

## Members' Event including AGM

Saturday 16th April 2016

at Minstead Hall, Minstead SO43 7FX



Dear Members

Please come to our Members' Event on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2016. We shall start with coffee at 10 am and the full programme is below. Guests are very welcome if you would like to bring along some friends.

The AGM agenda is enclosed. Then we shall have two talks, each followed by time for questions:

**Naomi Ewald of the Freshwater Habitats Trust** will speak about the New Forest Catchment Project and the New Forest Water Blitz.

**Rachael Gallagher of the New Forest National Park Authority** will talk about the 'Our Past, Our Future' project, a Landscape Partnership Scheme for the New Forest supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which will undertake around 20 projects to benefit the Forest.

**Programme** (timings after 10.30 am are approximate)

10.00 am	Coffee
10.30 am	AGM
11.00 am	Naomi Ewald
11.30 am	Rachael Gallagher
12 noon	General discussion

We hope very much that you will come along on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Yours sincerely

John Ward, Chairman

Enquiries to Sheila Ward at [sheila.lymington@gmail.com](mailto:sheila.lymington@gmail.com), tel: 01590 671205

**New Forest Association Annual General Meeting  
to be held at 10.30 am on Saturday 16th April 2016  
at Minstead Village Hall SO43 7FX**



**AGENDA**

1. Welcome by the President, Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the 2015 AGM – to approve the minutes (A)
4. Matters arising from the minutes
5. To adopt the Annual Report (B)
6. Treasurer's report - to adopt the Annual Accounts (C) and appoint the independent accounts examiner
7. Election of Council members - Graham Baker, Geoff Barnes, Leo Randall are due to retire and have been nominated to stand for re-election.
8. Adoption of revised Constitution recommended by the Council (D)
9. Report on new membership of Trustee Board and Council
10. Election of President: Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre is nominated
11. Election of officers: There are the following nominations

Chairman:	John Ward
Vice Chairman:	VACANT
Honorary Secretary:	VACANT
Treasurer:	Brandy Gill

**A Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the New Forest Association  
held at Minstead Hall on 18th April 2015.**

Fifty-eight members attended. The President, Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre, welcomed them all to the meeting and opened the proceedings.

**1. Apologies for absence** had been received from ten members.

**2. Minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting.**

The draft minutes of the previous AGM had been included in the Spring 2015 edition of the Newsletter which had been sent to all members. It was agreed that Bernie Austin had been elected to the Council and, with the addition of his name to Minute 6, members agreed unanimously to adopt the minutes, on the proposal of Mark Abbott, seconded by Brandy Gill.

**3. Matters Arising.**

There were none.

**4a. The Annual Report.**

The Annual Report had been included in the Spring 2015 edition of the Newsletter which had been sent to all members.

The Acting Chairman, John Ward, asked for comments or queries about the contents of the Annual Report. He said that it had been a 'mixed year' with no major issues to deal with but with a growing lack of volunteer resource. He thanked the Hon. Secretary who was not seeking re-election and also, he thanked the Newsletter Editor who will stand down at the end of this calendar year. He called for members to consider if they could volunteer to help in either of these roles.

The Acting Chairman thanked also the Committee Chairmen Graham Baker and Brian Tarnoff, who had given freely of their own time to achieve successful results.

John Ward drew members' attention to the coming 150th anniversary of the founding of NFA in 2017. He proposed that the date should be marked and called for a small team of volunteers who could consider suitable events.

On the proposal of Clive Chatters, seconded by Peter Roberts, members agreed unanimously to adopt the Annual Report with the exception of the discussion and recommendation on Proposed Constitution Changes which would be taken separately as Item 7.

#### **4b. The Accounts.**

The Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2014 and the Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees had been included in the Spring 2015 edition of the Newsletter and had been sent to all members. The Hon. Treasurer invited queries but there were none.

On the proposal of William Ziegler, seconded by Geoff Barnes, members agreed unanimously to adopt the Accounts.

#### **5. Election of Officers.**

President: Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre was elected unanimously on the proposal of John Ward, seconded by William Ziegler.

Hon. Secretary: There were no nominations.

Hon. Treasurer: Brandy Gill was elected unanimously on the proposal of Michael Chilcott, seconded by John Ward.

Hon. Independent Accounts Examiner: Martyn Smith was elected unanimously on the proposal of Brandy Gill, seconded by Clive Chatters.

#### **6. Elections to Council.**

Council members seeking re-election were unanimously re-elected. They were: Mark Abbott, Emma Blake, Maureen Bromley-Smith, Clive Chatters, Michael Chilcott, Jon Cox, Eve Gillmon, Roly Errington, Richard Reeves, Neil Sanderson, Brian Tarnoff, Jenni Tubbs, John Ward, William Ziegler.

#### **7. Proposed Constitution Changes to the New Forest Association.**

Acting Chairman John Ward presented his report and Council's recommendations. It had been included in the Spring 2015 edition of the Newsletter and sent to all members.

The recommendations were to review the 'Rules' of the Association along the lines published in the report and for Council to bring forward a revised constitution to a subsequent AGM or EGM for approval.

Members present raised no issues to be discussed, and, on the proposal of Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre, seconded by Peter Roberts, the recommendations were approved.

## B Annual Report 2015



### New Forest Association Annual Report 2015

<b>Patron</b>	Belinda, Lady Montagu
<b>President</b>	Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre
<b>Chairman of the Council</b>	<b>Hon Secretary</b>
John Ward	VACANT
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	<b>Hon Treasurer</b>
Graham Baker	Brandy Gill

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS during 2015

Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre	Jonathan Cox	Anne Millar
Mark Abbott	Roly Errington	Leo Randall
Bernie Austin	John Fawcett	Richard Reeves
Graham Baker	Brandy Gill	Neil Sanderson
Geoff Barnes	Eve Gillmon	Brian Tarnoff
Emma Blake	Keith Howe	Jenni Tubbs
Maureen Bromley-Smith	David Humbert	John Ward
Clive Chatters	Graham Long	William Zeigler
Michael Chilcott	Dionis Macnair	

Website: [www.newforestassociation.org](http://www.newforestassociation.org)  
<http://www.facebook.com/NewForestAssociation>  
[twitter.com/nfanews](https://twitter.com/nfanews)  
Registered Charity No: 260328

#### President's Report

In last year's report I mentioned the growing financial challenges that beset the Forest's publicly funded bodies such as the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the National Park Authority. At that time we had yet to get through the general election and the future was shrouded in uncertainty. However, the election is now far behind us and in his public spending review statement before Christmas last year the Chancellor delighted conservationists by singling out England's National Parks as organisations that would be protected from any government cuts for the next five years. Not only that, the existing grant would be increased each year by almost 2%. The only other organisation to receive this special treatment was the police force.

Whatever the Chancellor's reasons were for this welcome decision, we must not squander our moment in the sun. We must not assume that the goodwill that seems to currently ooze out of Defra is something that

will be either perpetuated or repeated, and all the Forest's bodies must combine forces to extract the most that we can from this opportune climate.

The Secretary of State for the Environment, Liz Truss, is very keen to make some lasting decisions for conservation, and has commissioned a Plan for National Parks in England, and a brisk period of consultation has now started with a view to launching the plan later this spring. This is running parallel to the creation of a separate and broader 25-year conservation plan for the whole country. It is still very much on the drawing board, but at present its focus is, I am happy to report, on reinforcing the special status that places like the New Forest have as protected landscapes.

We must watch the process carefully, and ensure that the new plan avoids entering in to the territory of actively promoting tourism and ever more visitors to the Forest. We are the smallest of the country's national parks, and yet we have the most visitors for our size by

far. Indeed, when looking at the large centres of population that surround the Forest the term “besieged” could sensibly be used! However, if the new plan is properly written and intentioned it will, I hope, be good news for the Forest.

In the meantime the Council’s laudable efforts to influence the Forestry Commission in its decisions on how to control fungi picking continue. Prompted by the excellent public statements recently made by this Association, there is strong support for the view that the Commission should copy the bold action taken by the National Trust and ban all picking until it can be shown that no harm is being done by uncontrolled gathering of mushrooms in the Forest. This would follow the precautionary principle which is the conservationist’s touchstone, including (one would hope) that of Natural England as the Government’s advisors on such matters. It does seem to be totally illogical that the Commission’s byelaws strictly and quite rightly prohibit the unauthorised removal of any plants and trees from its land, which is enforced, and yet mushrooms are somehow not deemed to be worthy of the same protection.

The Council continues to very effectively monitor the constant flow of planning applications in the Forest, and

### **Council Report**

“Another busy year for the New Forest Association, with aspirations to do more than we have, but struggling to find enough time and volunteers.”

This could have been the standard opening sentence for the Association’s annual report in recent years and 2015 was no exception, demonstrating how even when life in the Forest is generally going well there is a constant flow of issues, decisions and proposals from various directions causing lively debate at Council meetings.

The issue of fungi picking in the New Forest came to the fore and Council decided that the NFA would campaign strongly and publicly to raise general public awareness about the increasing scale of the problem and to galvanise action by the New Forest National Park Authority and the Forestry Commission. We were pleased when The National Trust set out its intention to ban picking within its own protected areas.

Tranquillity research, power lines, ancient woodland re-stocking, habitat restoration, planning applications and much more have formed the workload delivered through our two functional committees, the Planning & Transport and Habitat & Landscape Committees.

Cycling was very much a topic of vigorous debate in 2014. While the rhetoric calmed down during 2015, the

selectively lends its support or objections for applications with great effect whenever necessary. This year sees a full blown review of existing planning policy. An in-depth consultation is underway with all concerned parties to ensure that any changes are properly thought through and supported.

Our Association is heavily involved in this process, and is keeping a very close eye on the flow of new national planning proposals that are coming from the Government, many of which are designed to encourage a rapid nationwide acceleration in the building of new houses. We need to ensure that the New Forest is exempt from those measures which would potentially damage the landscape and its special qualities. Nobody doubts the need for more housing in England, but we must continue where necessary to persuade Ministers that some of the new ideas are definitely not appropriate for highly sensitive and protected places like the Forest. The work continues.

As ever, on behalf of all the members of the Association, I would like to conclude my report by thanking the Council for its vigilance and hard work over the year.

Oliver Crosthwaite Eyre

Association’s concern about the harm done by off-road cycling on the open forest away from designated gravel roads is just as strong, including the growing sport of off-road cycling with bright lights during darkness. Hitherto the Forest and its wildlife have been generally undisturbed during the night and the NFA will campaign vigorously to prevent such disturbance.

But it was the potential long term threats to the New Forest from the Government’s various proposals to reform national housing and planning policies that made 2015 an uncomfortable year for those seeking to protect the relatively small New Forest National Park from the impact of development within and around its boundary. Large-scale urban development in and close to the New Forest in the 1970s and 1980s added immensely to pressures on the Forest. Supported by the NFA, a complete planning policy change from growth to restraint followed to take us into the new century. The risk now is that a drive to solve national and regional housing needs may once again threaten the New Forest if it is delivered through opportunistic and uncoordinated development instead of a robust planning framework that recognises the special qualities of National Parks to provide public well-being through the qualities of their special landscapes.

Ironically, at the same time proposals to extend “Right to Buy” to housing association properties cast doubt about the future for small village housing schemes to meet local needs.

We are fortunate to have well-developed and close working relationships with other National Park Societies and the Campaign for National Parks to assist us in forming co-ordinated responses to national proposals such as these.

A positive boost to the protection of the New Forest came in the form of a £2.89 million Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership grant awarded to the New Forest National Park Authority. We were pleased at their success in securing this funding to restore lost habitats, develop Forest skills and inspire a new generation to champion and care for the New Forest.

We did also manage to enjoy ourselves during the year with some informative walks for members and the

### **Planning & Transport Committee Report**

The concord with the National Park Authority has persisted and monitoring applications for development has become a reduced part of the committee’s job. Still we argue about fences, about contribution to affordable homes, about the size and bulk of replacement dwellings, but these are the arguments at the margin - the difference between a man with a job and a man with a passion.

In development control these days we are usually supporting the National Park Authority and are generally on the winning side. Supporting them against Parishes where valuable principles might be sacrificed for local convenience, against applicants wishing to misuse valuable back up pasture, against developers determined to try every avenue to gain a bigger house, against those seeking to overturn decisions at appeal and most of all supporting them in resisting Government attempts to relax the planning rules. Working with the National Park Authority and the Campaign for National Parks, we have succeeded in gaining exemption from many of these relaxations. But proposals come thick and fast; before the results of the last one on significant changes to national planning policy are known, two new consultations have been announced, both containing many dangerous proposals.

The more we succeed in keeping unwanted development at bay, the more attractive the area becomes as somewhere to live and the more house

annual barbecue. And the Secondary Schools New Forest Conference at Brockenhurst was a great success. The Association’s Education Group is working with the National Park Authority on the 2016 conference.

2017 will be the New Forest Association’s 150 year anniversary and we realised that although that might seem some way off in 2015 we needed to start our thinking now. A small working group was formed and the beginnings of an Anniversary Year Programme have been put together. There will be lots for members to participate in. We also volunteered to host the National Parks Societies annual conference as a part of our year of celebrations. The venue was booked and the date fixed – Balmer Lawn Hotel from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017. There is no doubt that 2016 will be a busy year again.

Chairman - John Ward

prices have risen. In November 2015, the average property in the National Park cost £531,162 that is 14.2 times the local average wage, a higher ratio even than London. If land-based occupations are to survive the next 25 years we must secure more homes for local people unable to afford market housing.

Driven by a Government determined to ever increase house numbers, our surrounding Planning Authorities have become the main threat to the Forest. Thousands of homes are planned south of Romsey, on the Waterside, at Fawley and East of Christchurch. Everyone recognises that each house built increases recreational pressure on the protected areas of the National Park and everyone agrees that the Authorities should compensate for the damage that it will do. But the compensation is inadequate, and as part of the revision of the New Forest National Park local plan, the New Forest Association will campaign for sensible mitigation contribution used for effective, long term measures.

The planning committee is in good heart and up to complement. Burley gives us cause for concern and if there is someone from the village who would like simply to check planning applications each month for likely problems, I ask them to contact me.

Chairman - Graham Baker

## **Habitat & Landscape Committee Report**

Our ecologists have had a very busy year, and I hope they will forgive me if this report cannot hope to capture the full scope of their efforts. They have my and the Association's deepest thanks.

### **Site Visits**

HAL members attended site visits and provided feedback for a variety of Forestry Commission led habitat restoration and maintenance project proposals. This has included:

- Linford Bottom
- Norley Mire, Bagshot Moor, Upper Crockford Bottom,
- Three Beech Bottom and Horseshoe Earth
- Ogdens Mire and Sloden Inclosure
- Lyndhurst South (Coxlease Lawn, Brick Kiln Mire, Allum Green)
- Waters Copse, Withycombe Shade
- Broomy/Ocknell Plain (Suburbs Wood Mire, Broomy Bottom, Linford Brook Mire)
- Dibden Bottom, The Noads Mire, Ferny Croft

We continue to support the FC's restorations. We would like to see more resources for monitoring, a more procedural basis for prioritising the schemes with clear reference to the framework provided by the habitats regulations, and a cohesive grand design for habitat restoration across the whole of the Forest.

### **The Forest Design Plan**

In July 2015, we were one of a select group of conservation organisations invited by the Forestry Commission to comment on their earliest draft of the next Forest Design Plan. With a shift towards much more broadleaf planting, it represents a huge sea change for the foresters. In a much-appreciated move, the FC is actively seeking our input and expertise. We hope to see more detail and nuance as the plan is further developed, with public consultation in the autumn, 2016. Much of the committee's work over the last decade has been preparing research and evidence to bolster the NFA's vision for the inclosures as presented in our policy document, "Recovering Lost Landscapes", and has been aided further by changes in government policy as evidenced in the Lawton Report and the Policy on Ancient Woodland Sites.

### **NFA Fungi Campaign**

After years of increasing damage from commercial pickers, and more than two Autumns passing with much

talk, but no subsequent action from the Forestry Commission and National Park Authority, the NFA Council took the lead and tasked our committee to develop the NFA's policy and campaign to protect fungi from foragers.

At both the Verderers Court and National Park Authority meetings in July 2015 we called for the Forestry Commission to impose a ban on fungi harvest on the Crown Lands of the New Forest, the Site of Special Scientific Importance under their stewardship. This is in keeping with existing bans in Epping Forest and at many of the Wildlife Trusts' Nature Reserves. A blanket ban will assist enforcement by removing the need to prove commercial intent and weigh amounts against the arbitrary allowance. With discretion Forestry Commission keepers could target those who are over harvesting, whether for personal or commercial use.

It is also in keeping with guidelines the FC itself subscribed to in 1998, the Wild Mushroom Pickers Code of Conduct published by English Nature, which says culinary foraging is inappropriate on SSSI and National Nature Reserves. That code is also the source of the supposed 1.5kg limit (which has no basis in law) which there is suggested "per foray" for a culinary harvest, but which the FC have erroneously repeated as "per person / per day", ignoring the code's SSSI prohibition. The NFA have asked that all FC leaflets and posters compounding this error be withdrawn until a revised code is established.

The National Trust imposed the ban on the Northern Commons that they manage within the Forest. The Forestry Commission stopped short of the ban, but did engage in a series of disruption events targeting commercial foragers; some harvests were seized and destroyed. We believe the FC should have moved forward with prosecutions to further deter commercial criminals. Foraging fungi for any commercial purpose is seen as theft in the Theft Act, 1964. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 if they have taken any rare protected species they face summary conviction for 6 months + £5k fine, or if Natural England determine that a group of pickers have engaged in potentially damaging operations on SSSI, fines of up to £20k may be levied.

The display of fungi in the New Forest is as essential a part of the experience of autumn in this protected habitat as the pannage pigs, and should remain for all to see and enjoy.

### **Basketts and Felling Licences**

In Autumn 2015, Neil Sanderson, one of our leading ecologists, spotted veteran and woodland edge trees

marked for felling at Busketts Lawn. Whilst this had been done as part of a scheme to improve grazing – and had been granted a felling licence – many trees of value, but not detrimental to the lawn, had been marked including glade edge Oaks, nectar source Crab Apples and Hawthorns.

The NFA had not previously been aware of the plans due to the sparse detail available in the list of works we receive through our membership of the Open Forest Advisory Committee, and the equally slim notification of the felling licences through the parish councils. To the FC's credit they did manage to arrange a site visit before the works commenced and took on board some of our advice. While from our point of view this was damage limitation rather than success – we saved some trees and shrubs and a large mature Oak – we were also able to make suggestions that were accepted as useful going forward: we got some Oak pollarding, preventing loss of grassland to shade, not previously considered as a tool in lawn management; and by cutting back Holly from former wood edge trees, we agreed to maintain a transition from lawn to wood, both aesthetically, and functionally within the habitat, desirable.

We will be pressing for improvements in the way the FC and Natural England notify felling licences and document works of this type on the open forest.

#### **Going Forward -- Other areas of concern to address in 2016:**

**Countryside Stewardship Scheme** – This new version of the HLS funding will need our particular attention. We

were very disappointed in the NELMES consultation that produced Natural England's Countryside Stewardship Statement of Priorities. As funding may be targeted based on the erratic outcomes of the consultation, we are hoping to have these refined or corrected.

**Fungi Campaign Continues** – The NFA continue to press for a new code of conduct, and with the full support of the members of the National Park Authority will be included in the stakeholders tasked with its development. We have stressed that a plan needs to be in place by the New Forest Show to have coordinated messages and actions for Autumn 2016. We will also campaign for improved protection when Wildlife laws are next revised. The Law Commission has published a draft, but we do not know when it will be brought forward.

**Night Disturbance from LEDs** – As part of our tranquillity remit, we want to see the nocturnal disturbance to wildlife and infringement of the New Forest byelaws cease. With our neighbouring conurbations, it is unlikely that the New Forest would ever qualify as an International Dark Sky Reserve (designation held by three other National Parks), but any steps in this direction would be welcome.

Chairman - Brian Tarnoff



**NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION (Registered Charity 260328)****RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS YEAR END 2015**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>2014</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
<b>Charity Activities</b>		
Members' Subscriptions	7,029.00	7,592.00
Donations	869.26	1,610.25
Gift Aid Tax Reclaim	0.00	3,763.59
Trading Activities	340.60	605.40
	<b>8,238.86</b>	<b>13,571.24</b>
<b>Other Receipts</b>		
Bank Interest	1,597.10	2,053.99
Charibond Dividends	5,115.36	5,115.36
Legacies	0.00	0.00
	<b>6,712.46</b>	<b>7,169.35</b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>14,951.32</b>	<b>20,740.59</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>		
<b>Charity Activities</b>		
Cost of Goods Purchased for Resale	59.27	336.00
Council Expenses (travel, meetings, conferences)	386.72	283.65
Insurance	378.15	344.47
Events & Shows	328.50	355.00
Office Supplies and Postage	907.24	1,372.99
Newsletters & Reports (Printing)	2,224.00	2,815.00
Subscriptions	596.00	596.00
Bank / Paypal Charges	14.36	12.82
Admin & Bookkeeping Expenses	2,460.00	2,400.00
Advertising, Public Relations, Website	265.00	698.74
Misc Expenses	85.00	41.94
Honorarium	0.00	500.00
	<b>7,704.24</b>	<b>9,756.61</b>
<b>Other Payments</b>		
Grants Given	3,598.82	0.00
	<b>3,598.82</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>11,303.06</b>	<b>9,756.61</b>
<b>Net Receipts</b>	3,648.26	10,983.98
<b>Cash Funds Opening Balance</b>	151,094.94	140,110.96
<b>Cash Funds Ending Balance</b>	<b>154,743.20</b>	<b>151,094.94</b>

**NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION (Registered Charity 260328)****STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES YEAR END 2015**

	Total £	2014 £
<b>Cash Funds</b>		
Lloyds Current Account	12,553.79	£20,482.95
PayPal	252.50	£272.18
Barclays (Standard Life) Dep Acc.	37,129.35	£26,738.07
Shawbrook Bank	21,055.11	£20,680.57
Virgin Bank	83,752.45	£82,921.17
	<u>154,743.20</u>	<u>151,094.94</u>
<b>Other Monetary Assets</b>		
Gift Aid Receivable	1,536.88	0.00
Stock for Retail Sales: Opening Value	463.53	595.53
Plus: value of new stock purchases	59.27	336.00
Less: value of goods sold	-200.00	-468.00
	<u>1,859.68</u>	<u>463.53</u>
<b>Investment Assets</b>		
M&G Charibond: Opening Value	101,746.81	96,781.43
Increase/Decrease in value	-5,415.34	4,965.38
	<u>96,331.47</u>	<u>101,746.81</u>
<b>Assets for the Charity's Use</b>		
Laptop: Opening Value	70.00	140.00
Less: Depreciation (Laptop)	-70.00	-70.00
Exhibition Equipment	399.00	399.00
New Forest Embroidery	100.00	100.00
	<u>499.00</u>	<u>569.00</u>
<b>Outstanding Expenses</b>		
Lyndhurst Community Centre (Meetings)	322.00	0.00
	<u>322.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>

**Notes on the Accounts**

1. The Receipts and Payments Account has been prepared as a summary of receipts and payments made during the year by the New Forest Association.
2. These Accounts have been prepared in a format which complies with guidance issued by the Charity Commission.
3. NFA has committed £25,000 to the Rockford Farm project and has so far paid £490.00 (in 2012).

**Approved on behalf of the Trustees**

.....  
 (Name) (Date)

.....  
 (Name) (Date)

## **NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2014**

### **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the New Forest Association**

I report on the accounts of the Association for the year ended 31st December 2015, which are set out on the previous pages.

#### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act;

to follow the procedures laid down in the general Direction given by the Charity

Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act, and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

#### **Basis of Independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present 'a true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Acts; and

to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

NAME OF EXAMINER

ADDRESS OF EXAMINER

DATE

## **D Revised Constitution**

At the 2015 AGM (Minute 7) Members resolved that the Association's constitution (Rules) should be amended and a revised version be brought back to a General Meeting for approval. The intention was to restructure the arrangements for the governance of the Association, replacing the existing Council, all of whose members are trustees of the NFA charity, with a smaller Board of Trustees and a new Council with an advisory role. The purpose of making the changes is to streamline and make more efficient the management of the Association, while retaining the strength of an elected Council to draw attention to and debate New Forest issues of concern to the Association. The name, objects and powers of the Association remain unchanged.

The Charity Commission have been consulted on the principles of the amendments and they raised no objection. At their meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 (Minute 7) Council unanimously approved the revised constitution to be submitted to the AGM for adoption.

On adoption of the revised constitution:

1 The following elected members of the present Council have chosen to step down from their role as charity trustees, but to remain as members of the new Council:

Bernie Austin; Maureen Bromley-Smith; Clive Chatters; Michael Chilcott; Jonathan Cox; Roly Errington; John Fawcett; Eve Gillmon; Keith Howe; David Humbert; Leo Randall; Richard Reeves; Neil Sanderson; Jenni Tubbs

2 In addition to remaining as members of the new Council, the following elected members and officers of the present Council have chosen to continue in their role as charity trustees of the Association as members of the new Board of Trustees:

Graham Baker; Geoff Barnes; Brandy Gill; Dionis Macnair; Brian Tarnoff; John Ward; William Zeigler

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT:

THE REVISED CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION AS SET OUT BELOW BE ADOPTED

### **NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION**

ADOPTED 17th MARCH 1969 AS AMENDED 28th APRIL 1999, 28th APRIL 2007 AND 16th APRIL 2016

#### **1 NAME**

1.1 The Association is called the NEW FOREST ASSOCIATION, hereinafter referred to as the Association.

#### **2 OBJECTS**

2.1 The object of the Association is to promote the preservation for the benefit of the public generally of the New Forest as administered by the National Park Authority and generally to protect and preserve the character and amenities thereof and to protect and preserve the areas of scientific and ecological importance and the flora and fauna therein.

#### **3 POWERS**

3.1 For the purpose of carrying out the foregoing objects but not otherwise the Association shall have powers to:

(i) Raise money from the public generally.

- (ii) Attend or be represented at Public meetings, Planning Inquiries.
- (iii) Promote or oppose, or assist in the promotion of or opposition to, legislation affecting the New Forest.
- (iv) Provide funds for the furtherance of the objects of the Association.
- (v) Organise concerted action, promote co-operation and educate public opinion in order to ensure the promotion of the objects of the Association.
- (vi) Do all such lawful acts or things as are incidental to the attainment of the primary objects of the Association and so far as may be necessary or desirable to do such acts or things in collaboration with any person, body or institution authority or otherwise.

#### **4 MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS**

- 4.1 The Association shall consist of Officers of the Association, Ordinary members, Corporate Members and any other category of member passed by resolution of an Annual or a Special General Meeting.
- 4.2 The Association may at an Annual or Special General Meeting nominate a person as an Honorary Life Member of the Association (with the nominee's consent) who in the opinion of the Meeting has merited such distinction.
- 4.3 Subscription rates may be set or changed only by Resolution of an Annual or Special General Meeting and shall be payable at the time of joining and for ordinary members thereafter annually. Members who have not paid their subscriptions by three months from the due date shall cease to be members.

#### **5 PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 5.1 The President and Vice-Presidents shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting following their election and shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting
- 5.2 The President and Vice-Presidents shall be ex officio members of the Council.

#### **6 OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 6.1 The Officers of the Association are the Chair, Vice-Chair, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary.
- 6.2 The Officers of the Association shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting following their election and shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting
- 6.3 Any casual vacancy as an Officer of the Association may be filled by the Board of Trustees and any member so chosen shall be eligible for subsequent election.
- 6.4 Nominations for all Officers seeking election or re-election shall be proposed and seconded by members of the Association in writing to the Hon. Secretary together with the consent of the nominee at least six weeks before an Annual General Meeting.
- 6.5 Not less than 21 days before the Annual General Meeting the Hon. Secretary shall circulate the Notice convening the Annual General Meeting and a list of the candidates offering themselves for election or re-election as an Officer of the Association, together with a note where appropriate of their attendance and such personal qualifications as each candidate may authorise to be published and, if there are more candidates than vacancies, a ballot paper to be returned to the Hon. Secretary no later than seven days before the date of the meeting.
- 6.6 Members may withdraw their nominations in writing to the Hon. Secretary prior to the Annual General Meeting.

## **7 TRUSTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 7.1 All fully paid up members of the Association are eligible for election as Trustees of the Association. The Board of Trustees shall consist of the Officers of the Association and not more than six additional elected members.
- 7.2 Elected trustees shall hold office from the Annual General Meeting at which they are elected until the holding of the third Annual General Meeting following that meeting.
- 7.3 Any casual vacancy as a Trustee of the Association may be filled by the Board of Trustees and any member so chosen shall be eligible for subsequent election.
- 7.4 Nominations in respect of all members seeking election or re-election as a Trustee of the Association shall be proposed and seconded by a member of the Association in writing to the Hon. Secretary together with the written consent of the nominee at least six weeks before the date of the relevant Annual General Meeting.
- 7.5 Not less than 21 days before the Annual General Meeting the Hon. Secretary shall circulate the Notice convening the Annual General Meeting and a list of the candidates offering themselves for election or re-election as a Trustee of the Association, together with a note where appropriate of their attendance and such personal qualifications as each candidate may authorise to be published and, if there are more candidates than vacancies, a ballot paper to be returned to the Hon. Secretary no later than seven days before the date of the meeting.
- 7.6 Members may withdraw their nominations in writing to the Hon. Secretary prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.7 At the discretion of the Board of Trustees members who have not attended three consecutive Board of Trustees meetings may be asked to resign.
- 7.8 The Board of Trustees shall meet not less than four times per year and at such times and places as it may appoint or in default of appointment as the Chair may appoint.
- 7.9 The quorum shall be three. A trustee shall not be counted in the quorum present when any decision is made about a matter upon which that trustee is not entitled to vote. If the number of trustees is less than 3 the continuing trustees or trustee may act only for the purpose of filling vacancies or of calling a general meeting.
- 7.9 At all meetings the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

## **8 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

- 8.1 The powers contained in Clause 3.1 shall be delegated to the Board of Trustees by the Association subject to any resolution passed by an Annual General Meeting (Clause 11.3) or a Special General Meeting (Clause 12.3).
- 8.2 The Board of Trustees shall have power to appoint Committees which shall be given clear terms of reference including, where appropriate, powers to negotiate and act on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
- 8.3 Trustees shall comply with their obligations under the Charities Act, 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to:
  - (i) The keeping of accounting records for the Association;
  - (ii) The preparation of annual statements of account for the Association;
  - (iii) The independent examination of the said statements of accounts and their transmission to the Charity Commissioners;

- (iv) The preparation of an annual report and an annual return and their transmission to the Charity Commissioners.

## **9 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

- 9.1 A special meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be convened by the Secretary on receiving a request in writing from the Chair or four Trustees.
- 9.2 The Hon. Secretary shall give at least seven days notice of the meeting and the business to be discussed at such Special Meeting and only such business shall be discussed. Such Special Meeting shall be held within twenty-one days of receipt of the requisition by the Hon. Secretary.

## **10 COUNCIL OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 10.1 The purpose of the Council shall be to bring together on a regular basis individual members of the Association with a wide breadth of knowledge of the New Forest, engagement with other New Forest organisations or professional skills valuable to the work of the Association, and who are volunteers, serving on Committees or otherwise actively engaged in roles supporting the Association. The Council shall discuss with and advise the Board of Trustees on any New Forest issues pertinent to the Objects of the Association that its members wish to raise.
- 10.2 The Chair of the Board of Trustees shall chair meetings of the Council.
- 10.3 All fully paid up members of the Association are eligible for election to the Council of the Association, which shall consist of the Board of Trustees and not more than fifteen additional elected members.
- 10.4 Elected members of the Council shall hold office from the Annual General Meeting at which they are elected until the holding of the third Annual General Meeting following that meeting.
- 10.5 Any casual vacancy on the Council may be filled by the Board of Trustees and any member so chosen shall be eligible for subsequent election.
- 10.6 Nominations in respect of all members seeking election or re-election to the Council shall be proposed and seconded by a member of the Association in writing to the Hon. Secretary together with the written consent of the nominee at least six weeks before the date of the relevant Annual General Meeting.
- 10.7 Not less than 21 days before the Annual General Meeting the Hon. Secretary shall circulate with the Notice convening the Annual General Meeting a list of the candidates offering themselves for election or re-election to the Council, together with a note where appropriate of their attendance and such personal qualifications as each candidate may authorise to be published and, if there are more candidates than vacancies, a ballot paper to be returned to the Hon. Secretary no later than seven days before the date of the meeting.
- 10.8 Members may withdraw their nominations in writing to the Hon. Secretary prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- 10.9 At the discretion of the Board of Trustees members who have not attended four consecutive Council meetings may be asked to resign.
- 10.10 The Council shall meet not less than twice per year and at such times and places as it may appoint or in default of appointment as the Chair may appoint.

## **11 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS**

- 11.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the Board of Trustees and at least 21 days notice shall be given. The Hon. Secretary shall circulate members with the Notice convening the Meeting together with the Agenda and a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts.
- 11.2 At this meeting:
- (i) The Annual Report and Accounts for the preceding year ending the 31st December shall be presented for adoption, the Accounts having first been approved by the Trustees and duly examined by an independent examiner.
  - (ii) The results for elections as Officers shall be declared.
  - (iii) The results of election to the Board of Trustees shall be declared. Election as an Officer or member of the Board of Trustees shall be by majority vote.
  - (iv) The results of election to the Council shall be declared. Election as a member of Council shall be by majority vote.
  - (v) All other necessary business shall be transacted.
- 11.3 Resolutions to be considered by an Annual General Meeting must be proposed by the Board of Trustees or be received by the Hon. Secretary at least six weeks before the meeting and must be supported by fifteen signatory members of the Association. Resolutions passed by a majority vote at an Annual General Meeting shall become the official policy of the Association, subject to Rule 15.
- 11.4 Resolutions properly proposed for an Annual General Meeting must be allowed adequate time for presentation and debate unless withdrawn by the proposer.
- 11.5 At an Annual General Meeting each member shall have ONE vote except:
- (i) Any person whose subscription is not fully paid up.
  - (ii) Any person who has joined the Association less than thirty days before the meeting.

## **12 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 12.1 A Special General Meeting of the Association shall be convened by the Hon. Secretary within six weeks of receiving a request in writing together with the business to be discussed from the Chair, or by resolution of the Board of Trustees, or from five signatory members of the Board of Trustees, or thirty signatory members of the Association.
- 12.2 At least 21 days notice together with the business to be discussed shall be given to members.
- 12.3 Any resolution passed by a majority vote at a Special General Meeting shall become official policy of the Association (subject to Rule 15).
- 12.4 Resolutions properly proposed for a Special General Meeting must be allowed adequate time for presentation and debate unless withdrawn by the proposer.
- 12.5 At a Special General meeting each member shall have ONE vote except:
- (i) Any person whose subscription is not fully paid up
  - (ii) Any person who has joined the Association less than thirty days before the meeting.



### **13 TRUSTEES AND POWERS OF INVESTMENT**

- 13.1 All monies at any time belonging to the Association and not required for immediate application for its purposes shall be invested by the Board of Trustees in or upon such investments, security or property as it thinks fit, subject nevertheless to such authority, approval or consent by the Charity Commissioners as may from time be required by law or by the special Trusts affecting any property in the hands of the Association.

### **14 RECORDS OF MEETINGS**

- 14.1 The Minutes of all Board of Trustees and Council meetings and Annual and Special General meetings shall be entered into a book together with the names of members attending the same.

### **15 DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- 15.1 In the event of a proposed dissolution of the Association
- (i) A resolution to such effect may be proposed only at a Special General Meeting of the Association duly summoned for that purpose.
  - (ii) Such dissolution shall not be valid unless there is a majority of not less than three quarters of the votes cast by members in favour of such dissolution.
  - (iii) The notice convening the Special General Meeting shall:
    - (a) Provide for members of the Association unable to attend the Special General Meeting power to record their votes by Proxy.
    - (b) Indicate which Charitable body or bodies has or have objects as near as possible to those of the Association to which the assets of the Association should be transferred.
  - (iv) Such dissolution shall not be valid unless and until an Order of the Charity Commissioners to that effect shall have been made and accordingly until such order shall have been made the Association shall continue to function under these Rules.

### **16 AMENDMENT OF THE RULES**

- 16.1 The Association in an Annual or Special General Meeting by a resolution passed by not less than three quarters of those present and voting may amend these Rules save that there shall be no power to amend Rules 1 and 2 except with the prior consent of the Charity Commissioners. Six weeks' notice in writing of such proposed alteration or addition must be given to the Hon. Secretary who will insert the same in the summons to the meeting.
- 16.2 Resolutions for Rule changes shall be submitted in accordance with procedures laid down for an Annual or Special General Meeting.