

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION AND LEISURE
Wednesday 5th July 2023

Officer: Mike Cox – Outdoor Recreation and Asset Manager

FISHERIES

Purpose of Report

To update the Council the work of Shrewsbury Town Fisheries

RIVER FISHERIES.

The new river season commenced on June 16th and permit sales are brisk.

In preparation, the fisheries team strimmed around all the platforms at Sydney Avenue, Monkmoor and Emstrey. It was difficult work due to the high temperatures. The County Ground and the Quarry will be strimmed at the beginning of September when they begin to be busy over the Autumn and Winter.

Wherever they can, bankside vegetation will be left untouched for the wildlife and it will only be trimmed if deemed necessary.

During the hot weather, a ban was imposed on Pike fishing on all town council fisheries, unfortunately some anglers were removed from our locations only to fish along the tow path where we have no jurisdiction.

WATER TESTING RIVER:

The overall results from the River Severn are of concern. As at the end of May 2023:-

- 360 samples have been recorded on Epicollect
- Electrical conductivity results range from 50 to 1380 ($\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$)
- Temperature results range from 0 to 24.6 degrees centigrade
- Phosphate results range from 0.0 to 2.5(ppm). 141 samples exceeded the upper limit for phosphate, 39%!
(Note Water Framework Directive limits for Phosphate are site specific and we are assessing against the upper limit, so it is likely that many more samples exceed their site specific limit.)
- Nitrate results range from 0 to 20 (ppm), 201 samples were 5 ppm or over, 56%!
- 118 samples exceeded both Phosphate and Nitrate limits, 33%
- 4 results exceeded the upper limit for Ammonia with 10 observed algal blooms and 35 observed pollution incidents

A full copy of the River testing results are included in the fisheries report.

WATER TESTING OF POOLS:

With the long warm and dry summer periods we are experiencing, the pools are tested on a daily basis for dissolved oxygen levels as a precaution

Oxon and Mousecroft Pools have had reasonable oxygen levels, but Radbrook Pool has been borderline generally.

Last Sunday the pool experienced a severe Oxygen crash and the fisheries team deployed their oxygen pumps to help improve levels. They did improve but crashed again on Monday evening. The Environment Agency came to help with a more powerful unit that could run over the night time period when levels tend to get worse. The Shrewsbury Fisheries pumps would have disturbed the residents at night, and so are extremely grateful to the E.A.

The Pool has greatly improved with Oxygen levels and to allow it to settle down we have closed it to fishing until the fisheries team are happy for it to reopen. We had six fish deaths, but if the response had been slower, we would have lost many more
A full copy of River testing results are included.



The fisheries manager has added that it is important to understand that all our fisheries including the rivers, Pools and tributaries are under many different pressures with various effects from either pollution consequences or hot dry spells of weather where water parameters can quickly change, we are very hands on every day to hopefully ensure we don't experience mass fish loss and habitat damage by such events as they have happened up and down the country.

It was indicated the problem at Radbrook Pool has been made worse due to the tree cover in the vicinity of the pool.

Many trees were planted around the pool and not been thinned and as they have matured they have created a wind break and so the water surface does not get stirred up as much.

Work had been done at Mousecroft and Oxon to thin trees and these pools have not suffered to the same extent. Where you do open up the ground slightly it will encourage other flora and fauna such as blue bells to come back and it will create better conditions to allow air to pass over the pool.

JUNIOR ACADEMY

The first Junior Coaching event took place on Saturday 3rd June and was fully booked, and very successful. All had a fabulous day and some caught their first fish. Smiles all around.

RIVER FISHING PLATFORMS

We have recently started to install another ten river platforms partly funded by an angling improvement grant of which we were successful in winning, Two are to replace flood damaged pontoons at Sydney Avenue and three more at Monkmoor of which one has received a donation by late angler Darren Perkins of £500 and five pontoons at the Emstrey fishery.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report is noted.
2. That officers can liaise with the countryside team and tree officer regarding radbrook pool and the possibility of thinning some trees.
3. That Andy Jones, his team of volunteers who manned the pumps overnight and the EA are thanked for their rapid response to ensure the fish did not suffer and loss was minimal.