

Liskeard and District Angling Club

Annual General Meeting

11th February 2020

1. Call to Order/Welcome

The meeting, held at Liskeard Constitutional Club, was called to order at 19.35hrs on 11th February 2020, with R Williams (in the Chair).

- RW welcomed all to the well attended 2020 LDAC AGM
- In the absence of the President, RW read out the President's welcome address

"May I apologise for missing the AGM for the first time in some 40 years. Game angling is going through difficult times with falling fish stocks, lack of interest from youngsters and more regulation; all of which makes the job of your Officers and Committee much more demanding. They have had much to do over the last year and they all deserve our thanks, mine included.

Angling is the purpose of our club, but hopefully you gain more by way of friendship in a club that has, I believe, always been a happy one. Realistically, we cannot expect our fishing to improve dramatically in the short term, but please give us your continued support and if you can, please encourage others to join.

I wish you all an enjoyable 2020 with hopefully good angling conditions".

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Messrs. White (A), Johnson, Leadsford, Smith, Bryant, Comber and Mugridge.

3. Approval of 2019 AGM minutes

Following adoption by the Committee (on 9th April 2019) and their publication on the Club website no further comments have been received.

A motion was therefore made by P Jordan, seconded by N White, to approve the minutes of the 12th February 2019 LDAC AGM meeting.

APPROVED unanimously.

4. Matters Arising from previous AGM Minutes

None.

5. Officers' Reports

Chairman's Report (R Williams)

The 2019 season proved once again one of the more challenging in recent years as drought conditions across England and Wales led to a marked decline in the rod catch both locally and nationally.

2018 National statistics for England and Wales follow;

- 2018 salmon catch: 7,788 against 2017 13,500 (a decline of 38% on the 5-year average)
- 2018 Sea Trout 13,600 against 22,000 in 2017 (a decline of 49% on the 5-year average).
- Wales fared worst with the decline being -60% for Salmon and -56% for Sea Trout on the 5-year average.

As a consequence Wales had introduced new conservation measures in the form of a 10-year byelaw.

Locally we have also seen the introduction of new byelaws for the Camel, West Looe and Seaton rivers (all details on the Club website).

Against this backdrop of increasing regulation the Club has seen a further fall in membership numbers. The income stream that membership fees generate is, of course, key in allowing the Club to exist; to enable it to rent fishing, to insure itself and run the organisation. The Treasurer would discuss the impact of falling revenues further in his report.

The two salmon hatcheries continue to provide important support for dwindling stocks. Despite tough conditions both managed to meet their targets for brood stock collection in 2019. More details follow in their reports.

- Hatcheries were not the answer to all our problems but they provide a backup for years when conditions (high river levels and water temps) have hampered spawning and juvenile fish survival.
- A timely reminder was made to members to check any salmon on the Fowey for fin clipping (indicating returning hatchery fish).
- Thanks made from LDAC to the volunteers who make this important contribution to our fishing.

WRT fry surveys continue on the Fowey and the results show juvenile numbers for salmon and sea trout holding up despite environmental pressures.

There was little to report on the Draynes gravel cleaning, but this is hopefully going to restart in summer 2020; subject of course to managing increasing regulation and the need for licences to do so.

Bank clearance days have been generally well supported. Ashford/Doublebois were cancelled due to recent inclement weather and they will be arranged for a later date, more information will be posted on the Club website.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the Secretary for all his efforts and a special mention made to R Grieve for his support in running the Club website.

Finally he thanked the Committee and wished all better fishing in 2020.

ii) Secretary (P Jordan)

- The Committee met 4 times with excellent attendance.
- Committee discussed and took the lead in implementing voluntary restrictions on the Fowey (and other rivers) to

support fish stocks in the future. These are being rolled over into 2020 with no additional measures added.

- Participated fully in FRA and TTFA and LRA meetings to best represent interests of the Club and its members.
- Arranged with Fishing Mayhem to act as our sole agent for selling not just visitor permits but also annual memberships. (Cash only).
- Noted the first reported occurrence of a live signal crayfish in the Draynes.
- Noted the likely introduction of beavers in the upper reaches of the Warleggan in 2020. Reports of a female beaver with kits were made in the Inny and also a solitary male at Roadford Lake.
- Noted ongoing work with WRT to coppice Lewarne in a sustainable manner to help improve access and improve environment for anglers.

- ***Removal of commercial net from Fowey.***
 - LDAC agreement to support EA voluntary restrictions both avoided a byelaw on the Fowey but more importantly resulted in the NLO of zero. This has been bought out with funds provided by SWW and support from the EA. Thanks go out to both for their efforts.

- ***On increasing membership dues for 2020***
 - Noted that membership dues had increased by 2.5% this year.
 - For £100.00 members get access to c.22 miles of fishing (£4.50 per mile). This compares very favourably with Newbridge (£35.00 per mile), and Lanhydrock (£45.00 per mile).
 - Variety: 6 rivers with brown trout, sea trout, salmon and grayling.

- ***Thanks made to the riparian owners for accepting a 20% reduction in rentals as the club manages a***

drop in membership/income. Further details to follow from the Treasurer.

The main message this year is really one of *looking forward*, rather than looking backwards.

- ***Looking forward to going fishing in 2020***
 - *Looking forward* to getting out and about on the rivers.
 - *Looking forward* to catching a fish, and of course losing them; the latter being the ones' remembered the most.
 - *Looking forward* to seeing the first kingfisher of the year flashing down the stream. The surest indicator that rivers are healthy.
 - *Looking forward* to hearing about the size of the fish being caught in Club waters.

- In concluding the Secretary reminded members to advise of any address or email changes *asap*. Failure to do so would inevitably result in lost contact.

- The ***FRA AGM on 16th April 2020*** will be at a new venue, the Conservative Club in Lostwithiel. More details will appear on the LDAC website nearer the time.

iii) Treasurer (T Sobey)

The Treasurer presented and reviewed the P&L account for year ending December 31st 2019.

Allowing for all costs in the year the Club carried forward a loss of £1,602.00 for the year.

This is the first recorded loss for the Club and is directly attributable to the sharp reduction in membership numbers. For 2019 this was at an all time low of 126.

The Committee is aware that 2020 will be critical financially.

- Membership rates are therefore increasing by 2.5% to

£100.00 pa.

- The Club are pleased to note that most of our riparian owners have also recognized the financial uncertainties we are facing and have agreed to a 20% reduction in rental rates whilst we weather the *not-so-perfect* storm of increasing regulation, the effects of commercial netting at sea and climate change. We thank them for their understanding and support.

Q: Mr A Brewer asked whether there was merit in considering allowing members to pay by installments and/or direct debit. The Chairman advised that this could be discussed at forthcoming Committee meetings.

iv) Auditor (A White)

The Club's accounts were found to be in order and thanks are due to the Treasurer for his efforts in managing the Club finances.

With the fall in membership the last 12 months have been a difficult time for the officers, but their efforts have limited the shortfall to an acceptable level.

However it will be necessary to look hard at expenditures in the future and unless membership can be increased further saving will need to be found.

Motion: To approve the 2020 accounts: proposed by N White, seconded by M Davy.

APPROVED unanimously.

6. Other Reports

FRA Colliford Hatchery (R Grieve)

- RG firstly mentioned the recent passing of C Bettinson, a long-term member of the Club and a keen supporter of the Colliford hatchery.
- RG noted that the Facebook page was being effectively used and that external interest in the Club was evident.

- Hatchery specifics followed
 - 2019 brood stock collection had been successful with 9 cock and 9 hen fish collected.
 - LDAC waters had provided over 50% of the fish.
 - Operating challenges included the withdrawal of Pycezes as a treatment measure. The EA has just approved use of an alternate treatment.
 - The hatchery was on target to have stocked 100,000 fish into the St Neot River by summer of 2020.
 - Fin clipping was discussed and the importance of reporting any fin clipped fish caught emphasized.

The Secretary took the opportunity to thank RG and his volunteers for their efforts in running a successful hatchery

Lynher Hatchery (G Hake)

- GH reported that brood stock collection had been difficult in winter 2019 and that there had been a shortage of cock fish.
- Despite the slow start 28,000 eggs had been laid down and hatching was progressing well
- He noted that 30% of the alvelins were stocked out into side streams under artificial redds. Monitoring of these sites later in the season had showed high densities of fry – attesting to the success of the method.
- GH noted that the Lynher hatchery was run solely by volunteers and the provision of the site by N Lintott was highly appreciated. The work of the secretary (A White) was also highlighted.
- Financial donations were critical to the continued existence of the hatchery. He thanked LDAC for their generous financial donations in supporting the hatchery and urged Club members to join the Lynher River Association (£10.00 pa) thereby helping to further finance the activity.

Q: AB asked whether fin clipping took place at the Lynher hatchery. GH advised that this was not permitted by the EA as the Lynher was part of a mixed river estuary and that fin clipping already took place on the Tamar at Gunnislake.

BREAK (20.40 hrs)

7. Election of Officers

- N White (acting Presiding) commended the current Officers and Committee members for their efforts in 2019 and stated that in the absence of any nominations from the floor RW was willing to stand for re-election as the Chairman of LDAC.

Motion: To approve RW as Chair for 2020: proposed by PJ, seconded by DW.

APPROVED unanimously.

Chairman duly re-elected.

- RW stated that with no new nominations from the floor the Officers' of the Club were willing to stand for re-election in 2020; (N White, Vice Chair; T Sobey, Treasurer and P Jordan, Secretary). He therefore proposed *en bloc* voting to re-elect these 3 Officers

Motion: To re-elect 3 Officers for 2020: proposed by RG, seconded by MD.

APPROVED unanimously.

All Officers duly re-elected.

8. Election of Committee Members (RW)

The Chairman (R Williams) advised that one Committee vacancy now existed following the resignation of P Tuscon. PT was thanked for his contributions and the Chairman advised that a nomination for election to Committee had been received for A Page.

Motion: To elect A Page as Committee member for 2020; proposed by T Coleman, seconded by GH.

APPROVED unanimously.

1 new Committee members duly elected.

In the interest of time RW proposed that as the remaining Committee were all standing for re-election he recommended they be re-appointed *en-bloc*.

Motion: To re-elect the standing Committee members; proposed by PJ, seconded by T McPherson.

APPROVED unanimously.

All current Committee members were duly re-elected.

9. Presentation of Club Trophies

The Committee had received the following nominations for trophies during the 2019 season.

- *Salmon Cup*: D White for a 15½ lb. salmon caught on 18th June 2019 on the Fowey at Ashford. The Committee awarded the Salmon trophy to D White.
- *Glencross Sea Trout Cup*: A Bruce for a magnificent 21lb sea trout caught on the Fowey at Lower Boconnoc on 25th September 2019. The Committee awarded the Sea Trout trophy to A Bruce. It was noted that this is a new club record.
- *The Lynher Contribution* trophy was awarded to G Hake in recognition of his ongoing work in supporting the Lynher River Association and Lynher hatchery.

Keepsake trophies were also given to 2019 winners.

No nominations were received for the Junior Achievement or Brown Trout trophies in 2019.

10. Any Other Business

Giles Rickard provided a brief synopsis of WRT activities in 2019

- Water4Growth activities
 - Tree work to reduce shading over riffles (Fowey).
 - In-river habitat work on the St Neot to create fry refuge from high water levels and predation.
 - Work on the Inny to improve water quality.
- Fish passage work, modifying weirs at gauging stations and modifying of baffles.
- Electrofishing (40 sites)
- Upstream thinking
 - Farms, fencing and run-off management
 - Dung storage to prevent spreading in wet weather

An additional 5-year programme was planned going forward and a recognition that efforts had been primarily focused on the Fowey catchment. It was hoped that future efforts might therefore focus on the Lynher.

RW: Thanked GR for his update and advised members that additional work was planned with WRT in managing the Club owned wood at Lewarne Coombe. This was especially pertinent as the threat of ash die back was likely to compromise the roadside setting leading to further cost to the Club.

RW: advised that Fishing Mayhem were able to order in specific hooks and other tackle if members so required. Members were further reminded that a 10% discount was offered on production of their current LDAC membership cards.

RG/JH: provided an amusing account of how not to manage brood stock collection.

RAFFLE

The AGM was followed by a successful club raffle organised by Messrs. N and D White. Proceeds raised amounted to £124.00.

In closing the Chairman thanked all for their attendance and input. He wished them success in the season ahead.

The 2020 AGM of the LDAC was brought to a close at 21.45 hrs.