

National Assembly for Wales
Environment and Sustainability Committee
NRW 2015 – 20
Natural Resources Wales – Annual Scrutiny 2015
Response from Mike Hill

Dear Sirs

In response to your request for contributions to the annual review of the NRW in 2015

I moved to Wales ten years ago. As a keen fisherman I chose to join Llandoverly Angling Association close to my new home with access to some of the best sewin fishing Wales **used** to offer.

As my interest in sewin fishing grew I saw more and more that the river was slowly being eroded by negligence on the part of the regulating bodies. The cold water take off at the Lyn Brienne dam, the nets, the coracles and now the closure and subsequent complete ban on stocking. The decline of fish entering the River Towy, let alone reaching the upper waters, is a natural disaster not just for the environment but also for the economy.

Surely NRW should be guided by the Welsh Assembly Government who spend millions of pounds each year on the tourism market. Fishing provides a substantial income and numerous employment opportunities to Scotland and Ireland. The rivers in those countries are looked upon as precious commodities to be protected and nurtured thus retaining the fish anglers travel from all over the world to catch. Wales has those rivers but the regulating bodies have failed to protect them and the results are plain to see. No fish, no visiting anglers and a decline in rural income throughout Wales.

I can only surmise that the funding for NRW is the reason for the lack of bailiffs on the rivers. WAG is very much in favour of job creation but where are the bailiffs?

Perhaps it is a good thing that I did not have the pleasure of fishing in the golden years of the River Towy as I, unlike many other fishermen, have nothing to miss. However it grieves me to think that such a fantastic river could end up in the sorry state it now finds itself in. NRW knows the steps that must be undertaken to revive this Welsh treasure. If they do not then they should not be a regulatory body. I hope that NRW will sit up and take note of the comments made by fishermen regarding this consultation as I for one would like to see the return of the halcyon days of sewin fishing in Wales.

These views and opinions are my own.

I have no objection to my views being on public display.

Yours faithfully

Mike Hill