

Ms. Virginia Hawkins,
Clerk to the Sustainability Committee,
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff, CF49 1NA

Dear Ms. Hawkins,

I understand that you are inviting comments on the Access to Inland Waters enquiry.

As a lifelong enthusiastic angler and also a one time whitewater canoeist I feel that I am able to have a broader outlook on this topic than many others on both sides of the argument.

While legally canoeing whitewater salmon rivers in Wales I have been verbally abused by fishermen and occasionally had anglers deliberately casting large salmon flies at me. I have also encountered anglers who were very friendly and appreciated being asked whether they wished me to pass close to them or on the far side. I even had one salmon angler who asked our party to beat up the pool to liven up the fish! So it would appear that not all anglers object to canoeing on their waters.

Some anglers have illogical views on the subject. They see nothing amiss in rowing noisily about a stretch of water but object to a canoeist gliding silently by. (particularly when they are having a bad day!)

The best whitewater canoeing is to be had in winter flood conditions outside the angling season. Canoeists at these times are doing no harm to fishermen's sport or to spawning fish. At present anglers with their "dog in the manger" attitude will not consider allowing canoeing even in these conditions. .

I would make one further point. Those waters which presently have canoeing access, e.g. certain parts of the river Wye, are subject to a constant stream of canoeists. Having fished in these conditions I too have found the constant passage of groups of canoeists annoying although it actually had little impact on the overall numbers of fish I caught. If there were open access to all waters the canoeing pressure would be divided among many waters and would therefore be much less of an annoyance to anglers than it is at present.

My personal view is that all inland waters should be open to all water users who do not use engine powered craft i.e. anglers, canoeists, coracles, punts and

rowing boats. I understand that we are the only nation in Europe and possibly the world who do not allow open access to inland waters. Even Scotland allows canoeing on all waters including its major salmon waters. This lamentable situation should be put to rights.

Yours sincerely,

(Dr.) D.T.Roscoe.