

Liskeard and District Angling Club

Annual General Meeting

2013

1. Call to Order

The meeting, held at Liskeard Constitutional Club, was called to order at 19.40hrs on 12th February 2013, with R Williams (Chair) and A White (presiding).

2. Members not in Attendance

Apologies for absence received from Messrs. B Kirkpatrick, R Elliot and P Todd.

3. Approval of 2012 AGM minutes

Following their publication in April 2012 a motion was made by R Williams to approve the minutes of the 7th February 2012 AGM meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. Matters Arising from 2012 AGM Minutes

- i) The new catch limits were passed to all members in the May 2012 newsletter.
- ii) A review of the club's investment strategy concluded that there was no merit in changing current banking arrangements.
- iii) A new trophy award process has been established.
- iv) The Kingfisher Beat was added to the Club's catch return form.

5. Officers' Reports

i) Chairman (R Williams)

The Chair reviewed the season's sport, headlining that the runs of summer grilse and summer peal were almost non-existent in 2012.

This was certainly a common trend across the rivers of the southwest, if not nationally. The 2012 Restormel fish count numbers supported these observations; both salmon/large sea trout and small sea trout counts were down, the former by 20% and the latter by 33% when compared to 2011. However comparisons with the 10-year average were more encouraging.

A number of multi sea winter (MSW) fish had been observed and caught and an early season run of large sea trout was also evident.

ii) Secretary (P Jordan)

The Secretary reported that in 2012 no fishing leases were lost and that, with the addition of the Kingfisher Beat and Parsons Meadow the Club members now has access to a total of 36.5km (nearly 23 miles) of fishing on 5 rivers in east Cornwall. The club owns over 4km of the Fowey and 0.5km of the Lynher, being 13% of the fishing that members have access to. He noted that the Committee looked at every opportunity to buy more fishing as and when it became available. In this regard the club (unsuccessfully) bid at auction in 2012. The Club will continue to look for additional fishing whether rented or owned and members were asked to advise Committee if they became aware of any fishing for sale or rent.

The high proportion of rented fishing meant that the Club's relationship with its riparian owners was critical to the Club's future. The Committee recognized this and is working hard to enhance these relationships. In 2012 the Committee members visited 90% of them personally. It is hoped that this will increase in 2013.

Members were reminded that they could help in looking after all beats: ensuring that litter is picked up, by making sure that gates are always shut, that fences are respected and access not blocked.

The urgent need to effect repair to many beats after the severe weather of 2012 was discussed and members were asked to turn out for the work parties highlighted in the Newsletter.

Lost and Found was instigated in 2012 and the Club has a simple process to try to help members get back anything they have lost. Members were reminded to email sec@ldac.org.uk with lost and found items.

Members were asked take a regular look at the Club website – to find latest news, any beat changes, forms, maps and benefits (discounts, insurance etc). It was noted that 65% of members now communicated with the Club by email – the aim being 100%.

iii) Treasurer (T Sobey)

The Treasurer reviewed the statement of income and expenditure to 31st December 2012 and illustrated that the club finances were in good order.

To reflect 2013 costs the Committee has increased annual fees for adults and seniors and lifetime membership by 6% following last

years freeze. Full members will now pay £85.00 per year. It is noted that inflation increases will generally require annual rises.

Membership levels were not as high as the previous year, dropping by approximately 10%; 2012 membership comprising 200 full, 15 junior and 9 life members. Membership limit remains set at 250.

iv) Auditor (J Shearsmith)

The Club auditor recommended the accounts for approval and commended the Treasurer.

Approval of the 2012 Accounts: proposed N White and seconded C Pinnels. Approved unanimously.

6. Other Reports

i) Hatcheries/FRA

A White reviewed performance on the Lynher hatchery and indicated that current operations were satisfactory and sustainable. A shortage of cock fish for brood-stock was reported for the 2012 season. Despite this the Hatchery aimed to rear 60,000 fry for release in Autumn 2013. A White thanked the Club for its financial support in 2012 and notified members that additional hatchery volunteers would be welcome.

R Williams advised that whilst there was still no hatchery on the Fowey it was hoped that progress would be made in 2013 to remedy the situation.

Members were reminded that the FRA AGM is scheduled for 17th April 2013 at the Stable Block, Boconnoc Estate and that attendance was open to all LDAC members.

ii) Head Warden

R Williams stated that poor weather and high water levels in 2012 meant that little work was done on the Draynes Sanctuary in 2012. He hoped that 2013 would see a return to higher volunteer participation and significantly more progress being achieved.

The Club's efforts to manage Lewarne Coombe trees adjoining the A38 was discussed and members were made aware of the Club's responsibility in maintain our property in a safe manner.

iii) Web Site Manager

R Grieve updated members on website developments and encouraged them to utilize the site for downloading forms and maps of beats. He discussed the introduction of the Facebook pages and requested members participate in populating it. A request was also made for another volunteer to assist in helping to maintain the website.

R Williams thanked R Grieve for his continued efforts in supporting the website.

7. Election of Officers

A White (presiding) commended the current Committee for their efforts in 2012 and stated that all the serving officers (R Williams, Chair; N White, Vice Chair; T Sobey, Treasurer and P Jordan, Secretary) were standing for re-election. No other nominations were forthcoming from the floor.

Proposal: To re-elect the 4 officers by C Pinnels and seconded G Hake. Unanimously approved.

All officers duly elected.

8. Election of Committee Members

Following the inability of B Kirkpatrick to attend Committee meetings lately the Chairman thanked him for his past efforts and commended V Lamb for his efforts in staying on the Committee during that period. The Chairman advised that with the resignation of Mr. Kirkpatrick one Committee vacancy had now arisen. Nominations were sought from the floor.

Nomination: J White: proposed T Sobey, seconded D White.

Proposal: Re-election of existing committee members and the one new candidate, by P Jordan, seconded N White. Unanimously approved.

Committee duly elected.

9. Presentation of trophies

This is the first year of the club's new trophy award process. Forms were distributed to all members with their 2012 newsletters in December.

The Committee received several nominations for the 2013 Salmon Cup - that from J White for a 15lb Fowey salmon caught on 29th July 2012 at Golitha was the largest reported salmon and the Salmon trophy was duly awarded.

A single nomination for the 2012 Glencross Sea Trout cup had been received from R Grieve for a 5lb (Seaton) fish caught on 11th May 2012. The Committee awarded the Sea Trout trophy to R Grieve.

The Lynher trophy was awarded to P Mugridge (in his absence) by the Committee; being in recognition for his continued work in maintaining the Club's fishing on the Lynher river.

No nominations were received for either Brown Trout or the Junior achievement trophies. The trophies were not awarded.

W Eliot requested that all trophies should be put on display at future AGM's.

Discussion took place about reinstating a small trophy that winners could keep after they returned the Club trophies at year-end.

Action: Committee agreed to review the issue at their next meeting.

10. Any Other Business

R Jope advised that his 2 sons were willing to assist in beat work on the Fowey. The Chairman thanked him, and after discussion over insurance cover agreed to accept his kind offer.

A member asked for an update of the East Looe pollution incident in 2010. S Toms (EA) advised that the matter was still *sub judice* but hoped for satisfactory closure of the matter in 2013.

A further member asked about control of cormorants on the lower Fowey and discussion took place regarding the club's limited ability to cull and control these vermin.

11. Guest Speakers

- i) Simon Toms EA (Environment Agency) provided an overview of fish stocks illustrated by comparison to 2010 and 2011 count numbers on the Fowey. He agreed with the Chairman that 2012 numbers were disappointing and that grilse numbers were nationally reduced.

Lynher rod catches were discussed and the EA were pleased

with the 2012 catch and release figures, which exceeded the 66% target imposed. He also noted that just 7 anglers caught the total 2011 salmon catch and that 90% of these were taken by just 4 anglers.

There was discussion regarding poaching and enforcement in estuaries. S Toms indicated that patrols and prosecutions were gathering pace but that liaison with other government parties (IFCA; Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority and the MMO; (Marine Management Organisation) required coordination to ensure that all parties' interests were covered. The EA advised that they were looking for a complete ban on netting in southwest estuaries but that conflicting IFCA rules (on mullet) were complicating the issue.

Sea lice infestation and its relationship to fish farming was discussed and the EA advised they were collecting data for a new baseline study. Heavy infestations, especially to the heads of salmonids should now be reported to the EA. The study was required to support arguments against the establishment of a large (1,000 tonnes pa) southwest river estuary rainbow trout farm currently in development. The EA indicated that club members might like to engage with local MP's and other government offices to resist the establishment of such a farm. The Club agreed to investigate drafting a standard letter for members to download from the website. R Furniss offered to assist with said drafting, noting that the warmer waters in the southwest (when cf Scotland) could lead to an explosion of sea-lice infestations and death of many more salmonids in the southwest.

G Hake advised S Toms that small-scale pollution into the Camel was still occurring and that the two monitoring stations established by the EA there several years ago seemed to have had little positive effect. The Secretary was asked to forward any new information onto the EA.

In response to a question regarding who was now responsible for tree management in our rivers S Toms stated that it was riparian owners' sole responsibility and that the EA only had a duty to act if flooding was likely to occur as a consequence of tree debris.

- ii) **R Furniss (South West Rivers Association)** provided additional information on the Exe and Teign to support the observation that grilse stocks had collapsed in southwest rivers in 2012 but that MSW salmon had increased in numbers.

He advanced SWRA views on a number of subjects

- i) Canoeing: The SWRA were now campaigning strongly with the Dept. of Sport to prevent the Government (post Olympics) from continuing to inadvertently provide financial support for the *illegal* act of canoeing in private waters.
- ii) Hatchery: The SWRA now had a Best Practice Group established to ensure dissemination of experience in hatchery management. With regard to the Fowey Hatchery he advised that the FRA now had sufficient data to conclusively prove that the establishment of Colliford Reservoir had led to the collapse of the River St Neot salmonid population. Discussions were ongoing with SWW and it is hoped that they will fund the establishment and running of a hatchery to mitigate the damage. Progress was anticipated in 2013.
- iii) Cormorants: SWRA were aware of the damage caused by cormorants and were liaising with Angling Trust on the matter – a significant lobbying body group (with 1-1.5 million members, including LDAC). Licenses could be sought for limited culling but these methods are only effective along the length of an entire river.
- iv) The IFCA sea fish by-law review was discussed and recommendations for future lobbying would be placed on the FRA website to allow members to lobby against any undue impact on salmonids in the southwest.
- v) Sea Lice and rainbow trout fish farming in a southwest river Estuary: The SWRA would lobby strongly to prevent such a farm being established anywhere in the southwest.
- vi) The EA were looking to introduce voluntary regulation of salmonid fishing in the southwest rather than imposition of new by-laws. The SWRA were supportive of this approach.

In closing R Furniss advised that he was stepping down from the SWRA in 2014 but would continue to actively support and work with the FRA to protect fishing in the region.

The Chairman thanked Messrs. Toms and Furniss for their interesting and informative talks. He thanked Club members for their attendance and involvement in the AGM and club matters.

The 2013 AGM of the LDAC was brought to a close at 21.40hrs.

The AGM was followed by a successful club raffle organised once again by V Lamb.

Roger Lashbrook's and Fishing Mayhem were both thanked by the Chairman for their generous donations to the club raffle this year.