

A meeting of the Fowey Rivers Association
was held on Wednesday 20th January 2016 at Lostwithiel Social Club

Present

Bill Smith (Chairman)

Alice Barker (Lanhydrock)

Roger Furniss (SWRA/Glynn)

Chris Janes (Riverbed management)

Paul Jordan (Treasurer)

Ivan Lyne (BAA)

John Tisdale (Treverbyn)

Jon Evans (secretary)

Apologies

Chris Bryant (LDAC)

Rob Williams (River Co-ordinator)

In attendance

Giles Rickard (WRT)

1. **Anthony Fortescue**

The Chairman gave a short summary of the achievements of Anthony Fortescue, President of the Association who had sadly died on 9th November 2015. The members stood in memory.

2. **Lanhydrock**

The Chairman welcomed Alice Barker, a ranger for the National Trust at Lanhydrock. Alice would represent the Lanhydrock Fishing Club in place of Fred Tolman.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2015**

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 21st October 2015 were agreed.

4. **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

5. **Financial report**

The Treasurer spoke to the 4th quarter paper sent out with the agenda.

He said that the Association had a balance of £13,484 and the company had £7,457. Invoices expected were WRT for £2,600 for the second part of the fry survey and £600 for payment of accountants fees. The WRT outstanding money will be paid on delivery of the final fry survey report. There is a balance of £7,910 in SWW accounts and there will be a further £5,000 in April 2016. The September payments for hatchery services will be met from the hatchery OPEX budget and are not included in FRA accounts.

The financial situation is currently manageable but it is essential to increase income. Discussions are still continuing within FFRG to try to secure index linking of the mitigation payments but recently discovered correspondence is likely to make it difficult to achieve the financial support previously hoped for.

The Treasurer's report was noted.

6. Hatchery development

Roger reported that the planning was proceeding apace.

The Didson fish counter had been placed in the St Neot just above the Fowey St Neot Junction for six weeks from 8th December 2015. The cooperation of the EA had been outstanding and the equipment had been installed within two weeks of the initial proposal.

Fishtek had undertaken the equipment placement and data analysis. The Fishtek contract had been arranged by SWW. Roger showed the two clips he had collected from the Fishtek offices in Dartington. The results demonstrated that over 100 fish between 40cm and 90cm had been detected during the six weeks when the scanner was in the river. The larger fish ran during January. SWW would be sending Fishtek the flow data for the period in question. The full report would be available shortly and this should identify relationships between water flows and the appearance of fish. The evidence was plain that the use of a trap was a viable option, and likely to be more effective than capture by rod and line.

The Didson results would be reported to the hatchery group meeting on the following day and the group would be asked to commission the fabrication of a suitable trap, consider possible reconfiguration of the river at the selected site, and to obtain a fixed engine order from the EA for trap usage in 2016 and beyond.

RF JE

It was agreed that the clips, together with a written commentary should be placed on the FRA website.

RF RG

It was noted that Richard Grieve had been appointed by the FRAL as the hatchery manager. Volunteers would be needed to support Richard and help provide the services in the future. SWW had started preparing the contract between SWW and FRAL and the SWW lawyers were currently determining the final details. The FRAL interests would be overseen on a pro bono basis by Roger Copeland, Chairman of the Glynn syndicate and a qualified solicitor.

The operating budgets (OPEX) had been agreed and the money would be paid by SWW to FRAL quarterly in advance.

7. 2015 Fry index survey

Giles introduced the 2015 interim survey report and the six years of data now available.

The results show a slight improvement on 2014 but still below the long term average. There are two obvious correlations emerging from the data, first that the proportion of salmon to trout declines higher up the river e.g. into the Draynes Valley and tributaries, and secondly, that, because the river can only sustain a certain number of fish, any increase/decrease in salmon is matched by an equivalent decrease/increase in trout numbers.

The final report, which should be available by the end of January, needs to incorporate the EA data but a calibration exercise has to be undertaken. There are some areas of the catchment that merit further investigation such as below Bodithiel following the Lewarne improvements and the Clinnick stream. Trout numbers overall seem reasonable and the priority should be given to salmon habitat rehabilitation. The completion of the Ladyvale bridge project will enable a useful comparative exercise to be undertaken. It will also be helpful to survey the Cardinham between Ladyvale and Millpool where there may be areas blocked by trash dams or overshadowed and inimical to juvenile fish.

It was agreed that the work on the Draynes should continue to be undertaken with Rob acting as gangmaster to a team of volunteers.

RW

Giles was thanked for his, as ever, most informative presentation.

8. **AGM**

It was noted that the AGM had been confirmed at Boconnoc on 13th April 2016. Bill agreed to get the beer and Rob would be asked to bring the pasties.

BS RW

Jon agreed to remind Simon Cadman that he had accepted the invitation to be our guest speaker.

JE

9. **FFRG report from meeting held on 13th January 2016.**

Much of the discussion had been in relation to progress with hatchery development. Other items were

1. The terms of reference for the group, first established in 2011 needed updating and possibly setting within a legal framework.
2. There was no change in the financial summary last considered in September 2015
3. The legal investigation into banking the compensation flow when regulation releases are made and amendments to licences had not yet been concluded
4. The early information from the Didson counter was encouraging
5. The hydromorphology study had been contracted to APEM and a meeting had been arranged at the EA for 29th February for all parties to discuss the project
6. The correspondence surrounding the inception of the SWW goodwill payments had been found but hopes that the funds might have an inflation element applied had not yet come to fruition. It was unlikely that inflation increases would be backdated to 1998 when the original proposition for the goodwill payment was first received from SWW
7. It was hoped that a one off payment for the permanent buyout of the one remaining net might be found by SWW as the principal element of the NLO review, replicating the buyouts in 1997 and 2007.
8. Work is continuing on the publication of historic records of joint activity, with particular reference to the tripartite meetings which preceded the establishment of the FFRG.

The next FFRG meeting will be held in May 2016

10. SWRA

The Chairman reported on the SWRA meeting held on 19th January.

1. The SWRA Treasurer was resigning with effect from the AGM in April and would be replaced by Steve Phelps subject to AGM confirmation. Steve would undertake some of the administrative work while Roger undertook the more political and strategic activities.
2. The AGM would be held at the Arundell Arms on Saturday 16th April 2016. The key speaker would be Sarah Chare, EA Deputy Director, Fisheries, Biodiversity and Geomorphology and head of the EA's team driving forward the five key elements of the EA strategy for achieving a better future for salmon.
3. Roger's report on the management of salmon and sea trout had been discussed at length and decisions made. Roger would prepare a précis for wide distribution to the angling fraternity. A key element would be increased support for anglers and that each river to manage its own angling activities.

11. River reports

The river reports showed a mixed picture for salmon but sea trout numbers and catches seemed reasonable.

12. Dates of future meetings

AGM	13 th April 2016
Committee	20 th July 2016
Committee	19 th October 2016
Committee	18 th January 2017