

Fleet District Salmon Fishery Board  
AGM 2015 Minutes of Meeting

The AGM was held at the Murray-Arms Hotel on Friday the fifth of December 2015.

Attendance:

Mark Hannay, James Girgan, Iain Jardine, Jamie Ribbens, Richard Gilbey

The board has been without a chairman since Dec 2014. Mr Richard Gilbey was co-opted to the committee and subsequently a proposal was forwarded by the clerk (Iain Jardine) to appoint Mr. Gilbey to the vacant chairman's position. This motion was seconded by Mr. Mark Hannay and duly accepted by Mr. Gilbey.

The meeting then progressed to a discussion of the current finances of the board. It was drawn to the notice of the attendees that there is currently insufficient funds in the board's coffers to meet this year's outgoings. Specifically the annual contribution to GFT cannot be met as a result of one proprietor failing to pay outstanding levies for the second year running. The deficit in the accounts at present is in the order of £600. Two proprietors have provided the board with a temporary loan of £800 in order to pay outstanding debts. The clerk was asked to write to the proprietor in question to determine the exact issues as to why payment has not been received.

Jamie Ribbens, representing the Galloway Fisheries Trust (GFT), presented the board with an overview of the work conducted in the Fleet catchment over the past year and projects earmarked for 2016. Work described included : invertebrate project, limestone sand introduction to forestry drains, river fly network, knotweed control, deciduous planting, gravel loss and electro-fishing results. Some £55,000 of work was conducted in the Fleet catchment during 2015 with a further £40,000 earmarked to date for 2016.

The health of the catchment regarding water quality was discussed, whilst there are signs of improvements there are also areas where forestry drains cut through deep peat present serious quality issues and continue to pose a threat to young salmonids.

The fishing effort on the river was discussed. Only MUF-owned fishings were available this year, however, due to numerous complaints raised by visiting anglers to GFT, these day tickets will not be available for 2016. Access to the riverbank was the main complaint. Each year considerable effort is required to maintain such access, clearly this is not feasible with limited revenues from permits. Only eleven sea-trout were recorded caught by rod. For the second year running no salmon have been landed by rod anglers. Net catches amounted to: 1 salmon, 15 grilse and two sea-trout.

Predator numbers were discussed and the board noted that efforts to improve water quality in the Fleet catchment and encourage both salmonid stocks as well as more angling effort were being thwarted by a lack of predator control.

A checklist for compliance with the 2013 DSFB act was presented and discussed. The clerk pointed out that his was a purely voluntary role and his enthusiasm mirrored the rod catches, nevertheless, in the absence of any other volunteer, best efforts would be maintained to follow guidelines.