

Minutes of 2026 AGM of Cobbinshaw Angling Association Ltd

Held at Deer Park Club on Sunday 25th January 2026

Order of business

1. As detailed in the Agenda.
2. In the absence of Mr Moon the meeting was chaired by John Glynn, a previous Secretary and current director.
3. The Chairman opened the meeting by thanking members for attending, and confirmed it was quorate with 83 members having signed in [quorum is 50]. He also thanked Frank Jackson for managing the sign-in.
4. He then summarised arrangements for the general conduct of the meeting, highlighting that there was no PA system in use, and that members needed to speak clearly and loudly when asking any question or making a comment.

AGENDA ITEM 1: Apologies

5. D Moon; C McIsaac; I Whyte; C Green; C Mackay; AV Campbell; R Turnbull; P Martin; MJ Makison; R Mclean; M Delves; NR Davidson; I Coutts; R Brough; R Harvey; A Hutton; J Hughes; W Munn; N MacIntyre; T McGravie; D Donaldson; T McRae

AGENDA ITEM 2: In Memoriam

4. A minute's silence was held in memory of the following Members and past Members who the Chairman advised had sadly passed away since the last AGM:
 - K Mackie; T King; JB Campbell; D Lowe; A Melrose; H Moody.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Minutes of 2024 AGM; Paper 3.1

5. There were no suggested amendments to the draft minutes as presented: they were approved on proposal by **J. McCaig** and seconded by **I. Drummond**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: Secretary's Annual Report: Paper 4.1

6. **The Secretary** referred to his annual report already circulated and highlighted the following;

Membership matters

7. He drew attention to a net increase of 19 members on the previous year, which was a very positive outcome given the challenges involved, and gives us confidence that our advertising strategy and the changes in our charging regime are having some success. Nevertheless, there remained much to be done in order to maintain our membership numbers at a viable level over the longer term.
8. He again highlighted the need to improve our marketing of Cobbinshaw across social media. The board has been aware of this for some time, and it was raised at last year's AGM, but it does not currently have the skills to take this forward. The Secretary again asked for volunteers from within the membership to join a sub-group of the board to help take it forward. Anyone interested should contact the Secretary.
9. He reiterated previous statements that the best source of recruitment were our current membership, and he asked all members to try and encourage other anglers to join the Association. More members will allow us to further improve the excellent facilities we currently have and help keep costs down.

Fishing matters

10. He advised that he would cover these when discussing the 2025 proposed stocking plan at **Paper 7.1**.

Questions from the floor

11. **W. Woods** commented that he did not think that the CAA website was working well, but that the Facebook content was good and that the keepers deserved praise for this, and asked why the website was poor. **The Secretary** responded indicating that problems with the website had been noted over the season and explained in his report. CAA uses Yola as a low cost internet management tool, but a number of technical issues had been experienced that included missing uploads. The secretary always uploads approved minutes as soon as possible on the website and paper copies are posted in the cabin.
12. **M. Gordon** asked why the opening date had been delayed by one week and was not on or around the 14th of March as in previous years. **The Secretary** explained that the opening date had been delayed because of a heavy pre-season workload for the fishery staff combined with several uncertainties relating to fish deliveries [which are ongoing], key equipment deliveries and re-locating the cages to a new site. On balance, the board felt that a week's delay provided time to ensure all these works were completed ahead of opening. The potential loss of rod income [estimated at around 50 rods] was taken in to account but, all things considered, the board felt that the safest option in the circumstances was to delay by a week. Enquiries post-AGM also confirmed that we could not get lorry fish delivered before w/c 23 March which, combined with administrative and other unforeseen issues arising, made earlier opening impracticable this year. On the plus side, the delay has allowed us to increase the initial stocking to 1600 fish, which should improve early catches.
13. There were no more questions for the Secretary and the Chair moved on to the next Agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Treasurers Annual Report and Accounts; Papers 5.1 and 5.2:

14. **The Treasurer** presented his report and accounts to the meeting. He did not go over his report in detail and instead focussed on the following:

Overall financial position

15. Historically the association has seen a declining membership with increasing financial losses which culminated in a loss of £35k in 2024. Continued losses necessitated radical changes in our charging regime which were approved at an EGM in November 2024. The aim of the series of inter-related measures agreed at the EGM was to bring the accounts back into profit and secure the future of the Association. This was not seen as an instant solution but a staged improvement in financial performance that included merging of memberships categories, a reduction in subscriptions, an increase in fishing charges and the introduction of club day membership.
16. We again made a loss this year of £15,923: a considerable improvement on the financial performance in 2024 of nearly £20,000, but still a loss. Nevertheless the improvement shows that we are on the right track to reduce the losses completely and get our accounts back in to profit. The end target is for a consistent profit of around £15,000 per annum to finance capital replacements and maintain the estate and equipment. This level of profit is considered a viable level for the association to operate at.

Budget setting process

17. To help members understand how the board arrived at proposals to increase charges etc, the Treasurer described the budget setting process. He explained that the overriding principle was that we had to generate sufficient income to cover our costs plus a profit to finance capital spend and carry out maintenance, otherwise we would simply go bust.
18. He confirmed that costs could be estimated with a reasonable degree of confidence, with salaries in 2026 being around £78k, fish costs being around £70k and running costs around £43k. This total of £191k, plus an expected profit figure, determines the anticipated or required income level.
19. By contrast, he emphasised that income is very difficult to accurately estimate due to a number of factors that are out with our control [around membership and rod numbers] and is effectively an informed guess.
20. He explained that estimated 2026 subscription income was based on 255 full paying members. This reflects an overall estimated membership of 275, with the difference being 20 Honorary members who do not have to pay an annual subscription and can make donations instead. He acknowledged that the estimate of 275 is conservative and below the current membership of 289, but experience has taught us that we need to be cautious when predicting membership income. He also advised that we have a awaiting list of 14 potential members and an overall target of 25 new members this year. In summary, we have estimated subscription income at around £81k.

21. Rod income is also difficult to estimate with members in general fishing less often for various reasons, and this has the biggest impact on income. To illustrate: in 2007 we had 6750 rods fishing over the season; in 2025, excluding clubs, we had a total of 3280 rods, of which 2920 were fished by members and the remainder by guests. The fall in rod numbers has not just affected income but it has also identified significant unused boat capacity, hence the financial necessity to open up Cobbinshaw to clubs. The 2026 budget includes an estimate of 3200 member rods with an income of around £70k, plus guest income of £13k.
22. Regarding clubs, the Treasurer made clear that the income derived from club / day membership bookings are now essential to securing the future of the Association. The 2026 income is estimated at £26k with 500 boats booked: this is the equivalent of £105 on subscriptions per member that would have been needed to achieve the same financial input. Whilst highlighting the financial benefits of club bookings, he pointed out that it increased the pressure on boat bookings, and despite the considerable spare boat capacity we currently have, he recommended that members book their boats early to avoid disappointment. He also reminded members that single anglers had a duty to share a boat with another member if all other boats were booked out.
23. He summarised the 2026 forecast accounts as follows: overall income for the year is estimated at £196k; overall expenditure is estimated at £191k; giving an estimated profit of £5k. Whether we achieve these results is dependent on a range of factors, some of which are in the lap of the gods. But members can help by:
- (a) Fishing the loch as often as they can
 - (b) Recruiting new members and / or bringing guests
 - (c) Encouraging clubs to book at Cobbinshaw
24. On capital expenditure the Treasurer emphasised that nothing lasts forever, and several expensive items were now in need of replacement or repair. He confirmed a 2-year capital expenditure programme of £36k, comprising; £15k for cage nets; £5k outboard motors; £7k on a new wheelie boat (net of grant); £5k on replacing pontoons, and; £1k on cabin painting / improvement. He added that the boat replacement programme would re-start, commencing with another wheelie boat that came with a £10k grant making it an attractive purchase. The overall plan was to replace the fleet gradually as finances allow with existing boats being sold to off-set purchases. He therefore asked for members to contact him if they new of anyone interested in purchasing a boat this year.
25. The Treasurer emphasised the good value that Cobbinshaw represented by comparing it with other fisheries in Scotland. He emphasised the quality of the facilities and the excellence of the two fishery staff. To maintain these benefits he also pointed out how important it was recruit new members. He advised that we would continue with magazine adverts and an Open Day, but also highlighted that the most successful recruitment source was our members, and he asked that they continue to ask friends and fishing colleagues to come and join Cobbinshaw.

2026 proposals to increase charges

26. Lastly, the Treasurer referred to the board's proposals to increase charges commencing season 2026 and his earlier explanation as to how these had been arrived at. He emphasised again that we could not run at a continuing loss and at a minimum we had to recover our costs, and the current year proposals had been determined accordingly. He felt that the increases were quite modest in the circumstances and reflected the board's staged approach to getting our finances back in to profit.

Questions from the floor

27. **A Member** sought clarification on how many club boats were allowed per day. **The Treasurer** replied that a max of 10 boats were allowed per day. He also advised that most club bookings were in the range of 4 to 7 boats, with only a few asking for 10 boats.
28. **A Member** asked what the kill limits were for this season. **The Treasurer** replied that it was a 4 fish limit for clubs and a 6 fish limit for members, per outing, the same as last year.
29. **A Member** asked whether the kill rate of 6 could be reduced in order to help make savings. **The Treasurer** explained the reasons for the higher limit in relation to current very low kill rates ie to try and reduce the number of fish that simply die off annually in the loch. He also advised that it provided increased value to members should they wish to kill fish. In terms of making savings, he advised that we could not reduce stocking further without it having a negative impact on catches.
30. **J Connell** asked if there were any possibilities for generating income from the fish that were caught and killed. **The Treasurer** responded saying that this had been investigated and current legislation meant that it was very difficult to sell or even donate the fish due to food safety legislation. The only outlet he was aware of was the possibility of giving fish to a local zoo to feed animals but this also required some additional work for the fishery staff. Ian

Drummond commented that there was a box at the Tarn Fishery for killed fish which were then donated to the local 5 sisters zoo.

31. **E. McGee** commented that he considered a flat rate fee per angler for both single and two angler boats to be an anomaly and at odds with normal practise at other commercial fisheries and asked if we should charge more for single anglers. **The Treasurer** answered that the board had not considered this particular aspect as this was deemed to be a perk for members which allowed them to choose whether they wish to fish alone or as a pair. The current system of charging a single rate per angler per session had replaced a previous mechanism that had a flat boat charge which was considered to be unfair. The current mechanism works out at an equal charge per fish and facilitates maximum flexibility on booking [which is a key benefit of membership]. Also, increasing the cost to a single angler would make it more expensive for them, likely discouraging memberships.
32. **I. Prentice** asked if a member can ask to share a boat if there are single anglers and no other boats available. **The Treasurer** answered, YES, advising that this is specifically covered in para 6(h) of the Fishing Regulations. Whilst not compulsory, he felt that it would be selfish of a member not to share a boat in those circumstances.
33. **W. Woods** asked if the keepers can enforce the sharing of boats. **The Treasurer** referred to his previous reply, adding that the keepers can certainly "ask" a single angler to share but it currently cannot be enforced.
34. **A Member** commented that he agreed with the flat rate per session but expressed his concern about the increased cost to a single angler who fished the loch frequently e.g. two to three times a week. **The Treasurer** referred to his earlier comments on how the increases were arrived at - in short, we need to recover our costs and the proposed increases were quite modest in the circumstances.
35. **I. Prentice** asked if there was a cancellation fee for clubs if they cancelled at the last minute. **The Treasurer** replied that bookings cancelled within a week may be charged but so far we have operated flexibly to encourage bookings.
36. **S. Maxwell** asked if the guest rate should be lowered to encourage new member introductions. **The Treasurer** answered that the guest rate needs to be high enough to discourage membership sharing and the current charge rate has been set to achieve this. He added that whilst it may seem high it is still considerably cheaper than like-for-like charges in commercial fisheries, which hopefully will encourage guests to join rather than continue to fish as a guest. He concluded by advising that historically it used to be 3 times the rate for a member rod. Also, he confirmed that the Open Day provided a free opportunity for anyone wishing to try the facilities.
37. **W. Woods** stated that he recognised the financial issues affecting the club and suggested that the annual sub could be increased by a further £5 and maintain the fishing charges at the proposed levels. **The Treasurer** replied saying that the board had considered various options around existing charge rates and had opted for the current proposal as part of a staged approach to profitability. An increase of £5 on the subscriptions would only generate an extra circa £1250, which in the scheme of things would not have much impact.
38. **A Member** asked if there had been any feedback from the clubs who had finished at Cobbinshaw in 2025. **The Treasurer** advised that feedback had been very positive. He added that in general clubs honoured their bookings and fished regardless of poor weather.
39. **A Member** asked if the entry fee for new members was still set at £50. **The Treasurer** confirmed that this was the case.
40. **E. McGee** asked if the end of June was the best time to hold the Open Day as fishing then could be difficult and not give the best impression of Cobbinshaw to prospective members. **The Treasurer** noted and agreed, and said that alternative dates will be considered going forward.
41. **R. Hunter** asked the Treasurer to explain whether **R. Brough's** proposal to re-instate a four-hourly session at £15, which was not included in the meeting papers, had been addressed by the board in accordance with our constitution. Before replying, **the Treasurer** advised that the matter would have been raised under AOB for sake of completeness and transparency. He also advised that Mr Brough could not attend the meeting due to health issues.
42. **The Treasurer** made clear that the board's consideration of Mr Brough's proposal had been made fully in compliance with our rules, despite late receipt of the proposal. He explained that under current rules such proposals from members required to be submitted in time for them to be included in the AGM papers, plus the proposal required a minimum of 20 members in support of the proposal. The AGM papers were issued on 9 December and the formal proposal was received on 19 December along with 20 names listed as support, some 10 days after the due date. The Treasurer wrote to Mr Brough advising him that the proposal would nonetheless be accepted for the meeting subject to his supporters providing written confirmation of their intention to support the proposal. He also advised that he would copy them his email responses to Mr Brough so that they had full information before making a final decision [it transpired that Mr Brough had not provided them with any financial case to support his

proposal]. Following this series of communications, only 3 members confirmed their support in writing, with 14 withdrawing their support and 5 not responding. In these circumstances the proposed motion did not carry sufficient support for it to be included in the AGM papers.

43. **The Treasurer** also advised that he had explained to Mr Brough several times in writing that the proposal was not viable as it would result in a drop in income of circa £20k which would need to be recovered by either increases in charges or a reduction in costs, neither of which was practicable in current circumstances. If implemented without these compensating changes to income or expenditure, the proposal would put the Association back in to losses and potential bankruptcy. He also explained that the proposal effectively reversed a key change in our charging structure that was unanimously approved by the members at an EGM in 2024. He had also offered to meet with Mr Brough on several occasions to explain in detail but the offer was not taken up.
44. **Mr Hunter** thanked the Treasurer for his explanation, and updated the meeting on Mr Brough's situation, advising that he was now home and his condition was slowly improving. **The Treasurer** thanked him for the update and asked that he pass on our best wishes for his return to fitness.
45. **The Chair** brought questions to a close and asked for a proposer and seconder to approve the Treasurer's Report and Accounts: Proposed **I.Drummond**; Seconded **E. Fox**.

AGENDA ITEM 6: Chairman's Report; Paper 6.1

46. John Glynn indicated that the chairman's annual report was included in the AGM pack and read some additional comments from Mr D. Moon.
47. He then invited comments or questions. No comments or questions were received.

AGENDA ITEM 7: Stocking proposal 2025; Paper 7.1

48. **The Chair** passed this matter to the Secretary to lead.
49. **The Secretary** referred to the board's stocking proposal and related matters as set out in **Paper 7.1**.

Stocking plan 2026

The Secretary addressed paper 7.1 highlighting that the double use of cages would increase the throughput of fish, allowing an increase in the average size of fish being stocked, and hopefully avoid variability in stocking size which can be a problem with lorry fish. Additionally, the stocking policy would lower fish costs and increase the number of larger fish above 2 pounds that are stocked annually.

The Secretary also specifically highlighted the excellent work of the fishery staff in rearing high quality fish.

No comments or questions were received, and the stocking proposals were **passed unanimously**.

2025 catch returns

50. The Secretary referred to his report summarising the 2025 season, and the catch return included in the AGM pack which summarised rod numbers, catches and stocking over the 2025 season.
51. He commented that 2025 had been a good season despite some challenging weather conditions over the late summer. However he noted that we had been less affected than several other fisheries in Scotland, and certainly much less so than many in England. Nevertheless he reminded members that climate change remained a major challenge going forward.

Questions from the floor

52. **D. Farmer** asked whether the Association still planned to install aeration equipment in the loch. **The Secretary** confirmed that remains a priority, specifically to help protect the cage fish when water temperatures are high by improving oxygen levels around the cage area. However initial enquiries identified cost and technical issues that need to be addressed to make it both affordable and effective. Investigations are continuing.

AGENDA ITEM 8: Proposed changes to Articles and Regulations; Paper 8.1

53. The Chairman handed over to the Secretary to lead on this item.

54. The Secretary referred to the proposed changes set out in **Paper 8.1**.

Changes to Articles of Association

Proposal (a): To retain the existing limit of £5000 on single signatory payments / orders by the Treasurer

55. This was a special resolution requiring a two-thirds majority.

56. **Approved unanimously.**

Proposed changes to Operating Regulations

Proposal (b): To amend fees and charges for 2026 season as follows:

57. The Secretary referred to earlier discussions on these proposals under the Treasurer's Report and called for a vote, the results of which were as follows:

Proposal	For	Against	Status
i. Annual subscription: increase of £15	82	1	Approved
ii. Full member fishing charge increase of £2 per session	82	1	Approved
iii. Day member fishing charge increased by £3 per session	83	0	Approved
iv. Guest rate increase of £3 per session	81	2	Approved
v. Bank fishing and pike fishing charges increased commensurably with above	83	0	Approved

Proposal (c): To amend the Club Booking Regulations by allowing club bookings on Tuesday's and Thursday's

58. **Approved unanimously.**

Proposed updating of Pike Regulations

Proposal (d): To approve up-dated Pike Fishing Regulations

59. **W. Woods** asked why there was a limit on the number of guests for pike fishing. **The Secretary** replied that this was considered necessary to help better manage the fishing, maintain the health of the fish and avoid overfishing.

60. **W. Woods** asked if there was still a two person boat limit for pike fishing. **The Secretary** confirmed that was the case.

61. **Approved unanimously.**

AGENDA ITEM 9: Election of Office Bearers

Election of Chair

62. The incumbent Chair - Mr D. Moon - was willing to stand again. There being no other volunteers, **Mr Moon was duly re-elected.**

Election of Secretary / Treasurer

63. These posts were now combined, per the relevant motion passed earlier in the meeting. The incumbent - Mr AW Anderson - was willing to stand again. There being no other volunteers, **Mr Anderson was duly re-elected.**

AGENDA ITEM 10: Appointment of Directors

64. The Chair advised that there were two vacancies to be filled on the board for which there were currently 2 volunteers - **Mr R. Adams and Mr A. Fisher**, and asked if there were any other persons interested in those positions.
65. In the absence of any other volunteers, Mr Adams and Mr Fisher **were duly elected** to the board subject to final vetting at the next board meeting.
66. The Chair took this opportunity to thank all directors for their services over the past year, and especially the outgoing directors [of which he is one].

AGENDA ITEM 11: Appointment of Auditor

67. Mr R. Haidinger was willing to stand again. There being no other volunteers, **Mr Haidinger was duly appointed**.

AGENDA ITEM 12: AOB

AGM venue

68. **A Member** asked if the AGM could be moved to another location with better access and less background noise/disturbance, and suggested we look at Pumpherston Golf Club which apparently offered better facilities and likely be much cheaper. **The Secretary** commented that Deer Park was especially convenient being close to the main transport routes and therefore an ideal location especially in the event of poor January weather. Nevertheless he agreed to investigate and report back to the board.
69. **J. McCaig** asked if it would be possible to install and use a wood burning stove to heat the cabin in order to save electricity costs. **The Secretary** replied that this had been considered but rejected due to installation costs, increased fire risks and tightening regulations on their operation. He advised that the board were investigating cheaper and more efficient alternatives to the existing old-style water tank.
70. **I. Drummond** asked if solar panels might also provide a lower running costs solution to power requirements for the cabin. **The Secretary** said that he was currently obtaining advice from a member on the costs and practicalities of installing solar panels to help reduce energy costs across the estate.
71. **W. Woods** asked if anything had been done at all regarding media for example contacting the West Lothian college. **The Secretary** confirmed that more than one college had been contacted but all wanted to charge for their services. He also reminded members that anyone with media expertise would be very welcome on a sub group to help improve our media profile.
72. **N. Brechley** asked if CAA had considered an online booking scheme and a digital payment mechanism for the fishery. **The Secretary** advised that this had already been discussed by the board but several practical and financial aspects meant that it was impracticable to proceed. The main issue had been poor internet connection which fundamentally ruled these out, but recent technology improvements [**NB** cited Starlink] now offered a workable option. However he added that there remained significant workload issues and financial costs that continue to make these changes impracticable. He recognised that down the line cash will become less available / used and card payments will be inevitable but for now the existing arrangements work well.
73. He further commented that same general argument applies to online booking, ie the current system works well, offering maximum flexibility to members [many of whom are not internet savvy and would be put off using an online system] whilst still providing some degree of control by the fishery staff, which is especially important in managing club bookings.
74. He also advised that discussions are ongoing with the association's telephone suppliers to change the existing copper line to a digital connection which should improve existing connectivity and reduce costs.
75. **K. McCormick** asked about the environmental improvements that could be made around the margins of the loch and the possibility of funding from the operators of the nearby wind farms. **The Secretary** replied much of the land was privately owned and access restrictions limited the opportunity to undertake planting. However on those areas where we controlled access via our lease with Scottish Canals we had planted several hundred hawthorn and willow trees, with much of the planting being done by Murray Gordon and Bob Brough. We had also helped negotiate government grants to the farmer to enable some areas on the South shore to be fenced and planted. The board will look at further opportunities to plant suitable saplings. **I. Prentice** commented that part of the area around Sandy Bay was designated a SSSI, with associated limitations.

76. The Secretary also advised that there is little potential for direct funding from the wind farm operators as their licence agreements channel local funding via the local development trusts. We received a grant from the local trust in the past - for the wheelie boat - and a similar approach will be made again this year.
77. **W. Woods** asked if the club bookings sheet would be available to members in order that they know when club days are in prospect. **The Secretary** confirmed that the club booking diary would be available at the loch.
78. **R. Hunter** asked if the cages were to be moved as per earlier proposals. **The Secretary** confirmed they were going to a new location in 2026, with two new anchors already installed. The cages will be attached to those and two of the old anchors thereby moving them more towards the railway shore.

AGENDA ITEM 13: Presentation of trophies

79. **The Secretary** reported that the heaviest fish trophy was won by **Craig Cowan** for a fish of 11 pound 1 ounce, caught on a Purple Throbber.
80. The Brown Trout Trophy was not awarded.

CLOSE

81. **The Chairman** closed the meeting at 13:30 and thanked all present for their attendance.

AW Anderson
Honorary Secretary
On behalf of the board of directors
January 2026.