

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE
4 September 2024**

Officer: Andy Jones – Shrewsbury Town Fisheries

FISHERIES UPDATE

Purpose

To update the Council the work of Shrewsbury Town Fisheries.

Radbrook Pool

In the next two weeks a fishing platform contractor will return to install a further four new replacement fishing platforms at the pool. The last platform in the rear corner is going to be totally removed and left to re wild. The reason for this is the platform area is easy for poachers and various youngsters also use the platform to cause problems as it is hidden. They will look at ways to rewild this area to help stop issues. Further improvements are planned in the autumn with some minimal tree work around the pool to improve the surface water area which will allow better water movement to improve oxygen levels. The improvement on some of the additional path areas will be moved in next year's plans.

Signage was installed earlier this year by Shrewsbury Town Council to stop the feeding of ducks and fish with bread and to also help control the rat population which was problematic with local residents. Despite large signage which is prominent at the pool in areas where this is happening, members of the public are ignoring the signs and are continuing to feed the wildlife with large volumes of bread. Some have been advised not to do so, whilst others plainly tell staff to "go away" putting it mildly.

To help stop the feeding habit, particularly on the beach area, they are going to transplant one of the ornamental Lillie's from another area of the pool to the beach area to hopefully take the feeding area away. Also at the pool, three domestic ducks have been dumped. This in addition encourages the feeding activity and believe this has been done on purpose. They will speak to Cuan Wildlife Rescue who we support as a fishery and see if they will help us rehome the three ducks. They are causing problems with the resident wild ducks and domestic ducks won't fare well at the pool over the winter.

Mousecroft Pool

Recently the contractors have been making further improvements to some fishing platform areas and path areas due to increased water levels of which some areas are now flooding in the winter. At some point, before the ground gets too wet, we wish to clean out the immediate fronts of all the platforms that have weed build up on them, with a small machine. This is necessary to prevent overgrowth before winter and spring.

Quarry & County Ground

Over the next couple of weeks, they shall be looking at the tree growth in these areas as many of the fishing platforms have overgrown, reducing access for anglers and inhibiting the rowers and boat people. A report will be produced and sent to the Contracts and Arbs Officer at Shrewsbury Town Council.

In the Quarry and County Ground in the last 12 months our fisheries staff have removed seven motorcycles from either in or on the river. Recently we recovered one in the County Ground after it had been stolen from the Copthorne area and set on fire, before being dumped in the edge of the river. We managed to find the owner, who was a young man, and he collected it. There is also another red motorcycle that we are going to get out at platform 95 in the Quarry. All these thefts could be preventable if owners secured their property. These machines pollute the rivers when they are dumped.



Monkmoor

Last month there were reports of a swan on the river at Monkmoor with fishing line hanging out of its beak. For a few days, many hours running around, and with the help of Cuan Wildlife Rescue, they tried to catch the swan to rescue it. It was decided to make a concerted effort and the Fire Brigade were contacted to ask for help. They did assist and later that day with the professional help of the fire service the swan was rescued, the fishing line removed from its beak and Cuan Wildlife took control of the bird for recuperation. It was later returned to the wild at Monkmoor.



Fishing Coaching

This year the coaching sessions have grown in popularity and continue to grow in demand. The Junior and Shropshire Recovery events will be soon end for this year in September. We plan to grow with the demand next year with help of the Angling Trust and our own team of trained coaches. We are also adding help with the Canals and River Trust next year to help provide more opportunities for youngsters and adults with extra resources of trained personnel.

The “Fish Talk Release” events for adults with various difficulties in their lives, is proving a success and this will continue with the aim to reduce potential possible river deaths. This has been positively supported by some local businesses and individuals. Sean and Dave who run these in small groups of four have recently passed the coaching qualifications with Angling Trust and will continue to develop with the scheme.

Vandalism on Fisheries

Recently they have experienced an angler’s car badly damaged at Monkmoor by young juveniles in our anglers parking area, under one of the bridges. This was reported to the police by the angler. The fisheries are busy each year attracting anglers from all over the country to come to Shrewsbury of which benefits the local economy. It’s not good when they return to their car and find it badly damaged. We had the same issue in July last year when another angler’s car had over £8000 worth of damage in the same parking area. There are also problems on the Reabrook reserve in the same areas with damage to infrastructure and fires. The fisheries staff do try to stop these situations but it’s difficult with a number of the younger generations of today.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the contents of the report are noted.**