

# S&DAC Newsletter

## Spring 2018



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Dear Members,

## **Salisbury & District Angling Club Spring 2018 Newsletter**

As outlined in the previous newsletter hard copy versions will no longer be produced and all Club communications will be transmitted to members via the web site, online forum or email.

Please make sure that you advise the office if you change any of your contact details.

### **Subscription Renewal Reminder**

Membership Fees 2018/2019

Subscription rates agreed at the AGM held on Tuesday 9th January 2018

Game Full/Associate £255.00

Game Senior Citizen £193.00

Game Junior £57.00

Coarse Full/Associate £114.00

Coarse Senior Citizen £78.00

Coarse Junior £29.00

Renewals can be done by cheque, cash, or BACS transfers but **preferably online.**

Visit web site: <http://www.salisburydistrictac.co.uk/renewals/>

For BACS payments our account details are given below. Please use your membership number for reference.

Name: Salisbury & District Angling Club

Sort Code: 40 40 14

Account No: 21164015

Renewals are now overdue !

### **General Data Protection Regulation.**

The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** is a legal framework that sets guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information of individuals within the European Union (EU). ... **GDPR** will come into effect across the EU on May 25, 2018.

The Salisbury & District Angling Club are currently reviewing and updating our practices and privacy policy to ensure we remain compliant with these new

regulations which are designed to safeguard your information. Currently we hold personal information including your full name, address, telephone email details in our membership database. This information will only ever be used for legitimate membership and administration purposes and never be divulged to third parties. Further information will follow shortly.

## **THE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The 2017 season will certainly be remembered for the steady reduction in water flow, which at the end of the trout season, saw the rivers at unseen levels. This was not good news for the coarse fishermen who had to wait until December for river recharge. However, the mild winter fewer river surges saw good levels of overwintered trout in the early season.

The newly coloured tagging system will help us to understand fish survival so making accurate entry in the returns book most important. The red tag will be replaced by green for 2018.

Committee changes during the year saw Phil Wood resign for business reasons. We thank him for his contributions, in particular, regarding the lower part of the Avon. We were pleased to see Dominic Longley take his place and very much look forward to his forum reports and guidance on habitats.

Last year we saw Folds Farm enter our portfolio and has proved a good addition for coarse and game members. Although disappointing to lose our parking on the right bank, members have found ways around this setback. Returns books will be placed just upstream on the left bank by the suspension bridge and also at new access in Folds Farm.

Unfortunately, after exploring all the practicable avenues, the Committee have had to relinquish Ratfyn Lake. This fishery has served the Club well for forty years but the recent summer water temperatures could not sustain a trout population. In 2018 we are closing Ratfyn river bank for the season to give the keepers a clear run on habitat improvements on this side and the opposite Countess bank. The coarse anglers will see the addition of Watergate Lake Day Fishery in Amesbury. This is a well-known commercial fishery with access for four anglers per day and will compliment Waldens and Witherington Fisheries.

The Club continues to add to our New Waters Fund and thanks members for their contributions. SADAC own the fishing rights at West Amesbury but not the land. The surrounding land is expected to come back on the market in the spring. This land is important and access to accessible funds is crucial.

At the AGM, a strong case was made to improve our profile on Biosecurity. I urge all members to have dried their nets before river fishing or to dip the nets in the containers provided, before fishing our lakes. Please take the time to have a look at pages 19 and 20 on Biosecurity.

Also, at the AGM, the Committee proposal to increase the cost of Life Membership from five to ten times the current annual nonconcessionary subscription was approved.

The Club is in robust shape and has a long serving and experienced committee. In order to maintain continuity, Club Committee Members are only elected every five years. At the next AGM in January 2019 there will be an election to elect or re-elect

the next club Committee Members.

Finally, the Club is very concerned about phosphate and sediment levels in our rivers. A working party of experienced members is developing a strategy to bring our concerns in front of the Regulatory Bodies.

On a last note, I wish you all a successful season.

Robert Leachman.

Chairman

## **Game**

We approach the 2018 game season in good order after a winter that has seen our rivers and aquifers properly refreshed. The aquifer levels are higher than at this time last year promising good flows into the summer. Although the rains have been more than adequate they have only recently started to cause problems for us with flooded beats and banks the norm in the first week of the season. Expect some restrictions on where you can go for a week or two while the banks begin to dry out.

The winter has seen keepers and officers working hard to upgrade and improve the fisheries. A few examples are:

- New access gate to beats 3, 5 and 7 at Durnford overcoming the need to climb the field gate.
- New fencing and gates on 4, 6 and 8.
- Tree work throughout the beats improving casting space.
- In-stream features providing fish refuge.
- Repairs and rebuilds to bridges for example, through the wood below Sleeper Bridge.
- Car park improvements at Woodford.
- Re-fencing at Hurdcott.

As beat 3 is now much more accessible it is able to be used by the less mobile angler, members may be accompanied by a friend on this beat as on beat 15. Watch out for possible double beats appearing at Durnford in the summer after the mayfly and when the banks are quiet, tags on the board will indicate their availability. They will enable members to enjoy a longer day and more variety without returning to the Cartshed.

Plans are in place for restoration and habitat works at Stonehenge, Countess, Ratfyn and West Amesbury. These may involve some short interruptions to fishing in the season. Partners in EA, Wild Trout Trust and our owners have helped put together plans that will see river improvements from the A303 bridge all the way through to Bulford Bridge on water managed by our club and the Snake Bend Syndicate. River restoration is not the whole story however, water quantity and quality are of the greatest importance. The later paragraphs here about the club's efforts to safeguard the river show that we must fight on every front. An extra day's fishing is available on the Wylde's Eastleigh beat but sadly we did not reach a successful conclusion to discussions to take on a substantial stretch of the Ebbles. Fingers crossed it may come in future years.

This season our stocked fish will be marked with a green plastic tag. You will be asked to distinguish tagged fish in the return books. Red tagged fish were 2017 stock,

green tags 2018. It is important that we gather this information to inform stocking plans. How many of the 2000 stocked fish are surviving the winter? Too many in the river over winter disrupt wild fish spawning and compete for food. Most of our fish remain in the river only 200 or so being taken and killed. One red tag fish was caught this winter by a match angler at Deanery Meadows having travelled some 2 miles downstream through various obstacles in the town.

We are fortunate in the club in enjoying the services of some notable member volunteers. Dr Cyril Bennet is our entomology specialist and Tom Putman is our legal man. Together they have been working to put together data from our invertebrate benchmarking, EA water quality data and sewage discharge records for Amesbury, Ratfyn and above. They have correlated a decline in our insect life with the phosphates discharge data. The club will be raising a formal request for action with the EA as a result of this work. Without Tom we would have never understood and applied the relevant regulations, without Cyril we would never have understood the data. Others have supported this process, notable contributors from Salmon and Trout Conservation are John Slader and Nick Measham and our own Andreas and Jan Szakowski who now leads our entomology work. Let us hope our request for action can result in reduced discharges from these sites.

Many of our chalk stream insects are vulnerable to phosphate and silt discharges but they are also capable of telling us what is happening to the river. Specific species have specific vulnerabilities so regular benchmarking of the populations can precisely record water quality.

A year or two ago we spent time resisting the construction of a borehole washout facility at Durnford direct into our beat 22. We were successful and this winter saw the revised facility, an underground gravel filter and gradual filtration through woods and meadow, being operated for the first time. It has been a great success and was constructed at some considerable additional cost to the water company. It was our expertise in river ecology that won us this battle and let us hope that we will also influence the sewage discharge permissions in the same positive way.

Please record your 2018 catches carefully in the return books, better data enables better targeted stocking. We have changed our supplier this year and altered the stocking dates to ensure most fish are in the water a few weeks before our busiest periods. We do not insist on catch and release but please protect the wild stock and take only plastic tagged fish for the pot, the more of these you take, the better, we would ideally want them gone by the winter.

A warm welcome to our new members and tight lines to all.

John Stoddart  
Vice Chair Game

## **Coarse**

Despite some difficult weather conditions during the past season a good number of very nice fish have been caught by our members on our rivers and lakes.

The club fishing matches have been very well supported and the new list of fixtures is shown in the yearbook.

The addition of Folds Farm to our portfolio last season has been well received and work has been carried out on new bridges to ease access to the lower section of this water as well as the introduction of a new members car park as you arrive at the entrance to the farm. This gives access directly to the upper boundary of this fishery.

Both Nightingale and Dandy's lakes have been netted and some Perch introduced into Nightingale. Extensive tree work has been carried out at Dandy's to enable more light and air to get on to the water. Planting and stocking of this water is being planned.

The club has added Watergate day fishery to our permitted coarse lakes to compliment Walden's and Witherington fisheries.

Petersfinger access has settled down and the lakes have fished well. Electricity has been laid on and plans are in progress to add aerators to the water to enable us to be ready for any hot weather and falls in oxygen levels.

Steeple Langford. The new access gates and bank repairs will be carried out in the close season.

## **Predation**

We are suffering losses of fish from all our lakes and rivers to cormorants and otters. We have some control over the cormorants and continue to operate the catchment control measures licensed by Natural England. There is little we can do about otters on the rivers other than make sure we preserve and enhance complex habitat to shelter fish of all sizes.

On our coarse lakes we are losing fish to otters and we will take all the measures that we can at each site to reduce this. Where the opportunity exists to build a fence we have done so, at Petersfinger which we own, and plan to do so at Dandy's where we have permission from the owner. At Langford we have again this year talked to the owners but we have not been able to get permission for a fence. The ownership is held in a family trust and all are keen to keep things as they are.

We must therefore look to creating complex habitat with woody debris, artificial fish shelters, weed and marginal structures to give the fish some chance of survival. We will also need an ongoing stocking policy for our lakes which unfortunately will be a costly exercise.

Open snag free lakes will have to become a thing of the past unless we can fence and we will need to return to more natural habitats. A good but perhaps extreme example might be Hayward's lake which has so far managed to sustain a population of mixed species although it is of course more difficult to fish.

We welcome input from members with any ideas that might be included in the plans .

The club continues to run fishing days for the injured personnel from Tedworth House and members are encouraged to volunteer to help on any of these very worthwhile days.

My sincere thanks to the keepers, bailiffs and volunteers of the club for all the work and support they have given to the club over the season.

Please do continue to report your catches to the club.

Tight lines!

Roger Hunt

Vice Chairman Coarse