

President
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Hon. Secretary
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Dear Member,

I hope you are all well and enjoying your fishing. We are almost half way through the season and so far from what I've been told results have so far been pretty good.

As mentioned in an earlier letter, Duchy is recording good catches of 30 plus at times and the beck although clear and low has not disappointed.

Mayflies are very much in evidence in parts and surprisingly there have been a lot of fish seen rising in Big Crooks.

Oxford beck currently has a few escapee Rainbows in there at present though they are not expected to hang around for long.

From bitter experience Pexton has certainly lived up to its reputation of being difficult at times although on occasions good catches of some superb 4 to 6 pound Rainbows have been recorded.

However, from a personal point of view it's such a nice place to sit and watch the world go by the fishing at times hardly matters. Well anyway, that's my excuse for not catching?

Several members have reported that it's getting difficult to get the boat out onto the lake at Paper Mill due to weed growth etc. and at his last end of month work party Colin intended to address the problem. However, being a bank holiday only two members attended.

Hopefully the next work party to be arranged by Colin will be better supported and the issue addressed.

Publicity.

The Trout and Salmon Magazine contacted Dave Southall with a view to doing an article on the PFA and subsequently sent a reporter and cameraman to review and photograph the beck etc. on the 29th May.

This went well and comments received about the beck and fishing was favourable.

A brief description and photographs of the day can be found posted by Dave on the PFA Facebook pages.

Extra Cash.

Having completed the platforms at Pexton, the expectation was that we would have to return any residual balance of the grant to the Angling Trust. This amounted to c £1800 of the £2700 allocated.

However, we are fortunate that Tony Walsh has been able to negotiate with the AT who has kindly agreed that we can spend the remainder on other items of benefit to the PFA.

This will include,

Trail cameras for Little Crooks.

Metal Kissing Gates for Little Crooks and Big Crooks.

Ladders to facilitate members getting in and out of the Beck.

Stiles at Oxford.

As we now under pressure to spend the money ASAP, work is underway to obtain costs for the work to be carried out hopefully in the near future.

Wheelchair membership.

The platforms at Pexton are now complete and have been the subject of favourable comment from members and in particular from one wheelchair user who fished Pexton as a guest.

On a temporary basis for this year only and subject to demand, it has been decided to offer membership to wheelchair anglers at a subscription of £50 with no joining fee.

I have yet to finalise rules and by laws to cover wheelchair users but in general, they will be based largely on the same rules regarding full membership.

However, there will be some changes as well as published guidelines/general awareness regarding the location and fishing.

Risk Assessment Documentation specific to wheelchair users have been finalised and should be available via the members section of the website shortly.

(This document was cribbed and amended to suit wheelchair members from a generic work party risk assessment kindly produced by Allan Haughton. This will also shortly be accessible via the members section of the website.)

Once they are on the website I would be grateful if members would take time to read both documents and apply the advice and recommendations to whatever circumstances apply at the time whether fishing from a wheelchair or attending a work party.

Opening up the PFA membership has yet to be publicised but in the interim, in order to take full advantage of the facility now available, if any member knows of a wheelchair user that enjoys fishing and would be interested in joining, please let them know of what we now have to offer.

Insurance cover.

At the AGM, various questions relating to the insurance cover for PFA members were raised.

Gordon Dickinson subsequently contacted his contact at our insurance broker for answers and their recommendations.

The following are the questions asked and the responses from our brokers.

1. Q. Insurance cover for Wheelchair users and do they need to be accompanied.
 A. Providing that all relevant risk assessments are in place and correct health and safety procedures followed there would be no issue.

Relating to the question regarding the accompaniment of those who are in a wheelchair, common sense applies. If unable to extricate themselves from any potentially dangerous situation they should be accompanied.

2. Q. Is the guest of a member covered?
 A. The guest of a member would be covered if they were injured, not if they injured someone.
3. Q. If someone purchases a guest ticket, are they covered?
 A. The purchase of a ticket would make the individual a member for the day, therefore they would benefit from the same insurance as a member for their ticketed time
4. Q. If a guest or prospective member helps out on work parties, are they covered?
 A. Yes. This would be covered by your Employers Liability. The guest would be classed as a volunteer who is included under the definition of Employee.
5. Q. If a member brings a junior are they covered?
 A. If they are a junior member yes, if they are not and are injured they would be covered. If they injured someone else they would not.

Would you please take note of the above and make sure that when fishing or attending work parties with guests that they are aware of the extent of their cover where appropriate.

New Bailiff.

I am pleased to announce that one of our new members, Steve Smith, has kindly agreed to take on the role of an additional Bailiff for Pickering beck and will work alongside Paul Ridley monitoring what goes on.

Steve lives in Pickering and walks his dog along the beck on an almost daily basis. He has already been successful in preventing poaching at Ing's bridge when two non-members who were in the process of setting up their fishing tackle cleared off on his approach.

Although he was unable to get a number plate, I would ask all members to keep an eye out for a rusty, white and beaten up Toyota Hilux and report anyone they catch fishing our waters to the Police on tel. 101.

Steve being new to the PFA does not know many of our members so I would be grateful if you meet him on the bankside you would introduce yourselves.

Oxfolds.

Work on improving access to allow members to fish the beck once more has begun and as part of this, the Environment Agency have emptied the silt traps on Oxfold beck removing c 20 tonnes of silt from each one.

It was then recognised that as the traps had not stopped the silt build up over the length of the beck between the traps it would also be removed. All paid for by the EA.

This work has now been completed and it is hoped to arrange a series of work parties to attend to bank work and 'in river' weed control etc. hopefully leading to the beck being restocked.

Please note, although it is possible to fish the beck, extreme care and the use of a wading stick is advised in areas where silt covers the bed of the beck.

You should also be aware that in the first field below Willow Dene Trout Farm there is a Bull. He was quite indifferent to the fact we were there doing an invert survey but you never know?

The PFA now has its own combination lock allowing access to the field. Code 2013.

(This is also the code that opens the lock on the Duchy.)

It can be difficult to operate as we found out when doing the invert survey as it is on a short chain, low down and the lock is stiff to open and close.

There is also an electric fence in close proximity to the gate and that is in full working order.

If opening the gate, please ensure that the gate/lock is closed afterwards so as to maintain our current good relations with the land owner.

It has now been agreed that the silt traps will be emptied on an annual basis and the amount of silt build up monitored.

Lost Fly Box.

Barry Parsons has found a fly box containing flies on Duchy.

If you have lost a fly box in that location, please let me know giving details so that its return can be arranged.

Gutting fish at Pexton.

Please be aware that it has been reported that signs of someone gutting fish by one of the benches at Pexton were very much in evidence.

It is not suggested that one of our members was responsible as most likely it was one of the poaching fraternity and has to my knowledge happened on a couple of occasions in the past.

However, although the area is technically off limits to the public, we still get dog walkers and others walking through and the sight of fish blood and entrails is not an image we would wish to portray as being representative of our activities?
Particularly if it is reported back to the FC.

Poaching at Pexton.

Poaching remains a big problem and enquiries have been made of the FC regarding the siting of trail Cameras at Pexton.

The FC have agreed to this on the condition that they site them at a cost to us of £300 each and they monitor the memory cards at a cost of c £15 to £20 per hour in accordance with their regulations.

In the first year, siting only one camera and for the FC to monitor for one hour a month, this would equate to having to recruit four new members.

The committee decided that this was unaffordable.

Subsequent to this decision, we are now hoping that we can come to some arrangement with the FC that is mutually acceptable and from a PFA point of view, affordable.

In the meantime, please look out for and report any poaching activity you come across and if possible get what evidence you can without putting yourselves at risk.

Dates for your diaries.

1. 6th June. Stocking Pickering Beck. Meet Chris Smiles above Low Mill at 4 pm.
2. 22nd June. Duchy Walkover with Dave Southall. Meet Ing's Bridge at 9.30am.
3. 23rd June. Field Day hosted by Dave Southall. Meet Ing's Bridge at 10am.
4. 30th June. Provisional. Work party to be arranged for the lakes.

Work parties are to be arranged for Oxfolds and Pickering Beck as required.

Well, that's about it for now. I hope everyone enjoys the rest of the season and although seemingly a long way off, like me are quietly looking forward to the start of the Grayling matches and trotting a maggot down the beck as well as having a go with an orange tag.

The John Gore match will take place in early October and the autumn match in late October, dates still to be finalised.

Very Best Wishes.

