

# **Bishop's Stortford & District Angling Society** *(Established 1949)*

*President: Mr A Streeter*

*Vice President: Vacant*

*Hon. Secretary*  
Mr R G Merritt  
32 Mayflower Gardens  
Bishop's Stortford  
Herts. CM23 4PA

*Chairman*  
Mr S Foster  
6 Prestwick Drive  
Bishop's Stortford  
Herts. CM23 5ES

*Hon. Treasurer*  
Mr M Head  
25 Lambert Cross  
Saffron Walden  
Essex. CB10 2DP

*Match Secretary*  
Mr J A Cruci  
44 Chaffix  
Felsted, Dunmow  
Essex. CM6 3EG

*Members of - The Anglers Co-operative Association and The Angling Trust & Fish legal*

## **Minutes of 2023 AGM**

### **Held at Bishops Stortford Social Club on: 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

In attendance:

Club Officers: Steve Foster (Chairman), Tony Cruci (Match Secretary), Robin Merritt (Honorary Secretary).

Committee members: Reg Speller, Pam Speller, Dave Fuller, Rob Rudge

Club Members: Keith Smith, David Jones, Jeff Bloor, Howard Baynes, Phil Whitmill, Peter Green.

Apologies: Malcolm Head (Treasurer), John Todd(c), Rob Rostron(c), Gary Pickard(c), Jeff Pearson, Fred Hunt

### **Chairman's Report**

The chairman thanked the committee for their continued hard work, and all the people who have helped on work parties and bailiff duties throughout the year.

### **Minutes of the previous meeting (2022 AGM)**

Proposed – Reg Speller

Seconded – Peter Green

### **Secretary's Report**

#### **Fisheries Update**

#### **Beggars Hall**

It has been another year of extremes in the weather: from a very wet spring; through a very hot and dry summer; a mild but wet autumn; and finishing with some very cold winter weather. These extremes take their toll on the Club's fisheries and you will have seen there have been some large-scale renovations this year. The work at Beggars Hall is progressing well with around half the swims now done. We would like to make a big push this year to get all the waters into good shape. Please keep an eye out for possible extra weekend work party dates as we appreciate Thursdays do not work for everyone. Contact Steve Foster for more information.

#### **Malcolm Barker Lake**

This year the lake had a very active weed growth period over the summer and as such made some types of fishing a bit more difficult. The upside to this weed growth was that it gave some additional protection to the fish from the cormorants! We can also confirm that there is a small catfish in the lake which was hooked by a member but unfortunately wasn't landed! It is probable that there is more than 1 catfish in the lake, so if you do catch and land one, please DO NOT put it back but contact a member of the committee who will come down and remove it from the fishery. Several good-sized Pike were caught during the autumn & winter months. We will again be applying "Siltex" to the lake this spring to encourage a better water quality and biodiversity.

Several swims were refurbished this year to ensure they are safe and fit for use.

## **Hall Farm Lakes**

### **Small Lake**

Fishing this lake has again been very popular with all standards of anglers. We held our annual open weekend at the end of August in conjunction with Bishops Stortford town council and 2 coaches from "Everybody can Fish". The event was hugely successful and every man, woman & child caught a fish—all happy bunnies!

The Bishop Stortford Scout Group enjoyed a sunny summer evening's fishing on the lake with the fish being very obliging to all.

### **Large Lake**

This lake suffered low water levels again during the summer due to the lack of rain, although this did not adversely affect the fishing. We also identified several swims that were in need of repair and they are hopefully back to normal and safe. We continue to support the British Heart Foundation & Grove Cottage charities with fundraising matches on the lake. Inter-Club matches were also fished here and enjoyed by all. We are hoping to run these matches again this year. Please look in your membership book and the website for the dates these will be held on.

### **River Stort & Backwater**

The River Stort – Reports show that the lower stretches seem to be more productive with good size Chub, Perch & Bream regularly being caught.

The Backwater – Perch & Roach seem to be the predominant species with the occasional 4lb+ Chub making an appearance.

### **Work Parties**

The Thursday work party group have again had a busy year on all of the fisheries.

### **Match Secretary's Report**

The Champion Angler is Gary Pickard.

The over 65s cup was won by Phil Whitmill.

The lady's trophy was not contested.

Triple Cup – Not contested

Brandon Shield – 1<sup>st</sup> BSDAS (144lb 15oz), 2<sup>nd</sup> Sawbridgeworth (72lb 5oz).

Lea & Stort Cup – 1<sup>st</sup> BSDAS (12lb 5oz), 2<sup>nd</sup> Sawbridgeworth (9lb 9oz)

Inter-club matches against Abbey Cross & Saffron Walden took place over the year.

It is hoped that the Charity matches will again take place at Hall farm – dates to be advised.

The Chairman thanked Gary for standing in for the Match Secretary.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer reports that the club had another successful year with the books showing a surplus.

He recommends that the Ordinary membership should increase from £65 to £70 and the Senior membership should increase from £45 to £50.

Junior membership (£10), Guest Ticket (£7) and the River Stort Day Ticket (£5) should remain the same.

Questions from the floor.

Q. What did Professional Fees relate to?

A. These were fees paid to our solicitor in relation to the MBL land registry registration.

Q. Why was the engraving so much money (£500)?

A. There were 3 years results to engrave on the trophies.

## Election of Officers

<b>President</b>	Mr A Streeter	<b>Proposed</b>	Committee	<b>Seconded</b>	Committee	<b>Carried</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	Vacant	<b>Proposed</b>		<b>Seconded</b>		
<b>Auditor</b>	Mr Brecknock	<b>Proposed</b>	Committee	<b>Seconded</b>	Committee	<b>Carried</b>
<b>Trustees</b>	Mr S Foster, Mr M Head, Mr R Merritt	<b>Proposed</b>	Committee	<b>Seconded</b>	Committee	<b>Carried</b>
<b>Chairman</b>	Mr S Foster	<b>Proposed</b>	Committee	<b>Seconded</b>	Committee	<b>Carried</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	Mr R Merritt	<b>Proposed</b>	Committee	<b>Seconded</b>	Committee	<b>Carried</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mr M Head	<b>Proposed</b>	Committee	<b>Seconded</b>	Committee	<b>Carried</b>
<b>Match Sec.</b>	Mr T Cruci	<b>Proposed</b>	Committee	<b>Seconded</b>	Committee	<b>Carried</b>
<b>Committee</b>	Mr T Cruci, Mr S Foster, Mr J Todd, Mr D Copping, Mr R Rostron, Mr R Speller Mr R Merritt, Mr R Rudge, Mr D Fuller, Mr M Head, Mrs P Speller, Mr G Pickard	<b>Proposed</b>	Automatic	<b>Seconded</b>	Automatic	<b>Carried</b>

## Motions from the Committee

### Subscriptions for 2023-24.

Ordinary Membership to increase by £5, from £65 to £70

Senior Membership to increase by £5, from £45 to £50

Junior membership to remain the same at £10

Guest ticket to remain at £7

River Stort Day ticket to remain at £5

**Carried.**

### Constitution & Bylaw changes.

Several changes have been proposed to the Club's Constitution and Bylaws.

These changes mostly relate to making the wording more "user friendly" and presented in a modern format.

**Carried.**

### Proposal for Life Membership – Don Copping.

Don has been an active member and committee member with the Club for many years, and in recognition of his services to the Club, we propose that Don should be awarded a life membership.

**Carried.**

## Resolutions Proposed by the Membership

None Received

## Questions from the floor.

### John Shellard (via Hon Secretary).

**Question 1.** Toilet facilities at Beggars – out of the 4 lake venues I fish this is only one without any toilet provision. Perhaps some of the extra membership fee could be used to install and maintain a portaloo?

**Response.** The main issue with this is getting the land owners (Mr Streeter) permission to put a toilet on site, as Mr Streeter lives next to the lake. Another issue would be that the toilet would also be used by casual walkers who use the dam side of the lake, and as such would need more frequent cleaning. Finally, the vehicle used for cleaning is not designed to travel on grass verges and therefore the siting of the toilet would be difficult! The Chairman said he will ask Mr Streeter if he is willing to have a toilet on site and report back.

**Question 2.** Reconsider the ban on boilies as hook baits at club venues – I can understand, to a point, why the club might not want boilies as loose feed, but don't understand why we can't use boilies as hook bait? As I'm sure you're aware it's a very effective bait for large carp and helps to avoid catching smaller 'nuisance' fish.

**Response.** The club has made a concession, allowing 8mm “Wafers” (a small dumbbell shaped boilie) as hook baits only. By allowing all forms of boilies, just as hook baits, we have found from experience that a small minority of anglers will abuse this position and feed large amounts of boilies into the lakes. The consequence of this action will only cause the feeding habits of the Carp (and possibly Tench & Bream) to change to only feeding on boilies! As we have already been through this scenario a few years ago and know the consternation it caused with the majority of the pleasure anglers in the club, we feel it would be a retrograde step to allow normal boilies to be used. Although all our lakes contain carp, some up to 20lb+, they are not Carp lakes but mixed fisheries and should be treated as such.

**Keith Smith.**

**Question.** The accounts show a healthy surplus of money, why do the subs need to be increased at this time? Also, are there any plans to spend the money in the near future?

**Response.** The subs were last increased in 2019 (from £60 to £65) and have stayed at that price since. Although we do have a healthy surplus, we do have some plans in the pipeline that will use some money as well as possible re-stocking in the coming season and other general expenses. It was therefore felt prudent to increase the subs at this time to ensure we stay in a strong position to cover any possible un-planned costs as well as the planned costs.

**Peter Green**

**Question.** Why has the AGM notification (which included a web link to the “Newsletter”, “AGM Aena” and “Membership application form”) been sent out via email. Some members do not have the facility to print files/forms from the internet!

**Response.** The new membership system “Clubmate” allows the club to easily communicate with the members via email (for those who have supplied an email address), and to this end we have sent out several emails via this method informing the membership of relevant information during the year. This method was used to communicate the AGM information to those individuals with email addresses on the system. For those who did not have an email address, paper copies were sent out via the normal postal mail.

By using the Clubmate system to communicate with the vast majority of members who have an email address on a frequent basis, we can, 1- keep the membership better inform of club matters and, b- save on postage costs, which would run into 100’s of pounds, which we can better use on other club requirements.

**Reg Speller made an additional Response to above question.**

Some of the membership application forms received are badly written and often have words that are difficult to make out, especially email addresses! consequently, when Clubmate is updated each year to add/update a member, the email address might not be correct, and as such the member will not receive any emails! Unfortunately, there is no way we can detect this and emails do not get delivered to the intended member, therefore giving the impression we haven’t sent them any.

**Phil Whitmill.**

**Question.** What is the club doing about the Malcolm Barker Lake which has fished badly for most of the season when a match is held there.

**Response.** There are several reasons why this situation has occurred, which are: -

1. The major fish loss last spring (2022) due to an outbreak of “Golden Algae” is still having an effect on the fish in the lake
2. The confirmed presence of a Catfish in the lake (and probably more) which predate and spook the fish.
3. The cormorants that frequently visit the lake and also predate & spook the fish.

We frequently monitor the water quality for PH, Acidity, Nitrates, Nitrites and Ammonia levels, and these are always good.

We have been in contact with our local EA officer and he informs us that this situation is occurring in lots of other waters, and as yet, there is no obvious reason!

We have applied for a EA grant to purchase a solar powered water aerator for the lake which will run at specific times during the day, which will help improve the oxygen levels in the lake and hopefully prevent any future algae blooms and go some way to improving the overall water quality.

We are continuing to closely watch the situation on the lake and will report any news via the website and email communications.

The Chairman said that a fish survey will be organised with Framlingham Fisheries to help determine the fish stock in the lake, and from the results of that, formulate a plan to help improve the fishery.

Finally, we have had reports that fish are being caught later on in the day through to dusk and a bit beyond, so, although not fishing as good as it has done in years gone by, good fish are still being caught.

Meeting Closed at 9.15pm

Prepared by  
Honorary Secretary  
Robin Merritt