



Hampshire County Council

ARTS, COUNTRYSIDE
AND COMMUNITY

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Dear Maureen

RE: FORESTRY COMMISSION

Thank you for your letters relating to Forestry Commission management.

If I can answer your questions first before going on to more general matters. It has proved very difficult to work with the Commission over the management of both definitive rights of way and permissive access to Alice Holt and the surrounding woodland. Hampshire County Council has no remit beyond the definitive network but it is regrettable that a more positive attitude to equestrian users does not exist.

Hardings ride will be the subject of a Traffic Regulation Order but as we have seen in the past this will only prove effective if the Commission who exercise private rights avoid using the lane. Despite promises in the past this has not been the case. The County Council is considering what management and repair programme is to be implemented to try and improve the condition of the lane for public use and this will be implemented over the next year or so.

In relation to the tarmac I can confirm that no authority was sought or given by the County Council. You are correct in saying that permission should have been granted before the work commenced. By coincidence Barry Lockyer and I were on site the day that this work was being undertaken and were ourselves prevented from using Hardings. This is an issue, which Mr Locker will be taking up with the Forestry Commission. While I agree the work should not have been undertaken without co-operation with the County Council I am not sure I would agree with all the points you make in relation to the physical use of tarmac in that location. Yes I agree that there is a danger that cars and operational vehicles may use this type of surface at greater speed but with care and consideration both users of the access road and Hardings can coexist, as is the case on many similar estates. The use of a different surface should not present a problem as this is an occurrence users face in countless