



**SHARK ANGLING CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN
COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 28th February 2022 AT 7pm
At Looe Social Club and Via Zoom**

Present: - Bob Woodman - Chairman, C Kelly - Secretary, P Davis, K Tapper, A McKay

Via Zoom: P Martin, S Ward, M Collings,

Apologies: S Thomas, D Stone

Minutes of Last Meeting –

29th November 2021 - Proposed as an accurate record by Pete Davis, seconded by Kevin Tapper

Matters Arising

1. Skipper Members

The Secretary reminded the Committee that a suggestion had been made to introduce ‘Skipper Membership’ as Skippers rarely had the time to actually fish for Sharks and gain membership themselves.

The Chairman declared an interest and stepped back from the discussion.

It was proposed by Pete Davis that skipper membership be offered to trustworthy and loyal skippers. The Committee agreed to a reduced ‘Full Skipper Member’ rate of £10, to be offered to agreed selected skippers.

Trophy Claims

None

Lucky Run Club

- The Winner of the January draw was Dave Stone winning £80.00
- The Winner of the February draw was Kevin Tapper winning £80.00

New Business

- The secretary advised that she had recently sold a sweatshirt, which, following a complaint, had been returned and refunded. The secretary asked permission to open all the sweatshirt packages and if any others were faded or old to be able to offer them at a discounted rate. She went on to say that she had also had some hoodies done by Neil Hipkiss (a local supplier) on which the sewn badge wasn't up to standard and asked if she could also sell these at a discounted rate. This was agreed by the Committee.
- Email from Ellie Powell to the Harbour Office:
The Secretary read the following emails which had been sent to the Chairman for consideration:

On Friday, 7 January 2022, 15:52:36 GMT, Tina Hicks <ce@looeharbour.com> wrote:

Good Afternoon Ellie,

I was passed your enquiry from Looe Town Council re Shark Fishing which takes place here in Looe.

As you may be aware, the Shark Angling Club of Great Britain's head-quarters, is based here in Looe and as the Harbour Authority, we have a very good working relationship with both the club and the skippers that operate



under the SACGB 'umbrella'. I therefore thought it would be prudent for your enquiry to be answered by the club directly and hope that the response (below), will at least ease some of your concerns. I can only apologise that the communication process has been so drawn out.

Hi Tina, thanks for the opportunity to respond to the Looe visitor who raised concerns reference shark angling from Looe.

The Shark Angling Club of Great Britain (SACGB) is committed to the conservation and protection of sharks and has had a policy of catch and release for all sharks since 1994, indeed a large number of skippers and anglers chose to do this for many years prior.

A poorly handled released shark will have a lower chance of survival than one handled correctly which is why the SACGB have worked with marine scientists to develop a best practise handling guide.

Barbless circle hooks are used which deliver a very high hook up rate in the corner of the sharks mouth making its release very straightforward and quick.

The preference is for all sharks to be released at the side of the boat while still in the water but there are occasions when sharks have become entangled in discarded commercial fishing gear, plastic banding and other debris. To leave the shark in this condition would reduce its quality of life and could result in premature death. Removing this debris usually requires the fish to be brought aboard so when this is required, the deck is first cooled down using the boat hose, the shark is constantly doused in sea water and a damp cloth is placed over its eyes to keep it calm.

Recreational sea angler data is widely recognised by the marine scientific community to be high quality. Records of the number, estimated weight, length, sex and condition of sharks caught in UK are maintained by skippers and shared to the Pat Smith Database.

This database holds catch records from the early 1950's up to the present day making it the longest timeline dataset for Blue Sharks in the world which is enabling scientists to better understand and protect the species.

An analysis from this dataset was used by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) to implement a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for Blue Sharks which has helped to protect them from over exploitation from the commercial sector. Without this data ICCAT would have found this very difficult to achieve.

The numbers of Blue Sharks which visit our waters has increased dramatically in the last 10 years and this pattern has also been seen in our other large pelagic sharks such as, Thresher and Porbeagle.

Shark tourism is a sector which is beginning to develop in the UK and is available through a number of skippers. I don't believe this is available from Looe currently although I have heard there is the possibility of a sea safari experience operating from Looe soon.

Hopefully the increase in numbers is evidence of a recovery in stocks in the Atlantic, which would represent a considerable success for fisheries management policies, which has been underpinned by data supplied by anglers.

The increasing numbers of Porbeagle and Thresher Sharks along with other apex predators in our waters is encouraging because, as you correctly pointed out, they are a vital component in maintaining the health of our oceans.

Dr. Simon Thomas

Honorary Biologist for the Shark Angling Club of Great Britain

From: Ellie Powell

Sent: 10 January 2022 14:49

To: Tina Hicks <

Subject: Re: Reply to query re Shark Fishing in Looe

Hi both

Many thanks for the reply - and not a problem about the time taken. I am glad to hear there is guidance for the catch and release of sharks in our waters.

However the best practice you have quoted (*The preference is for all sharks to be released at the side of the boat while still in the water but there are occasions when sharks have become entangled in discarded commercial fishing gear, plastic banding and other debris. To leave the shark in this condition would reduce its quality of life and could result in premature death. Removing this debris usually requires the fish to be brought aboard so when this is required, the deck is first cooled down using the boat hose, the shark is constantly doused in sea water and a damp cloth is placed over its eyes to keep it calm.*) doesn't seem to be adhered to or promoted. When we noted all the shark fishing boats/trips offered most also had photos of people on board merrily holding the sharks they had caught. And as you will see below, a quick google search on Shark fishing Looe also have plenty of images of people holding, and even kneeling on caught sharks. None of which look to be in need of human intervention.

<https://www.loofishingtrips.co.uk/Sharking>



<http://fishing-cornwall.co.uk/fishing/shark>

[Mistique Fishing Charters Looe Cornwall](#)

[Warrior II Sport Fishing Looe](#)

Photos from one of the boats recommended on your website

[Swallow 2 Charter Fishing Looe](#)

I would be interested to hear your thoughts on this as well - if you have time. I would love to be able to take my son on a boat trip in the future with the chance of us seeing a shark in wild, but only from a safe/natural distance.

Many thanks

Ellie

On Monday, 10 January 2022, 15:00:48 GMT, Tina Hicks wrote:

Good Afternoon Ellie,

Thank you for your mail.

Your comments have been noted.

I have followed the links through that you have provided and it appears that the photos used on the respective websites are old photos - prior to when the 'Best Practice' guidelines were introduced.

I have contacted the SACGB and asked them to confirm this and have suggested a way that their skippers can promote their new means of operating. Once I receive a reply, I will get back to you with some feedback.

Kind Regards

Tina

A discussion took place. The Committee agreed to contact Ellie and confirm that the photographs were historic and, since they have been posted, the Best Practice document has been created and that the education of skippers and anglers is 'work in progress'. Some of the skippers in the port are not members of the SACGB and some historic photographs which go back to the early days of the club (also displayed in at least two local public houses and the Heritage Centre) show how far we have come in conservation, but that all skippers would be reminded of the SACGB's Best Practice document.

- Festival T Shirts – The secretary advised that she would like to do T Shirts for the Festival, this year, with a special design exclusively for the Festival. It was agreed that she should gain a price for the T Shirt, colours to be a Black t shirt with gold print.
- May 23rd Meeting – The secretary asked if this meeting could be cancelled due to other commitments. This was agreed.
- 70th Anniversary – 2023. The secretary advised that 2023 would be the 70th Anniversary of the SACGB and was looking for ideas to celebrate and commemorate the event. Any ideas to be passed to her for consideration by the Committee.
- J McMaster – Retro Sharking Day. The Secretary read the following letter from John McMaster:

Some of you may recall at the 2019 SACGB Festival, Ken Horsfield took the decision to use a Hardy Palakona rod and a Hardy Fortuna reel, both of which he had restored. He acquired the rod many years ago from a fisherman in East Looe who was clearing out his store.

He caught one shark on this gear on the second day and another on the third.

This generated a lot of interest among the competitors and I was approached to see if I would organise a Retro Sharking Event where only retro gear would be allowed. The exception of course was that modern line, traces and circle hooks were to be used. In terms of what retro gear is, some of the lads were using cane rods with centre pins but others used solid glass rods with early multipliers.

The first event was in 2020 when there were two boats and eight competitors but Covid reduced that to one boat and four competitors. The lads had a great day and caught, tagged and released two sharks.

By 2021 the event had grown to 3 boats and 12 anglers. A trophy, the Ken Horsfield Trophy, was introduced for the largest estimated weight shark and that year it was presented by Ken for the first time in Billys after the event.



The trophy is held by the winner for 12 months before being returned and competed for at the following years event.

This year the event has 5 boats and 20 competitors so as an annual event it appears to have significant appeal.

Its a rule of the event that the SACGB best practise applies and each year measurements have been taken (last year one additional one was taken) and passed to Simon Thomas to be included in his data set.

With much of my time now being spent debating with civil servants and MP's about the benefits of a Bluefin Fishery and why recreational angling for porbeagle should not be banned I have less time to devote to this type of thing. The Retro day is always planned for the Monday of the SACGB festival week as this makes it available to the festival anglers, many of which are in Looe that week.

My question to the committee is, would the SACGB be willing to take on this event going forward? I will manage this years event, and if you are agree to include the Retro day in your events list, Claire would have the opportunity to shadow me this year, although there is nothing complicated about it.

It was agreed that the SACGB would take on the Retro Day, with Paul Martin volunteering to run the event. The presentation of the trophy to be included in the Presentation Night on the Friday of the Festival week.

- Warren (Rotary Club) – Guest Speaker. The secretary advised that Warren from the Rotary Club in Coleshill were looking for a speaker via Zoom or in person. Kevin Tapper advised that Ian Harbage may be interested as he was in that area. The secretary to pass the details on to him.

Any Other Business

1. Murray Collings stated that he was concerned at recent fuel prices as far as the Festival goes. The Committee agreed that this may need looking at nearer to the Festival week and that skippers prices and anglers charges may need to be increased to accommodate this.
2. Paul Martin asked if the hooks that he had provided would be any good for the Festival. The Committee agreed that the hooks were a bit small, and as Paul was busy for the next three months, the hooks would not be used this year.
3. Pete Davis stated that Tim Newcombe who owns the May Queen, which is the oldest sharking boat in use, would like to be present during the Festival as some kind of 'Figure Head'. It was decided to ask the Harbour Office if he could be in the Visitors Berth for the week and the SACGB to pay his visitors fees. This would be of interest for the Retro Day and the skippers meeting also could be held aboard the May Queen.
4. The Secretary advised that another letter had been received from LHC advising that visiting Boats to the Festival would be charged for a mooring at £10 per day, which had previously been free.
5. Kevin Tapper stated that a skipper had been putting posts on Facebook which weren't appropriate. The posts had since been removed but it was requested that an email be sent out to all members, reminding everyone of the troubles that anglers have just been through regarding the fishing of Porbeagles and that care and consideration was still needed with regard to the posting of any photographs on social media.
6. Kevin Tapper also mentioned that the SACGB was still members of the Shark Trust and that maybe this should now be cancelled. This was agreed.

There were no further matters to discuss.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Date of Next Meeting – 28th March 2022 at 7.00pm Lower Bar, Social Club, West Looe and via Zoom.