

RIVER YTHAN TRUST

Minutes of 7th Annual General Meeting, 17th January 2019.

Location- Haddo Estate Office.

Present.

Mark Andrew (MA)	Alec Paterson (AP)	Dr John Pirie (JP)	Michael Stewart (MS)
	Jim Adie (JA)	Anouk Kahanov – Kloppert (AK)	Dr Mark Young (MY)

Apologies

Richard Macdonald (RM)	Charles Wolrige Gordon (CWG)		
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Item	Comment	Action
Chair	MS took the chair and welcomed all present to the 7th AGM of the River Ythan Trust.	
Minutes of the 5 th AGM, 14 th December 2016.	MS asked if the 2016 AGM minutes were accepted as being an accurate record. Minutes were adopted, proposed by JP, seconded by MA.	
Chairman's Report.	<p>Chairman's Report for the 2018 AGM.</p> <p><u>Introduction.</u></p> <p>Good evening everyone.</p> <p><u>Rivers and Fishery Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) / Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAFTS organisation ceased to exist in early 2017, the new organisation dealing with Salmon Fishery Boards and Rivers/Fisheries Trusts is Fisheries Management Scotland (FMS) • FMS, which we have joined, is our link with Scottish Government and a source keeping us informed what is going on regarding conservation measures etc. • We feel our annual subscription at £1000.00 is excessively high when compared with other larger trusts and are in discussions with FMS to see if this can be reduced. 	

Chairman's Report.	<p><u>Scottish Invasives Species Initiative. (SISI)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a project the River Ythan Trust has been involved with (along with other rivers trusts) since it was first mooted by the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) in late 2015, to try to get a project together to control invasive species (plants and North American Mink) over a large part of north and north east Scotland. • Funding is via the Heritage Lottery Fund and Scottish Natural Heritage. • The project became live in spring 2018 and will run until autumn 2021 – this is not a project that will currently replace the INN plant control work by the Ythan Biodiversity Volunteers – there are insufficient funds and personnel at present. • SNH is the project leader, working through the Deveron, Bogie and Isla Rivers Charitable Trust (DBIT) to cover the Deveron and Ugie also in our area (River Ythan Trust) – the Ythan catchment and the Water of Cruden/Laeca and Slains Burn. • There is full-time officer (Al Reeve) and a seasonal officer (Karen Muller) based at the Deveron DBIT Office near Rothiemay, Huntly. Karen is tasked with dealing with the River Ythan Trust (RYT) area and Ugie area for six months of the year. She is responsible for surveys/organizing /training volunteers and supply of PPE and herbicides in these two areas. • SISI do not currently have any funding to pay for contractor control – the aim of the project is to enlist volunteers to carry out INN plant control, led by Karen. • The River Ythan Trust are closely involved and have provided SISI with all information relating to known invasive non-native plant locations and landowners in the River Ythan Trust area including the Water of Cruden/Laeca/Slains Burn. • Japanese Knotweed control in the Ythan Catchment and Tarty Burn in 2018 has been carried out by SISI. • SISI's Karen Muller has been retained (unexpectedly) by SISI/ DBIT overwinter and part of her work is to attempt to recruit volunteers for Giant Hogweed control on the Ythan and Tarty Burn. 	Action

<p>Chairman's Report.</p>	<p>Ythan Biodiversity Volunteers. (YBV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giant Hogweed (GH) control for 2018 has been completed earlier than usual due to the exceptionally good weather and our contractor having an extra man available for the work. • Funding for the contractor in 2018 was via the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund (SLCF) the "Approved Body" being E B Scotland Ltd, the SLCF funding supplier was Easter Hatton Environmental Ltd. Balmedie. Aberdeenshire, the Contributing Third Party Funder being the Ythan District Fishery Board, Tarves. Aberdeenshire. • Since the YBV commenced GH control in 2014 the amount on the Ythan and tributaries, including the Tarty Burn has been reduced by a massive 98%. • This is a truly remarkable result, carried out initially by a combination of a contractor + volunteers, and for 2017 and 2018, largely by a contractor • Since 2014 the YBV raised around £30k from various sources including Aberdeenshire Council, Scottish Landfill Community Fund with other small (relatively) donations from the Ythan District Salmon Fishery Board and others. • However, if the GH is going to be eliminated totally, this work must continue for several more years. • Currently, the YBV has not yet sourced enough funding to allow full contractor control of GH for 2019, but the River Ythan Trust Secretary is investigating possible sources on their behalf – it gets more difficult as the years slip by. <p><u>SEPA and Rural Diffuse Pollution</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We had assumed that SEPA had commenced their survey of the Ythan and tributaries (farm visits) in spring 2018 – unfortunately this was not the case. However, they have just recently completed the coastal area which includes the Water of Cruden, Slains Burn, the Foveran Burn and Tarty Burn. • We have collated all RYT habitat survey information and this was passed to SEPA at the River Basin Planning Meeting on 27th June 2018 meeting. (First passed to SEPA in spring 2013.) and again delivered to SEPA's Fraserburgh Office in December 2018. 	<p>Action</p> <p>AP</p>
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<p>Chairman's Report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In late November we were advised that work will commence early January 2018, using 6 separate SEPA Inspectors, likely to commence around Ellon on the lower river and moving then moving upstream. • SEPA are willing to consider commencing with YDSFB/RYT recommendations – MA and AP to advise. • Much of the diffuse pollution comes from livestock watering stations and cattle poaching – we do not know if/when watering stations could be improved or removed - could take years. <p><u>Debris Obstacles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further work carried out since the last meeting. <p><u>Manmade Obstacles</u></p> <p>Bronie Burn Esslemont Weir.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEPA have employed a specialist firm to carry out a feasibility study to come up with proposals to ease fish passage – their final report should be available early February 2019. Subject to getting Scottish Government funding, they hope to let out a design and build contract to deal with the issue in 2019. <p>Fordoun Burn Bridge of Lewes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the SEPA RBMP meeting of 27th July we updated SEPA on man-made obstacles to fish migration, including the Bridge of Lewes falls on the Fordoun Burn at Fyvie. • Hopefully, they will investigate this soon. <p>Keithfield Burn Outfall Keithfield Lake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Stewart and Jim Adie have this year been actively working on the erection of a pool and weir fish pass and have completed over 50% of the work – the remaining timber is now available to enable complete the project in spring 2019. <p><u>Education.</u></p> <p>Salmon in the Classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alec Paterson is no longer fit enough or has time (very time consuming from the end of February to the end of May – constantly on call). • Even the Don Trust/Fishery Board with three Bailiffs available have ceased their similar projects. • We will consider how we can resurrect this project for 2020 	<p>Action</p> <p>MA/AP</p> <p>All</p>
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Chairman's Report.		Action
	<p><u>Wild Fisheries Reform. (WFR)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately, the reforms we had hoped for, died in February 2017 - The Scottish Government refused to put up any funding, leaving the smaller fisheries boards and trusts, including the Ythan District Fishery Board and River Ythan Trust in no better a position to fulfil their functions than previously. The Scottish Government have since issued mandatory requirements that, arguably increase the workload of fishery boards. • We had hoped that the outcome of the reform would be an amalgamation of the Dee, Don, Ythan, and possibly Ugie fishery boards, and hence closer relationships between the various trusts, both financially and sharing of skills and staff – this did not happen- the Scottish Government have failed us badly. • Regarding the Marine Scotland Science Salmon Scotland Regulations, these remained unchanged – in 2019 the Ythan will remain a Category 3 river – all salmon and grilse must be released following capture. • Regarding salmon netting activities by the Wild Salmon Company (USAN), the moratorium on netting is currently still in force. <p><u>Scottish Government (Marine Scotland) Seal Haul-out Site at Newburgh.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As you are all aware, the protected seal haul-out site is now in place on the north side of the Ythan Estuary opposite the old Lifeboat Station. • It has been alleged, that due to the presence of seals upriver in Ellon, that proprietors there have had great difficulty in selling permits for their fishings this year. • Anglers report, that when salmon and sea trout are present, seals move through Ellon at dusk and return downstream at dawn on a regular basis. <p><u>Ythan District Salmon Fishery Board.</u></p> <p>Revised Dee/Don Bailiffs Duties (Since spring 2018.)</p> <p>As most of you know, the river Don and Dee Bailiffs have been working for the Ythan Board for some time. The board decided that they would change the bailiffs' duties to make more efficient use of their time – less time to be spent on policing and more on other duties shown below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out surveys on numbers of fish eating birds on the Ythan during the period September 2018 – May 2019. • Set up a system to record the numbers of seals in the river above Logie Buchan Bridge. 	

<p>Chairman's Report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out redd counting (salmon and trout) over a total of nine selected 1km sites throughout the catchment from late October 2018 through to January 2019. This to be an ongoing practice during the spawning season for the next few years. <p>Marine Scotland Science National Electrofishing Sampling Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Such is the concern regarding the decline in salmon stocks that Marine Scotland Science has instigated and funded a project using electrofishing procedures at randomly selected locations, including 16 sites in the Ythan catchment in order to understand the current situation. (2018). May be extended for future years depending on funding being available. This year, the work has been carried out on behalf of the Ythan Board by a team from the Deveron, Bogie and Isla Charitable Trust. (DBIT) Results have been circulated to Trust members – all 16 sites surveyed had trout present, 10 had juvenile salmon present. <p><u>Website Matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The problem with the domain name was changed to www.riverythantrust.co.uk sometimes work ok but not always – will use our new Facebook page for communication/publicity purposes. We delayed doing anything about the website until the uncertainty about the Wild Fisheries Reform was resolved. It has been agreed that we will consider the possibility of a new joint website with the Ythan District Salmon Fishery Board. <p><u>Facebook Page.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/River-Ythan-Trust-888017091237227/ is still live but needs to be updated. 	<p>Action</p>
<p>Finance.</p>	<p>Treasurer MA presented a copy of the River Ythan Trust Accounts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The document showed the bank balance at 30th April 2018, the end of the 2017/2018 financial year at £8591.00. MA asked if there were any queries regarding the accounts, since none were expressed, the accounts were approved. Current bank balance at the AGM date is £7187.30 MA has highlighted the need to find a way to obtain some income for the Trust to continue for the long term – currently we have no annual income. 	<p>RYT/YDSFB</p> <p>All</p>

<p>Resignation/ Election/ Re- election of Directors.</p>	<p>Director Resignations/Re-elections.</p> <p>MS advised that under the Articles of Association, one third of our directors require to resign, but may choose to seek re-election.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resignations were MY, AK, CWG and Sandy Milne. (MY, AK and CWG all wish to seek re-election.) • There being no other proposed candidates MY, AK and CWG were re-elected as directors. 	<p>Action</p>
<p>Election of Office Bearers</p>	<p>MS raised the action of election of office bearers and vacated the chair. Nominations and results are shown below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Chairman - Proposed by AP, seconded by MA, Mike Stewart was elected as Chairman. • Office of Treasurer - Proposed by JP, seconded by MY, Mark Andrew was elected as Treasurer. • Office of Secretary - Proposed by MA, seconded by JP, Alec Paterson was elected as Secretary. 	
<p>AOCB</p>	<p>There being no other competent business the chairman thanked all for attending and declared the meeting closed.</p>	
<p>Date of 2019 AGM</p>	<p>To be advised.</p>	