

From
To

Subject: Re: Rudby Neighbourhood Plan: Regulation 14 Consultation

Date: Fri, 9 Jul 2021 16:21

Attachments: Wild Trout Trust Awards Final Application 170719.docx (1090K),
Table 2 summary of survey fishing survey results.docx (19K)

Hi Allan,

I have just read the draft Plan. It is a tremendous piece of work. Thank you and your team for the effort you have all put into it and congratulations on the high standard of its content and presentation. It should be of great value to the village.

There is some evidence which may help to emphasize the value of the River Leven as an amenity for the enjoyment of the local community:

In 2019 the Hutton Rudby Fly Fishing Club won the 2019 Wild Trout Trust award for the conservation of brown trout for its entry describing "The Leven Wild Fishery Project". Briefly the award was for "rewilding" the river: creating a wild, indigenous brown trout fishery in which the river habitat for fish was improved so that stocking with farm-bred fish was no longer necessary and analysing members' catch records over 10 years to show the resulting wild fishery was viable and successful for members. I have attached the application we made, which describes the project. It is a longish document but the first two sections ("Site/project background" and "Project objectives") describe the project in 400 words. I have attached one reference which summarises Club members' responses to a survey of their satisfaction with the project. In this the last question was:

9. We plan to encourage an even more natural state to encourage an increase in fish stocks. This may make the fishing more challenging. Do you agree with this policy?	% responses
agree	45 % strongly agree
	45 % agree
	10 % neutral

I've singled out this response because it shows the strong enthusiasm for the rewilding of the river even though the fishing could be more difficult. Also, the natural environment, wild life, peace and tranquillity of the river had the most mentions for reasons to enjoy fishing on the Leven.

I think all the work put into the rewilding of the river Leven, the national recognition of this work and the members' enthusiasm for the results strengthen the requirement that housing development in the village should not negate any of the work, nor should it frustrate future work in this direction. For instance housing development should neither overload sewage disposal facilities nor cause extra polluted run-off from hard surfaces to pollute the river.

I know that there is great appreciation in the village for the beauty of the River Leven valley through the village but it occurred to me that this award provides quantitative evidence to back this up, which has been assessed by an independent national organisation and may be of value to you in distilling out a few extra words to strengthen the protection of a natural amenity we have been lucky to have inherited.

Having said all this the promised Government reform of planning laws has been worrying. This week in The Times newspaper there was a brief report saying that several wild life organisations believe the reforms will "oust nature and people from the planning system" together with a counter statement from the Government. Do you have information that Neighbourhood Plans will still have the influence and weight they were originally intended to have? For instance I've just found a document (from "Locality.org.uk") I saved in 2020 which says NPs may not be able allocate sites for development under the new planning system. It would be good to hear some good news on this!

I hope this has been helpful and thanks again for all your work - John.

On 05/07/2021 18:42, Allan Mortimer wrote:

Dear Residents,

We have reached an important stage of the Neighbourhood Plan, the 'Regulation 14' Consultation. From now on the process is tightly defined by statutory regulations, and this consultation is your opportunity over the next 8 weeks to say what you think about the draft Plan which has been published on the [consultation webpage](#) today.

The Plan has been developed taking into account all of the consultation and evidence gathering work we have carried out so far to which many of you have contributed. The Plan aims to deliver things you have told us are important to you. Any comments made during this consultation will be taken into consideration during the preparation of the Submission Version of the Plan before we send it to Hambleton for examination. After examination it will be your decision, through a referendum, whether the Plan is to be approved.


You can access the Plan and supporting documents through the [consultation webpage](#). Copies of the Plan are also available at the Hub for inspection, and we will be running a few 'drop-in' format information events at the village hall between 19 July and 8 August where you can ask questions.

Towards the end of this week or over the weekend every household in the Parish should receive a copy of the attached leaflet which gives some more information on how to participate in the consultation. You can give feedback using an on-line survey hosted on the [consultation webpage](#), by a response form you can download from the [consultation webpage](#), or by email to rudbyparishcouncil.surveys@gmail.com.

Please take this opportunity to give feedback to ensure that the Plan reflects the consensus of the Parish community.

On behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group & Parish Council
Allan Mortimer
Steering Group Chairman




9. We plan to encourage even an more natural state to encourage an increase in fish stocks. This may make the fishing more challenging.	% responses
Do you agree with this policy?	45 % strongly agree
45 % agree	
10 % neutral	

 NP Leaflet Reg 14 Consultation (July 2021).png

The Wild Trout Trust Conservation Awards Entry Form 2019

This entry form and appropriate supporting information (see guidance below) should be sent via e-mail to office@wildtrout.org to arrive on or before Wednesday 31 July 2019.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS AN INITIAL APPLICATION. THE JUDGING PANEL WILL COMPILE A SHORT-LIST FOR TELEPHONE/SKYPE INTERVIEW, CONSIDERING ASPECTS SUCH AS CONSERVATION VALUE, APPROPRIATENESS OF THE SCHEME FOR THE SITE/PROJECT, FUNDING AND VALUE FOR MONEY, TECHNIQUES USED, IMPACT ON WILD TROUT, SUSTAINABILITY, LOCAL INVOLVEMENT, EASE OF ACCESS AND POST-PROJECT MANAGEMENT. SHORT-LISTED APPLICANTS WILL PROVIDE FURTHER DETAIL OF THEIR PROJECTS THROUGH THE INTERVIEW PROCESS.

Name of the Lead Applicant: Mr. John D. Gifford, Committee member.	
 TS15 0HU	
Telephone: 	
Email: 	
Club / Organisation & Partners: Hutton Rudby Fly Fishing Club N.B. if you win an Award, what is in this box is what will appear on your framed Certificate	
Entry for the Award Category of: Outstanding Habitat Improvement Project Outstanding Contribution to Wild Trout Conservation (Highlight the category you believe applicable to your entry; see guidance below)	
Project Name: Leven Wild Fishery Project	
Location (Name of river, lake etc, if applicable): River Leven, North Yorkshire	
Site/Project Background words (Why this site?): Background	Maximum 200

This is the story of how, from 1989 to 2019, the members of a small village fishing club which had stocked its river with farm-bred trout for 100 years, developed an ambition to create a naturally sustainable wild trout fishery in beautiful surroundings rich in native wild plants, birds and animals.

Most of the narrative deals with decisions and actions in the last 10 years but the previous 20 years are also important. From 1989 to 2009 the Club members were learning from their experience and advice, principally from the E.A., the W.T.T. and the Tees Rivers Trust, what they wanted from their fishing so that by 2009 they were highly receptive to the idea of creating a wild fishery. It has been a 30 year process, learning together, to develop and realise this ambition.

The Club owns fishing rights on the River Leven through the village of Hutton Rudby and for 2 miles downstream towards Crathorne. (See Figure 1) The River Leven is an important tributary of the River Tees. It supports a good population of wild brown trout. The Environment Agency and the Tees Rivers Trust have been working with farmers to improve the water quality for decades. From the start of the 2019 season the club has also rented a stretch of the River Leven downstream from Crathorne. (Figure 2)

The scope of the work done in this project is described under four main headings:

Stocking Policy.

The club had stocked the river every year with 400 brown trout. The Club's ambition to make a wild trout fishery was initiated in 2009 by the E.A. suggesting the Club should base its stocking policy on its members' catch returns.

Fish Barrier Easement.

There are three major barriers to fish passage to spawning tributaries: two weirs adjacent to Church Bridge and an inadequate fish pass at the inlet from Coul Beck.

Habitat Management.

Up to 2009 the members' river improvement work was heavily "interventionist": changes to water flow were made by groynes, fallen trees or trees cut down to increase light to the river were dragged clear of the river.

There was virtually no in-channel plant life.

Club members were trained to "kick sample" the river fly life from 2007

Invasive species

The river banks are infested with Himalayan Balsam over large areas. The rented stretch of river is infested with Giant Hogweed.

Project Objectives

Maximum 200

words

(What did you set out to do?):

Stocking Policy

- Persuade our members to keep fishing logbooks to record the number of wild and stocked brown trout they caught each year.
- Stock the river as usual with 400 brown trout marked by clipping their adipose fins and a dye marker.
- Analyse the fishing returns to determine the value of stocking the river and our future stocking policy.
- Re-invest any money saved in habitat improvement.

Fish Barrier Easement

- Construct modifications recommended by the Environment Agency to the fish pass at Coul Beck and easements at the weirs adjacent to Church Bridge.

Habitat Management

- Engage the Wild Trout Trust to recommend where best to put further resources into habitat improvement.
- To implement these recommendations including planting water ranunculus to improve cover for fish, habitat for fly life or to improve water flow.
- Continue to monitor fly life populations in the river by kick sampling and share the results with the EA and the Riverfly Partnership.

Invasive Species

- To investigate the feasibility of strimming and innovative biological methods of eradicating the Himalayan Balsam.
- To eradicate infestations of Giant Hogweed.

What did you actually do?

Maximum 1000

words

(Describe how you initiated, planned, timed and completed the project including timescales, funding, costs, manpower etc; *include before & after photos*):

. Reference 1 summarises all the conservation work done by the Club from 1981 to 2019, including costs.

Stocking Policy.

- We invited our E.A. Fisheries Development Officer to our A.G.M. in 2009 to speak to members about the advantages of keeping logbooks for stocking policy and fishing quality management.
- Our members voted at that meeting to go ahead with the logbook trial.
- We designed fishing record logbooks based on Environment Agency advice so that the fish size categories matched E.A. size categories.

- We had the logbooks printed and supplied every member with one each year with a stamped, addressed envelope to encourage its return.
- In 2009 we stocked with our usual number of brown trout: 200 11” to 13” fish in March and June. These were marked by clipping their adipose fins under Environment Agency supervision and with a dye marker to show whether they were stocked in March or June.
- Over the following years a high percentage of members responded with very good records of fish caught.
- Their records were analysed to show catch rates for wild and stocked fish at the end of each season.
- Stock fish were shown to be very poor value: about 90% of members caught less than 3 stock fish for a cost of at least £25 per fish caught.
- After the Environment Agency stocked the river with small grayling in 2009 we re-designed the logbook to show grayling catches.
- Our members voted in 2010 to stop stocking on the basis of the analysis and have confirmed this policy at every Club AGM to 2019, having been notified in advance of the meeting that this item would be on the agenda.
- Our members have voted at every AGM since 2010 to spend the money saved from not stocking on river improvement rather than reducing subscriptions.
- Since 2016 the Club has had a website on which members can record their catches on-line by ‘phone or computer and record their fishing experiences in a members’ forum, which helps them to assess the current quality of fishing and fishing techniques likely to be successful.

Fish Barrier Easement

Coul Beck fish pass

- Club members fixed oak battens to the fish pass in a design recommended by the Environment Agency to assist fish passage. (See Figures 3 and 4 and Ref. 8)
- The Club also paid a local blacksmith to build a steel ladder fish pass fixed to the existing weir (See Figure 3)
- The Club paid a local builder to build a small holding pool at the foot of the weir to assist trout to make the first leap on to the fish pass (See Figure 4 and Ref. 8)

Church Bridge Weirs

- Club members, assisted a Tees Rivers Trust (TRT) officer to build easements to the TRT design as shown in pictures 5 and 6

Habitat Management.

- We had a survey of the river carried out in 2011 by Tim Jacklin of the Wild Trout Trust to determine how and where best to spend money to improve the river habitat.
- Club members carried out the measures recommended by the Wild Trout Trust which were within their capability (Tree felling and tying to banks for cover etc.) This included substantial improvements in flow and the creation of scour through using natural cover such as fallen trees to improve the topography of the river bed. Long, muddy-bottomed glides, for example, have been improved through fixing logs/trunks from the bankside to form V-shaped weirs. The associated improvements in flow-rate have changed the nature of the strata on the river bed which in turn facilitates a greater diversity of invertebrate life.
- We employed the Tees Rivers Trust to carry out the recommended work which members could not do (fabricate and fix log groynes, underwater cover and flow improvers)
- Members transplanted water ranunculus from a downstream stretch of the River Leven.
- Tree canopy cover which might previously have been pruned was selectively left to provide shade and protection from predators.
- Club members have regularly carried out kick samples of river flylife.

Invasive Species

Himalayan Balsam (HB)

- Large areas of the river banks were strimmed in 2005 and 2006 just before the seeds were mature. There was an immediate recovery of the native wild plants in the following year but the HB quickly re-colonised the strimmed areas. The cost of continuing strimming was found to be prohibitive.
- A committee member investigated the innovative work being done by CABI to control HB by infecting it with a rust which kills or weakens the plant and is specific to HB. He contacted CABI and after satisfying themselves that our sites were suitable they initiated a trial. Club members collected seeds of the HB so that rust specific to our HB could be grown. Club members assisted CABI to apply the rust to a trial area.

Giant Hogweed (GH)

- We have had one member trained to spray the GH and plan to have others trained with financial support from TRT

Finance

Consistent with our approach to using innovative techniques such as HB rust infestation and engaging specialist advice to assist us in designing habitat improvements, we have sought financial support from various

agencies to supplement our limited annual subscription income (c.£2,000 pa).

Most significantly, we were able to secure a grant of £5,000.00 from the Angling Trust which took the form of 'match-funding'. Using our carefully managed subscription income we drew down the full value of the grant, spending in total some £10,000.00 on the cost of materials and labour (provided at a subsidised cost by the TRT) to complement the very many hours of time/labour provided voluntarily by our membership.

See Reference 2 for a summary of all Club improvement work and associated expenditure and granted monies from 1981 to 2018.

Have the objectives been achieved?
words

Maximum 1000

(Describe how the project has affected the fishery e.g numbers of wild fish; benefits to other species; furthering conservation; has it solved the original problem? Has there been or is there to be monitoring?):

Stocking Policy

- Table 1 (sent separately) shows a summary of the analysis of fishing records from 2009 to 2018. Although the total fish and hours fished by members catches vary widely depending on which members fish and how often, the increasing fish catch rates indicate that the fishing quality has increased. Some enormous numbers of fish have been caught: one member catching about 650 fish in a season!
- In the seasons after the last stocking not a single stock fish was caught indicating that stock fish do not survive in the stocked stretch over winter.
- When the E.A. stocked the River Leven with small grayling our members' records showed their rapid growth rate and in 2013 the small grayling caught showed the grayling had bred in the river.
- Members' records also show one confirmed salmon parr caught.
- The fishing catch recording and analysis trial and the later provision of the Club website have led to a big increase in members' interest in the quality of fishing and communication with each other.

- This communication confirms members' enthusiasm for their fishing and the management of the Club fishing. The fact that at every AGM from 2010 to 2019 they have voted unanimously not to stock is strong evidence that the results of the policy change have been beneficial to our members. (This vote is always notified in advance of the meeting to ensure anyone opposed has the chance to speak and vote)
- The latest members' catch returns for 2018 show grayling are still present in the river and in 2019 members have provided photographic evidence of grayling catches of approximately 11lb. weight.

Fish Barrier Easements

- The easements built have survived to date. Observation suggests they do assist fish passage up the river but no numerical data is available.
- The 2019 WTT survey and report approve of the easements but suggest further improvements which can be made at low cost plus other more substantial possibilities to be considered.

Habitat Management

- The fly life kick sample results have identified a healthy mix of invertebrates spanning all the main orders and species. In the WTT report in 2019 the river is rated "moderate" for fish.
- Water ranunculus which members transplanted has spread throughout our stretch of river providing extra fish cover, habitat for fly life, flow improvement and adding enormously to the interest and beauty of the river. (See Figure 7.)
- The improved habitat has also contributed to the survival of the grayling population.
- Evidence of the spread of otters through the river includes spraints, footprints and actual sightings.
- Other predators frequently seen include dippers, kingfishers, heron and mergansers.
- The survey and report by the WTT in 2019 states the river has the potential to be a good wild brown trout fishery with a good population of naturally sustainable wild brown trout provided river improvement work is done by "working with nature".
- This report and comments at the river side by Gareth Pedley have encouraged the Club to make its ambition to: "work with nature" to create as near as possible a wild fishery supporting a good population of naturally sustainable brown trout.
- The local people who walk beside the river have benefitted: rather than interventions such as removing vegetation to make fishing easier they prefer to see the river develop naturally

which increases their chances of seeing a wider range of wildlife.

Invasive Species

Himalayan Balsam.

- Cabi have reported that the HB sprayed with rust has developed viable proportions of infected leaves on viable proportions of plants in the trial area. Large areas of infestation are significantly reduced this season.
- Further observations will be made to measure the spread of the infection and its effects on the HB inside and outside the trial area.

Giant Hogweed

- Training has been arranged for Club members in June and spraying should be complete by late summer this year.

Members' satisfaction with their fishing.

In June 2019 the Club committee decided to carry out a survey of members' satisfaction with their fishing experience. The results are summarised Table 2. **The full survey responses can be seen in Reference 9, which includes all the individual comments made by members.**

67% of active members responded to the survey.

The survey shows the very strong support of members for the Club's ambition to create a wild fishery as expressed in the opening paragraph of this application. They support the non-stocking policy (100% agree), the "working with nature" approach to river management (100% agree), and the increased "wilding" of the river (90% agree). They clearly enjoy their fishing and especially appreciate the wild life and tranquil environment, the varied water (85%) and the opportunity to catch truly wild fish (95%) in a local river (80%)

We also contacted ex-members who had left the Club between 2015 and 2018 (See e-mail attachment Ref. 10 and summary of results appended). Briefly: ex-members contacted left the Club for reasons associated with health, job or business pressures or moving home. They expressed satisfaction with the Club's fishing quality and its policy of creating a wild fishery.

The results of both surveys are strong evidence that the objectives set out in this application have been achieved: we believe our members have a "friendly river" which can be fished in a relaxed and light-hearted mood and with good expectation of success.

Wild Trout Conservation: the wider picture

In addition to the direct benefits of this project for wild trout conservation in the Leven Valley it has provided encouragement to other fishing clubs to determine their stocking and river improvement policies based on catch returns rather than subjective judgements or tradition and to consider the "working with nature" approach to river

management.

In addition to the conservation advantages of these policies the expenditure reduction associated with not stocking allows Clubs to reduce their fixed costs considerably and enhance their chances of long-term survival in difficult times.

The general public are likely to prefer the natural development of rivers rather than interventions for the benefit of anglers only. This will encourage public support for fishing at a time when all field sports need all the public support they can get.

The project has been described in EA national Newsletters, a Wild Trout Trust Newsletter, a Tees Rivers Trust Newsletter and the magazine Fly Fishing and Fly Tying and has been presented at EA Fishing Forums. (see references 2 to 8 below)

Acknowledgements

This project has had strong support from the local public, local government and other organisations:

- A local landowner donated fishing rights to the Club in 1996.
- The Club purchased further fishing rights in 2002 helped by donations from local people, members, local charitable organisations, the Parish and District Councils.
- The club has received grants for river improvement work and encouraging young people to fish from the District Council, Environment Agency and the Angling Trust.
- The E.A., W.T.T. and the Tees Rivers Trust have given valued advice and support over a 30 year period.
- The Club's members given strong and unwavering support for its policies and massive effort in the implementation of them.

References

Attached separately with the application

Table1: Catch returns analysis 2009 to 2018

Table 2: Summary of members' fishing experience satisfaction survey.

Reference 1: Record of Club encouraging fishing and river improvement work 1981 to 2018.

Reference 9: Full responses to members' fishing experience satisfaction survey.

Reference 10: Survey of ex-member reasons for leaving the Club.

Other references also available

Ref. 2: Logbook report to the E.A. 2013-2014

Ref. 3 The Environment Agency National Newsletter, 2013.

Ref. 4 The Environment Agency Trout and Grayling Strategy Newsletter September 2011

Ref 5: Presentation for the Environment Agency at a northern Fisheries Forum (copy available)

Ref. 6: The Environment Agency Trout and Grayling Strategy Newsletter September 2014.

Ref.6: “Fly fishing and Fly Tying” magazine 1.7.2011 “In Good Health”

Ref.7: Short article submitted to the Wild Trout Trust for their Newsletter December 2014

Ref.8: Short article submitted to the Tees Rivers Trust for their Newsletter 2014



Figure 1: Owned water



Figure 3

Figure 2:
Rented water



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

Guidance on Award Categories

- **Outstanding Habitat Improvement Project:** we will consider practical, in-river projects of all sizes, looking for the very best one producing benefits for the river, its environs, wild trout and for people. Projects could be multiple-benefit, river restoration-type work or single elements such as a weir removal, delivered by government agencies, river or wildlife trusts, local angling clubs or a partnership team.
- **Outstanding Contribution to Wild Trout Conservation:** we will consider smaller-scale habitat improvement projects for this category but we're also keen to hear of other work that's good for wild trout. For example, how an angling club has changed the management of its fisheries and anglers, perhaps reducing or stopping stocking and

encouraging catch-and-release.

If you'd like to discuss a possible application, don't hesitate to call Shaun Leonard at WTT, on 07974 861908.

Guidance on Supporting Information

You may submit up to 2 additional documents to support your application. Please do not submit comprehensive final project reports or similar large, documents. At this stage, we are looking to prioritise projects for interview, so useful additional documents include before and after photos, a map showing what has been done where on the river or lake, one example of how the project has been disseminated to others (e.g. newsletter or local news article) or monitoring reports (ideally the results!).

Our Awards evening is on Wednesday 16 October 2019 at the Savile Club in London – short-listed applicants will receive an invitation. You will also be given the opportunity to present your project to our audience, by way of a very short video (or presentation in person), an illustrated poster for display or an A4 flier for people to take away.

Please also supply two or three hi-res photographs that we can use at the Awards presentation evening and/or in subsequent publicity. By submitting such photos, you are confirming that we are free to use them,

Table 2

Hutton Rudby Fly Fishing Club
Summary of results of members' fishing satisfaction survey 2019

20 members responded (67% of active members)

Survey question	Members' responses. (Weighted average out of 5)
1. How do you rate the fishing experience on this stretch?	4.1
2. How do you rate the environment when fishing?	4.68
3. Our objective is to create the opportunity to see a wide range of animal, bird and native plant life in the fishing experience using the "working with nature approach" to river improvement. Do you agree with this?	% responses 100 % agreement.
4. How does fishing the Leven rate compared with other rivers you may fish?	45 % better 35 % same
5. Do you agree with the Club's no-stocking policy?	100 % agree.
6. What aspects of fishing the river do you appreciate?	
Not far to travel	80 % appreciate
Wild fish	95 % appreciate
Varied river character	85 % appreciate
Ease of parking	40 % appreciate
7. What do you enjoy most about fishing the Leven?	No. of mentions
Natural environment, wild life	8
Peace, tranquility	7
Challenge of small river	4
Wild fish	2
Varied water	2
Not far to travel	2
Not over-fished	1
8. How could we improve the fishing experience?	No. of mentions
Build on past policies.	7
Better access	4
Eradicate Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed	2
Information on good fishing techniques	2
Open overgrown areas/ less tree overhang (but retain cover)	2
Hold back water in feeder streams to reduce flow rate variation	1
Social events plus fly tying	1
9. We plan to encourage an even more natural state to encourage an increase in fish stocks. This may make the fishing more challenging. Do you agree with this policy?	% responses 45 % strongly agree 45 % agree 10 % neutral