

**Minutes of the Board Meeting of
The Ythan District Salmon Fishery Board
held on 10th February 2026
at Schivas Steading, Newton, Methlick**

1. Present:

Paul Adderton	- ADDA Machar Pool
John Pirie	- Ardlogie
Charles Wolrige Gordon	- Esslemont – Chairman
Dominic Fairlie	- Cromleybank
Eric Ritchie	- Tenant angler
Andy Crawford	- Angler
Edward Arthur	- Schivas
Wayne Smith	- Ellon Castle – Boat of Fechil

2. In Attendance:

Gwen Chalmers	- Clerk to the Board
Mark Andrew	- Former Clerk to the Board
Jim Kerr	- Don District Salmon Fishery Board Superintendent
Nicholas Taylor	- ADAA
Anouk Klopert	-River Ythan Trust
Robert Paylor	- SISI Project Officer (Ythan and Ugie)
James Begg	- Allathan Associates

3. Apologies for absence:

Fred Pell	- HAC
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4. Appointment of Gwen Chalmers as Clerk to the Board

Although the Chairman had already introduced Gwen at the Public Meeting Mark Andrew asked him to seek the Board's approval to the appointment. The Chairman asked for all Board members to show their approval which all did unanimously confirming the appointment with immediate effect.

5. Matters arising from the Public Meeting

The discussions from the earlier (Public) meeting were endorsed by the Board. There were no further matters arising.

6. Accounts

The draft accounts for the year ending 25th July 2025 had been circulated and were available on the website. Mark Andrew explained that costs had reduced as the role of Clerk had been vacant during the year. The SLA had increased by RPI from March 2025 based on the uplift in January 2025. An accounting error had been noted by the accountants from 2019 and the 'other income' shown in the accounts was for adding back the 'mistake'. No queries were raised and the Chairman signed the accounts by way of approval and adoption.

7. Setting the rates for 2026

Mark Andrew reported that Board had not spent as much as had been anticipated during the period to date due to savings made as detailed above. Consequently, the Board held a surplus and could afford to keep rates unchanged for a further year (the third in succession) at £1-53. He had circulated a budget for 2026 earlier which showed that the full cost of the SLA with the Don Board could be met from the surplus and rates for 2026. All agreed that the efforts to improve the river and its fishings should not be reduced.

8. AOCB

Mark Andrew advised that the Assessor was in the process of re-valuing fishings on the river for the forthcoming replacement Valuation Roll which had an effective date of 1st April 2026. It was likely that the Ythan fishings valuation would be published after that date and would be effective for setting the rates in 2027.

There was a general agreement that a license to control piscivorous birds should be applied for (to Nature Scot) using the data on such bird numbers supplied by the Don team.

John Pirie asked if the Deveron Board had been undertaking the annual electro fishing surveys (NEPS) since Mr. Andrew had retired as Clerk. Mark Andrew advised that he did not know for sure but that he thought the annual 'random' surveys had continued but not of the selected annual sites that had been undertaken in the first 8 or so years of NEPS (until COVID called a halt to them).

Note – in subsequent correspondence with Richie Miller of DBIT no surveys have been undertaken since 2023. These are to be re-commenced in 2026 (if running).

John Pirie asked if anyone had any knowledge of the fish hatchery proposed by the Ugie Board. He was advised to approach Joseph Yule directly about it.

Jim Kerr advised that SEPA had carried out electrofishing within the Bronie burn following removal of a man-made obstruction at Scottisley two years previously. He was pleased to report that all year classes of salmonids had been found in the burn

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending, Schivas Estates for providing the venue and Mark Andrew for his work on behalf of the Board. He wished Gwen Chalmers success as Clerk to the Board and hoped everyone would attend the next meeting at Newburgh on 30th June 2026