



Current Affairs



Newsletter of Llandysul Angling Association

August 2008



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Letter from the Secretary



We recently decided to alter the format for sending out our newsletters. For many years we have produced them in November and February thus covering the end of one season and the beginning of the next. Many felt it would be more sensible to space the interval between them better so we decided to publish in February and August. This also gives us the opportunity to write to members during the season - a pleasure which we have not had for a long time.

The bypass is now well under construction which, of course, has led to problems for those members who like to fish near Llandysul. The work areas have been fenced off for safety reasons and those members who cross those areas to reach the river are doing so at their own risk. More of the river is being denied to us than was originally expected so we are looking to our advisor, James Andrew of Llewellyn Humphreys, Carmarthen, to make claims for compensation. Please note that the contracts state that the date for the final “handing over” must not be after 31/12/2009 so we may well have similar problems for all next year unless the work goes ahead at a phenomenal pace. I can only ask members to be patient.

We have just purchased the meadow and fishing between Church Farm fishery and Llanfihangel Bridge, the last remaining stretch between Llanfihangel Bridge and Pont Ieuan – our new bridge below Abercerdin. We do urgently need to create a car park in the new meadow so that members can park there and fish all the way down to Llandysul. Few clubs can offer such a wonderful continuous stretch of water.

When I agreed to take the position as secretary - in 2000 - it was for a short period. I have enjoyed the work and I believe the Association has progressed. Now, eight years on I believe it is time to inform members and the committee of my plans. I will retire at the AGM in December 2009. I hope the Committee appoint an assistant secretary at the AGM in December 2008 with whom I can work for a year. This should provide a smooth change over and be of great help to the incoming secretary. I urge the committee and members to work towards finding a new secretary by December 2008 so that the Association can benefit from a seamless change. The Association would undoubtedly benefit from having a secretary living near the fishery who can react quickly to local issues.

Finally, on behalf of us all I must thank Eric and Dion Davies who, with Peter Jones, are continuing their successful summer working with youngsters; and all of our committee for their hard work for the club this year. I hope to see many members at our **AGM on Friday, 5th December** at the Porth Hotel, beginning at 8.00 p.m.

Yours sincerely, *Tonlas Evans*, Hon. Sec.

Arrangements for the Annual General Meeting

The 2008 AGM will be held on **Friday 5th December, beginning at 8 pm in The Porth Hotel, Llandysul**. Our president, Dr David Roberts, will chair the meeting.

Agenda:

1. Minutes and matters arising from the 2007 AGM
2. Report on younger member activities and award of prizes
3. Chairman's report on local, national and international fisheries matters
4. Annual accounts and Treasurer's report
5. Secretary's report on the 2008 season, membership and correspondence received
6. Election of officers
7. Election of committee members
8. Membership fees for 2009
9. Any other business (to be notified to the secretary in advance of the meeting)

Nominations for committee membership

In accordance with normal procedure, three committee members are standing down; they are Eurig Thomas, Eric Davies and Alan Williams. All three have expressed a willingness to continue to serve on committee if that is the wish of the AGM, and Committee is nominating them for re-election.

Any full member may nominate another member for a place on the committee. Nominations in writing, with a statement signed by the nominee confirming that they are willing to stand, should be sent to the secretary at Room 101, The Porth Hotel, Llandysul SA44 4QS to arrive no later than Friday 21st November 2005. If there are more nominations than vacancies, a ballot will be held during the AGM.

Membership Subscription Proposals

In line with our normal practice, committee recommends that membership prices should increase only in line with inflation. The membership fees proposed for 2009, subject to AGM approval, are:

- | | |
|--|------|
| • Adult full membership | £149 |
| • Pensioner member (at least five years as a full member to qualify) | £74 |
| • Severely Disabled (Tyr Dref beat only) | £10 |
| • Joining fee (adults only) | £15 |
| • Student membership | £43 |
| • Junior (schoolchild) trout fishing membership | £2 |
| • Weekly permit up to 31st August | £67 |
| • Weekly permit, 1 st September to 17 th October | £77 |
| • Guest day permit (and introductory day visitor - only to 31st Aug) | £18 |

Chairman's Report



I am very pleased to be the bearer of good tidings at present, as this summer's report contains a great deal of good news, most notably the fact that the Teifi has been fishing well over the past few weeks. There are plenty of sewin around, with at least two double-figure fish being taken, and a sprinkling of salmon as well. The recent rains have freshened things up and even I have produced seven sewin from my last three evenings on the river. The impression I have is that it's stuffed with fish, as there has been plenty of action on every recent fishing trip. However, the amount of water falling on us at present is threatening to make it another silly summer like last

season - hopefully we will get some settled weather soon to bring the fly rod into action. If so the fishing could be very good indeed.

The second piece of good news is that the club is in the process of acquiring the field and fishing adjoining Llanfihangel Bridge on the left bank. It means that we can now fish all the way from this bridge down to Pont Ieu, just above Llandysul, and that both ends of this stretch of water are now accessible by car. This is going to make life a lot easier for all of us. We will of course be installing a members' car park and signage. This relatively small acquisition is the last piece in this particular riparian jig-saw and is going to be of huge benefit for us – as well as yielding some income from letting the grazing.

We have also been very happy to welcome Steffan Jones to the committee this year. If you don't know Steffan then you don't fish for sea trout. Steff, a local boy brought up on the Teifi, is developing international experience through his angling business enterprises. I am sure he will be a valuable addition to the club's resources for many years to come.

There is also more good news regarding Teifi Rivers Trust, as we are about to deliver four local habitat improvement schemes - three on the Clettwr and one on the Medeni (a tributary of the Ceri). We are also setting up an invertebrate monitoring group to provide a more accurate measure of the health of our tributaries. This has involved a great deal of work for some of us, and many thanks to all concerned. I think we have all learned a great deal from the experience. Apart from becoming trained in this work, which was fascinating enough in itself, we are now seeing close collaboration between the three major angling clubs in the Teifi Valley in a project that may become invaluable to us all. We are also learning to work in partnership with other agencies - the E.A in particular - and producing something that we hope will restore our tributaries to something approaching respectable ecological status. Regrettably this work is confirming what we have suspected to be the case for a very long time: most of the upper reaches of our tributaries are in very poor condition and in desperate need of rehabilitation.

The Trust's funding via the EU's Interreg programme has been compromised by problems in Ireland, and so we are particularly grateful to the Environment Agency for financing us this year through their Challenge Fund. This work is currently dependent on volunteers, so may I ask for anyone who feels that they would like to get involved to step forward please, as we are desperately in need of help.

The Trust is also involved in setting up a governing body for rivers trusts in Wales, and we are indebted to Donald Patterson from Tregaron for handling this aspect of Trust business – it has not been easy.

The Teifi Fisheries Federation continues to provide a forum for us local folk to express our views, and in the past year we have been pleased to welcome Llanybydder Angling Association to the fold, having at last located them. We have received updates on the effectiveness (or otherwise) of our fish counter at Abercych, the current situation regarding illegal (and legal) netting on the Teifi, and the Cypermetherin situation, which regrettably continues to haunt us.

I would also like you to reflect on last year's catch returns, which are detailed on page 12 of this newsletter.

Some very good fish were caught. The best salmon was allegedly nineteen and a half pounds, and several double-figure sewin appeared in the club's catch returns. 'Top rod' caught seventeen salmon last season – that's good fishing by anybody's standards.

However, the disappointing figure is the return rate for salmon. Our members released just 36% of the salmon that they caught. This is the same as the average result for the Teifi, but is well below the England-and-Wales average of 54%.

We pride ourselves on being a conservation-minded angling club, but it does make it very difficult to negotiate for funds for conservation work when our members are knocking two thirds of their already scarce salmon on the head. I am afraid that in order to make progress in conserving and possibly enhancing our fish stocks we all have to play our part and give up some of our murderous instincts – you cannot conserve them and kill them at the same time.

So, I am having a very busy summer but enjoying myself nonetheless and looking forward with eager anticipation to my next trip to the river. I haven't caught anything I would call sizeable yet, but I am sure it will not be long now.

Best wishes,

Ian Thomas
Chairman

Junior Members' News and Events

Congratulations to Trystan Davies on achieving second place in The Youth Fly-tying National under 14s Welsh Salmon and Trout Competition in Rhayader in February. (Da iawn ti.) You now need to achieve first place next year in order to emulate Steffan Jones!



Llandysul A A's top four Youth fly casters at the Llandysul Food Fayre, where they won their club-sponsored entry to the 2008 Welsh Youth Trials.

Our youngsters started the season well by showing their fly-casting skills at the annual Llandysul Food Fayre in Ty'r Dref Park in June. In a distance and accuracy competition organised by David Williams, the first four were: Trystan Davies, Dafydd Davies, Steffan Rees and Joshua Broniman. These boys will now be entered into The Welsh Youth National Trials due to be held on Llandegfedd Reservoir on 13th September and on Llys-y-fran Reservoir on 14th September.

Many thanks to Peter Jones once again for demonstrating fly-tying and to Dion Davies for coaching fly-casting to anyone interested. Our supporting team of Dr. Ian Thomas, Eirig Thomas, Ieuan Thomas and Gwilym Jones did a wonderful job answering questions from the visiting public. Many thanks to you all.

Our summer tuition will start on Friday 1st August running from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and will continue every Friday throughout August. Bring eye protection, wellies, food and drink.

On Tuesday 5th August a Catch-Measure-and-Release flyfishing competition for the club's under 16s will take place. Competitors, each accompanied by an adult member or members of their family, meet by Pont Ieu (the new suspension bridge) at 6 p.m. to start fishing as soon as possible thereafter. Tackle will be supplied to competitors without any, but bring your own eye protection, wellies, waterproofs (if it is raining), rod licences if you are over 12, and your club permits. Members of the family can help competitors with anything, *except* casting for them. After the competition we shall retire to the Porth Hotel for a light buffet and to work out the results; the winners will receive tackle and fly-tying materials as prizes. If this event is a success, we shall have more of them in August – so if you missed the first event please contact me on 01559 362485 for other possible dates.



Fly tying lessons provide our young members with the opportunity to continue developing their skills through the winter months when the river and many stillwaters are closed to fishing.

Fly-tying classes will start in The Porth Hotel on Thursday 6th November and run from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The classes will continue through to spring if there is sufficient demand.

Any Salmon this season? There's still time...

Fifty years ago the majority of salmon caught on the River Teifi had been landed long before the end of July. Today the big springers are a rarity, and multi-sea-winter salmon comprise less than 20% of the run. The Teifi is not unique in this respect: spring runs everywhere have dwindled, but there is some evidence that the byelaws protecting that precious spring run are making a difference, as more club members report catching salmon in the early part of the season. Nevertheless, the main chance usually comes with the autumn rains, when the summer grilse are supplemented by larger, late-running salmon.



A 16 lb salmon caught and released in July 2008 by club chairman Dr Ian Thomas

To catch a salmon on the fly is a real thrill, and probably your best chance of doing so is to concentrate on shallowish water – ideally no more than two feet deep if you are fishing with an easy-to-cast floating line. Pool tails, glides and the water running off a riffle and down in to the neck of a pool are paces where salmon tend to rest, and resting fish are far more likely to see your fly than running fish are. (Hence the well-known but far from strictly true saying that a running salmon will not take a fly.) So give salmon a go this autumn, by all means... but do please think of the future and consider returning your catch to spawn and add to Teifi salmon stocks in future years.

The Hirons Salmon Award – how you can enter

If you land a big salmon on fly, witnessed by another club member, let us know by the end of October and your catch will be entered for the Salmon Trophy. Large sea trout are equally valid, and for the purposes of the award a five pound sea trout is considered to be equivalent to a ten pound salmon.

Catch and release? No problem! Any fish whose nose-to-tail fork length is measured and independently witnessed before being released is eligible for consideration for the Trevor Hirons Salmon Trophy award. (The weight can be calculated reasonably accurately.)

Wildlife Corner: River Dragons

Dragonflies are an ever-popular topic, and we see so many of them on and around the River Teifi. Here are two that are commonly seen in summer and sometimes well in to autumn – and, to help with identification, the male and female are both pictured this time:



The broad-bodied chaser (*Libellula depressa*) is found chiefly on still or slow-flowing water, and so most of those seen flying over the Teifi probably come from nearby ditches, marshes and ponds.

This is the female, with golden brown abdomen with yellow highlight spots along each flank.



The male broad-bodied chaser is a handsome fellow with a blue body and yellow side spots. As he spends much of his time on a waterside perch sizing up the next meal, you are as likely to see this dragonfly just as he sees you and flies off. Be patient, however, and provided you keep still he will soon come back to his favourite perch even though you are standing just a few feet away.



Emperor dragonflies (*Anax imperator*) are big, bold and aggressive. They can easily see off a broad-bodied chaser even though the two are of comparable size. The longer body of the emperor distinguishes it from the broad-bodied chaser. This is a female (and she is laying eggs).



The male emperor dragonfly, seen here flying low over the water, is not quite so easily distinguished from its mate; however, if you look carefully you will see that the female has a greenish-blue abdomen with dark brown dorsal markings whereas the abdomen of the male is iridescent blue with black markings.

Emperor dragonflies rarely rest, not even for meals: they eat their captured prey while in flight.

Report on Welcome Day, Saturday 10th May 2008



Tonlas Evans managing the questions and discussion during the Fishermen's Forum



The after-lunch casting demonstrations on the Teifi always attract a great deal of interest

Our Welcome Day was very well attended. Not only was the weather kind to us all, but our new members and guests told us that it was a very useful and enjoyable introduction to the club, its fisheries and the many good people who turned out to make the day a success.

Many thanks to our presenters, casting demonstrators, beat guides, fishermen's forum contributors and hosts Andrew and Louise James of the Porth Hotel for all your help.

Apart from the crucial role that present club members play in introducing new people to Llandysul A A, we do rely extensively on our website and magazine advertising to find replacements for those members who, through old age, illness, moving abroad or a host of other reasons can no longer continue to fish our waters. Welcome Day is a very good way of saying... er... Welcome to Llandysul A A, and, psst... Please pass it on!

OBITUARY

We are sorry to report the death in June of John Riegen, long-time member of Llandysul Angling Association. A picture of John fishing club waters appears on the cover of our book *A Flyfisher's Guide to the Teifi Valley*. Unable to fish in recent years due to a disabling stroke, John retained a keen interest in the progress of our club and in particular our conservation work. He generously donated his fishing tackle to the Wild Trout Trust to raise money to restore tributaries on rivers in Wales, including the River Teifi where he enjoyed many happy days. John lived to within a few days of his 90th Birthday.

Catch Results for 2007

Despite the mixed weather, the 2007 season on the Teifi turned out to be quite a good one. At the time of going to press with this newsletter, the month-by-month reported rod salmon and sea trout catch figures for the River Teifi for 2007 were not available via the Environment Agency's website www.environment-agency.gov.uk but they should be downloadable from that website as a PDF fairly soon. What is published is the total reported rod catch of salmon from the Teifi in 2007, which was 481. The weather and difficult fishing conditions certainly had an effect on catches, but considering the circumstance the Teifi was not ungenerous to those who persisted.

Llandysul A A's 2007 catches (based upon XXX reports received) were as follows:

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Total
Salmon	-	1	10	14	28	52	43	148
Sewin	2	12	60	92	112	64	9	351

22 salmon were caught on fly, 70 on spinner and 56 on worm. 36% were released.

182 sewin were caught on fly, 148 on spinner and 21 on worm. 56% were released.

While stocks remain under threat, Llandysul A A and the Teifi Rivers Trust are strong supporters of such salmon conservation measures as catch and release. Overall across Wales anglers seem to have been slower to recognize the problem and adopt C&R, as the Environment Agency catch return data below, for years 1999 to 2007, clearly suggest.

Year	Number of Rod-caught Salmon - Wales	% Released	Number of Rod-caught Salmon - England & Wales	% Released
1999	3,369	36	12,492	44
2000	4,049	31	17,596	42
2001	4,351	31	14,383	43
2002	3,312	41	15,282	50
2003	2,632	45	11,519	56
2004	6,648	37	27,332	48
2005	4,408	52	21,418	56
2006	4,355	52	19,509	56
2007	4,488	47	18,117	54

Catch Return and Prize Draw

Please send in your club catch return promptly at the end of the season (17th October). Catch data are essential evidence in our submissions to Government on byelaw changes etc. Please remember that failure to submit a club catch return before 1st February 2009 results in an automatic £10 surcharge on next season's membership fee. On a more positive note, every catch return is entered into our annual Prize Draw. Why risk losing £10 when you could be £25 better off?

Late Season Sewin Flies, by Steffan Jones

With the prime summer months been and gone, most club members tend to divert their attention towards the wonderful salmon run the Teifi is bestowed with, retiring the sewin into their winter slumber. However, be warned, you may be missing out on some great sport, especially on the ever exhilarating surface lures.

Granted, many of the sewin you catch come September would have been in the system for a couple of months, and many would have lost their silver sheen. However, fresh sewin do enter the Teifi long after the season has ended, and some of the big fish bide their time, running alongside the autumn salmon run – as many a unsuspecting salmon angler finds out, with a large sewin making a seemingly impromptu appearance.

The habits and tastes of the sewin changes as the months progress, and the longer they've been in the system. Whereas the flashy blues and silvers may persuade those early fish, patterns that take on a more solemn hue prove to be their Achilles-heel late season; patterns where flash is incorporated sparsely, or not at all. In addition, sport tends to occur within or close to the surface layers, with little need of exploring the depths. Indeed, one of the best methods of targeting these late season sewin is with a surface lure – if you have yet to try one then you're really missing out, they provide the most exhilarating way of catching sewin and work very well on the Teifi from July onwards. Don't be shy of fishing the larger surface lures, too. Three inches long or more is not uncommon. Further to that, some long-shank singles accompanied with some low-water doubles should reflect your chosen armoury and stand you in good stead. Travel light and cover a few pools – with the nights drawing in you can fish for a good three hours and still be in bed before midnight. Indeed, an advisable approach is to fish as it's getting dark for the salmon, then give it a couple of hours on the sewin – best of both worlds.



Deuoni

Further to the surface lures, useful late season patterns would include traditional, such as; Dark-Mackerel, Mallard & Claret, Muddler-Minnnows, Stoats-Tail etc. Two of my favourite 'tried and tested' late season patterns for the Teifi would have to be the Insomniac and the Deuoni. They offer totally different profiles and shade combinations for the sewin, and both carry a certain panache that lure the sewin from their leaf-lined-lairs.

Tying details for the Deuoni (illustrated on page 13)

Hook: longshank 10-6
Thread: black 6/0
Body: silver tinsel
Rib: silver wire
Body Hackle: white cock, palmered.
Wing: black squirrel
Head hackle: dyed blue grizzle hen or cock



Tying details for Insomniac, illustrated above

Hook: long-shank 10-6
Thread: black 6/0
Body: black floss
Rib: opal mirage tinsel, wide.
Tail: red rabbit fur
False hackle: black rabbit fur
Wing: black squirrel
Overwing: mirage/pearl mirror-flash
Eyes: Jungle cock.

As an end note, I would urge all club members – be they fishing on Llandysul AA waters or otherwise – to return these late season sewin. Rarely would the flesh be as sumptuous as a June fish - even if the fish looks fresh, they're best returned to carry on their journey. Enjoy them for the sport they provide, then grace them with a fair hand, and wish them well on their journey ahead.

Steffan Jones

Renewing your Membership for 2009

Please wait until after the AGM (on Friday 5th December) before sending in renewal applications, as next season's membership, joining and visitor fees listed on page 3 of this newsletter are only proposals until agreed at AGM. You will receive a copy of the Spring 2009 Edition of *Current Affairs* in early February together with an application form for renewal of membership. Renewal cannot be obtained without first sending in a catch return for the previous season. N.B. there is no need to send in another passport style photograph unless you have lost your Llandysul A A Member's I/D card. (New adult and student member applicants *are* required to send in a photograph, of course.)

Your completed applications form, with subscription payment, must arrive at one of the permit vendors (contact details below) not later than 28th February 2009. Application forms received after that date are treated as New Member applications and a £15 joining fee is payable subject to vacancies being available. Many members kindly enclose an SAE with their application. This really is a great help to our hard-working permit vendors at what is a very busy time of year. Many thanks!

Llandysul A A's Permit Vendors

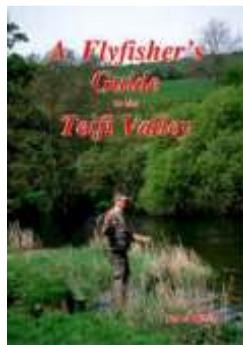
Club permits as well as Day Tickets and Week Tickets, may be obtained from:

- Andrew James, The Port Hotel Llandysul SA44 5QS - Tel: 01559 362202
- Alan Williams, 57 Bridge Street, Lampeter SA48 7AB - Tel: 01570 434313

Llandysul A A for Birthday and Christmas Presents

If you are wondering what to give to a special fishing buddy as a birthday or for Christmas present, what about a few days, a week, or better still (because they're worth it!) a full season's membership of Llandysul Angling Association? The fees are always set at the AGM, but it is established custom for the club fees to rise only in line with inflation – see page 3 for the fees proposed for 2009. Contact one of the permit vendors listed above and they will be pleased to help you make Christmas 2008 and the fishing season of 2009 very special for someone you care about.

And if they are already club a member? Well you could give them their own copy of our hardback book *A Flyfisher's Guide to the Teifi Valley*. All our fisheries, with maps, pictures, fishing tips, parking details etc are covered in full cover, with a wealth of other useful information to add to the pleasure of fishing on our river and in other stillwater and coastal fisheries in the Teifi catchment. The cost is £14 + £2 P&P. Make your cheque out to Llandysul A A Ltd, and post it, with your name and address details, to Room 101, The Porth Hotel, Llandysul SA44 4QS.



Fishing Tips, by Sue Parker



After mastering the basics of casting, learning to mend a floating line – to change its position on the surface of the water and make a wet fly ‘swim’ differently – comes well up the river flyfisher’s agenda. The usual way of doing this is to cast and then flip the line over to form a loop either up- or downstream depending on whether you want to speed up or slow down the progress of the fly, or just make it fish a slightly different part of the river. Don’t make mending a habit, though, because there are times when it is a really *bad* habit.

A sea trout tactic – make do but *don’t* mend?

It doesn’t take long to work out that casting into a sea trout’s lie (usually under the far bank or an overhanging tree) is critical for success if you are aiming to catch a big fish rather than the little ones that jump about all over the river in high summer on the Teifi. On our courses we spend a lot of time teaching casting techniques that help to get to these really difficult spots without first catching the oak tree behind you. Amazingly, we often see anglers finally reach that critical spot only to immediately wrench the fly out of the lie by mending the line, often moving the fly a considerable distance from the fish’s line of sight. Don’t mend the line when sea trout fishing!

Air mend to avoid turbulent currents – a dry fly tactic for river trout

In this picture there is a trout rising regularly three or four yards upstream of a partly-exposed boulder. It’s a small stream with no useful cover, so I have to approach the fish from its blind spot – directly downstream. The trouble is, that if I cast directly at the trout the fast water either side of the boulder will cause my leader and hence my fly to skate on the surface – the dry fly fisher’s biggest enemy: drag!

Here’s a solution: as you make your forward cast, gently move the rod to the right and then left (or left and right depending on which side of the obstruction you want the line to fall) *before* the line lands on the water. The earlier you make this movement on the forward cast the further down the line (towards the fly) the mend will appear. A bit of practice makes perfect!



New Facilities at Cors Caron

The raised bog system known as Cors Caron (Tregaron Bog) has been a National Nature Reserve since 1955. Now the site has a new car park, toilets, an observation hide and extended boardwalks, all with wheelchair access. This will allow many more people to get out onto the bog in safety. It's a great place to call in on if you are fishing our upper beats.

For birdwatchers, the tree-lined disused railway track beside the bog is home to various finches, tits, warblers and thrushes and a great place for seeing pied flycatchers, chiffchaffs and stonechats. On the bog look out for sedge warbler, reed bunting, grasshopper warbler, curlew, snipe, redshank, whinchat, hobby, sparrowhawk, red kite and buzzard. You could also see otters, shrews, water voles and maybe even a polecat. Sunbathing lizards seem to enjoy the new boardwalks, too.



Footnote from the Editor



I am grateful to Eric Davies, Tonlas Evans, Dewi Roberts, Sue Parker, Steffan Jones and Ian Thomas, all of whom have made time to contribute articles and/or pictures to this edition of *Current Affairs*. As usual, however, any mistakes in design, layout or editing are all my own work!

If there is something you would particularly like us to include in a future *Current Affairs*, please let us know. Better still, why not drop us a line with a contribution and, if possible a picture or two. And if you have email you can even save the postage by sending files to us at: laa-enquiries@fishing-in-wales.com

Best wishes for the remainder of your 2008 fishing season on the River Teifi.

Yours sincerely

Pat O'Reilly

Current Affairs

Current Affairs is published twice per year by Llandysul Angling Association. Copies are sent to club members and to people applying for membership.

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