



Virtual Fisheries Forum 11/08/21 – Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire EA Updates

Q&A Session with Ian Wood

Q. Can you enlighten us on the legitimate use of crayfish traps? Do they still need an identification card on them? Just how important is it to have set standards for trap opening size in minimising risk of accidental trapping of Otters and other wildlife?

A. Yes, Crayfish traps still require an ID card. Occasionally we issued a license for scientific research, but these are not granted generally for personal consumption in the North. Any trap without a card is illegal.

To the next part, unlicensed traps pose a greater risk to native wildlife. All legal traps must adhere to carefully set conditions and a proper trap will not have an aperture diameter greater than 9.5cm.

Q. We have several instances of Eastern Europeans poaching on the Shropshire Union Canal. Who can we contact?

A. The Angling Trust Building Bridges team whose main role is engaging with migrant anglers to ensure understanding on English fisheries legislation. There is signage published in multiple languages
<https://anglingtrust.net/building-bridges-project/>

Because it is a canal and CRT owned you would need to seek permission from CRT before putting up any signage along the waterway. We can at least log it onto our intelligence system. John Ellis would probably be the best contact at CRT currently.

Q. What has happened to the EA self-regulation scheme?

A. For some context the SRS is came about because previously when we approached a lot of the large commercial fishing complexes who host match fishing events to enter premises and check rod licenses as part of our enforcement duties we received a lot of resistance from these fisheries who did not want their matches being interrupted by us license checking due to the stakes and prize money involved for competitors. As a result we decided to give these fisheries power of self-regulation to demand to see licenses before sale of day ticket or entry to a match so we do not have to disturb events. There is around 20 fisheries involved with this scheme.

Q. We have had fish being taken from one of our lakes and transferred to another water which is not one of our waters, if these people are seen again doing this what can be we do to give us the best chance of successful reporting/apprehending?

A. Most importantly find out who they are, what method of transfer they are using i.e. a vehicle?. If you see them in the act take a video if possible or get the best form of evidence you can to pass on to the police. If the police or EA officers catch them in the act then it's a certified fish theft offence and arrestable. Usually if they are transferring fish from one lake to another that is not owned by you then they are probably not members of your club.

Dave Lees is the relevant Angling Trust Regional Enforcement Manager who could be a good contact for you on this matter.

Q. Our club a canal (Manchester, Bury and Bolton canal), its disused and the water is in very poor state. It's owned by CRT who have a duty of care according to the EA. What can we do to push the CRT to take action?

A. Relatively little can be done to push the CRT other than pressuring with emails sadly. Usually these sections of canal that get neglected are no longer navigable and in the eyes of the CRT no longer valuable compared to canal stretches where boats regularly use.

Q. Our club would like to meet our local EA officers. Would it be possible for some of the new team members to introduce themselves to us?

A. Yes, that is fine we would be more than happy to engage with our local clubs. Please do get in touch.

Q. What would your stance be on the use of knotted landing nets by anglers should you come across them on a patrol?

A. If I was in doubt about the net mesh I would seize it however I have never come across one personally. I'm sure the angling trades association must have a stance on these nets and be aware of their existence. Knotted leads are legal in Ireland and in Europe so presumably they could be available from retailers in England under the premise that they are for use not in England.

Q. What is the EA stance on the reports of our rivers in terms of raw sewage outflows?

A. Combined Sewerage Overflows are only permitted to discharge when flows are high. At all other times they should not be discharging and if they are collect evidence and report the offence by calling in to our incident number.

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