

# TRUSTEES AND MANAGERS OF STELLING MINNIS COMMON

## An Alternative Grazing Plan. (In respect of Managing Stelling Minnis Common)

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### THE ALTERNATIVE GRAZING PLAN

In submitting this plan; following significant research into existing successful grazing plans, I am mindful of the overall objectives of a complete plan and perceived philosophy of DEFRA, The Minnis Managers, the owners and the Local Community.

If it has been acknowledged that grazing in some form or another, by any particular type or types of livestock is a better way of managing scrub and the like. (as opposed to mechanical clearing) then I submit the following: -

#### Proposal

1. To introduce grazing on the Minnis, with sheep and cattle of rare breeds. (Quantities and types to be agreed) i.e. Dexter Cattle and Jacobs Sheep.
2. To encourage participation, by the local community. This to be promulgated by suggesting the following: -
  - To consult/ask all of the “commoners”, if they would be interested in participating.
  - To consult/ask all of the residents, if they would be interested in participating.
  - To consult/ask the Village School, if they would be interested in participating, in an educational and not financially basis.
  - Consult with both the owners and the Managing Agents, to be involved by way of sponsoring the contribution on behalf of the School.

#### Implementation

Hopefully, by involving the local residents, commoners, owners and managers, I can persuade sufficient “sponsors” into “buying” or “donating” to the Village “flock/herd”.

This would mean that the participating residents have a day-to-day interest in the welfare of the flock/herd and the consequential benefits of the Minnis being grazed. They would also receive an additional benefit, by sharing, at the appropriate time, in fresh beef and lamb.

Irrespective of whether a resident donates any stock the sponsoring resident jointly and severally have notional ownership of the stock. This would mean that any stock, that maybe, in excess to the number required to maintain, or, if required to expand the stock 50 % would be given to the said resident. This would be at the same ratio of nominal ownership of stock available for slaughter.

Depending on the amount of stock available the following should be able to take place: -

1. Local residents having, from time to time, first class lamb and beef available for consumption.
2. The village shop to have, at cost, an amount to sell with permission from the owners with the ability to make their normal profit. The shop is therefore involved in the plan and is helping to maintain and sustain a village amenity. The same would apply to the village Public House.

### **Care of the Stock**

Where it was deemed necessary to employ an administrator and perhaps a secretary together with a stockman, under my proposal, as none of these roles would need to be done on a full time basis. One locally appointed qualified person could perform all three functions. This would of course save money as far as funding is concerned.

This person (The Minnis Warden) would also be able to perform other tasks and duties as detailed/specified in The Kent Wildlife Trust Plan, previously submitted.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

This plan would have the following benefits: -

1. Grazing is re-introduced to the Minnis.
2. There is no need for Cattle Grids.
3. There is no need for fencing, temporary or otherwise.
4. Commoners are involved.
5. The Local Community is involved.
6. Village Groups, such as: - Scouts, Guides, Historic Society etc are involved.
7. Local Children (our future) through the Village School are involved.
8. The Village Shop and Public House are involved.
9. Benefit to dog walkers and casual users i.e. stock would be put out to graze after 10.00 and returned to holding areas by 3.00 pm or 4.00 pm, subject to the time of year.
10. Areas of grazing would be pre notified to all by way of notice boards and the Hardres Stelling News.
11. Educational visits would be encouraged. (they would use the local amenities)
12. All of this would be a positive contribution to the preservation of the Minnis and its community for the long term. It may even get to a point, where it is totally self funding, giving local people great personal satisfaction and saving the tax payer money.