

# Letters to the editor

## Complete denial of the facts

SIR, The unfortunate, rather complacent communication in the *A&T* (Letters, September 3rd) on the "objectors to stream restoration are the vandals", does so amply illustrate the lack of respect shown to the growing number of protestors over the "restoration of wetland schemes" perpetrated by the New Forest National Park Authority and the Forestry Commission over the past few years.

If they see nothing wrong, despite years of recorded presentments by experts to the Verderers' Court expressing their extreme concerns over these issues, it explains the lack of courtesy shown by a complete denial of the facts.

These are now documented and recorded on film, not just from Friends of Latchmore, but from many other areas desecrated in this way — for example Wootton, Lyndhurst, Burley and the Beaulieu river to name just a few.

There have to date been hundreds of objections to the New Forest National Park planning authority about Latchmore alone, and rather ironically one of the most eminent protests was printed on the reverse page of the letter from the New Forest Association in the *A&T* on September 3rd. It came from a highly-respected archaeologist, the academic Anthony Pasmore, who has repeatedly objected to the proposed destruction of the valuable sites in Latchmore, some excavated professionally by him.

It seems completely negative to try and turn back the clock. It also seems somewhat irresponsible to take on subcontractors to do the infilling unsupervised, who wouldn't know an SSSI or recognise a protected species from a lamprey to a vole if it jumped up on their JCB and bit them.

I would certainly hope that the Habitat and Landscape Committee of the New Forest Association are indeed well intentioned, but so far are not regarded as achieving outstanding success in their objectives and appear dismally reluctant to learn by, or even acknowledge, their mistakes.

With the utmost respect, please listen to what we are saying, the wildlife you are killing cannot be resuscitated, the infilling material being used is not from the New Forest and is incompatible with the habitats of the New Forest environment. None of this makes

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any sense and is bordering on irresponsible damage.

Surely if these "restorations" are absolutely essential they could be done more sensitively with some protection of the Forest and its unique wildlife.

Isn't that what the New Forest National Park Authority, the Forestry Commission, the Habitat and Landscape Committee and their agents, and the Verderers are supposed to be there for?

Mary Winstanley Rose

## Scrap this vanity project

SIR, Brian Turnoff, chair of the New Forest Association Habitat and Landscape Committee, is out of order in his letter to the *A&T*, September 3rd, in referring to the leaders of the Friends of Latchmore Brook, including one presumes Professor John Shepherd, as "the only vandals I see here".

Whereas the Friends of Latchmore Brook as quoted by Anthony Pasmore (*A&T*, September 3rd) refer to the proposed corrective works as vandalism, which in some people's eyes it could be.

I must confess that I know nothing about Latchmore Brook, but I regard the expenditure of the proposed £1.5m on the project as pure vanity, in the face of the need for affordable homes in the New Forest area.

Mr Pasmore in his New Forest Notes clearly and meticulously

demonstrates that the planning application is supported by a deeply flawed Environmental Impact Assessment, which can at best be described as sloppy and inadequate, to justify the disruption and expenditure of £1.5m to restore this stream to its original water course.

In my view, this project should either be abandoned as a waste of money, or called in by central government, as suggested by Mr Pasmore, and an independent and thorough survey carried out before any planning application is considered.

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