HORSHAM & DISTRICT ANGLING ASSOCIATION

***2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES***

*17 April 2024: Roffey Social & Sports Club, Horsham*

1. **Welcome**

Club chairman Barry Clark opened the meeting by welcoming those present and explaining the agenda and format for the meeting.

1. **Minutes of previous (2023) AGM**

Minutes of the 2023 AGM were not read out at the meeting, as had been made available to all members beforehand.

Barry asked if anyone objected to the minutes of the previous meeting not being read. No-one expressed an objection.

Minutes of the 2023 AGM were proposed by Oliver Wright and seconded by Barry Clark.

1. **Matters arising from the minutes**

Questions relating to the 2023 AGM minutes:

There were no matter arising from the 2023 AGM.

1. **General Secretary’s Report on last season**

*The report is available as a separate document.*

*Questions*: None

1. **Membership Secretary’s Report**

*The report is available as a separate document.*

*Questions*: None

1. **Match Secretary’s Report**

*The match secretary role is currently vacant, but Ray Smallwood and Mark Haley have been organizing and running matches until the role is filled.*

Ray noted that he had organized a number of evening matches last year. The matches were attended by between 6 and 9 angler, which he thought was reasonable given that they were held on weekday evenings. He plans to organize similar matches this year, though less than last year due to other commitments.

Mark thought the matches he organized during the latter part of 2023 had been successful, with between 12 -16 in attendance. He has organized a further series of matches (already underway), details of which can be found in the [match calendar](https://hdaa.co.uk/fixture/) on the club website. Mark added that the primary aim of the matches he is organizing is to encourage more members to try match angling by fostering a friendly and supportive environment. He invited anyone who wishes to join to contact him.

*Questions: None*

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

*The treasurers report and the club balance sheet for the year ending 29 February 2024 are available as separate documents.*

*Questions:* Paul Stennett asked if the money in the Roosthole Dam fund is sufficient to cover any repairs/work required on the dam.

Ray replied that the amount of money was likely insufficient, but noted that moving money off the balance sheet improves the club’s chances of getting grants. Ray noted he had set up the dam fund with the approval of the auditor. He added that the auditor had raised the prospect of increasing the fund, and this will be raised at a forthcoming committee meeting.

1. **Fishery Officer’s Report**

*The report is available as a separate document.*

After Lee Waller had spoken (see main fishery officers report), Tony Staples described how the club had taken the decision to conduct major work at Roosthole (for details see articles on the club website giving [information on the project](https://hdaa.co.uk/2023/10/13/roosthole-water-quality-survey-and-planned-work/) and its [progress](https://hdaa.co.uk/2023/12/28/projects-update-blackbottom-and-roosthole/)).

He also gave an update on the progress of the project.

Phase 1 of the project has involved considerable clearance work on the Horsham bank. Tony acknowledged this far has significantly altered the appearance of the Horsham bank at Roosthole, though stressed the benefits of allowing more light and wind to access the lake. He noted that the screen of trees behind the path on the Horsham bank would be reduced in height. When this is done phase 1 of the planner work will be complete.

Bio aqua has also been applied to the lake to reduce the accumulation of organic matter on the lake bed. The application of bio-aqua does not seem to have had a negative impact on the quality of fishing.

Phase 2 (to be initiated in the coming months) will involve installing floating islands and increasing the size of the reedbed at the inflow to increase filtration, as well as removing trees at that end of the lake. More lilies will also be added to the lake.

Phase 3 (next winter) of the project will involve a further application of bio-aqua and an assessment of the stock in the lake, via electro-fishing. When this has been done decisions can be made regarding future stocking actions.

*Questions Comments:*

* Richard Dewdney asked if any effect on fish condition has been observed following the introduction of a feeding program at Island Pond?

Tony said that this was likely to be the case and explained the likely benefits of the feeding program.

* Kevin Rice suggested that the improvement project at Roosthole has led to a realization of the number of trees that had fallen, or are about to fall, into the lake. A large number had been removed from the lake this year.

He added that there are also large numbers of trees in the water at Birchenbridge and asked for help with work parties that will be organized at the venue this year.

* Barry Clark noted that following a car crashing into the newly installed fence at Roosthole earlier this year, the club has been able to recover the costs of repair from the driver’s insurance company.

1. **Head Bailiff’s Report**

*The report is available as a separate document.*

*Questions/comments:*

* What do the “issues reported” mentioned in the head bailiff report refer to?

Kevin said, ‘issues reported’ covers a lot of transgressions, such as leaving gates open, not having required equipment etc, poaching etc.

* Tony added that is has been useful to let local tackle shops know about the work being done by the bailiff team, as he suspects this deters some would-be poachers
* Graham Sitton asked about people staying in the “little house” at Foxhole using the boat on the lake.

Oliver Wright said that this the landowner has confirmed this should not be the case – guests at the little house, should not be on the lake.

* Les Gregory asked about the [stocking of a large carp in Foxhole](https://hdaa.co.uk/2023/11/18/specimen-carp-stocked-at-foxhole/), and how this fits with current landing net size rules at the water.

Barry indicated this will be better dealt with when rule changes are discussed.

* Andy Holmes asked if bailiffs have any specific training.

Kevin said this was not the case, but the bailiffs have clear guidelines about how to carry out their duties. There are limits to what they can do in terms of removing poachers. He gave an example of the case of a aggressive poacher who did not leave Island Pond until the police were involved. But he noted that this was exceptional and the police ware unlikely to get involved unless “aggressive” behaviour is reported.

Tony added that bailiffs need to be thick skinned, as there are occasional encounters with abusive/rude individuals on club waters. He added that ‘Dave Wilkins’, a retired police officer who works with the Angling Trust, has visited the club to give advice to bailiffs.

**10. Election of Officers**

*Officers as of 17.04.2024*

President – Andy McIntyre

Vice Presidents – Bernard Brooker\*, Colin Martin, and Graham Sitton.

Chairman – Barry Clark

General Secretary – Oliver Wright

Membership Secretary – Ian Petch standing down to be replaced by Mark Hayley

Match Secretary – (Covered by Ray Smallwood & Mark Hayley)

Treasurer – Ray Smallwood

Fishery Officers – Lee Waller, Tony Staples

Head Bailiff – Kevin Rice

Welfare Officer – NEW ROLE

*\*A member notified the committee during the AGM that Bernard Brooker passed away 2 weeks ago. The club extends it condolences to Bernards family.*

Barry clarified that all present were aware of the H&DAA committee structure. He noted that the rules indicated the committee is made up of 12, 6 officers (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Match Secretary, Fishery Officer and Head Bailiff) and 6 others. He continued by pointing out that the number of officers has increased due to the splitting of the secretary role in to two (General and Membership Secretaries). Consequently, the committee has been operating with 7 officers and 5 others – this was not ratified at either of the previous two AGMs due to an oversight.

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When invited to do so, no-one elected to stand in place of existing club officers.

A motion that the existing officers be re-elected *en-bloc* (excluding Ian Petch, who is stepping down as membership secretary) was proposed by Chris Jenkinson and seconded by Paul Stennett

All existing officers were elected *en block.*

A further motion that Mark Haley to replace Ian Petch as membership secretary was proposed by Ian Petch and seconded by Graham Sitton.

Mark Hayley was elected as membership secretary.

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Barry next indicated that a new officer role is required to satisfy insurance requirements. The new officer role is that of Welfare Officer.

*Note: The change to the club rules required to change the committee structure is dealt with below in the section of the AGM dealing with rule changes. This change was approved, leaving the committee consisting of a maximum of 12, of which 8 are officers.*

Chris Jenkinson, who has offered to stand in the welfare officer role then spoke about the new role, describing what the role entails and giving further details describing why the new position is required why required (see separate document).

Chris was proposed for the role by Graham Sitton and seconded by Paul Stennett

Chris Jenkinson was elected as Welfare officer.

*Questions/comments:*

* Graham Sitton asked for some documentation to be produced giving guidance for bailiffs outlining impacts of the new welfare officer position on bailiffs. He also asked about who cover the role when Chris unavailable.

Chris said he would look into producing documentation and said he had not considered the issue of cover for the welfare officer role if he were unavailable. He added this was a good question and he would need to give it some consideration.

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**11. Election of Committee**

The re-election of Graham Boylett, Tom Sayers and Peter Collins as committee members was proposed by Richard Dewdney and seconded by Graham Sitton.

Graham Boylett, Tom Sayers and Peter Collins were re-elected as members of the committee.

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Following the business described above, there remains a single vacancy on the committee.

Colin Wadey was proposed to fill the vacancy by Lee Waller and seconded by Tony Staples

Colin Wadey was elected to the committee.

**12. Graham Sitton**

Graham Sitton had asked for a few minutes to speak at the AGM to express his appreciation of the late Clive Bashford’s (a former H&DAA chairman) contributions to the club, and of the recent work carried out by the committee.

He noted that committee members work hard on the club’s behalf, give their time freely, which saves the club considerable expense, thereby helping to keep membership costs at their current levels. He further highlighted various donations made to the club from the estate of the late Clive Bashford, including the disabled swims that have been constructed at Roosthole.

Barry Clark thanked Graham for his thoughtful words.

**INTERVAL**

**13. Consideration of any other proposals submitted in accordance with the Association**

**Proposed Rule Changes**

**ITEM 1**

**Existing Rule 4**: The business of the Association shall be conducted by a Committee of six, plus the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Match Secretary, Fishery Officer and Head Bailiff. A quorum shall be formed of 6 of these persons, all of whom shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. The AGM shall also elect the President, Vice-Presidents and Auditor. In the event of a vacancy arising among the officers from any cause whatsoever, the Committee shall have the power to fill up any such vacancy until the next AGM. The date of the AGM will be given on the Membership card.

**Proposed Change:** *The business of the Association shall be conducted by a Committee of up to four, plus the Chairman, General Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Match Secretary, Fishery Officers (2 at present)), Head Bailiff and Welfare Officer. A quorum shall be formed of 6 of these persons, all of whom shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. The AGM shall also elect the President, Vice-Presidents and Auditor. In the event of a vacancy arising among the officers from any cause whatsoever, the Committee shall have the power to fill up any such vacancy until the next AGM. The date of the AGM will be communicated to members by email and advertised on the club website at least one month in advance of the event.*

Note: the changes formally split the secretary role into two distinct roles, general secretary and membership secretary. A new officer role “Welfare Officer” is also proposed.

As the date of AGM is no longer on the membership card, the proposed change also ensures that the date of the AGM is publicized well in advance of the AGM.

Proposed: by the committee

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 2**

**Existing Rule 14**: Membership cards must carry the Member’s photograph with the Member’s signature being carried across the photograph and Members must not enter Association waters without a properly completed Membership card containing their photograph.

**Proposed Change:***‘Clubmate membership cards must be carried at all times by all members when on our waters.’*

Proposed: by the committee

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 3**

**Existing Rule 17**: New Members joining the Association after 1st December shall pay half price.

**Proposal:** *Remove this rule completely*

Proposed: by the committee

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 4**

**Existing Rule 20**: A night fishing permit is available to Senior, OAP and Intermediate Members only (not Minors or Juniors) who have been Association Members for at least two full seasons, subject to an additional fee which shall be notified on the renewal advice. From 1st December qualifying Members may purchase a half price night permit. Existing night permit holders may also upgrade their night permits from 2 to 3 rods at half price.

**Proposed change:** A night fishing permit is available to all categories of fishing member over 18 years of age who have been Association Members for one full season, subject to an additional fee which shall be notified on the renewal advice. Night permits will allow fishing with up to 3-rods provided the member has a corresponding EA rod licence.

Note: If this proposal is accepted intermediate members (those aged 16 to 17 years) will no longer be permitted to buy night permits. To compensate for this, the cost of membership for 16 to 17-year olds will be repriced to match the cost of junior membership (that is reduced from £45 to £15) and the intermediate category will be abolished, with the age range of the junior category extended from 10 - 15 years, to 10 – 17 years.

Question: Richard Dewdney asked if this proposal permits use of 3 rods at night only or 3 rods at any time?

Barry said the intention was to permit use of 3 rods at night only, but acknowledged the wording of the proposal was ambiguous.

Counter proposal: Oliver Wright proposed the rule change proposal be amended, as follows, to remove the ambiguity:

***“****A night fishing permit is available to all categories of fishing member over 18 years of age who have been Association Members for one full season, subject to an additional fee which shall be notified on the renewal advice. Night permits will allow fishing with up to 3-rods at night provided the member has a corresponding EA rod licence.”*

Counter proposal put to vote

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 5**

**Existing Rule 23 a and e:** The night permit is subject to the following conditions:

1. Maximum number of permits to be 45, issued on a first come first served basis, but with preference given to existing night permit holders.

**Proposed change:** a) Maximum number of permits to be 55, issued on a first come first served basis, but with preference given to existing night permit holders.

A counter proposal was put forwards by Barry Clark, altering the wording as follows:

*“No limit will be placed on the number of night permits.”*

*This change is proposed on a trial basis for 1-year.*

Barry explained that this counter proposal will make the role of membership secretary far less demanding by significantly reducing the burden of work relating to the night permit renewal process.

Counter proposal put to vote

Outcome: Passed

e) Carp sacks must only be used for single specimen fish caught during the hours of darkness.  Any member breaking this rule will have the night permit withdrawn immediately and may also have his general Membership withdrawn at the discretion of the Committee.

**Proposed Change:** *e) Carp may not be retained other than for the purposes of getting ready to weigh or photograph, which must be done immediately. Any member breaking this rule will have their membership withdrawn at the discretion of the committee.*

Proposed: by committee

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 6**

**Existing Rule 24:** At Birchenbridge, Roosthole and Island Pond only, bait boats may be used at any time, provided there are 2 unused swims either side of the angler intending to use the bait boat. At Foxhole Pond bait boats may only be used by ~~Senior~~ Members holding a valid night permit during the period between 30 minutes before sunset and 30 minutes after sunrise.

**Proposal:** *retain this rule permanently – it was voted in at 2023 AGM on a 1-year trial basis.*

A counter proposal was put forwards by Ray Smallwood. He said changes in rules relating to night permits made the word senior superfluous, so it should be removed.

Les Gregory pointed out there are few usable swims and Birchenbridge and those there are very far apart. He suggested this would make it very difficult to use baitboats there given the wording of the proposal.

Ray said he did not think this would cause an issue, especially when trees had been removed and swims repaired, which would make more swims fishable.

Counter proposal was put to the vote

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 7**

**Existing Rule 28**: Senior, OAP, and Intermediate Members who have been Association Members for at least two full seasons not in possession of a full night permit may purchase a one-night permit for an additional fee. One-night only tickets will not be available for Saturday nights. See membership card for further details.

**Proposed change:** *All categories of fishing member over 18 years of age who have been Association Members for at least one full season not in possession of a full night permit may purchase a one-night permit from the Membership Secretary for an additional fee. ~~One-night only tickets will not be available for Saturday nights~~. See club rules for further details.*

Note: If this proposal is accepted intermediate members (those aged 16 to 17 years)) will no longer be permitted to buy night permits. To compensate for this, the cost of membership for 16 to 17-year olds will be repriced to match the cost of junior membership (that is reduced from £45 to £15) and the intermediate category will be abolished, with the age range of the junior category extended from 10 - 15 years, to 10 – 17 years.

Tony Staples counter proposed that the club allow fishing on Saturdays too with the one night only ticket.

Counter proposal was put to vote

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 8**

**Existing Rule 35:** Carp sacks may only be used for single specimen fish caught during the hours of darkness.

**Proposal:** *remove this rule completely.*

Proposed by committee

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 9**

**Golden Rule and Rule 43**

**Golden rule:** MINIMUM 36” OR 30” SPOON LANDING NETS MUST BE USED ON ALL WATERS (EXCEPT **BSA & FOXHOLE**) & 42” WHEN FISHING FOR PIKE SEE RULE 43 FOR FULL DETAILS

**Existing Rule 43)** When fishing for pike, a minimum 42-inch landing net or a specifically designed folding rubberised pike net minimum 70cm x 85cm must be used. At all other times the angler must be in possession of a 36-inch triangular net or a 30-inch spoon net which must be set up and ready for use on all waters other than **~~Foxhole and~~ BSA** lakes and used for landing specimen carp. Smaller landing nets can be used for silver fish, but the angler must be in possession of the larger net.

**Proposal:** *Remove wording referring to BSA and Foxhole.*

Note: This proposal would set a minimum landing net size for all H&DAA venues (except the River Arun at Lee Place, which is governed Billinghurst AA rules).

Ray and Ian both suggested that this rule would create issues with members especially OAPs who fish foxhole and would likely create problems with Billingshurst at BSA, as they have a lot of match anglers.

Ray suggested a counter propose to retain the reference to BSA in the proposal.

Counter proposal was put to vote

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 10**

**Golden Rule and Rule 47:**

**Golden rule**: NO RADIOS, FIRES, BBQs OR DOGS, EXCEPT THE HORSHAM BANK AT ROOSTHOLE WHERE DOGS ARE PERMITTED PROVIDING THEY ARE KEPT UNDER CONTROL AT ALL TIMES, DO NOT ENTER THE WATER AND ALL EXCREMENT IS REMOVED FROM THE SITE.

**Existing Rule 47**) No member shall leave any gate unfastened or do or permit any damage to fences, mowing grass, or crops near or adjoining the river or pond, or shall be accompanied by a dog (with the exception of bona fide Association Bailiffs) except on the Horsham Bank at Roosthole where dogs are permitted providing they are kept under control at all times, do not enter the water and all excrement is removed from the site.

**Proposal:** *retain these rules permanently – they were voted in at 2023 AGM on a 1-year trial basis. The relevant section of the rule relates to dogs being allowed at Roosthole.*

Counter proposal put to vote

Outcome: Passed

One member, the only to vote against the proposal, explained that he had voted against the proposal on the grounds of animal welfare. He suggested that hooks and similar equipment on the ground, as inevitably occurs at fishing venues would pose a threat to dogs.

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**ITEM 11**

**Existing Rule 40:** Pike Season: Pike fishing is only allowed on Association waters between: 1st November and 15th March.

**Proposed change:** *“Pike fishing is only allowed on Association waters between 1st November and 15th March. The start date may be moved forwards or delayed by the committee, depending on water temperatures. Any changes to the start date of 1st November will be communicated to members by email and advertised on the club website.”*

Proposed: by committee

Outcome: Passed

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**ITEM 12**

**New rule proposals:**

**A.** *“No fixed lead, beachcaster or twig rigs are allowed: in the event of a breakage, the lead/weight must be able to come free.”*

**B.** *“No fish being photographed should be held over knee height and always over an unhooking mat or cradle.”*

**C.** *“3 rods may be used at Birchenbridge during the day by members holding a night permit and corresponding EA licence. Any rods that infringe on another angler’s swim, even if they arrive later, must be reeled in and relocated.”*

All 3 new rules were proposed by the committee

Outcome: passed

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**ITEM 13**

The “Senior” membership category will be renamed “Adults”.

Note: Since this involves a change of terminology, it does not require voting on. The reason for making this change is to reduce the scope for confusion amongst OAP members. In the past there have been instances of OAP members purchasing “Senior” tickets in the mistaken belief that “Senior” refers to over 65s (OAPs).

On similar lines, Oliver noted that a member named Robin West had contacted him asking for the name of the OAP category to be changed to over 65s, as the former term is seen by some as offensive. Terry Crouch suggested that for the sake of terminology it would be better to rename as suggested. This issue will be dealt with by the committee at a later meeting.

**14. Any other business or late proposals at the Chairman’s discretion**

Trever Epps suggested that the club impose a rule permitting barbless hooks only.

Ray suggested he propose this at the next AGM – as this is a new rule so should have been submitted earlier.

**The AGM closed at 2230**