

Dear Member

It's that time of year again and I write to invite you to renew your membership of the Pitfour Fly Fishing Club. Should you wish to remain a member your annual membership fee should be paid on or before 27th February 2016. Renewal forms were sent out during December and January, if you could complete these and send them to our secretary, Di along with a cheque that would be great. Alternatively bring the completed form and payment along to the AGM which will be held in the MACBI Community Hub Mintlaw, (situated on Newlands road behind the doctor's surgery and library) on Saturday 27 February 2016 at 10:00am to which all members are invited.

There shall be no increase to the annual membership fee for the coming 2016/17 season.

We have had a number of enquiries from people wishing to join the club next year so prompt payment of fees is advised to secure your membership for the 2016/17 season.

CHAIRMANS REPORT

First and foremost I would like to thank the members of the committee for their efforts over the past year. I would especially like to thank our Secretary, Di as I appreciate how time consuming this role can be. Once again she has done a sterling job. I would also like to thank those club members who have given up there time to help with various activities such as weed cutting, boat maintenance and general repairs and also with donations of maintenance materials.

At our last AGM the committee requested that the members consider the introduction of an Adult/Child membership. This was proposed and seconded and this form of membership has been introduced.

Also at last year's AGM a proposal was forwarded that in order to allow for increased fish stocks the standard membership be increased by £50 from £130 to £180. This will be voted on at the AGM on 27th February

Historically during the summer months the Bothy has suffered a bit of vandalism in the form of broken windows. However, this year there was no vandalism affecting the Bothy but our wooden picnic table situated near the Bothy was destroyed and had to be discarded. This has not been replaced.

Once again the lake has fished well throughout the season with approximately 1900 fish being caught up to the end of January 2016

In 2014 we had a discussion with our fish supplier regarding our Argulus infestation and it was decided to refrain from stocking fish during the warm summer months and stock only in the colder winter months. This seemed to be somewhat effective as during the autumn of 2014 a number of fish were observed with Argulus but the infestation was nowhere near the high levels observed in previous years.

This stocking policy was followed during the 2015/16 season with stocking being suspended at the end of May and recommencing on 18th September. As of the end of January 1544 fish had been introduced 1393 rainbows and 151 brownies. Should we manage to introduce more fish during February I will update the figures at the AGM

I am happy to report that this season the Argulus situation is greatly improved with only 20 fish being reported as having a lightly infestation. This represents only 1 percent of the fish caught. This is great news for the club and this stocking policy will be adopted in future years.

As was mentioned in last year's letter the committee thought it would be appropriate to stock some brown trout and to this end our stocking licence for 2015 was amended to include brown trout and a total of 151 brownies have been introduced over the season. Our stocking licence for 2016 also allows for the introduction of brown trout.

Should you catch a brownie please return it unharmed if possible.

The winner of this year's Watson Cup competition was one of our new members Frank Thrall with a total of eight fish, "well done Frankie". I am sure Frank will really enjoy his fishing this next season as his prize is free membership renewal. It was a good day and thanks to everyone who came along and made it a success.

I would just like to remind all our members that although we call it a competition it is basically a fun day and a get together for our members. Please do not feel intimidated by the competition. Come along and enjoy the "CRACK".

There was some boat maintenance carried out last season. Two boats were removed from the water and transported to the nearby barn. Boat number five was repaired, painted and duck boards fitted. This boat has been returned to service. Boat number three has been repaired and is almost ready to be returned to service.

There was a couple of weed cutting work parties during the summer months and these were very successful thanks to Charlie Russell who loaned us a new style of weed cutter to try out. Although quiet labour intensive the new cutter works very well and not only cuts the weed but removes it at the same time. Weed cutting was concentrated on the areas adjacent to the fishing jetties and these were kept clear for most of the season.

Since our last AGM Saplin Brae hotel has changed hands and the new owners are Noel and Joanna Gall. I spoke with Noel at the start of December regarding our access through their car park and he confirmed there is no problem with this. We thank Noel and Joanna for their co-operation and wish them well in their new venture.

As you will be aware the lake was partially drained during November and December to allow dredging of the section located to the east of the stone bridges and to facilitate repairs to the normally submerged areas of the bridges. This work has been completed and the level of the lake has been partially restored. The level is being maintained about a foot lower than normal so that repairs can be carried out to the small sluice adjacent to the temple. Once this work is complete the lake will be restored to its normal level. The dredged area east of the bridges will be available to the club once the banks have been tidied and made safe.

So to sum up I think the club has had another good year. I would like to thank everyone, members and non-members, who have devoted their time to help keep the club running smoothly over the last year. All things considered I think we are in a good position to move forward into the 2016 season.

Tight Lines.

Kenny Shuttleton.