



The President, Peter Spillett, took the Chair and welcomed members.

Present: 31 members

1. Apologies: Richard Noble

2. Minutes of Forty-Sixth Annual General meeting

These had been previously circulated and were agreed.

3. Chairman's Report

This the 47th year of the Institute is another milestone in the history of our organisation. As we head up to our 50th Anniversary we can look back with great pride on the work and achievements of the Institute. It has been an extremely busy, successful and yet difficult year.

Since our last AGM, Council has met on a number of occasions and moved forward the Institute's strategy's, reviewing its finances and insuring that the Institute is relevant to today's fisheries needs. The new look Executive has worked well. This has resulted in the Institute successfully offering new training opportunities, advocating more on behalf of better fisheries management and collaborating more with like-minded groups.

I wish firstly to take this opportunity to thank members of Council and the Executive for their time and dedication to the work of the Institute. In a time when we are all time poor it is great to see such commitment. In a difficult year for the Institute I would like to thank particularly our President Peter Spillett and acting Executive Director Ian Dolben for their help and advice.

It is at this time, over the last few years I would turn to John to thank him and he would shrug his shoulders, in his quiet way as if to say I did nothing.

John was a great man, one of life's gentlemen and a good friend. He gave hugely to the Institute over many years. In recent years John was the driving force behind the modernisation of the Institute and building partnerships with like minded bodies.

John had great ambitions for the Institute which we discussed on many occasions. How more members could get involved, how the Institute could improve the professionalism of those involved in fisheries, and how we could improve our advocacy role for better fisheries management. Ensuring the Institute grows and continues into the future would be the best way we can remember him.

The Institute's 46th Annual Conference hosted by South West Branch was held in Plymouth, on the theme of "Extreme Fisheries" and was a great success.

The Institute continues to attract good numbers to our specialist conferences and workshops. Paul Coulson, our Operations Director, ably assisted by Iain Turner, offered a wide range of diverse subjects; from Eel passage to Mapping for Fisheries; from Farming and Fisheries to Fish Tagging and Telemetry, to mention but a few. I should say that these specialist conferences will continue in 2017, with one of the highlights being the second International Eel Science Symposium to be held at London Zoo in June 2017.

Iain, together with Paul, Ian Wellby and Mike Lee have toured the country giving talks to college and university students in all regions on the work of the Institute and the Industry.

Our Training Section under the Chairmanship of Ian Wellby, Training Director concluded discussions with the Environment Agency, on the development of a bespoke training course for new fisheries staff. The degree level programme is designed to help new staff to better understand the main issues affecting stillwater fisheries. The programme will comprise 6 modules and a project over the two years. Each of the modules has been written and will be delivered by an industry expert. They will also have an internal mentor to help guide them. Part of the duties of these new staff will be to work with local stillwater fisheries owners and to help them formulate a fishery action plan.

Our long standing Fisheries Management courses continue to be well supported with new groups showing interest. We have been requested by the Prison Service to make our Certificate course available to prisoners. In addition, all of our courses will shortly be available to the Armed Services for military personal who intend to leave the service. The funding for this programme will be met by the Armed Services training department.

Our Branches continued to work closely with local members and continue to host activities, such as the Scottish Branches very successful Bailiff Course and a new practical course on netting techniques. Also the Branch continues to work with the Government to develop a new model for the management of fisheries through its stakeholders, setting out a more holistic governance system than pertains at present. This new model is to be implemented next year, with the Institute will be to the fore in developing and accrediting a staff training programme.

In Wales it's worth noting that the Branch elected the first whole new female committee to be chaired by Nicola Teague.

The London Branch had another busy year with talks from a range of speakers including our own Paul Coulson, as well as Sarah Chare of the EA. There was also an archaeology walk of the Thames and an evening of presentations by Kings College Students. Steve Colclough and Iain Turner supported both the Totally Thames and Tide Fest events last month, with practical fish surveys and fishy knowledge going down very well as always.

The Institute continues to develop programmes for NGO's. The Institute has been involved with the Angling Trust in the development and delivery of workshops on fisheries enforcement, which also includes the monitoring for non-native species, biosecurity and H&S.

We have also joined up with the Atlantic Salmon Trust to develop a new course designed to allow citizen scientists to assess the small streams and rivers in their area. The IFM has accredited the training materials and will certificate all successful trainees

Under our Finance Director, Richard Noble, the Institutes finances continue to be in a good state. This despite a difficult year in which major issues required to be addressed. Changes in the Tax legislation required the Institute to pay substantial taxes on our investments. Also the increase in the Institute's turnover from its activities has brought us into the 'VATable' area. Richard will discuss these issues later. Thankfully our investments have grown over the years and we are now able to reinvest some of these funds in our operations.

Unfortunately Richard has indicated that he will be stepping down as Finance Director due to increased work and family commitments. I would like to thank Richard for his excellent work over the last numbers of years.

Membership remained steady, but we need to seek ways to increase it. The Membership Committee under the chairmanship of Ian Dolben, Membership Director is developing initiatives to increase membership.

Adrian Taylor, External Affairs Director has been coordinating responses to consultations and statements. He has also been networking with external bodies to promote the aims of the Institute. Adrian has also been collaborating with Paul, Iain Turner and others to improve our Website, Face book and Twitter accounts.

Our excellent magazine FISH, under the editorship of Lawrence Talks continues to be received positively. In an exciting new development, being led by Aidrian and Lawrence, a digital copy of FISH is being developed and will be launched in January 2017 and I would encourage people to get involved and submit articles to Lawrence.

Miran Aprahamian our newly appointed Director of Policy has commenced work on developing new and updating the old policies. One of the main issues facing fisheries management in the coming year will be Brexit. Recently Miran has worked with others members to submit a position statement to the Government's Environmental Audit Committee some of the implications of Brexit. This mainly from an Agricultural view point. Miran will be widening this out to cover all aspects of fisheries in the coming weeks.

The Institute continues to collaborate with NGO's and State agencies in many areas of Fisheries to advocate on behalf of sound fisheries management, making submissions, supporting campaigns and developing new programmes. I would like to express our gratitude for their support and help.

Further afield we have continued to develop our long standing partnerships with **American Fisheries Society**. We have also received sponsorship from a wide variety of groups which we greatly appreciate.

Finally I would like to thank the members and non-members who volunteer to implement the work of the Institute, without whom we could not operate. It is heartening to see the dedication of people associated with fisheries in seeking to educate, protect and enhance fisheries and I think John and the many others who brought the IFM to this stage of development would be proud of what has been achieved. So get involved in the fisheries challenges ahead and recommend IFM to your colleagues

4. Treasurer's report

In the absence of the Treasurer, the acting Executive Secretary read out the following:

Firstly, please accept my apologies for not being able to attend the conference and AGM again this year, this time of year is professionally very busy for me and as this is read out I will be just finishing a day of surveys in deepest darkest Yorkshire and about to start a 2 hour drive home. I hope that you have a successful and enjoyable conference.

Secondly, please accept my further sincere apologies that I am not able to present and report on the final audited accounts for 2015. 2016 has been a year of significant change for me personally, with the birth of my first child, Dylan, in May - as you can imagine I have not had the time I would have liked to contribute to the IFM as director of finance. I have also spent the vast majority of the last 2 months on field surveys with my day job - it's great to be busy but the spare time I used to have after fieldwork is now my turn to baby sit. It has also been a year of great challenges for the IFM. Although I know the timing is not great I know that I need to stand down from the role as director of finance after 6 years and pass the baton to someone new who can contribute more than I can and do the job to the standard I would like to do myself. I will assist with a transition period as we will need, as a team, to transform the Institute's finances and accounting as the Institute becomes much more active and moves from strength to strength.

Although the primary reason I am unable to present finalised accounts is that I have not had the time recently to complete them with the auditors, another reason they have taken longer than usual is that during 2016 we have had cause to ask our current payroll services provider, Andrew M. Girling & Co., to also become our accountants and auditors. I will briefly summarise the accounts from 2015 and the reasons for these changes.

Firstly, the overall accounts from 2015 was as planned one of a deficit (in the region of £27,000) as we invest in the future of the Institute through our commitment to our full time staff. This is a better situation than in 2014 as our conference and training surpluses were better in 2015 due to the sterling work of our staff and volunteers. I will complete the final auditing of the accounts with Girlings in the near future and present them to council for approval, when they will also be published on the website.

Our International Investment Bond was valued at £489,143 which was slightly down from £515,013 the previous year - this is despite the withdrawal of £40,000 to support the salaries and development of the institute. It was following this withdrawal that St James Place informed us that changes to accounting standards meant that we were liable to corporation tax (20%) on any growth realised from the investment and that in addition, new standards meant that we would have to revalue the bond each year and be liable for tax on growth since the start of the investment. Further to this we have discovered that we were liable for tax on our previous withdrawals something that we had been led to believe didn't apply to the small amounts we were withdrawing. Given this, and the additional fact that were we to want to become a charitable organisation we would not be allowed to hold an international investment bond, the Council decided upon advice to cash-in the international bond, lay aside our tax liability and re-invest £400,000 in a new, more appropriate Unit Trust. This is currently valued in August 2016 at £426,123. The good news is that SJP have accepted that they will cover our tax liability on historical withdrawals and any costs/penalties we may incur in reporting these to the HMRC.

Given that we needed to seek advice on our historical corporation tax liability, we have commissioned Girlings as our accountants and auditors (I personally would like to thank Mike Axford who was auditor for the previous years I was treasurer) and I am in the process of auditing the 2015 accounts, reviewing our tax status and also putting in place new book keeping and accounting processes with them to streamline the work of the Institute's treasurer. During this process Girlings are also reviewing our VAT status, since as the Institute grows and becomes more active it is possible that we will exceed (or may have already exceeded) the threshold for VAT registration. This is an issue I hope to resolve in the near future and report to council in the near future.

Obviously, the outlook for the 2016 financial position will indicate that we will have a large tax liability in 2016 and that we are also committed to using our investments to fund the role of new development officer. However, the outlook for the institute's income from our core activities of training and conferences is very positive as we move towards a position where we are in a position of financial surplus to further support our members and activities.

Once again my apologies for not being with you; I wish you an enjoyable conference dinner.

5. Election of Officers and Council Members

(The President vacated the Chair)

Election of President: Peter Spillett was nominated and approved nem con.

(The President resumed the Chair)

Election of Vice Presidents:

Dr D. Cragg-Hine, A. Neville Jones, V. Holt and R.L. Welcomme were elected nem con.

For Council vacancies, to retire in 2019:

**retiring in accordance with Rule 5(A) but eligible for re-election*

Richard Noble*, Jim Lyons*, Adrian Taylor*, Chris Mills, M Aprahamian.

Proposed I Wellby, seconded Steve Colclough, agreed unanimously.

To be elected under rule 5 (E) to fill casual vacancy caused by resignation of Keith Hendry.
Robert Clark

Proposed Jim Lyons, seconded Adrian Williams, agreed unanimously.

6. Subscriptions

- a. Annual subscriptions: Council recommends that there be no increase in subscriptions which currently stand at:-

Registered Member	£70
Associate Member	£60
Affiliate Member	£35
Student Member	£10
Subscriber Member	£35
Corporate Member	£90 to £170 depending on category

Agreed.

b. Proposal to increase CEnv fees

The Society for the Environment has increased the fee charged for new Chartered Environmentalists to £80 in 2016. The Institute has not increased the fee charged for new CEnvs since 2011 and so Council is recommending that the cost to new Registrants is increased to £70. The fees will then be (current fees in brackets):

Initial application: £25.00 (£25.00)

Professional Review: £50.00 (£50.00)

Joining and First Year fee: £70.00 (£60.00)

Ian Dolben proposed the increase in the fee charged to new CEnvs. Agreed.

7. Appointment of auditors

Proposed that we appoint Girlings Ltd by I Welby; seconded Lawrence Talks, agreed unanimously.

8. Questions from members

Members present asked questions on involvement in council meetings, the value of branches in recruitment of members, and the usefulness of descriptions of various Institute roles being available.

The Meeting closed at 7pm