

# **Liskeard and District Angling Club**

## **Annual General Meeting**

**February 2017**

### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting, held at Liskeard Constitutional Club, was called to order at 19.35hrs on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017, with R Williams (in the Chair) and with A White (presiding).

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence received from Messrs Lynes, Evans, Lamb, Pilkington, Lashbrook, Dean and Leadsford.

### **3. Approval of 2016 AGM minutes**

Following adoption by the Committee (on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016) and their publication on the Club website no comments have been received.

*A motion was therefore made by R Williams to approve the minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 AGM meeting: APPROVED unanimously.*

### **4. Matters Arising from previous AGM Minutes**

None.

### **5. Officers' Reports**

#### **Chairman's Report (R Williams)**

A special welcome was made to our guests from the EA and the guest speaker, Dr. Bruce Stockley (WRT).

The season started reasonably well, spring salmon and some large sea trout being caught but it never really got going due to low water conditions during the year and fishing was, once

again, challenging. When rain did come, intermittent runs of small grilse and sea trout occurred on both main rivers but the back end of the year did not bring a winter run of large fish.

Fowey counter numbers were down on the 10-year average but large sea trout still arrived in the upper reaches of the system in good numbers and a large number of redds were evident from mid-November onwards. No heavy winter spates occurred so hopefully the eggs will have developed well and will not be as vulnerable to attrition as they develop and hatch this year.

Predation at sea, lack of food sources, global warming are all taking their toll on our fish stocks – but what is critical is the survival of smolts and their return to the sea. Without these there will be no run. If we do not send smolts back to sea they cannot come back. This brings me to some good news. We are now lucky to have two hatcheries operating in our area – the Lynher and Fowey Hatchery. I will let others update you on their excellent progress later in the meeting.

It was obvious upon walking the banks up in the spawning sanctuary of the upper Fowey that the majority of the sea trout redds appeared in those areas where volunteers had been working – testament to the effectiveness of these efforts. The work of Chris Janes and his small band of volunteers is gratefully recognised.

There is also excellent news in that the FRA has now managed to purchase the Draynes sanctuary – so we will have these sanctuaries in perpetuity. It will now be important to keep them in good condition.

We must also maintain our excellent efforts in catch and return – this can only benefit the overall spawning success and ensure the viability of future stocks. It also demonstrates to our riparian owners and Regulatory Authorities we care about our fishing and are committed to its conservation. I must also stress to all the importance of careful handling of fish as you return them. Much can be done to ensure their survival after the enjoyment and privilege of catching them.

The Chair took to opportunity to thank, on behalf of the Club

members

- the Secretary for once again producing an excellent annual newsletter and for his efforts on behalf of the club
- the Treasurer and his auditors for all their hard work during the year
- and the Club Wardens.....noting that if anyone wishes to step forward to look after any of our stretches they should approach the Chairman later.

Finally, the Chairman thanked the Committee Members for their continued support and hard work in the last year.

In closing he wished members a successful 2017 season.

## **ii) Secretary (P Jordan)**

The Secretary noted that it had been quite a busy season behind the scenes. All the usual activities took place (meetings, newsletters, membership correspondence, rental renewals etc.) and additionally

- ***The Duchy leases were re-negotiated*** and the club has moved from annual leases to 4-year leases on both the West Looe and Inny. This is much more acceptable to the club as it enables us to do longer term maintenance on the beats – work on which has already started.
- ***We lost*** a rented short stretch of River Lynher (Beat 9, Lynher Farm, 2 meadows) up at Bathpool as the owners' sold the property and fishing rights to third parties.
- ***There was a lot of legal work*** including changing out the LDAC trustees (to T Sobey, D White and P Jordan) and other land registry matters:
  - ***Prevented*** the sale of a short stretch (110m) of our fishing north of the road bridge at Newbridge - as the Turnpike Cottage owners' tried to include our fishing rights in their auction.
  - ***Purchased the Hendergrove Stretch (800m) of the upper Fowey:*** (Beat 2b, 1hb opposite

Golitha). This stretch was offered to the Club off-market and the Club agreed to purchase as it protects the Golitha fishing on the opposite bank – already owned by LDAC. Contracts have been signed and payment made in full.

- ***Unable to register Beat 15: Cadsonbury Beat; Lynher.*** The LDAC Trustees have had to withdraw the LDAC registration of this beat as the NT formally objected to the registration due to deed issues from the 1942 and 1967 sale/purchase agreements. We intend to continue to fish the beat and to explore options to complete the registration without resorting to an expensive legal tribunal.
- ***Sold c.50m (600m2) of LDAC land/ roadside verge*** to Highways England. This sale is progressing. Value to Club is approximately £850.00. Please note the on-going traffic restrictions and the need to enter Lewarne Coombe from the west now (Halfway House) as a result of their ongoing works. There is no access from the east (Trago) until end-April.

- Other news

- ***FRA*** has purchased 5100m of the Draynes sanctuary stretch that they previously rented. This should protect these important sea trout breeding areas in perpetuity. They have control of over 70% of the valley now. Thanks to Chris Janes, Roger Lashbrook and Rob Williams et al....for all their efforts in improving the stretches over many years.
- ***ORVIS EXETER*** are now offering 10% on all fishing related items (incl clothing, waders tackle etc..) to club members in 2017. Present your 2017 season ticket to get the discount. Shop visits only – not online. Thanks to Arthur White for arranging this.
- ***We are now looking for a new website manager*** to keep the club website up to date. Please come and see Secretary after the meeting or get in touch if you can help.

- Don't forget
  - **ROADFORD FISHING FAIR (25<sup>th</sup> February 2017)**, LDAC will be there. Come and support your Club.
  - **FRA AGM (19<sup>th</sup> April 2017) is confirmed at Boconnoc Estate** as usual. Come and support your River Association, the Salmon hatchery at Colliford and the sea trout sanctuary in the Draynes. These efforts, in conjunction with the excellent work that the Lynher Association also does at their hatchery are critical in sustaining our sport. Support them both by joining.
  - **LDAC work parties started last weekend.** Thanks to all for the good turnout at Kingfisher last weekend. Please support all the others and improve your fishing. The Newsletter has all the dates in it. Wotton is next Sunday.....we look forward to another good turnout.
- And finally
  - **We need your latest email and postal address** if we are going to keep in touch with you. That's in your hands, not ours....

### iii) Treasurer (T Sobe)

The Treasurer reviewed the 2016 profit/loss account for the Club and provided a breakdown of all expenditures and income for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

He illustrated that the finances were in fair order but that the Club had shown a loss of £327.91p for 2016. This loss could be attributed to increased legal costs associated with trustee and land registry matters.

As subscriptions accounted for 91% of income in 2016 it is important to maintain membership numbers. Happily 2016 membership levels were maintained at the same level as the previous year.

For the 2016 season the club therefore had eleven (11) life members, fourteen (14) junior members and one hundred and seventy six (176) full members (adults/disabled). Total club membership again therefore stood at a total of two hundred and one for 2016).

An additional 20 beat and complimentary season tickets were also issued to riparian owners as part of lease agreements and these individuals were therefore allowed to fish our waters – bringing the number of potential anglers to two hundred and twenty one (221).

2017 cost/rental increases are estimated to rise by some 2.5% (over 2016 levels) and subscription for adult members are therefore to rise by £3.00 pa to cover this. All other ticket rates have been held at 2016 levels. Up-dated ticket prices and membership details are available on the club website at [www.ldac.org.uk](http://www.ldac.org.uk)

#### **iv) Auditor (J Shearsmith)**

The Club auditor recommended the 2016 accounts for approval and commended the Treasurer for his excellent work.

***Approval of the 2016 Accounts: APPROVED unanimously.***

### **6. Other Reports**

#### **i) FRA Hatchery (R Grieve)**

The new FRA-operated hatchery at Colliford is now up and running thanks to the generous funding from SWW and the efforts of all the volunteers who helped set it up and run it.

Initial concerns over water temperature and quality/quantity have proved unwarranted and the Hatchery Manager was pleased to report that the first 6 months of activities had proved a success:

- Brood stock collection quotas had been met. LDAC

waters provided two thirds (2/3) of the brood stock and one angler (J Hake) had collected over 50% of the total.

- Just under 40,000 eggs had been stripped and the brood stock returned back to the river.
- At the time of the meeting the first 2 fry had hatched and with low water temperatures (assisted by a chiller unit) eggs are developing well.
- A CEFAS inspection had been carried out and the results were more than satisfactory.
- The vision for the hatchery is not just to make it work – but to make it work well.
- Volunteers were once more thanked for their efforts in making the operation the success it is to date.

## ii) **Lynher Hatchery (A White)**

Firstly AW thanked LDAC for the financial contribution it makes to the running of the hatchery on the Lynher. Unlike the Colliford hatchery the Lynher hatchery receives no funding from SWW or other external agencies; the £2000 pa running costs have to be met from contributions from local anglers and the volunteers themselves.

Operating problems from previous years had been resolved inasmuch as

- The EA had granted the Hatchery a license to collect brood stock in November, after the season had closed. This means that the brood stock are no longer held for long periods in warm (autumnal) waters and their health has improved – allowing for more successful stripping. Thanks were given to the EA for their support.
- Later stripping increased the viability of eggs as the water temperatures were now lower during their development.

### Operation to date

- Brood stock quotas met
- 52,000 eggs stripped. However one batch was poorly

developed and those eggs (10,000) were then re-introduced into artificial redds in the river to prevent their inevitable deterioration in the hatchery.

- Of the remainder approximately 50% of the eggs had hatched to date.

The stocking plan for the fry this year would involve split releases – half the stock would be reared on whilst the other half would be introduced to the river as swim-up fry. This plan prevented rising water temperature from impacting survivability during the summer.

This year the hatchery would also be looking to raise funds for a chiller unit to further improve survivability rates in the future.

***David White proposed a vote of thanks to all the volunteers who supported the work of both hatcheries. This was endorsed by all present.***

## **BREAK**

### **7. Election of Officers (AW)**

A White (presiding) commended the current Officers and Committee for their efforts in 2016 and stated that all the serving officers (R Williams, Chair; N White, Vice Chair; T Sobey, Treasurer and P Jordan, Secretary) would stand for re-election.

In addition the existing Committee (bar three) would offer to stand for re-election.

In the interest of time he proposed *en bloc* voting to elect both Officers and Committee members.

***Proposal: To re-elect the 4 officers and existing Committee members; proposed by Bill Eliot and seconded by R Selby. Unanimously APPROVED.***

*All current Officers and Committee members duly re-elected.*

## **8. Election of New Committee Members (RW)**

The Chairman (R Williams) advised that three Committee vacancy had arisen.

No written nominations had been received by the date of the AGM.

Any interested members should contact the Secretary (or Chairman) and their nomination will be put to the Committee for due consideration. The Committee was looking for key skills to help support the work it was doing (IT/legal being highlighted).

In the event of acceptance the new members would be co-opted and their formal election would be sought at the next AGM.

The Chairman thanked retiring members for their help and support during their time on the Committee.

## **9. Presentation of Club Trophies**

The Committee received the following nominations for trophies during the 2016 season.

- *Salmon Cup*: T Coleman for a 12lb 8oz Fowey salmon caught in August 2016 on the Lynher at Best Pool. The Committee awarded the Salmon trophy to T Coleman.
- *Glencross Sea Trout Cup*: J Drew for an 8lb 6oz Fowey sea trout caught on the Fowey at Lower Boconnoc. The Committee awarded the Sea Trout trophy to J Drew.
- *The Lynher Contribution* trophy was awarded to J Hake in recognition of his ongoing work in supporting the FRA Hatchery, his tireless efforts in improving the Inny and his overall support for LDAC as a Committee member.

No nominations were received for either the brown trout trophy or the Junior Achievement Trophy in 2016.

Keepsake trophies were given to 2016 winners.

## 10. Any Other Business

- **John Shearsmith:** Enquired about advertising for members. The suggestion was to consider advertising in national publications such as Trout and Salmon magazine.
- This brought about a discussion as to the merits of attracting more up-country members with useful comments from ***Messrs. White, Preston, Gray, MacPherson and Selby.***
- The consensus was that the Club should, in the first place be for local anglers and that any national advertising should ensure an effective balance.
- The difficulty of attracting youngsters into the sport was discussed and the idea of offering free fishing to local organisations such as the scouts, guides, ACF etc. was debated. It was pointed out that the Club already provided free membership to youngsters in year one and thereafter reduced fees (of £10 pa) until the age of 17 years. Recruitment of youngsters into fishing was seen as a wider societal issue.
- The Committee was acutely aware of membership issues and regularly discussed ways to ensure numbers were sustained. With the change in focus from attending local summer shows to those more focused on the angling fraternity (eg Roadford, Wherrington) AND the important efforts of local angling shops (Lashbrooks, Fishing Mayhem, Holmleigh) membership numbers had held up well.

## 11. Guest Speakers

- **Tam Sneddon: EA Enforcement Officer** provided an overview of his activities in 2016 and his focus on repeat offenders. This had met with some success.

He illustrated his talk with an example of a local kayaker who had encountered illegal netsmen at weekends on the Lynher and reported the event. This had provided the

opportunity for nets to be lifted and burnt, resulting in an immediate drop off in the number of net-marked fish being reported by local anglers.

There was on-going confusion around the roles of Cornwall IFCA and DEFRA and whose role it was to enforce netting regulations in the estuary. The EA were unable to enforce regulations unless nets actually held salmonids.

It was felt that Cornwall IFACA were now lagging well behind the rest of the national IFCA bodies in fulfilling their role.

The underlying message from the EA enforcement office was if you see something report it immediately and action will be taken to investigate, to either intercept /intervene or, if outside their jurisdiction to report it to IFCA.

- **Gitty Ankers: EA Catchment Coordinator** provided a useful update on partnership activities in the region. Highlights included
  - River Lynher now has a good ecological state.
  - Actively working with landowners to reduce pollution incidents by improving working practices.
  - Working on wider permitting issues with SWW.
  - Looe bathing water had attained blue flag status
  - WRT partnership on the Fowey to reduce pollution incidents.
  - Focussing on **Water for Growth** initiatives (the subject of the next talk).
- **Dr Bruce Stockley WRT** provided an interesting talk that initially focused on the River Fowey as this is where WRT had been funded to do most of its work in 2016.
  - **Electrofishing** had not been carried out in 2016 due to financial restrictions. However it had been agreed that this work would take place in 2017. The on-going results are important in being able to target specific improvements to the river. As examples the culvert at Ladyvale Bridge was

installed in 2015 and it was hoped that salmon parr would now appear above the bridge on the Cardinham for the first time. On the Lerryn a weir had been removed and salmon parr were now being seen above that point for the first time.

- ***Upstream Thinking*** continued with intensive efforts to get farmers to alter working practices to prevent slurry and run-off into the rivers. Pesticides remained a problem but WRT were trying to introduce best practice in this area.
- ***Water for Growth*** was to be the new focus going forward. Following receipt of a large grant (£1.8mm) three critical aspects, namely free passage of salmonids, good gravel beds for breeding and tree works/coppicing for enhanced insect life in rivers would become the focus of work on the Camel. This river had been chosen as it currently has many impediments to fish passage; unlike the River Fowey which is largely devoid of weirs now.
- P Jordan asked whether the work on the Camel would look into opening up the De Lank. BS advised that they were looking at that. A further point was made regarding the WRT passport scheme and opening up more waters for anglers. BS advised that mobile apps were being introduced by WRT to increase ease of use.
- R Williams felt that the electrofishing results might provide more real opportunities to do intervention work to improve fishing. BS agreed and hoped that WRT could work closely with LDAC to target such opportunities.
- R Selby asked whether water quality might come under threat with all the talk of expanding mining activities in Cornwall. BS advised that any such impact would quickly be recognised and Regulatory Authorities would have to step in.
- M Smith asked about the impact of insecticides in the river. BS advised that the on-going regular river fly surveys provided real evidence of immediate change and that kick sampling showed up problems. Monitoring was improving across the

- catchment and equipment used specifically addressed the presence of insecticides.
- R Bristow asked if WRT would be attending the BAA AGM to talk more of the **Water for Growth** project. BS confirmed they would be attending.

### **RAFFLE**

The AGM was followed by a successful club raffle organised by Messrs. C Bryant and N and D White. Proceeds raised amounted to £121.00p.

Roger Lashbrook and Fishing Mayhem were both thanked by the Chairman for their generous donations to the club raffle this year and for their continued efforts in selling visitor tickets on behalf of the Club.

***The 2076 AGM of the LDAC was brought to a close at 22.20 hrs.***