

Ms Virginia Hawkins  
Clerk to the Committee  
Sustainability Committee  
Welsh Assembly  
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF99 1NA

Our Ref 28/34a  
18<sup>th</sup> August 2009

Dear Sirs

RE CANOE ACCESS TO THE RIVER DEE.

I was very dismayed to hear of the proposed plans to allow unrestricted access for canoeist on the River Dee without prior consultation with landowners surrounding the Dee or the riparian owners.

I am a riparian owner to the stretch of the River Dee which runs between Erbistock and Bangor-on-Dee and run a fishing syndicate of 52 rods on this section. I also lease out two parts of the river to the Bryn-y-pys Angling Association, which have about 100 members and let out another section by Erbistock Mill, which has 14 rods. The majority of these members come from the surrounding area and approximately half from Wales in itself. There has been renewed interest from the locals recently due to the high price of oil and traveling up to Scotland for a weeks fishing has become a lot more expensive as a result.

This stretch of the river is well above the tidal stretch and the river is very well defined. There are areas where a footpath runs adjacent to the river but does not go to the river so anyone entering the river will be trespassing. It does not matter how carefully canoeists pass down a river, they will disturb fishermen, who have paid money for the right to have a peaceful day, and also disturb salmon which is the main reason why the Welsh Dee was made an SSSI. Canoeist will undoubtedly want to canoe down the upper stretches of the Dee which is the spawning ground for salmon and this will lead to lowering of successful spawning which will eventually reduce the salmon in the river. Not only will it disturb fishermen and salmon but also wildlife which will lead to a lowering of numbers on the river.

The Anglers on the river have just paid huge amounts of money to remove the nets off the estuary so that salmon are not caught and more have a chance to get into the river system. This good work will be lost should the spawning grounds be disturbed during the wrong time of year. Have the canoeist ever contributed anything towards improving the ecology of the river? The anglers also pay a subscription every year and part of this will be for the benefit of the river. Does the Canoeist pay anything?

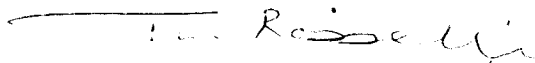
In the past, the Dee Fishery Association have agreed informal access for the fishermen at Llangollen so they can be on the river at certain times of the year. However, recently they have taken a stance that they have the right to do what they wish and will not even bother to discuss the matter. As a result, all talks have broken down which ultimately is to their detriment.

The act of having voluntary access on certain parts of the Dee at certain times of the year i.e. November to April is the way forward since it has worked in the past and benefits the river, the landowners and the Canoeists.

Another reason why I am not keen on canoeist is that there is a weir on the stretch of the river and this is likely to cause injury to a canoeist. Should an accident happen, they will no doubt wish to sue the owner of the river for something, which they undertook without permission? Apart from putting up a warning sign, it is impossible to fence off such a dangerous hazard and therefore premiums for Landowners will no doubt be increased. Why should landowners be financially penalized for the illegal actions of others?

Should this law be passed, I believe the Nos of salmon will reduce dramatically and the local economy in this part of Wales will suffer as a result. It will be nothing short of a right to roam bill which will destroy any associated commercial enterprise on the river and contravene European legislation of SSSI's.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "T J Roselli".

T J ROSSELLI