**MINUTES OF THE SFCA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE ALONA HOTEL, STRATHCLYDE PARK ON THU 27th MARCH 2025**

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| Committee Present: | Gus Brindle | Chairman |
| | Saul Gardiner – (on line - Via Zoom) | Vice Chairman |
| | Craig Postlethwaite | Honorary Secretary |
| | John Rae | Coaching Officer |
| | Jon Neafcy | Policy Officer |
| | Heather Lauriston | Equity Officer |
| | Kev McConnell | International Carp Team Manager |
| | Sam Innes | Child Protection Officer |
| | Gavin McCully | Non-Executive Director |
| | Niki Wildman | Equity Officer (designate) |
| | Richard Seville | Non-Executive Director (designate) |
| Apologies: | Andrew Weir | Assistant Policy Officer (Pike) |
| Clubs Represented: | Scottish Carp Group – (on-line - Via Zoom) | |
| | PAAS – (on-line - Via Zoom) | |
| | PAC – (on-line - Via Zoom) | |
| | Dams to Darnley | |
| | Lanarkshire | |
| Apologies: | | |

| Item<br>(a) | Discussion and Decision<br>(b) | Action<br>(c) |
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| **1. Opening Remarks** | 1. Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and thanking them for taking the time to attend.<br><br>2. He then went on to remind those present that 2025 was the 50th Anniversary of the SFCA. This important milestone needs to be marked in a suitable way and he and the Executive Committee will be looking at suitable opportunities to do so – possibly a big open competition on Strathclyde Park and something linked to the Scottish Canal Championships as that is where the early matches were run. He also said that the SFCA would consult with members over how they feel this should be done. All ideas are welcome. | |
| **2. Election of Officers** | **1.Chairman Re-election.** The Chairman informed the meeting that the Officers' posts up for re-election were the Chairman and Treasurer. Unfortunately, with the Secretary, Craig Postlethwaite wishing to step down the Constitution does not allow for both the Chairman and Secretary to change over in the same year. The Chairman's post will therefore be put up for re-election in 2026. The Chairman asked if everyone was content with this proposal and for a proposer and seconder.<br><br>**Proposed by: Lanarkshire** **Seconded by: SCG** | CARRIED |

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| | **2. Hon Secretary**. As mentioned, the current Honorary Secretary, Craig Postlethwaite, wished to step down to enjoy his retirement. The Chairman extended his thanks, and that of the membership, to Craig who has been a member of the Federation since its inception. Over the years he has made a huge contribution to Scottish Coarse Angling, both on committee roles and as an active coach over the past 15 years.<br><br>Gavin McCully has agreed to step up and fill this critical appointment. Gavin has been covering the role of Non-Executive Director for the past year and had already had a good grasp on the current issues we were dealing with and has all the experience and administrative skills required for the post. The Chairman asked if there was anyone else present interested in taking up this appointment. As there were no other expressions of interest, Gavin McCully was the only nominee, and he asked for a proposer and seconder to support that appointment.<br><br>**Proposed by: D2D** **Seconded by: LANARKSHIRE**<br><br>**3. Treasurer**. The Chairman then reminded the meeting that the Federation still had a critical gapped post, the Honorary Treasurer. This role required some financial and bookkeeping knowledge & experience and there was still no volunteer to fill it.<br><br>It will be re-advertised on the website and through Scottish Sports Association, SportScotland and Volunteer Scotland next week. In the meantime, the role would continue to be covered by the Executive Committee.<br><br>**4. Coaching Officer**, John Rae had given notice at the last AGM that he wished to step down from the Coaching Officers' role in October 2025. The Chairman, on behalf of the whole Federation, formally thanked John for his unwavering commitment and the huge amount he had brought to not only the coaching officers' role over the past 20 years, but also to the ADBoS Coaching Committee, and the Tutor/Assessor Team where he has been involved in the training and qualification of almost every Angling Coach working in Scotland today, across all three disciplines. John will still be involved in coaching, will remain a member of the Angling Scotland Tutor/Assessor Team and continue as the SFCA PVG Signatory for the time being.<br><br>There was some discussion around PVG Signatories and John suggested that this role would be better placed within Angling Scotland on behalf of all three SGBs. This makes sense as it is Angling Scotland who were the licensing body for coaches on behalf of all three SGB. Chairman, in his capacity as Chair of ADBoS, will arrange a meeting with the three SGB signatories and Disclosure Scotland to look into this.<br><br>With John stepping down, Heather Lauriston has kindly agreed to move sideways in October 2025 from the role of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer to take up the mantel of Coaching Officer. Heather has a huge amount of experience to bring to the role, both as an active coach and from more than 10 years of experience as the Get Hooked on Fishing Coordinator for Scotland. | CARRIED<br><br>Chairman |

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| | The Chairman then introduced Niki Wildman who has kindly agreed to step into the EDI Officer role when Heather steps across into the Coaching Officer role in October. Niki is a current Scottish Internationalist, has been a member Ladies Carp Team Scotland, almost from the very start, and was passionate about getting more women and girls into angling and removing barriers to participation. Both Heather and Niki will start to shadow the jobs they will be assuming in October from this meeting, to ensure that there is a smooth transition and to minimise the loss of corporate knowledge when John steps down.<br><br>The Chairman then informed the meeting that Andrew Weir had recently agreed to come onto the Executive Committee to support Policy Officer, Jon Paul Neafcy, with a focus on Pike related issues. Andrew is a keen pike angler and a member of PAAS and will help to reduce the workload on Jon in what is a very important area for the future of coarse angling in Scotland. There was no requirement to vote on these appointments under the Constitution as they can be appointed by the Executive Committee.<br><br>5. Finally, the Chairman reminded the meeting that with Gavin McCully stepping into the Honorary Secretary role, there was a gap for a Non-Executive Director to provide an assurance role and represent the interests of Clubs and Individual Members at the Executive Committee. He introduced Richard Seville to the meeting. Richard had recently contact him looking for an opportunity to volunteer to support the work of the SFCA and has kindly agreed to take on this important role. As this post is a members' representative, the Chairman asked for a proposer and a Seconder for the appointment.<br><br>**Proposed by: PAC** **Seconded by: PAAS**<br><br>The Chairman then introduced Jason Walls from PAAS. Jason has agreed to take up an appointment on the Angling Scotland Non-Migratory Fish Committee with the aim of ensuring that coarse fish issues, particularly those related to pike protection, were adequately considered and represented. Jason is a qualified fisheries scientist and has previously worked for the Tay Salmon Board in their Hatchery, and also on the Forth Fishery Board/Trust. He therefore not only brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role but is also known and respected across the salmon sector which will be a huge benefit when engaging on coarse fish issues. He will maintain close ties with the SFCA Policy Officer and will sit on the subcommittee dealing with pike protection issues.<br><br>While we have this year managed to fill all of the appointments, with the exception of the key officer's appointment of Honorary Treasurer, we cannot be complacent. Identifying individuals with the right knowledge, skills and experience to fill Executive Committee appointments continues to be a real challenge. To this end the Chairman informed the meeting that he would be looking to build more redundancy into the committee by trying to identify shadows for at least half of the key appointments, to both reduce the workload and enable some form of succession planning to be conducted. To this end, if anyone knows anyone who would be a good fit for any of the Executive Committee appointments, they should contact either the Chairman or the Secretary. | CARRIED |

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| **3. Matters from Last meeting**. | 1. Minutes of the last AGM held on 28th March 2024 had been published on the website. The Chairman asked that they be agreed as a true record of proceedings.<br><br>**Proposed by: PAAS** **Seconded by: Lanarkshire**<br><br>There were no matters arising from the previous minutes that wouldn't be covered in the main agenda. | CARRIED |
| **4. Constitutional Amendments**. | 1. No proposals for Constitutional amendments have been received from member clubs and there were no proposed changes from the Executive Committee.<br><br>The current constitution will therefore be republished in its current format with effect 1st April 2025.<br><br>**Proposed by: D2D** **Seconded by: SCG**<br><br>The updated Constitution will be available on the website with effect from 1st April 2025.<br><br>2. At the last AGM the Chairman had raised the issue of the need for constitutional change around the issue of voting rights. This had been raised due to the reduction in the number of clubs and the fact that there were now concerns that the significant number of individual members of the Federation were not adequately represented and had little ability to influence or affect the policy, plans and direction of the Federation.<br><br>This had been discussed at the last two AGMs and the Executive Committee had undertaken to conduct a consultation with members to gain feedback and thoughts from members. This consultation has, and remains, linked to progress with Angling Scotland's move to become a registered charity and being able to take ownership of a lot of the Policy, Environment and Development activity. For various reasons, little progress on these matters had been made by Angling Scotland over the past year and the consultation on proposed changes to the constitution have been delayed.<br><br>The plan remains to conduct a consultation as soon as possible and more details will be published in due course. | CARRIED |
| **5. Officers' Reports** | **1. Chairmans Report**.<br>The Chairman then gave a short update on the state of the Federation. As at this evening the SFCA has 1595 Individual members of which 449 are juniors, with over 70% of members now electing for the digital membership rather than a laminated physical card.<br><br>There was some discussion about the number of OAP members given the aging demographic of the sport and the fact that this affects membership income. The Chairman said that while he did not know the split of concessionary memberships between over 65s and those with disabilities, there were currently around 300 concessionary members within the Federation. Jon Paul Neafcy asked if the Concessionary membership included adult students. The Chairman said that it didn't as it hadn't been considered that an £8 annual membership would be a barrier to students. | |

**2. Finance Report**.
In the absence of a Treasurer the Chairman went through the Federation Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Report for the year from 1st April 2024 until 27th March 2025. A copy can be accessed by clicking the link below:

**Income and Expenditure report as at 27th March 2024**.

The Federation remains in a healthy position to meet its objects.

Now that the funding for the joint Canal project with Scottish Canals had ended however, the cost of our grass roots programme to grow participation would have to be covered entirely from our own funds, and this would place a constraint on the amount of activity that we can afford to deliver.

The Executive Committee is actively looking for new funding opportunities. Chairman reminded the meeting that the Annual Accounts would be formally closed on 31st March 2024 and that an audited copy of the final accounts would be published on the SFCA website by the end of May.

Craig Postlethwaite suggested that the SFCA should consider switching the bank account to RBS as they were still offering a club account without bank charges and that gave a reasonable rate of interest. The Chairman will discuss this further with Craig over the coming weeks and will look into this further.

**3. Membership Fees**.
Chairman confirmed that individual membership fees for the SFCA remain unchanged for 2025/2026.

**4. Canal Project**.
a) 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 or 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 affect 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.

b) This programme was now complete with the exception of the £20k for restocking and about £5k for fish biomass and habitat surveying works which were being led by Scottish Canals. Over the past two years the grant funding had allowed the SFCA to deliver angling taster sessions on the canals for over 400 young people, train more coaches and provide CPD opportunities, and had seen 8 new disabled access fishing pegs installed on the Forth and Clyde Canal. The Chairman informed the meeting that he was seeking a meeting with Scottish Canals, COO, Richard Miller, in the coming weeks to look at

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| | opportunities to apply for a follow-on grant to continue the excellent work that had been started through this project.<br><br>c) This opened up a lively conversation about the canals and the fact that no stocking or movement of fish back into areas that have necessarily had the fish removed during engineering works has occurred. This has resulted in large swathes of the canal network being almost devoid of fish. The fact that Scottish Canals had not managed to utilise the £20k within this grant to address this issue was hugely disappointing. The feeling in the room was that some of the barriers to addressing the critically low fish biomass in the canals were internal within Scottish Canals, and not solely to do with EIAs and difficulties obtaining consents from Marine Scotland. With work now commencing to replace all of the lock gates on the Forth & Clyde Canal over the coming years, if nothing is done to re-establish fish stocks as well as rescue them during these extensive works it will have a catastrophic impact on the fishery.<br><br>d) Gavin McCully informed the meeting that he had recently attended a Lowland Canal Stakeholder Group meeting with Scottish Canals with a wide range of users, mainly boaters. Some of the issues raised/discussed included; boater concerns and maintenance facilities, the lack of movement of boats, the identification of rare plants in a few locations that could further restrict the cutting of bankside vegetation, INNS such as Giant Hogweed, the issue of car parks being unusable due to fly-tipping and e-bikes etc on the towpaths. There was an undertaking by Richard Miller, Scottish Canals COO, to set up working groups including stakeholders to try to take these issues forward and also to review and enforce existing bye-laws. The Chairman and Secretary will engage with Scottish Canals to ensure that the SFCA is included and represented on these groups.<br><br>**Officers Reports**.<br><br>**a) Media & Marketing**. The Chairman undertook to publish a revised Marketing and Media Plan by 1st May 2025 and to allocate tasks to generate content to Executive Committee members. The aim remained to have good coverage of coarse angling matches, coaching event and angling activities and opportunities on all of our social media platforms and in the national media.<br><br>**b) Policy & Environment** – The Policy Officer informed the meeting that the Pike Safe Handling video continued to get a lot of views which was very encouraging and there had been a lot of downloads of the Pike Leaflet that had been produced.<br><br>He went on to provide an update on the Netting Surveys and plans of the Spey Salmon Fishery Board to try to remove the perch from Lochs Alvie and Insh and the impact that this would have, not only on the perch but also the pike in those waters. The sub-committee that had been formed last year to respond to the report commissioned by the Spey Board had met again recently to discuss next steps. The Committee includes the Policy Officer, representatives from PAC ad PAAS and Jason Walls in his new capacity on the Angling Scotland Non-Migratory Fish Committee. The group had recently drafted another piece of correspondence to the Spey Board and the Policy Officer with forward it to the Chairman to cast his eye over before it is sent. | Chairman/ Secretary<br><br>Chairman/ Secretary<br><br>Chairman |

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| | The other pressing issue remains to try to get coarse fish protection back on the agenda at the Salmon and Recreational Fisheries Department of Marine Scotland. The hope is that by now having Jason Walls appointed to the Non-Migratory Fish Committee of the Angling Scotland Board, it may open the opportunity for a meeting with key staff in the Department where the matter can be raised. The Policy Officer will provide updates as and when we make any headway. | Policy Officer |
| | **c. Coaching Officer.**<br>**1) Program**<br>The coaching program for 2024-25 has mainly focused around the "Let's Fish program" on the canal with over 200 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 2025-26, as detailed in the Annual Business Plan, including a "pathway into competition program" which it is hoped to deliver on Strathclyde Park. SFCA will still be delivering the "Club Angling Program", and "Let's Fish Taster and Development" for schools, community groups and individuals across the central belt and south west. The focus will as usual be on providing opportunities to increase the number of juniors, women and girls participating in angling. | Coaching Officer |
| | **2) Coach Education**.<br>Work on the new Angling Lead Coach Qualification was progressing but had been delayed due to issues identified by the Chairman regarding mapping of the SQA's Qualification Outcomes and Performance Criteria and the CIMSPA Professional Standards. It is hoped to get the new qualification signed off and approved for delivery by the end of June with a view to running the first pilot by September. Details will be published on the website as soon as dates are known, and the coaching officer will contact all L1/Angling Support coaches to offer them places. The next Angling Support Coach course delivery will commence in October. Anyone interested should contact the Coaching Officer, Heather Lauriston or email info@sfca.co.uk. | Coaching Officer |
| | **3) Coach CPD**.<br>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. | |
| | **d). Safeguarding & Protecting in Angling and PVGs**.<br>With Coach Licence renewals due 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. The plan is also to try to organise refresher training for all Executive Committee members and details will be sent out in the next month. | Coaching Officer |
| | **e). Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**.<br>The Equity Officer informed the meeting that she has been engaging with BLESMA and PAMIS regarding ways to improve access and remove barriers to accessing angling for individuals with physical disabilities and profound learning difficulties. More to follow on this in 2025. | |

She had also been engaging with the Chairman regarding re-instating the Scottish Ladies National and the Over 50s National Championships this year. Again, more will follow on this in the coming months.

With regard to the achievement of the Foundation Level of the SportScotland Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework for Sports, we are still waiting for Angling Scotland to form a joint committee to take this forward on behalf of all three SGBs. It is hoped that this committee will be set up by the end of the summer so that progress can be made on this very important outcome. AFTERNOTE: Angling Scotland will be advertising for a volunteer to take up a role as Chair of the EDI Committee to project manage this piece of work. The aim was to attract the services of a SME to lead the work. If anyone knows of anyone, within or outside angling, who they feel may be qualified and willing to take on this role they should pass details to the Chairman at chairman@sfca.co.uk.

**e. Competitions and International Performance**.

**1) Match**.

**a) Overview**. As was mentioned in the Annual Report and Christmas Message from the Chairman, overall our International Teams had a mixed year in 2024. The highlight was of course the incredible success of the Celtic Cup which we hosted on Strathclyde Park in October. This event allowed us to field the first ever Scottish Ladies Match Team at International level.

The first event for the Match Team in 2024 should have been the Sensas Challenge on the Gloucester Canal at the end of March, but disappointingly we were unable to even field a single team of 5 having fielded two teams in the previous three years and having picked up the bronze medal in 2022. This event is one of the biggest matches in the UK calendar, fishing to CIPS rules, against the best teams from across the UK as well representative teams from Wales, Ireland and the Channel Islands and of course from Sensas France. It is therefore one of the best opportunities for the Team Manager to have a look at anglers who wish to make the step up to World or European level. It is therefore all the more disappointing that we have again been unable to field a team in 2025 – more about this later. 2024 was also disappointing due to the move of dates for the Walterland Masters in Szeged, in Hungary, from March/April to October. This change made it far too close to the Celtic Cup, so another missed opportunity for international representation. After the disappointment of not being able to field a team in either the Europeans or World Championship in 2023 due to having insufficient bankside support to be competitive, in 2024, despite no improvement in this situation, we decided to field a team in the European Championships on the Princes Margreit Kanaal at Spannenburg in the Netherlands. After a terrible first day, the team managed to put in a good performance on day 2 to end in 9$^{th}$ place on the day and pull ourselves back to 18$^{th}$ overall. The lack of bankside support continues to hinder our ability to assist anglers during matches, as we can't see every section or relay information quickly enough for anglers to make crucial changes for success.

As mentioned at the start, in October 2024 we hosted the Celtic Cup on Strathclyde Park. Most of you will have seen the results and coverage on the Facebook page. Safe to say that the event was a huge success.

Strathclyde Loch fished better than I think anyone could have hoped, waggler and slider proved extremely important – which is what I had hoped for, and the icing on the cake was Team Scotland lifting the Gold, helped by the point of one of the Ladies team, Emily Mather, in her first ever International match.

Furthermore, North Lanarkshire Council and the Park Authorities couldn't have been more pleased and supportive and have since engaged with me about more major events on park in future years. There was also talk amongst the Home Nations Team Managers, with support from several European nations for it possibly being able to host a European Championships in the future. That would be a huge undertaking, but also a hugely exciting prospect, and just the fact it is being talked about is testimony to the quality of the fishing and the success of the event. Probably the most important thing about the event however, was that it provided the Team Manager the opportunity to look at up and coming anglers with potential to fish at World or European level in the future, and there were lots of positive takeaways.

The intention for 2025 is to continue to build on this development pathway. 2025 has however seen numerous things already conspire against us! It had been hoped to firstly field a development team in the Sensas Challenge on the Gloucester Canal held last week. Sadly, due to a lack of interest, we were unable to field a team. Cost and time off work is always an issue, especially for the younger members of the squad. Understandably, many for those who fished the Celtic Cup last year wanted to prioritize selection and participation in this year's Celtic Cup, which is being hosted by Wales on the River Weaver at Northwich in October, whilst the senior squad members were focussed on the European Championships, Slnava Reservoir, Piesyany, Slovakia – 23rd-29th June 2025. It had initially been decided to do this rather than the World Championship on Modrac Lake, Lukavac, Bosnia in September, due to the huge logistical challenges and additional costs of travelling there. Yet again however, having booked time off work and made initial accommodation bookings, last month FIPSed announced that the Slovakian Federation could not fit all of the sections on Modrac Lake and that there would now be 3 sections on the Lake, which is 1-1.5 mtr deep waggler/slider venue, and two on a hydro controlled stretch of the River Var which is up to 6 mtrs deep and would require using flat floats up to 50g. While they will allow nations to nominate anglers to fish each venue, the guys selected to fish the river sections would only get 2 practice days on the river and 3 on the lake. Depending on the draw it might be two half days(!), as Thursday and Friday practice finishes at 1400 hrs due to the opening ceremony and need to tape the venue for the match. During a meeting on Sunday, 23rd March 2025, it was decided that due to only having the Team Manager available to run the bank and the logistical challenges and costs of transporting tackle and bait for both venues, it would be impractical to travel out and compete effectively. With everyone having already shifted holiday plans to September we are now faced with not fielding a team in the World or European Championships for the second time in three years!

The practice of splitting International venues to allow more nations to be able to host a Worlds or Euros, seems to be becoming the norm. However, this really disadvantages smaller, unfunded nations who aren't able to travel with large support teams and logistical support. The Chairman is in the process of drafting a letter to the President of FIPSed to register our concerns that decisions like the one taken this year are making it impossible for nations like Scotland to not only compete, but to even participate.

So where does this leave us? Well, we still have the Celtic Cup in October and this will be our main focus as this is our opportunity to develop talent for the future. We will also continue to look for other alternative opportunities throughout the year. Hopefully we can look forward to a much busier and more successful year in 2026.

**(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. With 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) <u>Men</u>**. 2024 saw the men's team compete in Croatia for the world championship. Making history in the process, Alister Kirkhope and John Graham became the first pair from Scotland to win their section at this level and finishing 6th overall, with the team finishing 21stoverall out of 34 nations. As part of the build up to this event, from March through to August saw a lot of training up and down the UK. The squad utilising venues with similar features to Jezero Lapovac and Jezero Sandor in Nasice, Croatia in an attempt to ensure that our 3 debutants were ready for the event. This requires a huge commitment, both in terms of time and finance, but is essential if we are to be able to compete with the best in the World.

2025 brings big hopes. The World Championships is again being held in Croatia, and this year's Scotland squad is the strongest we have had to work with to date, with 14 anglers all vying to be selected in the final squad and look to better our world ranking. We have 2 matches lined up so far with other training events planned to mimic this year's preparation.

In April we will be holding our annual match against the ex-military team along with Team Wales as they are now back up and running. The big one before I finalise the squad for Croatia will be the Home Nations in June which will also include Team South Africa. This event will be held on Naseby Reservoir which will allow all nations the chance to finalise tactics and strategies to aid in the preparation for Croatia.

**b) <u>Ladies</u>**. 2024 was another busy, challenging but rewarding year for the Scottish Ladies Carp Team. First off following a change in the captaincy, Catherine Robertson had the task of rebuilding the team as two new team members were brought in to replace two of the ladies (including Captain Joanne) who had left the team early in the year. The team utilized the experience from the world championships in France

to assist new members in quickly acquiring necessary competition experience. This enabled the team to participate again at the Home Nations Event for the second consecutive year. The match was held at Naseby Reservoir in May 2024. There was a closely fought battle against the English and Welsh teams, with the Scottish ladies finishing only a single point behind England (hosts) and bringing back a second silver medal. The ladies certainly demonstrated they have the ability and skills to compete at national level to a very high standard.

Other highlights of the year saw participation by team pairs in British Carp Angling Championships events, as well as two of the ladies successfully winning the Wyreside Winter Cup, triumphing against 34 pairs of men. The ladies also raised their profile following the publication of an article on their success story, in Talking Carp Magazine, September issue 103.

Due to a change in the International calendar, the ladies world championships moved forward to the month of June from September, meaning there was insufficient time to raise enough funds for the team to attend the championships in Latvia in 2024. It does however highlight the significant financial pressure such an event presents and with no national funding, the team have a constant battle to raise funds and secure sponsorship, alongside self-funding any other in-year training and events. The ladies continue to receive significant support from their bait sponsor, Nutrabaits, but also successfully secured additional in year sponsorship deals with end tackle firm, Mudman Outdoors and also with Trident Leads, as well as rod manufacturer "Freespirit ". All of the sponsorships involve access to discounted products. However, the high cost of International competition entry, equipment transportation and travel/accommodation remains the biggest hurdle each year. 10 countries took part in the world event this time around and the competition is growing year on year with 12 countries expected to take part in 2025.

In early 2025, the ladies had further team drop outs (personal/financial reasons), but have been able to recruit new team members once more. The importance of Social media in this process has been the key to reaching more ladies. Many ladies joining however, have little or no competition experience and therefore significant time is needed to train and improve their skills sets. For this reason, as well as insufficient management/logistic support/finance, the ladies will not be attending the 2025 World Championships in Italy. During the remainder of 2025 we will be consolidating the experience within the team and have a number of exciting events ahead of us.

In March 2025, 3 pairs took part in the Wyreside pairs winter cup, where we were also able to raise funds by holding a raffle at this event. We also have managed to secure a new team manager, Callum Reid (manager of Wyreside Fisheries) which should significantly boost the support to the team both managerially and from a coaching perspective, through the sharing of his considerable expertise.

April 2025 will see us fish A1 pits in Nottinghamshire against 3 pairs of "Army Carpers" with the SFCA Chairman attending to cap the new squad members.

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| | In May 2025, Wales will host the third ever Tri-Nations event. The ladies team will take on Wales and England at Gweryd Lake in North Wales.<br><br>A first ever Celtic Cup (Wales versus Scotland) is planned for October 2025 at an event which will also see the two teams joined by the Dutch ladies team. The venue and date is yet to be confirmed.<br><br>**3) <u>Lure</u>**. The Chairman informed the meeting that during the past year he had been contacted by several individuals both directly and via social media posts asking why Scotland still wasn't fielding an International Lure Team. The answer is very simple. In order to establish and field a team there needed to be a Manager willing to take on the organisation, selection and management of the squad/team, including the pathway to selection, and a Lead/Level 2 Coach with the Coach Clean and Clean Sport Advisors qualifications, to deal with WADA/UKAD training for the squad. There had still not been any interest in either of these positions (which could be combined if an individual with the right KSE and Qualifications came forward. 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 chairman@sfca.co.uk. | |
| **6. Annual Business Plan/Priorities for Action**. | 1. The Chairman informed the meeting that the Draft Annual Business Plan for 2025/26 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.<br><br>2. The Chairman asked for a proposal that the Annual Business Plan and supporting budget be approved for publication:<br><br>**Proposed by: SCG** **Seconded by: PAAS**<br><br>3. The final approved version of the Annual Business Plan 2025/26 will be available on the website from 31st March 2025. | CARRIED |
| **6. Angling Scotland** | 1. The Chairman then gave an update on Angling Scotland's progress. There has been minimal advancement over the past year, primarily because the three discipline SGBs have been addressing their own internal priorities and issues, and have found it challenging to allocate enough time and resources to advance Angling Scotland.<br><br>The aim remained for Angling Scotland to become a Scottish Registered Charity. This would potentially open up new avenues for funding to support its work on behalf of all anglers in Scotland, deliver its core functions and promote, protect and grow participation in angling in Scotland. The initial plan stipulated that, upon completion of the transition from a Limited Company to a Charitable Trust, Angling Scotland would commence the formation of sub-committees necessary to assume responsibility for the core areas agreed upon by the three SGBs in 2020.<br><br>It was however becoming increasing clear that this work needed to be completed sooner rather than later as the discipline SGBs were finding it more and more challenging to independently carry out all of the | |

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| | essential corporate governance and core roles such as Policy, Protection, Environment, Safeguarding, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Coaching and Development.<br><br>On 8th April the Angling Scotland Board was due to meet with a new committee set up by SANA to focus on the issues that they were currently facing.<br><br>The priority for the SFCA Executive Committee would be to both support this work and ensure that there was sufficient coarse angling representation on all of the Angling Scotland committees to represent coarse anglers and coarse angling interests, but also to ensure that the SFCA remained able to operate independently and meet all of the functions required to meet the SportScotland recognition status for a SGB. Angling Scotland will be present at this year's Scone Game Fair and the aim was to have coarse angling coaches at the show. The Chairman undertook to continue to provide regular updates on progress.<br><br>2. The Chairman reminded the meeting that Angling Scotland individual membership is now available at a cost of just £5 – and that this now includes FREE, automatic membership of the JustGo 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 than recouped their membership costs throughout the year effectively making their membership free. Members can join by simply adding the membership to their SFCA membership in the JustGo system. 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.<br><br>More details and a fresh marketing campaign will be launched over the coming months. If anyone wanted any more information about Angling Scotland they could email him at chairman@sfca.co.uk | Chairman<br><br>Chairman |
| 9. A.O.C.B. | **a). Keptie Pond, Arbroath**.<br>Angus Council has decided to enforce a ban on fishing at Keptie Pond in Arbroath and to prosecute a young angler for fishing without consent. This decision was reported to the Chairman following concerns raised by the Arbroath Angling & Conservation Group. The decision has received considerable coverage across various angling social media channels and in today's Scottish Sun newspaper. Keptie Pond contains a healthy stock of coarse fish, including perch and carp, and is the only location for coarse fishing within the immediate Arbroath area. It is popular with local anglers of all ages, particularly youngsters from the community. This background highlights the significance of the ban on angling.<br><br>We acknowledge concerns about discarded tackle affecting wildlife but believe a blanket ban on fishing is not the best solution. There are better ways to protect the environment and wildlife that allow local anglers to continue to enjoy fresh air, engage with nature, and reap the mental health benefits of angling. | |

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| | The SFCA have been asked to try to engage with Angus Council on behalf of local anglers to try to find a way forward that allows fishing to continue on the water, perhaps through the establishment of a local club, with trained and licensed coaches, to educate young anglers about how to fish correctly, about social and environmental responsibility, fish welfare, and valuing all of the wildlife in the park.<br><br>The Chairman has drafted a letter to the head of Angus Council to try to get a meeting with local councillors, a representative from the Arbroath, Angling & Conservation Group, local police and youth organisations to discuss the issues leading to the decision and to try to find a way to restore access for angling on the pond.<br><br>**b). Membership renewals**. The Chairman reminded those present that while SFCA memberships were now based on a rolling year from the date of renewal, due to the previous fixed year system many renewals were due as of 1st April. Individuals should therefore expect to receive reminder emails from the 'JustGo' system over the coming weeks. Any members who could not remember their Username and/or Password to the 'JustGo' system could either uses the 'Forgot Password' link or email him at chairman@sfca.co.uk and he would rest the password and send them an email link.<br><br>**c). Meeting closed**. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 2200 hrs and thanked everyone present for finding time to attend and for their continued support for the SFCA. | |

*Gus Brindle*

I G BRINDLE
Chairman, SFCA

Distribution:

Website
All Club Secretaries
All Executive Committee members
SportScotland Partnership Manager