

ISLE OF WIGHT FRESHWATER ANGLING COMPANY

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Arreton
Community Hall**

on Friday 10th May 2024 at 19:30 hrs.

23 members were present at the meeting. Copies of last year's financial report from our accountant , the minutes from the 2023 AGM, and the agenda for this meeting were sent via e mail attachment to all members. These details were also placed on the website. The Chair welcomed attending members and opened the meeting.

John Creaser, Company Secretary chaired the meeting, eight Directors were in attendance. John opened the meeting at 19.30 and welcomed all those that had attended and thanked Arreton community Hall for the use of this venue and access to the bar . It was appreciated that work and other commitments could prevent members from attendance. Notification of AGM had been distributed by e mail, inserted on the website, and advertised in the IOW Observer newspaper.

Agenda items

Item no	Discussion	Action by
1	Apologies. Glyn Mills, Adrian Greenough	
2	2023 Minutes. Minutes of the 2023 AGM were read out by the Company Secretary, which were approved. Proposed Jeff Arnold, Seconded Pete Bennett	
3	Annual statement to the Members from the Board. A statement was read out by the Company Secretary highlighting some of the problems and successes that have been experienced in the last membership year. (The full statement is on the website). The Board has faced another challenging year in trying to fulfil the wants and wishes of the membership, abide by the regulations we must adhere to as a Company and the challenging financial obstacles we have dealt with. Progress achieved over the previous couple of years has continued this year with:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved swims at Holliers, stock ponds cleared and put into production.• Septic tank at Merstone repaired.• Laurel trees at Gunville taken down to fence level after a neighbours complaint.• Pruning back the island and surrounding trees on Heron.• New boats sourced to ensure safe working is possible when on the water.• Health and safety policies revised and updated to ensure we comply with our legal and insurance requirements.• New signage installed to warn of potential dangers.	

	<p>The work over the last few years to enhance the fisheries is starting to pay off. It takes time for hard landscaping to settle down and look more pleasing and natural. Kingfisher demonstrates the success in managing fish welfare with weight gains and numbers of fish caught.</p> <p>There is still much to do at Merstone, with repairs to the platforms on Minnow, the resurfacing of the carpark, and the path around Kingfisher. There will also be a new concrete path from the toilet block to the first peg on Kingfisher making access easier for our disabled members.</p> <p>Further work is still required on swims at Holliers and the access road to the venue could cause issues. The actual access road does not belong to the company, but we are contracted to maintain it. The verges and overhanging trees belong to Holliers Farm who are required to maintain that. We have recently had a complaint from Holliers Farm that members had driven their cars on the verges causing damage. This was mainly due to the amount of mud on the lane causing cars to ground out. We have since tried to make preliminary repairs, but further work will be required once the weather improves.</p> <p>Maintenance is always a constant drain on resources and the unpredictable weather has given us some additional expenses over and above what could be anticipated. Maintenance and equipment has been our biggest expenditure over the last 12 months, but if we want to have safe accessible venues and keep nature at bay, neglecting regular upkeep would result in far higher long term costs.</p> <p>Unfortunately, whilst the core of the volunteer work parties will continue, the number of members committed to the work has diminished. If you are able to help in any way please consider attending work parties in the future. You may have noticed the recent efforts to clear fallen trees, work on kingfisher island and to clear paths around Heron. However the Board have reluctantly accepted that contractors will need to be employed to supplement the general day to day maintenance of our venues, and to ensure completion of ongoing necessary projects in order for members to enjoy good sport in safe surroundings.</p>	
4	<p>Accounts.</p> <p>There were no questions raised about the accounts. These are on the website for all to see. We had failed to live within our yearly income once again, mainly due to excessive electricity prices and extensive maintenance required on our venues. We spent £82, 656 during the financial year which was an increase of £22,655 over the previous year. Our income was £67,120 during the financial year, which was an increase of £20,264 over the previous year. We have spent £15,536 more than our annual income.</p>	
5	<p>Articles and byelaws.</p> <p>The Board have spent a lot of time reviewing the Bye laws and the Articles of Association, to ensure that most eventualities were covered and that the way the Company is now run is reflected in those Articles. Both had been posted to the website prior to the AGM. The Bye laws were read out by the Company Secretary.</p> <p>Jeff Arnold commented that the rule regarding the discharging of weapons</p>	

	<p>on our venues had not been inserted, and that the Environment Agency restriction on night fishing on our Eastern Yar venues should also be included. The Board thanked Jeff for bringing these omissions to our attention and would be rectified shortly.</p> <p>The Board explained that the changes in the Articles were introduced to ensure that they reflected the role of the Company Secretary in undertaking the administration of the IOWFAC, who deals with membership applications, guest tickets, payment of invoices and correspondence to and from the Board of Directors. The Xero accounting system, used to record all financial transactions is accessible directly by our Accountants and all Directors ensuring clarity and good governance of Company finances.</p> <p>The Board of Directors have also introduced a conflict of interest register, where all Company officials are compelled to declare any potential or perceived conflict of interests. The register makes it clear that if any interests held outside the company might be perceived as being at odds with the Company interest it is declared, and the individual excluded from voting on the subject. This register is reviewed before every Board meeting.</p> <p>There was some general conversation about the adoption of new bye laws and Articles. Jeff Arnold proposed that those present should make vote to adopt the rules and articles. This was seconded by Shane Pearce. A show of hands was conducted and the vote was carried unanimously.</p>	
6	<p>Membership subscriptions.</p> <p>We have at past AGM's set the level of membership fees for the following membership year, but with the rapidly fluctuating financial markets and costs of maintenance we feel we have no option but to review costs closer to the new membership year. We had originally thought about removing concessionary membership fees, but we would have been the only club in the country to do so according to the Angling Trust, and felt it was not the right thing to do.</p> <p>We have projected our income for the next financial year using the breakdown of members we currently have and using the updated membership charges. This would give us a projected income of £75, 378. This is over £7,000 less than we spent last year, so you can understand the larger than normal increase in membership costs we are introducing. If we want to maintain the facilities we have, to the level we currently enjoy, we must make provision for this in increased fees.</p>	
7	<p>Election of Directors.</p> <p>Spencer Simpson had served his 3 year term as a Director. He was willing to stand again. Membership approved this and no new nominations received.</p>	
8	<p>Any other business.</p> <p>Jeff Collins raised the issue that the size of the Carp in Kingfisher had increased substantially with fish now up to 23 lbs in weight. He suggested</p>	

	<p>that heavier tackle was likely needed as a result and asked if these larger fish should be taken out and transferred to Heron or Gunville. Some lively discussion ensued. The removal of the platforms and tree snags had resulted in the fish moving around the lake far more than before and might be the reason these larger fish are being landed. It was generally agreed by all present that Kingfisher was the lake of choice for the vast majority of our members. Whilst Carp are possibly not welcomed by all, pleasure anglers in particular enjoy the opportunity to try and catch them. Indeed to move the Carp to Heron or Gunville would likely be a disincentive for both pleasure anglers and specimen hunters alike.</p> <p>Overall following netting, there are now likely fewer fish in all our lakes, but the quality has improved. Pete Bennett confirmed that following the netting some 18 or so Carp which were in poor overall health, (damaged mouths etc) had been culled on fish welfare grounds. It was not a total loss as in expectation, arrangements had been made with the Sea Eagle trust for their use in their project. The Board will continue to monitor the situation regarding the quality and size of the stock in all our lakes.</p> <p>Peter Clark asked for clarification about bailiffs, officers and Directors being able to see membership details on their smart devices. Whilst he accepted and was supportive of the need to confirm if an individual was authorised to fish, was there a security risk with members details being held on a phone? What happens if it is lost or stolen? A valid question given the constant threat of identity theft. In answer it was confirmed that there are multiple layers of security in place. Each mobile device has its own pin code and or biometric security. No membership information is stored on the mobile device itself.</p> <p>Access to the membership application is monitored and restricted to those authorised by the Company Secretary via the Company lap top computer. The Company Secretary can cancel access immediately if Directors leave their post or bailiffs cease their duties. Whenever member information is needed the application request is accessed which sends an e mail authority to the bailiff which allows them access to log on and see the details required. This is very similar to a mobile bank account application. Once it is closed or timed out the information is no longer available and can only be viewed again by restarting the process.</p> <p>Peter reiterated that he fully understood the need for checking. His concern was about cyber security which we hear lots about. He now felt reassured that the procedure was as secure as possible. This clarification was welcomed by all in the room.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No other questions raised, meeting closed at 21:00 hrs. 	

Proposed Seconded

Secretary/Chair/...../.....