

Verderers Court: **Wednesday 17th** March 2025

Presentment: **New Forest Commoners Defence Association**

Good morning Official Verderer, Verderers, and members of the Court.

Andrew Parry-Norton CDA Chairman.

Over the last year there have been decisions taken that have had large impacts on the Forest, these decisions will have a lasting legacy on our unique landscape.

Car parking charges are the next installment in the Forests history, possibly coming into force within the next 12 months. As every Forest organization struggles with under funding, ever-increasing numbers of visitors seem the obvious target to develop a revenue stream.

We, as Commoners, are often on the front line in dealing with these visitors; we explain why you should not feed our ponies or try and sit your young child on the Shetlands back, maybe attend a vehicle collision late at night with one of our stock. These situations are becoming more frequent as visitors’ numbers increase and decisions are made that could potentially impact Commoners and their stock.

Commoners are and always will be, an important part of the Forest’s future so shouldn’t we be included in discussions that have an impact on the Forest and Commoning?

Instead of having surprises thrown at us with little time to respond, engage with us, involve us in talks at an early stage. The CDA is not there to be disruptive, a compromise is often the best way forward but it requires openness and round table talks.

So we ask that we be invited to engage in the car parking charging process, lets work together to produce a satisfactory result for everyone and most importantly the Forest’s future.