

The Annual General Meeting of the Fowey Rivers Association was held on Wednesday 15th April 2015 at Boconnoc

Present

Bill Smith (Chairman)	Paul Jordan (Treasurer)	Robin Bradley
Chris Bryant	Bill Eliot	Richard Elliott
Roger Furniss	Malcolm Gilbert	Richard Grieve
Chris Janes	Dave Johns	Ivan Lyne
Dave Matthews	Giles Rickard	Justin Ruscombe King
Mick Smith	John Tisdale	Godfrey Tucker
David White	Rob Williams	Dan Wyton
Jon Evans (Secretary)		

Apologies

Anthony Fortescue (President)	Alan Hawken	Chris Hitchens
Chris Marwood	Chris Matthews	Adam Price
Jonathan Price	Simon Toms	

1. Minutes of the 2014 AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 16th April 2014 were agreed.

2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes

3. Chairman's introduction

The Chairman thanked members for coming and introduced notable achievements of the past year many of which had been highlighted in the Newsletter

1. He thanked Roger Furniss, John Tisdale and Malcolm Gilbert for the excellent work in achieving the abandonment of the CEFAS scheme in South Cornish waters. Sadly, a further attempt seemed to be being made in North Devon but a precedent has been set and the national fishing organisations such as Angling Trust and STA are very aware of the success strategies needed.
2. WRT has now provided five years of juvenile data which is providing most useful in planning where and how improvements can be made to the health of the rivers and stocks. The 2014 salmon results were by and large disappointing but some trout data particularly in the smaller streams were very encouraging for the future of sea trout stocks.
3. WRT has also successfully obtained funding from the European Fisheries Fund for Ladyvale Bridge improvements. This may need supplementation from FRA funds.
4. SWW has had its PR14 business plan approved by OFWAT. Among other things, this will permit the development of a hatchery and gravel rehabilitation to help salmon restocking in the St Neot which was decimated by the construction of Colliford dam. Hatchery site selection between Park Pit and Colliford would be made by the FFRG in May. SWW would manage the capital works and the operation would be contracted out to FRA Ltd.
5. The website had been totally redesigned and upgraded and Richard was

thanked for his work on this.

6. He thanked all the volunteers who had been engaged in the Lewarne coppicing and Draynes gravel work. Expenses costs had been reimbursed.
7. He thanked Anthony Fortescue, who was unfortunately unable to be with us, for his hospitality and the excellent arrangements.
8. Finally he thanked his officer colleagues and Board members for maintaining the FRA in such excellent financial and organizational health.

The Chairman's report was noted.

4. **Treasurer's report**

The Treasurer presented his report.

The main activities of the FRA are funded through the company but the funds are kept in the Association account until required. SWW is invoiced for appropriate reimbursable activities by agreement with the members of FFRG (SWW, EA and FRA) and reimbursed from the Colliford mitigation fund which is maintained by SWW. It should be noted that this has not been inflation linked although a similar fund for the Exe has been inflation linked. This will be considered at the next FFRG meeting. Other non refundable expenditure has to be found from income from clubs and individual members.

The balance sheet shows a total of £21,566 comprising £19,909 in the association account and £1,655 in the company account. There are financial obligations including £1,600 for the next WRT fry survey, £5,000 for Ladyvale Bridge, £2,000 for Lewarne coppicing and £1,000 for the Draynes conservation. These items are recoverable via FFRG from the funds held in SWW accounts but restricted for FRA schemes.

The pattern of expenditure during 2014 is broadly the same as 2013. The major difference is the accountancy fee required to complete the statutory company accounts. The company's accountants, Keen Dicey Grover were selected because they had undertaken the company's first annual accounts, their charges are competitive and they are tax registered and appropriately indemnified. The Treasurer emphasised that not all expenditure is recoverable and it is essential that other income levels are increased by clubs and individual member contributions and donations.

Rogers Furniss suggested that the funds held by SWW on behalf of the FRA should be recognised as FRA debtors in the accounts. This is done by the Exe which has similar arrangements with SWW.

It was agreed that the accounts should be adopted and that Paul Jordan should be thanked for his work.

5. **Secretary's report**

The Secretary said that the Chairman had already given a comprehensive report on the Association's activities. One additional item concerns Park Lake and the possibility of enhancing spawning in the perimeter leat. Large numbers of juvenile fish had been seen during the FFRG site visit. It had been agreed that a full survey should be undertaken at three points in the leat. There are some residual funds from the Park Stannon Environmental Group and these will be used to fund the studies to be

undertaken by Giles during the summer of 2015. In addition, the programme of gravel rehabilitation in the St Neot stream will be undertaken towards the end of the five year PR14 programme.

The committee will continue to meet quarterly to ensure the successful development of both the river and the Association.

The Secretary's report was noted.

6. **Election of Officers**

It was agreed that the post of vice Chairman should continue to be left vacant until required. There were no new nominations and it was agreed that the Chairman and officers should be elected en bloc to serve for the year until the 2016 AGM.

7. **Appointment of committee**

It was agreed that the FRA committee members should comprise the officers and

Anthony Fortescue	President	
John Tisdale	Treverbyn	Upper river
Chris Janes	RFC	Upper river and River Bank Management
Chris Bryant	LDAC	Upper river
Rob Williams	LDAC	Middle river and River coordinator
Roger Furniss	Glynn	Middle river and Water Resources Officer
David White	LDAC	Middle river
Fred Tolman	Lanhydrock	Lower river
Ivan Lyne	BAA	Lower river
Stewart Fullwood	RFC	Lower river

8. **Catch limits**

Chris Janes suggested that the perceived shortage of salmon in the river required the FRA to review the catch limits and possibly emulate the actions of the Tamar and Tributaries Association and ban bait fishing and have a 100% catch and release policy for salmon. He said that this could be a potentially divisive policy and any change needed to be generated by discussion at club level and not imposed by the FRA.

Roger Furniss said that catch and release rates are already high and there is a danger that banning the taking of all salmon could reduce the number of anglers. He also said that the starting point should be the EA assessment of salmon stocks. These views were strongly supported by John Tisdale and Bill Eliot.

It was agreed that rather than continue the debate at the AGM the matter should be deferred to the July committee meeting.

9. **Keynote speaker – Malcolm Gilbert** - Conservation Officer, Cornish Federation of Sea Anglers

After the traditional beer and pasties, members were treated to a presentation by Malcolm Gilbert. Malcolm drew attention to the significant difference in attitude between north America and Europe. He drew attention to the failure of marine fisheries management to conserve marine fish stocks. This seems to be a consequence of the political influence exercised by the commercial sea fishing industry.

Malcolm talked about the tonnage and cost of sea fisheries. There are 6,000 commercial fishermen and the total value of the fish is £157m. UK landings have declined and 87% of fish are now imported. For example, 1,000 tonnes of bass are caught and 50% is exported. At the same time, 35 million tonnes of farmed bass are imported.

The UK sea food industry is supported by Seafish, an organisation formed from the old White Fish Authority. Seafish is antagonistic to recreational angling and conservation organisations. Every time anyone buys fish, a fee goes to Seafish which opposes campaigns to protect fish stocks and marine eco-systems. Scientific advice on stocks and conservation is buried in the political processes.

Roger Furniss thanked Malcolm for his informative presentation. He reinforced Malcolm's message that it is essential for us all to engage politically to protect our fish and their habitat.