it would be possible to plant some Beech at High Beeches to replace the recently fallen trees. Mr. Morgan suggested that this be considered by the Conservation Committee at their next meeting.

Mrs. Wright enquired whether there was any evidence of Mink on the Forest. The Superintendent advised that there was no firm evidence. Mrs. Sheldrick reported that Mink had been seen in Millbrook stream.

#### **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 34

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**



There being no other business, the Meeting closed at 4.55 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 7th. JULY 1986**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, V. Facer, O.E.B. Hughes, G.W.N. Osborne, A.L.H. White.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Gent and Mr. Hardy

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th. April had been circulated. Subject to the following amendment those were approved and signed by the Chairman

Page 3 – 11b      .....14709 last year"  
Should read      ....14709 the previous year"

Before continuing with the Agenda, the Chairman informed the Board that Mr. Stride, who was in the 'Public Gallery' had handed him a letter raising points he wished to be reported to the Board. As a first step, a meeting between himself and Mr. & Mrs. Stride had been arranged for 15th. July.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to item 7, the Superintendent reported that a meeting between himself and Maresfield Parish Council had been arranged for Wednesday, 9th. July to discuss the problems at Nutley Recreation Ground.

Mrs. Sheldrick advised that, since the new Commandant had taken up his post at Crowborough Camp, there had been no further problems with the Army in her area.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12th. MAY**

Mrs. Wright proposed the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated prior to the Meeting. Mrs. Sheldrick questioned the proposal to plant 10 acres of Beech, which would involve considerable manpower in maintaining the area. Whilst she agreed with the proposal she felt that with the present manpower available it was difficult to cope with present demands, without adding to the amount of woodland maintenance required.

A lengthy discussion ensued and various points were raised on how the woodland management could be coped with. The Superintendent advised that the Manpower Services Team would be used extensively on woodland management next season.

The Chairman suggested that the various points raised be discussed at the next Conservation Committee meeting.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE**

Miss Lumsden moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated.

The Superintendent reported that one of the Planning Applications referred to under item 3 of the Committee Minutes had been approved, the second had been deferred pending discussions on parking.

It was agreed that, although the problems of the Forest are not taken into account when the Planning Committee consider applications, it was still important that Wealden District Council were continually made aware of the problems of increased riding on the Forest.

The Minutes were adopted.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2nd. JUNE**

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated, which required No further amplification, unless any members wished any further information. There being no questions from the Board the Minutes were adopted.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16th JUNE**

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated together with the audited accounts. She congratulated the Superintendent on the 'healthy state' of the accounts.

The Chairman reported that the accounts had been completed and audited by mid June which was an 'all time record'. He proposed a special vote of appreciation to Mrs. Ruxton for mastering the new computer and preparing the accounts so quickly. Referring to the proposed renewal of the Information Boards display, Mrs. Gabriel advised that the present display would be put into store for future use.

The Superintendent reported that he had written to Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith with regard to Crossbows and he had replied that he would support any legislation. The Minutes and the audited accounts were adopted.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the Fire Season was officially over. There had been seven fires, burning a total of three acres. Six of the fires had been South of the Crowborough/Nutley road and evidence shows that these were deliberate.

Mrs. Moore inquired what the Archaeological Dig was hoping to find. The Superintendent advised that this was the second year of the dig. The site was believed to be an Iron Age Encampment. The Superintendent agreed to furnish Mrs. Moore with a copy of the report on last year's dig.

The Chairman reported that the Pageant staged to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of The Friends had been well attended and was a great success.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 40

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.10 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 29th. SEPTEMBER 1986**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, V. Facer, L.C. Hardy, G.W.H. Osborne

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Messrs. J. Gent, O.E.B. Hughes and A.L.H. White.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th. July, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no MATTERS ARISING from the Minutes of 7th. July.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18TH. AUGUST 1986**

In the absence of Mr. Gent, the Committee Chairman, Mrs. Wright presented the Minutes which had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting.

Mrs. Wright reported that the Committee were convinced that the proposals set out in Items 1 and 2 of the Minutes were the correct course to take, but there was a division of opinion on item 3. She further reported that the Committee had discussed at length the Renotification of the Forest as an SSSI (Item 6), and could foresee no major difficulties in view of the good relationship between the Forest Superintendent and the Nature Conservancy Council.

Some members of the Board felt that the £1,875 quoted for cutting the 10 acres of gorse was rather excessive for such a small area. Also it was questioned whether leaving a layer of mulch would be good for the Forest.

Mr. Osborne and Miss Lumsden said they would be prepared to set up an experiment with another machine as they felt that other methods could be employed much more cheaply.

The Chairman explained that attempts had been made to hire the Contractors for only one or two days to carry out a small scale experiment, but the Contractors were not prepared to do this, mainly due to the high cost of moving the machinery. The Superintendent also explained that much of the area to be cut had been heavily used by the Army and was, therefore, full of holes and slit trenches. This made the use of an ordinary tractor impossible.

After discussion, the Chairman suggested that this experiment should go ahead, but that the Conservation Committee should consider alternative experiments, including that proposed by Miss Lumsden and Mr. Osborne.

Referring to the cutting of old Heather on the Forest - Item 2 - Mrs. Sheldrick stated that mature heather should also be cut in order to keep a balance. This was agreed.

Mrs. Sheldrick further reported that she had suggested that a site should be found in the Twyford area for planting Beech, but having now looked at the area it was obviously not possible. A number of young Beech in that area already needed attention and she suggested that a Grant might be available from the Forestry Commission.

The Superintendent advised that it was likely that the area of Beech was not large enough to meet the criteria set by the Forestry Commission for such a grant but he would make further enquires.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1st. SEPTEMBER 1986**

Before discussing the Minutes, the Chairman informed the Board of the recent death of Mrs. Pamela Munn, Secretary of the Ashdown Forest Riding Association, who will be greatly missed.

As the Committee Chairman had been unable to attend the Committee Meeting, Mr. Morgan moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated. He explained the decisions made at the Meeting had had to be put into operation immediately, as the new riding year started on 1st. October.

Mrs. Sheldrick proposed a vote of thanks to the Superintendent and his staff for the excellent improvements made to the rides on the forest.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1st. SEPTEMBER 1986**

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated.

The Superintendent reported that he had had informal discussions with Maresfield Parish Council regarding the proposed Licence for Nutley Recreation Ground, but was expecting a formal proposal from them in the near future. The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES MEETING HELD ON 15th. SEPTEMBER 1986**

Mrs. Gabriel presented the Minutes which had been circulated to the Board, and invited questions.

Referring to Item 6, Mr. Hardy enquired whether the Quarry would in fact be worked out once the present face being worked had come to an end. The Superintendent replied that the present quarry will probably last for another year, as a further face is available. A decision would have to be made at that time as to whether the further quarry is opened up.

Mr. Osborne suggested that perhaps consideration could be given to planting gorse and heather in an attempt to screen the quarry which is becoming more and more noticeable.

Mrs. Sheldrick enquired whether a new Tractor Driver had yet been found. The Superintendent advised that he had received 17 applications, had interviewed seven, and had, today, written to one of the candidates offering him the post.

The Chairman said how sorry the Board was that Mr. Waddington had left, but offered the Board's very best wishes to him in his new career.

Referring to Item 1 of the Committee Minutes, the Chairman of the Board repeated his congratulations to the sub-committee for the production of the pamphlet on Common Rights which he felt would be of great value not only to new Commoners, but also to new Conservators as it sets out so clearly the details of Rights of Common. He also thanked the Superintendent and Mrs. Ruxton for their efforts and attention to detail in connection with the production of the pamphlet.

The Chairman went on to say that the purchase of the new photocopier reported under Item 5, reflected the hard work of the Voluntary Information Staff in selling and of Mrs. Ruxton in the production of the leaflets.

Finally, the Chairman on behalf of the Board, accepted, with grateful thanks to the Friends of Ashdown Forest, the land near Chelwood Vachery, which would now become part of Ashdown Forest and would be covered by its Bye Laws.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS.**

The Superintendent had no sundry matters to report to the Board.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Moore thanked the Superintendent and his staff for the most enjoyable day spent on the Forest by the East Sussex County Council Conservation and Countryside Sub-Committee, of which she was a member.

Miss Lumsden raised the question of replacing 'Finger Posts' on the Forest. The Superintendent advised that he had written to the County Council regarding these and had been advised that it would County policy to replace these with metal signs.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that a further request should be made to the County Council for the signs to be replaced. The Chairman agreed to take up the matter with the Divisional Engineer.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 41

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.40 p.m.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 24th. NOVEMBER 1986 at 3 p.m.**

**Present:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Hon. G.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, V. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, G.W.H. Osborne.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Moore and Mr. White

Before continuing with the Agenda the Chairman welcomed Mrs. Sheldrick, who had been ill. He also reported that Mr. White had also been very ill but was making progress. The Chairman had passed on the Board's best wishes for a speedy recovery to him.

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th. September were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman then reported that, at the Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Ashdown Forest, Lady Aberdeen had announced her retirement at the end of the year. The Chairman suggested that he write on behalf of the Board and read out his proposed letter. This was agreed.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman invited the Superintendent to report on the dead gorse. The Superintendent reported that the contractor had spent 11 days on the work and suggested that he had done a good job. A number of large holes had been uncovered and he had, therefore, spoken with the Nature Conservancy Council with regard to these being filled, in order that the area could be maintained by the tractor. The N.C.C. were not averse to this being done.

The Superintendent further reported that he had received no adverse comments from local residents regarding the clearance.

The Chairman reported that the County Council Highways Department had given a final decision with regard to replacement Finger Posts. These would not be replaced on junctions on A or B class roads as it was the Council's policy to renew Finger Posts with metal signs. On lesser roads Finger Posts would be replaced.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13th, OCTOBER 1986**

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated to the Board and Mr. Gent reported that the meeting had been 'fairly mild' and non controversial. There were no questions from the Board on the Minutes as circulated and these were adopted.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27th. OCTOBER 1986**

The main problem discussed was Livery Stables. The Superintendent reported that yet another application had been made to the District Council for stables at Thatchings, Fairwarp, which if approved would mean there were four livery yards next door to one another. An objection has been made to the Council. The Superintendent further reported that the number of annual permits issued to date had already exceeded the number issued for the whole of last year.

The Chairman asked the Riding Committee to discuss further at their next meeting ways of how to tackle the problems, and he asked all members of the Board to let the Superintendent have any ideas they may have. The Chairman suggested that copies of any letters to Wealden District Council objecting to specific applications be sent to Wealden members of the Board.

A number of riders were still using the Forest without Permits, who could be prosecuted under the Bye Laws. Mrs. Wright suggested that a Press Release should be issued warning that the Conservators intended to prosecute anyone caught riding without a Permit. This was agreed and the Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27th. OCTOBER 1986**

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee had been circulated to the Board. Sir Frederick Sowrey reported that Item 5 of the Minutes had been discussed at length with Mr. Grimston and would be discussed further when Mr. Grimston presented a Paper on proposed policies.

There being no questions from the Board the Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10th. NOVEMBER 1986**

Mrs. Gabriel reported that the Committee had approved the Estimates which would now go before the County Council. Referring to the figure of £9,250 estimated income for Riding, Mrs. Wright felt that, in view of the present increase in riding on the Forest, we should be looking for an increase next year. She suggested that perhaps consideration should be given to issuing Permits on a quarterly basis. The Superintendent advised that this would increase the administrative load and would be difficult to control.

Referring to Item 4, Mrs. Gabriel drew attention to the letter from Imberhorne School, which had been circulated to the Board, which she felt fully outlined the advantages school parties were getting from visiting the Centre. The Committee had fully supported the proposals made by the Superintendent for the employment of another Ranger to help with the growing commitments at the Centre. Mr. Hughes & Mrs. Wright registered their wish to reserve their position on this item and Mrs. Gabriel understood their reasons for this. Mr. Cumming felt the proposal should go forward to the County Council and was prepared to support it.

With regard to the proposal to engage an Interpretive Consultant to produce a new display for the Information Centre, Mrs. Gabriel reported that it had been hoped to recruit a suitable person through the Manpower Services Commission scheme, but this had not been possible. Mr. Hardy, whilst seeing the need for a new display, questioned whether the money would not be better spent on manpower. The Chairman explained that the Trust reserves were allocated for the maintenance and running costs of the Centre, and, therefore, they should finance the new display.

Mrs. Sheldrick enquired why the distances between the Deer Mirrors on the A22 varied. The Superintendent replied that, although the placings were arbitrary, the mirrors had been concentrated in areas where there had been a high number of casualties.

There being no further questions the Minutes were adopted.

## **8. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Chairman drew the Board's attention to a new leaflet, copies of which had been tabled, which gives details of what is available at the Centre for schools, etc. wishing to visit.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 42

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.40 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 16th. FEBRUARY 1987 at 3.00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mr. G.T.M. de M. Morgan (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cunning, J. Gent, L. C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, G.W.H. Osborne.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Facer and Mr. White

## **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24th. November, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to item 7 of the Minutes, the Chairman advised the Board that the Estimates had now been approved by the County Council.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19th. JANUARY 1987**

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated to the Board. Mr. Gent, referring to Item 1, advised that together with Mrs. Sheldrick and The Superintendent, he had visited the Golf Course and had agreed to some cutting being carried out, but this was less than proposed by the Golf Club. The request to build a new First Tee had not been approved.

There being no questions on the Minutes, they were approved and adopted.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26th. JANUARY 1987**

Before moving the adoption of the Minutes as circulated, Miss Lumsden asked the Superintendent to advise on any up to date information regarding Planning Applications (Item 1). The Superintendent reported that the Toll Farm application had been refused.

The Chairman recorded the Committee's appreciation to Mr. Kay of Wealden District Council for attending the meeting and giving advice with regard to Planning Applications. Further, referring to item 2, the Chairman thanked the Superintendent for the considerable amount of work that had gone in to producing the paper and confirmed that the Committee would give further consideration to the matter.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were approved and adopted.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26th. JANUARY 1987**

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated.

Referring to Item 5 of the Minutes, Mrs. Gabriel suggested that the Press be asked to make special note of the problems of Deer being killed on the roads through the Forest. It was also suggested that the Editor of the Forest News be asked to include the subject in the next edition.

Mr. Hughes advised that the question of Deer Mirrors being erected on Shepherds Hill, Coleman Hatch, had been taken up with the County Highways Department.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2nd. FEBRUARY 1987**

Mrs. Gabriel briefly outlined the discussions that had taken place on each of the items as presented in the Minutes, which had been circulated.

The Chairman stated how impressed the Committee had been with Mrs. Riley's presentation of the proposed new display for the Information Centre. The Superintendent advised that it was hoped the display would be completed in May/June.

Referring to Item 4, Mr. Osborne expressed concern over the Committee's recommendation that S.M.A.E. be allowed to fly over Misbourne Valley when the wind was in the North-west, as the area was extensively used by riders and horses could easily be frightened.

After discussion it was agreed that permission be granted for a 12 month trial period and the position be closely monitored. The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **8. TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT THE ASHDOWN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Chairman explained that each Committee had discussed the sections relevant to them and made the appropriate amendments. The Plan was a working document which clearly recorded the policy decisions of the Board and terms of reference for the staff to work to. It would also be particularly helpful to new Conservators. The Plan would be reviewed each year and amended as necessary.

The Chairman congratulated the Superintendent for the clear and concise way in which the new Management Plan had been drawn up. The Plan was adopted by the Board.

## **9. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the Forest had suffered a considerable amount of vandalism over the Christmas Period with damage to seats and car park signs. This had now been repaired.

The Superintendent further reported that the installation of the pipeline along the High Road had now been completed. The County Council were carrying out work on the Crowborough/Nutley road and he had given permission for them to use Box car park to keep their equipment. As a result of this work the Council had offered the Conservators a quantity of soil. As this was Forest soil it had been accepted and was being stock piled for use on the rides when the weather improves.

Some members expressed concern that the work being done by the County Council on the Crowborough/Nutley road was in fact widening the road, as heavy traffic had worn away the edge of the verges and the new road surface was being laid to the line of the verge, hence encroaching onto the Forest. It was also noted that the numbers of heavy lorries now using the road was increasing.

The Superintendent was asked to contact the Highways Department of the County Council regarding the increase in width. It was also suggested that the possibility of getting a restriction to heavy lorries be investigated.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Sheldrick advised the Board that this was the last Meeting to be chaired by Mr. Morgan. Speaking for all members of the Board she thanked Mr. Morgan for all the work he had done and all that had been achieved during his period as Chairman.

She went on to say that, under his influence and guidance there were three points which, interlinked with other factors, have helped make the management of the Forest more positive and forward looking.

Firstly, the development of the Committee system, with written Minutes available to all members of the Board, thus making them better informed and improved decision making.

Secondly, the selection of the new Superintendent. The right candidate having been chosen by the careful and logical procedure organised by the Chairman.

Thirdly, his willingness to attend Commoners' Meetings and give an annual report, answer questions and ensure that important points raised by Commoners are brought to the attention of the Board.

Again, on behalf of the Board, Mrs. Sheldrick said how much his guidance would be missed and as a token of the Board's appreciation, presented the Chairman with a case of Claret.

Mr. Morgan thanked the Board for their gift and for their support over the past years. He went on to say that he had enjoyed his time as a Conservator and felt privileged to have played a part in trying to ensure the future of Ashdown Forest.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 44

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**



There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.35 p.m.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 13th. APRIL 1987 at 3.00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mrs. N. Alexander, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly, G.W.H. Osborne.

Being the first meeting of the year and that at which a Chairman was to be elected, the Meeting was opened by the Superintendent who welcomed Miss Lumsden back as a Conservator following her re-election at the Commoner Annual General Meeting. The Superintendent also welcomed two new members, Mrs. Whitley and Mr. Kelly, appointed by East Sussex County Council.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Gabriel and Mrs. Moore

**2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Superintendent called for nominations for a Chairman for the year 1987/88. Mr. Hardy proposed Mrs. Sheldrick. This was seconded by Mr. Cumming and carried unanimously.

The Superintendent then called for nominations for Vice Chairman for the year 1987/88. Mr. Facer proposed Mrs. Wright, seconded by Mr. Gent and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Sheldrick thanked the Board and took the Chair.

**3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th. February, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

Barn Display. The Superintendent reported that progress was on schedule and the display should be completed by 1st. June.

Management Plan. The Chairman thanked the Clerk and his Personal Assistant for the excellent presentation of the new Management Plan.

Work on Crowborough/Nutley Road. The Superintendent reported that he had had a meeting with the Officer in Charge of the work who had accepted that the work had encroached onto the Forest and agreed to reinstate the line as far as possible to its original position.

**5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23rd. MARCH 1987**

The Minutes of the Roadway Committee had been circulated to the Board. Referring to item 2, Sir Frederick Sowrey explained that the Committee had approved the widening of the existing pathway to allow vehicular access to the property. Sir Frederick further advised that, although the Committee were not particularly happy about the Police Notices (Item 3 (a)) being put up in car parks, they felt that responsibility should be accepted by the Board.

Mr. Osborne asked how long the notices would be up as vandalism was already taking its toll. The Superintendent explained that the Police had tried special surveillance on the Forest, but cars were still being broken into. Visitors were still leaving valuables in their cars and it was hoped that the signs would make visitors more aware of the dangers. The situation would be closely monitored to see if number of incidents decreased.

Mrs. Wright suggested the possibility of more permanent signs being attached to the large Ashdown Forest signs.

The Board agreed that co-operation with the Police was important, but regretted the need for the notices.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23rd. MARCH**

Miss Lumsden reported that the Committee were still looking into ways of controlling riding and were making progress.

Mrs. Sheldrick advised that some useful comments had been made by AFRA Members at their recent meeting, and this would be referred to the Riding Committee.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 30th. MARCH 1987**

Mr. Hardy proposed the adoption of the Minutes as circulated.

The Superintendent reported that since the Committee Meeting he had met representatives from B.P., who had now made a few changes to their original proposals.

They now proposed to move the site further down the valley and instead of bringing in large amounts of stone to cover the site, they now intended to cover the site with tracking with a very shallow stone base. This will reduce the number of lorry loads of stone from around 400 to 200. The route to the site for delivery of stone would be via Crowborough, Poundgate Road, Duddleswell Cross Roads, Kings Standing, Gills Lap, Kidds Hill and entry via the Army Road at Kidds Hill. This would necessitate the Army Road being widened at its junction with Kidds Hill. This is Forest land.

BP were considering putting on a local exhibition to show what is involved.

BP are hoping to submit a Planning Application in May, which would go before the County Council in September. The Superintendent had advised them of the Conservators current position.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **8. TO AGREE THE DATES OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 1987/88**

Suggested dates had been circulated to the Board, and these were agreed.

## **10. TO AGREE THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEES**

Details of the composition of the 1986/87 Committees had been circulated prior to the feting. It was agreed that Mrs. Whitley join the Conservation Committee and Mr. Kelly Roadways Committee. Mrs. Alexander expressed a wish to join the Riding Committee. This was agreed.

## **11. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Chairman advised that, having said farewell to Mr. White in his absence at the previous Meeting, The Clerk had written to thank him for his many years of service to the Board.

The Chairman reported that the Commoners Annual General Meeting had been held at Forest Row on March 6th. 74 people had attended and Miss Lumsden had been re-elected as a Conservator for the next five years. Mr. Morgan had attended the meeting and given a full report on the Conservators work over the year. He had re-affirmed the Conservators position with regard to oil exploration and that the Conservators would call a Public Meeting at the appropriate time.

Mr. Morgan had also mentioned the possible change of ownership of the Forest, which was met with no objections from the Commoners, but they questioned whether the Act, which could be amended, gave adequate protection.

Questions were raised on wood cutting and riding and these would be referred to the appropriate Committees.

A vote of thanks to the Conservators had been proposed by Mr. Reeks.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 45

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 27th. JULY 1987 at 3.00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Hon. G.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. D.L. Cumming, V.G. Facer, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly, G.W.H. Osborne.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey and Mr. J. Gent.

### **2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th. April, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to Item 4(a) of the Minutes, the Chairman hoped that members had taken the opportunity to look at the new Barn display. She felt it was a great improvement over the old display and reported that visitor reaction had been excellent. The Chairman paid particular tribute to Ranger Jonathan Pedder and two volunteers, Mrs. Margaret Tebbutt and Mr. Bill Hulme, who had put in a lot of time on the new display. The Chairman suggested that letters expressing the Conservators' appreciation, together with appropriate gifts be sent to the volunteers. This was agreed.

Referring to the Police Notices, the Chairman advised that the Police had reported a marked reduction in thefts from cars and the notices would remain for a further period.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18th. MAY 1987**

In the absence of the Committee Chairman the Chairman of the Board moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated.

The Chairman reported that the heather, referred to under item 3 of the Committee Minutes, had now been baled and interest has been shown by a possible outlet. The Superintendent reported that the £2,000 expenditure authorised by the Committee for cutting down burnt areas had not been used as the contractor had quoted a cost of £3,693 to carry out the work. The tractor and the Manpower Service Team had cleared approximately 10 acres and three local residents had employed contractors to cut areas rear their properties. There was still some 15 acres to be cleared and it was hoped that Commoners would clear much of this in the winter.

Referring to item 3, Mrs. Gabriel enquired whether the Yorkshire National Parks Moorland Management paper gave any indication as to preference between cutting and burning. The Chairman replied that both methods were treated equally, but the use of Asulox was expensive and the Committee did not think it appropriate on the Forest.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8th. JUNE 1987**

The Minutes of the Committee had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting, and, in the absence of the Committee Chairman, Mr. Cumming was invited to report.

Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes and advised that the Phie Forest Garden application, item 9 of the Minutes, was-not likely to be successful, as the area was outside the envelope scheduled for development

The Superintendent advised that a letter had been received from the Water Authority which stated that they had found no pollution of Millbrook Stream.

With regard to the Army Road, item 8, the Superintendent reported that the matter was in the hands of the solicitors and a claim of Prescriptive Rights was being challenged.

Referring to Item 6, Mrs. Moore enquired whether it would be possible for signs to The Centre to be erected on the A22. The Chairman advised that it had been the policy of the Board not to advertise the Centre.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8th. JUNE 1987**

In moving the adoption of the Minutes as circulated, Miss Lumsden reported that the Committee had given very careful consideration to question of Mrs. Parker's Summer Permit from Tremain's Stables continuing. Mrs. Parker had, for several years, been trying to get a Riding School Permit. Miss Lumsden explained that Mrs. Parker's clients with horses at livery at her two establishments had more Permits than any other livery yard on the Forest, and since opening her stable at Brock Cottage her use of the Forest had increased dramatically. The Committee were, therefore, adamant that the Summer Permit for Tremain's should be discontinued.

Mrs. Moore felt that as Mrs. Parker had not increased the use of the Forest with her own horses, there were no strong grounds to refuse the Summer Permit.

After discussion, Mrs. Wright suggested that consideration be given to the Summer Permit from Tremain's continuing, provided that the number of horses at livery at Brook Cottage be decreased.

The Chairman of the Board suggested this be considered by the Riding Committee at their next meeting.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

#### **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6th. JULY 1987.**

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated and reported that letters had been received from The Friends of Ashdown Forest and the Federation of Sussex Amenity Societies in support of the Board's objections to the proposed Oil exploration.

A copy of the proposed letter to the Press had been circulated to the Board for approval. Mrs Moore reported that the County Council had now been advised by the Secretary of State for the Environment of his final decision on the County Councils Fourth Alteration. This did not accept the principle of No Go areas, and therefore, the letter would have to be amended to bring it into line with present policy.

It was agreed that the letter should be sent to National and local newspapers, and that Sussex Radio and TVS should also be approached.

Mr. Facer questioned whether the proposed 'honesty boxes', referred to under item 7(c), would be vandal-proof. The Superintendent explained how these would be constructed and Mrs. Moore advised that similar cairns were used at Rye, which incorporated a notice saying the boxes were emptied regularly, and these had proved successful.

The Chairman of the Board drew attention of the Audited Accounts, copies of which had been circulated. The Audit had been completed, and the certificate signed by June 18th. and there had been no matters raised by the Auditor. The Chairman congratulated the staff on the speed with which the Accounts were drawn up and the audit successfully completed.

The Accounts were accepted by the Board and the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **8. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

New 'Friends' leaflet. The Superintendent reported that the Friends of Ashdown Forest had produced a new leaflet. Copies were distributed to members of the Board.

Adverse weather conditions. The Superintendent explained that due to the bad weather some of the ride improvement work had had to be postponed. Further, the cutting of roadsides and rides was approximately six weeks behind schedule.

Youth Training Scheme. The Superintendent advised that he had been asked to take on a youth under the scheme for a period of six months. The cost would be £20 per week, and this was approved. The youth would work with the Rangers gaining general experience. Mrs. Wright suggested that the possibility of a day release course at Plumpton be investigated.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 47

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.15 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 28th. SEPTEMBER 1987 AT 3.00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. V. G. Facer, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly, G.W.H. Osborne

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. D. Cumming and Mr. J. Gent

## **2. MINUTES**

Subject to the following amendments, the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman

Item 4 -- para 3 ° line 4. should read ...The use of Asulox for spraying bracken was expensive

Item 8 (c)        should read Job Training Scheme

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman reported that she had received letters of thanks from the Ranger and volunteers who had received gifts of appreciation for their work on the new display and these were available for any members wishing to read them.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24TH. AUGUST 1987.**

In the absence of the Committee Chairman, the Chairman of the Board presented the Minutes, which had been circulated. She invited the Superintendent to report further on the proposed heather cutting.

The Superintendent reported that, he had had a meeting with a possible purchaser of bales of heather. He was only interested in very old heather and would require it in long lengths and not chopped. Our machinery chops the

heather, and it would therefore be necessary to purchase a drum mower and use a contractor to bale the heather. The cost of a suitable mower would be around £400. It was agreed that the matter be referred back to the Committee for further consideration.

The Superintendent also reported that he had watched the spraying done by helicopter on the Army ground, referred to under Item 4 of the Committee Minutes. The contractors who undertook the work felt they may have been approximately two weeks too late in spraying. The helicopter had sprayed from about four feet above the bracken and the cost of the chemical had amounted to approximately £4,000. It was anticipated that this should control the growth for 7 years. The Army propose to spray further areas in the Spring.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7th. SEPTEMBER 1987**

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes as circulated and enquired of the Superintendent whether a reply had been received from the Solicitors regarding the use of the Army road referred to under item 2 of the Minutes.

The Superintendent advised that the solicitors had replied enquiring whether the Lord of the Manor supported the proposed action. Mr. Grimston had today confirmed that he would.

Referring to Item 2 c Dumping at Outback Farm, Mr. Hughes advised the Board that the matter had now been referred to the County Council Development Sub-Committee. The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7th. SEPTEMBER 1987**

The Minutes had been circulated prior to the Meeting and Miss Lumsden moved their adoption. She confirmed that Tremain's Stables agreed to only use the Twyford area of the Forest.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted

#### **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14th. SEPTEMBER 1987**

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes which had been circulated and invited questions from the Board. There being no questions from members, the Minutes were adopted.

#### **8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that he had taken on a youth under the Youth Training Scheme for a period of one year. He attended Plumpton College for two days per week and spent three days each week working with the Rangers. This was approved by the Board.

#### **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Gabriel expressed concern over the rapid growth of the trees planted in the Centre garden. The Superintendent agreed that these will have to be replaced with new specimens in due course.

Mr. Hughes reported that the Environment Committee of the County Council had recommended the Council purchase the Forest and a figure had been agreed.

The Superintendent reported that he had had several discussions with the Chief Executive. Copies of a letter containing the formal resolution of the Environment Committee and the position regarding the financial problems involved with the purchase by the County Council were tabled. The Chief Executive had requested the assistance and agreement of the Conservators to various aspects of the fund raising.

It was envisaged that major commercial sponsors would want some form of advertising in recognition of their financial support, possibly appearing on Ashdown Forest Maps, walks leaflets, etc. Or, that a 'clump' be planted and named in recognition of major sponsors.

After discussion it was agreed that these requests be agreed in principle.

The Chief Executive also wished to discuss with the Golf Course the possibility of their new Licence being linked to an advance premium payment, which could be used toward the purchase of the Forest.

Mrs. Wright explained that it would be better if the premium were paid to Lord De La Warr and he reduce the selling price, otherwise the Council would still be faced with the 'Permission to Spend' problem.

Whilst the Board agreed to preliminary discussion, without commitment, taking place, it was felt that as a premium payment by the Golf Club would affect the Conservators' future income, it should be suggested that this action only be taken as a last resort.

In view of the Council's need to raise funds from outside sources for the purchase of the Forest, the Chief Executive felt that it would of great help if the Conservators and/or Friends of Ashdown Forest could pledge a minimum of £50,000 toward the purchase.

A lengthy discussion ensued on how the money could be raised. The short time available did not allow for a public appeal. Furthermore, it would be difficult to get wide public support when the County Council had not formally committed themselves to the purchase.

Mrs. Wright suggested that a Press Conference be arranged jointly by the Conservators and The Friends to fully explain why the County Council were unable to fund the purchase and the need for donations from the public. She further suggested that the County Treasurer be asked to attend to explain the County Council's position.

Mrs. Moore suggested that the County Press Officer be asked to arrange a Press Conference, and this was agreed with suggested date of either the morning of 12th. October or the afternoon of 14th. October.

The Superintendent was asked to write to the Chief Executive confirming that the Conservators/Friends of Ashdown Forest would raise £50,000, and possibly as much as £100,000.

Members of the Board were asked to put forward the names of anyone they considered would help either financially or with the administrative input needed in raising the money.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 48

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.45 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 30th. NOVEMBER 1987**

**Present:** Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. A. Moore and Mr. G.W.H. Osborne.

### **2. MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING THERE FROM**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th. September, which had been circulated were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman reported that she had attended the meeting of the County Council when the proposed purchase of the Forest was discussed and at which the Council had unanimously agreed to purchase the Forest, subject to contract, for £1.2m, of which the County Council would contribute £300,000.

Mrs. Wright advised that the Council's decision was definitely influenced by the large sum raised by the joint Appeal launched by the Conservators and The Friends.

Referring to the Appeal, the Chairman paid tribute to Mr. James, Chairman of The Friends, who had acted as Appeal Co-ordinator and read out a letter of thanks she proposed to send to Mr. James. This was unanimously approved by the Board. The Chairman also thanked Miss Lumsden for the substantial sum she had raised at the beginning of the Appeal.

It was hoped that the County Council would put the Forest in the hands of Trustees and it was suggested that the Chairman write to the Chief Executive to thank him for his efforts in connection with the purchase and broach the subject of a Trust.

Also arising from the previous Minutes, the Superintendent advised that the heather cutting, referred to under item 4, had had to be postponed due to other commitments caused by the storm.

Messrs. Hughes & Cumming advised that the problems at Outback Farm referred to under item 5 of the Minutes would be discussed at a meeting on 3rd. December.

### **3. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2nd. NOVEMBER**

Sir Frederick Sowrey presented the Minutes which had been circulated.

Mr. Gent enquired whether the power line, referred to under item 3, was connected with the change of use of the Radio Station site. The Superintendent confirmed that it was not.

Referring to item 4, the Superintendent advised that Maresfield Parish Council had confirmed that they would not object to the change of location of the Recreation Ground and Fairwarp Village Hall Committee had now been approached with regard to them taking out a Licence with the Conservators.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were unanimously approved and adopted.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16th. NOVEMBER 1987**

The Minutes, together with the Revised Estimates for 1987/88 and the Estimates for 1988/89 had been circulated to the Board prior to the Meeting.

The Committee had proposed that the Forest Rate be increased by 4.5 per cent, being the rate of inflation for the year ending November. This was unanimously approved by the Board.

Referring to Item 3, the Superintendent reported that a contractor had been engaged at a cost of £70 per month.

Referring to item 5, Mr. Cumming advised that he had made enquires regarding Amstrad Word Processors and had been advised that these were not designed for the commercial market and would not withstand the volume of work. Further, the cost of a silent printer would be in excess of the £740 quoted for a new typewriter. He, therefore, suggested that the purchase of a typewriter should be agreed. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the final choice be left to the administrative staff.

Mrs. Gabriel reported that the Committee had considered the Estimates, which, in the main, were self explanatory. The increase in income, largely due to the renewal of the Ice Cream Licence, was very pleasing.

Mrs. Gabriel then asked the Superintendent to outline the proposal to employ an additional Ranger.



The Superintendent explained that he had put forward a proposal for the employment of an extra Ranger in November of last year. The work load generated by the Centre was constantly increasing, and although the present staff were coping with the ever increasing number of visitors, the service that can be given to the public, particularly visiting school parties, was not really sufficient. Further, the amount Ranger time spent in the Centre was at the detriment of work on the Forest.

The income from the Centre had increased sufficiently to meet part of the cost of an additional Ranger, the remainder being available within the normal budget.

Mrs. Wright suggested that a wider range of items be sold from the Centre, thus generating even more income. The Superintendent said that the original policy of the Board, when the Centre was first opened, was that it should not be commercialised and should primarily be a place where the public could get information about the Forest.

The Superintendent advised the Board that he had had discussions with the Sussex Trust at Woods Mill, who carried a wide range of stock and had a very substantial annual turnover, which necessitated them employing someone full time to run the shop, and at the end of the day, their profit was no greater than ours. Mrs. Gabriel suggested that this matter be looked at further. This was agreed.

Mr. Facer queried the cost of insurance shown on the Estimates. The Superintendent explained that this covered high Public and Employers Liability in addition to insurance for the buildings, etc. Mr. Facer felt that the figures were high and offered to look at the policies to see whether the costs could be cut. The Revised Estimates 1987/88 and the Estimates for 1988/89 were approved.

Mrs. Gabriel reported that the Committee had discussed the Superintendent's paper on the storm damage and a further paper was now tabled. She invited the Superintendent to report further.

The Superintendent advised that a more detailed study of the problems had now been carried out and the areas requiring attention had been divided into four categories. These covered the largest areas, although there were a number of much smaller areas that had been affected by the storm.

He explained that the categories A and B covered very large trees which could not be dealt with by our own resources. Contractors were available to carry out the work on a no cost basis and as much of the timber would be of no use if left lying for a few months, he felt it essential that work commence as soon as possible.

Countryside Commission grants may be available to help with the cost of replanting and this was being investigated.

A brief discussion ensued and it was agreed that, subject to consultation with the Conservation Committee, the Superintendent proceed with the proposals as outlined.

Mr. Facer enquired whether the Forest Clumps had been damaged. The Superintendent advised that some had and Kings Standing had been the worst. This had already been replanted and work would continue on the other clumps, although in some cases the ground was too wet at present.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **5. SUPERINTENDENT TO REMIT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that several local residents had offered to clear storm damage in their area. Numbers of Forest trees had fallen into neighbouring property and in several cases fences had been damaged. Although not legally obliged to repair the damage, the Superintendent felt that it would be appropriate in some cases.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Miss Lumsden enquired what had happened to the Deer during the storm. The Superintendent reported that no bodies had been found by the Rangers. The Chairman reported seeing numbers of deer in her area of the Forest.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 49

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting Closed at 4.30 p.m.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 22nd. FEBRUARY 1988**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. V. G. Facer, L. C. Hardy, O. E. B. Hughes, C. E. Kelly.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. A. Moore, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Messrs. D. C. Cumming and J. Gent.

Before continuing with the Agenda, the Chairman paid tribute to the late Earl De La Warr. She said that the Board could not have wished for a more sympathetic owner of the Forest, who allowed the Conservators free reign to manage the Forest and fully supported all their actions, and had been extremely generous to the Forest. The Forest and the Board had lost a very considerate landowner.

#### **2. MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to item 3, the Superintendent reported that Maresfield Parish Council had confirmed that they were happy for the location of the Recreation Ground to be moved and the Fairwarp Village Green Committee were willing to take out a Licence for the new Recreation Ground. The Superintendent, therefore recommend the Board formally agree a change of location of Fairwarp Recreation Ground, which is permissible under the Act. This was agreed.

#### **3. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18th. JANUARY 1988**

The Minutes of the Committee had been circulated to the Board and in the absence of the Committee Chairman, the Chairman of the Board presented them. She advised the Board that the Superintendent had put in a tremendous amount of work to get the Forest cleared following the storm and the County Council had been very supportive in clearing roadsides.

Referring to item 2(d)(ii) The Chairman advised that the Forestry Commission had confirmed that as the Forest was public place, Felling Licences were not required.

The Superintendent had had discussions with the Insurance Company. Item 2 (d)(iii) and appropriate notices warning of dangerous trees had been put up in the car parks.

Referring to item 2(d)(iv), the Superintendent reported that he had written to Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, who had confirmed that the letter had been passed to the Ministry for Environment. Sir Geoffrey had also raised the matter in The House.

The Superintendent also reported that High Beeches and Streeters Rough had now been cleared and replanted and that local contractors had been engaged to clear the Five Hundred Acre Wood area. They had been working for five weeks and had completed half the clearing, although, due to the bad weather, it had not yet been possible to get the timber to the roadside. Outlets had been found for one timber.

Referring to item 5, the Superintendent reported that he had written to Mid Sussex Water regarding the route of the pipeline, but to-date had not received a reply.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

[no item 4]

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1st. FEBRUARY 1988**

Sir Frederick Sowrey presented the Minutes which had been circulated and outlined the two roadway problems referred to in Item 1. The Committee were against a direct confrontation between Rangers and Mr. Thevenet. The Superintendent was asked to find out the legal position regarding motorcycle scrambles on farmers land as regards access and the likely cost of an injunction.

Mr. Kelly reported that he had taken up the matter of the overflow of sewage at Mardens Hill and had received a reply from the Environmental Services advising that the matter was in hand.

Mrs. Alexander enquired whether a reply had been received from SPA regarding the skyline plan of the Radio Station site. The Superintendent said that PSA had advised that his letter had been forwarded to the Government Department concerned.

The Minutes of the roadway Committee were adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1st. FEBRUARY 1988**

Miss Lumsden presented the Minutes which had been circulated. She reported that in their lengthy discussions on the transfer of Riding Establishment Licence at Whitehouse Farm, Duddleswell, the Committee had considered the possibility of raising a premium on Riding Establishment Licences. Miss Lumsden suggested the Board might like to discuss this at a later date.

Mr. Facer enquired whether the suggestion made by Mrs. White in her letter, referred to under Item 3, had been implemented. The Superintendent advised that there were problems, as the official highways signs already included horses, but the possibility of adding suitable wording to our 'Riding Suspended' signs was being investigated.

Referring to Mr. Osborne's suggestion that more Forest stone be used Mrs. Gabriel enquired whether this meant on the fire rides. The Superintendent confirmed that it did, but only over part of the ride. This had worked well in other places,

The Minutes of Riding Committee were adopted.

#### **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8th. FEBRUARY 1988**

The Minutes of the Committee had been circulated to the Board, and Mrs. Gabriel presented them, and felt they needed no further explanation.

The Superintendent confirmed that quotes had now been received from the insurance company for additional cover for The Centre with excesses of £500 and £1,000. The reduction over the original quotation of £246.19 would be £13. It was agreed that the original sum be accepted. The Superintendent further reported that he had visited the County Council to discuss the cost involved of clearing the storm damage. The Council had confirmed that the Conservators could set up a 'Reserve Fund' and carry forward any surplus they had at the end of this financial year in order that work of clearance could continue next year.

Referring to item 3c., The Superintendent reported that the Cairn at Gills Lap had been built three times, each time being vandalised before the cement had set. However, it was now in place.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

#### **8. TO AGREE THE DATES OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 1988/89**

The proposed dates had been circulated prior to the Meeting and these were agreed. Mr. Kelly proposed that Board Meetings start at 2 p.m. instead of 3 p.m. as County Councillors often had to be in Lewes by 4 p.m. for Council business on the same day as a Board Meeting. This was supported by other Councillors and agreed by the Board.

#### **9. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported on deer casualties and Forest fires for the year, which were

Deer casualties	46	45	63
Fire	14 acres	151 acres	

The Superintendent further reported that he had received the final report on the Garden Hill Excavation Group regarding their dig at Danes Graves whose finds had ranged from Mesolithic flints to Victorian trenches and Second World War Mortar Bombs. They had found no evidence of Roman occupation.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Superintendent requested that the next meeting of the Conservation Committee, scheduled for 7th. March be moved to 21st. March. This was agreed.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 50

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.

# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 25th. APRIL 1988.**

**Present:** Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon. C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowery, Messrs. D. S. Carter, L.C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly.

Being the first of the year, the Meeting was opened by the Clerk.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

## **2. ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Clerk asked for nominations for a Chairman to the Board for the year 1988/89.

Mrs. Gabriel proposed that Mrs. Sheldrick be elected for a further year and this was unanimously supported by the Board. Mrs. Sheldrick took The Chair.

The Chairman proposed that Mrs. Wright be re-elected as Vice Chairman. This was unanimously agreed.

The Chairman then introduced Mr. Don Carter, who had been elected at the Commoners' Annual General Meeting to serve on the Board for five years commencing 1st. April. She welcomed Mr. Carter and advised the Board that Mr. Carter had been enormously interested in the Forest for many years and regularly attended Commoners' Meetings.

The Chairman invited Sir Frederick Sowrey to report on the Commoners' Annual General Meeting.

Sir Frederick reported that approximately 70 Commoners had attended the Meeting. Both the Chairman and the Superintendent had addressed the Meeting and their reports had been welcomed by the Commoners.

The Commoners had expressed concern about the effect on the skyline caused by the development of the old Radio Station at Kings' Standing, and on the future ownership of the Forest. The Commoners felt strongly that the Forest should be given Trust status in order to safeguard its future

The Superintendent advised the Board that he had still had no response to his letter to PSA regarding the Radio Station.

The Chairman advised that, in view of the Commoners feelings on the future of the Forest, which was also shared by The Friends, she had written to Mrs. Mont, Leader of the County Council. She read out the letter. This had only been sent recently, and, therefore, no reply had yet been received.

### **3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22nd. FEBRUARY 1988**

The Minutes had been circulated prior to the Meeting. Subject to the following amendment the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Item 3 Para 3 line 3 to read:

Put up in the car parks leading to high woodland.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to the problem of sewage at Mardens Hill, Mrs. Gabriel reported that Southern Water had advised Wealden District Council that they cannot alter the priority of their work schedule to deal with this problem as it is not causing any danger to houses and is not considered to be a health risk.

After discussion, it was agreed that the possibility of the Water Authority being prosecuted be investigated and that a letter be sent to Southern Water, and a Press Release sent to local newspapers.

Mrs. Moore stated that it was not possible for her to attend Board Meetings starting at 2.00 p.m. After a brief discussion it was agreed that future Board Meetings would commence at 2.30 p.m.

### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21st. MARCH 1988**

Copies of the Minutes had been circulated prior to the Meeting and Mr. Gent reported on the visits to the various sites being cleared of storm damaged trees. The Committee had discussed the question of disposal of toppings. It was too expensive to use the contractors for burning up and some members felt that toppings could be left to rot down. This, however, would cause a problem in the event of a Forest fire.

The Superintendent advised that the MSC Team and voluntary groups were being used to burn up toppings, but progress was slow. He further reported that a new buyer had been found for the Scots Pine, but prices were poor. It was, however, estimated that up to 50 per cent of the cost of clearing would be met by the sale of timber.

Mrs. Moore enquired whether Grants toward the cost of transporting timber would be helpful. The Superintendent confirmed they would, as it was costing £10 per ton for haulage. Mrs. Moore suggested the Superintendent be asked to write to the Government via Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, regarding the possibility of haulage grants being available. This was agreed.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28th. MARCH 1988**

Miss Lumsden presented the Minutes which had been circulated. Various suggestions for ride improvements had been discussed and Miss Lumsden requested the Board's approval of these.

The Board approved the proposed improvements and the Superintendent advised that, subject to suitable weather conditions, work would commence in June.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

### **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28th. MARCH 1988**

In view of his absence from the Committee Meeting, Sir Frederick Sowrey invited Mrs. Gabriel to present the Minutes which had been circulated.

Mrs. Gabriel reported on the site visit following requests from Withyham Parish Council for various works to be carried out in the St. John's area.

Although some clearance of the area in front of St. John's Reading Room was agreed, it was felt that the trees should remain. The removal of the telephone kiosk was not within the Conservators' powers, although it was agreed that it did obstruct the view of motorists coming out of School Lane.

With regard to the provision of a car park, Mrs. Sheldrick advised the Board that she had recently visited the area to look again at the parking position and found that the old army road was being extensively used and, therefore, suggested that a car park in that area would be a better alternative. It was agreed that no decision be made at present and the matter be referred back to the Roadways Committee.

Referring to item 2 of the Committee Minutes, the Superintendent reported that he had now received agreement from Mr. Hutchings, via our Solicitors. The Superintendent read the letter containing the suggested wording of an agreement, and this was approved by the Board.

With regard to the Thevenet case, the Superintendent reported that Hartfield Parish Council had discussed the problem at their Meeting on 11th. April and although the majority were against motorcycle events, they accepted that there was little that could be done to prevent them. It is understood that Wealden District Council will monitor the event due to take place on 8th. May.

After discussion the Board asked the Superintendent to write again to our Solicitors, asking them to reiterate the Conservators' agreement to the use of the road for agricultural purposes only.

Referring to Item 4, the Superintendent reported that it now seemed likely that the Mid Sussex Water Board would now lay the new pipeline through Wych Cross Place, which would only involve some 300 yds crossing the Forest.

With regard to the development of the Radio Station, The Superintendent reported that he was still awaiting a reply to his letter requesting a skyline plan.

He had, however, received copies of correspondence between a member of the Committee of The Friends and PSA in which PSA had stated that some of the land would be surplus to requirements and would be sold. The Board asked the Superintendent to write to PSA on this subject.

Referring to Mr. Thompson's request to exchange land, Item 5c, the Chairman advised the Board that she had visited the site and felt that any such exchange of land, even if permitted under the Act, would be dangerous,

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **8. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that there had been seven fires to date, totalling 50 acres. Three of the fires were undoubtedly lit deliberately.

The Police intended to mount a further campaign over the Bank Holiday weekend, against thefts from cars parked on the Forest. Notices, the same as those used last year, had again been put in car parks.

There had, over the past few weeks, been an increased amount of vandalism around the Forest. A Cairn had been smashed, as had picnic tables, and on one occasion the contents of the litter bins along the Ridge Road had been strewn along the road. The Superintendent would be asking the Police to keep an eye on the situation, especially on Friday nights, when most incidents occurred.

The Superintendent had interviewed 14 candidates for the two posts of Forest Ranger. He had short listed four, who he would be seeing again before making a final selection.

The Manpower Services Commission was again making changes and numbers on Teams were being cut. He thought it likely that we would lose the Team working on the Forest.

Finally, the Superintendent advised the Board that the Information Centre had been entered for the Carnegie Award for Interpretive Centres.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman reported that a number of owners of property abutting the Forest had removed their hedges and fences, which could lead to encroachments onto the Forest. She suggested that the owners of these properties be asked to delineate their boundary in some way. A brief discussion ensued and it was agreed that in cases where no physical barrier was erected a ditch should be dug around the boundary.

The Chairman suggested that Mr. Carter be invited to take the place of Mr. Osborne on the Conservation Committee and felt it would also be beneficial to have Mr. Carter on the Roadways Committee. This was agreed. The Chairman also requested that Mr. Hughes join the Finance and General Purposes Committee and leave the Riding Committee. This did leave the Riding Committee somewhat short of Members and the Chairman asked Conservators to consider whether any could give up a little more of their time to sit on this Committee.

Mr. Hughes reported that the cases of tipping at Outback Farm and at Cobbers Farm were being reported to the County Council by the Enforcement Officer on Wednesday.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 51

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 25th. JULY 1988.**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.S. Carter, D. C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Grimston.

## **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25th. APRIL 1988**

The Minutes, which had been circulated prior to the Meeting, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no MATTERS ARISING that were not covered by the Minutes of the various Committees.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6th. JUNE 1988**

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee had been circulated and were presented by Mr. Gent, who reported that a lot of storm clearance had been achieved by the two cutting teams.

The Superintendent confirmed that written consent for the clearance proposals had now been received from the Nature Conservancy Council.

Mr. Gent further reported that the Government grant of £400 per hectare was for broadleaf replanting and the Forest would qualify for this. The Superintendent reported that he would be having a meeting with the Forestry Commission in the near future to see if there was any way the Forest might be eligible for grant aid. Further, it was hoped that the Nature Conservancy Council, who are strongly in favour of areas being left to natural regeneration, would also attend the meeting.

Mrs. Wright reported that she had recently spoken to Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, and he had expressed a willingness to continue to see if he can get any financial help for the Forest.

The Chairman suggested that it might be appropriate to approach the Heritage Trust again, who had shown interest at the time of the discussions regarding financial assistance for the purchase of the Forest. The

Superintendent agreed to write when the purchase of the Forest had been completed. He also advised the Board that he had written to the Tourist Board to enquire whether they could offer any financial help.

Mrs. Wright enquired on the long-term financing of the storm clearance and whether The Friends had been approached.

The Superintendent explained that £22,000 had been carried forward from last year's accounts and money was coming in for the sale of timber. He estimated that this would enable contractors to continue until December. If no other financial assistance becomes available The Friends will then be approached.

Mrs. Wright further enquired whether contractors were fully aware that good standing trees were not be felled and whether Tree Surgeons were being employed where necessary. The Superintendent confirmed that contractors were not felling sound trees, but tree surgery was too expensive to entertain. Mrs. Wright suggested that, in some cases, tree surgery should be considered.

The Chairman suggested that at their next meeting the Conservation Committee look in detail at various areas with a view to Tree Surgeons being employed.

Mr. Gent went on to report that the Bracken, now in its third year of being cut, was in his opinion, weakening.

Mr. Facer questioned whether the North face of the quarry, which was being closed, should be fenced. The Superintendent advised that the quarry would be filled in and would, therefore, be safe.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th. JULY 1988**

Sir Frederick Sowrey presented the Minutes, which had been circulated, and reported that the Committee felt that the Conservators should not provide parking for residents in the area of the Hotel and Tompsetts Bank, but should consider a new car park for visitors if the enlarged park at the Recreation Ground did not solve the problem.

Referring to item \* of the Minutes, the Superintendent reported that he had received a letter from the Police regarding the road safety aspects in the School Lane area. The Committee would, therefore, like to look again at the problem taking account of the points raised by the Police.

The Chairman advised the Board that the proposed car park would only take about 20 cars which would help the situation but would not entirely solve the problem.

After discussion it was agreed that if, after further consideration, the Roadways Committee felt the car park should be constructed, work should commence.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11th. JULY 1988**

The Minutes, together with the unaudited accounts for the year ending 31st. March 1988 had been circulated prior to the Meeting, and these were presented by Mrs. Gabriel.

There were no questions from members of the Board on either the Minutes or the accounts.

Referring to item 8(b) Mrs. Wright advised that the question of the Trust status of the Forest was being discussed by the County Council Conservation Sub-Committee on Wednesday, and both the Chairman and the Clerk were invited to attend. The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted together with the Accounts for the year ending 31st. March 1988, subject to audit.

#### **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

Riding Establishments. The Superintendent reported that Revenir Riding Centre, was no longer operating, although they had taken out a Licence valid until the end of September. Brook Cottage Stables were very keen to



have a Licence and the Superintendent suggested that Brook Cottage be granted a temporary Licence for a maximum of six horses from 1st. August to the end of the Riding Year, and that the Riding Committee consider the position for the coming year. This was agreed.

Wych Cross Place. The Superintendent advised the Board that a Planning Application had been made for the main house to be converted into a Hotel, together with building of 100 units. As yet, no plans of the proposed development were available.

After discussion it was agreed that the Conservators should look seriously at the proposed development, especially with regard to access.

Ashdown Forest Calendar. The Superintendent reported that a calendar, with extremely good photographs of the Forest, had been produced for 1989 and he had ordered 1,000 for sale in The Centre. The calendar would sell for £4.00 and he asked Conservators to support this venture.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman drew the Board's attention to the retirement from the Board of Mr. Grimston, details of which had been circulated with the Agenda. A painting of the Forest by a local artist had been purchased and this was shown to members. The Chairman suggested that Mr. Grimston be presented with the painting at a social gathering one evening and that the three previous Chairmen of the Board and the Rangers be invited to attend. This was agreed.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 52

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.05 p.m.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 26th. SEPTEMBER 1988**

**Present:** Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Hon C.A.S. Grimston, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.S. Carter, D. C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Alexander, Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Whitley and Mr. Hardy.

## **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25th. JULY 1988**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Superintendent reported that the North face of the Quarry had now been made safe.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22nd. AUGUST 1988**

The Minutes had been circulated and Mr. Gent was invited to present them. Mr. Gent reported that it had been an interesting meeting with lengthy discussion on the Forestry Commission grants. The Committee confirmed that the three metre spacing required under these grants was not suitable for the Forest. The Committee recommend an average spacing of 10 metres and that 1.2 metre tubes be used instead of 1.8 metre tubes.

Mrs. Wright questioned whether 1.2 metre tubes were adequate protection against deer. The Superintendent replied that opinions differ, but the Beech planted earlier in the year was not doing well and Mr. Gent suggested this may be due to it getting too hot in the tubes. The Superintendent therefore intended looking into the possibility of using mesh guards instead of tubes.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were approved and adopted.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5th. SEPTEMBER 1988**

Sir Frederick Sowrey presented the Minutes which had been circulated. Sir Frederick reported that the Committee had looked again at the parking problems at St. John's, Crowborough and recommend that the construction of a car park goes ahead.

The Superintendent reported that he proposed to ask Withyham Parish Council to construct the entranceway to the car park and when this was completed the car park would be constructed at a cost to the Conservators of approximately £500.

Referring to item 2 of the Minutes, Sir Frederick reported that random checks had been carried out and there appeared to be some improvement in the parking situation. The Superintendent reported that there had recently been two extremely busy weekends, with 230 cars on one occasion. Mrs. Gabriel advised that the use of the sports field would increase over the winter months as it is regularly used by local football clubs. It was agreed that the Superintendent should continue to monitor the situation.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were approved and adopted.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5th. SEPTEMBER 1988.**

The Minutes of the Riding Committee had been circulated and Miss Lumsden was invited to report.

Miss Lumsden reported that, although some rides had not yet been cleared of fallen trees, in most cases sufficient work had been done by cutting away sections of trees across the rides to give sufficient access.

Referring to item 2, Miss Lumsden reported that as Revenir Riding School would no longer be requiring a Permit they felt that Mrs. Parker be granted an Establishment Permit for a maximum of eight horses from Brook Cottage Stables, for a trial period of one year.

The Chairman advised the Board that Mrs. Parker would be using one of the wettest areas on the Forest and she would have been happier if only six Permits had been allowed.

Mrs. Wright reported that she had received a complaint from a walker that the Forest was being saturated by riders. The Superintendent advised that there seemed to be more co-operation between riders and walkers recently with far less complaints being received.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were approved and adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12th. SEPTEMBER 1988**

The Minutes of the Meeting had been circulated. The Committee Chairman had been on holiday and the Meeting had been chaired by Mr. Hughes. He was therefore invited to present the Minutes.

Mr. Hughes reported that the Committee felt the Thatching at the Centre had not been a success and that a possible maintenance cost of £4,000 p.a. was not acceptable. The Committee therefore recommend that all the buildings should be tiled. Further, the Committee recommend that handmade tiles should be used.

The Superintendent reported that Keymer tiles would cost approximately £20,000 per building, but a saving of between £3-£4,000 per building could be made by using other tiles. One roofing company had recommended that other tiles be used as they were lighter than Keymer. Confirmation from the Architects on the weight of tiles that could be used was awaited.

It was agreed that the Committee should discuss the question of the type of tiles to be used once the Architects report had been received.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were approved and adopted.

## **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the Croydon Motor Club has intended to hold a rally on unclassified roads through the Forest, in the early hours the morning. Thanks to the good offices of Mr. Hughes this had been stopped. The Rally had been sanctioned by the R.A.C. and the Superintendent suggested that the Conservators write to the R.A.C. expressing their concern that such an event should be allowed and pointing out the effect it would have on the Forest wildlife, with special emphasis on the dangers of deer crossing the roads. This was unanimously agreed.

The Superintendent further reported on efforts to raise funds:

Ashdown Forest Calendars. These were not selling as quickly as had been hoped and the Superintendent asked Conservators to publicise their availability amongst their friends.

A painting of the Airman's Grave had been given to the Conservators and this was going to be raffled by The Friends.

A display was being mounted in the Barn in an effort to persuade visitors to sponsor tree replacement.

The local newspaper would be printing a feature on 'A Year After the Storm' and had interviewed the Superintendent. He advised the Board that he had painted a 'black picture' in the hope that this might bring further financial support.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 53

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 28th. NOVEMBER 1988**

**Present:** Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.S. Carter, V. G. Facer, J. Gent, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. Cumming and Mr. Hardy.

### **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26th. SEPTEMBER 1988**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to the Car Rally, discussed under Sundry Matters at the previous meeting, the Superintendent reported that he had written to the R.A.C. who had replied that they could not stop such events as the roads through the Forest were public highways, but they would limit the number using Forest roads to no more than one every four months.

Mr. Hughes requested that he be informed of any future events that come to the Superintendent's notice.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17th. OCTOBER 1988**

Mr. Gent presented the Minutes, which had been circulated. He reported that the Committee had viewed the Replace a Tree display in the Information Barn and considered it to be excellent.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the clearance at Mardens Hill, Church Hill and Priory Road had been completed and work at Legsheath was going well. He further reported that one of the timber companies was installing a Splitter and would be able to take larger butts after Christmas.

Mr. Gent reported that the Committee had discussed the proposed Tree Planting Ceremony and recommend that this take place at 12 noon on Thursday, 1st. December. This was agreed and the Chairman asked that as many Conservators as possible attend.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 31st. OCTOBER 1988**

Sir Frederick Sowrey had been unable to attend the Meeting and the Minutes, which had been circulated, were therefore presented by The Chairman of the Board.

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that the Committee were unanimous in their decision not to agree a new access at the Golf Club.

The Chairman then invited the Superintendent to report on the up to date position regarding the new car park at St. Johns. The Superintendent advised the Board that Withyham Parish Council had completed the entrance to the car park and that the JCB had today started on the clearance of the car park.

The Committee had discussed at length the proposed East Grinstead By Pass and the Superintendent had written to West Sussex County Council to express the Conservators' views. The Council had replied and invited five members of the Conservators to attend a Seminar on 6th. December, at which the three Councils involved and local M.P.'s would be present.

After discussion it was agreed that, if possible, the Conservators should not make any statements at this Seminar, but should take the opportunity of attending in order to judge other opinion, but if a Statement was necessary, the points set out in the Superintendent's letter should be put on record.

Referring to item 5a, The Superintendent reported that the N.C.C. had given consent to the Mid Sussex Water Company pipeline crossing the Forest.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14th. NOVEMBER 1988**

Mrs. Gabriel presented the Minutes, which had been circulated. She reported that the Committee had been divided in their opinions regarding the tiles to be used for re-roofing the Centre.

The Chairman of the Board reported that Mr. Cumming, who was unable to attend the Board Meeting, expressing the view that machine made tiles should be used.

Mrs. Gabriel went on to report that some members of the Committee felt that the Conservators would probably receive some criticism for not re-thatching the barns, and that hand-made tiles would be more in keeping with the buildings. Other members felt that the extra cost involved could not be justified and that after a period of weathering it would be difficult, to distinguish between handmade or machine made tiles.

Sir Frederick Sowrey showed the Board samples of the various tiles both machine made and handmade and a further discussion ensued.

The Chairman then proposed that the Quotation submitted by BJN Roofing for retiling the barns with machine made tiles be accepted.

Mrs. Moore proposed an amendment that the Conservators should keep their options open and investigate the possibility of raising the extra funds needed for the use of handmade tiles.

This amendment was put to the vote and lost with 5 members for and 7 against. The original proposal was then put to the vote and carried 8 to 3 against, being Mrs. Gabriel, Mrs. Moore and Sir Frederick Sowrey.

Sir Frederick Sowrey then suggested that the Superintendent should contact the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, who would probably be able to advise on ways of achieving the best results possible with machine made tiles.

The Chairman then proposed that the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust be asked to finance the project as much as possible. This was agreed.

The Board noted the completion of the sale of the Forest and the Chairman suggested that a letter be sent to the 11th. Earl De La Warr, thanking him for fulfilling his father's wishes. This was agreed.

Mrs. Moore advised that the Chairman of the County Council will probably be the Lord of the Manor.

The Board noted the generous gift of the land on which the Centre is built from the Manor Charitable Trustees.

Referring to item 7c of the Committee Minutes, Mr. Hughes advised the Board that there would be a Public Meeting regarding the County Structure Plan, at Hartfield Village Hall at 8 p.m. on 15th. December at which the County Planning Officer would be in attendance to answer questions.

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee were adopted.

## **7. SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent had no sundry matters on which to report.

Mrs. Moore enquired whether the Board were now in a position to discuss the possibility of grazing being reintroduced on the Forest.

The Chairman replied that an item on the Confidential Agenda would be covering this point.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 54

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4 p.m.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY. 20TH. FEBRUARY 1989**

**Present:** Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.S. Carter, D.C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly, N. Mackilligin.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

## **2. TO WELCOME MR. N. MACKILLIGIN TO THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS AS CHAIRMAN OF THE ASHDOWN FOREST TRUST AND LORD OF THE MANOR'S REPRESENTATIVE**

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to Mr. Mackilligin on behalf of the Board.

## **3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28th. NOVEMBER 1988**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

After "new access" delete "at the Golf Club" and insert "for the Golf Club at Hollybrook Cottage, Forest Row".

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no MATTERS ARISING that were not covered under the various Committee Minutes.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16th. JANUARY 1989**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gent, who reported on an unusually long Meeting.

The Committee had visited the site of the proposed grazing experiment and although some members were not certain that the area would be suitable for animals in view of the large quantity of birch within the area, the experts felt that it would be.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the fencing work had been put out to Tender and the lowest quote out of the five received had been accepted. The total cost of the fencing, gates and stiles would be £6,091 towards which the Nature Conservancy Council would give a grant of 50 per cent. Included in the figure of £6,091 was approximately £1,500 of timber etc. off the Forest, therefore, the actual cost to the Conservators would be £1,755.50.

It was proposed that the experiment should start in June and continue for a minimum of three years.

Mr. Gent then reported that, once the Legs Heath area has been planted, the 1988-89 tree planting programme would be completed.

Referring to item 6 of the Committee Minutes, the Superintendent reported that the Flower Arrangement Society had agreed to sponsor the planting at Legs Heath.

Mr. Hardy enquired how far the proposed grazing experiment followed the proposals suggested in the LUC Report. The Chairman replied that the Report proposed a much larger area, and that, if the experiment was successful the LUC Report could then be discussed in full.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th. JANUARY 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey.

Referring to item 4 of the Committee Minutes, Sir Frederick advised the Board that, although the Committee were reluctant to increase parking facilities in the area of the Hotel and Recreation Ground, the increased use of the Recreation Ground and New Golf Course made it necessary. The area selected for the new car park was that of the least disadvantage to the environment. It was hoped that cars could be directed to the new car park and thus stop encroachment on to the Forest

Sir Frederick reported that the Committee were unanimous that the Forest should not actively be promoted as a tourist attraction and asked the Board to reinstate their policy and make the policy known to Wealden District Council.

A copy of a proposed letter to Wealden District Council had been circulated and the Board Chairman suggested that the points raised be amplified. Mrs. Moore suggested people must be made aware of how rare a habitat Ashdown Forest is as so many acid heathlands had been lost. Mrs. Alexander suggested that a copy of the letter should also be sent to the Chief Executive and District Planning Officer.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee were adopted.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th. JANUARY 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mr. Gent.

Referring to the proposed Ride Improvements, Mr. Facer enquired whether the list given in the Committee Minutes was in order of priority as he was particularly concerned with item (e) - Entrance to Boringwheel Mill and had received complaints from walkers about the very muddy state of this entrance to the Forest.

The Superintendent agreed there are problems in this area as there are two natural springs and previous attempts to solve the problem by detouring the springs and laying a surface of heather bundles had not been successful. It was therefore felt that the only solution would be to harden the surface with stone as had been done in other areas, but this would be a major undertaking.

The Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

## **8. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6th. FEBRUARY 1989.**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Gabriel.

The re-roofing was progressing very well and the helpful suggestions made by Sir Frederick Sowrey had been adopted.

Referring to item 4 of the Minutes, Mrs. Gabriel explained that the Information Barn had been entered for the Carnegie Interpretive Award and although the judges reported favourably on the Barn they had raised the points outlined in the Minutes.

The Superintendent reported that he had already had one consultant look at the A.V. and his report was awaited. If it is decided that a video system be installed, there is a machine available that can copy the existing slides onto video.

With regard to the suggestion that the sign posts be erected to direct visitors to the Centre, the Committee were strongly against this.

Some members of the Board felt that the sign opposite the Centre was not adequate and should be improved. Mrs. Moore suggested that the principle of saying we do not want more visitors was not a good one and perhaps the Board could consider ways of accommodating more visitors.

The Superintendent advised that, on good weekends, and Sundays in particular, the barn could not physically accommodate more visitors.

After a brief discussion the Chairman suggested that the problem be put before the Roadways Committee for full consideration. This was agreed.

Mr. Carter remarked on the number of people using the Forest on Sunday 19th. February for an Orienteering exercise. The Chairman explained that permission was given to certain Orienteering Clubs to use the Forest but not during the bird nesting season.

## **9. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the deer casualties for the year had been 33 which was a significant reduction on the numbers killed over the past three years, being 46, 45 and 63 respectively. It is believed that the loss of roadside trees in the storm may have helped.

The Superintendent further reported that there had been eight fires last year with a loss of about 50 acres. The figures for the previous two years were 7 fires/50 acres and 14 fires/150 acres.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the County Treasurer had now confirmed that the Employers Superannuation contributions would not have to be paid for the foreseeable future. Contributions paid in 1987 had been returned and the Finance & General Purposes Committee had decided that this should be kept in a special deposit account. At the beginning of the current financial year there had not been definite confirmation that

Employers contributions were not payable and, therefore, these had also been held on Deposit. By the end of this financial year the Deposit Account will show a balance of approximately £6,500. The Superintendent, therefore, requested the Board decide how this should be spent.

The Chairman suggested that as much of the timber to be extracted next year will not yield such a high income as this year's, the money should be added to the Storm Budget. This was agreed.

The Superintendent advised the Board that work had started on the Wych Cross to Weir Wood pipeline which was crossing approximately 185 yards of Forest.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Facer advised the Board that he had been approached by Maresfield Parish Council regarding erecting notices on Fords Green stating that dogs were prohibited on the Green. Mr. Facer presented a sample of the proposed Notice Board.

The Board were not happy with the wording of the Notice, but would be willing to consider the erection of a notice requesting people to keep dogs out of the children's play area.

As Fords Green was part of the Forest it was felt that it would not be possible to prohibit dogs from the area.

#### **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 55

#### **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 4.30 p.m.

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### **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY. 24th. APRIL 1989**

**Present:** Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.S. Carter, D.C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, J. Gent, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, C.E. Kelly.

This being the first Meeting of the year, at which the Chairman and Vice Chairman were to be elected, the Meeting was opened by the Clerk.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Moore and Mr. Mackilligin.

#### **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Clerk requested nominations for a Chairman to the Board for the coming year.

Mr. Gent proposed Mrs. Sheldrick, this was seconded by Miss Lumsden and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Sheldrick took the Chair and thanked the Board for their support. She then asked for nominations for a Vice Chairman.

Mrs. Wright proposed Mr. Hughes. This was seconded by Mrs. Gabriel and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Sheldrick thanked Mrs. Wright for her support and help during the period she was Vice Chairman.

#### **3. TO NOTE THE RE-ELECTION OF AIR MARSHAL SIR FREDERICK SOWREY AS A CONSERVATOR FOR FIVE YEARS COMMENCING 1st. APRIL 1989**

The Chairman advised the Board that Sir Frederick had stood, unopposed, for re-election to the Board and was, therefore, elected for a further five year period.

#### **4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20th. FEBRUARY 1989**



Subject to the following amendment, the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Page 3 - final paragraph - Delete Weir Wood Insert Horsted Keynes

## **5. MATTERS ARISING**

The Superintendent reported that he had looked into the possibility of replacing the Audio-visual system with a Video system, but all advice had been that video systems required professional expertise and should not be considered. He had also been advised that the A.V. equipment at present in use was the best available. He had, therefore, sent the equipment back to the supplier to investigate the problems. The Centre ranger had also gone to meet the supplier to receive first-hand advice on the use of the system.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20th. MARCH 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated to the Board and were presented by Mr. Gent.

Mr. Gent reported that the contract for fencing the Experimental Grazing Area had now been placed, but two adjoining landowners were not prepared to fence their boundary and were willing to accept animals straying onto their land.

The Superintendent advised the Board that he had now received a letter from the Army indicating that they would now be willing to fence their boundary, but could not promise that this would be done by 1st. June. The Superintendent also reported that letters had been sent to those Commoners who had expressed an interest in grazing at earlier discussions, but no interest had yet been shown.

The Superintendent asked the Board to approve the wording of the proposed notices to be placed on the gates of the experimental area. This was approved.

Mr. Gent reported that the Committee considered the problems involving the Quarry. The Committee felt that the main diggers were turning it into a commercial enterprise and this was not the intention of the Conservators. The Committee therefore recommend that future digging be limited to 4 cubic metres per property, per year and that the property must be within the bounds of the original Forest Pale. They further recommend that the owner of the property must personally obtain a permit and not an Agent.

These recommendations were approved.

The Superintendent reported that two further donations had been received for clearance of storm damage - £300 from C.P.R.E. and £2,500 from Wealden District Council.

The Minutes of the Conservation Committee were adopted.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. APRIL 1989.**

Sir Frederick Sowrey presented the Minutes which had been circulated. He reported on a very lengthy meeting, and requested the Board's guidance on Item 1 of the Minutes.

Sir Frederick explained that the owner of a property in Fairwarp had planted trees in the Forest in order to screen the neighbouring property, which, it is alleged, was built with a higher roofline than that on the approved Plans. The owner of this property had cut down the trees, and the neighbour was requesting permission to replant.

The Roadways Committee requested Board guidance on whether the planting of trees to screen views of neighbouring property was felt to be desirable on the Forest. After discussion it was agreed that, any property owner could grow a hedge on his own property to screen any offending view, or in the case of buildings being erected to a higher level than the approved Plans, the aggrieved resident should take the matter up with the Planning Authority. Further, it was felt that no planting of lines of trees should take place on the Forest. Trees should not be planted for the benefit of individuals, and only to the benefit of the Forest, and if any such planting was agreed, it should only be in natural clumps.

Sir Frederick then outlined the various site visits in connection with Planning Application for development of properties and requests for roadways. Several Planning Applications had been submitted to Wealden District Council for either extensive development of existing buildings or new development on Island Sites within the Forest.

After discussion it was agreed that any such Plans should be strongly opposed. In cases where a new access across the Forest would be needed, they could refuse vehicular access, but all property would still have a way of necessity. Mrs. Gabriel suggested that the Conservators' views on development within the Forest be made known to Wealden District Council in the hope that such restrictions would be included in the 'North Wealden Plan

The Committee had also noted various infringements of the Bye Laws in the shape of abandoned cars, stable refuse, etc., left on the Forest, and suggested that a determined effort be made to get them removed. Under the present Bye Laws the maximum penalty was £50, which was considered inadequate.

Mrs. Wright advised that in many cases where only a small fine was imposed, costs were often awarded, which could amount to several hundred pounds, and this usually acted as a deterrent, even if the fine did not.

The Superintendent advised the Board that he had written to the Home Office to enquire what steps should be taken to get the Bye Laws amended.

After discussion it was agreed that the Roadways Committee should look at the problem with a view to action being taken in specific cases.

The Minutes of the Roadways Committee and the recommendations made therein were adopted.

#### **8. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM MRS. SHELDRIK ON THE COMMONERS' ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 3rd. MARCH**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported that, despite advance publicity from an unknown source on the grazing experiment, there had been no increased attendance at the Meeting. The Superintendent had outlined the proposals to the meeting and no opposition was raised by the Commoners. The Superintendent had also given an updated report on storm clearance and she, as Chairman of the Board, had given a report on the events of the previous year.

The following points were raised by the Commoners:

It was suggested that any funds surplus to the requirements for the purchase of the Forest by East Sussex County Council should be used to purchase Phie Forest Gardens at Crowborough. The Meeting was advised that, with the agreement of the donors, surplus funds were going towards storm clearance.

Concern was expressed at the amount of damage done by horse riding on the Forest. Commoners were assured this would be discussed at the next Riding Committee Meeting. The Commoners were concerned about the active promotion of Tourism by Wealden District Council which they felt went against the spirit of the Ashdown Forest Act.

Miss Willard suggested that a Commoners Association be formed and meet several times a year. There appeared to be limited support and it was suggested that anyone interested should contact their local elected Conservator.

Elected Conservators advised the Board that they had heard nothing further.

#### **9. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that there had been five fires, covering a total of five acres, so far this season. He also reported a reduction in the number of Commoners cutting estovers from 31 in the previous year to 20 this year.

The Superintendent advised the Board that he and the Chairman had now signed the Deed of Gift in respect of the land at the Centre and that a Plaque in recognition of the gift from the Manor Charitable Trustees had been erected.

The Ashdown Forest Trust had had its first Meeting and it had been agreed that all income, except the Golf Course Rent, would still come directly to the Conservators. The Trust would pay half the Golf Course Rent to the

Conservators and would require a report on how the money was spent. The Superintendent reported that during the Easter weekend the Forest had reached saturation point with visitors. All 48 car parks were full and at one time it was estimated that some 6,000 cars were parked. Hartfield Parish Council had received complaints from residents about the amount of parking in the Pooh Bridge area.

It was believed that a 'Treasure Hunt' had been organised in the area, although no permission had been sought from the Conservators.

The Superintendent advised the Board that that there had recently been a number of occasions when Rangers had spoken to members of the public regarding various unauthorised activities on the Forest and it appeared that the public thought that as the Forest was now owned by the County Council they, as rate payers; had a right to use it for any activity they wished. In one case, the proposed activity was being arranged by a member of staff from the County Planning Office, who, if they had not contacted the Ashdown Forest Riding Association, would not have been aware that the Conservators permission was necessary.

Mrs. Wright suggested that a letter from the Superintendent to Mr. Reece, County Planning Officer might be appropriate.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman requested the Board consider the composition of the various Committees. Mr. Hughes as Vice Chairman would now be an ex officio member of all Committees, which would leave a vacancy on the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Riding Committee was lacking members and it was felt to be beneficial to have Wealden District Council members on the Roadways Committee.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that Mrs. Wright would fill the vacancy on the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Mrs. Alexander would join the Roadways Committee. Also other decisions would be deferred until after the elections on May 4th.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 56

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 31st. JULY 1989**

**Present:** Mrs. A.J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. H.F. Wright, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. K. Bodfish. D.S. Carter, D.C. Cumming, V.G. Facer, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes.

The Chairman opened the Meeting by welcoming Mr. Bodfish to the Board.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Mont, Mrs. Moore and Mr. Gent.

### **2. TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MRS. J. MONT AND MR. K. BODFISH TO THE BOARD**

It was noted that Mrs. Mont had been appointed as the Ashdown Forest Trust representative and that Mr. Bodfish had replaced Mr. C. Kelly.

### **3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24th. APRIL 1989**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Page 4 --Item 9 - Para 4 - Line 3

Delete "at one time"

After "were parked" ADD "during the day."

## **4. MATTERS ARISING**

The Superintendent confirmed that the changes in the regulations for the use of the Quarry had been made and had been successful. There had already been a marked reduction in the use of the Quarry, which would result in a reduction in revenue.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5th. June 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Whitley, who invited the Clerk to give an up-dated report on the Grazing Experiment. The Clerk reported that the fencing was completed and on 4th. July, 12 Welsh Blacks and 97 sheep were put in the enclosure by Mr. Osborne. Two other Commoners have shown an interest.

The cattle had settled in well, but the sheep were not as settled. There had been two incidents of dogs worrying the sheep and it was suspected that they were local dogs and not those belonging to visitors walking through the area.

Dr. Mike Hutchings of Sussex University had agreed to monitor the experiment and had sent detailed proposals which requested that four sites be set up within the fenced area for the monitoring. He intended employing Ecological Land Management to carry out the work the cost of which would be £50 per day plus expenses, plus £50 for Dr. Hutchings supervising the work and writing reports. Ecological Land Management would require to work for four days, therefore, the total cost would be £330; which was £100 more than the original figure agreed by the Committee.

The Chairman suggested that the Friends be asked to meet either the whole or the additional costs.

Mrs. Wright enquired what insurance cover the Conservators had for the animals in the grazing area and, in view of the unusually dry conditions at the moment, whether the keep was sufficient to support the animals.

The Clerk confirmed that the owner of the animals was totally responsible and the Conservators had no insurance cover for them. This had been stated, in writing, to the owner. The Clerk further advised that, as the area was a damp part of the Forest, the grazing was not too bad.

Referring to item 4 of the Committee Minutes, Mrs. Whitley asked the Clerk to report.

The Clerk advised that a site had been agreed for the Centenary Planting, but Mr. Denyer had now chosen another site near the Reservoir on the A275. The Board approved this site.

There being no questions from the Board, Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. JULY 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey.

Referring to Item-2, Sir Frederick reported that the Committee could see no reason for revoking the Licence held by Withyham Parish Council for the area in front of St. John's Reading Room, and although the Committee recommend that any further objections should be referred direct to the Parish Council, the Roadways Committee would continue to monitor the situation.

Referring to Item 5, The Committee felt that if the owner of a property wished to plant trees to screen neighbouring properties, this should be done on their own land and not on the Forest. With regard to the various encroachments at Woodcock Cottage which, despite several letters from the Conservators, Mr. Thompson had made no effort to rectify matters, the Committee recommend that a letter should be sent to Mr. Thompson's solicitor giving a deadline and, if no action is taken by Mr. Thompson, legal proceedings should be instituted.

The Committee recommended that the Board agree the erection of two seats on the Forest, as detailed under item 6 of the Minutes, but were concerned that there would soon be no suitable sites left for seats to be erected. Board members were therefore asked to put forward any ideas they may have for other suitable forms of memorials that could be placed on the Forest.

With regard to item 7, Mrs. Whitley advised that the application for the Tip at Duddleswell was being considered by East Sussex County Council on 1st. August. It was believed that Wealden District Council had recommended that the County Council refuse permission.

Mr. Carter enquired whether the problems at Wych Cross Place had been solved. The Superintendent advised that clearing up operations had commenced.

Referring to item 9(c), Mr. Bodfish suggested that the Conservators should write to the Department of Transport and Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, M.P.

Sir Frederick then moved the adoption of the Roadways Committee Minutes and these were approved.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd. JULY 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Miss Lumsden.

The Committee had felt that, as the Riding fees had been increased by £2 per permit the previous year, no increase should be made for the year commencing 1st. October 1989.

A number of ride improvements had been carried out and the co-opted members on the Committee, representing the Ashdown Forest riding Association were delighted with the results.

Referring to item 4 of the Committee Minutes, Miss Lumsden asked the Superintendent to outline the problem.

The Superintendent explained that the present line of the bridlepath ends in the middle of Kings' Standing car park, one of the busiest car parks on the Forest and on a dangerous road junction. It was, therefore, proposed that application be made for the bridlepath to be moved approximately 60 yards South. This was agreed.

Miss Lumsden asked the Superintendent to report on the Guided Ride referred to under item 5. The Superintendent advised that only six riders had taken part, probably due to the lack of advertising. One of the riders was not experienced, and the ride leader felt that steps should be taken if future rides are to take place, to ensure that riders are sufficiently experienced to ride on the Forest.

Mr. Facer enquired whether the problem at Spring Gardens had been resolved. The Superintendent confirmed that a Ranger had visited and it was hoped the situation would now improve.

It had been suggested that future Riding Committee Meetings should be held on the same day as Conservation Committee Meetings. This was agreed.

There being no further questions the Minutes of the Riding Committee were adopted.

## **8. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 10th. JULY 1989**

Mrs. Gabriel presented the Minutes which had been circulated. Mrs. Gabriel reported that Mr. Ridley, representing the Ashdown Forest Association had attended the Meeting and fully outlined the intentions of the Association.

The Committee had felt that the name of the Association was misleading and Mr. Ridley agreed to discuss a change of name with his Committee.

Copies of the Accounts for the year 1988/89 had been circulated with the Committee Agenda and the Superintendent reported that these had now been audited.

Mrs. Wright requested further information regarding the Information Services Fund which now showed a substantial balance. The Superintendent explained how this was started many years ago with a gift of copies of "Ashdown Forest" by Garth Christian which were sold from a caravan sited on the Forest at weekends. As funds increased, more sales items were purchased. As well as stock purchases, the fund now also met other expenses connected with the Information Barn, such as repairs to the A.V. system and the new display board needed to replace the one on thatching the barns.

The Board recorded their appreciation for the gifts of land at Crowborough and at The Centre, as outlined in Items 5 and 6 of the Committee Minutes.

Details of the proposed amendment to the Bye Laws was set out under Item 7 of the Committee Minutes and this was approved by the Board.

Mrs. Gabriel then asked the Superintendent to report on the production of Christmas Cards for sale in the Barn.

The Superintendent showed the Board a watercolour by Bru Collins that would be used to produce a Forest Christmas Card. Danehill Press had quoted 25p per card for a run of 5,000. The Superintendent also presented the 'home produced' Notelets that were now being sold in the Barn at 75p for a pack of six.

With regard to the Rent for the Army Licence, Mrs. Gabriel reported that the Committee agreed that the increase be calculated on the Compounded Average R.P.I. and the Superintendent advised that, taking the June 1989 figure into account, this amounted to an increase from £4,000 per annum to £5,180 per annum for the next five years. After a brief discussion this was agreed.

The Committee had discussed the Draft Wealden District Council Local Plan and recommended that Wealden District Council be asked to make various amendments, the details of which were set out in the Minutes. These were approved by the Board. There being no further questions, Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes. These were approved.

## **9. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the present weather conditions were resulting in very little growth on the firebreaks, which could well lead to serious erosion later in the year. The continued dry weather could also lead to serious fire problems, although so far, few fires had occurred.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Sheldrick recommended that members of the Board look at the Army display which was staged in the barn. She had telephone Col. Legg to thank him for this 'outstanding' display.

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## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 2nd OCTOBER 1989.**

**Present:** Mrs. A J Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. N Alexander, Mrs. E Gabriel, Mrs. J. Mort, Miss A Lumsden, Mr. K Bodfish, Mr. D C Cumming, Mr. V G Facer, Mr. I Gent, Mr. L C Hardy, Mr. O E B Hughes.

The Chairman opened the Meeting by welcoming Mrs. Mont to the Board.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Whitley, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowers and Mr. Carter.

### **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31st JULY 1989.**

Subject to the following amendments the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

Page 1 - Item 2 Heading Delete Heading

Insert - To welcome Mrs. J Mont and Mr. K Bodfish to the Board.

Delete Paragraph

Insert - It was noted that Mrs. Mont joined the Board as the representative of the Ashdown Forest Trust and Mr. Bodfish as an E.S.C.C. appointed Conservator.

Page 4 - Item 8 - Paragraph 4 Delete "Danehill .... card,"

Insert "Danewood Pr\*\*\*\*\* produce the card,

which will sell at \*\*\*\* per pack of 10."

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman reported.

Items 5, that the Friends had agreed to meet the additional costs of monitoring the grazing experiment.

Item 6, that that E.S.C.C. had refused the application for a tip at Duddleswell.

Item 8, that the Army were not prepared to agree compounded R.P.I. as the basis for revision of the licence fee, but had offered an increase of £1,000 as against an R P.I. figure of £1,153. The Board agreed to accept this offer.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 AUGUST 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mr. Gent, who invited the Clerk to give an up-date on the grazing experiment. The Clerk reported that the Welsh Black cattle were doing well but the sheep had not settled as they were not used to heathland grazing. Forty Behulah Speckle Face sheep have been purchased by the Commoner to replace the present sheep and these should be well suited to heathland grazing. The Clerk also reported that the area was now showing distinct signs of grazing. Mr. Hughes said the dry weather was certainly not helping but with this experiment being monitored the mix of animals could be adjusted.

The Chairman said she had spoken to the Commoner who would be reducing the number of cattle to around ten for the winter, but accepted that if the area showed signs of over grazing, they would be removed.

The Clerk reported the newly planted Scots Pine at Kingstanding Car Park had suffered as a result of the dry weather, and The Men of Trees had offered to pay for the replanting.

There being no other questions from the Board, Mr. Gent moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th SEPTEMBER 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mr. Cumming.

Mr. Bodfish questioned the policy of only permitting seats adjacent to car parks and felt seats on walks would be helpful for visitors.

He also considered the picnic tables were important and ways of overcoming the vandalism should be looked into. In general discussion, it was suggested that anchoring picnic tables and the use of tree trunks should be considered. Mr. Cumming said that, as the subject was still under active consideration, the Committee would consider all the points raised.

Mr. Bodfish asked if it was not possible to accommodate Mountain Bicycles as they were less pollutant than some other activities permitted on the Forest. After a general discussion it was agreed that random mountain bicycle riding should not be permitted, but if an organisation requested permission the Board would consider finding an area on the Forest for a track. Mr. Cumming said that a report by the three counties was now expected in December on the East Grinstead By-pass. The Clerk reported that Mr. Thompson had not complied with the Board's request and that it was time the matter was placed in the hands of our solicitors. The Board agreed.

### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11th SEPTEMBER 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mr. Hardy. The Board accepted the recommendation of the Committee that the present Clerk to the Conservators (Lt. Col. J. R. Nicholls) be given authority to sign documents involved in the management of the Forest, including financial documents.

The Clerk reported that he had interviewed a possible Supervisor

for the Community Programme Project on the Forest and he had advised the Training Agency that he was well suited for the post.

Both Mrs. Gabriel and Mr. Hughes said that they were pleased that a good liaison had been at last achieved with Wealden Leisure.

Mr. Cumming spoke about the increase in clay pigeon shoots in the area and with Government approval for up to 28 days activities in any one farm, the only form of control was when the site went above the legal noise limit. In general discussion, silenced guns, the effect of lead pellets and noise barriers were mentioned.

Mrs. Alexander suggested that included in the Conservators comments on the North Wealden Local Plan should be reference to: The control on the building of commercial riding establishments adjacent to the Forest. The control on the size of house extensions permitted adjacent to the Forest.

Mr. Bodfish said he was not against conversions but control of size especially, preserving the external appearance. Mr. Hughes said that these should be small and sympathetic to the environment, even if this involved extra cost for which grants might be available. The Board agreed these points should be added to the Conservators comments on the plan. Mr. Bodfish asked about the comment on modern recreational activities and wanted further explanation. Examples such as hot air balloons and microlites were suggested.

Mr. Facer said that he was sorry the Conservators were not prepared to meet the request of Wisley for stone. Mr. Hardy explained the problems and felt he could meet the requirements from stone at Freshfield.

There being no other questions from the Board, Mr. Hardy moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. SUPERINTENDENTS TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that he had received a request for a right of way across an existing Forest roadway to Marl pits, which had recently attained planning permission for the conversion of a barn into a dwelling. The Superintendent explained that the permission of the Conservators was required prior to a formal request to the Ashdown Forest Trust for a lease. The Board granted their permission.

The Superintendent reported that he had received a request from Mrs. Day of Shepherds Gate Farm for a riding school licence to use the Forest. He had visited the stables with Miss Lumsden, Chairman of the Riding Committee. Miss Lumsden said as the owner of the stables was not yet a qualified instructor, nor were the stables officially licenced as a school, she could not recommend that the Board agree a Forest Riding School Licence. The Board accepted Miss Lumsden's recommendation.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No further points were raised.

## **THE BOARD WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

See Confidential Minute No. 57

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 4th DECEMBER 1989**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair). Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. J. Mont, Mrs. A. Moore, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. K. Bodfish, D. S. Carter, D. C. Cumming, V. G. Facer, O. E. B. Hughes, J. Gent.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**



Apologies were received from Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. N. Alexander and Mr. L. C. Hardy.

## **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16th OCTOBER 1989**

As there were no amendments, the minutes which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman brought to the attention of the Board the amended planning application WD/2624P for Heathdene, Chuck Hatch.

The Chairman reported that she had visited the property again and the level of the roof had been brought down by one foot as specified on the amended application but a drainage problem existed, as the property is on a sloping site. The Commoners in nearby properties found the extension obtrusive.

The Superintendent commented that the building had been extended previously and the current extension was an increase of approximately 30%.

After discussion the Board agreed that the Superintendent should write to Wealden District Council registering the Conservators' comments and that the Board should in future be wary of extensions.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES ON THE CONSERVATION MEETING HELD ON 16th OCTOBER 1989**

The minutes had circulated and were presented by-Mrs. Whitley, who commented that the Leatherjackets were not causing a problem on the fairways.

Mrs. Gabriel, referring to item suggested that Wealden District Council should pressure the Southern Water Authority to put into operation in 1990 the design submitted to divert the surplus foul water into drains, not into the Forest stream.

Mrs. Whitley suggested that the National Rivers Authority might be able to pressurise.

Mrs. Moore suggested that the Sussex Land Drainage Committee should be approached with the view to placing the matter on their next agenda.

The Board asked the Superintendent to write to the National Rivers Authority enlisting their aid.

Referring to item 4 e), Mr. Gent enquired if it would be possible for there to be more cutting and mowing of the rides to bring on the Marsh Gentians. The Superintendent replied he was already cutting 250 acres of bracken twice a year and the rides alone took twelve weeks, leaving little scope for increasing the cutting commitment. The Chairman suggested hiring a contractor to ease the burden.

Mrs. Moore commented that the Grazing experiment has gone well, taking into consideration the lateness of season and the dry weather conditions.

The Superintendent reported that there were 28 cattle in the area and up to a few weeks ago 96 sheep, which had since been taken out, as they were not a suitable breed for heathlands. These were shortly to be replaced by 40 Behulah Speckled Faced sheep, which are well suited to heathland grazing. The area was certainly showing signs of grazing and bracken damage. The Superintendent said there was hardly any adverse reaction from the public to the experiment.

The Chairman reporting on the planting by the Men of the Trees said unfortunately the ceremony had been cancelled, but the group were providing funds for the replanting of Kings Standing with Scots Pine.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the minutes, this was agreed.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th OCTOBER 1989**

The minutes had been circulated and were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey.

Referring to item 1, Sir Frederick commented that the Conservators had only put down a marker for the present dwellings in Old Lodge.

Referring to item 2, Sir Frederick reported that the car park at the Foresters Public House had been doubled in size. Plans for a wrought iron sign had been submitted by the brewery. The Maresfield Parish Council had no objections.

With reference to item 3, Sir Frederick suggested the Board should approach the County Council.

The matter regarding Mr. Thompson, Woodcock Cottage, is now in the hands of the Enforcement Officer at Wealden District Council and the Conservators have no need of any further correspondence at this time.

Referring to item 5, the Board agreed that an agricultural access to the Gatehouse, Kidds Hill, is not justified but would issue a temporary licence to clear the wind blown timber.

Mr. Moore enquired as to whether a letter had been sent to Wealden District Council concerning item d). The Superintendent confirmed this.

The Chairman reported that she had been able to thank personally Sir John Boring for the Ashdown Forest Centre land.

#### **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13th NOVEMBER 1989**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Gabriel.

The Superintendent reported that the 1st November Retail Price Index was 7.3% which would increase the Forest Rate for 1990/91 from £5.20 to £5.60 per year for under 2 acres.

Referring to item 2, the Superintendent reported that Task Force Trees were prepared to give the Conservators a 75% grant for storm clearance. The Superintendent advised that the clearance of the Forest over the next financial year should be discussed at committee level next year.

Mrs Wright enquired if the storm clearing had to be completed in the coming year for the grant to be valid. The Superintendent answered that the time period was until the end of march but full clearance should be completed by the end of August 1990. Mr Wright asked if this would alter the cash flow figures. The Superintendent replied that the money will have to be accounted for by the end of March, as the grant will not be issued until the project is complete.

The Board discussed other ways the cash flow problem could be overcome.

Sir Frederick suggested there would be an increase in storm damaged areas that will be left to nature. The Chairman agreed.

The question of a possible increase in Riding Permit fees was raised by Mrs. Moore. The Superintendent replied that there was no increase this year due to the imposition of VAT which was added in October.

Referring to item 4, Mrs Whitley enquired as to the exact complaint of the Home Office with regard to the Bye Laws.

The Board agreed the best course of action was the Superintendent's intention to visit the Home Office for further discussion.

Mrs. Mont enquired if a price was known for the surplus land at the Radio Station. The Chairman replied that negotiations had not yet started.

There being no further questions from the Board, Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the minutes, this was agreed.

The Chairman said as the Management Plan was being updated, the Board should consider future plans, to ensure that Ashdown Forest remained a peaceful oasis in the South East for visitors. The Chairman offered the following suggestions for discussion over the next few months:-

- a) Increase the open space surrounding car parks for recreation – landscaping
- b) One or two smaller car parks
- c) Education at the Ashdown Forest Centre - updating of the Teacher's Pack.

Mr. Bodfish suggested that informal consultations take place with the professionals at the County Council and Wealden District Council.

The Board discussed the various options open for obtaining professional advice from different bodies which would benefit future plans for the Ashdown Forest.

Mrs. Moore raised the question of roads across the Forest. The Superintendent said that it had been reported in the National Press that there was a 50 m.p.h. speed limit on all roads across the New Forest. Sir Frederick suggested monitoring traffic speeds on the B2026 and A22, recorded high speeds would add weight to the Conservators' cause to reduce speeds on roads across Ashdown Forest. After discussion the Board agreed that the Conservators should work towards speed limit restrictions on Forest roads.

## **7. THE SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that there had been fifteen fires on the Forest so far this year. The largest fire attended was thirty four acres. There have been no reports of arson. The Superintendent considered that the public are more conscious of fires and evidence showed that many are started by the use of illegal Barbecues.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Mont commented that Lady de la Warr had been disappointed that there was no mention of their family on the plaque commemorating the East Sussex County Council purchase of the Forest.

The Board discussed the matter and suggested various ways the history of the Ashdown Forest could be displayed at the Centre.

## **THE BOARD THEN WENT INTO COMMITTEE**

see Confidential Minute No. 59

## **THE BOARD CAME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

There being no further business the Meeting closed at [blank]

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 12th FEBRUARY 1990.**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. A. Moore, Miss A. Lumsden, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D. S. Carter, L. C. Hardy, D. C. Cumming, V. G. Facer, O. E. B. Hughes, J. Gent.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. J. Mont and Mr. K. Bodfish.

## **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4th DECEMBER 1989**

Subject to the following amendments the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman:-

Item 3 - para. 2 - insert problem after drainage. Item 4 - para. 2 - delete pressure and insert pressurise. Item 6 - para. 4 - delete Mr. Wright and insert Mrs. Wright. Item 8 - para 2 - insert after history. De La Warr family's involvement with the Forest.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Referring to the Planning Application WD/2624P for Heatherdene, Chuck Hatch the Chairman reported that the Superintendent had written to Wealden District Council registering the Conservators' comments. The Planning Application was turned down by Wealden District Council.

The Superintendent had written to the National Rivers Authority concerning the Bunkers Hill overflow, but felt the reply was not helpful. Mrs. Moore said that this was in the Kent Land Drainage Committee area and she had received assurance from Mr. Jeffery Robinson that the matter was in hand and would be chased at the highest level.

Referring to Mr. Gent's enquiry, the Chairman reported that the area near the Airman's Grave had been mown to encourage Marsh Gentians.

With regard to the boundary dispute with Mr. Hibbs of Martronic, Mr. Hibbs had agreed to move his fence and the Chairman said that this was due to the intervention of the County Secretary's Office.

The Planning Application for Glynbourne, Highgate Green, had been withdrawn.

The Superintendent read the suggested wording for a plaque to recognise the De La Warr family's historic connection with the Forest:-

THIS PLAQUE COMMEMORATES THE ASSOCIATION OF THE EARL DE LA WARR FAMILY WITH ASHDOWN FOREST, WHICH STARTED WHEN RICHARD SACKVILLE WAS APPOINTED MASTER FORESTER IN 1561 AND ENDED WITH THE SALE OF THE FOREST BY THE ELEVENTH EARL DE LA WARR IN 1988 TO THE EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL.

After discussion the Board agreed that 'Earl' should be omitted and the proposal and wording should be submitted to the Earl De La Warr family for their approval.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION MEETING HELD ON 15th JANUARY 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Whitley. Mrs. Wright asked the Chairman how many sheep were involved in the grazing experiment. The Chairman replied that at the present time only cattle are involved. Mrs. Alexander commented that the article in the local press on clearance of heathland on the Forest was excellent.

Mr. Gent enquired as to the work of the contractors hired to aid in the clearance of heathland. The Superintendent reported that two companies had submitted estimates. The successful contractor had started clearing on Friday 9th February.

The Superintendent stated that he had an appointment with a reporter from the Kent and Sussex Courier, on Thursday 15th February, with a view to getting an article in the press on heathland management on the Forest.

Mrs. Alexander enquired whether a decision had been reached on the use of 'matting' on the footpaths and rides, to aid the problem of erosion. Mrs. Moore said she had read about an experiment on the Pennine Way (possibly a newspaper article) to stop erosion and suggested the Conservators should be in touch with other parts of the country with similar problems. The Superintendent replied that the Conservators' policy is to retain the natural surface of footpaths, there are many artificial surfaces on the market, but costs are high. He reported that the makers are not prepared to sponsor a trial. Mrs. Whitley said the Committee were not prepared to spend money on a trial, as the Committee felt the matting was not what they were looking for.

Mrs. Moore suggested the Minutes should be amended to read - Police in West Sussex not West Sussex Police as this was incorrect. Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAY COMMITTEE HELD ON 22nd JANUARY 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey.

Referring to the second entrance way Mr. and Mrs. Chadder had constructed at Chequers Farm, the Superintendent reported that he had had a successful meeting with Mr. Evans, Mr. Hardy, Mr. \*\*\*\*\*-West and Mrs. Bradley from East Sussex County Council on Thursday \*\* February 1990. A site visit had been made. The Officers considered that this was a case for the Lord of the Manor and would seek the agreement of the Ashdown Forest Trust. The Chairman said that the Trust should come to a ruling on this matter. Mrs. Moore agreed to urge the Trust to reach a decision.

Mrs. Moore remarked that she disagreed with the line taken by the Officers of the County Planning Department in supporting the Planning Application submitted by Faircote Farm and Stud. The Officers are in favour of encouraging riding on Ashdown Forest. Mrs. Whitley replied that as Ashdown Forest is a splendid place to ride, exception cannot be taken, the professional view should be defended. The increase in density in the South East and the area not being large enough, were the main points put forward by Sir Frederick Sowrey.

On the subject of the copy of the Highway Strategy for the New Forest, which had been circulated, Mr. Hughes stated that he had passed a memo to the Superintendent.

Sir Frederick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15th JANUARY 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Miss Lumsden. As there was no business to discuss, Miss Lumsden moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29th JANUARY 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Gabriel. The Superintendent suggested that as he expected to receive a sample a type of map that might be used for a new Forest map from ARKA Graphics within the next fourteen days, any decisions should be delayed. Mr. Hughes said that Hartfield Parish Council were interested in a new Ashdown Forest map and suggested contacting other prospective suppliers. Mr. Cumming suggested alternative quotes should be sought. Mrs. Moore said perhaps all the Parish Councils on the Forest would take some new maps for sale.

The Board agreed to wait until the sample from ARKA Graphics had been examined.

The Chairman invited the Superintendent to give the Board an update on the recent storm damage. The Superintendent reported as follows:-

Roadsides are a major problem, especially the West side of the A22. Contractors are working clearing that area.

A number of trees left standing after the 1987 Storm had now fallen in amongst the newly planted trees.

The high winds had flattened the tubes containing newly planted trees.

More expense was involved in extracting large fallen trees from the newly planted areas.

The Rangers had removed five trees that had fallen on and were endangering houses.

Holly had suffered particularly this time also the large Scots Pine, Beech and Birch.

The clearance of the Forest had been put back six months until April 1991.

Mrs. Wright enquired as to the long term results to the new trees if the deer ate the tops. The Superintendent replied that to some extent the trees grew back, but if small they would not recover.

Mr. Gent pointed out that the plastic ties on the tubes keep breaking and asked if baling twine had been tried. The Superintendent replied that twine was in use now.

The Board discussed the damage and growth of the newly planted trees.

The Superintendent said that at least twenty tubes had been taken including some of the small trees.

The Board also discussed different strategies to protect the young trees, such as deer fencing, using longer tubes and netting.

The Superintendent reported that an Autumn check had been carried out on the trees planted after the 1987 Storm and approximately eight hundred had been replaced, mainly due to the dry Summer. In future all Beech were being planted in netting tubes.

Mr. Carter enquired if the roots of fallen trees would eventually coppice, the Superintendent replied that in time this would happen on trees such as Sweet Chestnut and Birch.

The Chairman proposed there should be formal recommendation from the Board that the eleven acres of land at Braberry Hatch, Chelwood Gate, purchased by the Conservators in 1982, should be designated as part of Ashdown Forest, covered by the Ashdown Forest Act of 1974 and its Bye-Laws.

The Board endorsed the recommendation.

The Chairman reported that a cheque had been received from the Friends of Ashdown Forest for the purchase of a fire proof cabinet to store current financial documents, licences and certain records.

Mrs. Moore stressed the importance of ensuring that there is a back-up on computer discs and they were kept in another location.

A member commented that the Rates for the Ashdown Forest Centre seemed low. The Chairman said there had been a recent valuation. Mrs. Gabriel felt the Rates were appropriate.

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **8. TO AGREE THE DATES AND TIMES FOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THE YEAR 1990/91**

After discussion the Board agreed the dates subject to the following amendments:- Board Meeting from August 6th to July 16th. Roadway Committee - 4th June. Riding and Conservation Committees - 22nd May. Finance and General Purposes Committee 25th June.

## **9. THE SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that Mr. Matthews, Secretary of the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club, and Mr. Hardy from the County Council Estates Department had agreed the terms of a new Licence for the Golf Club, subject to the approval of the Golf Club members and The Ashdown Forest Trust.

A letter had been received from the Training Employment Centre. The Superintendent stated that it had been agreed at a previous Board Meeting that the Conservators would meet the costs of a Supervisor for the Community Programme Project, for one year starting on 1st. November 1989, on the basis of £4,000.00 in the year 1989/90 and £6,000.00 in the financial year 1990/91. The letter asked the Conservators for an extra £3,000.00 to meet the costs of transport, road tax and petrol, in the financial year 1990/91 and agreement to cover the Supervisor's salary for the whole of the financial year 1990/91. This would mean the Forest Maintenance Budget providing £13,000:00 over the next financial year. The Superintendent recommended keeping the Training Programme, as the work force provided invaluable help on the Forest. The Chairman agreed, particularly in view of the recent storms. Mrs. Gabriel recommended the Board adopt the proposal. The Board agreed.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) Mrs. Gabriel raised the subject of Environmental Week and the possibility of a Mobile Exhibition on the 1st May at the Ashdown Forest Centre. The Superintendent replied that he had yet to be approached by Wealden District Council, but he saw no problem in accommodating the request. A Guided Walk had already been arranged.

b) Mrs. Gabriel commented that there appeared to be a new access to Faircote Farm and Stud, constructed over the last two weeks. The Superintendent explained that this was correct. The access mentioned is for agricultural use. The Board discussed the matter further and the Chairman closed by saying the stoning of the entrance in question and would be considered at the next Roadways Committee Meeting.

c) Mr. Cumming remarked that an entrance at Goat Cross Roads to a barn conversion is receiving increased use. The Superintendent replied that the Conservators had refused use of the access for a barn conversion.

d) Mr. Cumming also raised the matter of Breeze-blocks, which had been left in Beaconsfield Road, Chelwood Gate, by the Water Board. The Superintendent agreed to talk to the Water Board with the view to getting the blocks removed.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 30th APRIL 1990**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. A. Moore, Miss A. Lumsden, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D. S. Carter, L. C. Hardy, D. C. Cumming, K. Bodfish, O. E. B. Hughes, L. J. Gillham

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. J. Mont and Mr. J. Gent.

### **2. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND A VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Superintendent requested nominations for a Chairman to the Board for the coming year.

Mr. Hughes proposed Mrs. Sheldrick, this was seconded by Mrs. Alexander and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Sheldrick took the Chair and thanked the Board for their support during the last year. She then asked for nominations for a Vice Chairman.

Mrs. Sheldrick proposed Mr. Hughes, this was seconded by Mrs. Gabriel and carried unanimously.

### **3. TO NOTE THE ELECTION OF MR. L. J. GILLHAM AS A CONSERVATOR OF THE FOREST FOR FIVE YEARS, COMMENCING 1st APRIL 1990, IN PLACE OF MR. V. G. FACER**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. L. J. Gillham to the Board. Mr. Gillham is a Commoner and his father had served as a Conservator previously. Mr. Gillham is also a Maresfield Parish Councillor.

### **4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12th FEBRUARY 1990**

As there were no amendments, the Chairman proposed that the Minutes were a true record. This was agreed by the Board.

### **5. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman reported that planning application for Heatherdene, Chuck Hatch, had gone to appeal. The Superintendent, on behalf of the Board, and the Chairman had both written to the Inspector registering the Conservators' concern.

Referring to the plaque recognising the De La Warr family's historic connection with the Forest, the Chairman reported the wording had been submitted to the eleventh Earl and after minor alterations the plaque was now in situ outside the Information Barn.

The Chairman informed the Board regarding the second entrance way constructed by Mr. and Mrs. Chadder at Chequers Farm, Forest Row. Letters are being exchanged between the County Council's and Mr. and Mrs. Chadder's solicitors.

Mrs. Moore said that she had discussed the matter with Mr. Beechey's office recently and an Ashdown Forest Trust meeting is being set up.

Mrs. Gabriel commented that the amended plans submitted to the District Council for the new house are being passed, as there is already a double gate at the site.

The Chairman advised the Board there had been no further development regarding the new Ashdown Forest map as the Superintendent had not yet received a sample from ARKA Graphics.

A cheque for £600.00 had been donated by The Friends of Ashdown Forest and a fire proof cabinet had been purchased and installed. Important records are now stored in the cabinet.

Mrs. Gabriel, referring to Environmental Week, advised the Board that a Mobile Exhibition would be at the Ashdown Forest Centre on Tuesday 1st May.

The Chairman reported that the breeze-blocks left in Beaconsfield Road by Water Board, had been removed.

Mr. Carter asked why the Conservators were not involved with the new licence for the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club. The Chairman replied that the licence was between the Ashdown Forest Trust as freehold owners and the Golf Club.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26th MARCH 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Whitley.

Mr. Bodfish referred to the offer by the Countryside Commission to grant aid for Notice Boards and footpath signs in major car parks. He regretted the decision of the Committee not to recommend the proposal to the Board, although they considered all major car parks should have directions to the Ashdown Forest Centre. He considered it a short sighted policy. Long term management and protection of the Forest, positive use for recreation, and leisure by management were important. He said that if the required needs of the visitors were ignored then damage to the Forest would occur.

Mrs. Whitley replied that she took Mr. Bodfish's point, it was hoped to achieve a balance of aims and the general opinion of the Committee is that all major car parks should have directions to the Ashdown Forest Centre, but otherwise the Forest should remain unchanged with regard to signs.

Mr. Hughes suggested the Board look at the issues as a whole within the context of the Management Plan and not take the signs as a single issue.

Mr. Bodfish said the Countryside Commission should not get the impression that the offer had been rejected out of hand.

Mrs. Wright commented that in open countryside, with prospects, it was nice not to see sign boards.

Sir Frederick Sowrey agreed with Mr. Hughes that visitors' needs should be reviewed within the Management Plan.

Mrs. Moore suggested that the distance of individual walks could be recorded on the signs in time, a practice carried out in Switzerland.

The Board then discussed the grazing experiment. The Nature Conservancy Council believes a constant number of animals makes it easier to draw conclusions from the experiment.

The Superintendent advised the Board that the site meeting to select the areas of heathland for clearance under a management agreement with the Nature Conservancy Council had been arranged for 2 p.m. on the 10th May.



Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Miss Lumsden.

The Board discussed the problems between riders and dogs. The Superintendent reported that three people had been warned off the Forest recently due to lack of control of their dogs.

Miss Lumsden moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **8. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2nd APRIL 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey. Mr. Bodfish raised the matter of a possible East/West motorway and suggested the future development plans should be observed. Sir Frederick agreed it was a timely reminder and the Committee should keep a close watch on any major road proposals in the vicinity of the Forest.

Mrs. Gabriel referred to the application to build a new farmhouse at Spring Garden Farm, Fairwarp. The superintendent reported that there had been a firm application to Wealden District Council. There had been no changes to the original plans and it would be discussed again at the next Committee Meeting. The Superintendent considered this a serious situation as this could become a three house complex. Mrs. Wright enquired the reason for the application. The Superintendent explained the application was for a new farmhouse involving leaving the original farmhouse and cottage.

Mrs. Gabriel enquired as to the current position regarding the tyres that had been tipped on the Forest. The Superintendent replied that one third had been taken by local farmers and members of the public. Three thousand had been taken to a Council dump at Hastings and the remainder were due to be removed on the 4th May to the same Council dump, subject to the Board's approval. The approximate cost of removing the tyres would £450.00. The Surrey Police had received reports of a lorry off-loading tyres at Godstone and loads had been left at Weir Wood Reservoir and Chailey. The case is being pursued by police in several Forces. The tyres are a considerable fire risk, plus, they are being scattered over a wide area.

The Superintendent reported that he had written to the County Council with regard to the repairs to the Glenmore Road Bridge.

The Superintendent reported that at a site meeting with Mr. Raikes of RH & RW Clutton, it had been agreed that the Conservators would retain the fifteen foot grass verge at the entrance to the Isle of Thorns on A275, and any Forest trees impeding visibility North, will be cut back on request.

Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **9. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM MRS. SHELDRIK ON THE COMMONERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 2nd MARCH 1990**

Mrs. Sheldrick reported there had been an excellent attendance of approximately one hundred and sixty. This was largely due to a contested election. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. George Perring of Forest Row.

The result was as follows:-

Mr. Leslie Gillham (Commoner)	85 votes
Mr. Michael Hall (Non-Commoner)	18 votes.

Mr. Michael Hall was a Conservator previously.

The Chairman of the Board of Conservators, in her annual report, clarified the position regarding Manorial Waste, as misleading newspaper reports had worried some Commoners.

The Superintendent gave an up to date report on storm clearance. This was very well received.

The increase in the Forest Rate by rate of inflation was approved.

The increase in deer casualties caused discussion.

Serious concern was expressed over increased pollution of the Forest and its streams by untreated sewage, overflowing from the end of Nursery Lane, Nutley. This seems to be a situation similar to Bunkers Hill, Crowborough. Planning permission has been given for additional houses without improvement to basic services.

Excessive speeds on the Forest roads are causing concern. The Commoners requested the Conservators to see if speed restrictions could be brought in.

Tourism promotion by Wealden District Council is another point the Commoners raised and are very much against. Increased riding in some areas and nuisance from Model Aircraft worried some.

Miss Willard requested that consideration be given to reinstating occasional public meetings, with all Conservators present.

The Board discussed the points raised at the Commoner's Annual General Meeting. Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested that copies of the agenda should be made available at the Ashdown Forest Centre, 2-3 weeks before the Meeting, should any Commoners wish an advance copy.

Miss Lumsden suggested encouraging Commoners to contact their Conservators during the year.

#### **10. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that as from the 1st April the County Council had re-introduced the Employer's Contribution to the Superannuation Fund, at a rate of 6% of basic salary. This totals £4,844.60 per year, not budgeted for in the Annual Accounts.

Weather conditions are very dry, making the risk of fire on the Forest a very real hazard. There have been eleven fires to date, covering a total of thirty seven acres. Lack of wind had lessened the damage. Most fires have been started deliberately or as a result of barbecues. The Sussex Fire Brigade have been turning out in force and it could be very serious if we do not have rain.

#### **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs. Gabriel remarked that the signpost at Goat Cross Roads had been replaced with a metal sign. She asked if wooden finger posts could be retained on minor roads. The Board discussed the matter and the Superintendent agreed to refer to previous correspondence.

The Chairman reported that the Superintendent was consulting with County Council Officers regarding the Management Plan, before submitting the final draught for consideration.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 16th JULY 1990**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. J. Mont, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D. S. Carter, L. C. Hardy, D. C. Cumming, L. J. Gillham, O. E. B. Hughes.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr. J. Gent and Mr. K. Bodfish.

#### **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30th APRIL 1990**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman:- a) Item 10 - para. 3 - delete "draught" and insert "draft".

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman informed the Board regarding the second entrance way constructed by Mr. and Mrs. Chadder at Chequers Farm, Forest Row. The matter is being dealt with by the County Secretary and is due to go before the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel. Mrs. Moore confirmed this, saying it was on the agenda for the Meeting due to be held on 23rd July 1990.

The Chairman said it was the Board's policy not to grant a second access and the Superintendent would discuss Chequers Farm with The County Secretary, Mr. H. Cartwright, at their Meeting next week.

Mrs. Moore thought the general opinion was that there had not been enough information available to conclude the problem at a previous Ashdown Forest Trust Meeting.

The Superintendent commented that, in his opinion, there had been sufficient correspondence with the County Secretary's Office to explain the Conservators' objections.

Mrs. Alexander thought a second access should not be allowed.

The Board discussed the newly erected wooden direction Boards to the Centre. The Chairman explained that they were now placed in six of the largest car parks (Hindleap, Hollies, Millbrook, Friends, Gills Lap, and King's Standing).

Referring to the tyres that had been dumped on Ashdown Forest, the Chairman said that three men were due to appear in court. The Superintendent reported that he had submitted a £500 compensation claim, which covered the cost of having the tyres removed. The Board asked if the sum was sufficient as considerable inconvenience was caused. The Superintendent explained that as the men were due to appear in three or four other courts, greater financial compensation could not be expected.

The Chairman asked when the court case was due to be held. The Superintendent replied that he understood within two months and he intended to give the case maximum publicity, via the press and television.

Mrs. Whitley commented that the County Council would give their support.

Referring to fires on the Forest, the Chairman said that due to the exceptional dry weather conditions, it was fortunate that more fires had not occurred. If the dry weather continued, fires could be a problem later in the year.

Sir Frederick Sowrey reported that the Roadways Committee had originally rejected a change of access to Yew Tree Cottage, but he had now received a new request, which reduced the length of access and enabled all the cars to be parked off the Forest and recommended the Board agree this proposal. Mr. Gillham commented that the access to the garage may not be used at all once permission had been granted.

Sir Frederick Sowrey said that Wealden District Council would be responsible for granting planning permission for relocation of the garage.

Mrs. Alexander asked if once the land returned to Ashdown Forest the owner could re-apply.

The Chairman replied that that would be the responsibility of a future Board and recommended the present Board agree, on condition that planning permission be obtained to move the garage and when the new access is opened, the old roadway be reinstated.

Mrs. Moore, referring to the problem of pollution of the Forest and its streams by untreated sewage flowing from the end of Nursery Lane, Nutley, and Bunkers Hill, Crowborough reported that she had received a letter dated 9th July from Mike Beardsley, the Environmental Protection Officer, updating the situation. Mrs. Moore read the letter aloud to the Board. Referring to Bunkers Hill, no complaints had been received and there had been no seepage recently but [he] will continue to watch. Referring to Nursery Lane, there is a history of pollution here and Mr. Beardsley is in correspondence with the Southern Water Authority.

Mr. Gillham said that residents should tell the Conservators immediately a seepage occurred and was of the opinion Rydon Homes had an agreement with the Southern Water Authority regarding the additional houses they

were building, which would entail a contribution to the improvement of the sewage pumping system to take the increased flow.

Mrs. Whitley said she thought action would not be taken until evidence had been seen of the overflow.

The Chairman suggested the residents should be supplied with the address and telephone number to report to when the overflow occurred.

The Superintendent replied that residents were already in-possession of this information but when they telephoned the National Rivers Authority on 16th May, due to a major overflow at Nutley, there was no reply. The problem at Nursery Lane was sheer volume and at Bunkers Hill, rainwater. The Chairman said that Nursery Lane, Nutley, was the more serious problem of the two.

#### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>nd</sup> MAY 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Whitley. Mrs. Gabriel referring to a request from Wakehurst Place to extract bracken from the Forest, remarked that care should be taken to give the project full publicity as it may cause public concern.

The Superintendent replied that they would only be skinning the surface and in other areas where bracken had been extracted the heathland came back well. Sir Frederick Sowrey commented that it could be an alternative to bog peat and may possibly improve the Forest.

Mrs. Moore enquired if the Nature Conservancy Council approved. The Chairman replied that they were fully aware of the proposal.

The Superintendent said the bracken had been used to effect at Wisley and Kew. It was useful for acid loving plants only and therefore no real substitute for bog peat.

The Superintendent reported that he had asked for a quote using Terraseal along the rim of Wrens Warren Valley, an area which is badly worn. He had received an acknowledgement to his letter and was awaiting a specification and quote.

Mrs. Gabriel enquired if Terraseal had been used in other areas. The Superintendent replied it had been used at Bovington Tank Range, the Long Man of Wilmington and was commonly used on the banks of motorways and was a proven organic method of providing natural cover.

The Chairman commented that the cost would be the deciding factor.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>th</sup> JUNE 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey. The Superintendent reported that he had received a reply to his letter to the Mid Sussex Water Company regarding the leakage at the Reservoir on the A275. The Weir Wood pumping station had developed a fault in its cutting out system, resulting in the Reservoir on the A275 overflowing. The failure has now been corrected.

The Chairman pointed out an error in Item 6 - para. 2 - East side and West side should be reversed.

Sir Frederick Sowrey enquired whether finger posts could be used at 'B' road junctions, together with "Warboy" signs.

The Superintendent said that the Council's policy had not changed. There had been a serious accident at Goat Cross Roads, this is why a reflective "Warboy" sign had replaced the finger post. He thought it would be confusing to use both.

The Board discussed the advantages of both types of sign.

Mrs. Gabriel enquired if the District Council had requested permission from the Conservators to erect a road sign at Legsheath Lane. The Superintendent replied that permission had not been requested and he had taken issue and was awaiting a reply.

The Superintendent reported that he had visited the Stone Bridge at the end of Glenmore Road with a Safety Officer from the County Council. The bridge had been made safer for children and two notices erected saying "Unfenced Bridge". Enquiries are being made to find the owner of the far side of the bridge.

Sir Frederick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25th JUNE 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Gabriel.

Referring to the review of the 1990/91 Estimates, Mr. Gillham asked for an explanation of how such a situation had arisen. The Superintendent replied, the Estimates are prepared in October/ November and are sent to the County Council for approval in January. On the 1st. April there was a re-introduction of the Employer's Superannuation Contribution at 6i% on basic salary, with a likely cost of £5,500. The Business Rate for the Ashdown Forest Centre was higher than expected. The new Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club Licence is nowhere near as high as expected, a figure of £10,000 was included in the account as half the licence fee. The Ashdown Forest Trust had now been asked to review their present grant of £2,750 and discussions are to take place at the next meeting of the Ashdown Forest Trust.

Mrs. Moore suggested there should be either a positive decision from the Board or to defer the matter until after the Ashdown Forest Trust meeting. Mrs. Gabriel suggested the Board should await the outcome of the meeting. Mr. Carter noticed that the Conservators were not party to the new Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club Licence. The Superintendent reported that the clauses in the new licence would remain the same.

Mr. Hughes said that the Ashdown Forest Management Plan was not looking ahead and went on to read a prepared statement on the course of action he considered the Conservators should take.

Mrs. Gabriel said the Committee had agreed that a seminar involving all the Conservators should be held to decide what is best for the Forest.

The Chairman said the seminar would be held with a view to selecting a small committee, which would have a forward projection, putting a five to ten year plan before the Board.

Mr. Cumming commented that he supported the need for a forward plan. He is concerned that 'Management' should be of a positive nature, as far as the Forest is concerned. Larger car parks mean more cars. He has grave reservations as to further activities on the Forest.

The Chairman suggested the Board should collect opinions from the County Council and District Council when appropriate.

Sir Frederick Sowrey said with the growth of motor vehicles there will be changes and the Board should have a forward projection.

Mrs. Wright said it is very difficult to predict future leisure activities and suggested it might be helpful to have a map of the Forest showing pressure points.

The Board were in agreement that there should be a seminar with all the Conservators present.

Mrs. Alexander considered a questionnaire put to a cross section of weekend visitors might prove useful.

The Board then discussed the possibilities of a professional survey.

Mr. Hardy suggested contacting an area such as the Peak District, to obtain information for the initial briefing.

Referring to the sale of Old Lodge, Mr. Gillham said the last report he had heard was that it was to be sold as one lot, possibly to an institutional buyer.

Mrs. Whitley commented that the offer of £150 and a tape of the Wildlife film of the Forest by Countryside Films Limited was very low. She considered £15 per hour, rather than a day, would be a more realistic pricing policy. The Superintendent replied that a charge of £100 per day was raised for commercial photography, but in the case of television, whose coverage was normally good public relations for the Forest, a cover figure was agreed. Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE AMENDED MANAGEMENT PLAN - SECTION I-IV**

Mrs. Moore suggested sending the introduction to the Management Plan to the East Sussex Records Office for verification.

The Chairman replied that the Management Plan had been very well vetted. Mrs. Gabriel suggested it would be helpful to number the pages.

Mrs. Wright and Sir Frederick Sowrey agreed that the link between the Ashdown Forest Trust and the Conservators should be improved.

The Chairman said that during the retype all the current small errors would be corrected.

The Board agreed the contribution from the County Archaeologist was a welcome addition and found it very interesting.

Mr. Hardy enquired as to Model Aircraft being authorised leisure. The Superintendent replied that the two clubs had held licences for many years permitting them to fly on the Forest and were a listed activity.

Sir Frederick Sowrey commented that it was the judgement of the Board at the time to include Model Aircraft. The Board agreed that Section III Leisure Index, items 14/15/16/17 & 18 should become sub paragraphs to No. 13 Authorised Leisure and an additional paragraph should be added clarifying Authorised Leisure.

The Board agreed Section V Future Management Proposals should be omitted until a later date.

## **8. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

As a result of an East Sussex County Council paper on visitor parking at Pooh Bridge a request had been received from East Sussex County Council to obtain the Conservators' agreement to enlarging the small Forest car park on the Chuck Hatch road to take 12-15 cars and improving the footpath through the Forest to the bridlepath. In view of the problems a few years back when this was last suggested by the Conservators, he had written to Hartfield Parish Council for their comments before placing the request before the Roadways Committee.

The Friends of Ashdown Forest are to receive a quarter of the proceeds raised from The Royal Philharmonic Pops Orchestra charity performance at Barclays Bank Management Training Centre, Wych Cross, on 7th September 1990. One thousand pounds has been paid in advance which The Friends wish to put to a project on the Forest. The Superintendent suggested that as the Forest needs more ponds that the second pond at Braberry Hatch is dug out. A quote of £1,250 has been obtained to undertake the work and as the weather was ideal he had started the work. The Board approved the Superintendent's action.

Hot Air Balloons are landing on the Forest. In wet conditions there could be problems. The Superintendent intends to contact Hot Air Balloon clubs, to notify them that they should only land on the Forest in emergencies, because of the damage to the Forest by the recovery vehicles.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 1st OCTOBER 1990**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. Moore, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. Mont, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D. S. Carter, L. C. Hardy, L. J. Gillham, O. E. B. Hughes, J. Gent.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mr. K. Bodfish, and Mr. D. C. Cumming.

### **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16th JULY 1990**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman:- Page 2. - Para. 3 'the old roadway reinstated' should read 'the old roadway be reinstated as Forest'.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Superintendent was asked whether a date had been set for the pending court case relating to the tyres that had been dumped on the Forest.

The Superintendent replied that a provisional date of 1st November had been made, but one of the people involved could not be found, therefore one summons had not been served.

The Chairman informed the Board of the present situation regarding the change of access at Yew Tree Cottage, Nutley. It had been suspected that a possible planning application would be submitted at a later date. Wealden District Council had now received an application from Mr. Hlisnikowski to remove the old existing cottage and construct a new three bedroomed house with two new garages, one of them to replace the existing garage. The plans showed the new driveway into the property to be double the present width.

The Superintendent reported that he had written to Peter Taylor Associates, who are Mr. Hlisnikowski's architects, drawing their attention to the fact that the roadway across the Forest should be a maximum of nine feet, therefore any split of the roadway to serve both properties should be within their Client's property. The Superintendent then read the letter he had written, a copy of which had been sent to Wealden District Council's Planning Department.

The Chairman enquired as to the present situation of the overflow of sewerage onto the Forest at Bunkers Hill, Crowborough.

The Superintendent replied that he had a meeting arranged with Southern Water Authority. They intend to relay the main pipe that goes past the Horder Centre. There is to be a minor change of direction of the pipe and it is intended to carry out the work in Spring 1991.

The Chairman reported that £250 had been received from Countrywide Films Limited for the filming of a nature film on Ashdown Forest.

Mrs. Wright enquired whether a date had been set for the appeal for Phie Forest Gardens.

The Superintendent replied no date had been set.

### **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd SEPTEMBER 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. Sheldrick, due to the absence of Mrs. Alexander who had chaired the Meeting.

Mrs. Sheldrick commented that the Ashdown Forest Riding Association had conveyed their appreciation of all the work that had been carried out on the rides.

The Superintendent said a survey had been carried out with the three riding establishments licenced with the Conservators. The schools reported having a surplus to their needs and were meeting their commitments with ease. He also commented the riding schools were the main cause of the erosion to the rides on the Forest.

Reporting on the proposed British Horse Society Link Route between the North and South Downs, which would involve crossing the Forest, the Superintendent stressed the following points:-

The route must be used by genuine long distance riders and not by riders without permits.

Riders wishing to use this route should apply for a permit and map to cross the Forest.

No provision for a car park near the Forest should be included in this link route.

The actual route chosen across the Forest was straightforward and the best.

The Superintendent said a brief would be prepared in readiness for the next Riding Committee Meeting.

The Chairman agreed that it would be necessary to issue each rider with a permit and a map to help combat illegal riding on the Forest and noted that any provision that meant riders could keep off the roads was excellent. Mrs. Wright thought the north to south riding route should not be considered a long term proposition, erosion being the biggest problem.

The Superintendent commented that he did not envisage large numbers of riders using the route. He thought it would be used for casual riding, this is why it was essential that riders should hold a permit and be issued with a map. Mrs. Wright thought the route would be a great attraction with pony clubs during the school holidays, but stressed she was in favour of the route. The Chairman suggested the Board should approve the route on a provisional basis and see how it developed.

Mr. Gent said that an annual riding permit worked out to nine pence per day and compared with other leisure activities was very cheap. He thought there should be radical revision of the price of a riding permit.

The Chairman said the Ashdown Forest Riding Association would probably object to an increase in permit fees, but agreed that a substantial increase in the future should be considered, as at present, the fees were only raised at the rate of inflation.

Mr. Hughes said that riding revenue and expenditure in the context of the Management Plan was a point he intended to raise at the Seminar, due to be held on 26th November 1990.

Mrs. Mont enquired as to the penalties riders faced when found to be riding without a permit. The Chairman replied that the Rangers made regular checks on riders not displaying a permit badge.

The Superintendent added that the majority of illegal riding was done either early in the morning or in the evening when the Rangers were not patrolling the Forest, but by the end of the riding year the majority of riders have permits. Mrs. Mont suggested that an on the spot fine would be a solution. Mrs. Sheldrick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3rd SEPTEMBER 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mrs. S. Whitley. Mrs. Whitley remarked that the way the sheep in the grazing experiment area were keeping down the birch stumps was excellent.

The Chairman reported that Mr. Henry Osborne of Misborne Farm had been due to remove his sheep from the grazing experiment area at the end of September, leaving the cattle in for the winter. She had seen Mr. Osborne today and he had requested that as his land had very little grass, due to the very dry summer, his sheep remain on the Forest for a further ten days. Mrs. Whitley thought this was a reasonable request.

Mrs. Moore asked if Dr. A. Tait, the County Ecologist who had visited the grazing experiment with the Committee, had commented if the sheep would still eat the birch stumps as a variation to their diet or if it was due to the lack of grass.

Mrs. Whitley replied that Dr. Tait had made no comment.

The Chairman said this is one of the reasons why the Committee considered there was a possible need to lengthen the experiment.

Mr. Gent said that as Ellsions Pond was dry, it would be a good time to clean it out.



The Superintendent replied that a JCB had been booked for Tuesday 2nd October, but due to the heavy rainfall over the weekend, the pond had now started to fill so the cleaning out had been cancelled.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10th SEPTEMBER 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey. Referring to the request from East Sussex County Council to construct a car park, with space for 12-15 cars and repair the path serving Pooh Bridge, Sir Frederick stressed that the Board should maintain their principle not to involve themselves with areas of interest off the Forest, but considered in this particular case it would be a responsible gesture to the community to construct a car park and repair the path.

Mr. Hughes commented that the local press, regularly gave maximum publicity to Pooh Bridge and the problem of car parking was a bone of contention with local residents. As a Councillor, Mr. Hughes said he kept up to date with the developments concerning Pooh Bridge. Hartfield Parish Council considered the County Planning Department's report could be a solution to the problem. Sir Frederick enquired if one of the options might be a car park on the Hartfield side of the Bridge. Mr. Hughes replied that regretfully he could not comment on this. Mrs. Moore asked if the cost of constructing a car park was known.

The Superintendent replied that if the car park was constructed in the normal way, i.e. preparation, hardcore, topping and the hire of a JCB, the cost could be in the region of £1,000, but before a price was reached, planning permission had to be obtained.

Referring to a proposal from Tenet Design to construct an eighteen hole golf course in Old Lodge, Mr. Gillham said that he considered as the plans covered an important site within the Forest they would destroy a quiet area of farmland.

The Chairman suggested the East Sussex County Council's Golf Course Development Policy could be helpful in objecting to the proposal. The Board then discussed the proposal further.

Sir Frederick said the possible implications should be discussed at the next Roadways Committee Meeting.

The Superintendent reported on the new entrance on manorial waste leading to a Forest track at Glyndebourne, Highgate Green, Forest Row. He had had discussions with the Chairman and a site meeting had been arranged with an Officer from the County Council's Highways Accident Department. The Superintendent wrote to Mr. Priori of Glyndebourne, stating the Officer's recommendations: -

The original entrance way could be made safer by reducing the thickness and height of the hedge, on either side of the entrance way for 2-3 yards.

If an approach was made to the Highways Department they would lower the kerb stones.

A reply from Mr. Priori had been received today saying that he would look into the matter, but still strongly considered the access on to the A22 to be dangerous due to the speed of traffic.

Sir Frederick said that all residents with an access onto a main road could use the same argument. He thought the Superintendent had taken the best possible advice and recommended the Board stand by their policy of not allowing new roadways across the Forest, also the second illegal access should be reinstated to Forest.

Mrs. Moore raised the matter of the request for a Husky team and wheeled sledge to train on the Forest. She asked if sledges without wheels applied to the Bye Laws.

Sir Frederick replied that problems were the same, i.e. they were fast and heavy causing erosion, also there was the possibility of accidents, especially with young children and other dogs.

The Superintendent informed the Board of developments at Woodcock Cottage, Fairwarp. There is a complication in that a planning application to convert the building into a garage and workshop has now been submitted. The Officers of Wealden District Council Planning Department are fully aware of the situation but if the plans are accepted it would be another five years before the conversion need take place, resulting in continued parking on the Forest. The Superintendent had written to Wealden District Council registering the Conservators' strong objections. All three members of the Board representing Wealden District Council have a copy of the letter.

Reporting on Chequers Farm the Superintendent read to the Board a copy of a letter from the County Secretary's Department sent to Mr. and Mrs. Chadder's Solicitors, confirming that the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel, at its Meeting on 23rd July 1990, had refused permission for a second access to be made into Highgate Road from Chequers Farm. Mr. Moore enquired if the Superintendent had heard anything further. The Superintendent replied there had been no progress since this letter dated 1st August.

Mrs. Moore asked what the next step was. The Superintendent said he was keeping in contact with the County Secretary.

The Chairman said that there had been no further work carried out and the second access, at present, did not appear to be used.

Mr. Hughes, referring to planning application WD9O/2060 at The Cottage, Wych Cross, for the conversion of a cowshed into a bunk hostel for ten. There had been no objections from the Highways Department regarding the exit onto the A22. Sir Frederick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17th SEPTEMBER 1990**

The Minutes had been circulated and were presented by Mr. Hardy due to the absence of Mrs. Gabriel, who had chaired the Meeting.

Mr. Hardy referring to the decision of the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel regarding a request from the Conservators to reconsider the sum received from The Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club Licence said the Committee had difficulty in defining between maintenance and conservation items in the budget. The Committee were uncertain of the Panel's position regarding the additional grant.

Mrs. Mont replied that the phrasing of the letter may have caused confusion. The Superintendent read the letter informing the Conservators of the Panel's decision to the Board.

Mrs. Mont explained that the Panel intended that the figure was for the benefit of the Forest and whether it was maintenance or conservation would not be an issue. The grant should not be assumed in a budgetary way, but for specific projects.

Mrs. Moore confirmed that the grant would be given for specific projects. The Chairman thanked the members for clarifying the position.

Mrs. Wright said although the Forest Budget was under pressure, the wording of any request would possibly affect the Panel's acceptance. She considered it put the Conservators in a false position and the grant was not sound. Mrs. Moore replied the undertakings would have to come within the meaning of the Trust.

Mrs. Mont stressed that the grant was not an entitlement and it was additional funding, as far as the Trustees are concerned.

Mrs. Mont enquired if the date set for the Seminar had been agreed with the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel members not on the Board of Conservators, as she considered it important they should attend. The Superintendent replied the date had been set to fit in with County Council Board members' arrangements, but he had sent invitations to the other two Panel members as soon as the Committee had set the date.

Mr. Gillham asked why representatives from Wealden District Council and the County Planning Office had been invited.

The Chairman replied that it was important that members from the District Council and the County Council were aware of what is involved in the management of the forest.

Mr. Hughes said that East Sussex County Council's Environmental Committee was currently drawing up a Plan for Leisure and Tourism in the North Weald.

Sir Frederick added that the Council had produced papers on tourism to the end of the Century, so they should be able to present some useful figures.

Mrs. Whitley enquired about the Tenders for a licence to sell ice cream on the Forest. She asked the price of the Licence for 1989/90. The Superintendent replied that it was £217,700. Mrs. Whitley said this was lower than Seven Sisters. The Superintendent reported that they were currently both with the same company. Several companies were showing interest in the new Tender.

Mr. Hardy questioned the Minutes regarding Mountain Bicycles. In the Committee's opinion if a club requested use of the Forest, it should be considered.

Mr. Gillham commented that Mountain Bicycles were not generally a club activity and should the bicycles be allowed on one part of the Forest, there was a danger that it would be abused by other riders on other parts of the Forest.

Mr. Hughes said he had been misquoted in the Roadways Committee Minutes with regard to the East West Link Road and asked that the section be deleted. He said that the County Engineers did not have any plans for a trunk road. East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey were still working together with regard to an East Grinstead By Pass.

There is to be a public exhibition touring the area and it would at Forest Row on 24/26 and 27th November 1990, with a preview for Councillors on 3rd November 1990. Consultations are to begin in January 1991 for two months. East Sussex County Council supported no particular route, but do have strong views that there should be no By Pass through the Forest. The Board then discussed further the implications of the By Pass. Mr. Hardy moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **8. THE SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

Wych Cross Reservoir had overflowed again and washed away the ride. The Reservoir was also leaking and had resulted in the new pond at Braberry Hatch being filled with water containing chemicals. Repairs are to be carried out to the overflow at the end of the week and one of the tanks is to be emptied because it is polluted.

Mr. and Mrs. Simmonds had constructed a car park on the Forest at The Hollies, Paynes Hill, Duddleswell. The Superintendent then read to the Board a letter, sent by Recorded Delivery dated 19th September 1990, requesting that the car park on the Forest be removed within one month. The Superintendent asked the Board what action they recommend if this request is not met.

Mr. Gent remarked that four extra stables had been erected and the property was being used as a livery.

The Board discussed whether the Rangers were legally able to dig the car park up or whether the matter should be put into the hands of solicitors. The Board agreed that firm action should be taken and authorised the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take what ever action they deemed appropriate. A letter was to be written to our solicitors requesting advice on the course of action to be taken.

The Superintendent reported that regrettably there had been a number of cars broken into on the Forest. The police were aware of the situation. It is mostly overseas visitors and holiday makers' cars that goods and cash are stolen from. Mr. Gillham asked if the police had taken action. The Superintendent replied that the police were called to every incident.

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Sir Frederick reported that the Roadways Committee had taken a survey of Milestones on the Forest. Two were missing and one had its oak backing in a bad state of repair. Sir Frederick requested the Board's permission to write the County Council Engineers requesting replacements.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 3rd DECEMBER 1990**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. N. Alexander, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D. S. Carter, L. J. Gillham, O. E. B. Hughes, J. Gent, K. Bodfish, R. C. Cumming.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. J. Mont and Mr. L. C. Hardy.

## **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1st OCTOBER 1990**

Subject to the following amendment the Minutes, which had been circulated were read and signed by the Chairman:-

Page 4. Item 6. Paragraph 1 should read - Mr. Gillham said that he considered the plan covered an important site within the Forest and would destroy a quiet area of farmland.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chairman informed the Board that Lady Aberdeen had died on Friday 23rd November 1990. Lady Aberdeen had been a stalwart friend of the Forest, in every sense. She was one of the first members of the Friends of Ashdown Forest when it was founded in 1961 and served on the Committee from then on, becoming Chairman in 1970 and held the Chair until 1987, when she stepped down. She was re-elected the first President, a position she held until her death. Lady Aberdeen will be sadly missed.

The Superintendent reported that the court case relating to the tyres that had been dumped on the Forest, had been heard at Uckfield Court on Thursday 29th November 1990. Two men had been charged and were fined £1,000, £500 compensation and £70 costs. Mrs. Wright enquired as to the extent of the publicity given to the case. The Superintendent replied that the Press had been asked to attend and report the case.

The Chairman reported on the amended planning application submitted to Wealden District Council for Yew Tree Cottage, Nutley. The plans involved the redesigning of the access, which the Conservators had previously agreed with Mr. Hlisnowski, the positioning of the septic tank and retention of part of the existing cottage, for storage. The Chairman commented that the access was the most important factor as far as the Conservators were concerned. The Riding Committee Meeting had been cancelled.

The Superintendent had sent a sample leaflet for the proposed British Horse Society Link Route between the North and South Downs to all Committee members. As there had been no adverse comments, the leaflet had been submitted to the County Council for an estimate of the cost of producing the leaflet.

Mr. Henry Osborne had removed all his sheep from the grazing experiment on the agreed date, 6 cattle and 1 follower remain in the grazing experiment area.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22nd OCTOBER 1990**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Sheldrick, as Mrs. Whitley the Chairman of the Committee had not been able to attend the Meeting.

Mrs. Sheldrick said that the Committee had found their visits to different areas of the Forest very informative and she thought that site visits were important for the Conservators.

Mrs. Gabriel enquired if the heather cutting and the scattering of the cut heather was labour intensive.

Mrs. Sheldrick replied that as machinery was used to do the cutting and the cut heather was scattered onto an adjacent ride, this was not the case.

Sir Frederick Sowrey enquired as to the success of the heather seeding. The Superintendent replied this was an experiment, but had worked on other sites.

Mrs. Sheldrick said that the coppice wood had grown away very well. Mrs. Sheldrick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5th NOVEMBER 1990**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey. Referring to the Wealden Model Aircraft Society, Sir Frederick said that two points concerned the Society: Restricted flying times may inhibit young members as they rely on their parents for transport. The need to provide a viable programme for their members.

After discussion it was agreed to accept the suggestion of the Society to reduce the present permitted flying times by approximately 45%. Sir Frederick Sowrey had personally telephoned every member of the Roadways Committee and all the members were in agreement with the following flying times: -

	Powered	Silent
Saturday and Sunday	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	
Monday	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	
Wednesday	10 a.m. - 8 p.m.	
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday	NIL	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Sir Frederick Sowrey recommended the Board accept the amended proposed flying times.

The Superintendent referring to the use of the stables at "The Hollies", Duddleswell, reported that a written explanation had been received from Mr. and Mrs. Simmonds. In replying to the letter sent from the Conservators' questioning the use of the stables, Mr. Simmonds claims it was friends of the family using the stables.

Referring to the illegal entrance into "Glyndebourne", Forest Row the Superintendent said the matter had been passed to East Sussex County Council Estates Department, as the entrance goes onto manorial waste.

Sir Frederick Sowrey informed the Board that he had sent a private letter to the Inspector at Department of the Environment, Bristol, opposing the proposed development at Phie Forest Gardens. The Superintendent had also sent a letter on behalf of the Conservators.

Mrs. Alexander said she was hoping to attend the three day Appeal for part of the time.

The Board then discussed ways extra weight could be added to the Conservators' opposition to the proposed development.

The Superintendent referring to the planning application for the conversion of a building at Woodcock Cottage, Fairwarp, into a garage, reported that the matter is now in the hands of Wealden District Council's solicitors with a view to prosecution.

The Superintendent also reported that the extension to Fairwarp Church Car Park was complete and the Conservators' planning application for Pooh Bridge Car Park was due before Wealden District Council on 18th December 1990.

Sir Frederick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12th NOVEMBER 1990**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Gabriel.

Referring to the Seminar that had been held at the Ashdown Forest Centre on 26th October 1990, Mrs. Moore said she regretted that members of the Ashdown Forest Panel not on the Board of Conservators had been unable to attend due to previous commitments.

Mrs. Gabriel replied that she agreed that it is important that the Panel members should be aware of the way the Board of Conservators work and to have an airing of views.

The Chairman suggested inviting the members of the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel not on the Board to visit the Forest.

Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested that it may be appropriate for the working party to do a presentation, due to the diversity of views.

Mr. Hughes said it might be necessary to co-opt other members to the working party appropriate to the areas being discussed.

Mrs. Wright referring to the Revised Estimates for 1990/91 and the Estimates for 1991/92 said she thought the figure of 4½%

% for the rise in wages for 1991/92 should be queried with East Sussex County Council.

The Superintendent replied that he had acted on instruction from East Sussex County Council's Treasury Department. The year's salary-figure was multiplied by 4¼% to cover a period of nine months.

Mrs. Moore said she understood from an Ashdown Forest Trust Panel Meeting, the Treasurer's approach to be to work out a figure according to Forest inflation rather than the National Inflation Rate.

Mrs. Wright commented that 4½% was a realistic percentage for the Forest as a whole, but not for a wage increase.

The Board discussed the new Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club Lease and the position of the Ashdown Forest Trust in the interpretation of the Lease. The Superintendent considered that as the land is part of Ashdown Forest, covered by the Act and the Ashdown Forest Bye Laws, the Conservators have a major right to a say in the wording of the Lease.

The Board then discussed the plan and showed concern as to the accuracy of the boundary line. The Board agreed that for a Lease covering a twenty year period the boundary line should be thinner on the plan and therefore more accurate.

Although Mrs. Moore said she thought the plan was illustrative only and any encroachments would be referred to the master document.

Mr. Gillham was in agreement with Mrs. Moore and thought legally the plan was not for reference.

Mr. Cumming considered the Board should go back and ask for an improved plan. Mrs. Moore suggested that the Board should write to the County Council registering their concern that the plan is not adequate.

The Board agreed the following amendments should be submitted to the County Secretary's Office:-

Front page under East Sussex County Council in brackets (Acting as Trustee for the Ashdown Forest Trust). The Conservators believe without this wording early in the Lease the document is misleading, even though the Trust is mentioned in paragraph 11.

Front Page. As the Third Party to this Lease, the Board of Conservators should be mentioned in conjunction with the Council.

Paragraph 8 (11) line 2. Delete trees and insert tees.

Last page. Delete Director and insert Chairman. Delete Secretary and insert Clerk.

The Board also question whether a larger scale map was not required.

The Board then discussed the proposed routes for the East Grinstead Link Route at great length.

Mr. Hughes said West Sussex County Council should reconsider the whole question. He requested a minor amendment to the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting.

Delete Item 7 a) - Paragraph 3 and insert....

Mr. Hughes explained the East Sussex County Council's position and said he had learnt that in a further reviewing of its Structure Plan, West Sussex County Council had now deleted the A272 as a main distributor road in their County. Mr. Hughes said the County Planners are looking into this and West Sussex County Council are in an uneasy position.

Mrs. Gabriel said Wealden District Council are concerned about the upgrading of the A272 and will be discussing the matter in January.

The Chairman said a Press Release should be sent out due to pressure on the Superintendent for the Conservators' views.

Mr. Gillham said that at a public meeting that evening in Nutley he expected public opinion would swing around violently to relieve the pressure of traffic on Nutley.

Mr. Cumming considered the main task was to protect the Forest. There were no statistics of traffic flow, not only now, but in the future. The Uckfield and Maresfield By Passes were not successful.

Mr. Bodfish raised two points:

Does the Board appreciate the confrontation between East Sussex County Council (who favour a box route) and West Sussex County Council (who favour the diagonal route).

The Board should consider the expansion of the Gatwick and Crawley and the resulting pressures.

He concluded East Grinstead will inevitably expand with the improved road system.

The Board agreed the prepared Press Release subject to a minor amendment to Item 7. This point should be rewritten to make more positive reasoning.

The Superintendent reported that the subject of the management of manorial waste had gone before the Environmental Committee. Then it would go before a Property Sub-Committee, when the manorial waste had been registered.

The Chairman reported that when she and Mr. Gillham met the Earl Castle Stewart, she had made it clear that the Board had reservations on the proposed development at Old Lodge to build an eighteen hole golf course. The site was very exposed and would be visible from a wide area of the Forest.

Mrs. Moore informed the Board that at a recent meeting the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel had agreed the Conservators' application for £10,000 grant towards the heathland management agreement with the Nature Conservancy Council and the clearance of scrub woodland from a heathland site at St. John's, Crowborough and grants to cover the heathland management agreement with Nature Conservancy Council for the financial years 1991/92 and 1992/93.

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. THE SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

The Superintendent reported that the bracken clearance by Wakehurst Place had gone ahead. The local press had been informed and a reasonable article had appeared in the Kent and Sussex Courier. One area had scraped out well and uncovered the rhizomes, exposing them to the frost. A second area had not been successful. A third area at the top of Kidds Hill had been selected to be done. The areas are being spread with cut heather in anticipation that the heather seeds will take. The operation will be completed before Christmas. This is an experiment and we will have to wait for the results.

The Superintendent reported that the office computer was with Viewgold, Uckfield, for repair. They were trying to obtain a disc to 'Boot Up' the locked system. Members of the Board suggested possible solutions.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

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# **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY 18th FEBRUARY 1991**

**Present:** Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick (In the Chair), Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. E. Gabriel, Mrs. J. Mont, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D. S. Carter, J. Gent, L. J. Gillham, O. E. B. Hughes, L. C. Hardy.

## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs. N. Alexander, Mr. D. C. Cumming and Mr. K. Bodfish.

## **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3rd DECEMBER 1990**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. MATTERS ARISING**

Mrs. Gabriel informed the Board of the position regarding Yew Tree Cottage, Nutley. Wealden District Council Planning Committee had made a site visit to the property and considered the proposals to be an over-development of the site and asked the Officers to discuss the plans with the applicant.

The Chairman reported on the current position regarding Woodcock Cottage, Fairwarp. The Enforcement Order issued by Wealden District Council to demolish the illegal building on the second plot, expired in November 1990. A further six months is allowed for an appeal before action can be taken.

The Chairman then referred to the suggestion that members of the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel, not on the Board, visited the Forest.

The Superintendent reported that Mr. G. Theobald had visited the Centre. Although the weather had not been conducive to a prolonged visit on the Forest, the Superintendent thought Mr. Theobald had enjoyed his visit.

The Chairman reported that the office computer had been repaired. Mrs. Moore asked if all the programmes had been saved. The Superintendent replied that everything was in order.

## **4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14th JANUARY 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated were presented by Miss Lumsden.

Miss Lumsden enquired as to any further developments regarding a request to East Sussex County Council of the possibility of erecting warning signs at two crossing points, one on the A275 at the Reservoir and the other at Chelwood Car Park. Also the printing of the Forest Link Map for the British Horse Society's proposed North South Link Route.

The Superintendent replied that he had received a letter that morning from East Sussex County Council Highways Department, confirming that warning signs would be erected at the two crossing points in the new financial year. With regard to the Forest Link Map, an adequate map could be produced in the office, thus saving the enormous cost of producing the map professionally. Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Mont registered their disapproval, enquiring if the Conservators had not used the services of Media Presentation under false pretences.

The Superintendent replied that Media Presentation had agreed to carry out the artwork free of charge and after an explanation, he considered they understood the position, as it would cost £700 to produce the maps professionally.

Miss Lumsden moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14th JANUARY 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley.



Mrs. Whitley proposed the Board accept the following wording for an additional notice to be erected at the grazing experiment to advise the public, following an incident in which Miss Lumsden's Sister in Law had been knocked down by one of the cattle:

THE PUBLIC WHEN EXERCISING THEIR DOGS ARE ADVISED NOT TO APPROACH THE GRAZING CATTLE.

Miss Lumsden considered the notice should read: The public are advised not [to] approach the grazing cattle.

Mrs. Whitley thought it was dogs that caused the problem.

Mrs. Moore agreed with the reference to dogs.

Mr. Hardy suggested the notice be amended to read:

THE PUBLIC, PARTICULARLY WHEN EXERCISING THEIR DOGS, ARE ADVISED NOT TO APPROACH THE GRAZING CATTLE.

The Board agreed with this wording and asked the Superintendent to arrange to have the notices printed.

Mr. Gent said that as the costs relating to Conservation were decided at the Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings, it was difficult for the Conservation Committee to reach firm decisions. For example there were areas of very old heather that needed clearing, particularly after a very dry summer. The following methods could be used; i) controlled burning, ii) labour or iii) grazing, but overall costs were needed.

Mr. Hughes suggested that each committee might have its own budget, with a final decision being made by the Board, but considered delaying discussions until the Forward Plan was at a more advanced stage.

Mrs. Whitley said if the committee's structure was to be reviewed, she agreed this should be looked at.

Mrs. Wright also agreed that major choices need more information.

The Chairman said the Board might consider the possibility of looking at committee structures and supported the point that more consideration should be given to conservation, but discussions should be delayed until a later date.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ROADWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21st JANUARY 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey.

Referring to Item 1., Mrs. Moore said it was confusing to use the word 'riding' when referring to bicycles and suggested 'cycling' might be more appropriate as riding was usually used when discussing horses. The Chairman stressed that cycling on the Forest was only permitted on the definitive bridle paths, not the on the rides.

Sir Frederick Sowrey enquired if the final details had been discussed with Crowborough Athletic Football Club for a licence to use St. John's Recreational Ground.

The Superintendent replied that an amended draft Licence had been submitted to the Club for their approval, with a specific clause stating that the licence would only be revoked if there was a blatant breach of the conditions. There is only a Peppercorn Rent on this licence.

The Superintendent reported that he had an appointment with Mr. Ashley Brown, District Planning Officer, Wealden District Council on Tuesday 11th February, to discuss the points raised in the Inspector's Report, which used for the first time the County Council's Structure Plan - Policy 17, stressing that to permit development within the Pale needed a particularly strong case.

The Report was a result of an appeal for a nursing home complex at West Camp, St John's, Crowborough which was refused.

Mrs. Gabriel advised the Board that planning application WD/90/3870 involving building a house on old army camp foundations at Marsh Green and planning application WD/90/3900 involving the conversion of an indoor riding school at White House Farm, Duddleswell had both been refused by Wealden District Council. Planning application WD/90/3727 involving the continuation of storage of non-residential caravans, had not come before the committee yet.

Mrs. Whitley questioned whether the request from Forest Row Lawn Tennis Club to erect floodlights, should be refused. She thought members would appreciate the opportunity to play tennis early in the morning or late in the evening.

The Chairman replied that the location of the courts in the centre of the Forest was the main cause for concern.

The Club had also requested permission to build a third court and

Sir Frederick Sowrey considered this the more acceptable alternative and suggested the Committee look at the matter again. He said that lighting no higher than the stop netting could be considered, but floodlights would be offensive.

Referring to the new car park at the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club, Mr. Hardy asked if the Golf Club had carried out the Conservators' stipulations. The Superintendent replied that the car park had been agreed to the Golf Club's design, including the banks. The golf course materials had been removed and all the Conservators' stipulations had been met. Mr. Hughes commented that he had visited the site with a Ranger and in his opinion the work was satisfactory. Sir Frederick Sowrey moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL 'PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4th FEBRUARY 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Gabriel. Mr. Hardy considered that the Minutes did not clarify how the cost of £8,500, for the cost of repairs to the stone bridge at Glenmore Road, would be met. The Superintendent explained that a Safety Officer from East Sussex County Council, Estates Department had inspected the bridge and declared it unsafe. The Superintendent had received the quote for £8,500, but intended to obtain further quotes, which it was hoped would be at a reduced figure, then a decision could be reached.

Mr. Hughes suggested the Board approach Lynnette Leeson of the Countryside Commission for the possibility of a grant to meet part of the cost. The Superintendent commented that the last time the Countryside Commission had been approached, they said they would not fund further footpath/ride projects on the Forest.

Mrs. Moore said the Countryside Commission had funds to help with footpaths and suggested the Board approach them again.

Mrs. Whitley agreed saying the request should be presented as a specific scheme.

Mrs. Gabriel said all avenues should be explored.

Mr. Gillham, referring to the Conservators' response to the application by Tenet Design to build an eighteen hole golf course at Old Lodge, stressed that as a planning application had now been submitted, the Conservators' response that they remain to be convinced that a complex of this nature is appropriate to this site, should be worded more firmly.

The Chairman replied that when Wealden District Council asks for the Conservators' comments, the Board can form a stronger response.

The Superintendent confirmed that the Conservators had not been invited to comment yet. He informed the Board that Wealden District Council considered the application was not up to standard and it had been returned for alterations.

Mrs. Wright commented that it would not be advisable for the Conservators to appear to have a closed mind before the application has even been made.

The Superintendent reported that he had met with Mr. D Jackson, the manager of East Sussex County Council Training and Employment Agency and the manager of a private Brighton agency. The agency was investigating the possibility of taking over the environmental projects currently with the East Sussex County Council Training Agency. A further meeting was arranged for next week.

Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **8. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON 14th JANUARY 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Sheldrick.

Mrs. Wright questioned the proposal of converting the implement barn into an educational facility and then constructing a new building for use as a vehicle/machinery/mechanical workshop/woodwork shop and storage area. She considered this might be more costly than building a purpose built educational facility.

The Chairman explained that the present implement barn was unsuitable.

The Superintendent explained further that the barn is not large enough and the proposal might be the less costly solution.

Mr. Hughes said the new building would be in harmony with the existing buildings and there was a need to have the workshops removed from the present complex.

The Board then discussed the extent of work needed to be carried out to achieve the Working Group's proposals.

The Board agreed to approach RH & RW Clutton the architects previously engaged for the original buildings at the Centre.

Mrs. Sheldrick explained that the next meeting had been arranged for 20th May, so that the Superintendent had sufficient time to prepare a Brief.

Mrs. Sheldrick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **9. SUPERINTENDENT TO REPORT ON SUNDRY MATTERS**

a) The Superintendent reported that he had been advised of 3.15 acres of Corsican Pine woodland for sale within the Pale. He then proceeded to pin point the relevant area on the map for the Board's information.

The Superintendent explained that the majority of the woodland had suffered windblow in the 1987 storm. The trees are approximately 25-30 years old. There is only access to the land across the Forest or from Wych Cross Place, who are interested purchasers. The Friends of Ashdown Forest would possibly finance the purchase for the Conservators, if requested.

The Chairman said she had visited the area and in her opinion she cannot see the woodland as an asset to the Forest, although it is the Board's policy to review the purchase of any land that becomes available within the Pale. Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested the Board look at the implications of purchasing land. He said small areas presented no problem. but if larger tracts of land became available the Nature Conservancy Council or East Sussex County Council should be involved.

Mrs. Wright agreed with Sir Frederick and thought the matter should be looked at very carefully. She considered the Superintendent should investigate the cost of restoring the area of woodland in question.

The Board then discussed their position with regard to the purchase of large areas of land.

Mr. Gillham commented that in land purchases, things happen quickly and the Board should be in a position to raise the necessary finance.

Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested approaching the Nature Conservancy Council informally for their views on funding purchases of land.

Mrs. Moore said that the management of fragmented land presented problems. The Board agreed the Superintendent should pursue enquiries.

The Superintendent reported that a letter of complaint had been addressed to the Chairman of East Sussex County Council from the British Deer Society, which she had passed on to the Conservators- The Superintendent read the letter to the Board, together with the ensuing correspondence.

The basis of the complaint appeared to be that the British Deer Society would like to see selective culling on the Forest, to reduce road casualties and the possibility of poaching.

The Board agreed that to cull deer on the Forest would endanger the public. The Superintendent read a draft reply to which the Board gave their support.

The Superintendent reported that a roadway appeared to be under construction from the main house to a gate in an adjacent field at Spring Garden Farm, Fairwarp. The gateway is an agricultural access not a way of necessity to Spring Garden Farm.

The owners had approached the Conservators last year requesting a second access into the property. Due to a planning application which had been submitted to build a new farm house, the request had been refused. The Conservators had considered the present access to be sufficient, as it could be split within the island site to serve both properties. The Superintendent had written to Cripps Harries Hall, Solicitors, asking for advice, as a number of other requests for second entrances and new access had been received in the past and refused due to the Conservators' policy to protect the Forest from further roadways.

After discussion the Board agreed that the Superintendent should write to the owner at the first available opportunity, to prevent the road construction from proceeding further.

Mrs. Whitley reminded the Board that an agricultural access requires planning permission if there is going to be a change of use.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Board agreed the proposed dates and times for Board and Committee Meetings for the year 1991/92. There being no further business the Meeting closed.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY 29<sup>th</sup> April 1991**

**Present:** Mr. O. E. B. Hughes (In the Chair), Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Mrs. J. Mont, Mrs. N. Alexander, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, L. J. Gillham, D. H. O. Allen, J. F. W. Passmore, D. C. Cumming.

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mr. L. C. Hardy, Mr. D. C. Carter and Mr. K. Bodfish.

#### **2. To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman**

The Superintendent requested nominations for a Chairman to the Board for the coming year. Mrs. Gabriel proposed Mr. Hughes, this was seconded by Mr. Gillham and carried unanimously.

Mr. Hughes took the Chair and nominated Sir Frederick Sowrey as Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Mrs. Alexander and carried unanimously. Mr. Hughes and Sir Frederick Sowrey thanked the Board.

**3. To note the election of Mr. D. H. O. Allen as a Conservator of the Forest for five years, commencing 1st April 1991, in place of Mrs. A. J. Sheldrick**

**4. To note the appointment by East Sussex County Council of Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mr. L. C. Hardy, Mr. J. F. W. Passmore, Mr. O. E. B. Hughes, Mr. K. Bodfish and Mr. D. C. Cumming as Conservators of the Forest for four years, commencing 1st April 1991.**

**5. To note the appointment by Wealden District Council of Mrs. N. C. Alexander and Mrs. E. M. Gabriel as Conservators of the Forest from 1st April 1991 until 22nd May 1991.**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. D. H. O. Allen and Mr. J. F. W. Passmore as new members of the Board and noted the re-appointment of the other Board members by East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council.

**6. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 1991.**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**7. Matters arising**

The Superintendent reported:

The planning application for Yew Tree Cottage, Nutley, involving the redesigning of the access, the positioning of a septic tank and retention of part of the existing cottage, had been refused on 12th March 1991.

An appeal had been raised for the planning application at Woodcock Cottage, Fairwarp, relating to retention of a building and conversion into a garage workshop on the second plot. The Board would await the outcome of the appeal.

The proposed additional signs to warn the public at the grazing experiment are now in place. The Conservators had issued a licence to Crowborough Athletic Football Club for the use of St. John's Recreational Ground. The Club had started work on the drainage of the ground.

Planning Application WD/90/3727 involving the continuation of storage of non-residential caravans at Wrens Warren, was refused on 12th March 1991.

A letter had been received from Mrs. Hayes, the owner of Spring Garden Farm, Fairwarp, regarding the construction of a roadway from the main house via an adjacent field to the main roadway. The letter had been shown to the Chairman of the Roadways Committee. Sir Frederick said the Board should stand by their original decision, that there should be one entrance to the island site and the field access should be for agricultural use only. Should there be a change of use for the field access, this would require planning permission. He suggested the Board do not change their instructions to their Solicitors. This was agreed.

**8. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 25th March 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. S. F. Whitley.

Mrs. Whitley asked that Item 3 - paragraph 2 should be amended to read: During discussions the following points were suggested.

The Chairman commented that Grant Aid should remain under the Finance General Purposes Committee's control.

The Board discussed controlled burning and agreed the Superintendent should prepare a report for the next Conservation Committee Meeting.

Mrs. Moore, referring to the control of squirrels on the Forest, asked why the Superintendent could only agree to trapping. She said that a poison called 'Warfarin' was designed to kill squirrels only and not harm other animals.

Mrs. Whitley replied that this method required using hopppers, therefore it was more expensive than trapping.

The Superintendent said as the public had 24 hour access to the Forest, using poisons was open to considerable problems.

Mrs. Moore suggested contacting East Sussex Woodland Forum.

Mrs. Whitley said the Ashdown Forest was not suitable for the use of poison and agreed with the Superintendent.

The Chairman enquired about local landowners.

The Superintendent replied that at the meeting at the Ashdown Forest Centre everyone had been fully briefed and a further meeting was arranged for the 22nd May.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **9. To receive the Minutes of the Roadways Committee Meeting held on 8th April 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Sir Frederick Sowrey.

Referring to a request from R. T. Mitchell Associates on behalf of Earl Castle Stewart to improve the entrance way into Old Lodge, Sir Frederick informed the Board that R. T. Mitchell Associates had changed the access after consultation with East Sussex County Council Highways Department. The access would now be at a right angle with plays on either side. Sir Frederick commented that either plan would mean that Ashdown Forest would have to give up some land and suggested the Conservators approach the developers on an exchange of land or make a suggestion that will be beneficial to Ashdown Forest.

The Board then discussed the amended planning application for Old Lodge, involving a change of use to a hotel, omitting the golf course. At Mrs. Alexander's suggestion, the Board agreed that the Chairman or the Superintendent should approach the District Planners with regard to the application.

The Superintendent reported that he had written to the Divisional Engineer regarding the idea of using cellular concrete edges on Forest roads. He had had a meeting with the Divisional Engineer on 26th April and agreed an experiment using concrete on a stretch of the Stonehill Road, between Nutley and Duddleswell.

Mrs. Moore commented the report received from Hampshire County Council on New Forest Highway Strategy she had found extremely interesting and considered the Conservators could learn from its contents.

Sir Frederick reminded the Board that Hampshire County Council had suggested the Conservators should take no action until the outcome of the trials were complete.

Referring to the request for vehicular access to Spring Garden Cottage, Mr. Passmore enquired if there was a payment for a roadway licence with the Conservators and if so, was it payable annually.

The Superintendent replied that the charge for a wayleave was £10 per year, with a £50 licence preparation fee.

Mr. Passmore asked if the wayleave charge could be increased.

The Superintendent replied that the licence fee remained the same until a change of ownership, when it was increased to the going rate. A number of 50p licences still existed.

Sir Frederick moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **10. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held 15th April 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. E. M. Gabriel.

The Chairman thanked the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel, of which two members were present, for their Grant for 1991/92.

Mrs. Gabriel added her thanks as Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Mrs. Mont said the Panel thought all the schemes were worthwhile and had been presented well.

The Superintendent read to the Board a letter received from John Kain & Co., Solicitors to the owner of Phie Forest Gardens, in reply to a letter from the Superintendent asking again if the owner would consider selling the land to the Conservators. The Solicitors will communicate further when a decision has been reached.

Mrs. Gabriel said she had spoken to the press at a local council meeting and stressed the importance of the public being aware of not leaving valuables in unattended cars parked on the Forest.

Sir Frederick suggested writing to the local press to gather support for the Conservators to purchase the land, should the opportunity arise. The Superintendent considered the Board should await a reply from the owners before approaching the press.

#### **11. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

A Commoner has 8 cattle grazing on the Forest and they are marked accordingly. The cattle were causing problems on the highway and by entering people's gardens.

There had been 4 fires to date and approximately 20 acres of heathland lost, but as the conditions are very dry, the Superintendent considered there could have been many more fires.

Referring to estovers, 33 Commoners had taken wood from the Forest this year and 38 non-Commoners.

Pooh Bridge Car Park construction and the path to the start of the bridleway were now complete.

The Chairman expressed the Board's thanks to Mrs. Mont, Mrs. Alexander and Mrs. Sheldrick for their services to the Board of the Conservators. He said a collection had been made for a gift for Mrs. Sheldrick for her services as Chairman of the Board and a painting of the Forest had been purchased. Unfortunately, Mrs. Sheldrick had been unable to attend the Board Meeting, so a presentation would be made later.

Mrs. Alexander said it had been a privilege to be a Conservator and hoped the Forest remained a place of tranquillity.

#### **12. Any other business.**

The Chairman then referred to the suggested membership of committees for 1991/92, which had been circulated (attached). There being no objections the Committees were agreed.

The Chairman commented that there may be a need to reconsider the structure of the committees at a later date.

Mrs. Mont said the Board of Conservators was the best attended body she sat on and was very impressed.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE WYCH CROSS FOREST ROW ON MONDAY 29th JULY 1991**

**Present:** Mr. O. E. B. Hughes (In the Chair), Mrs. A. Moore, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. L. J. Gillham, D. H. O. Allen, J. F. W. Passmore, D. C. Cumming, H. Hatcher, R. I. F. Parsons, L. C. Hardy, D. C. Carter

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mr. K. Bodfish.

#### **2. To welcome Mr. H. Hatcher to the Board of Conservators as Chairman of The Ashdown Forest Trust and Lord of the Manor**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Hatcher to the Board and said he considered Mr. Hatcher to be a valuable contact with the County Council.

#### **3. To note the appointment by Wealden District Council of Mrs. E. M. Gabriel and Mr. R.I.F. Parsons, from the 22nd May 1991 to 1st April 1995**

The Chairman welcomed Mrs. Gabriel as a re-appointed member of the Board and Mr. Parsons as a new member of the Board.

#### **4. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th April 1991**

Referring to Page 3 - Item 10 - Paragraph 4, Mrs. Gabriel asked for an addition to the following sentence to clarify the statement:

"Mrs. Gabriel said she had spoken to the press at a local Council meeting"

addition to the sentence to read: “and stressed the importance of the public being aware of not leaving valuables in unattended cars parked in Forest car parks.” The Chairman noted that Item 1G, Superintendent to report on sundry matters, should read Item 11. The Chairman read to the Board a letter from Mrs. Anne Sheldrick, retired Chairman of the Board, expressing her thanks for the retirement gift of a painting of the Forest by local artist Bruere Collins from her fellow Conservators. Mrs. Sheldrick also conveyed her appreciation of the Board's support during her term of office. Subject to the preceding amendments the Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **5. Matters arising**

Referring to an appeal that had been raised for the planning application at Woodcock Cottage, Fairwarp, relating to the retention of a building and conversion into a garage/workshop on the second plot, the Superintendent reported the appeal had been refused and the building would be demolished in due course.

The Superintendent reported that there was a fair representation of landowners and agents at the meeting on squirrel control, which took place at the Ashdown Forest Centre on the 22nd May 1991. There was a general feeling that squirrels in this area are not a problem at present, due to a lack of vulnerable trees. In twenty years time the trees, particularly the ones planted after the 1987 Storm, will have reached the age when they were vulnerable to squirrel damage.

Mrs. Moore asked if the Woodland Forum had been contacted, as they were helping with squirrel control across the county.

The Superintendent replied that Mr. Tony Denyer from the County Council Planning Department had organised the meeting and was undertaking the liaison required.

## **6. To receive the Minutes of the Riding Committee Meeting held on 20th May 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Miss Lumsden. The Superintendent reported that due to adverse weather conditions, the ride improvements to the rear of Chelwood Vachery and School Lane, Nutley, were yet to be completed.

The laying of a new sewerage pipe at Mardens Hill had made the ride there impassable for horses. The pipe had been laid very deep, therefore the replacement soil was not compacted. A Sleeper Bridge had been placed over the pipeline enabling horses to cross. The work on the new trunk sewer is likely to continue for the remainder of the year. A lease had been drawn up between Southern Water Services Ltd. and East Sussex County Council to ensure full reinstatement of the Forest. Miss Lumsden moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 20th May 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley.

The Superintendent confirmed that the weed from the old pond at Braberry Hatch will be removed towards the end of August by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers Team.

The Chairman, commenting on the repairs to carried out to Glenmore Road Bridge, congratulated the Superintendent on the excellent work.

Mrs. Gabriel, referring to a prepared brief for the Conservation Committee on the effects of fire on heathland, queried the recommendations for heathland management.

The Superintendent replied that invasion of Scots Pine and birch was being dealt with by cutting and treatment of stumps. This method of heathland management had been employed for some years. Approximately 60-80 acres of bracken and 5-10 acres of heather were cut annually. It was hoped to increase the size of the area being grazed once the current grazing experiment results were known.

Mrs. Whitley confirmed that a programme had been drawn up by the Conservation Committee.

Sir Frederick Sowrey raised the question of the new Countryside Commission Stewardship Scheme and its usefulness.



The Superintendent said the Countryside Commission had offered their support to the Forest and a proposal was being prepared for heathland management in Wrens Warren Valley.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **8. To receive the Minutes of the Roadways Committee Meeting held on 3rd June 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gillham.

The Superintendent reported that the trees to the east of the A22, along the Pippingford Straight, had been cut back and additional Deer Mirrors, supplied by County Council Highways Department, were now in position.

Referring to an experiment to lay 2 x 15 metre lengths of cellular concrete edging on the bends on the Stonehill Road between Nutley and Duddleswell, the Superintendent reported that one 30 metre length had been laid by the County Council Highways Department.

The Superintendent then read to the Board a letter from East Sussex County Council, Highways Department, in response to the Conservators' letter registering their concern at the increasing number of heavy vehicles using the road between Nutley and Duddleswell Cross Roads. The reply stated that the road falls short of the requirements laid down by the Highways and Transportation Committee therefore a weight restriction cannot be placed on the road.

The Board then discussed the difficulty of access off the A22 onto the road. Sir Frederick reminded the Board that the point of issue was erosion to the Forest, due to the damage caused by heavy traffic to the Forest edges.

The Board also discussed at length the traffic flow figures recently obtained from East Sussex County Council Highways Department. Mr. Gillham said the whole matter would be discussed further at the next Roadways Committee Meeting.

The Superintendent reported that the application to Wealden District Council for a new roadway entrance across the Forest to Poundgate Lodge had been refused on 10th June 1991.

The Chairman informed the Board that since the Police had been carrying out undercover surveillance, there was a marked reduction in thefts from cars left unattended in Forest car parks. One man had been arrested in connection with thefts from cars on the Forest.

The Superintendent reported that the illegally parked caravan at Lark Hill, Duddleswell, also a trailer at Hills down Farm had both been removed. Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **9. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 1st July 1991.**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming.

In response to the Committee's request, a 'turned' Yew Jug had been purchased for John Pedder in recognition of his seventeen years service to the Board as a Forest Ranger.

The Superintendent reported that only the Supervisor and one member of the Employment Training Scheme remained on the Forest and the scheme would almost certainly cease at the end of September. He is preparing a brief on the options for providing a labour force for the Forest.

The Superintendent read to the Board a letter from Mr. W.W. Giles, the owner of 3.5 acres of windblown Corsican Pine at Twyford. An increased offer of £2,000 had been made by the Board, but Mr. Giles replied that his final price was £3,000. The Board instructed the Superintendent to write saying, with regret they were unable to increase their offer, but they would consider

Mrs. Moore drew the Board's attention to Item 5, which referred to the trail to test a new frequency for the radio system. She suggested moving the comma from after "as requested by the DTI" to follow "in lieu of two frequencies", as she felt it read in a misleading manner. This was agreed.

The Board then discussed the plans for the building of extra public toilets and an education facility at the Centre. The merits of the Committee's decision to place a connecting door from the educational facility to the toilets, as

against an external door, were discussed, also the Board agreed to apply for planning permission and building regulations for the toilets and barn conversion. The Committee would review the design of the Implement Barn.

Mr. Carter informed the Board that a company dealing with sewerage disposal had installed locally a system using a 'Reed Bed'. This system, as well as being functional, provided an attractive amenity. The Chairman thanked Mr. Carter and said it sounded interesting and worth investigating.

Mrs. Moore was asked if she was aware of the latest situation regarding the appointment of an officer to co-ordinate planning applications and conservation projects. Mrs. Moore replied that she understood the post had been advertised. Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **10. To receive the Minutes of the Working Group Committee Meeting held on 20th May 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Hughes.

Mrs. Moore questioned the need for a Working Group and suggested the other Committees could deal with the issues raised.

The Chairman replied that the idea of a Working Group was to take a forward look at the Forest as a whole. The members are made up of the Committee Chairmen and it was not intended to be a permanent arrangement.

The Board agreed to work through the brief on the Development of the Forest Amenities over the next 5-10 years, page by page. Subject to the following amendments the Board agreed the brief:

#### **(A) INTRODUCTION**

1.3. Mrs. Gabriel informed the Board that the 1988 County Structure Plan Sixth Alteration had been approved, but not the North Wealden Plan. 4.5. Mr. Cumming considered should be amended to read: The effect of a possible East Grinstead By Pass.

#### **(B) PLANNING FOR AMENITIES**

i) 1.1. Mr. Carter considered this read in a contradictory manner. The Superintendent replied confirming that the majority of members of the public do not want to see any further developments on the Forest. The Board agreed to amend the final paragraph to read:

The policy over the next ten years should be to continue to develop the facilities of the Forest in a controlled way.

ii) Mr. Hardy raised the question of staffing on the Forest. The Superintendent replied a brief is to follow on this subject.

iii) The Chairman commented that the County Council were preparing a plan on leisure and tourism for the High Weald.

iv) 9. Mr. Gillham registered his strong disapproval of erecting directional signs on the Forest. He said he would agree to more detailed maps in car parks and at the Centre.

Mr. Passmore agreed with Mr. Gillham and thought the Rangers' walks leaflets were sufficient, even for the serious walker.

v) 10.2.4. Mrs. Moore suggested that this sentence should be amended to read: To regulate the number of permits issued if the Forest is being seriously damaged.

vi) 10.3. Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested discussions should take place with the powered model aircraft club that has a licence with the Conservators to use the Forest. He considered a phased withdrawal would be appropriate.

Sir Frederick also said that the dog training clubs that use the Forest should be looked at, due to recent nationwide reports of apparently unprovoked attacks by dogs on members of the public.

Mr. Hughes moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **11. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The Superintendent reported on a road traffic accident on the A22 on 11th June 1991. The Subaru pick-up belonging to the Conservators was parked off the road on the Forest. The Subaru was damaged beyond repair when it was hit by another vehicle involved in a road traffic accident. A new Subaru had been purchased.

There had been a serious spate of vandalism on the Forest. Mostly car park signs and litter baskets on a regular basis and last week two Cairns had been damaged. A suggestion was made that underground boxes should be constructed.

## **12. Any other business**

Mr. Gillham asked if the Board had considered approaching Barclays Bank Plc with regard to the sale of Ashdown Park.

Mr. Gillham reminded the Board that 31st July 1991 was the fiftieth anniversary of the Wellington Bomber that crashed on the Forest killing the crew members. The Superintendent reported that a wreath would be laid at the grave on behalf of the Conservators.

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 30th SEPTEMBER 1991.**

**Present:** Mr. O. E. B. Hughes (In the Chair), Mrs. A. Moore, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. L. J. Gillham, D. H. O. Allen, J. F. W. Passmore, D. C. Cumming, R. I. F. Parsons, D. C. Carter

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs. S. Whitley, Mr. H. Hatcher, Mr. K. Bodfish and Mr. L. Hardy.

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. Matters arising**

The Chairman read to the Board a letter from John Pedder thanking the Board for the gift of the Yew Jug, presented to him in recognition of his seventeen years service to the Board as a Forest Ranger. The Superintendent reported that the ride improvements to the rear of Chelwood Vachery were now complete. The repairs to the ride at School Lane, Nutley, had been postponed, due to an underground power cable running along the proposed route. Referring to a new radio system for the Forest, the Superintendent reported that he was still waiting to hear from the DTI regarding a trial on a Duplex System, using the UHF band. Mr. Parsons said that Wealden District Council had purchased radio equipment from East Sussex County Council when their new radio network had rendered the equipment redundant.

### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 2nd September 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Hughes in Mrs. Whitley's absence. Mr. Hughes asked the Superintendent to report on the latest situation regarding the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

The Superintendent reported that he had met again on Wednesday, 25th September with David Whelon and Tim Allen, who had devised the Scheme.

Lengthy discussions had taken place with the Countryside Commission who are keen to provide financial support for heathland management. The Scheme would provide £3,000 plus per year over ten years, to carry out heathland management in Wrens Warren Valley. A further proposal had been prepared involving mowing 30 hectares of bracken for five years, followed by a further 30 hectares in the next five years. This would provide a further £3,000 grant per year. The Scheme would also finance any capital expenditure needed to extend the grazing experiment.

The Chairman commented that the Conservators seemed to be in the unusual position of requesting a figure lower than that expected by the Countryside Commission.

Mr. Gillham asked if the bracken cutting would still be carried out by the Conservators.

The Superintendent replied that the bracken cutting and heather mowing would still be carried out in house.

Referring to the British Deer Society's opinion that the solution to the deer casualties on the Forest roads was to cull half the herd, the Superintendent reported that advice had been sought from Mr. F. Marshall, who lives in Hartfield and was a recognised deer stalker and runs a deer farm. In Mr. Marshall's opinion, the Conservators' policy not to cull on the Forest is correct. The Ashdown Forest holds only a small number of deer and the responsibility to cull lies with private land owners. Mr. Marshall was willing to come and have discussions with the Rangers, also the Conservation Committee and the Board, should they wish.

Mrs. Gabriel enquired as to the number of road casualties. The Superintendent replied that 69 deer had been killed in 1990, 14 of those had been off the Forest. Mr. Hughes moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **5. To receive the Minutes of the Roadways Committee Meeting held on 9th September 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gillham.

The Superintendent reported that he had written to County Council Highways Department requesting an extension to the experiment, using one row of Grasscrete on the roadside, in lieu of three. To date no reply had been received.

The Board supported the Committee's recommendation not to agree to a request from Dr. Jephcott the owner of Fernhill, Fairwarp to construct a second access at the rear of his property.

The Board then discussed the proposed East Grinstead By Pass and agreed that to date the correct action had been taken by the Board, but requested that the Superintendent write to the Chief Executive of the County Council stating that the Board supported the County Council decision to object to West Sussex's Replacement Structure Plan on the subject.

The Superintendent confirmed that the Committee's observations regarding the planning application for Old Lodge involving a hotel (20 beds), function room and 15 self-contained units, had been made in writing to Wealden District Council.

Mr. Parsons reported that contracts for Old Lodge had been exchanged on Friday, 27th September between the Earl Castle Stewart and a private purchaser.

Mr. Parsons reassured Mrs. Wright that although the purchase included the freehold of part of the Nature Reserve, Mr. Mitchell, the Earl's agent, had made it clear that it wouldn't alter the aspects of the Reserve.

Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **6. To receive the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 16th September 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming.

Mr. Gillham referring to the Audited Accounts for 1990/91 enquired as to the position of the Storm Account.

The Superintendent replied that it was a separate holding fund within the account. Therefore, the balance was carried forward each year.

The Board then discussed the Brief by the Superintendent on the recruitment of two Estate workers to replace the Employment Training Team now the Scheme had closed down.

Members asked if suitable employees could be found from the recent applications received when the Ranger post was advertised.

The Superintendent said he would look through the applications, but he hoped to recruit locally.

The Chairman recommended the Board agreed to the recruitment as the Forest urgently required a labour force. The Board agreed.

The Superintendent reported on his meeting with ADAS to discuss the possibilities of an agricultural building being used as an Implement Barn as part of the proposed development of the Ashdown Forest Centre. The representative had written to the Superintendent following their meeting and put forward the following recommendations:-

The site level be dropped by 1-2 feet to lower the eyeline of the roof level.

The steel building be clad in timber to be in keeping with the existing surrounding buildings.

The corrugated roof be painted in a russet colour to blend with the surrounding foliage.

Some minor landscaping would be required.

The building should be constructed adjacent to the existing buildings, essential for security.

He also noted that a costly structure was not warranted.

The Superintendent informed the Board that he had contacted a timber cladding company with the view to obtaining some costs, but was still awaiting a reply. Mr. Cumming enquired if discussions had taken place with the District Planning Officer.

The Superintendent explained that more details were required before that step could be taken.

The Board supported the Committee's recommendation to accept the need for a purpose built building to be used as an Implement Barn. .

Mr. Carter raised the question of effluent disposal for the proposed new toilets. The Superintendent replied that repairs were to be carried out to the existing system as enquiries into alternative systems had proved too costly. It wasn't envisaged that the effluent would be any greater than at present, the new toilets would be more convenient for groups attending the Centre i.e. schools.

The Board agreed the recommendation that another stone quarry was not opened up to replace the present exhausted quarry.

Referring to the high costs quoted by the solicitors of Mr. Giles, the owner of 3.15 acres of land at Twyford the Conservators proposed purchasing. The Superintendent informed the Board that he had approached the Conservators' solicitors, Cripps Harries Hall, for advice. They had replied quoting costs they considered to be appropriate and the Superintendent had written to Mr. Giles' solicitor.

Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. To receive the Minutes of the Working Group Committee Meeting held on 9th September 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Hughes.

Mrs. Moore asked if the location of land within the Pale should not be a criterion to be considered.

The Board agreed this aspect should be included in the Brief by the Superintendent on Land Acquisitions.

## **8. The Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The Superintendent had nothing to report.

## **9. Any other business**

Mr. Allen commented that a letter had been printed in the local press criticising the tubes used for newly planted trees. The writer thought them to be ugly and asked why after four years the tubes were still in place. Mr. Allen asked if the Conservators should not reply to this type of criticism.

The Superintendent explained that an individual was in fact prepared to answer on the Conservators' behalf.

Mr. Parsons reported that Action Research had conveyed their appreciation to the Conservators for giving their permission for the Forest to be used for their annual charity ride.

There being no further business the Meeting closed.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 2nd DECEMBER 1991**

**Present:** Mr. O. E. B. Hughes (In the Chair), Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Mrs. A. Moore, Miss A. Lumsden, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Messrs. L. J. Gillham, D. H. O. Allen, J. F. W. Passmore, D. C. Cumming, R. I. F. Parsons, D. S. Carter

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mr. H. Hatcher, Mr. L. Hardy and Mr. K. Bodfish.

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. Matters arising**

The Superintendent, referring to Item 3 the proposed new radio system, reported that a trial had been undertaken in conjunction with Philips on a Duplex System using the UHF band. The trial had been very successful. The Superintendent invited Mr. Parsons to expand on the report, as he had been present at the trial.

Mr. Parsons said the clarity of reception had been extraordinary, especially considering the aerial used was erected temporarily and the prospect was promising.

Referring to Item 5, the Superintendent reported on the experiment using Grasscrete strips to protect the Forest verges, particularly from heavy vehicles. In reply to the Conservators' request for an extension to the experiment, the County Council Highways Department regretted that their budget did not allow for such an extension. The Superintendent recommended members of the Board view the Grasscrete already in place, as the grass was now growing through the blocks and visually they were more acceptable. Sir Frederick Sowrey said that Surrey County Council had used an edging which gave an audible warning as a vehicle passed over it.

The Superintendent said he understood a difference occurred in that the Grasscrete allowed for vehicles to pass over it, whereas the edging installed by Surrey County Council was intended to be a deterrent.

The Chairman suggested that County Council Highways Department be approached again in the new financial year.

Reporting on Item 6 the Superintendent said that two Estate Workers had been employed to replace the Employment Training Team now the scheme had closed down. The first had commenced employment two weeks ago and the second had commenced employment today. Both men had been employed on a six month trial basis. The first employee seemed promising. Mrs. Moore asked for an amendment to be made to Item 7 - "a criteria" should read "a criterion".

### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 21st October 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley. Mrs. Whitley asked the Superintendent if there had been any further development regarding an approach by the Board to English Nature, with a view to sharing the cost of a habitat survey on the Forest.

The Superintendent replied that he had nothing further to report.

Mrs. Whitley invited Mr. Carter to explain to the Board how Bio Dynamic Peppers could be used to control bracken on the Forest. Mr. Carter explained that this was a homeopathic treatment i.e. 'treating like with like'. The bracken rhizomes would be burnt on a wood fire and then the pepper would be scattered over the offending foliage. Over a period of seven years this should eradicate the bracken. A trial would be carried out by staff and pupils from Michael Hall School, Forest Row.

The Board agreed the brief prepared by the Superintendent on the conservation of the Forest as a basis for conservation work on the Forest for the next ten years. Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **5. To receive the Minutes of the Roadways Committee Meetings held on 4th November 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Hughes, as the Committee Chairman. Mr. Gillham had been unable to attend the meeting on the 4th November. The Board agreed the adoption of the Minutes.

#### **6. To receive the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting on 11th November 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming. Mr. Allen queried the Capital in the Revised Estimates for 1991/92 and the Estimates for 1992/93.

The Superintendent explained that it was Capital Expenditure for the purchase of vehicles, one purchased this year and two to be replaced next year.

Sir Frederick explained to the Board why the Committee recommend the Commoners be approached at their next Annual General Meeting, with a view to agreeing to future annual increases for the Forest Rate being 1% above the RPI. He said the costs of the Forest were rising quicker than the rate of inflation. For example, salaries and wages were the largest item in the Forest Budget. Commoners with unpaid Forest Rates over a period of years were further adding to the cost of collection.

The Superintendent added that at the current RPI, a 3.7% increase on a Forest Rate of £6:20 equalled 23 pence.

He informed the Board that he had obtained Small Claim Court forms, which would be sent to the court for the 6 Commoners involved who had not paid the Forest Rate for two years, some for three years. The final demands for this year had just been sent out and if the offenders had not settled their accounts by the 1st January 1992, the court forms would be despatched.

The Board approved the Revised Estimates for 1991/92 and the Estimates for 1992/93.

The Chairman referring to the Ashdown Forest Visitor Survey 1991, said he wished to reiterate the Committee's thanks to the Volunteers and Staff that had taken part in the survey.

Mr. Cumming invited the Superintendent to give the Board an update on the development of the Centre.

The Superintendent reported that planning permission had been obtained for the Toilets and the Education Centre. The work had been put out to tender and they were due in this week. The tenders and the costs would be submitted to the Countryside Commission who had offered a 40% grant on the Toilets and Education Centre.

The Superintendent showed the Board the plans for the General Purpose Building, which would house the vehicles and act as a store. A deer-shed and a covered area for timber would be included. The building would be clad in timber to complement the existing buildings. A planning application had been submitted to Wealden District Council.

The Chairman requested that the Superintendent write to the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust thanking them for their offer of a £25,000 contribution towards the cost of the Centre improvements.

Mr. Parsons congratulated the Superintendent on finding a building that was both highly functional and in keeping with the original buildings.

The Superintendent informed the Board that two quotes had been obtained to purchase a new telephone system out of the Repairs and Renewals Budget. The British Telecom quote was considerably less than the quote from a private company.

The Board discussed the purchase and it was agreed that the supplier would be left to the discretion of the Superintendent.

Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. To receive the Minutes of the Working Group Committee Meeting held on 28th October 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Hughes.

Mr. Hughes thanked the members of the Committee and, in particular, the Superintendent for their support during the period the Committee had been operating. He considered it had been a successful management audit.

The Board discussed the Superintendent's brief on Forest Manpower Resources over the next 5-10 years.

Mrs. Wright considered the brief should have covered a shorter period, for example 2-5 years. The policing of the Forest in particular, should be under constant review and possibly on the agenda every six months. Mrs. Wright suggested submitting a report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the end of the 1992 Summer Season.

The Board then discussed the Superintendent's brief on the Finances of the Forest.

The Chairman said that when the ownership of the Forest had changed to the County Council, the Conservators' income decreased and he suggested approaching the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel with a view to investigating the possibility of making up the shortfall of income.

Mr. Moore, as a member of the Ashdown Forest Panel, informed the Board that the Panel had not met since Mrs. Mont, Mr. Hatcher's predecessor, had retired from office.

The Superintendent said that the Conservators would be putting forward, for the new financial year, new conservation projects for the Panel's consideration and asks for increased revenue support.

In answer to questions from the Board, the Superintendent explained that the Salary Budget was calculated on an increase percentage figure, estimated by the County Treasurer annually.

Mr. Passmore informed the Board that he had been looking at the wording in the Conservators' Wayleave Agreements and suggested putting the matter before the Finance and General Purposes Committee as he considered there was room for improvement.

The Superintendent said the Wayleave Agreement had been prepared on the advice of the Conservators' solicitors, Cripps Harries Hall, in conjunction with the County Council solicitors.

The Board had lengthy discussions as to the possibility of increasing the annual Acknowledgement Rent for Wayleaves, currently £10 for a roadway, waterpipe and direction board. The Superintendent explained that a signed Wayleave Agreement was a legal document and the rent remained fixed until the property changed ownership.

Referring to Item 8, Mr. Cumming considered that the Centre should receive special Rate status as the Conservators are a non-profit making concern. The Superintendent confirmed that an appeal had been made in March 1990, but rejected in the following October.

The Board agreed that a second appeal should be submitted and asked the Superintendent to write putting the Conservators' case to Wealden District Council.

Mrs. Wright was concerned that finance is not available for archaeological survey work on the Forest and suggested writing to the Sussex Archaeological Society, as they may be able to advise the Conservators of Groups who might be prepared to carry out a survey.

Mr. Allen considered a habitat survey to be more important.

The Board then discussed the Superintendent's brief on Management Structure.

The Chairman explained the proposal to reduce the Board meetings to four times a year, supported by three standing committees. An emergency committee would deal with any planning applications or matters that needed



urgent attention. The Riding Committee should be disbanded and replaced by a twice yearly meeting with Ashdown Forest Riding Association representatives. Mrs. Moore said she supported the proposal to reduce the Board meetings to four times a year, but had reservations regarding an emergency committee. Sir Frederick suggested that once a decision had been made by the emergency committee, the remaining members of the Board should be contacted, perhaps by telephone.

After discussion, the Board agreed:

Emergency Committee should consist of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Chairman and one member of the committee involved.

Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings should be on the same footing as the other committees.

A twice yearly meeting with the Ashdown Forest Riding Association representatives, replacing the existing committee, should consist of one member from the Conservation and Roadway, Planning and Amenities Committees and the Superintendent.

The Chairman thanked Miss Lumsden for her loyalty over the years as Chairman of the Riding Committee.

### **9. The Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The publication 'Walks on Ashdown Forest and Around Tunbridge Wells' by H. Longley-Cook had been reprinted. It had been necessary to make a considerable number of amendments to the original edition, due to development and storm damage blocking some of the routes. The cost price of the new edition is £1.19 each, retailing at £2.50.

The Board asked the Superintendent to convey their thanks to Mrs. Beryl Bradley who had investigated each walk and forwarded the amendments to the Superintendent.

Mrs. Wright said she understood Mr. Longley-Cook had been suffering from ill health and suggested a gesture in the form of an amended copy from the Board informing him of the amendments and the reasoning behind them.

Scott Limited of East Grinstead had offered financial assistance in equipping the new Education Centre. The Superintendent was due to meet with management on Tuesday, 3rd December.

### **10. Any other business**

Mr. Gillham, as Chairman of the Roadways Committee, informed the Board that he had been approached by the Superintendent following a request from County Council Highways Department for the Conservators' permission to extend a footpath at Mardens Hill by approximately 25 metres. The matter had been initiated by the local school, through the Parish Council. Due to the siting of the school and the existing footpath, the children had to cross the road near a 'blind' corner. Extending the footpath necessitated encroaching on Forest land.

After discussion, the Board agreed to ask the Superintendent to contact the County Council Road Safety Officer to ascertain his view of the proposal.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE WYCH CROSS FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 6th APRIL 1992**

**Present:** Mr. O. E. B. Hughes (In the Chair), Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Messrs. L. J. Gillham, D. H. O. Allen, H. Hatcher, J. M. Dunn, J. F. W. Passmore, D. C. Cumming, R. I. F. Parsons, D. S. Carter, L. C. Hardy

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs. A. Moore and Mr. K. Bodfish for absence. Advance apologies for lateness had been received from Mr. L. Gillham.

### **2. To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman**

The Superintendent requested nominations for a Chairman of the Board for the coming year. Mr. R. Parsons proposed Mr. O. Hughes, this was seconded by Mrs. P. Wright.

Mr. Hughes took the Chair and nominated Sir Frederick Sowrey as Vice Chairman, this was seconded by Mr. J. Passmore.

Mr. Hughes and Sir Frederick Sowrey thanked the Board for their support.

**3. To note the election of Mr. J. M. Dunn as a Conservator of the Forest for five years, commencing 1st April 1992 in place of Miss A. Lumsden.**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Dunn as a newly elected member to the Board and recommended the Board write a letter to Miss Anne Lumsden, who had recently retired after many years, thanking her for her long and admirable service to the Board.

Mr. Hardy invited Mr. Dunn to introduce himself to the Board.

Mr. Dunn said he had farmed for many years in Northumberland, before moving to Forest Row, where he spent a further 10 years. On retirement, he moved to his present home in Hartfield. Mr. Dunn had been a Farmer all his life and hoped to make a useful contribution to the Board as a Conservator.

**4. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd December 1991**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

**5. Matters arising**

The Superintendent, referring to Item 3, reported that on completion of the trials that had been undertaken in conjunction with Philips, using a Duplex System on a UHF Band, costs of the new equipment had been obtained from Philips. Before purchasing new equipment, he was awaiting confirmation from the DTI that the frequency previously suggested would be allocated to the Conservators. Upon receiving confirmation, a list of requirements would then be drawn up. The Friends of Ashdown Forest had agreed to finance the equipment.

Mrs. Whitley asked if there was likely to be any difficulty in obtaining the new frequency.

The Superintendent replied that he thought not, as the DTI had requested the change in frequency in the first place.

Referring to Item 6, the Superintendent reported that he had written to the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust, thanking them for their £25,000 contribution towards the cost of the Centre improvements.

Mr. Hardy as Chairman of the Trust, thanked the Board for their acknowledgement of the contribution.

The Superintendent reported that a new telephone system had been purchased from British Telecom and was installed and working satisfactorily.

Referring to Page 4, Paragraph 3, the Superintendent reported that a second appeal had been submitted to Wealden District Council for Special Rate Status as the Board considered the Conservators should be eligible as a non-profit making organisation.

He had been informed verbally, after enquiring as to the progress of the next appeal, that the Conservators' case comes before the Committee at their meeting and was asked to hold payment on the Rate Demand recently received. The Superintendent considered that this information looked promising for Conservators' case.

The Superintendent reported that he had approached the Sussex Archaeological Society with a view to the Society carrying out survey work on the Forest. The Society had said that financial aid was not a requirement and would be willing to carry out a survey, starting with the Pale.

Reporting on Item 9(b) the Superintendent said that a letter had been sent from the Board to Scott Limited of East Grinstead, thanking them for their donation of £1,056.44 for furnishing the Education Centre. He explained that Scott Limited is a large company involved in the manufacture of tissue paper.

## **6. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 3rd February 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley.

Mrs. Whitley said the Committee had appreciated Dr. M. J. Hutchings' attendance at the Meeting, as he had been able to answer points raised by the members in connection with his findings covering the first three reports on the grazing experiment.

Mrs. Whitley then invited the Superintendent to report on the acre of hazel coppicing carried out at Cackle Street, Nutley.

The Superintendent said unfortunately no market existed, other than Bean Sticks, which were labour intensive.

The Superintendent reported that the purchase of land at Twyford was complete and the area had been cleared by contractors. The 3.15 acres had been replanted with broad-leave trees, such as oak and beech.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

The Chairman recommended Item 7 be deferred, as Mr. Gillham the Chairman of the Roads, Planning and Amenities Committee had not yet arrived.

## **8. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 2nd March 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming. Mr. Cumming invited the Superintendent to report on the proposal to apply for a 50% grant from English Nature to finance a year's contract to undertake a ground habitat survey of the Forest and to set up and input the data on a mapping computer system.

The Superintendent asked for an amendment to the Minutes. The figure of £5,976:50 should be inserted in place of £6,500.

He reported that English Nature had agreed in principle to grant aiding the project and written confirmation should be received within the next two weeks. The Friends of Ashdown Forest had agreed to provide a computer and the necessary software required to record the data. The Ashdown Forest Panel had been invited to contribute 50% as part of the Conservators' 1992/93 grant application.

Referring to the Conservators' 1992/93 grant application for special projects to the Ashdown Forest Panel, the Superintendent said it seemed judicious to dismiss Item 4(b) in the application, as this extra heathland management could be carried out at a later date.

As recommended in a brief on the Finances of the Forest, agreed by the Board at their Meeting on 2nd December 1991, an approach had been made to the Panel for an annual increase in the Forest fixed grant of £2,750.

The Panel had been invited to consider grant aiding the following projects for 1992/93: -

Referring to Item 6, the Superintendent reported that contributions towards the development of the Centre had been received from the Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust and The Friends of Ashdown Forest.

There had been no increase in expenditure to date. The Education Centre would be completed by Easter and preparations had started on the site for the General Purpose Building. SEEBOARD had agreed to reposition the main cable free of charge.

The Superintendent suggested a plaque with the following inscription be displayed in the Education Centre:

THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST ACKNOWLEDGE WITH THANKS THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS GIVEN BY THE COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION, THE SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS OF ASHDOWN FOREST, THE ASHDOWN FOREST CONSERVATION TRUST AND SCOTT LIMITED OF EAST GRINSTEAD, WHICH HAVE MADE POSSIBLE THE CONVERSION OF THIS BARN TO AN EDUCATION CENTRE.

APRIL 1992

Mr. Cumming considered it courteous to recognise those contributors who had made the development possible. The Chairman thanked the Superintendent on the Board's behalf for his instigation and completion on schedule of the project. Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **7. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 17th February 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Hughes in Mr. Gillham's absence. Mrs. Gabriel commenting on Item 2 and the Committee's recommendation that the existing footpath at the top of Chapel Lane, Forest Row, provided a safe route round the corner, suggested that the 10 m.p.h. sign that existed there at one time, was replaced. The Superintendent replied that the sign had been replaced and vandalised in short period, five times since he had taken up the post of Superintendent. The Board agreed to put the matter back to the Committee.

On Mr. Gillham's arrival he continued with the presentation of the Minutes.

Referring to Item 5(a) the Superintendent reported that a letter had been written to Wealden District Council Planning Department registering the Conservators' objections to planning applications WD/91/3121 and WD/92/0365, and WD/92/0366 - Ashdown Forest Farm - and the applications were due to go before the Committee on Tuesday 7th April. He understood that the property had changed hands and had been purchased by a church charity, with the view to providing holidays for under privileged children. The applications involved retention of administrative building with kitchen, store and toilets, showers and 7 temporary wooden huts for overnight shelter.

Mr. Cumming said he had visited the site with Wealden District Council Planning Officers. The 7 wooden huts and toilet block had temporary planning permission. There were 12 outstanding planning applications all had been renewed, but not built.

Mrs. Wright considered the Conservators should be concerned at the erection of permanent and semi-permanent buildings on the site and suggested that the Officers from Wealden District Council might have constructive discussions with the applicant.

Mr. Parsons reported that the Double-Decker Bus had been re-sited to a less visible location. He considered it preferable for the bus to be locked into one playgroup, i.e. The Westminster Playgroup rather than being used on an ad-hoc basis.

The Superintendent read to the Board a letter from Mr. C. Williams, County Planning Officer, on the implications of accommodating the forecast traffic flows on the A22 and across Ashdown Forest, discussed at a Joint Environment and Highways and Transportation Committee in October 1991. Enclosed was a report from the County Engineer recommending that the routes considered at public consultation for an East Grinstead By Pass, should now be rescinded.

The Superintendent informed the Board that a meeting had been arranged between himself and Mr. Williams for the 1st May.

Mr. Allen considered that the three counties concerned in the East Grinstead By Pass discussions, should hold joint consultations.

The Board discussed traffic calming at length and agreed that the County Council be approached with the view that Ashdown Forest should be part of the area considered when discussing methods of traffic calming. The Forest should be considered as a separate entity, rather than just part of the countryside and the Conservators should be consulted in the same way as Parish Councils.

The Chairman asked for amendments to the Committee Minutes to read:

To appoint a member for Riding - meeting next on 29th April agreed to represent the Board on riding matters.

The Superintendent referring to Item 9(c) reported that areas used by the public at present for parking on the Forest at the top of Chapel Lane, around the Recreation Ground and Tompsetts Bank were to be banked and posted off.

The Board agreed the Superintendent's proposal to construct a new car park for 20 cars adjacent to the Recreation Ground to relieve the parking problem.

Mrs. Wright, referring to Item 9(d), enquired as to the balance of the Conservators' No. 2 Account, as a large percentage of costs for the Centre development are being met by funds from the account.

The Superintendent explained that the account was fed from profit from Information Barn sales, donations, lectures, school visits and Bank Interest. The account had been set up when the present Information Centre opened and the funds from the account were for the maintenance and development of the Centre. Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **9. To agree meeting dates for the year 1992/93**

The proposed dates which had been circulated, were agreed by the Board.

### **10. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The Superintendent reported that one of the Estate Workers had given Notice and left. He had interviewed a replacement for the post.

### **11. Any other business**

Mr. Gillham as Chairman of the Commoners' Annual General Meeting held on Friday 6th March 1992, gave the following report:

It was an extremely positive meeting, well attended with 82 Commoners present. There was a contested election for a Conservator to the Board between Mr. J. M. Dunn and Mr. A. N. White. Mr. Dunn was duly elected with 72 to 71 votes.

Sir Frederick Sowrey continued by saying that the Commoners accepted the Board's recommendation to increase the Forest Rate annually by 1% over the Inflation Rate, but stated that the increase should not be added if inflation was over 10%.

The Commoners are concerned about the increase in numbers and speed of traffic on the Forest. The New Forest experiments in traffic calming met with approval and they would support the Board in instigating restrictions particularly as the Forest is an area with large numbers of pedestrians.

There was support for the Board in enforcing the Bye-Laws to ban mountain bicycles on the Forest, but asked the Board to approach the County Council with a view to setting aside an area for young people to use their bikes.

The Commoners considered the Board of Conservators were carrying out the task of managing the Forest well and conveyed their appreciation and thanks.

Mr. Gillham added that the grazing experiment had received unanimous support.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Gillham and Sir Frederick Sowrey on behalf of the Board.

Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested the Board express their thanks and appreciation to County Council Highways Department for replacing the Mileposts (cast iron, backed in Forest oak) on the Forest.

Mr. Parsons added that appreciation should be expressed for Finger-Posts replaced in Hartfield.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST  
HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON MONDAY, 1st.  
JUNE 1992**

**Present:** Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey (In the Chair), Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. A. Moore,  
Messrs. L. J. Gillham, D. H. O. Allen, H. Hatcher, J. M. Dunn, J. F. W. Passmore, D. C. Cumming, D. S. Carter, L. C. Hardy

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mr. O. E. B. Hughes, Mr. R. F. Parsons and Mr. K. Bodfish.

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th April 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. Matters arising**

The Superintendent referring to Item 8 reported that a 50% grant had been approved by English Nature to finance a year's contract to undertake a Ground Habitat Survey of the Forest, which includes setting up and inputting the data on a Mapping Computer System. Miss Nicola Muggeridge had been employed on the 1st May to fulfil the contract. Miss Muggeridge had recently carried out similar work for English Nature on the South Downs.

The Superintendent reported that the Ashdown Forest Panel had approved the projects put forward by the Conservators in their 1992/93 Grant Application. The Panel were to visit the Centre on the afternoon of the 15th June. The visit was to include discussions regarding an increase in the annual fixed grant the Conservators receive from the Panel and a tour of the Forest.

Referring to Item 11 paragraphs 9/10, the Superintendent reported that letters had been written conveying the Conservators' thanks and appreciation for replacing the Mile Posts and Finger Posts on the Forest.

The Chairman proposed that other matters would be covered by the Chairmen of the Committees during the presentation of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 27th April 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley.

The Chairman asked the Superintendent to remind the Board of the acreage involved in the proposed extension of the Grazing Experiment.

The Superintendent indicated on the map the areas involved in each option proposed in the brief on the results of the grazing experiment started in 1989 and proposals to extend the grazing on Ashdown Forest. The Superintendent explained that the area recommended by the Committee was difficult to manage by other methods, but suited to grazing. The Committee recommended Option B, which involved two Cattle Grids across a 'C' road, this would reduce the fencing required. The Superintendent warned that the fencing proposed would meet with opposition both locally and nationally, but every effort would be made to hide the fence lines.

Mr. Allen considered that the proposed Cattle Grids could aid traffic control.

The Board agreed with the Committee's recommendations:-

A phased extension of grazing in line with stages using Option B proposed in the brief.

An application be made to the Secretary of State under Section 194 of the Law of Property Act 1925 for stages II, III B and V.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **5. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 11th May 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gillham. Referring to Item 2, the Superintendent read to the Board a letter received from Forest Row Parish Council following a site meeting between the Committee and two representatives of the Council. The Parish Council were not satisfied with the Committee's decision to reject an application for the construction of a footpath at the top of Chapel Lane.

Mrs. Gabriel, as a member of the Parish Council, suggested the Board write again to the Parish Council emphasising that they are concerned about the danger of traffic on that part of the road.

The Chairman asked Mr. Hatcher to speak on the de-restricted road signs. Mr. Hatcher said that technically the residents should write registering their concern to the County Engineer. The problem often occurred when a de-restriction sign was followed closely with a speed restriction sign and unfortunately in this case the 10 m.p.h. restriction sign was regularly vandalised.

After discussion the Board agreed to reinstate the 10 m.p.h. and to write inviting the County Council Highways to investigate the matter.

Referring to Item 3 and the Conservators' decision to stop powered flying on Ashdown Forest in 1997, Mr. Dunn said that the residents in Cotchford Lane, Hartfield were subjected to noise pollution from the model aircraft operating 2 miles away.

Mr. Gillham informed the Board regarding Item 5, the marking of definitive footpaths across the Forest by Maresfield Parish Council. He said that several complaints had been received as a result of the erection of the signs. The problem being that the footpath markers were erected on the road verges, but once the footpaths entered the Forest there was no indication as to direction and the public were unwittingly trespassing on private land. The Superintendent had written to the Chairman of Maresfield Parish Council enclosing a plan showing the location of the offending signs, with suggestions as to which signs could be replaced with stone markers, which should be removed altogether and which were acceptable.

Mr. Gillham reported that the Parish Council had rejected all the Conservators' suggestions, insisting on maintaining the footpath signs as erected. Mr. Gillham suggested that as the County Council had offered to replace any offending signs with stone signs, the Conservators should take up that offer.

The Board agreed to negotiate with the County Council, rather than the Parish Council, with regard to this matter.

Mr. Cumming reported to the Board on a visit he had made to the New Forest with the County Engineer. The object of the visit was to see how Hampshire's traffic calming experiments were progressing. Hampshire's County Engineer said they had decided that the Forest held the priority over the car and various methods were being tested on traffic calming, i.e. 40 m.p.h. limit signs, clearly marking the Forest entrance, Grasscrete strips and publicity in the form of car stickers and posters with a slogan by local primary school children. Single roads were being narrowed, with passing places inserted.

Mrs. Moore said she was concerned at the time lapse involved in waiting for the New Forest results. She considered the Conservators should be taking some action with the proposed East Grinstead By Pass discussions in progress.

Mr. Hatcher said that during a visit to Hamburg he had been informed that the police there had tried and disregarded most of the traffic calming experiments. They had found that in 10 km. areas pinch points had obtained the most satisfactory results and suggested writing to the Hamburg Police to gain advice from their experience with their extensive forest areas.

Mrs. Wright agreed that artificial pinch points do slow the traffic considerably and suggested following the French example of erecting signs at each passing place reminding drivers of the speed restriction.

The Board agreed that the Committee should prepare a presentation on traffic calming within Ashdown Forest for discussion by the Board and recommend the Superintendent writes to East Sussex County Council Highways Department enlisting their support, with a copy to go to the County Planning Officer.

Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 18th May 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming.

Reporting on Item 3(b), the Superintendent said that English Nature were not prepared to grant aid the purchase of land at Foresters Cottage, Kidds Hill, as the land is not designated as an SSSI. Mr. David Streeter was preparing a report for the Friends of Ashdown Forest, as they had agreed to consider contributing the balance of the purchase price.

Reporting on Item 3(c), the Superintendent said that the agents acting for Barclays Bank plc were sending details next week, as their Management Training Centre and adjoining land was not yet on the market.

Referring to Item 6, the Superintendent reported that 35 applications had been received for the post of Ranger on Ashdown Forest as a replacement for Ranger David Pickett, who was leaving on the 26th June. Seventeen completed Application Forms had been returned and seven had been selected for interview on Friday, 5th June.

Referring to Item 7(a), the Superintendent reported that although Wealden District Council had granted the Ashdown Forest Centre Discretionary Charitable Relief of 80% on the Rates, 25% of the relief would be deducted from their annual contribution to the Conservators.

Referring to Item 7 b) the Superintendent reported that although the General Purpose Building had been sited as requested by Wealden District Council Planning Department, the Building Inspector had said the building was 2.5 metres too close to the Education Centre (a public building) to meet with the Fire Safety Regulations. A solution had been reached by removing the corner of the General Purpose Building, thus meeting the required distance between the two buildings.

Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **7. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The Superintendent said that congratulations were in order to the public for the absence of any serious fires on the Forest this season. The largest fire had been in the Army Grounds.

Mrs. Whitley enquired if the Superintendent had obtained any further information on supplies of Tensile Fencing for the new grazing enclosure. The Superintendent replied that as yet a supplier had not been found, but he was shortly travelling to Scotland, where the fencing was used extensively and he would make enquiries. Mrs. Moore suggested a number of Deer Farms in the area were using High Tensile Fencing.

#### **8. Any other business**

Mrs. Moore expressed a wish to retire from the Conservation Committee due to other commitments. The Chairman accepted her resignation with regret.

Mr. Carter enquired if the land at the Radio Station had been purchased. The Superintendent replied that the Earl de La Warr had purchased the land.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE WYCH CROSS FOREST ROW ON MONDAY, 21st. SEPTEMBER 1992**

**Present:** Mr. O. E. B. Hughes (In the Chair), Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Mrs. A. Moore, Messrs. L. J. Gillham, D. H. O. Allen, H. Hatcher, D. C. Cumming, L. C. Hardy, D. S. Carter, R. I. F. Parsons

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs. M. P. Wright, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Mr. J. M. Dunn, Mr. J. F. W. Passmore, Mr. K. Bodfish.

#### **2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 1st June 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **3. Matters arising**

The Chairman invited the Superintendent to report on the discussions which had taken place when the Ashdown Forest Trust Panel visited the Ashdown Forest Centre on the 15th June.



The Superintendent reported that the Panel had agreed to increase the Conservators' annual fixed grant from £2,750 to £3,300. The Panel had previously agreed to a grant of £10,930 for special projects.

The Chairman thanked Mrs. Moore and Mr. Hatcher as representatives of the Panel.

Mr. Allen reported that he had accompanied Miss Nicola Muggeridge, who was undertaking the Habitat Survey on the Forest, and was most impressed with the professional approach.

The Superintendent reported that a draft submission for an extension to the grazing experiment had been sent to the Secretary of State and their comments had been incorporated in the draft.

The amended draft had now been sent to the Chief Executive of the County Council, Wealden District Council, Countryside Commission and English Nature for comment. It was hoped that strong letters of support would be forthcoming to be part of the final submission.

Once a reply has been received, the draft submission will be sent to the relative Parish Councils and other bodies for input, prior to advertising in the press.

The Superintendent reported that a letter had been sent to East Sussex County Council Highways Department regarding traffic calming within Ashdown Forest. The Highways Department had replied that the matter was already being considered. The Superintendent said that he would be preparing a report following his visit to the New Forest with the County Planning Officer to see at first hand how their traffic calming experiments were progressing. The report would be submitted at the next Roads, Planning and Amenities Committee Meeting on 26th October.

#### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1992**

The Superintendent explained that the Conservators had obtained a Stewardship Scheme grant for Wrens Warren Valley in 1991. The Committee recommended a proposal to apply for another Stewardship Scheme, covering the area West of the A22, from Press Ridge Warren to the Millbrook Stream, after visiting the area.

The Superintendent said that the two Schemes would bring in approximately £15,000 per year, although this varied from year to year depending on the work involved.

Mrs. Gabriel commented that the Committee had been very impressed by the proposed submission.

The Chairman moved the adoption the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **5. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning k Amenities Committee Meeting held on 20th July 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gillham.

The Chairman asked for an amendment to Item 2 - paragraph 2 "sites" should read "cites".

The Board agreed to raise no objections to Ashdown Park's Planning Application for a change of Class, to include use as a nursing home and residential accommodation for people in need of care.

The Chairman invited the Superintendent to report on the present position of planning applications previously discussed. The Superintendent reported as follows:-

WD/92/0423 Old Forge Stables      no decision yet

WD/92/0443 Brown Knoll Farm      - approved on 3.8.92

WD/92/0356 Ashdown Forest Hotel - , refused on 28.8.92      WD/92/0438 Ashdown Forest Cricket Club - approved on 10.7.92

Mr. Gillham said that the Conservators had become involved in a dispute between the residents and the Ashdown Forest Hotel regarding a planning application submitted by the Hotel for an extension. The residents appeared to assume that the Conservators were constructing a new car park to support the Hotel. There was a problem with traffic and parking congestion in the area. The Committee had agreed in February to construct a new car park adjacent to the Recreation Ground, because of indiscriminate parking on the Forest. This would enable the

Conservators to bank and ditch off the Forest to stop illegal parking and the Committee could see no reason for changing their decision.

Mrs. Moore asked that more information on planning applications be given in the Minutes in future.

Mr. Hardy asked if the Hotel has enough space to increase their parking facilities.

Mr. Gillham replied that the Hotel did not have room to accommodate their requirements at present.

Referring to Item 3, Mr. Gillham, read to the Board a letter received from the University of Sussex with regard to their application to change the main entrance to the Isle of Thorns from Beaconsfield Road, Chelwood Gate to the A275. The letter explained that it was a condition of the purchase agreement for The Isle of Thorns, that the existing route be closed as The Manor Charitable Trustees did not want to give access through the land they were retaining.

The Conservators are concerned that the proposed access onto a fast stretch of road, would be dangerous.

At the Chairman's request the Superintendent indicated the two access points on the map for the benefit of the Board.

The Superintendent reported that the County Council Highways Department considered the proposed access to be dangerous and Wealden District Council had refused the application under delegated powers.

Referring to Item 4 the Superintendent reported that the de-restriction sign had been removed by the County Council at the blind corner at the top of Chapel Lane, Forest Row.

The Superintendent proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Hatcher as Chairman of the County Council, for his help in this matter.

Mr. Hatcher said he regretted the delay, but a labyrinth of guidelines surround road signs.

Mrs. Gabriel as a member of Forest Row Parish Council, said she was delighted as the problem had existed for many years.

Referring to Item 6, a request from Mr. Henderson, the owner of The Old Golf House, to construct a grass verge outside his property to stop cars parking alongside the hedge, blocking the gate access.

Mrs. Moore asked if Highgate Road, which The Old Golf House abuts, is an unadopted street.

The Superintendent replied that Highgate Road is a private street.

Mrs. Moore considered the County Council's permission should have been gained.

After discussion the Board agreed that an application for approval would be submitted to the County Council Highways Department.

The Superintendent reporting on Item 9(a), a request from Fairwarp Parochial Church Council regarding the possibility of extending their graveyard.

Mr. Hatcher said he understood that Parochial Church Councils had a statutory duty to provide burial grounds within the Parish.

The Board agreed to an amendment in the Minutes = "Fairwarp Parish Church Council" should read "Rural Parish Council"

Mr. Gillham informed the Board that Item 9(b) would be discussed under Confidential.

Mr. Carter referring to Item 9(c) enquired if the Royal Ashdown. Forest Golf Club had requested permission to lay concrete under the plastic tees on the Course.

The Superintendent replied that regretfully as the work was carried out some ten years ago, before his appointment, he could not answer, but considered a solid base to the tees preferable to the Forest being churned up.

After discussion the Board agreed that the Superintendent should write to the Golf Club, making them aware that the Conservators' permission should be gained before carrying out any similar work.

Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 7th September 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming.

The Superintendent reported that he had looked into the question of holding surplus money in a London Share Account and considered it unsuitable for the Conservators' needs.

The Board approved the Audited Accounts for 1991/92, which had been circulated.

The Board approved the Superintendent's action of agreeing the extra work needed on the General Purpose Building to meet the fire regulations and the Building Inspector's requirements.

The Board approved the increase in the Riding Permit charges for 1992/93 from £41.13 to £42.77 (inclusive of V.A.T.) for an annual adult permit. The increase of 4% was in line with inflation.

The Superintendent reported that following a V.A.T. Inspection, the Conservators had been asked to include V.A.T. on donations for school visits as this was considered a service.

The Committee had recommended contacting a V.A.T. Consultant for advice. The Consultant had advised the Conservators to include the V.A.T. as the alternative suggested by the Customs and Excise Officer of not being able to claim for V.A.T. inputs such as the Education Centre conversion (£4,025) did not compare with the V.A.T. payable on donations.

Mr. Allen commented that generally when a donation was made it was expected that the whole amount would go to the Forest.

The Board agreed to maintain the donation principle for school visits, but to make it clear on the Booking Form that the Conservators would be paying V.A.T. on the donation.

Referring to Item b, the Superintendent reported that the purchase of land at the Isle of Thorns would be completed that day.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to accept the draft for a new licence subject to adding "The use of herbicides to maintain the roadway is not permitted under Bye-Law No. 8"

The Board then discussed the recent letter received from Barclays Bank regarding charges. It was agreed that the Superintendent should investigate the possibilities of a reduction in charges with other banks. The closure of the Forest Row Branch also posed a problem and it was agreed that a bank in Crowborough would be more practical due to the difficulty of parking in East Grinstead.

Referring to 9(a), the vandalising of Forest Cairns, Mrs. Moore asked how often they were emptied.

The Superintendent replied every two weeks.

The Board agreed regretfully with the recommendation that if the Cairns were broken into again, they should be removed due to the cost of repair.

The Superintendent reported that clearance of rubbish dumped on the Forest was now a major problem. The previous arrangement using the dump at Wych Cross had been discontinued and everything now had to be taken to the amenity tip in Forest Row.

Mr. Cumming asked if the amounts of rubbish dumped on the Forest were large or small.

The Superintendent replied that a very large load of house clearance rubbish had been dumped at the Reservoir. Addresses had been obtained and the matter was now under Police investigation.

Mr. Hardy referring to 9(c) asked if the Education Centre and General Purpose Building had been included in the internal security system.

The Superintendent explained that he was unhappy with the quote received from the present company as he considered the quote to be too high compared to the work required to include the new buildings. He intended to obtain a quote from another company as a comparison. The work would be financed from the Repairs and Renewals Fund.

Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **7. Sundry Matters**

a) The Superintendent indicated to the Board a display of samples showing some of the output the new computer was capable of. He said it would make the preparation of plans and maps of the Forest a lot easier.

Mr. Cumming said he was very impressed with the display.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW ON 30th NOVEMBER 1992**

**Present:** Mr. O. E. B. Hughes (In the Chair), Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Mrs. E. M. Gabriel, Mrs. S. F. Whitley, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. M. P. Wright, Messrs. L. J. Gillham, D. C. Cumming, L. C. Hardy, H. Hatcher, D. S. Carter, R. I. F. Parsons, D. H. O. Allen, J. M. Dunn, J. F. W. Passmore

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mr. K. Bodfish.

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st September 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment:-

Page 3 - Paragraphs 15 & 16 "Parochial Church Council" should read "Rural Parish Council".

### **3. Matters arising**

The Superintendent reported that letters had been received from East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council, Countryside Commission and English Nature in support of the Conservators' proposed submission to the Department of the Environment for consent to fence common land, to extend the grazing on the Forest. As part of the consultation process, the draft submission will now be sent to the Parish Councils and other bodies for comment prior to advertising in the press.

A second Stewardship Scheme grant had been agreed with the Countryside Commission for heathland management over the next ten years, covering the west side of the Forest.

Ashdown Park had submitted a further planning application for a hotel and conference centre.

Planning application WD/92/0423 Old Forge Stables had been approved on 5th November 1992.

Mr. Richardson, Divisional Engineer from East Sussex County Council had made a site visit to the proposed footpath outside the Old Golf House, Forest Row. Mr. Richardson had no objection to its construction.

A meeting had been arranged with the Highways Department for Friday, 4th December to discuss the parking problems that existed on Highgate Road adjacent to the Ashdown Forest Hotel, Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club and Recreation Ground.

Referring to Mr. Carter's enquiry regarding the concrete pads sited at the tees on the golf course, the Superintendent said that they were moveable pads and part of the mat used as tees. The mats are stored during the summer months.

Mrs. Wright enquired if any further progress had been made with regard to the large amount of house clearance rubbish dumped at the Reservoir. The Superintendent replied that the police investigation had drawn a blank.

The Chairman informed the Board that he proposed to move Item No. 5 on the Agenda forward as the Committee Chairman had to leave the meeting to attend another appointment, together with Mrs. Wright.

## **5. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purpose Committee Meeting held on 9th November 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming.

The Board agreed to increase the Forest Rate for 1993/94 by the D.S.O. as at the 1st. November 1992 plus 1% (4.6% = £6:73 increase of 30p).

The Board accepted the Committee's recommendation to designate the recently purchased 13.7 acres of land adjacent to the Isle of Thorns as part of the Forest, covered by the Act and its Bye Laws.

Referring to Item 3(a), the Superintendent reported that the 27.8 acres of land at Tile Lodge for which the Friends of Ashdown Forest had agreed to pay up to £15,000 had been withdrawn from the market. Mr. Cumming suggested the Conservators should approach the vendor with the view to a private purchase and this was agreed.

Referring to Item 3 b) Mrs. Mere considered that the draft for an application for funds should be revised to stress the ecological value of Ashdown Forest as a lowland heath with public access, also the Conservators' aim to acquire or regain land that became available within the ancient boundary, should be clarified. Mrs. Moore added her support to this view.

After discussion the Board the Board agreed to amend the covering letter to the appendix to incorporate these remarks and to use Mrs. Wright's draft to approach other Trusts, Charities and Companies.

Referring to Item 4 changing the Centre Security System, the Superintendent explained that a quote from the existing company (Modern Alarms) to extend the system to encompass the two new buildings at the Centre was, in his opinion, too high. British Telecom were invited to quote for a complete Security System and Fire Alarm System, but were unable to supply the Fire Alarm side. The Superintendent had obtained a further quote from a company by the name of Swift Alarms Supplies Ltd. who were able to supply both systems.

The quotes compare as follows:-

Modern Alarms to extend present systems	£2,267
Total annual payment	£606.53
Telecom (security only) installation	£1,574
Total annual payment	£200.53
Swift Alarms Supplies Ltd.	
Installation of both systems	£1,500
Total annual payment	£271.00

After discussion the Board agreed to accept the quote from Swift Alarms Supplies Ltd. for installation and annual monitoring of a complete Security and Fire Alarm System for the Centre.

The Superintendent reported that the Conservators' accounts had been transferred from Barclays Bank, East Grinstead to Midland Bank, Crowborough. Notification received from Barclays Bank stated that the Conservators' accounts had outgrown the Small Business Tariff. The new Tariff would mean the Conservators incurring bank charges in the region of £1,300 per year. The Manager at Midland Bank, Crowborough, had agreed to conduct the Clerks Account and Clerks 2 Account free of normal activity charges. A further point to be taken into consideration was the closing of Barclays Bank Sub-Branch at Forest Row. This involved travelling to East Grinstead where traffic, queuing at the Bank and difficulty of parking made banking a time consuming task.

The Superintendent reported with regard to the Conservators' Insurers, Municipal Mutual Insurance. The company appeared to be operating normally after reports earlier in the year that they were in financial difficulty. A claim submitted by the Conservators following the theft of tractor parts, had now been settled. The Superintendent had contacted a London Broker with the view to obtaining quotes, should Municipal Mutual Insurance fail, Mr. A. Ogden, Deputy County Secretary, and had advised that his understanding of the Ashdown Forest Act meant that the County Council would be liable if Municipal Mutual were unable to meet a claim from the Conservators.

The Board approved the Revised Estimates for 1993/94.

Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 26th October 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gillham. The Board discussed an application from Forest Row Tennis Club to install 20 lights on the present courts. Mr. Dunn supported his objection to the Committee's recommendation to refuse the lighting by informing the Board that the nearest building was 200 yards away and that there were no immediate residential buildings that would be affected by the lights.

Mr. Allen said he had been involved with the installation of lights at East Grinstead Hockey Club and considered that if careful attention was paid to the design and installation, light pollution was minimised.

Mrs. Whitley enquired if a time restriction would be operated. Mr. Gillham replied that a restriction had not been mentioned in the application.

The majority of the Board considered that flood lights were not in keeping with a wild and natural area; further to agree to lights might set a precedent for future applications.

The Chairman asked the Board to vote and the Committee's recommendation was carried by 12 for the recommendation and 3 against.

Referring to Item 2 - Paragraph 2, Mrs. Moore suggested "the Golf Club wanted to come up with" should read "the Golf Club should come up with". The Board agreed.

Mr. Hardy said that as a member of the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club he was not aware of any future development plans. Mr. Gillham explained that the Committee considered the Golf Club should decide on a long-term co-ordinated plan to meet their requirements, rather than disjointed requests that could possibly lead to additional requests at a later date.

The Chairman explained that he had requested an update from the County Planning Officer on East Sussex County Council's position regarding the proposed East Grinstead Bypass and traffic plans for the Forest (each Board member was given a copy of Mr. C. Williams' update).

The Board then discussed the Superintendent's brief on his visit to the New Forest to see at first hand how their traffic calming experiments were progressing. Mrs. Moore commented that she had found the brief very interesting and considered that discussions with the County Council on traffic calming within Ashdown Forest should progress with some urgency. Mr. Hatcher endorsed this and considered the County Engineer should look at

Ashdown Forest as a complete package. The Conservators' request for concrete edging to Forest roads was not a major expense.

The Board agreed to approach the County Council again regarding introducing strict traffic management on the Forest without awaiting the result of the A22 consultations.

Mrs. Moore said that on the A22 through Nutley she had noticed that a number of Deer Mirrors were in need of repair, also that the grass verges were being cut to soil level. The Superintendent replied that approximately 200 Deer Mirrors were replaced and repaired each year and it was an endless battle to keep them in place. With regard to the verge cutting, this was carried out once a year as late as possible to allow wild flowers to seed. He would ensure the cutter blades were raised. the Board accepted the Committee's recommendation that the Superintendent should write to Wealden District Council expressing the Conservators' concern with regard to a planning application submitted by Londonderry Farm involving stabling for 10 horses and accommodation for 3 grooms.

Mr. Gillham informed the Board that Item 5 would be discussed under Confidential. Green Management Committee to apply for planning permission to convert the pavilion from a flat to a pitched roof. Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **6. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

A donation of £300 had been received to plant trees in memory of the Reverend Gerald Hawker, who at one time was the Forest Row Parish Priest. One hundred and fifty trees had been planted adjacent to the plantation at Church Hill.

The final date for comments from the Parish Councils and other bodies for consent to fence common land had been set for 29th January 1993. The Superintendent asked for a change of date for the next Conservation Committee Meeting to the 1st February 1993. This was agreed.

The Superintendent asked for the Board's support should it become necessary to ban horse riding on the Forest due to the very wet conditions. The Superintendent explained that the Forest was becoming very badly damaged by horses and the Riding State was set at State 3 - Walking Only. The Board agreed.

#### **7. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 1993**

**Present:** Mr. L.J. Gillham (In the Chair), Mr. D.C. Cumming, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Messrs. L. C. Hardy, H. Hatcher, R.I.F. Parsons, D.H.O. Allen, J.M. Dunn, J.F.W. Passmore, A.N. White, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

apologies for absence were received from Mrs. Gabriel, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Bodfish.

#### **2. To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman**

The Superintendent requested nominations for a Chairman of the Board for the coming year. Sir Frederick Sowrey nominated Mr. L.J. Gillham, saying he had the full support of the other Commoner Board members. Mrs. Wright seconded the nomination.

Mr. Gillham took the Chair and thanked the Board for their support, especially as he was conscious of the fact that there were longer serving members. He said he would like to pay tribute to Mr. O.E.B. Hughes, the retiring Chairman. Mr. Hughes had from the outset instigated a long-term Management Plan for the Forest and had diligently carried through the plan to its completion. Mr. Gillham, with the support of the Board, asked the Superintendent to write to Mr. Hughes and to present him with a painting of the Forest to express their appreciation of his term as Chairman of the Board. Mr. Gillham then nominated Mr. D.C. Cumming as Vice

Chairman, this was seconded by Mr. Parsons. Mr. Cumming thanked the Board for their confidence in him and said he would do his best to meet past standards.

### **3. To note the election of Mr. A.N. White as a Conservator of the Forest for five years, commencing 5th April 1993**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. White as a newly elected member of the Board and recommended that the Board write to Mr. D. Carter, thanking him for his service to the Board. The Chairman said Mr. Carter would be sorely missed, but he was sure Mr. Carter would still take an active interest in the Forest.

### **4. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th November 1992**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed subject to the following amendments:-

Item 5, paragraph 4 - "to pay up to £15,00" should read "to pay up to £15,000"

Item 5, paragraph 6 - "Referring to Item 3b) Mrs. Moore" should read "Referring to Item 3b) Mr. A. Wright"

Item 4, paragraph 2 - "nearest building was 200x away" should read "nearest building was 200 yards away"

Item 4, paragraph 2 - "would be effected" should read "would be affected".

Item 4, paragraph 6 - to be amended to read "The Chairman asked the Board to vote. The Committee's recommendation to refuse Forest Row Tennis Club's request to install 20 foot floodlights on the present courts was carried by 12 for the recommendation and 3 against".

### **5. Matters arising**

The Chairman said that matters arising would be covered by the following presentations of the Committee Minutes, therefore unless any Board member had a particular matter to raise, he proposed moving on to Item 6. This was agreed.

### **6. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 25th January 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley. Mrs. Whitley expressed the Committee's appreciation of Miss Muggeridge's report on the completion of the Habitat Survey. She said the Committee had been very impressed with the computer's capabilities and wished to thank everyone who had supported the project.

Mrs. Wright enquired as to the term "peppers", suggested as an alternative to herbicide.

Mr. Gillham said he understood the seed or spores of the invasive plant were collected and burnt, then ground and sprinkled on the young plants. It was claimed the plant would die in due course.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to undertake an experiment to eradicate Japanese Knot Weed (*Reynoutria japonica*) by treating with Glyphosate this summer in the largest patch at Nutley.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to accept the Superintendent's proposals to put forward to the Ashdown Forest Trust for financial support for specific Conservation Projects for 1993/94:

Heathland management - Broadstone Valley

Hazel coppicing - Cackle Street, Nutley

Fencing for the grazing extension at Millbrook should the Conservators' application to fence be approved.

The Superintendent reported that it had been a difficult season to undertake the planned conservation work on the Forest due to weather conditions. The season had started dry, enabling the contractors to start work, then there had been several weeks of rain resulting in the work being halted. The work had now been completed, apart from rhododendron clearance by Turner's Fencing & Forestry at Hindleap. It had been agreed to complete the work in September/October.

Mr. Hardy enquired if the hazel coppicing at Cackle Street produced any income for the Forest.

The Superintendent explained that the produce was at present of a poor quality. The work undertaken so far had included removing the canopy that had grown over the coppice. This would let the light in, giving the hazel a chance to grow.

Mrs. Moore reported that at a recent Woodland Forum it had been said that there is a market for poor coppice for charcoal users and suggested contacting Tony Denyer, Woodland Adviser for East Sussex County Council. The



Superintendent said that the local charcoal burner required 3 inch diameter stems and the stems available were only 1 inch, but the new growth did look promising.

Sir Frederick Sowrey said a paper produced by Hampshire County Council on Hazel Coppicing was very informative. The Superintendent said he had read the paper.

Mr. Allen suggested the Board look at the market for hazel coppice for future reference.

Referring to Item 6, the Superintendent reported that he had written to Wealden District Council with regard to the overflow from Nutley Pumping Station polluting the Forest stream. Wealden District Council had forwarded the letter to the National Rivers Authority on the 9th February. The Superintendent had written to the National Rivers Authority last week asking for a reply. The overflow was being monitored and to date the bag, that had been installed to collect any excess sewerage, was empty and intact. Mrs. Whitley said, as a member of the National Rivers Authority, she would follow up the matter if required.

Sir Frederick commented that the overflow had been raised as a matter for concern at the Commoners' Annual General Meeting.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 8th February 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gillham. The Superintendent read to the Board the letter, containing amendments suggested by Board members, on the Conservators' observations following the draft Recreational Cycling Strategy for East Sussex forwarded for comment by the County Planning Department.

The main points condensed as follows:-

With traffic calming measures, the Conservators consider secondary roads around and through the Forest could be adopted as cycle routes.

Failure to take into account Ashdown Forest's S.S.S.I. status. Heathland is rare and fragile, susceptible to erosion. The Conservators' policy is to curtail recreational activities in the summer months to protect the flora and fauna, this is when off-road cycling would be most popular.

Because of the fragility of habitat, the Conservators press most strongly that Ashdown Forest be deleted from consideration for off-road cycling.

Mrs. Whitley reported that the Strategy had caused consternation. Nine Parish Councils had replied in the same vein and a lot of replies asked for lesser roads to be designated. Mrs. Whitley said the Strategy was scheduled to be discussed at the June meeting of the County Council Joint Highways and Environment Committee. She stressed that the Strategy was a draft and therefore no firm decisions had been taken, but she would follow the proceedings closely on the Conservators' behalf.

Mr. Gillham reported on a letter from Mr. D. McL. Rabagliati representing the Trustees of the Tompsetts Bank Road Fund who objected to the proposed construction of a car park adjacent to the Forest Row Recreational Ground, agreed by the Board at their meeting on the 6th April 1992. Mr. Gillham said he had attended a meeting on Sunday, 7th March with the Superintendent to discuss the residents' concerns with regard to the car park bringing more traffic into the area and the Road Fund having to meet the extra costs in repairing the road as a result.

An alternative had been suggested by the residents by way of banking the sides of the road and putting in posts. This would prevent illegal parking on Forest land and the proposed construction, of the car park would be abandoned. From the Conservators' point of view, this solution provided a cheaper alternative and they could not be accused of encouraging more traffic into the area. Also it met with their obligation to protect the Forest.

The Board discussed the provision for parking for the Hotel and Golf Club. Mr. Gillham said that the residents seemed to hold the misconception that the Conservators were in collusion with the Hotel in wanting to construct a car park.

The residents were in agreement with the alternative arrangement, but both Mr. Gillham and the Superintendent could not see this being a solution to the parking problem in the long term.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to the request from the British Horse Society Endurance Riding Group to hold an event on the Forest on the 9th October, with a limited entry of one hundred.

Approval was given on the condition that if the going was unsuitable and would cause damage to the Forest, the event would be cancelled.

The Board then discussed a request from Mrs. Parker, 'Tremain's Riding Stables', to increase her Riding School Badges from 8 to 12 for the summer months.

The Superintendent explained that there were two schools using the Chelwood Gate accesses onto the Forest, as a result that area of the Forest was already under pressure.

Mrs. Wright expressed her concern, with the school holidays approaching, that children may be forced to ride on the roads. Mrs. Whitley endorsed this concern.

After discussion the Board agreed that the Superintendent should write to Mrs. Parker inviting her to put other options forward, which would be considered by the Board.

Mr. Cumming reported on the meeting of the County Council Highways Committee held on the 17th March, when the Highway Strategy for the High Weald was under discussion. The County Engineer proposed an overall plan for Ashdown Forest. East Sussex and Surrey were considered to be standing in the way of an East Grinstead By Pass. The Strategy proposed that in the event of an East Grinstead By Pass, the road would be single line across the Forest, with By Passes for Forest Row and Nutley. The Strategy accepted the Forest as a special place and proposed measures similar to those introduced in the New Forest for traffic calming, with forest gates, cattle grids, rumble strips and traffic management including a 40 m.p.h. zone.

Mr. Cumming said he had spoken in support of these proposals, especially if they resulted in the benefit of a reduction in lorries using Forest roads, but he had not supported an East Grinstead By Pass.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Hatcher for his support in putting the Conservators' concerns in reducing the impact of traffic on the Forest to the County Engineer.

Mr. Hatcher replied that he had been disappointed with replies to his letter from the County Engineer and the County Planning Officer. Ashdown Forest was still not being looked at separately; traffic calming is being looked at as a whole.

The Superintendent reported that he had a meeting with the County Engineer prior to the Highways Committee Meeting. Mr. Kermode had discussed his proposals for the Forest with the Superintendent. The Board discussed their course of action at length and it was agreed that the Board should write to the County Engineer suggesting that an Officer be appointed to start planning the special measures suggested for the Forest and to consult with the Conservators. Mr. Hatcher said he intended to write.

The Superintendent reported that the dispute between British Telecom and the residents in Highgate Road, Forest Row, over whether the cables for modernising British Telecom's system, should be put underground or whether extra poles should be put up, still continued.

The Chairman said that the planning applications relating to Lufton, Nutley and Broadstone Warren Scout Camp had been approved, but the development at Inkpen Lane was still being considered.

Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

**8. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 22nd February 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Cumming. Mrs. Moore pointed out a spelling error in Item 1 - "sort" should read "sought".

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to approach the Friends of Ashdown Forest with a view to inviting them to purchase a new Swipe and second-hand tractor (£12,600).

The Board agreed the proposed dates for next year's Board and Committee Meetings.

Mrs. Moore enquired if the advice of a fire officer had been sought with regard to proposed extension to the Rangers' Office to accommodate the new computer. The Superintendent replied that no approach had been made to date.

Referring to Item 7(b), the gift of a map by Mr. A. W. Lloyd, one of the original maps used in the 1885 court case between the Earl and Mr. Hale and others, Mrs. Moore suggested that if the original map was placed with the Lewes Records Office, a copy could possibly be made free of charge.

Referring to Item 7(e), the Superintendent reported that he had received a reply from Wealden District Council with regard to cars abandoned on Ashdown Forest and their removal to a holding area until permission to dispose of them had been obtained. Wealden District Council was questioning security at the holding area and insurance cover. The Board recommend that further consultations are necessary to establish the Conservators' position. Mrs. Wright suggested contacting Mr. Mike Fleming, Head of Works and Services, Wealden District Council direct.

Referring to Item 7(f), the Superintendent reported that he had had a meeting with the Honourable G.A.S. Grimston to discuss Strutt & Parker's position with regard to manorial waste. He suggested that the County Council advertise claiming the land. He also offered to sign a statutory declaration or even better, the Manor Reeve, Mr. Kirby. Mrs. Wright suggested the subject was raised at the Ashdown Forest Trust Meeting on the 20th April. Mr. Hatcher said he was raising the matter.

Mr. Cumming moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **9. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The estover cutting season is over and 50 Commoners and 30 non-Commoners had cut estovers this year.

The Ashdown Forest Visitor Centre numbers for 1993 were 20,193 as compared with 20,368 in 1992.

The Superintendent asked the Board for their approval of a notice he intended to include with the 1993 Acknowledgement rent demands. The notice reminded licence holders that the use of herbicides, roadway extensions and the dumping and burning of rubbish on the Forest is not permitted. Also fire breaks should only be cut in late summer.

The Board agreed, subject to two amendments to the notice and the addition of the relevant Bye Law numbers.

The Superintendent informed the Board of his intention to retire on the 31st. December 1993. He said he had served for ten years, the term agreed on his appointment. He had very much enjoyed working on the Forest.

The Chairman said that advertising for a new Superintendent should be carried out at the beginning of May, with interviews in June. The candidate selected by the beginning of July, with a view to taking up his post at the end of September or beginning of October, which gave a three month hand-over period.

He suggested an Interview Committee of five members to include the Chairman and Vice Chairman. He then asked which members of the Board had interviewing experience.

It was agreed the Committee members would be Mr. Gillham (Chairman), Mr. Cumming (Vice Chairman), Mrs. Wright, Mr. Parsons and Mr. Allen.

### **10. Any other business**

Sir Frederick Sowrey reported on the Commoners' Annual General Meeting held on 5th March 1993 at Hartfield Village Hall. Eighty-eight Commoners attended the meeting and over two hundred voted. The Commoners

accepted the new Forest Rate, which included the extra 1% over R.P.I. recommended by the Board and agreed by the Commoners at their 1992 Annual General Meeting.

David Streeter addressed the meeting on the need for management of heathland and the Superintendent explained the method of management, which involved a proposal to fence 1,000 acres of Forest to enable Commoners to graze their animals in safety.

After questions the Commoners agreed the proposals, which they would review on an annual basis.

The Superintendent reported that the amended application for consent to erect fences on common land, which had been circulated to all Board members, involved reducing the Stages from 4 to 2, thus reducing the amount of fencing, which seemed to be the main concern. All the other bodies who were invited to comment on the application, gave their support, apart from two Parish Councils.

It was intended to go to press in May, following two public meetings, one at Fairwarp and the other at Nutley. The Superintendent would borrow David Streeter's slides with Chris Marrable speaking on the reasons for the proposals and the Superintendent the plans. Conservators would be asked to be present.

A copy of the final amended application would be sent to all those bodies originally invited to comment.

The Chairman said that one group of people were strongly in favour of controlled burning as the method of management for the Forest and intended to make their views heard.

Maresfield Parish Council were the main Council opposed to the fencing and after Mr. Gillham had spoken to their Chairman, their main concern seemed to be getting the required number of stock for grazing. Mr. Gillham had indicated that the Conservators may be in a position to pay a premium for grazing animals on the Forest.

Mr. Allen referred to two letters which had been printed in the Kent & Sussex Courier condemning the proposals and suggested the Board respond by advertising the public meetings shortly.

The Board agreed to go ahead with the application after the two public meetings.

The Chairman reminded the Board that this was Mr. Hatcher's last meeting and conveyed the Board's thanks for all his help and support over the last year.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON 7th JUNE 1993**

**Present:** Mr. L.J. Gillham (In the Chair), Mr. D.C. Cumming,  
Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. E.M. Gabriel, Mrs. M.P. Wright,  
Messrs. L.C. Hardy, D. Bellotti, R.I.F. Parsons, D.H.O. Allen,  
J.M. Dunn, J.F.W. Passmore, A.N. White, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. A. Moore and Mr. K. Bodfish.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. David Bellotti, the recently elected Chairman of East Sussex County Council, as the representative of the Ashdown Forest Trust.

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th April 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct and accurate record.

### **3. Matters arising**

The Superintendent referring to Item 6, paragraph 4, reported that the site selected to undertake an experiment to eradicate Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) at Nutley had been changed in favour of an isolated site near Fairwarp. A report on how the experiment was progressing would be put before the Conservation Committee at their next meeting on 5th July.

Referring to Item 5, paragraph 8 the Superintendent said he had spoken to Tony Denyer, Woodland Adviser for East Sussex County Council, with regard to a possible market for poor hazel coppice, which the site at Cackle Street, Nutley, currently produces. Mr. Denyer had referred the Superintendent to Mr. Saunders, who has experience in the marketing of hazel coppice. The Superintendent hoped to have a meeting with Mr. Saunders at a later date.

Referring to Page 4, paragraph 6 the Superintendent said Mrs. Parker, Tremain's Riding Stables, had accepted the Board's decision not to increase her riding school badges from 8 to 12 for the summer months. Mrs. Parker proposed taking out two groups of 8 riders in succession onto the Forest, rather than one larger group of 12.

Referring to Page 5, paragraph 2, the Superintendent informed the Board that he had attended two meetings between British Telecommunications and the residents of Highgate Road, Forest Row, but the dispute as to whether the cables involved to update the telephone system should be put underground or to install extra poles had to date not been resolved.

Referring to Item 8, paragraph 3, the Superintendent said that the purchase of a second-hand tractor and a new swipe had been financed by The Friends of Ashdown Forest. The Board asked the Superintendent to write to The Friends expressing their thanks.

Referring to Item 8, paragraph 5, the Superintendent reported that a Fire Officer from East Sussex County Council had inspected the extension to the Rangers' Office and a glass door panel was required to meet the regulations. This had now been fitted.

Mr. Cumming enquired if any progress had been made with regard to obtaining a copy of the map used in the 1885 court case between the Earl, Mr. Hale and others, presented to the Conservators by Mr. A. Lloyd. The Superintendent replied that he had approached the Lewes Records Office as suggested by Mrs. Moore at the last Board Meeting, but they were unable to take a reproduction. Mrs. Wright suggested that if a negative could be made of the map, it would present the possibility of selling the reproductions in the Information Centre. The Board agreed that a negative should be obtained.

The Superintendent then read to the Board the reply he had received from Mr. Fleming, Head of Works and Services, Wealden District Council following a direct approach with regard to hastening the removal of abandoned vehicles on the Forest and the possibility of the Conservators removing them to a holding area until the Council had received authority for their removal and disposal. Mr. Fleming explained that although he supported the Conservators' wishes to have abandoned vehicles removed from the Forest without undue delay, the Council had to comply with the procedure laid down in the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978. He could see no objections from the Council's point of view, but suggested the Conservators sought legal advice. In the meantime, he would seek advice from the Council's Solicitor, particularly if a vehicle would remain classified as abandoned if it is within the Conservators' compound.

After discussion, the Board agreed that the Superintendent should investigate the Conservators' position further if an abandoned vehicle was removed to a holding area prior to collection by Wealden District Council.

The Chairman referring to Item 9(d) informed the Board that following the Superintendent's announcement of his intention to retire on 31st. December 1993, the post had been advertised in The Guardian and with the Officer's Association. Forty-eight application forms had been sent out and a short list of six had been selected for interview on Wednesday, 9th June.

#### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 26th April 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Gillham. Mr. Gillham explained that due to the meeting coinciding with the County Council elections, the attendance numbers had been low, therefore it had been decided to delay electing a Committee Chairman until the next meeting.

Mr. Gillham proceeded to report on the public meetings held at Nutley War Memorial Hall on the 11th May and Fairwarp Village Hall on the 13th May to present the Conservators' reasons for the proposal to apply to the Secretary of State for the Environment to fence 1,100 acres of Ashdown Forest to enable Commoners to graze their animals in safety, as the most practical method of heathland management.

He said although the Conservators had received criticism for lack of advertising, the meetings had been well attended. Mr. David Streeter, Pro Vice Chancellor of Sussex University, had addressed both meetings on the Conservators' behalf to explain the importance of lowland heath. The Superintendent had presented the Conservators' reasoning behind the proposed application to fence.

Mr. D. Allen and Mr. A. White had attended the Nutley meeting.

Mr. R. Parsons and Sir Frederick Sowrey had attended the Fairwarp meeting. Mr. D. Cumming had attended both meetings with Mr. Gillham in the Chair.

Mr. John Gent spoke at both meetings opposing the fencing and favouring burning as a more economical and effective method of management.

The main points put forward in opposition to the fencing were as follows:-

1. At Nutley there was strong support for not conserving the heathland, therefore letting it revert back to natural woodland. At Fairwarp, when this suggestion was put to the vote, the meeting was against letting the heathland revert back to woodland, but strongly opposed to fencing.

2. Concern at the lack of sufficient stock to graze, but conversely a large grazing stock would inconvenience dog walkers and riders.

3. Concern that grazing would reduce the diversity of plant life.

4. The Conservators had taken an undemocratic line.

At both meetings the public felt that fencing would be a restriction and went against the principle of common land allowing free access on foot.

There was support for a deer fence along the eastern side of the A22, but the Superintendent explained that fallow deer have a natural instinct to travel.

Mr. Parsons said that the Chairman had presented a fair summary of both meetings.

Sir Frederick Sowrey said that several people had spoken to him since the meetings, expressing the opinion that the Forest should revert back to woodland. He had explained that the Conservators had a legal obligation to manage the Forest and the S.S.S.I. status had been awarded because of the rare heathland habitat within Ashdown Forest. He questioned how benignly negative the Conservators could be before one of the government bodies stepped in. He understood the Conservators did not have the specialist machinery required to manage the boggy areas in the Misbourne Valley, but considered the Conservators should explore the possibility of approaching other organisations who managed similar environments i.e. bog areas, shorelines etc.

Mr. Cumming said that Mr. Streeter had expressed concern should the proportion of heathland to woodland change in favour of woodland and had made it quite clear that he would no longer be able to give his support for the continuation of the Forest's S.S.S.I. status.

The Chairman explained that should the Conservators decide to go ahead with the application, notification would appear in the press for a period of three weeks before the application was passed to the Secretary of State. If it was deemed necessary to hold a public enquiry, everyone would be able to make a representation then. He suggested taking the proposals back to the Conservation Committee for further consideration.

Mrs. Wright enquired if consultation with the various bodies approached originally would be repeated.

The Chairman replied that there was a possibility of re-consultation, whether the application received further amendments or not.

The Board agreed to put the proposal to fence 1,100 acres of Ashdown Forest back to the Conservation Committee for further consideration, following strong local opposition at the two public meetings.

The Superintendent asked the Board for their approval of the format for the Information Board's to be erected in eight major car parks, to give new visitors some information on the Forest and direct them to the Centre for further information. He said the type of Board's suggested were the cheapest option and could easily be replaced. The Board agreed the format for the Information Board's and agreed that the Superintendent should obtain quotes for illustration and production of the Board's.

Mr. \*\*\*more enquired how the deer population was monitored. The Superintendent replied that it was impractical to gain accurate numbers and policy was not to discuss figures because of poaching. Mrs. Gabriel commented that the deer population in the Forest Row area appeared to on the increase. The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to maintain the policy of leaving the herd in its natural state.

Mr. Gillham moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

#### **5. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 10th May 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Gabriel.

Mrs. Gabriel explained to the Board a proposal put forward to the Forest Row Memorial Ground Committee, which might resolve the problem of the Tennis Club's application for a third tennis court. She said that the original plan of the Recreation Ground had been inaccurate, therefore, it had been suggested following a site visit, that by encroaching on part of the junior football pitch, a third court could be accommodated within, the allotted five acre site without encroaching on the Forest.

Mr. Bellotti commented that facilities for young people were important.

Mrs. Gabriel agreed, but said the junior pitch was rarely used and a further pitch existed in the village.

The Board agreed to the proposal.

Referring to Item 4 the Superintendent said that the National Rivers Authority had assumed that the new pumping station at Nursery Lane, Nutley, had solved the problem of pollution of the Forest streams. There had not been any prolonged periods of heavy rain since the matter had been raised again at the Commoners' Annual General Meeting in March, but the overflow was being watched.

Referring to Item 5 the Superintendent informed the Board that the proposed diversion of the bridlepath at Pooh Bridge by the Parish Council was on private land.

Mrs. Gabriel reported that the Secretary of State had modified the West Sussex Replacement Structure Plan, which outlined plans for the A22 and suggested that the proposed East Grinstead By Pass may not be the answer and the traffic congestion problem could possibly be resolved by other appropriate improvements. These were now in conflict with East Sussex, whose strategy included options for single lane by passes for Forest Row, as a southern section of an East Grinstead By Pass and a Nutley By Pass.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation that a letter is sent to Withyham Parish Council expressing concern at the proposal to erect bridlepath signs on the junction of the B2026 and the B2188 at King's Standing. There are two car park exits and normally an ice cream van at this point, in addition to the road junction. A request for a stone sign, not a post, was also agreed.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to agree to a request from the family to place a seat at the Goat Car Park in memory of Mrs. Joan Horne.

#### **7. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 24th May 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Allen.

The Superintendent reported that both the Forest and the manorial waste plans at the time of the sale of the Forest were now registered.

In reply to Mrs. Wright's query, he said approximately 15 acres were involved.

Mr. Passmore asked for an amendment to be made to Item 2, paragraphs 4 and 6 "Registration Authority" should read "Land Registry".

With reference to the Conservators' budget for 1993/94, the Board agreed the Committee's recommendation that a special meeting should be held to discuss ways of improving income. The Committee agreed to meet on the 10th August at 9 a.m.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation that the cost of recruitment and salary (October - December 1993) for the new Superintendent be charged against the Repairs and Renewals Fund.

Mr. Alien moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

### **8. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The Superintendent had no further matters on which to report.

### **9. Any other business**

Mr. Bellotti regretted that a previous appointment prevented him from attending the September Board Meeting.

It was agreed to alter the meeting to the 4th October, starting at an earlier time of 2 p.m.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON 4th OCTOBER 1993**

**Present:** Mr. L.J. Gillham (In the Chair), Mr. D.C. Cumming, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. E.M. Gabriel, Mrs. S. Stokes, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.H. Allen, J.M. Dunn, D.L. Hall, L.C. Hardy, O.E.B. Hughes, A.N. White

The Chairman welcomed members of the public present at the meeting. He said that changes had been made in the East Sussex County Council Representatives since the last Board Meeting and conveyed the Board's thanks to Mrs. A. Moore, Mrs. M.P. Wright, Mr. K. Bodfish and Mr. J. Passmore for their contribution to the Board during their term in office. The Chairman then welcomed Mrs. S. Stokes and Mr. D. Hall.

The Chairman also welcomed Mr. Ian Robertson the Superintendent and Clerk designate, who will be taking over from Lt. Colonel J.R. Nicholls on 1st. January 1994.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr. D. Bellotti, Mr. R. Parsons, Mr. G. Griffiths and Mr. D. Tutt.

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th June 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct and accurate record.

### **3. Matters arising**

The Superintendent reported that the area of Japanese Knotweed at Fairwarp, which had been sprayed with herbicide as a trial, had had mixed results. The area had been sprayed again, but the results would not be seen until next year. Following consultation with other agencies, a number of areas had been cut and a programme of cutting and spraying would continue until the weed had been eradicated.



Following discussions with Mr. Saunders, Woodland Adviser for East Sussex County Council, the Superintendent said he was meeting a representative from Michelham Priory, with a view to finding a market for the coppiced hazel.

The dispute between the residents of Highgate Road and British Telecom as to whether the cables involved to update the telephone system should be put underground or to install extra poles, was close to being resolved.

A letter expressing the Board's thanks had been sent to the Friends of Ashdown Forest for financing the purchase of a second-hand tractor and swipe.

A negative of the map used in the 1885 court case between the Earl, Mr. Hale and others, presented to the Conservators by Mr. A. Lloyd, had been obtained and was stored in the fire-proof safe. Prints from the negative were very expensive, but should the map be damaged, a copy could be made.

The diversion of the bridlepath from King's Standing to Poundgate had been taken up by Withyham Parish Council on the grounds of safety. The County Council now recognised the hazard in erecting bridlepath signs at the junction of the B2026 and the B2188 and were sponsoring the diversion.

In answer to a query by Mrs. Stokes, the Superintendent explained that the bridlepath from the A26 leads straight into a boggy area and had not been open for some time. The other end of the bridlepath is at the dangerous junction. The bridlepath was now to be diverted onto a ride near King's Standing Farm.

The Chairman enquired if any complaints about the overflow at the Nutley Pumping Station had been received due to the recent torrential rain. The Superintendent replied that to date no complaints had been received at the office, but he would carry out an inspection.

Superintendent's Note: The overflow was inspected on the 8th October and no solids could be found.

#### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 5th July 1993**

The Chairman reminded the Board and members of the public that the Conservators' proposals to re-introduce grazing on Ashdown Forest had been referred back to the Conservation Committee for further discussion, following adverse comment at two public meetings.

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley.

Mrs. Whitley said the Committee had welcomed additional information received and this had resulted in the Committee holding productive discussions. The Committee recommend that the Conservators should continue to manage the Forest by maintaining a balance between 60% heathland and 40% woodland, using grazing, cutting and limited burning as management tools.

The Committee had asked the Superintendent to circulate a second draft of the Fencing Application for comment.

Mrs. Whitley emphasised the need for East Sussex County Council to draw up a traffic calming scheme for the Forest without delay.

The Chairman said that two options were available: a) to conserve the heathland or b) to let the heathland revert back to woodland. The latter had been unanimously rejected. The press had created the false impression that the Conservators considered grazing as the only management tool. He emphasised that only a traffic calming scheme on the 'B' and 'C' roads would minimise the need for fencing. The A22 would always have to be fenced if grazing was to be made safe.

The Superintendent reported that to date 5 Commoners had indicated their willingness to supply grazing animals; also 1 non-Commoner who farmed adjacent to the Forest.

The Chairman said that there had been a good feed back from the Second Draft of the proposals sent to various bodies for consultation and as many of the suggestions as possible would be accommodated within the application.

The Chairman then invited members of the Board to state if they: a) In principle were committed to re-introducing grazing on the Forest and b) Would in principle support the proposal to fence. The Board replied as follows:-

Mr. Cumming said he would support both a) and b), particularly as pressure for East Grinstead By-Pass and the proposed upgrading of the A22 presented a threat to the Forest. The Forest's only defence against these pressures was to retain its S.S.S.I. status by maintaining the present proportion of heathland to woodland. Traffic calming would reduce the necessity for fencing. Fencing should only be used as a last resort.

Mrs. Stokes endorsed Mr. Cumming's reply and reported that the members of the County Council intended to look at Ashdown Forest's traffic problems later in the month and was hopeful that it would result in traffic calming proposals. She agreed to work in this direction, despite proposals to improve the A22. Mrs. Stokes considered that fencing would always be necessary.

Mr. Hall said that although he endorsed these views, he was concerned that traffic calming would not provide the complete answer. He considered that traffic calming would create a more pleasant environment for walkers and would await the outcome of the County Council's meeting on the 21st. October.

Mrs. Gabriel said she agreed that traffic calming was not the answer alone and commented that during a site visit to the present grazing area she had not found the fences or animals obtrusive. She said she supported both grazing and fencing.

Mr. Hughes said that Mr. Hall had made some very valid points. He said that the LUC Report and the present grazing experiment, which has been monitored by Sussex University, had provided the spring board for the present proposals. Mr. Hughes said that the proposed fence lines could still be moved.

Mr. Dunn endorsed the previous views and was in support of the Conservators going forward with the proposals.

Mr. Allen said as Ashdown Forest's heathland represents an important part of part of the remaining heathland in South East England and Northern Europe, the Conservators had an obligation to maintain the heathland in favour of woodland. Grazing should be used as a management tool as far as possible, with traffic calming improvements implemented.

Sir Frederick Sowrey considered the Conservators should have a firm policy and endorsed a combination of cutting, burning and grazing. He favoured fencing the Forest, rather than fencing on the Forest. He considered that if the fence line was visible from the A22 it could possibly act as a reminder to drivers that there was stock, deer and other wildlife on the Forest. Sir Frederick referred to a survey carried out by Mr. A. White with the residents of Fairwarp, who would be enclosed within the fence lines, the residents were strongly opposed to fencing. Therefore, he suggested implementing the fencing on the A22 and deferring the fencing in the Old Lodge and Misbourne areas for twelve months. He considered implementing the whole area of fencing would take the pressure off the County Council to introduce traffic calming measures. It might even avoid the need for a public inquiry.

Mr. White said that he saw grazing as a necessity and agreed that birch cannot be controlled without it. Referring to the survey he had carried out, he reported that two out of twelve residents were prepared to be within the fence lines, but ten were not.

The Chairman confirmed that the Board were unanimously in support, in principle, of the re-introduction of grazing, and fencing if necessary.

Mrs. Whitley said that further work on the line of the fencing was needed and the Committee were always willing to listen to suggestions.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **5. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 6th September 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Gabriel.

Mrs. Gabriel confirmed that a meeting between an Officer from the County Council Highways and the Conservators to discuss traffic calming measures for the Forest had not yet been arranged.

Referring to Item 6(c), Mrs. Gabriel said that the Committee recommend that the Board agree to an increase in the size of the Forest Row Recreation Ground to the 5 acres allowed by the Act. This will enable the Tennis Club to construct a third court. Conditions were that no trees should be taken down without the permission of the Conservators. The Board agreed.

Referring to Item 6(c) and the removal of abandoned cars from the Forest, Mrs. Gabriel said Wealden District Council had stated that the vehicles would no longer be considered abandoned if the Conservators removed them to within their premises. The removal procedure had been reduced to eight weeks by Wealden District Council.

Mr. Hall asked for an amendment to Item 1, Paragraph 3(a) - 'TTP Schemes' should read 'TPP Schemes'. Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 6th September 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Allen.

The Board agreed to adopt the Audited Accounts for 1992/93.

Referring to Item 4(a), the Superintendent reported that to date no reply had been received from the Countryside Commission following an application for grant aid for eight Information Boards for the Forest.

Mrs. Gabriel commented that the Countryside Commission had always been in favour of Information Board's.

Mr. Allen moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. Superintendent to Report on Sundry Matters**

The Superintendent had no further matters on which to report.

## **7. Any other business**

Mrs. Gabriel enquired that as Wych Cross Petrol Station was changing hands, could the County Council see a way forward to construct a roundabout at the very dangerous crossroads.

Mr. Cumming replied that he had written to the acting County Engineer suggesting a purchase. He had received a reply saying that there was no provision within the budget for a mini-roundabout, as two full sized roundabouts were required in that area as part of the A22 improvement proposals.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST HELD AT THE ASHDOWN FOREST CENTRE, WYCH CROSS, FOREST ROW, ON 29th NOVEMBER 1993**

**Present:** Mr. L.J. Gillham (In the Chair), Mr. D.C. Cumming, Mrs. S.F. Whitley, Mrs. E.M. Gabriel, Mrs. S. Stokes, Air Marshal Sir Frederick Sowrey, Messrs. D.H.O. Allen, J.M. Dunn, D.L. Hall, O.E.B. Hughes, R.I.F. Parsons, A.N. White

The Chairman welcomed members of the public present at the meeting.

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Mr. D. Bellotti, Mr. L. Hardy, Mr. G. Griffiths and Mr. D. Tutt.

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th October 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct and accurate record subject to the following amendment:-

Page 3, Paragraph 8 - 'the Conservators should have a firmer policy' should read 'the Conservators should be firm on policy and flexible on application'

### **3. Matters arising**

The Chairman said that most of the matters arising from the Minutes would be covered by the following presentation of the Committee Minutes.

The Chairman informed the Board that since the last meeting the Nutley Pumping Station had suffered a pump failure. The National River Authority had visited the site and an officer from Wealden District Council was investigating the ensuing stream pollution.

The Superintendent informed the Board that a reply had been received from the Countryside Commission as a result of the Conservators' application for grant aid for eight Interpretive Boards. The proposal was to erect the Boards in the major car parks on the Forest. The Countryside Commission confirmed that they supported the Conservators' proposal and suggested consulting the Commission's advisory service - The Centre for Environmental Interpretation (CET). Sarah Barlow, Senior Countryside Officer, had prepared a brief for the CET and this had been agreed and forwarded. The Superintendent commented that it was prudent to accept the Countryside Commission's suggestion.

### **4. To receive the Minutes of the Conservation Committee Meeting held on 11th October 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Whitley.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to sell an area of mature birch to Kent Woodware for turnery poles.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to apply for a Woodland Management Grant from the Forestry Authority for four areas of woodland on the Forest.

The Chairman informed the Board that he had been invited to an Extraordinary Meeting of Maresfield Parish Council on Wednesday, 24th November to discuss further the Conservators' proposals to re-introduce grazing on the Forest.

He said the result had been an amicable and productive meeting. The Council's main concerns were whether grazing the heathland would achieve the desired effect (despite the success of the grazing experiment at Millbrook) stocking the grazing area (seven graziers had agreed in principle to put stock into the area) complications arising unless all the graziers agree to manage their stock in the same way - (it was intended to set up a Grazier's Committee)

The Chairman said that although Maresfield Parish Council remained sceptical, they had agreed not to oppose the Conservators' application to the Secretary of State for the Environment.

The Superintendent said he had a meeting with a representative from the Open Spaces Society and agreement had been verbally reached that the fence lines be moved to the roadsides for both phases, leaving the properties at Fairwarp within the fence lines. A letter of confirmation was awaited from the Open Spaces Society regarding the position of the fence lines relative to the car parks on the B2026.

**Superintendent's Note:** The Open Spaces Society wish to see the fence line along the roadside with cattle grids into the car parks. Those visitors not wishing to go into the grazing area could use the car parks opposite.

The Chairman said subject to the Board's approval, the next stage involved a press release in the local papers. English Nature had agreed to provide information leaflets for local distribution. The time scale was subject to agreement from the necessary bodies, but with a view to advertising possibly at the end of February 1994; the advertisement has to appear for three consecutive weeks. The plans would be available for examination at Wealden District Council.

The Chairman stressed that the minor roads across the Forest would only be fenced if the County Council was unable to instigate traffic calming measures.

The Chairman then asked the Board for a show of hands for all those in favour of applying to the Secretary of State for consent to erect fences on Ashdown Forest to enable the Conservators to re-introduce safe grazing on 1,360 acres.

The Board unanimously agreed.

Sir Frederick Sowrey suggested that in the application a number of points should be stressed. For example, referring back to the LUC Report where Crows Nest was given as having a high consistency of heather - perhaps the Conservators should consider grazing this area at a later date. In the Summary it should be stressed that grazing was part of a triumvirate of burning, cutting and grazing.

The Chairman confirmed that grazing was only part of the management of the Forest's open heathland.

Mrs. Whitley moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **5. To receive the Minutes of the Roads, Planning & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 25th October 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mrs. Gabriel. The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to agree to a request from the Highgate Resident's Association to clear an area on the Forest to hold an annual bonfire, subject to a suitable agreement being drawn up by the Superintendent.

The Board agreed the draft response to the Wealden Local Plan.

Mrs. Gabriel informed the Board that Planning Application WD/93/2322 involving a large stable complex in a field adjacent to the Forest on land at Harts Farm, Colemans Hatch, had been refused.

Planning Application WD/93/2441 involving a two storey, eight car garage at Pilgrims Cottage, Mardens Hill, had not yet come before the Committee.

The Board agreed to the Committee's recommendation that the British Horse Society Endurance Riding Group move their ride from October to August in 1994. This year's event had been cancelled due to wet weather prior to the event making the Forest vulnerable to damage. The agreement to the change of date for next year was subject to the position being reviewed after the event.

The Board agreed to the Committee's recommendation that the Crowborough Rotary Club hold a mini marathon in the Greenwood Gate area on 23rd April 1994 involving 250 child competitors.

Mr. White commented that there was a 'To be Let' sign at Wych Cross Garage. Mrs. Gabriel said that permission had been granted by Wealden District Council for alterations to the existing buildings only.

The Chairman asked Mr. Hall for a report on the County Council Joint Environment and Highways and Transportation Committee Meeting held on 17th November to discuss the Transport and Environment Strategy for the High Weald.

Mr. Hall said that the committees had agreed to bring forward traffic calming proposals for Ashdown Forest roads in the forthcoming year. The following options were discussed:-

- a) A dual carriageway between the County boundary and Little Horsted.
- b) A single carriageway from the County boundary to Uckfield By Pass
- c) leaving the A22 as it is.
- d) Major traffic restraint on the A22 and Ashdown Forest.

It was intended to invite interested bodies to a forum to discuss the options. Mr. Hall suggested that if all sides involved were to come together, it would be useful for the Conservators to contribute.

The Chairman enquired if a date had been set. Mrs. Stokes replied that neither a date or membership had been agreed.

Mrs. Stokes reported that correspondence between the previous County Engineer and the Conservators had not yet come to light. The Board discussed traffic calming measures for the Forest roads at length.

The Chairman thanked the County Council members of the Joint Environment and Highways and Transportation Committee for their support. Mrs. Gabriel moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **6. To receive the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 8th November 1993**

The Minutes, which had been circulated, were presented by Mr. Allen.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to accept the tender from G.W.H. Ice Cream Supplies Limited for a licence to position a total of six vans at any one time on the Forest. The licence would cover the years 1994/95/96.

The Board agreed the Committee's recommendation to increase the Forest Rate for 1994/95 by the R.P.I. as at 1st. November 1993 (1.4%) plus 1% as agreed by the Commoners at their Annual General Meeting in 1992.

Mrs. Gabriel queried the Conservation Budget figure in the Revised Estimates for 1993/94 and the Estimates for 1994/95.

The Superintendent explained that at the last audit the auditors had asked for the Countryside Commission Stewardship Scheme and Ashdown Forest Trust grants to be included within the accounts, whereas previously these had been dealt with in a Recoverable & Contra Account.

Mr. Allen explained that the Estimate figures may change due to the recruitment of a new Clerk/Superintendent.

Mr. Allen moved the adoption of the Minutes. This was agreed.

## **7. Superintendent to report on Sundry Matters**

The Superintendent had no further matters on which to report.

## **8. Any other business**

Mrs. Gabriel suggested approaching the County Council again with regard to installing Grasscrete strips on Forest roads, particularly in Priory Road.

The Superintendent explained that as the road edges became eroded, they were filled in with tarmac by the County Council, thus the roads were gradually widening. A very successful experiment had been carried out using Grasscrete by Box Car Park on the Stonehill Road. Three strips had been used, but one would suffice.

Mr. Hughes suggested that Forest Row Parish Council, through Mr. Hall, could ask for this work to be carried out.

Mrs. Gabriel agreed to try this course of action, but Mr. Hall considered that road edging would be part of the traffic calming measures and the Conservators' request would not be considered in isolation.

There being no further business the meeting closed