

# LODDON FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION CONSULTATIVE

## Agenda

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

Apologies: Amanda Ingham, Ade Bicknell, Jason Bayliss, Kate Tuck, Trevor Ashton

### **Item:**

#### **1. Welcome MM**

MM welcomed members to the meeting.

#### **2. Trevor Harrop The Avon roach project**

Full information on the project can be found at [Avon Roach Project](#)

From 2005 knew there was a problem with roach, EA doubtful until did survey and found very few roach in middle reaches of Avon. Population below critical mass. Why decline? Several reasons. Weed cut left nowhere for fry to go, flow picked up. Ditches not maintained so no fry refuges. Three floods in succession. Also cormorants. Devised artificial substrate to mimic *Fontinalis*. Used keepnet material, 8mm minnow mesh was best. Got tanks from various places including EA. Set up in Trevor's back garden. Once found right sites got lots of spawn. Only saw a few fish spawning. Usually begin spawning on 25<sup>th</sup> April every year. Took care not to narrow genetic base. Had to be careful to avoid over-spawning as too many eggs would lead to high rate of loss due to fungus, etc. Fed *Artemia* then weaned onto crumb. If fed trout feed just ended up really fatty. Big difference in size after 2 year old harvested from grow-out ponds. Small ones can catch up by year 3. Managed to get access to some old stew ponds. Held fund-raising dinners. EA assisted in transport and stocking. Stocked on three locations, one per day. Various locations each year. Stocked fish were slightly smaller year for year at age 3 than wild fish. Still a problem with cormorants. Hard work to change law so had to find another way. Got scuppered by election. Some EU Member States want to reduce European problem – since they migrate to UK this could solve problem. Also did some habitat restoration and improvement. Avon now has a very good roach population over much of its length. Initially they were not being caught, then picked up and now being caught in numbers. Now getting natural

recruitment. Now looking to do something with barbel. starting with gravel enhancement. But lots of red tape as it's a SSSI. No longer rearing roach but put in spawning boards to provide additional substrate and boards may be moved to other areas. Crayfish can be a problem. Put boards out in the stream so crayfish cannot reach them.

### 3. Break 20 mins

### 4. EA news by Ade Bicknell

As Ade was not able to attend, his notes were read by IW.

**Wish Stream Project** - 4 x fish passage issues resolved. Reinstated 100m of stream and created prime brown trout spawning habitat. Bypassed on-line lake. Project delivered in collaboration with Sandhurst Military Academy, LFCC and Wild Trout Trust. Also potential for a further project D/S with weir removals.

**Calverton Stocking** - Roach, chub and dace to be stocked both into River Loddon St Patricks Stream on 5th November. Marked barbel to be stocked into both River Loddon and St Patricks Stream. Individual blue dye batch marks again. Please report marked barbel captures.

<https://www.lfcc.org.uk/about-us/report-a-barbel>

**Floating Pennywort** - Usual round of FP observation/removal in the Loddon Catchment. Mill Lane – Nothing. Wysteria Pond – Nothing. Wyndhams Pool – Several strands. New source of FP found at Borough Marsh

**Bramshill Police College** - The Bramshill Police College estate is under new management. A recent meeting with the new land agent may see bed level raising and habitat improvement on the River Hart. Watch this space!

**St Patricks Stream** - 100 tonnes of mixed angular gravel funded by the Environment Agency as Rivers Week funding. Well done to Jason, Martin and team for carrying out the gravel introduction and creating another new riffle on the St Patricks Stream to improve habitat for gravel spawning fish species.

**Heckfield Estate – River Whitewater** - Proposed gravel introduction and habitat improvement work on the Heckfield Estate. Some good work has already been carried out at this location by the Estate including large woody debris and protecting the marginal buffer zone from farm animals.

### 5. LCP update

**Frimley weir removal- Blackwater-** Should be finished by the end of November with Trees planted in addition.

**Hart your River-** New project started scoping out the Hart in Edenbrook country park. We will create a range of plans to propose to council on improvements to

the Hart in the country. This will lead onto the improvements being delivered with a range of benefits including spawning habitat and fry refuge.

**Whitewater Weirs-** We have been given money to visit weirs/ the Mills along the Whitewater. We are working with the landowners to look at habitat improvement and fish passage around these structures. The majority of landowners have been contacted and visited. But any clubs on the Whitewater please reach out for any interest or a site visit as we maybe be able to include some improvements in the future stages of the project. We would appreciate your ideas and knowledge on the sections that may need improving.

**Longbridge Mill-** Some work has been progressing on Longbridge Mill via one of my colleagues who is looking to speak to any clubs involved in the area. Please contact me at [josh.bowes@southeastriverstrust.org](mailto:josh.bowes@southeastriverstrust.org) if you are happy for me to share your details with them.

6. **AOB** – Diglis weir visit was attended by very few people but was an enjoyable day out. Wellington balsam bashing continues. Fry refuge at Charvil was sampled to see what is using it but water levels were very low so there were few fish but got some at mouth. eDNA sampling continues on the Barkham Brook. PhD student at Uni Reading is working on the Barkham Brook crayfish. Greywell Whitewater to get more gravel. WildFish have helped to fund invert ID through Whitewater Conservation Society. Gresham now managed to remove 45 mink.

7. **Date of next meeting AGM 22nd January 2026**

**END**