

WINSFORD AND DISTRICT ANGLERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ANNUAL REPORTS AND STATEMENTS OF
ACCOUNTS

WAS HELD AT WHARTON CONSERVATIVE CLUB
ON WEDNESDAY 8th MARCH 2023 7.30 pm

Winsford and District Anglers Association

Agenda for the Annual General Meeting

Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Address and Apologies Mr R. Reid
2. Minutes of previous AGM held 16th March 2022 Mr R. Reid
3. Secretary's Report Mr G. Bayliss
4. Financial Statement Mr K. Andrew
5. Treasurer's Report Mr K. Andrew
6. Auditors Report Mr K. Andrew
7. Fishery Manager's Report Mr R. Ledwards
8. Match Secretary's Report Mr S. Flood
9. Angling Development Report Mr M. Leathwood
10. Honoraria and Expenses Mr R. Reid / Mr K. Andrew
11. Election of Officers Mr R. Reid
12. Election and Payment of Bailiffs Mr R. Reid / Mr K. Andrew
13. Annual Permit Subscriptions Mr K. Andrew
14. Notices of Motion Mr R. Reid
15. Annual Presentations Mr S. Flood
16. Any Other Business Open to all.

Content of the Annual General Meeting

Minutes to be taken by Secretary G. Bayliss

1, Chairmans Opening Address and Welcome Including Any Apologies – R. Reid.

To include a minutes silence in respect of those who have passed away.

2, Minutes from the Previous AGM held 16TH March 2022 – Taken by G. Bayliss

Date 16/03/2022 Time 7.30 pm Venue Wharton Conservative Club, Wharton Road

Committee members present:	B. Clarke	President
	R. Reid	Chairman
	G. Bayliss	Secretary
	K. Andrew	Treasurer
	R. Ledwards	Fishery Manager
	S. Flood	Match Secretary
	M. Leathwood	Angling Development
	T. Stubbs	GPC member

17 attendees in total, 10 signed into the meeting.

Apologies from S. Smith, T. Ratcliffe, S. Noden and S. Walton

Previous Minutes from 2021 AGM

These were read and accepted by all present, a show of hands was raised as acknowledgement.

Secretary's Report

G. Bayliss gave his report concentrating on positive and negative issues of the past year. There were no questions raised.

Treasurers Report

K. Andrew gave his report summarising financial matters for the past year. There was one question raised about QR codes for matches.

Fishery Manager Report

R. Ledwards gave his report which summarised work carried out and introduction of fish. Most of the waters and matches were covered. Thanks were expressed to all for support given throughout the year. Bailiffs were thanked for their contributions during the past year. It was explained that WDAA had been granted permission for development of pegs along Acton Bridge length.

S. Beech asked about night fishing the River Severn on WDAA permit. This is allowed.

B. Clarke explained that considerable work has been completed on the lengths of the Weaver.

Match Secretary

S. Flood gave his report with a summary of match results and weights. The Winter League Series had been very good. Congratulations were given to Drennan Northwest.

Roach are growing well in the river.

Thanks were given to Steve Walton and all anglers who supported the matches.

The Doug Maddock Match was fished, the winner was L. Breeze.

Honoraria and Expenses

Each official is now paid an extra £50.

Election of Officers

No change of officers.

Election and Payment of Bailiffs

Bailiffs have received their expenses for the year.

Permit Subscriptions

No changes to be made.

Notices of Motion

None were raised.

Annual Presentations

There were no representatives from the Gate Inn.

No other presentations were made.

Any Other Business

No questions or comments were raised.

On closing R. Reid commented that the attendance had been quite poor.

S. Beech mentioned that only 11 people had attended Prince Albert AGM and commented that if attendance is low, things are running smoothly.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30 pm

Minutes taken by WDAA secretary G. Bayliss.

3. Secretary's Report – G. Bayliss

Good Evening Eveyone,

Summary of Committee Meetings and Changes in Officials

Since the previous AGM held in March 2022, the committee has met on all scheduled occasions. The format has remained the same by meeting at the Wharton Conservative Club usually on the second Wednesday of each month where attendances have been good with apologies from non-attendees. Where officials have been unable to attend due to personal matters, another official has presented their report for the month. The standard itinerary has remained the same, commencing with a review of the previous minutes followed by each reporting official presenting their information and closing with any other business, which at times can last longer than all other reports put together.

Towards the end of the year, running from March to March, there have been several changes to committee members. The previous Vice Chairman Steve Smith was replaced by Wayne Robinson after the January meeting and two GPC members Tim Holland and Stuart Noden were replaced by two lady members Steph Banks and Wendy Hainey who are working alongside Mark Leathwood in the angling development section. Their input will no doubt bring a different perspective to WDAA through working with local schools in the promotion of angling.

Working Parties

This is the concern of the Fishery Manager however the general feedback is that attendance still remains poor.

Juniors

This division is now led by Mark Leathwood and his team. A separate report will be given but it is fair to say that progress has been going really well and interest is growing both in attending events and in willingness of others to help out with running this section. Several qualified coaches are now involved.

Secretary's General Address

It's the time of year again when traditionally we start to look ahead towards the next fishing season with hopes of what it may bring in terms of personal expectations, whether this may be searching for certain types of specimen fish, improving our techniques, taking up different forms of angling or just enjoying the opportunities of being in a peaceful environment that angling provides. However, in reality the traditional close season doesn't exist as it once did and many still-waters remain open throughout the year with mainly rivers closing their fishing rights between March and June, certainly for coarse fishing. If you still apply the close season rather than continuing to fish, a sense of anticipation to a certain degree can still be maintained from year to year. Despite the problems that we all have faced recently with economic pressures out of our control, the start of a new season coinciding with the onset of summer can still offer much needed relief from modern society.

WDAA is not perfect and like every other organisation has negative and positive aspects that impact on management of the Association. Peoples' actions bring their own problems and unfortunately we continue to have a small minority of members each year who breach the rules of the Association which results in disciplinary action being taken. This past season has been no exception, there have been warnings and membership terminations issued to offenders with at least 6 members being issued with a lifetime ban. For all readers of this address it is important to note that WDAA does not tolerate breaches of Association rules, they are clearly described in the permit and must be adhered to. Unruly behaviour creates a poor image of the Association which reflects badly on those members who genuinely do care. Fortunately, the majority of WDAA members are sensible anglers who do not want to cause trouble or break the rules.

Enforcement is down to the group of dedicated individuals who are involved with routine management of the Association in their own spare time whether at a bailiff or committee level. A tremendous amount of effort by our bailiff team contributes to the continual success of the Association, so it is only right to thank everyone involved for their ongoing efforts in keeping WDAA moving in the right direction. Without this support the Association would not exist.

It is vital that all members give respect to landowners and abide by any special rules that may be applied. Always take litter away, don't discard any tackle and adhere to any time constraints that apply at the venue, if landowners become consistently upset by members actions this could result in loss of the water either temporarily or for good. A prime example is Top Flash, the landowner does not like anglers driving down to the pool when they shouldn't which often results in a vehicle becoming stuck and having to be towed out. One serious incident here this season saw a group of anglers holding a family party, resulting in unruly behaviour with drinking and fighting breaking out. Needless to say 3 members had their membership terminated.

Drinking alcohol and use of drugs has been reported by the bailiff team on a number of occasions this year, disciplinary measures have been taken in each case. These are clear breaches of the rules and anyone found to be breaking them will be dealt with accordingly. This type of behaviour is not welcome within WDAA, not only can it affect other anglers, WDAA officials or members of the general public but can potentially endanger the welfare of the offender themselves.

Litter is an ongoing problem with some places, particularly those exposed to public attention due to their location with typical examples being the Ocean, Wyvern Pool or along stretches of the river. Although WDAA officials put in great effort to remove as much litter as possible it is often non-anglers who create this litter. Water seems to be a natural focal point for people to meet, especially during the warmer weather and this increases the likelihood of unsightly litter being left which then creates the impression that WDAA is at fault. There are some voluntary groups of local litter pickers that help by cleaning public areas so their help is greatly appreciated.

The last negative point to mention is the disrespectful attitude of some members and non-members towards WDAA officials which has resulted in aggressive and threatening behaviour to the extent that police have been called to intervene. This has also extended to abuse using social media which is completely unacceptable and very disturbing to recipients. Any attempts to intimidate officials in this manner will be passed over to the local police crime unit for investigation. Our officials are not out to create conflict with anyone, they are trying to perform their role on behalf of the Association, so please treat them with respect rather than conflict.

Thankfully everything isn't negative with WDAA, there are plenty of positives that probably outweigh the bad points. We continue to provide members with a variety of waters to appeal to most styles of angling whether they prefer stillwaters or rivers, there are plenty of different fish species to target. The River Weaver at Acton Bridge has to be one of the most successful additions in recent seasons with work taking place to establish pegs and matches now held on this stretch. Weights up to 40lb have been achieved, plenty of smaller fish but some nice bream and hybrids mixed in with them. This stretch is definitely worthy of attention but please do not park on the roadside or in front of the local residents' houses, always use the WDAA car park provided. After putting in a fair amount of effort to gain this stretch we don't want to lose it by complaints from locals or others about our misuse of the area.

Work parties continue to be held for general maintenance and improvement work. Peg repairs and creation, development of new pathways and management of the water bodies themselves form most of the work. Plans are in place to improve Wyvern Pool, Newbridge Pool and the Ocean this year. Wyvern Pool in particular is of importance for our Angling Development programme which concentrates on coaching of juveniles and is one of the venues for junior matches and Let's Fish events held with the CRT.

Our Angling Development programme has started to gain momentum throughout the past year and interest appears to be growing from those who want to take part and also to help out with the organisation. Several coaches are now available and joint events are being arranged with other angling bodies. It is planned that joint matches will be held with other local clubs and several CRT Lets Fish events are planned for this year. These are excellent opportunities for new or inexperienced anglers to benefit from some official coaching in a relatively safe and controlled environment. This past season saw attendees into double figures for some of the matches and thanks go to Mark Leathwood and all the assistants for making this happen.

In today's angling world carp fishing has become extremely popular and seems to dominate affairs to some extent. WDAA provides several angling venues for this species which hold some really nice specimen fish, however there are plenty of other fish to target including predatory species such as pike and perch. These don't seem to get the same focus as carp and can often be seen as nuisance fish to some anglers. Pike in particular can have a bad reputation which unfortunately leads to mishandling or use of inadequate tackle to catch them. Despite their ferocious reputation pike are actually delicate fish that can be damaged very easily if handled incorrectly. Therefore if you choose to fish for pike please ensure that tackle is adequate and this species is treated with respectful handling during unhooking and

return to the water. There is plenty of literature available for anglers wishing to target them. The same reasoning is applicable to any fish species, look after them and they will continue to look after us by maintaining a healthy population for the future.

WDAA continues to strive to provide quality angling facilities to its members but needs their support to achieve this. If we work together and support each other the Association will continue to grow and improve the facilities it has to offer. The committee and officials genuinely want all our members to feel welcome and remain with WDAA for a long time.

The following items to be presented by K. Andrew

4. Financial Report

5. Treasurers Report

6. Auditors Report

Winsford & District Anglers Association - Treasurers Report (Accounts to Dec 31st, 2022)

The Angling bounce back has remained stable for us in 2022 and we again had a healthy surplus of £11903 up slightly from the previous year due to lower spending.

Permit revenue was up slightly, with almost 50% of that revenue now being taken via the website, the rest of the permit revenue coming from our Permit outlets.

One big positive change in 2022 was the reinvigoration of our junior section, now renamed Angling Development, This is headed up by Mark Leathwood, who also managed to get £1000 funding the Police Crime beat fund, plus sponsorship of events from local businesses, this has meant that overall a very successful first year for angling development and has actually cost the club virtually nothing to set up and run in its first year So well done to Mark and his team of angling Coaches, Wendy, Steph, and Steve.

We again invested in fish stock and spent £2964 on purchasing fish for our waters, with several waters benefitting from this.

Rents were up slightly up, and no doubt will be a continuing trend, the work party spend was again lower than the previous year, but the committee have decided that larger projects will now carried out by contractors, the first of which is due commence in the next month or so.

The main reason for this decision is the fact that work party attendance remains low and is usually made up of committee members and the same few members, plus there's only so much as few people with shovels can do, this will have an impact on how much we spend to improve and maintain our waters, but work parties will remain part of our yearly maintenance and work plan.

In conclusion, the Covid angling resurgence that I've mentioned in my last couple of reports seems to be here to stay for a while longer, and shows no sign of waning yet, and the club is remains in a very good position financially.

Finally Permit Prices...

Our Permit prices have remained the same price for the last FIVE years, and our membership has remained relatively high, that brings extra wear and tear to pegs and waterways, so tonight, subject to this AGM's approval I propose to increase the prices this year to pay for the extra costs involved in hiring contractors to do some of the larger jobs on our waters.

Juniors and Spectators to remain the same at the fantastic price of £5.

Adult and Over 65's permits to increase in price by £5.

Night Stickers to also increase by £5.

And the Close season waiver sticker to increase by £5 for the 2024 close season.

This would still make the WDAA card one of the cheapest open angling associations in the Northwest, with Excellent stretches of the River Dane, River Severn, and the River Weaver in Winsford and Acton Bridge, and if that's not enough several still waters full many species of excellent fish to be caught up to specimen weights.

Keith Andrew. W.D.A.A Treasurer.

7. Fishery Managers Report - R. Ledwards

Fishery manager report 2022/23

The National pool suffered again from algae but still retains some surviving fish, WDAA have decided not to spend any more on this water and to leave it for nature to decide for now. Top flash fished well with 30lb plus carp coming out , 3 in one night, and bags of bream to 200lb. The river behind fished well for mixed silvers.

The river Dane fished well with no issues to report from the sharing with MJA.

The weaver at winsford had a pennywort problem all summer but still fished well with skimmers, roach and bigger bream from the dockyard area. It became harder in the cooler months with the larger roach doing a disappearing act. The day tickets are ceasing on these lengths this coming season.

Acton bridge was again super fishing but got a bit peggy through the colder months. The existing pegs will be improved and more are to be opened.

Newpool fished well in summer and the new stock common carp are putting weight on, the pool got harder as it got colder.

Wyvern pool still fishes well , and plans are set to enlarge the pegs around here.

A few carp and occasional tench came out from Tommy's hole with the carp showing gains.

Terminus pool still really only fishes at dusk when the fish come out from the reeds.

The lease agreement with SAC continues with no changes. The Severn fished patchy with most of the decent barbel action coming from the Preston boats length. If you plan to visit the Severn remember to private message the fishery manager for the gate code before you go as it can change.

Newbridge pool is planned to have some bank widening hopefully this year.

Marton Hole remained popular with the carp anglers but also holds specimen Tench, Chub

and Perch that receive little attention.

Recognition must be given to the Angling Development core of Mark, Steph, Wendy and Steve for the smashing job done in bringing on the future members and officials of this club. Finally

Thanks to all the bailiffs who again did a good job during the season helping members and tackling the poachers.

Rob Ledwards, Fishery Manager.

8. Match Secretary's Report – S. Flood

To be added when available

9. Angling Development Report – M. Leathwood

Angling Development Report

During 2022 the Association entered a new era of helping and encouraging people to take up angling and then supporting their ongoing development through a range of different activities. Historically this role had focussed on junior anglers and taster days for beginners, but I wanted to give it a much wider remit to make it inclusive of all ages, genders and levels of ability. For this reason I adopted the umbrella term 'Angling Development'.

These days it is essential that anyone working with young people or vulnerable adults is both suitably qualified and undergoes checks into their background to ensure that they are suitable. I had qualified as a Level 2 (lead) angling coach in 2011, although I hadn't done any formal coaching for several years. Once you have a coaching qualification it remains valid in subsequent years but I did have to renew my safeguarding and first aid training - both of these have to be renewed annually.

I was able to arrange for four Level 1 coaches to be trained during 2022 and Steve Egersdorff, Andy Robbins, Wendy Hainey and Steph Banks soon became a very effective team. The good news is that we have arrangements in place for the training of two more Level 1 coaches which will bring the number of Level 1 coaches six.

The training is arranged by the Angling Trust and normally costs £240 per coach. However, we have been able to make use of a bursary held by the Canal & River Trust which has covered all of the costs, although newly qualified coaches are expected to give three days back to the CRT at their 'Let's Fish' events, more of which later.

We also have an existing Level 2 coach moving to Winsford in the near future and we look forward to welcoming him to the team as well. The match anglers amongst you may already know Andy Hoyle. Another very capable and experienced angler.

The addition of Andy Hoyle is particularly good news because we cannot run any of our activities without a Level 2 coach to lead them and I have wanted, for some time, to add a

second Level 2 coach to try and ensure our program of events didn't falter in the event of me being unavailable for any reason. All of our coaches are DBS checked and have considerable skill sets, not just as anglers but in terms of their professional backgrounds. Without their involvement it would not have been possible to achieve, or to plan anywhere near as much as we have. Our Angling Development Team is now widely regarded as one of the leading lights in this area with other clubs looking to emulate our success.

Let me tell you more about the work we are doing: Wendy and Steph have developed a powerpoint presentation about the Association and the work of the Angling Development Team, which they will be taking into local junior schools. These visits will be followed up with taster days at Wyvern Pool for those who would like to try fishing. We will also be working with the Youth Offending Team during 2023 and hope that our involvement will help to inspire these young people to see fishing as a new and positive way to spend their time. I am in touch with an organisation called 'Cheshire Buddies' which organises activities with disabled people and their families. They work with Oaklands School in Winsford, which is a special school for secondary pupils with moderate and more complex learning difficulties. They have been fishing before as guests of Wybunbury Angling Club, and very much enjoyed their day out. We hope to arrange a day on Wyvern Pool for them in June.

As well as putting something back into the wider community this will also help the Association as it moves towards attaining 'Fishmark' status with the Angling Trust. In order to undertake these kind of projects we have begun to build up a stock of tackle that can be used by participants. All of the coaching we do with beginners involves the use of whips or poles fished at between three and five metres and we are always grateful to receive donations of suitable tackle to help support this work.

In addition we have begun to use donated tackle to equip youngsters who are keen to begin fishing but have little or no tackle of their own. We can always use whips and poles, float rods and fixed spool reels, seat-boxes, umbrellas and items of terminal tackle. We try to allocate items such as these as quickly as we can to those we know will make good use of them. We have also received a number of generous donations of both fishing tackle and cash over the last year from companies and individuals, including Dave's of Middlewich, CW Estate Agents, Fowles Funeral Services, Cllr. Ernie Welch, Guyz & Dolls, Top of the Market Cafe, Mather Tiling & Plumbing, L&S Personalised Creations, Greyhound Joinery and Avondale Guitar Tuition, and many others.

Our efforts were further supported by a successful bid for £1,000 from Cheshire Police's Crimebeat fund. All of this has meant that a very busy year, with a lot of different activities, was more or less able to break even financially. We will continue to seek sponsorship and external funding wherever we can, in the hope that our angling development activities will be able to run at a minimal cost to the Association.

During the last year we developed a close working relationship with the Canal & River Trust, who organise and run taster days under the 'Let's Fish' banner. These events offer 50 minute sessions with qualified and licensed angling coaches and are absolutely ideal for beginners. Tackle and bait are provided, but participants do need to book in advance via the CRT, rather than through our own website. In addition to handling the booking arrangements and providing the coaches, the CRT is also very proactive in its advertising and it's quite usual for 'Let's Fish' events to be fully booked. In fact, all those held here in Winsford during 2022 were fully booked.

It's worth noting that by the end of 2022's activities the Association was able to take on and run a 'Let's Fish' event on behalf of the CRT, when I was very ably assisted by three of our own Level 1 coaches.

Our first 'Let's Fish' event of this year is at Wyvern Pool on Wednesday 5th April. During the course of the day four coaches will run six sessions each, giving us a capacity to take 24 people. Ten of these places were booked on the first evening of tickets being made available.

With another four of these sessions in the diary for 2023 that gives us the potential to run 120 sessions, although realistically the overall number of participants will be fewer as many of them return to fish with us again a number of times; something we actively encourage them to do. During 2022 we engaged with 28 youngsters in total but I am confident we greatly increase that number in 2023.

Our Angling Development Facebook group now has over 100 members and this includes young anglers, parents, and many others who have an interest or who directly support what we are doing.

Last summer we invited Middlewich Joint Anglers to join with us in running a series of five junior matches throughout the summer holidays. The series culminated in a party and presentation evening, about a week after the final match, and this was attended by around sixty people. Trophies and prizes were presented by the mayor to all who had taken part and once again we were very well supported by Dave's of Middlewich and by a number of donations from the companies and individuals mentioned earlier.

This summer we will run a junior match series again and have invited both Middlewich Joint Anglers and Northwich AA to join with us and hope that this will be even bigger and better than last year's series. Our hope is that the youngsters taking part in these matches will begin to filter through into the adult match program, and we already have some very capable young match anglers who will soon be competing at a higher level.

In September of each year the Canal & River Trust hold a 'Celebration of Young People and Fishing', which we attended with a couple of our juniors for the first time in 2022. The celebration consists of a match on the Shropshire Union Canal in Staffordshire, contested by more than three hundred young anglers and run over two days in order to accommodate four different age categories. We all had a really enjoyable day and plan to attend again in 2023; hopefully with a bigger number of our junior anglers taking part.

Of course there are many other facets to coarse angling and our plans for 2023 include a three day junior carp challenge, to be fished during the spring at The Ocean. There are 15 places available and these can be booked now via the angling development page on our website.

Later in the year, as in 2022, we will be holding sessions on both lure fishing and on pike fishing at New Pool. This seems to be a real growth area at the moment and I certainly encounter a lot of aspiring young lure anglers on the River Weaver during the autumn and winter months. Last winter we ran a number of indoor coaching sessions at New Images Youth Centre on Nixon Drive. Although attendances weren't what we had hoped for we may well do something similar in 2023. Whilst much can be learned about fishing whilst out on the bank, some of the finer points of rig making etc. are much easier to learn in the comfort of a warm dry room.

There is also an opportunity to bring in some special guests to share their skills and knowledge, as we did last winter with pike specialist David Holden and also Tommy Ratcliffe, both of whom gave us a fantastic presentation on their angling experiences as well as providing lots of good practical advice.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to help, either by training as an angling coach and joining our team, or just in volunteering on an occasional basis. The Association does now have a protocol for volunteers assisting us with young people or vulnerable adults, which includes a DBS check. We now have a formal safeguarding policy and the safety and overall wellbeing of those we work with is always paramount.

In closing I would like to thank again, everyone who has helped our endeavours in any way, big or small. It is this collective effort and desire that enables us to make a real difference, and without your support and goodwill we simply couldn't achieve all that we aspire to.

Thank you. Mark Leathwood.

10. Honoraria and Expenses - R. Reid / K. Andrew

To be explained where applicable.

No changes to this in 2023

11. Election of Officers - R. Reid

To be mentioned as appropriate.

No officer elections required at the time of the AGM

12. Election and Payment of Bailiffs – R. Reid

Bailiffs were paid in December 2022.

No changes to Bailiff payments

13. Annual Permit Subscriptions – K. Andrew

Proposed changes to prices of permits (see below)

14. Notices of Motion – R. Reid

A vote was held regarding proposed changes to permit prices, the members present voted overwhelmingly in favour of the change.

New prices for 2023/24 will now be as follows...

Adult permit £50

Over 65's Permit £25

Night Sticker £30

Close season Stamp 2024 - £45

Junior Permit £5

Spectator Permit £5

15. Annual Presentations – S. Flood

S. Flood to present the trophies where applicable.

There were no presentations to make this year.

17. Any Other Business – Open to all.

WDAA TROPHY WINNERS ???