

CASE STUDY – BARFORD LAKES, NORWICH

Barford Lakes is an 11 lake coarse fishery located on the outskirts of Norwich. The fishery is a haven for match anglers with open and club matches attracting anglers from all over the area. Despite being a busy fishery, Barford are fully committed to ensuring that the next generation of anglers are being brought into the sport.

Getting families fishing

One of the fishery's most popular initiatives is their Family Fishing programme. Delivered midweek during the school holidays, the events provide a free opportunity for family groups to try fishing. Equipment and bait is supplied and the fishery's licenced Level 2 angling coaches are on hand to provide advice and guidance ably supported by a team of volunteers. The 90 minute events provide a fantastic introduction to angling using a very simple set of equipment, focusing on the importance of unhooking fish, particularly the use of a disgorger. Throughout 2019, the fishery ran a total of 16 sessions which saw 300 people coming along getting into fishing for the first time!

What happens next?

One of the things that really makes Barford Lakes a success is the opportunities to continue fishing beyond the Family Fishing events. In addition to the free Family Fishing events, there is an on going opportunity to hire tackle and fish the fishery's starter lake. For just £5 you can hire a 4m whip (and simple terminal tackle, nets etc.) and get your day ticket for the lake as well!

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Volunteers & Coaches

Underpinning all of the successful events at the fishery is the group of volunteers that help out at each of the events. A combination of licenced angling coaches and quality assured volunteers ensure that the fishery is able to cater for participants of all abilities. Their positive, friendly attitude has been one of key reasons why events are always full with participants eager to return for their next fishing trip.

Working in partnership is key!

Sarah Thompson, Manager at Barford Lakes is always keen to push the importance of working in partnership. The fishery have not only developed partnerships with the Angling Trust and National Fishing Month but also local, non-angling organisations. Active Norfolk, the active partnership for Norfolk, play a pivotal role in promoting the events to non-angling audiences. Additionally, Active Norfolk support the delivery of the Norfolk School Games of which angling based at Barford is a key part. The partnership has resulted in 30 schools from all over Norfolk competing in qualifiers at Barford every year with around 50 young people attending a School Games Final at the fishery.

Utilising Facebook

Barford have found great success in investing in Facebook adverts to help promote their events. It's been found as the most cost effective way to help spread the message locally. Not only is it cheap but it also helps generate interest, likes and subscribers on the fisheries social media accounts.

