

Present: Jon Weyer (JW), Jason Brewster (JB), Patrick Aikens (PA), Nick Walpole (NW), Stu Buck (SB), Leanne Dunn (LD), Richard Spicker (RS), Paul Scarff (PS), Dave Shearing (DS), Mike Dack (MD), Scott Swift (SS), Steve Rawlings (SR).

Apologies: Dave Watson who subsequently attended during the meeting.

Minuted Items	Action Owner(s)
<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>Meeting run over Zoom. JB hosted the meeting and was responsible for slides & interactions with attendees. JW chaired the meeting with PA presenting the accounts. JW opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. JW explained that AGM had a reduced agenda on this occasion due to the nature of this event.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes & Matters Arising</p> <p>JW reviewed matters arising from previous AGM run on Tuesday 14th May 2019.</p> <p>JW apologised for non-running of memorial match; if anyone is willing to take this task on then please contact the Chairman (chairman@nuac.org.uk).</p> <p>JW confirmed majority of NACA waters transferred to WACA with the length below Costessey Mill and above the Bungalow stretch now controlled by John Bailey.</p> <p>JW confirmed that work to repair Wroxham boat was undertaken by Wroxham DAC in time for 2019-20 season.</p> <p>Minutes proposed by SR, seconded by PS and accepted as a true reflection by attendees.</p>	
<p>3. Review of 2020-21</p> <p>JW presented an overview of the season.</p> <p>Proved to be a challenging time in exceptional circumstances, certainly not Business As Usual.</p> <p>Covid-19 outbreak impacted the club in March with the Lockdown 1.0 closing all waters not already impacted by the Close Season. Website updated, club communications drafted and issued; the first of many reactions to events over the coming months.</p> <p>Easing of restrictions presented new challenges with waters re-opening at different dates and then concerns over their abundance with Angling Trust/Government Guidance and the risk of non-compliance and implications on club's Public Liability Insurance and risk to Officers of the Club. This resulted in the club limiting Shallowbrook access to Snipe for an initial period. Other venues were stricter with their safety protocols and proved less of a concern. The Yare remained closed at the request of the landowners until 20th July. Government restrictions meant Hickling was out of bounds until mid-July. We were also monitoring other club's communications to assess the completeness of our messaging to members. Again this resulted in further changes to the website and member communications.</p> <p>Renewals proved heartening under the circumstances with 86% of 2019-20 membership choosing to stay with the club. The Lockdown regrettably resulted in some members not renewing.</p> <p>Loss of members did allow us to invite some new members; a warm welcome back to former members Greg Gladwell (GG) & Nick Walpole (NW) along with another 7 joiners. NW, a former committee member, offered to re-join and was gratefully accepted.</p>	

With no AGM we still processed changes in the committee with communications to the membership. Dave Crooks, Dave Shearing & Michael Stolworthy all stood down at the end of 2019-20.

The club management was ostensibly down to PA, JB & JW. Thanks to JB and PA for their resilience over the year. MS was able to re-join the committee in July.

Loss of Wroxham Boat triggered investigations into a replacement; unfortunately the alternatives proved too expensive.

Some fishing highlights: NG big tench & bream from Filby, class angler whose time & effort locating fish produces results. Early season catches from Snetterton by Brett Larke, Rob Boothby & Barry Green also spring to mind.

The re-opening of The Grove at the start of August enabled a long overdue working party to be organised. A good turnout with GG & other new members in attendance resulted in a successful tidy-up, thanks again to those who attended. Unfortunately we only had a few weeks to benefit from this work before The Grove closed again at the end of September at the request of the Care Home.

Thankfully Lockdown 2.0 in November had little effect on fishing.

December's heavy rains resulted in venues being flooded and unfishable. Snetterton Pits remains closed due to the impact of a wet winter.

January saw another Lockdown and more work for the committee. The decision to remain closed despite the Government's clarification that local travel for angling was permitted proved contentious although a consensus was eventually reached.

The end of 2020 and the start of 2021 saw Rob Boothby, Neil Glover, Michael Stolworthy & Warren Jones all stand down. NG will still oversee the boat at Filby and provide his diving expertise for working parties. JW thanked them for their contributions and support.

The easing of Lockdown 3.0 at end of March proved simpler affair with Hall Walk & BIF re-opening first with The Grove following a week later and all other waters remaining closed.

The club has been heavily reliant on JB in recent times with his role as Membership Secretary, website maintenance, bookings spreadsheet, collating a lot of the MI used to support club decisions and documenting key decisions.

During the same period the club have sought to implement a succession plan for this workload. Hence the continual club messaging regards administrative support. And one of the reasons we keep inviting new members to apply in an attempt to recruit volunteers to take on some of JB's workload.

Due to a change in JB's circumstances he will reluctantly be unable to continue as Membership Secretary and his input in other areas of the club will reduce. However, discussion with 2, if not 3 prospects to find a long term successor have ultimately drawn blanks.

Fortunately NW came to the rescue by volunteering his partner, Leanne Dunne to help with membership administration for 2021-22.

JB has documented all the processes involved in member administration and handover to Leanne was completed last week. Look forward to Renewals being issued shortly.

Indebted to Leanne for taking on this workload and thanks again to JB for supporting the handover.

Thanks to SB for slowing an already slow withdrawal from committee life. SB continued to support bookings and provided some much needed consultancy regards the club's immediate future.

Change of owner's at Mack's Farm, BIF & Shallowbrook have also had to be factored into the mix.

The sale of Mack's Farm was on the cards from the start of the season and was communicated via the permit documentation. The new owner has now confirmed that he is not interested in allowing angling access on his land. We will try again in the future but this venue will not be available to NUAC for the foreseeable future.

Shallowbrook lease changed ownership in October and we entered discussions with new owners in December with a new offer proposed in January. The new offer would see the club pay a slightly reduced annual fee however our members would no longer have free access to the lakes and would have to pay a fee per visit. Having had access to these lakes since they were created this new arrangement was another decision that prompted lots of deliberation by the committee. In the end the arrangement was not compelling to the club and was rejected. SB added in AOB that this offering would only benefit a small group of our members and this was another factor for rejecting.

BIF change in ownership resulted in lakes removing their season ticket access. NW played a key role in ensuring that NUAC still secured access despite the fishery's new operating model.

Brett Larke will act as club liaison at Snetterton Pits, thanks to Brett for taking this on.

NUAC is not a business but is run like one: Attractive offer, full membership, great website, a lively-ish Facebook presence, proper documentation and processes, great relationships with fishery owners and good communications with our members. JW quoted some feedback from one of our members "This is my first year with the club and I have to say, I am really impressed with how well it is being run by all involved."

That experience is what most people see. But it needs Committee resource to keep it that way.

Immediate outlook is stable, thanks again to Leanne for bailing us out at short notice, and JB continues to support the committee and help buy us time.

Keen to replace lost waters with 8 active leads as of the last committee meeting.

Loss of Shallowbrook and resulting impact on renewals is unknown so some trepidation for new season.

Support on the bank is good and look forward to this continuing in 2021-22.

Need to replace Secretary/Membership Secretary for 2022-23. Threat to long term viability of the club, clock is ticking...

Questions

SR asked whether questionable behaviour by some of our members at HW had resulted in change of access. JW reported that one member breached the barbless hooks rule last year but the owner dealt with the situation and no further action was taken. PA explained that HW owner was concerned regards the welfare of specimen fish in Tom's. He cannot vet our members in the same way he does his syndicate members and to avoid any risk to his 30-40lb+ carp has removed our access to this lake.

SB asked about the impact of killer shrimp in Ormesby Broad. JW explained that biosecurity will be increased on Filby boat and expect members will not be permitted to use their own nets. This matter is still being finalised with relevant authorities and once situation is confirmed we will notify the membership.

SB also asked for clarification regards river access at BIF. JW confirmed that the river is still bookable at BIF.

<p>SS asked whether we will purchase another Hall Walk ticket. PA explained that we do review utilisation of all our booked facilities on an annual basis and have no plans to increase ticket numbers at present.</p> <p>JB & PA thanked JW for his efforts as Chairman. PA reminded him that he is only a temporary stand-in 😊</p>	
<p>4. Accounts 2020-21</p> <p>PA explained the audited accounts, attached below for circulation with the committee. The accounts will be removed/redacted when these minutes are published on the website.</p> <p>The club operates on a non-profit basis and so aims to meet running costs with permit income. The reduction in costs this season have exceeded the reduction in income and resulted in an annual balance of approximately £ [REDACTED] (compared with a nominal loss of £ [REDACTED] in 2019-20).</p> <p>PA explained the key changes to club income & expenses.</p> <p><u>Income</u> Membership reduced to [REDACTED] paying members in 2020-21 ([REDACTED] in 2019-20)</p> <p><u>Boat Expenses</u> Wroxham boat ceased in 2020-21</p> <p><u>Water Expenses</u> Loss of Shallowbrook and Mack's Farm reduced water expenses. Change in ticket type from Gold to Silver at Hall Walk reduced these expenses. One-off Covid-19 refunds for BIF & Hall Walk also reduced these figures.</p> <p>Accounts proposed by PS, seconded by SB and approved by attendees.</p>	
<p>5. Election of Chairman</p> <p>JW confirmed he will continue in this role.</p> <p>JW resigned and JB took chair of the meeting.</p> <p>JW proposed by RS, seconded by PA and unanimously re-elected by attendees.</p> <p>JB returned chair of meeting to JW.</p>	
<p>6. Election of Treasurer</p> <p>JW explained that PA has confirmed he will continue in this role.</p> <p>PA proposed by MD, seconded by SR and unanimously re-elected by attendees.</p>	
<p>7. Election of Secretary</p> <p>JW explained that JB will take on this role on a temporary basis.</p> <p>JB proposed by JW, seconded by PA and unanimously elected by attendees.</p>	
<p>8. Election of Committee</p> <p>JW confirmed NW, SB & JS will continue on the committee.</p> <p>Committee proposed by PS, seconded by PA and unanimously re-elected by attendees.</p>	
<p>9. Any Other Business</p>	

Club Comms - RS

RS commended club's communications. Compared to other organisations that RS is involved in NUAC's communications, especially with respect to Covid-19, have been decisive and clear cut. Good work.

Club Vision - RS

With the loss of waters does the club have a vision for the future; what is proposal for attracting and retaining members and in this context the club fee is very low in comparison to similar offerings. JW clarified that no proposal to raise fees until we have secured new waters that warrant an increase in income and/or members to support this new expenditure. Our bank balance provides us with the ability to secure access to waters in the short term that we would never be able to consider based on annual income alone. PA explained we can trial waters and see how the membership respond to any new offering before making a long-term commitment. RS acknowledged this strategy was a good approach under the circumstances. SB wondered whether our low fees may impact future dealings with new waters; something for consideration when re-assessing future vision of the club.

New Waters – DS

Any chance of a more formal arrangement at Snetterton? JW reported that RB did raise this question with the owner last year but owner is comfortable with the status quo. DS did ask if there was the possibility of arranging exclusive access to one of the smaller lakes on the complex such as Tench or Lagoon. JW explained that given the distribution of our membership, focussed in and to the North of Norwich, Snetterton Pits is an outlier and as such is a low priority.

Hall Farm at Postwick? PA explained that we have contacted the new owner but have not had a response. Will try again once the river season resumes.

Fencraft at Brundall is up for sale however maybe we can get access in the meantime. This boat yard throws up some specimen fish.

New Waters – SB + MD

SB mentioned that Upper Bure, Oxnead was a water that club are pursuing further. Captain's Pond AS control the fishing rights, MD confirmed that crayfish are a real nuisance and really limit ability to keep a bait in the water.

Venues with No Booking – MD

Loss of Shallowbrook reduces the venues that members can just turn up unannounced and fish; now just The Grove and tidal River Yare. JB confirmed that over 50% of members do NOT book any venues and as such we are very aware of the situation and keen to rectify as soon as possible.

Feedback – SS

New member, joined 2020. Attracted by the variety of waters on offer. SS praised club's communications – very professional. Also praised turnaround of bookings, SS has had a very quick response when he has made a booking.

Wensum Valley Angling Discount - SS

SS was unsure whether this benefit was still available and was pleased to hear it was having contacted WVA. Can we communicate this benefit more clearly? JB confirmed that this benefit is

JB

referenced on page 4 of permit documentation and will continue in 2021-22. The club will endeavour to promote this again in June via Facebook and the website.

Access to Wensum - SS

SS had some success at Mack’s Farm (best catch of 3 chub including 6-11 specimen), so gutted at loss of this water. Will we be gaining access to another stretch of the Wensum? PA confirmed that access to Mack’s Farm will not be restored anytime soon, although we will try again next year. PA reported that we are investigating access to a stretch that is included in a property sale; once the new owner is known we will pursue this further.

Bigwood Again? – SS

Any chance of re-establishing an arrangement with Bigwood? JW explained that we had some difficulty with their operating model (as RS can testify) and it was deemed too expensive.

Bawburgh, Small Lakes – SS

SS explained that he has joined this complex and wondered whether we have considered brokering a deal with this fishery? PA confirmed that we have not investigated this option. Given that SS will be a member there would he be prepared to investigate this further on the club’s behalf? SS confirmed he would do this. SB explained that any conversations with this water should be predicated on an access model on a par with Hall Walk or BIF i.e. season tickets shared with NUAC members and booked beforehand.

SS

Fly Fishing Waters – SR

SR asked if the club has considered gaining access to a fly fishing water? JW explained that scope of our membership & expense of these waters precluded further investigation.

Wensum, Oram’s Farm – SR

SR asked if we considered access to Oram’s Farm stretch of the river? This 1.5 mile syndicate stretch is situated between Fakenham Road bridge and Ringland Road bridge and accessed from the farm. JW explained that we have not considered this stretch before. PA asked if SR could investigate further? SR confirmed that he lives at Taverham so can investigate on our behalf.

SR

Investment in The Grove – SS

SS asked if considered improving The Grove as a fishery. JW explained recent history of this water:

- Venue has changed radically over the last 20+ years.
- Silt has considerably reduced volume of water in that time.
- Opportunity to add some carp early 2020.
- Triggered debate about stocking policy; what strain of carp? Crucians? Tench? Will new fish just be food for predators?
- Through RB (EA bailiff) club tried to engage with an EA fishery consultant with a view to establish a plan relating to managing the fishery.
- For various reasons that failed to happen.
- Covid arrived so no opportunity to pursue fishery management since.
- Grants available for fishery work; need to have a fully costed proposal (i.e. need some form of fishery plan to start with).
- Club doesn’t own the water, can we justify this form of capital investment?
- LCH own & maintain the water but will not invest in a fishery.

10. Meeting Closed 21:55

JW thanked everyone for attending and for people's contributions especially during AOB, much appreciated.