

NFAF 31/4

Item 8 – Proposal to fence Barton Common

Barton Common is a registered common in the ownership of New Milton Town Council. It is roughly triangular in shape and bounded on two sides by Barton on Sea Golf Course. The remaining side is open to Barton Common Road. A location map can be found at Annex 1.

The Town Council is working with the [New Forest Land Advice Service](#) to consider how to best manage the green spaces in its ownership. One option is for Barton Common, along with other green spaces, to be entered into an [Environmental Stewardship](#) agreement with Natural England, under which the Town Council would receive an annual grant to manage the green spaces to enhance their value to wildlife.

The Town Council has consulted locally on its plans. Annex 2 contains a copy of a presentation given to a recent public meeting. The presentation includes information about Barton Common, its use and history, its current and potential nature conservation value, and future management proposals. Annex 3 contains a copy of a questionnaire that was available at the meeting and other public places, and also a summary of the questionnaire responses. Annex 4 contains the text of a letter to be sent to residents of Barton Common Road; the text will also be displayed on an on-site notice.

The proposed management of Barton Common includes grazing by cattle and unshod ponies for a few weeks every spring and autumn. In order to facilitate the grazing, it is proposed that the Common is fenced from the adjoining road and car park – the boundaries with the golf course are already fenced. Annex 5 is a map showing the proposed new fencing, marked in red, and gates. Annex 6 is a similar scale map showing the public footpaths which cross the Common.

Under the [Commons Act 2006](#), it is necessary to obtain consent from the Secretary of State before erecting fencing on a registered common. In practice, the consenting procedure is dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate. Although it is not a legal requirement, it is suggested that applicants consult the relevant local access forum prior to submitting an application to fence a common.

The New Forest Access Forum is asked to comment on the proposed application to fence Barton Common. The Forum is further asked whether it will support the proposed application.

Background reading

[Natural England Factsheet on fencing and other works on common land](#)
[Planning Inspectorate Guidance on consents for common land](#)