



RIVER AYR DISTRICT **SALMON FISHERY BOARD**

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MINUTES

of Board Meeting

of

RIVER AYR DISTRICT SALMON FISHERY BOARD

held at

The Mauchline & District Kilmarnock FC Supporters Club

8 Earl Grey Street, Mauchline, KA5 5AD

on Wednesday 4 June 2025 at 7pm

1. Persons Present

<i>Alan Hill (AH)</i>	<i>Barskimming Estate, Board Member (Chairperson)</i>
<i>Iain K Clark (IKC)</i>	<i>Gilson Gray LLP (Clerk to the Board)</i>
<i>Greg Bowie (GB)</i>	<i>Annbank Angling Club</i>
<i>Gordon Millar (GM)</i>	<i>Mauchline Ballochmyle Angling Club (Salmon Fishers' Rep)</i>
<i>Max Stobbs (MS)</i>	<i>Mauchline Ballochmyle Angling Club, Board Member</i>
<i>Robin Wilson (RW)</i>	<i>Ladykirk Angling Club, Board Member</i>
<i>Charles McDade (CM)</i>	<i>Sorn Angling Club, Board Member</i>
<i>Kevin Weir (KW)</i>	<i>Dumfries Estate, (Salmon Fishers' Rep)</i>
<i>Stuart Brabbs (SB)</i>	<i>Ayrshire Rivers Trust</i>

2. Apologies

<i>Nick Wright</i>	<i>Sorn Estate & Dumfries Estates LLP, Board Member</i>
<i>Struan Candlish</i>	<i>Ayrshire Rivers Trust</i>
<i>Carolyn Bryce</i>	<i>Ayrshire Rivers Trust</i>

3. Declaration of Members' Interests

In accordance with the Board's good governance obligations, the Board has agreed a Meetings Protocol and Policy on Members Interests. All Board Members present had signed a Declaration and the Board maintains a Register of Relevant Interests, pursuant to *Section 46E of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act")*. No additional interests were declared.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors on 26 March 2025 were approved unanimously as follows:

Proposed: Alan Hill
Seconded: Stuart Brabbs

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Qualified Proprietors on 2 April 2025 were approved unanimously as follows:

Proposed: Gordon Millar
Seconded: Kevin Weir

5. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

There is ongoing work with SPEN Funding - one application was agreed. Another one wasn't accepted.

The Grant Application to the Neighbourhood Ecosystem Funding was unsuccessful, due to the volume of applications.

There was a discussion regarding a Fencing Fund being established whereby the Board might consider offering 50% matched grant funding from the Board funds to proprietors who were willing to cooperate in fencing initiatives and contribute 50% themselves. This would be similar to the River Doon DSFB, where they have done that and put in solar watering systems, gravity fed systems etc. The Board agreed this in principle and ART are to identify suitable proprietors and go and 'knock on doors' to see whether they are interested. SB commented that this type of initiative can provide benefits on the river for up to 20 years potentially and deal with the issue of poaching of cattle and sheep. KW commented that it would make sense to target young farmers, who may be more accommodating and willing to engage with this initiative.

6. Report from the Clerk to the Board

IKC gave a verbal report on various matters, including noting that various difficulties had been experienced due to the ill health of his Paralegal. There were no queries arising.

7. Correspondence

There was a general discussion on follow up from the Annual Meetings.

Vaki fish counter - RM and SB spoke about this. Apparently, several years ago, the Board had granted £10,000 funding towards the installation of this. It should still be working. The wiring should still be in place. Apparently two people cut the cables and erroneously removed it because they thought the cameras were stolen (there never were any cameras, which is not how this counter works). The data from this counter was supposed to be analysed properly and was supposed to help with comparing with fish counter results on the lower river. ART have retrieved the Vaki Fish Counter. However, it would need to be sent to Vaki for repair. ART will be meeting with the relevant persons in due course, and then IKC may be asked to write to Catrine Community Renewables about the situation.

There was a discussion about smolts in the Voes at Catrine Dam, and ART are monitoring the position.

There was a general discussion about Bailliffing on the river. The Board does not want generally to be warranting Bailiffs, as the Board does not have the funding or insurance in place to employ them or to take responsibility for their actions. It was noted that SB has previously completed the qualification and could be warranted as a Bailliff, which would allow him to carry out proper investigations on behalf of the Board. The Board agreed to warrant SB as a Bailiff. He will NOT be employed by the Board. He will be covered by the Insurance for ART; and can carry out works for the River Ayr DSFB on that basis.

8. Report on Fishery Assessments

IKC confirmed that the Fishery Assessment Notices had not been issued as yet, due to the ill health of a staff member, but would be issued shortly.

9. Financial Report

IKC gave a verbal report confirming the balance in the Deposit Account is £31,180.94. There were no questions arising.

10. Report from Ayrshire Rivers Trust

See the attached Report from ART. Highlights included:

Signage for Cameras - Met with Toby Metcalfe regarding Signage for Crown Estate Scotland (CES) at the Nethermills and tidal beats. They also have made contact at Police Scotland.

Tarbolton Landfill – meeting with CES Representatives for electrofishing and visit Tarbolton Landfill site re long term managing site

Invasive Weed Control – just about to complete on the Giant Hogweed work. There was a discussion re Himalayan Balsam Bashing – particularly at Dumfries House and Mauchline – some Sunday. ART have also agreed to carry out the Japanese Knotweed work previously agreed with the Board.

Catrine Dam - Smolt Migration problems – smolts in lade and the voes beyond the screens. Meeting with SEPA. Catrine Community Trust were instructed not to re-start the turbines whilst the smolts were trapped. Turbines were running – confirmed this week. SEPA Correspondence – ART have asked what happened? Full inspection to find the gaps. Drain down of the voes in the summer. Outfall to be improved and smoothed. Last time, couple of smolts dead. Plus repair the screens.

Nethermills – sediment was being deposited into bedrock sediment – written to Fish Ecology – local licensing team decision at SEPA. Still waiting on hearing from Jim Storrie for SEPA. One off cleanout or every few years? There were a number of issues being raised. Important to be dealt with for next year's smolt runs. Harbour master take huge amounts of sediment out of the harbour. This will likely involve a crane, small excavator, and a skip – near where M&S on the other side. Possibly will require Marine Directorate approval. SB/ART are on this.

Pollution – Scottish Water – Reported to SEPA about failure of Mauchline Sewage Treatment Works – first night of good water to fish. Angling Syndicates all the way down to Stair. SB/AH to liaise and then provide information – was going for just under 2 hours.

Complaint from householder Scottish Water Ochiltree Sewage Treatment Works – happened throughout the low water.

Bogend Burn – ART – proprietor refused to permit SB to be at meeting. Difficulties with the various agencies. Now required to maintain two drains, because of the approach taken. Reduced from 8 houses to 4 houses. Other agencies still dealing with him.

Stair Dam – refitted two timber baulks and a camera

Nether Wellwood – green engineering been installed

River Watch Scheme ART will be buying new SIM Cards for the various cameras on the river at the end of June and the Board agreed that these were excellent and supported the work of the River Watch Scheme being established later this year.

11. River Watch Scheme

IKC presented the proposed arrangements for progressing with the River Ayr River Watch Scheme and setup. He will need the names and addresses, phone nos and emails addresses for everyone who wants to participate. GM and KW will progress, liaising with IKC. Arrangements would then be made to meet with interested individuals to have induction training on the Scheme and to sign relevant Agreements prepared by IKC on behalf of the Board. It was proposed the meeting would take place on 9 July 2025 at 7pm.

As regards costs, the Board agreed to fund patrols being carried out by self-employed River Watch Patrol Coordinators carrying out patrols on a self-employed basis between July to December each year. These individuals will not be employed by the Board, and will have to arrange their own insurance. On condition of submitting Monthly Written Reports and Incident Reports, they will be paid £25 per month for carrying out such patrols, with payment being made (subject to such Monthly Written Reports and Incident Reports having been submitted) twice per annum. The estimated budget agreed for this is up to 6 months x 8 River Watch Patrol Coordinators x £25 = up to £1,200 per annum + the River Watch Coordinators will be paid £300 per annum (in two instalments each of £150), again on condition of submitting Quarterly Reports to the Clerk = 2 x £300 = £600. That will be a regular anticipated annual budget of £2,400 + whatever the costs of printing, poster cases and stakes etc.

12. Any Other Business

RW asked for the contact details of Board Members to be circulated and suggested a WhatsApp Group could be setup to aid communication.

There was a discussion about the effect on catch returns due to changing weather, including the particularly dry summers and springs that we are experiencing.

The Board agreed that a donation should be made to The Mauchline & District Kilmarnock FC Supporters Club of £75 i.e. £25 for 3 meetings.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Based on availability at present, the next meeting is planned for 26 November 2025 at 7pm.

AH thanked everyone for attending and the meeting concluded at 21:15