



# Skipton Angling Association

## Annual review 2024

### General

First and foremost, Happy New Year from your officials and Bailiffs, I am happy to report that there have been some changes (a bit of shuffling around) to the committee following the unfortunate stepping down of our long serving president who we thank for his commitment to the club over so many years. However we are happy to report that all positions are currently filled. Most of the familiar and not so familiar officials and Bailiffs will be happy to support the club in their various posts for the coming year. With Membership numbers increasing, very slightly, and finances in a good shape, we go into 2025 with the confidence that we will have another exceptional year.

2024 was an exceptionally busy and successful year with a lot of new targets set and smashed. Some of those successes are:-

The introduction of our Get Kids Fishing was a massive success thanks to the coaches and volunteers that helped out, we run six sessions were carried out indoors at SELFA, and six sessions with the SELFA kids on the banks. A grant was won from the Angling Trust to the value £2,500, boosted to £2,600 through a discount scheme based on an agreement between the Angling Trust and Angling direct. This was used to purchase large amount of equipment, negotiating deals with suppliers allowed us to make stretch the budget as we procured the equipment which gave us a really divers range of fishing equipment to cover most freshwater disciplines.

Additionally Craven Communities Together project awarded us £900, and Sport England a further £900 which we used for the training of two Lead Angling Coaches through the Angling Trust. We approached several tackle suppliers and several made donations of various bits of bait and terminal tackle.

We launched our range of merchandise which generates a very small income to help cover running costs of running events. Sales are very slow and therefore, this does not generate a great income, however does help toward the cost of bait and replacement terminal tackle. Of course it's always nice to see members sporting a nice bit of clothing with the SAA logo prominently displayed.

A completely new website has been created and looks much better than the previous site that we can no longer access. It gives members and visitors all the information they could possibly need.

We constantly continuously improve the site to keep it up to date and keep things easy to find. The number of bailiffs has been increased to record levels with us now having support bailiffs in addition to our primary bailiffs. All our bailiffs carry ID cards as they did previously, and our primary bailiffs have been supplied with smart new bomber jackets with the SAA logo and bailiff identification on the jackets.

Unfortunately we are ending our shared water scheme with IAA, our members are not using it, IAA members are using it a lot, but we were not being informed of their presence, the difference in membership costs presents a threat to our membership numbers. However the main reason is that it simply did not work for our club with only one of our members in two years using the agreement.

The usual very popular matches were run on our various venues and good results accompanied by great fun were achieved.

### **Whinny Gill**

Some great work as carried out at Whinny Gill with pegs being levelled out and backfilled with gravel. To increase the age range and gene pool of fish at Whinny Gill we introduced 176lb of Bream between 1lb and 2lb 500 Ide at 6" to 8". This is hoped to give Whinny Gill a little bit of a boost and, perhaps, replace some fish lost to predation. Match weights continue to grow and Whinny Gill is shaping up to become an even better course Stillwater than it previously was, and continues to grow in popularity.

Two really successful taster sessions were run at Whinny Gill with a mix of ages turning up. It was really good to have families come along and we know at least three new members were generated as a direct result of these days.

In general fishing was good throughout the year.

### **Leeds and Liverpool Canal**

On the LL canal we have installed new signs along the canal informing of our fishing rights, and this will continue in the coming year. Additionally, for the first time ever, we carried out a litter pick along the Town stretch.

The fishing varied throughout the year with some days proving difficult while others proved to be excellent.

There are records not yet claimed on the canal and a new simple application form has been added to the website to make it easier to claim a record by ensuring the committee are aware of the fact.

### **River Aire**

Our usual litter pick was done on the river and a rather large amount of litter removed, making the area far more pleasant to look at and fish. In addition to that a club member (non-committee member) initiated out a massive clean-up of the river bank, taking out old fences, carrying out repairs and strimming vegetation, and generally improving access by making it easier and safer to negotiate the bank.

A memorial area in honour of Malcom Lawrence Mawson has been more or less completed, just waiting for a break in the weather to plant three Malus Rudolph (crab apple).

The river wasn't fished too often, however remains as another good venue.

## Embsay Reservoir

We hosted two fly casting days at Embsay, which we hope will generate additional member, however the sessions are great fun to be involved with and just give anglers a taste of something a bit different. Around 200 trees have been planted at Embsay to, eventually; provide additional wind break, additional habitat for wildlife and, more importantly (to the fly angler) insects. These came from various donations with 130 coming from the woodland trust, 25 from the wild trout trust, and the balance from one of our members. Tree protectors were also donated from the wild trout trust, so it cost around £15.00 and a good bit of effort from volunteers to get them planted.

We stocked 200 Brown Trout averaging 1 ½ lb, 1,221 Rainbow Trout ranging from 1 ½ lb to 8lb, 80 Tiger Trout ranging between 2lb and 2 ½ lb a total of 1,501 trout.

We noted that several rather skinny fish were caught at Embsay and know they didn't go in like that. It could be several factors, the weather being one, perhaps a bit of over stocking, etc. however the investment in fish stocks will remain around the same financial investment which means around a 10% reduction in fish numbers/weight being introduced.

It is felt that Embsay remains our flagship water and by keeping it in the best possible condition is a great way to thank, and retain loyal members and help to entice new members to what is a "Carlsberg" small club with a fabulous variety of trout species in the reservoir. We will keep the stock as diverse as possible, but obviously can only stock what is available from our supplier. Quite a few larger sized fish will be included next year to keep your hearts pumping when the adrenalin kicks in.

Embsay fished its head off fairly consistently throughout the season with plenty fish being posted on Facebook.

A really simple form has been added to the website for fish returns (fish retained by members and day ticket holders). We actively encourage the submission of this valuable information. If you take no fish, do the returns with a zero against the selections, it's still useful information

## Summing up

As stated earlier 2024 was a very busy and extremely successful year. We do hope to continue and build on our successes and what we learned from getting involved in new areas. That said, one thing we did learn, was that we slightly over committed and need more of our members to get involved. However it was really encouraging and comforting to see so many new faces volunteering on most of our events throughout the year. If that momentum can be kept going there's no stopping us. So look out for events, appeals for volunteers, and get involved, it's all for a good cause and is a lot of fun.

Tight lines to you all.