



Aberdeen and District Angling Association

Questions and responses in lieu of ADAA 2021 AGM (Period 20 January to 3 February 2021).

Accounts Review:

Accounts Line Item	2020	2019	2018	2017
Subscriptions & Permits	156,366	147,420	133,989	162,896
Don District board assessment	42,541	58,105	52,042	56,328
Ythan District board assessment	6,890	5,432	5,264	4,797
Dee District board assessment	9,227	9,431	3,368	8,217
Maintenance costs	29,382	42,793	45,044	45,989
Other Income	2,054	1,712	67,734	1,169
Fixed Assets	2,634,499	2,638,542	2,641,900	2,633,780
Surplus/(defecit)	19,027	(22,146)	31,518	1,175

Observations/Questions

1. Compliments on showing profit on the accounts for 3 of past 4 years
2. 2018 profit is helped by payment for Western Bypass of around £46k? 2020, potentially in profit due to reduced board assessments & less maintenance?
3. For Membership subscriptions believe in 2018 there were around 100 less renewals (from newsletter), there are increases in 2019 and then 2020, how much based on new members and how much on subs increase? What is projection for 2021.
4. Difficult to see a pattern on board assessments, what are these based on and do the relevant boards give predictions to ADAA on potential costs for coming year? Potential for higher costs in 2021 if season not affected by COVID shutdowns?
5. Maintenance costs show fairly steady levels on 2017 - 2019, while 2020 is undertsandably low if reduced for COVID. What is projection for 2021 based on revised maintenance plan being put in place
6. For other income what can we as members do with the committee to look at ways of increasing this area (e.g. raffles, outings (to non ADAA waters), encourage non local anglers to visit?

Was 2018 profit higher due to payment from AWPR?

Response:

ADAA had regular meetings with AWPR's liaison group and voiced our concerns on many issues, concerning the building of the new bridge at Cockers, pollution of the Don and work in the vicinity of Loirston Loch. We ultimately agreed an EU (Enforcement Undertaking) settlement with AWPR, to be used for various projects, locally on the Don and Loirston – the settlement value was £20,000 and is ring-fenced for those projects.

Was 2020 profit due to reduced River Board Assessments and lower maintenance costs?

Response:

ADAA secured a reduction in both Dee (40%) and Don (25%) assessments. Maintenance work, and therefore costs, were lower than usual, due to Covid restrictions.

There were 100 fewer membership renewals in 2018, then increases in 2019 and 2020. How much income was lost/gained, and how much of it is due to new members, and how much is due to increased subscriptions?

Response:

Season 2019: 53 new members generated income of £17,500, of which £1,000 is due to increased subscription charges. Season 2020 : 67 new members generated income of £25,000, of which £3,000 is due to increased subscription charges.

What, in membership numbers, is predicted for 2021?

Response:

We expect membership numbers to remain similar to those in 2020. We have also had an encouraging number of younger members taking up our offer of free membership (free for juniors only!)

How are River Board Assessments calculated, and are there forecasts by the Boards for 2021?

Response:

They are assessed by the Regional Assessor and are calculated according to the Rateable Value of the property. The River Board determines its expected operational costs for the period of the assessment and then allocates those costs, to the proprietors, as a proportionate share of the total operational costs.

Will Covid restrictions affect our running costs; will our costs be higher if there are no Covid restrictions?

Response:

Our major costs, which we can control, relate to maintenance. Grasscutting and strimming account for a large proportion of those costs. We are confident that those costs for 2021 will not be greater than in 2020. Beat conveners are committed to identifying and prioritising areas where work needs to be done in particular to prevent further damage being done to riverbanks. Currently, there are no plans to carry out major works on any of our fishings.

Maintenance costs have been steady for 2017 to 2019, lower for 2020 probably due to Covid restrictions; how will the new maintenance arrangements affect costs for 2021?

Response:

Any works that can be done by conveners, with the help of a growing number of volunteers, should have minimal cost to ADAA. Any work that may need to be done, by e.g. someone with experience, will be assessed and then approved before estimates or quotes are sought for the work. Our conveners have been asked to prepare a 2021 budget for their beat(s) and a draft budget is currently being prepared. We hope that any issues will have been identified during the close season and will be reflected in the beat budgets. We do not

envisage any major expenditure, other than grasscutting and strimming in 2021.

Costs:

The current plan of ADAA to change the way bank and beat maintenance is going to be carried out in 2021 and based on comments on the ADAA forum is proving to be an issue with some members. To this end:

Can more light be shed on the decision process and also more specifics on the current plans? I appreciate that there is reference to it within the Newsletter however it will be good to know the scope that will be carried out by contractor (e.g. timings, beats to be worked on and extent on each beat).

Response:

The Association has an established and successful programme where grass cutting is concerned, and which has been followed over a number of years. Experience has shown the number of hours of contracted grass cutting each beat requires, enabling a record of costs to be kept. This process normally commences in June and continues through the summer months. Beats classed as high demand, such as those at Parkhill, which fish throughout the season are classed as high demand and are prioritised in high summer over beats such as those on the Ythan which tend to be fished more in late summer and on into the Autumn. However, in years that experience heavier precipitation additional time is allocated to grass cutting where there is extra demand identified. Any bank maintenance that is identified is also carried out during this time. As well as formerly utilised contractors the Association has established links with other contacts.

How and where members can help in this area?

Response:

Many if not all our members have their favourite fishing beat(s), and it is hoped, and indeed anticipated, that some will welcome the opportunity to be more involved with the beat by becoming an assistant beat convener, or by just volunteering a few hours in grass cutting or bankside maintenance. The spraying of giant hogweed is one example where members can be of assistance.

As shown in the accounts review above, membership subscriptions have increased in the last two years, partly due to increase in fees and potentially in 2020 for new members who did not if I recall correctly pay joining fees (which I consider a good step forward in 2020 as it gave additional funds as a one off gesture and to encourage people to join ADAA). What is the plan to:

Response:

First of all, may we correct you when you refer to members that did not pay joining fees. ALL people that join the ADAA pay membership joining fees. You

may be confused by those members who joined halfway into the season and who paid a reduced annual subscription.

Push for further new members

Response:

It is the intention of the Management Committee to continually improve and enhance, whenever possible, the angler's experience when fishing the ADAA's beats. It is envisaged that this will be achieved by: 1. Improved stocking of its still waters, along with extensive weed clearance, improved access and general beat improvements, 2. Promoting the inter club exchange permit system, 3. Setting up a new web site and a closed Facebook facility for members, thus encouraging and implementing more informed communication between members, 4. Widening the "away days" to include those members not wishing to actually compete, 5. Organising a "75 year" ADAA dinner and celebration, and 6. Promoting junior days with tuition as well as promoting a wider "buddies" team.

Encourage existing members to remain

Response:

The above answers this question.

Will/can there be active publicity drive online and also in local newspapers?

Response:

The ADAA has used the media in promoting the Association's activities. This was more recently shown during the early COVID 19 restrictions when the Acting President was interviewed by both TV and the Press. The Association has in the past been successful in obtaining media coverage and has media expertise on the committee. However, it is realised there is some room for improvement, and this is being addressed.

Where we need to look at further reductions in costs, have the committee got options in mind for this? Are we thinking about looking at reduction of beats available (similar to when we did not renew for Balbithan/Torryburn in 2018), if so on what basis is this being reviewed?

Response:

It is not the committee's intention to remove beats from the Associations portfolio of fishing's as it is thought this would have a negative effect on membership. The Association gave up the lease on the Torryburn/Balbathan beat as we did not have the exclusive fishing rights to these beats.

Based on release of Parkhill fishery at the end of 2021 what is likely savings that will be made here and have the funds currently used here been earmarked for future projects?

Response:

There will be savings here on the rent, stocking, and maintenance. Whatever savings are realised will be used in the management and improvements of other beats.

Frequency and stocking of Millpond/Loch of Loirston, can this be assessed based on members submitting catch returns for frequency of people fishing at these locations?

Response:

In accordance with the ADAA's rules catches at the still waters are recorded, and this intelligence is used for stocking purposes. As pointed out above, given suitable finances, stocking will be improved at these fisheries.

The value of fixed assets is around £2.6M, what does this cover/ include, and are there options to look at potential sales in this area to offset future potential losses and / or reduce existing costs?

Response:

Our fixed assets are all the fishing beats that we own and are shown as book value on the Association's accounts. Their true value will be that realised on the open market. However, given the Association's reserves as shown in our accounts, there is no intention to realise any of these assets for cash. Good corporate management and matching income with expenditure are the criteria that drive the way the committee manages the ADAA.

Are there any plans for increasing revenue/funds for the association outside of increased membership? Can we do something on raffles, work with Somers on tackle products where they gain sales and ADAA gets some benefits

Response:

All members benefit from a 10% discount when shopping at Somers, thus Somers gains business and members make savings on their purchases. The Association also attracts additional revenue from the sale of visitor permits. Raffle tickets are something that the committee can investigate.

With new members coming in and possibly some existing members, are there thoughts to introduce additional club merchandise and do so on basis of pre-ordering thus reducing risk of non sales?

Response:

The Association does have a shop with limited merchandise that contributes a small income for the Association. With input from a larger committee this is an area that could be further expanded.

Communications:

Compliments to those taking part in putting together the newsletters we have seen in 2020 and also the newsletter for the 2020 summary. These were well presented and informative. Newsletters are powerful tools to keep people interested and involved.

We are all aware that the forum is now being closed on January 31st. While this may seem a small matter in the overall scheme of things at present a statement in my opinion could and should have been made on a discussion topic on the forum so as members were aware of what was to happen. Was this a conscious decision made by the committee and if so can a retrospective posting be made – it could I believe be made as a sticky with no responses being enabled? I believe/hope this could be seen by forum users in a positive manner.

Response:

Thanks for the suggestion. This will be considered by Management Committee members.

I have posted on the forum and taken part in some of the threads lately on AGM cancellation, loss of contractor, newsletter, nov committee meeting minutes to name a few. My frustration and I believe that of several others is that there has been, little, or no input or responses to these discussions by committee members (I stand to be corrected). I believe that this has only heightened some of the ill feeling towards some of the decisions, which have been made of late. I strongly believe that in any thread/discussion where it is clear that the committee is being asked a question (directly or indirectly) that a response could have been given on behalf of the committee. Why have no clear responses been given, was this a decision made by committee members to hopefully avoid conflict?

Response:

The reasons for closing the forum were detailed in the annual newsletter. The purpose of the Forum was not to discuss management matters. The Association relies on volunteers to give up their time and become Management Committee members. The amount of time they can dedicate to this is limited and to engage publicly on such matters could potentially be detrimental to the objectives set out in the Constitution. At the end of the day, all members will have opinions on such issues, however they elect Management Committee members to manage the Associations affairs. If any member has any questions about the management of the Association, they must be put in writing to the Secretary.

With Facebook (FB) now looking like being the preferred choice to replace the forum, it is likely that not all members will want to use FB and not all will want nor have FB profiles. What is being considered as a means of keeping members not on FB involved in ADAA activities and plans?

Response:

Facebook was recommended to us by the web developers for these purposes.

We have active website. The website is away to be upgraded. We post regular newsletters there and use email mailshots regularly.

For the newsletter, could members be more involved in these? I have met several people on the banks who are more than happy to share tips, advice on best pools, how to fish the pools, use of flies (albeit this one is less frequent ☺), etc. Could members be asked to participate by adding section(s) to the newsletter (tips, tricks, summary of day on water etc.)? Should we look at the newsletter being a monthly publication if so how can this be achieved? On the assumption that not all members use e-mail, how are these members communicated with? Do they see the newsletters, how do they see notices on planned changes etc.?

Response:

Management Committee member John Stephen currently composes the newsletter as a simple word document, while incorporating input he receives from (mainly) other committee members and he would be quite amenable to also including occasional items from the general membership as well.

A regular monthly edition of the 'letter would be ideal of course, but John could not commit to any hard and fast deadline on that score. However, unless some other committee member wishes to take up the task, he is happy to continue the newsletter as at present, while attempting to issue them as frequently as possible.

On the assumption that not all members use e-mail, how are these members communicated with? Do they see the newsletters, how do they see notices on planned changes etc.?

Response:

The latest statistics show that 93% of the population of the United Kingdom have internet access. We have active website and facebook sites The website is away to be upgraded and a new ADAA Facebook Group created.

In normal circumstances an Annual General Meeting is held where all members are invited to attend. The AGM Notice and annual newsletter, annual accounts, and so on are posted to those members without email addresses.

For members with e-mail, is there a group e-mail, where all members receive e-mails with updates or is it done on a member, by member basis?

Response:

Email mailshots are sent using email mail merge:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-mail-merge-to-send-bulk-email-messages-0f123521-20ce-4aa8-8b62-ac211dedefa4>

Thank you for reviewing the above and hope that the comments etc. are taken in a positive context and I look forward to the responses.

Tight lines for 2021 and here's hoping I land my first bar of silver.

	2020	2019
Ythan District board assessment	6,890	5,432
Printing, postage, and stationery	2,889	4,589
Competition expenses	382	795
Bank charges	2,051	2,596
Sundry expenses	7,600	8,000

Why is the Ythan assessment higher than last year when less fish has been caught?

Response:

The Ythan District Fishery Board sets an annual budget for its expenditure which, depending on what work it decides to undertake, remains the same regardless of how many fish are caught. It then raises a levy on each fishery to meet this budget. The method is by valuing each fishery using historic, 5-year, fish catches. Apart from fish catches other factors are included in the valuation, including, for example, access and fishing huts.

That valuation, as a proportion of the sum of all the valuations on the River, is the proportion of the budget that each fishery pays. i.e., a catch of more or less fish only increases or decreases the sum paid (the levy or Assessment) if the change is relatively more or less than other fisheries. Therefore, it is quite possible that a fishery can pay the same sum this year as last (assuming the same budget) even though it may catch quite a different number of fish.

What does the printing, postage and stationery expenses consist of?

Response:

The printing, posting and stationery costs were mainly for printing and posting items such as the members annual permits, rules booklets, maps and so on.

Also, items such as the AGM Notice, annual newsletter, and so on for the AGM mailshot for those members without email addresses.

Why are there competition expenses and should we not be stopping these events as it is for the same 9 to 10 members, what do we as an association gain from these competitions?

Response:

These expenses were related to entry fees to national competitions. They were all cancelled. The refunds for the expenditure have been accounted for in income so the net cost was zero.

The Association has organised competitions for over 50 years as part of its entertainment programme. Association competitions are open to all members, no one is excluded, and it is up to each individual member whether they participate or not. Also, for outings to the likes of Lake of Menteith members are welcome to come along to fish at the competition venue without taking part in the competition.

Association competitions are the pathway for ADAA members to progress to a higher level of competition angling through SANA, SANNAC & FIPS MOUCHE, with members going on to represent Scotland at National, International, European & World Championship fly fishing competitions. The ADAA has members who have qualified and competed at all these levels, which brings the Association to the forefront of Scottish angling circles. Our members who represent Scotland do so at their own cost, paid out of their own pockets, apart from the small entry fee which is paid by the Association. We would be delighted to see new faces at all competitions going forward.

What are the bank charges for?

Response:

Bank charges are charged by the bank the Association uses for the operation of its Business Account.

What are sundry expenses for, and can you itemise these?

Response:

The sundry expenses are really the general expenses for running the Association over the accounting period and are made up, as you will understand, of many items, for example, Broadband fees, card reader charges, Donations, DSFIA subscriptions, Gratuity, Office 365 computer subscriptions, HDMI cable, Secretarial and Administration fees, a wreath for Bob Dey, telephone allowance, a memory stick, Survey Monkey computer subscription, Zoom subscription and McAfee Virus subscription.

I was in to Somers today to pay my ticket and I have to write an addition to one of my previous questions regarding printing etc expense. Why have we printed out material for all members who are renewing their ticket, which is readily available to all of us on the forum surely this a false economy.

Response:

Management Committee members regularly review and will continue to do so our printing arrangements and costs. These have reduced considerably over the last few seasons, for example, we no longer print and post out the AGM Notice and so on to all members, just those without email addresses. We also replaced the annual diary with a simplified, less costly rules etc booklet which again has significantly reduced costs.

We also still need to print and provide every renewing and every new member with an annual permit and this fits easily into the rules etc booklet.

3 February 2021