

Proposal for implementing fence line changes to New Forest Inclosures in order to advance the objectives of the 2017 New Forest Inclosures Forest Design Plan (FDP)

Following discussions with the Verderers, Agisters and local FC teams, the following feedback was received:

- That although the principles of introduced grazing for the benefit of designated habitats within the New Forest are understood, there are many site specific constraints which require specific reference when implementing such a change. These include but are not limited to: ground conditions (stock welfare), location and age of pens for stock management, the use of the fenceline for stock management, the age of the fence itself;
- As the length of fenceline changes required to fully implement the FDP involves many Inclosures spread across the whole of the New Forest, a detailed programme could be unwieldy and difficult to plan and implement;
- A site by site discussion of the timing and type of change (e.g. fence removal or simply gate opening) would allow us to consider the site conditions and make a change which suits all interested parties.

As a result, the following is proposed:

- Follow the management rotation of the Inclosures according to the Working Block cycle (the rotational way FC manages its woodlands in the south). This would identify those Inclosures due to be worked within a given financial year and thus allow us to plan ahead;
- In addition, any sites which force a reactive change (i.e. the fence has failed and needs replacing) would be added to this list for consideration.

At the time of writing, those Inclosures which are due to be worked in 2019-20, or have fences which are failing now **and** which the FDP proposal suggests grazing is appropriate at some point in the future are:

Inclosure Block	Reason for Consideration	Agister	Keeper	Beat Forester
Poundhill & Fletchers Thorns	Working block cycle	Robert Maton	Maarten Ledeboer	Simon Holloway
Denny Lodge	Working Block Cycle	Mike Lovell	Alan Stride	Simon Holloway
Norley	Working Block Cycle	Robert Maton	Jonathan Cook	Simon Holloway
Milkham	Working Block Cycle	Peter Rix	Lee Knight	Alex Howells
Frame Heath	Fence failing	Robert Maton	Jonathan Cook	Simon Holloway
Pondhead	Fence failing	Mike Lovell	Alan Stride	Simon Holloway
Kings Copse	Fence failing	Mike Lovell	Jonathan Cook	Simon Holloway

It is proposed to set up meetings between the Agister, Keeper, Forester, FC Forest Management District Forester and the FC Planning & Environment Manager to discuss these sites, consider the constraints and suggest proposals for:

- Appropriate timing of the change;
- Appropriate type of change;
- Any other requirements prior to making the change.

In addition, it may be necessary to include a representative of the Verderers and Natural England and the Commoners Defence Association.

This proposal is drafted with the intention of agreement from the Verderers and Agisters to proceed in this way. Any changes suggested should be made to John Stride, FC Planning & Environment Manager, (john.stride@forestry.gsi.gov.uk).