

## NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

**Meeting:** Monday 12 June 2017

**Agenda Item 10: Local Issues**

### a) Bridleway gate latches

At the end of March Hallam Mills sent the Forum Officer the following note extracted from the draft Verderers' Court business, asking for it to be brought to the Forum's attention.

#### GATE CATCHES

*The Deputy Surveyor said he enquired as to the provenance of the 'trombone' catches which are now being used in the Forest and was advised that the British Horse Society and members of the Access Forum recommended them. In addition, Natural England believed they are the best handle for multi use. The HLS paid for them in the first instance.*

*Several members of the Court, however, said that they believe from both personal experience and anecdotal evidence from friends, that the trombone catches can be dangerous when operated by horse riders and it was suggested that their use should be restricted to gates where access by disabled people, particularly those in wheelchairs, is likely. On other gates, particularly where wheelchair access is physically not possible, it is suggested the old fashioned (and significantly cheaper) spring catches should be fitted.*

*The Deputy Surveyor said he would like to take the issue back to the Access Forum. Mr Mills who represents the Court on the Access Forum, agreed to advise the Forum of the Court's views.*

Gary North (Forestry Commission representative to the Forum) has confirmed that it would be useful to discuss this as he has recently received several enquiries and complaints about gate catches. The Commission is intending to trial some different catches over the summer.

The Forum is asked to consider and advise on whether trombone catches are appropriate for use in the Forest, and if so under what circumstances.

### b) Broadley Inclosure – Alison Russell

In August 2016 a clay hole was reported at Grid Ref SZ251992 Broadley Inclosure. At that time the hole was approximately 10 metres wide and closed an otherwise attractive and firm ride which forms part of a circular walking and riding route.

Since then the problem has been exacerbated by forestry operations. Local riders have been in contact with the Forestry Commission, but are concerned that to date no action has been taken.

Petronella Natrass  
May 2017