



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

S&TA CHAIRMAN **JAMES CARR** REVIEWS S&TA CHAIRMAN JAMES CARR REVIEWS THE ASSOCIATION'S TWO YEARS AS A CHARITY.

It is two years since your Association achieved Charitable Status – enough time to review whether the move was the right one!

During a period of significant change in the organisations active in the fishery world, the Salmon and Trout Association has emerged as the only 'campaigning' charity in the sector. 'Game Anglers for fish, people and the environment' is our slogan, and it is one that accurately reflects what we do.

Just as influencing issues such as the North East and Irish Drifts took over ten years to produce results, many of the items that we are now facing, such as the negative impact of abstraction and sedimentation, are ongoing battles linked to the drawn out timetable of the Water Framework Directive.

Others involve countering entrenched positions; aquaculture and coastal mixed stock netting come immediately to mind.

DELICATE BALANCE

There are also those issues which require a delicate balance between opposing objectives. Clearly, green energy in the form of hydro-power is high on the political agenda, but such power can only be truly green if the installations can be designed so that there are no adverse effects on the ecology of the watercourses involved.

There is also a strong move for improved access for paddlers to our rivers, but conflict with other users will only be avoided if it is properly regulated under an enforceable legal structure.

There is no quick fix that will solve any of these issues. It is therefore key that we continue with long term strategies backed up by robust real scientific evidence, using our scientific expertise whilst, wherever possible, forming partnership with larger organisations working in similar areas.

When discussing the advantages of charitable status with our members, it was always claimed that the issues that concern game anglers would not change, but that the

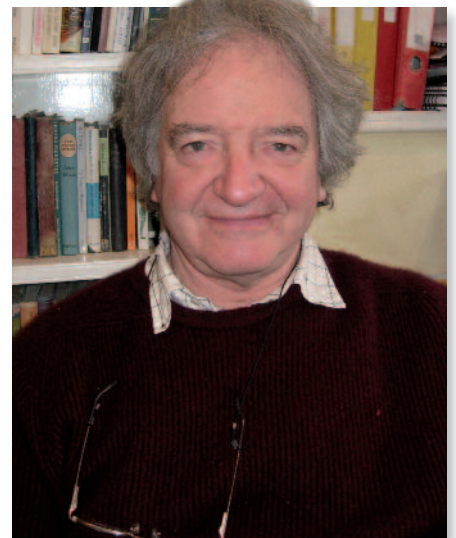
arguments would be targeted at public benefit and would be the stronger for this. I believe that this is exactly what has happened. It is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the Association has recently become a full member of Wildlife and Countryside Link, joining 8 million members from 36 other conservation organisations. Without achieving charitable status, this would not have been possible.

The credit crunch has provided all charities with difficulties, especially in retaining members. I am delighted that the increase in Gift Aid income has helped to mitigate the loss of membership income. This together with a successful fund raising dinner and tight cost control has enabled us to generate a small operating surplus for 2009.

Meanwhile, the merger with the previously independent Salmon & Trout Association Charitable Trust has significantly bolstered reserves.

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2009 has been an exciting and successful year. Such success could not have been achieved without the tremendous support of our members, volunteers both at national and branch level, and the Prime Warden, Court, and staff of the Fishmonger's Company, for which much grateful thanks. The Association moves forward into 2010 with a realistic Business Plan and a new funding committee. With the possibility of a change of government and the inevitable cutbacks in government funding, the challenges will be great. At least the Association will be able to meet them from a relatively secure financial starting point!



Above: James Carr.

