

Founded 1888

Barrow Angling Association Ltd.



136th AGM held at Barrow Cricket Club on 10 December 2024

The Chairman, David Nixon, opened the meeting.

Apologies:

Apologies were received from:

Sam Greenway, Jim Collis and Jimmy Moss

Past Members

A one minute's silence was held in memory of past members who are no longer with us. Sam Pittam and Ralph Walker were long-time members, Jack Dewhurst passed away aged 95 having been a member for an unbelievable 87 years.

Minutes of the previous AGM

The Chairman apologised for a technical hitch that meant the 2023 AGM minutes and the Financial Statement were not attached to the AGM calling notice. Hard copies of the 2023 AGM minutes and the 2024 Financial statement were made available at the AGM.

The 2023 AGM minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed by David Nixon and seconded by Alan Robertson.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising nor were there any proposals from the membership.

Chairman's Address

Thanks to Executives and Committee for their efforts over the last year

2024 has been challenging – tough fishing and a gradual decline in membership. Maintaining a healthy membership is vital.

Membership fees pay for the trout we stock into our waters so to maintain high stocking levels we need income. Although membership is dropping the Club aim to keep the number of fish stocked in 2025 the same as we stocked in 2024.

Hopefully all current members will renew. Members are encouraged to renew early to allow us to understand if we need to call on contingency monies should there be a sizeable drop in memberships.

For some of the cheapest Club fees around you get uncrowded fishing, numerous stockings of high-quality fish and some of the most picturesque reservoirs in the country. Where else can you see several ospreys in one session in such beautiful surroundings?

Can I encourage you to introduce your friends, relatives, children and grandchildren to a sport that doesn't need the use of a smartphone, provides a bit of exercise, gives you a catch challenge that Google can't give you the answer to, or even AI for that, plus you are in the fresh air at one with nature?

Like everything in life costs go up, the fish cost more, the rental of the waters is index linked, insurance increases, Clubmate costs go up plus the many other overheads we carry. The Treasurer will address this matter in his presentation. The Chairman thanked Jimmy Moss who has contributed 50% of the proceeds from the sale of his fly-tying equipment to the Club.

The Chairman thanked the Execs and Committee for their good work. Unfortunately, we do not have many committee members, we need more. Fortunately, we do have very active Executive Officers who give much time and effort without pay to keep the club running well. And the club is managed well, is not in danger of folding unlike many clubs in these difficult times.

Work parties will be needed for 2025, and it will be nice if there are some new faces. The Chairman thanked Mark Postlethwaite and Mark Bellas for their continued work on maintaining and improving Ireleth.

Not only do we have a well-run club with excellent waters, but we also have many exchange waters you can fish for free. Some of these, your club pays for so please use them. If you look at the variety we provide, 3 large well stocked trout reservoirs including a brown trout only water, 2 smaller waters at Ireleth, with disabled access and lots of fish including brown, rainbow, golden, blue and tiger trout. Plus, we have 4 exchange tickets with other clubs. Oh, and if you fancy it, we have Cavendish Dock with many 20 lb plus carp and roach over 3 lbs.

This is a great club, and I encourage you to keep it alive by maintaining your membership and introducing new members to the sport.

Secretary Address

On that note memberships can be renewed for 2025 from 01 January and must be renewed before the March stocking if you wish to fish for the usually rewarding late spring and early summer stockings.

2024 was a bit different in that we stocked twice a month and allowed fishing on stocking days after 1200. This stocking regime seemed popular with regular stockings including some very nice sizable fish. The new Stocking Manager will outline the plan for 2025.

Harlock was closed in 2024 for dam overflow repair work. I am pleased to tell you that Harlock will be available for the full season, and we will undertake 2 stockings to get back up and running.

Pennington is a picturesque water and had its moments for great fishing. This year we issued bird watching licences as an experiment to see if the twitchers and catchers could cohabitate. Well, it worked well and brought some welcome additional income. The twitchers had access to the reservoirs to get some excellent close ups of the ospreys, but they also acted as bailiffs by reporting

people who were fishing but were not signed in the book. So, we will continue to issue bird licenses in 2025.

Poaka did not suffer from as much weed as previous years but there appears to be several different types of weeds growing in there. We have asked United Utilities to investigate. The lane again was full of potholes. We requested UU to repair it in the spring 25, but they went ahead in the autumn so no doubt it will be in a poor state again for the start of the season. We have also asked for a load of hard core to be deposited in the car park so that we can repair the lane throughout the season. This has not appeared yet.

Ireleth is the most popular water with easy access, and you can always get to the fish. Thanks to the 2 Marks, Mark Postlethwaite and Mark Bellas, who have kept Ireleth in good shape and regularly mown the footpaths on our other reservoirs. They also did a great job of replacing the handrail on Lower Ireleth which was getting into a dangerous state. Jim Ireland arranged a work party on Ireleth where volunteers cut back hedges and trees as well as painting the handrails, benches and lifebuoy housings. Thanks to Jim and all those who turned up to help.

Cavendish dock had 238 permits, more than last year. The water is proving popular and is well managed by Jim Ireland, Head Bailiff Colin Pratt, Allen Cooke and the bailiffs. We have frozen the prices for a second year as our overheads have not significantly increased in this area. There are some big changes on the horizon. A 70-acre floating solar farm, the biggest in Britain, will, subject to planning approval, be built on Cavendish Dock in 2025. It will provide power to BAE and will be funded by ABP. BAA is in close discussions with ABP and the contractors to try and ensure that all parties are happy with the way ahead. The initial discussions are supporting the provision of fish cages to protect small fish from the cormorants. We are also involved in discussions to landscape the area. This will make it a more inviting venue for fishermen and the local community.

We held Open Days on Poaka and Cavendish Dock this year. They take a lot of organising by a few of us and we are not getting new memberships from these events. They are costing money as the club provide catering in the way of burgers and hot drinks. So next year we will try a different approach. We intend to hold some evening matches that will be open to non-members. They will be low in entry cost with maybe a small trophy to the winner. The focus will be on getting new members rather than winning a competition. So, you will be encouraged to get your friends to come along and have a go.

The sign in books have been modified to record catches. It's not to see who the most successful angler is but is to try and establish the average catch and how many fish are being taken from the waters. So please don't put down "lots" for number of fish caught. It doesn't help our surveys. The Events Manager will provide the returns later in the meeting.

There will no longer be Guest tickets from now on. If you want to take a friend, they can purchase a day ticket on the website or through Clubmate.

We are now entering our 3rd year of Clubmate, and it has been very successful especially on Cavendish Dock where the bailiffs use it daily and anglers purchase day ticket from it. Although it is costly it saves a huge amount on administration, and we don't have to develop our own bespoke system.

Membership Statement

The Membership Secretary, Sam Greenway, was unable to attend the meeting so the Secretary provided the Membership statement.

There are 259 members in 2024, down from 277 members last year: a drop of 18 in 2024 against a drop of 6 in 2023. But we had 11 birdwatchers permits issued.

It is however, encouraging that we are seeing more junior members joining the Club.

Cavendish Dock had 238 permits taken out this year. Up on the 219 in 2023 but the balance of juniors to adults has moved with less adults joining but resulting in a similar income. Some of the changes to the dock, as detailed earlier, may improve the fishing experience and could make the dock even more popular.

Everyone is reminded to tick the "Data Protection" box when renewing via Clubmate as this allows BAA to hold essential data.

We will not take up the WADAA exchange next year but we are in discussions with the Vale of Clwyd. Exchange tickets can be booked in Clubmate.

Financial Statement

The balance sheet was distributed at the meeting and was also sent out with the AGM agenda. The Treasurer, Jim Cannell, gave an overview stating a minor change regarding the £19 day tickets should have been included under "membership" total. There is a healthy income this financial year from Cavendish Dock with any surplus going into the BAA Ireleth Contingency Fund. Out of the membership fees, £20k was used to purchase fish for stocking and the remainder paid for running costs including the rental of the reservoirs.

The finances are in a stable position with an end-of-year surplus negating the need to draw on reserves. However, there are increased costs in 2025.

The financial accounts have been audited and approved by the independent auditors and have been submitted to Companies House and HMRC.

The 2024 Financial Statement was approved – Proposer Tom Denby, seconded Paul Hornby.

Stocking

The Stocking Plan for 2025 was available at the meeting and is a repeat of the one implemented in 2024. Subject to sufficient membership there will be almost 6,000 fish in total stocked in Pennington, Poaka and Ireleth. As Harlock is available this season there will be 2 stockings of Brown Trout. Increased stocking costs plus Harlock means the program will cost £25k.

Twice monthly stockings early in the season and allowing fishing after 1200 on stocking days will continue.

This level of stocking will maintain the commitment of the Club to provide good quality fishing on well stocked waters.

Fish to be stocked in 2024 will be a mix of 1.25 lb and 2 lb with several bigger fish of at least 3 lbs in each stocking.

The Stocking Plan for 2024 was approved. Proposed by the Committee, seconded by Allen Cooke.

It was raised by Ray Millard that the second July Stocking was cancelled without informing the members. The Secretary apologised for this oversight and assured them that a global communication would be sent out if any future stocking is cancelled or postponed.

Jim Ireland gave a brief on the numbers of fish recorded to have been caught or taken up until October 2024

Water	Anglers	Fish Stocked	Fish Caught	Fish Taken	Average catch
Ireleth	1,402	925	2,101	162	1.5
Pennington	550	2,445	675	125	1.2
Poaka	586	2,350	855	136	1.46

Subscriptions

There was no increase in subscriptions in 2022 and a £20 increase in 2023.

The cost of fish to stock the water goes up every year plus this year we have Harlock back.

The main objective is to provide good quality fishing on well stocked waters which in turn will hopefully maintain membership numbers.

There are other running costs impacted by inflation over the coming year. To maintain a healthy Club, we need to balance the books and avoid subsidising the Club from reserves which is not sustainable. It is therefore proposed to increase subscriptions by £10 for Full and Senior members. Junior prices will remain unchanged at £22 per annum.

2025 membership fees will be

Full Adult - **£165**

Senior - **£143**

Junior - **£22**

Birdwatchers - **£55** (£5 increase)

This proposal was passed unanimously, Proposer Ray Millard, seconded Dick Maddocks.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence of note to bring to the AGM

Election of Officers

The Chairman position – Dave Nixon was re-elected, proposer Alan Robertson, seconded Kieth Roger.

The Club Secretary position - George Teasdale was re-elected, proposer Ray Millard, seconded Allen Cooke.

The Treasurer position – Jim Cannell was re-elected, proposer Tom Denby, seconded Keith Roger

The Communications and Membership Secretary position – Sam Greenway was re-elected, proposer Allen Cooke, seconded Bill Edwards.

The Events Manager and Club Welfare Officer– Jim Ireland was re-elected, proposed by Mark Postlethwaite, seconded Alan Robertson.

Election of Committee

The current Committee Members, Geoff Hall, Allen Cooke, Mick Mason and Paul Riley are happy to remain on the Committee. Proposed Ray Millard, seconded Graham Meikle.

Three new Committee members were elected:

Pete Sanford - Proposed Mark Postlethwaite, seconded George Teasdale

Paul White – Proposed Alan Robertson, seconded Ray Millard.

Graham Meikle – Proposed Alan Robertson, seconded Ray Millard.

Articles/Rule Changes

No changes.

Any Other Business

There being no more AOB the meeting was closed.