

## **Minutes of BMTF committee meeting**

Held at Rookery Farm on 21 October 2020

### **Present**

Terry Lawton, chairman; Andy Hunt, treasurer; Richard Nelson secretary; Bill Emrich; Kevin Freezer

### **1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Mark Williams

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

TL welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Kevin for hosting us once more. He said that although it was sometime since a regular meeting had been held, everything had gone smoothly. He also commented on the recent spectacular caddis hatches.

The Environment Agency had responded to complaints made about flows of highly discoloured water from above Bintry Mill. They identified a collapsed weir on Tom Cook's land. Paul Seaman will be removing the fallen willow just downstream from the mill. A new "No Fishing" sign was to be fixed to Yarrow Bridge .

### **3 Approval of minutes**

The minutes from the 19 August 2020 meeting were approved and signed. There were two matters arising:

### **4 Matters arising**

**4.1** The outstanding chainsaw training/health and safety course has been postponed indefinitely because of the covid pandemic.

**4.2** Making the BMTF FaceBook page a closed group now to be actioned by Bill Emrich.

### **5 Treasurer's Report**

Andy Hunt presented a set of provisional annual accounts. There were tangible improvements in income and bank balance. Total income was £19,334.80 and expenditure £16,400.00, giving a surplus of £2,934.80. The closing balance was £19,086.89 compared to £11,956.34 for 2019. The draft budget for 2021 was discussed and will be part of the AGM documentation. (see item 10)

### **6 Secretary's Report**

RN confirmed all members have notified their acceptance of the club's General Data Protection Rules policy. Applicants on the waiting list were

also contacted as it is a requirement that they also opt in to our GDPR policy.

### **7 River management report**

In Mark's absence, Terry reported that all permissions to begin the County School improvement scheme were now in place. The heavy rain of recent weeks had made access to the TLHB impossible. Work will begin as soon as conditions allow. General work parties will be organised later in November with the initial task of cutting back and pruning trees along the river bank. The Secretary will put out a call for helpers. Between now and next April it is intended to make some bank improvements, possibly including casting platforms, to make access to some productive water easier and safer. At present the river was too high for gravel jetting and as it was too close to spawning time jetting was cancelled.

### **8 Catch Returns and Stocking Policy for 2021**

Initial analysis of the catch returns showed 575 fish caught so far this season against 514 in 2019. That total was reached even though the first six weeks of fishing was lost to covid restrictions. In 2019, 190 wild trout were recorded and to date in 2020, 301 wild fish showed in the fishing returns. Also a good number of black-tagged fish from last year's stocking turned up through the season in the totals. Over half of members' personal totals included more wild fish than tagged trout. After some discussion, this healthy state of affairs encouraged the committee to agree to supplemental stocking 250 fish for 2020. It was proposed to introduce the first stock fish on 10 May. It was noted that for whatever reason if a further stocking became necessary we had the funds for it.

### **9 Boating, canoeing and swimming**

Conversations were to be sought with Cornelia Bidewell and Paul Seaman to enforce the rule that our stretch of the Wensum is not navigable to all comers as a given right. AH presented an interesting document from Fish Legal and the Angling Trust setting out the points of law that state there is no public right of navigation existing on non-tidal waters in England and Wales. Both British Canoeing and the Broads Authority had confirmed that the only part of the river that can be used by canoeists is from New Mill Yard, Norwich, to the confluence with the river Yare. As the BMTF pays our riparian owners for the use and access to the river, it was suggested that the licenses we purchase might be extended to include control over boating access. If this were the case it would be easier to challenge anyone claiming navigation as their right. Signs are to be put up warning of possible harmful pollutants in the river water and along the river banks. It is hoped to put up

a fence to prevent access to the river on the TRHB upstream of Yarrow Bridge.

### **10 Scheduling and organising a covid-restricted AGM**

In conversation with Stower Grange (our usual host for the AGM) and other formal meeting venues it became obvious that an indoor meeting of any more than six people would not be possible during the pandemic restrictions. It was agreed to conduct the business as far as possible via email. A date of 22 November was set for a virtual AGM when a full set of reports will be emailed to all members. The report will be collated together in booklet form and prepared as a PDF file. RN will contact the membership and explain what is happening.

### **11 Insurance**

TL had some questions about the BMTF's insurance policy. AH had checked the cover and was happy that everything was in order. The insurance is with Fish Legal via the Angling trust.

### **12 Pike Day and social events**

A pike day is to be organised for 14 November and will include a BBQ. RN to contact members who will have to book in advance, allowing for accurate catering and covid compliance. A stillwater day (Rocklands Mere perhaps including an introduction to fly fishing for sons, daughters and grandchildren?) is proposed for March 2021

### **13 AoB**

TL was exploring the moving of accumulated dredged soil down stream of County School Bridge to improve the stability of the TRHB bank to the extent the quantity of material would allow.

### **Date of next meeting**

Date to be decided