

**MINUTES OF THE SFCFA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**HELD AT THE ALONA HOTEL, STRATHCLYDE PARK ON THU 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024**

Committee Present:	Gus Brindle Saul Gardiner – (on line - Via Zoom) Craig Postlethwaite John Rae Jon Neafcy – (on line - Via Zoom) Heather Lauriston – (on line - Via Zoom)	Chairman Vice Chairman Honorary Secretary Coaching Officer Policy Officer Equity Officer
Apologies:	Kev McConnell – (on line - Via Zoom)	International CarpTeam Manager
Clubs Represented:	Scottish Carp Group PAAS (Proxy vote provided) PAC Army Angling Federation Dams to Darnley Lanarkshire	
Apologies:	PAAS	

<b>Item (a)</b>	<b>Discussion and Decision (b)</b>	<b>Action (c)</b>
1. Opening Remarks	<p>1. Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and thanking them for taking the time to attend.</p> <p>2. The Chairman then went on to announce the sad death of Bryan Hewitt earlier in the week at the age of 84. Bryan had been one of the most influential figures in Scottish Coarse fishing in the late 60s and early 70s. He was the driving force behind the formation of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Coarse Fishing Association (G.W.S.C.F.A) in 1966 and worked tirelessly to identify and catalogue venues across Scotland that held coarse fish. His drive and determination to promote the sport saw him accepted onto the Scottish Sports Council as the first Coarse Angling Representative. This led to the first real recognition of coarse angling as a sport in Scotland and paved the way for the formation of the Federation, even though he had drifted away from angling politics before this came to fruition. Bryan was widely known, well respected, hugely influential and an extremely popular figure within angling circles. He always had time for anglers, and would happily take time to provide advice and guidance, whether that be about technical or tactical fishing advice or in my case in my early years as Chairman, on navigating the political minefield which is angling in Scotland. He will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him but his legacy remains..</p>	
3. Election of Officers	<p>1. The Chairman informed the meeting that the officers posts up for re-election were the Vice Chairman and Treasurer. Unfortunately, yet again there have been no volunteers to take on</p>	

	<p>these roles and asked if there was anyone present who was willing to assume the appointment of Treasurer which was currently gapped. As there were no takers the Chairman proposed that Saul Gardiner be re-elected as Vice Chairman. He asked for a proposer and seconder.</p> <p>Proposed by: Lanarkshire      Seconded by: PAC</p> <p>2. The Chairman then reminded the meeting that the Federation still had two critical gapped posts, the Treasurer and the Child Protection Officer. While these posts were currently being covered by other members of the Executive Committee double hatting, this could not continue indefinitely. This was the second consecutive year that no volunteers had come forward to fill these posts and the challenge of filling posts with individuals with the right knowledge, skills and experience would be covered later. In the meantime, if anyone knows anyone who would be a good fit for either of these post they should contact either the Chairman or the Secretary.</p> <p>3. The Chairman reminded member clubs that in accordance with the Corporate Governance and Risk Management Plan they had the opportunity to elect a non-Executive Director to the Executive Committee. The role of this post was to provide external scrutiny back to the membership on the running of the SGB and to ensure that it was operating in the best interests of all members. Unless a nomination from one of the member clubs can be provided by the end of April, the post will be advertised openly and applications from individual members will be considered. There was some discussion in the room and Gavin McCully offered to fill the appointment if the clubs were content. There were no objections so Gavin McCully was welcomed to the Executive Committee as the member's representative.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p> <p>Clubs/ Individuals</p> <p>Gavin McCully</p>
<p>2. Matters from Last meeting.</p>	<p>1. Minutes of the last AGM held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2024 had been published on the website. The Chairman asked that they be agreed as a true record of proceedings.</p> <p>Proposed by: Lanarkshire      Seconded by: D2D</p> <p>2. There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>
<p>3. Constitutional Amendments.</p>	<p>1. No proposals for Constitutional amendments had been received from member clubs and there were no proposed changes from the Executive Committee. The current constitution will there be republished in its current format with effect 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.</p> <p>Proposed by: PAAS (by proxy)      Seconded by: SCG</p> <p>The updated Constitution will be available on the website with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April.</p>	<p>CARRIED</p>

	<p>2. The Chairman went on to raise the issue of voting rights currently enshrined in the Constitution. With the number of clubs continuing to dwindle he was concerned that the current voting system was not giving an effective voice to a large percentage of the individual members. This had been discussed at the last AGM but it had been decided to wait until Angling Scotland had finished its restructuring to become a Charitable Trust (more to follow later in the meeting). This is due to be completed in the next couple of months and Angling Scotland will then start to take ownership of a lot of the Policy, Environment and Development activity. This would present an opportune moment to review the structure, role, membership offer, and voting system of the Federation to make it fit for purpose going forward. The Chairman said that he would be looking to form a working group to consider options and to conduct a consultation to gauge membership opinion on proposed changes to the constitutional controls and voting rights. This would lead to proposals for constitutional change being put to the next AGM. There was a deal of discussion in the room about the need to ensure that coarse angling and anglers had an equal voice within Angling Scotland and that any move of functions to Angling Scotland did not adversely impact on the protection and promotion of coarse angling interests or representation of those of its members. The Chairman assured the meeting that these concerns were at the top of his and the other SGBs priority list in the work being done to get Angling Scotland set up as a Charitable Trust. It is however vital that we work to identify and appoint individuals with the right knowledge, skills and experience to the Angling Scotland Board. This was probably the biggest challenge that we face given that we are struggling to fill our own appointments.</p>	<p>Honorary Secretary</p>
<p>4. Officers' Reports</p>	<p>1. <u>Chairman</u>. The Chairman then gave a short update on the state of the Federation and the move to the new Digital Membership System. This seems to have been really well received by the membership with over 70% now getting digital cards rather than requesting the old style laminated physical card.</p> <p>2. <u>Finance</u>. In the absence of a Treasurer the Chairman went through the Federation Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Report for the year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 until 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024. A copy can be accessed by clicking the link below.:</p> <p><a href="#">Income and Expenditure report as at 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</a></p> <p>The Federation remains in a healthy position to meet its objects. The GFP overspend in 2023/24 was, as highlighted at the last AGM, partly due to the £4,500 contribution to the Grant Application for the canal project with Scottish Canals (cover next) and the fact that CIPS had changed the date for payment of Annual Subscriptions to 31<sup>st</sup> March which has resulted in two years membership falling in this financial year. Chairman reminded the meeting that the Annual Accounts would be formally closed on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and that an audited copy of the final accounts would be published on the SFCA website by the end of May.</p>	

3. Membership Fees. Chairman informed the meeting that individual membership fees for the SFCA remain unchanged for the 2023/2024.

4. Canal Project. The Chairman provided an update on the joint project with Scottish Canals. In 2023 the SFCA and Scottish Canals had managed to obtain £95k of grant funding for a project on the canals which encompassed a range of work to improve access and fishing on the canals and to deliver a coaching program to give more people a chance to try fishing. This included, enhanced weed cutting, bankside vegetation management in the areas where the coaching was taking place, environmental work to better understand the fish biomass and water quality on the canals, installation of disabled fishing pegs in specific areas, some stocking to re-establish sustainable fish stocks in areas that have been badly affected by the Monkland pipeline blockage and other engineering works and for training and CPD for coaches and the delivery of a Let's Fish Program. Due to a problem with the weed cutting boats in 2023 and the fact that the grant was not received until May/June the project timeline has been extended to December 2024 to allow all of the works to be completed by Scottish Canals. For the SFCA's part, we have committed and spent all of our allocation in for the training of coaches and delivery of the Let's Fish program by the original project end date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. We have submitted a request to Scottish Canals to be able to use the remaining contingency in the project in order to deliver another Let's Fish Program this summer and are awaiting a response.

Officers Reports.

a. Media & Marketing. This is an area where we are definitely getting better but there is still more to do. The Executive Committee need to get better at using the website and social media platforms to communicate what they are doing on behalf of the membership. This year the aim is to set up the long overdue YouTube Channel and produce a series of videos on how to get started in fishing, focussing on the canal and natural venues. This may well be a section within a Coarse angling section of an Angling Scotland Channel bearing the SFCA logo. The Chairman undertook to publish a revised Marketing and Media Plan by 1<sup>st</sup> May and to allocate tasks to generate content to Executive Committee members.

b. Policy & Environment - Wild Fisheries Reform/Pike Conservation. The Chairman, informed the meeting that the Chair of Angling Scotland, Alison Baker, had met with the Salmon and Recreational Fisheries Department of Marine Scotland and raised the issue of the now long overdue Pike Protection Legislation. Unfortunately, the department was unable to give any commitment to getting this issue back on the Scottish Government program. The Chairman had convened a meeting with PAAS, PAC and the other individuals who were involved in the original work/meetings with Marine Scotland and were looking

Chairman

at other options to get this vitally important matter back on the agenda.  
The Policy Officer then updated the meeting on the ongoing engagement with the Spey Salmon Board with regards to their plans to try to remove the perch from Loch Insh. Again PAAS, PAC and other key parties had been brought together after the Spey Board conducted a netting survey on Lochs Alvie and Insh in 2023. This was a re-run of an earlier survey conducted back in 2004 and was done to try to understand the extent/growth of the perch population in the waters and their potential impact on the salmonid populations, particularly the arctic char in Loch Insh. The SFCA, PAAS and PAC all have some serious concerns with the report and held a number of meetings before submitting a collective response seeking to both highlight our concerns and open a channel for dialogue and better communications. We have recently receive a reply to our response which provides further information, and while it still doesn't address all of our concerns has at least opened a channel for discussion. The Chairman is in the process of replying to the Spey Board with a view to arranging a meeting with between them and representative from the SFCA, PAAS and PAC in the near future.

c. Coaching Officer.

(1) Program. The coaching program for 2023-24 had mainly focused around the Let's Fish program on the canal with over 300 individuals attending sessions throughout the summer and autumn. The lack of qualified and licensed coaches remains a major constraint on our ability to meet demand. There was already a lot planned for 2024-25 but the Let's Fish program was still provisional awaiting confirmation on funding. We will however still be delivering the Club Angling Program, Taster and Development sessions for schools and community groups in the central belt and south west with a new initiative being looked at in conjunction with the SANA coaching officer to do multi-discipline sessions on Strathclyde park with local Lanarkshire schools. With the Celtic Cup being held on Strathclyde Park in October there was also a plan to try to deliver some children's coaching activity on the Park leading up to and on the weekend of the event. Details of our planned programme for 2024/25 will be published on the website, and details will be advertised through the social media platforms in the lead up to each event . The focus will as usual be on providing opportunities to increase the number of juniors, women and girls participating in angling.

(2) Coaches. Having completed Angling Support Coach Qualification, the Chairman is currently in the process of designing and writing the new Angling Lead Coach Qualification and is hopeful that the first pilot will be ready to deliver by September. Details will be published on the website as soon as dates are known and the coaching officer will contact all L1 coaches to offer them places.

Coaching  
Officer

The next Angling Support Coach course delivery will commence in October. Anyone interested should contact the coaching officer, John Rae or email [info@sfca.co.uk](mailto:info@sfca.co.uk).

- (3) Coach CPD. As usual, the priority in the first half of this year will be to get all SFCA coaches up to date in their core CPD requirements for licensing – Child Protection and First Aid. Later this year it is also planned to run a series of technical and coaching skills CPD sessions. Details will be published on the website and through the SFCA coaching page.
- (4) Safe Persons Identification. Following the request from the Coaching Officer last year to provide some clothing or bibs to allow coaches to be quickly and easily identified at coaching events as a the 'Safe Person' for the children at the activity, it was proposed to spend up to £500 to achieve this before the coaching program commences.

Proposed by: D2D      Seconded by: PAAS (by proxy)

CARRIED

c. Safeguarding & Protecting in Angling. With Coach Licence packs due to be sent out in the next week, the Coaching Officer was asked to check that all coaches were up to date with their Child Welfare and Protection in Sport Training. Refresher training will also be required for all Executive Committee members in 2024 and details will sent out shortly.

d. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. Angling Scotland will be forming a committee to take this forward on behalf of all three SGBs in the coming year. SFCA/Coarse Angling Representative will continue to be Heather Lauriston, but the Chairman informed the meeting that Angling Scotland would soon be advertising for a volunteer to take up a role as Chair of the EDI Committee to project manage this piece of work.

e. Competitions and International Performance.

(1) Match.

(a) International

European Championships. After the challenges experienced with trying to manage the team without bankside support in Croatia in 2022, it has been decided not to field a team in the World Championships in 2023 and instead to focus on developing and growing the squad ready for 2024. This had been a success, mainly due to the Celtic Cup and in June 2024 the SFCA will be fielding a Team in the European Championships on the Prinses Margriet Canal at Spannenburg in Holland.

Celtic Cup. Following the success of the re-established Celtic Cup on the Newry Canal in 2023, it had been decided that Scotland would host the event

in 2024. The Chairman informed the meeting that the event would be held on Strathclyde Park from 10-13 Oct 24 with the teams staying on-site here in the Alona Hotel. As in 2023 the format will be a 4 person team event with each 4 man team only allowed to include one angler who has fished at World or European level in the past 2 years. It was hoped to make the experience as close to a full International as possible so the SFCA would be looking for volunteers to help to tape the venue and also possibly act as steward to mark catch cards. Full details will be published in the next month. This is proving to be a great event to help to develop talent for future World an European squads and also to provide the opportunity for more individuals to make the step up and earn Scotland caps.

(b) Domestic. The domestic match calendar in Scotland remains extremely healthy and competitive with a good spread of opportunities available across the country and a range of different types of venue. The such a crowded domestic calendar, the Federation will again focus on just delivering the major National Championships leaving more space in the calendar for the large number of club and fishery leagues and open festivals.

(2) Carp.

(a). Mens. 2023 saw the mens team compete at the World Championships on lac de panneciere in France. From March through to August they utilised Castle Loch as a training venue to be ready for the event and fished practice matches against the Army and ex mil teams. A special thank you to the 2 serving soldiers, Ryan Muirhead and James Arnall for coming out to the World Championship to supporting the team on the bank ensuring the anglers were looked after throughout the 72 hr event. This year the team was delighted to be supported by 2 new partnerships with RG baits and Katran who both showed great support for the world championships by supplying bait, clothing and essential tackle. Training and development for this year focused on our long-range casting (including over depth zigs), and baiting strategies at distance to be ready for what can only be said as the most difficult lake any of us, or the Ladies Team, have ever fished. With depths over 70ft and obstacles such as under water forests it was unlike anything any of had seen before. Unfortunately, despite all this hard work we managed to finish a lowly 30th out of 33 nations. Although we were disappointed with the result, we learned so much from this one event that we can only get better going forward. 2024 will see the team travel to Croatia for the world championships which will be held on lake Lapovac

	<p>and Sandor in the Nasice region from the 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> September. Trials have been held this year already with 2 anglers brought into the main squad and a further 2 into the development pathway. Plans are in progress for events against the army and ex mil teams to give the team time on the bank under match conditions. The venues being looked will provide the opportunity to hone the skills required for Croatia later in the year. Apart from the World Championships the main event this year will be in June where the team have a development match arranged with England on Naseby reservoir. Katran are kindly providing the team hoodies and t shirts for all of this years events. Team captain Alister Kirkhope is now representing Katran as a sponsored angler.</p> <p>(b) <u>Ladies</u>. The Scottish Ladies Carp Team had a successful inaugural year in 2023 . The Ladies squad , under the captaincy of Joanne Barlow , gained a silver medal and their first "caps" when the ladies Scottish team hosted the Tri-nations event against England and Wales in March 2023. They then went on to take part in their first Ladies World Championships in France in September on a extremely challenging venue which, like the men’s team tested them to the extreme with everyone learner a huge amount from the experience. In 2024 , under the new captaincy of Catherine Robertson, the team will be fishing a "friendly" match alongside the army. They will also be competing in their second tri-nations event , hosted by the England Ladies at Naseby reservoir in May 2024.. Due to the recent changes in membership and leadership, and the fact that this years World Championships is following on so quickly after the last event, the team plan to focus on work to consolidate and develop the squad and will fish other friendly matches throughout 2024 to gain more match experience.</p> <p>(3) <u>Lure</u>. The Chairman informed the meeting that he had still not received any interest in the position of Lure Team Manager/Coach and without these posts being filled it was not possible to establish a Lure Squad and field an International Team. This was disappointing as there was clearly more than enough interest to do so. Anyone interested in taking on the Manager or Coaching roles for a Scottish Lure Squad should contact him at <a href="mailto:teamscotland@sfca.co.uk">teamscotland@sfca.co.uk</a>. More to follow.</p>	
<p>5. Annual Business Plan/Priorities for Action.</p>	<p>1. The Chairman informed the meeting that the Draft Annual Business Plan had been published on the website for consultation. He had received no comments or proposed amendments. He asked the meeting if there were any proposals for changes from the AGM. There were no proposals forthcoming.</p>	



	<p>2. The Chairman asked for a proposal that the Annual Business Plan and supporting budget be approved for publication:</p> <p>Proposed by: PAAS (by proxy)    Seconded by: PAC</p>	CARRIED
6. Angling Scotland	<p>1. The Chairman provided an update on progress within Angling Scotland. Things continue to progress well and, as mentioned earlier, Angling Scotland is in the process of becoming a Charitable Trust. This would significantly improve the ability to apply for grants and generate funds to deliver its work and promote, protect and grow participation in angling in Scotland. Once this transition from a Limited Company to a Charitable Trust was complete, Angling Scotland will begin to form the sub committees required to take ownership of the core area that had been agreed by the three SGBs back in 2020. These include Angling Governance and issues relating to Policy, Protection, Environment, Safeguarding, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Coaching and Development. The Chairman reminded the meeting that it will involve all of the SGB leads for these areas starting the process of establishing and manning sub committees within Angling Scotland and working together for the benefit of angling as a whole. For example, the Environment Committee would include sub committees for Migratory, Non-Migratory and Marine fish and it would be vital that that coarse anglers were represented not only on the main committee by our Policy &amp; Environment Officer, but also on the Non-Migratory sub-committee, probably by someone from PAAS or PAC. There was still a huge amount of work to do and Angling Scotland and the three SGBs were being asked to identify more individuals with the right knowledge, skills and experience to help them bring the plans to fruition. The priority for the SFCA Executive Committee would be to support this work and ensure that there was sufficient coarse angling representation on all of the Angling Scotland committees to be represent coarse anglers and coarse angling interests. Angling Scotland will be present at this year's Scone Game Fair and for the first time we will have coarse angling coaches at the show. The Chairman undertook to continue to provide regular updates on progress.</p> <p>2. The new Angling Scotland individual membership is now available at a cost of just £5. Members can join by simply adding the membership to their SFCA membership in the JustGo system. He reminded everyone that when signing up for Angling Scotland Membership there was an option to pay an additional £5 to join a rewards scheme. This rewards scheme provides discounts on a huge Range of products and services from some of the biggest high street names. By taking up membership of the rewards scheme and the individual membership other sports have found that their members more that recouped their membership costs throughout the year effectively making their membership free. The Chairman encouraged everyone to join Angling Scotland as well as the SFCA as the more members we collectively represented, the bigger voice and greater influence we can exert when lobbying on behalf of Scottish anglers and angling. More details and a marketing campaign will be launched over the</p>	Chairman



Chairman, SFCA

Distribution:

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All Executive Committee members

SportScotland Partnership Manager