

# LODDON FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION CONSULTATIVE

## Minutes

**DATE** Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025  
**VENUE** Swallowfield Village Hall RG7 1QX  
**TIME** Meeting has usual 7.30 pm start, 9.30 pm finish.

Apologies: Amanda Ingham Skylark Farm Services, Ian Campbell CSAS

**Item:**

### **1. Welcome MM 5 mins**

MM welcomed all to the meeting and AGM.

### **2. Chairman's report**

LFCC needs more members so if anyone can persuade new members this will be welcome. 17 years since MM joined the Committee. MM thanked the Committee, thanked SD for role as Treasurer, RH for his valuable role in managing website and social media. Also role in WQMN. Thanks to AB for EA role. SB also had 17 years service. AI has long connection and helps contacts with farming community. Thanks to IW for all the cakes. Introduced Josh Bowes as new catchment host.

Last year has been a problem maybe due to weather conditions and unseasonal rainfall. Stillwaters affected by warm autumn and low oxygen levels. Still went on with habitat improvements especially at St Pats, Bassetts Mead and Greywell. Also looking at opening up some backwaters. MM and IW represent LFCC at LCP and at UoR. Still trying to get the Observatory restarted. WCC on BB still getting evidence to inform a conservation strategy. Now looking at control measures for SC such as pleopod removal. TW may be willing to contribute. Barkham works getting some upgrades which should improve water quality. Wellington CP HB clearance. Other clubs also doing clearance.

Got £1000 from Swallowfield Show to use on projects.

### **3. Treasurer's report**

£620 from subs, some paid in December 2024 for 2025 so that figure represents income for 2025. Not spent a lot. LFCC got £1500 from WBC for

projects as payment for survey at Dinton. Funds will go to UoR probably to support a planned PhD scholarship. Have a surplus for 2024 of £1430 for operational funds. LFCC has a reasonable fund available for projects.

#### **4. Election of officers**

MM re-elected as Chairman. IW re-elected as Secretary. SD re-elected as Treasurer.

**5. Rob Britton Bournemouth University** was unable to attend due to COVID

#### **6. EA news by Ade Bicknell**

AT portal open for FIP applications closes end Jan. Several applications have been made from Loddon catchment. Might get more funds later in year so keep an eye on the AT portal. Gresham Lyde gravel intro, Aldershot Garrison tree removal to let light in on lake. T&D more gravels into St Pats plus LWD. Farnham angling access. Wish Stream project with WTT.

Pollutions at Heath Lake, Blackwater, Yateley Pumphouse lake. Blackwater high ammonia d/s from Camberley STW. Sewage can cause problems later in year in stillwaters so impact may be delayed. Pumphouse club has ordered 3 aerators in case of problems. Can be activated remotely. Heath Lake is an SSSI but as no fish deaths not treated as serious pollution.

Wish Stream on Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Above lakes has population of wild brown trout. Runs into Bathing Pond. Could take pond offline and allow Wish Stream to follow original channel. Water quality seems good, gravels ideal for BT spawning. Might have seen some redds recently. Current channel is perched c/f original channel. Several small things could improve habitat and fish passage. Part of WS is on the assault course and pipe is another barrier.

Calverton stocking Swallowfield AC and T&D got marked fish. Different marks to previous. Please report marked fish through the LFCC website [Report A Marked Barbel](#). Also chub, dace and roach stocked. AB now has to apply for specific purpose now for fish from Calverton.

Problem of low DO in November. Probably due to low rainfall and warm autumn. Was widespread over S England. Had to deploy aeration. Farnborough N railway crossing Blackwater Network Rail planning works which would mean larger bridge. Would need some remediation work to make up for this.

#### **7. LCP update JB**

Introduced himself and gave brief history. Surrey WT last role before SERT.

Current projects include Pettys Brook work habitat improvement. Has some WQ test kits available. Expecting Emmbrook to go ahead but waiting for govt to release funds. Rivers Week Sept plus earlier will have INNS week. Has applied for more funding for WQ kits.

#### **8. Break 20 mins**

#### **9. MM LFFC equipment**

Reminded members that LFCC has a post driver and gravel washing equipment for use and also an ammonia checker for WQ testing.

#### **10. Greywell gravels MW**

Update as of November 2024. Failed impoundment at the mill dumped huge amount of sediment d/s. Very good habitat was ruined. Affected about a mile. Winter flows have pushed sediments aside but there was no gravel. WTT provided £1800 for gravels. HCC agreed and landowner supplied plant and labour. 12.5 tonnes of gravel put in. Now have nice clean gravels and trout have spawned on them already. Natural England did not respond to request for approval but did send a letter to Gresham afterwards saying that work was not approved but no action was taken. Had previously put in much more gravel with NE approval.

#### **11. Pennywort**

BVCT awarded LFCC for work done on FP clearance. Yateley ponds much improved. Basingstoke Canal not much improvement so need to do a leaflet drop to local residents as it seems someone is dumping FP in the canal.

#### **12. John Sutton Fleet Pond**

FP reserve is c50ha, lake is c20ha, currently in poor condition but improving. High P levels lead to WQ problems and major fish kill. Did fish survey after, not much found. WQ still is concern, especially algal blooms. Used to have very good WQ but went downhill as a result of changes to military operations which led to silt run-off. Also problems of misconnections and road run-off. Hotel had misconnection so its sewer was connected to surface water drainage and went into a stream feeding FP. This was corrected promptly. Connections to BC bring risk of FP entering. Want to divert Brookly Stream into reedbed to get rid of nutrients and pollutants and to re-wet the reedbed. Put in barrier to stop rubbish from stream which was successful but now there is so much it is a nutrient source. Ideally remove it but where to put it? Use enforcement money from TW? It will be a long process to get it agreed as so many authorities have to be consulted and agree. Have several INNS already to FP inc skunk cabbage. Also have bamboo and *Crassula*.

#### **13. AOB –**

Gresham Lyde cattle poaching causing serious problems with silt getting into river. Regs actually require poaching to be prevented but only for continuous stretches of >20m so if broken up by e.g. trees then regs do not apply. This needs a resolution.

Mink control is not well coordinated in the catchment so need to get this joined up. SB has worked with Wildlife Trust and provided them with data. Could get others involved.

#### **14. Date of next meeting 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

Get Rob Britton back for April. Talk on Avon roach project? Visit to Diglis Weir in summer. Can accommodate a group visit. Online talks diffuse pollution. Works at St Pats. RDAA hatchery?

**END**