

**Forest Enterprise & British Horse Society**

## **Concordat**

**A joint concordat  
between Forest Enterprise  
and British Horse Society**

The purpose of this Concordat is to strengthen the collaboration between Forest Enterprise and British Horse Society in promoting responsible equestrian access to the Forestry Commission Estate for recreation.

## **1. Introduction**

**Forest Enterprise** was established as an executive agency of the Forestry Commission on the 1st April 1996 with responsibility for managing the Forestry Commission estate. The aims of the agency are to produce the environmental, financial, and other outputs sought by Ministers and the Forestry Commissioners in a way that efficiently meets the Government's objectives and sustains the productive potential of the forest estate.

## **2. Providing Access**

### **Forest Enterprise will:**

- Allow open access to all Forestry Commission owned woodland, on roads and tracks, where management control is not required to regulate access.
- Grant permissions for a reasonable fee to allow access to woodlands where management control is required to regulate use.
- Provide opportunities for horse riding and pony trekking businesses particularly in remote rural areas.
- Co-operate in linking public bridleways and permissive routes where the proposed route is part of a through route which also runs over land owned by others by granting permissive access.

### **British Horse Society will:**

- Support the Forest Enterprise policy of providing open and permissive access rather than the creation of extensive new bridleways on the Forestry Commission estate.

## **3. Promoting the Use and Enjoyment of Woodlands**

### **Forest Enterprise will:**

- Prepare an annual gazetteer of woodlands where access is available in conjunction with user groups.
- Issue "roving" permissions to cover all Forestry Commission woodlands across Great Britain where access is limited for management reasons. Permissions will be issued based on the main residence of the applicant. Where local Forest Districts have no



permission charges our Terretorial office will provide guidance on chsrge based on adjacent Forest Districts.

**British Horse Society will:**

- Publicise the Forestry Commission open access scheme to its members through newsletters and other publicity as available.
- Encourage both BHS members and other horse riders to adhere to the agreed code of conduct.

**4. Managing Use of Woodlands and Trails**

**Forest Enterprise will:**

- Encourage a responsible approach to riding in the forest by including the code of practice developed with the British Horse Society any publications.
- Monitor use of trails and woodland.
- Continue to ensure a high level of access to public rights of way and to promptly remove obstructions or re-instate any damage caused by our activities.

**British Horse Society will:**

- With Forest Enterprise prepare a code of practice for horse riding in woodland to form part of the open access gazetteer.
- Recognise and respect the needs of FE managers to regulate and integrate multiple use of FC woodland.
- Liaise through local access officers with Forest District and Terretorial staff on any issues that cannot be resolved at a local level. Where issue cannot be resolved they will be refered through BHS national Access Officers to the relevant Forest Enterprise Terretorial or National Office.
- Provide information to Forest Enterprise on the use of open access areas through surveys carried out by local Access Officers
- Encourage its members to report hazards on trails to local managers.
- Help source funds for the development and extension of access to the Forestry Commission estate for horse riding.

**Both organisations will:**

- Develop pilot local Horse Riding Associations to manage riding in areas where management control is required to regulate use.

## **5. Developing Mutual Understanding and Partnerships**

### **Both organisations will:**

- Consult each other over work with potential impact on the others interest.
- Make and maintain close working relationships at all levels but particularly between Forest Enterprise Forest District Managers and British Horse Society Access Officers.
- Exchange experience on promoting public understanding and awareness of the impact of recreation on the natural environment.
- Promote community participation and explore opportunities for joint action and communication material.
- Liaise over opportunities for events and commercial use of the Forestry Commission estate.

## **6. Implementation**

- No action arising from this Concordat will override the statutory duties and responsibilities of either organisation.
- BHS will provide a list of local contact officers to be updated annually
- The contents of this Concordat will be communicated to FE staff and BHS members and other interested parties.
- Partnerships will be encouraged which facilitate a pooling of resources in order to further shared objectives.
- The two organisations will hold annual meeting to review progress in the working of the Concordat and will agree an annual programme of key issues or initiatives to address
- The Concordat will be reviewed by 1 April 2001

Signed by

Bob McIntosh - Chief Executive Forest Enterprise

Chief Executive British Horse Society