

Member Update June 2022

As summer approaches (in theory anyway!), the club sees increasing numbers of anglers on our venues. Summer brings with a new set of challenges for the club, particularly on managing our warming waters.

All venues, both game and coarse, are fishing very well with anglers catching lots of great quality fish. We are starting to see the benefits of the long term stocking strategies that have been put into place.

The newly added venues this year, Skelsmergh Tarn and Hall More, are both popular and doing particularly well – this is great to see.

Key dates for your diaries:

Events in summer are obviously focused around coarse fishing due to water conditions. Trout events will be picked up again in September.

There will be a series of evening coarse competitions run across several venues. These venues will be closed from 4.30pm on the day:

- Wednesday 8th June Castlehead
- Wednesday 15th June Ratherheath Tarn
- Wednesday 29th June Hall More
- Wednesday 6th July Castlehead
- Wednesday 27th July Ratherheath Tarn
- Wednesday 3rd August Hall More

Thursday June 16th

Skelsmergh Tarn closed for the day

Carp Night Competitions

(venue closed from 6pm on the day to 8am the next morning)

- Friday 24th June Ratherheath Tarn
- Friday 22nd July Ratherheath Tarn
- Friday 20th August Cleabarrow Tarn (this is 24 hour and the venue will be closed until 8pm on the 21st August)

Aeration Update

Over the last 2 years the club has embarked on a significant programme of aeration on it's most critical venues, both game and coarse. Methods vary depending on the nature of the venues and available power sources. However, the one thing they have in common is their expense, complexity and management time they take-up.

Perfecting solar powered solutions has been a particular challenge, given that aeration is required most overnight.

The biggest of our projects has recently been completed at Bigland Tarn. Due to it's relatively shallow depths, this venue is particularly sensitive to over-heating, with water temperatures last summer reaching 27 degrees. This is deadly for trout.

Given its overall size, aerating a large water body is difficult and expensive. The club sourced specialist equipment from Italy. This uses a combined water circulator and air injection system to improve

conditions. Installation required us to run a new 250m, 3-phase power cable lakeside – a large undertaking in itself.



The aeration unit sits attached between 2 steel cables between 2 islands:



As you can see from the above picture, it shifts a lot of water.

Power is distributed from a lineside box, positioned on the main island:



Water conditions are constantly monitored using a 3G enabled, automated test equipment permanently positioned in the water. This produces data that we can react to well in advance of issues becoming critical:



We have monitoring like this on 3 game venues now; Hall More, Bigland Tarn and Farletonview.

Such equipment is very expensive. However, it not only safeguards our stocks, aeration has significant other benefits too:

- Raises the metabolic rates of fish so they feed more, improving sport
- Evaporates off waterborne nutrients which if left, increase weed growth
- Creates flows which break up the formation of blanket weed

One disadvantage is that it has a tendency to attract fish into the flows in hot conditions. We can mitigate this to some degree by managing the times at which the aeration systems are running. We are learning more about this everyday and making adjustments as we go.

Weed Control

Following the European-wide ban on herbicides about 10 years ago, many venues now suffer excessive weed growth. This is exaggerated by the effects of global climate change.

Managing weed growth is very difficult and expensive. Over the course of the last few years, the club has used a whole variety of techniques and has successfully got on top of heavily weeded coarse venues such as Ratherheath Tarn and Castlehead.

The action of fish stocks such as carp and bream on coarse waters reduce weed growth by constantly disturbing the bed and creating turbidity in the water.

As a result of successful management techniques of the last 3 years, none of the coarse waters this year will require us to deploy the weedboat – this is brilliant news.

Unfortunately, the game waters are a much more complex proposition. The feeding action of trout doesn't create water turbidity and in fact, this would be detrimental to fly fishing anyway. As a result, a number of our trout waters weed up heavily in the summer months.

The only solution to this is to use a weed boat and at over £1000 per day, this is very expensive. In order to minimize costs, we 'block-book' the boat for a number of days to reduce travel costs.

Weeding this year will take place in mid-July. It is likely that in the run-up to this date, weed growth will create restricted fishing at Farletonview, Hall More and Capernwray. This is beyond our control. If it affects your fishing, the only answer is to use venues less impacted.

Though Bigland Tarn is generally less impacted, with weed growth in restricted areas, it is getting more widespread and we will need to devise a strategy to manage this in the years to come.

Anglers should also remember that whilst the weed impacts fishing, it does add life-saving oxygen to the water as it photosynthesises during the daylight hours. It also supports aquatic life which is the only thing feeding the fish in our game venues.

Ongoing Maintenance

We continue with our programme of maintenance and improvement work on our venues. Though we ramp this down in summer when venues are busiest, sometimes work is unavoidable.

We have received numerous requests to cut back hedges. Hedge cutting is governed by environmental legislation and we're not permitted to do this until August.

the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. (CSS) or the Environmentally Sensitive Area scheme (ESA) you must not cut hedgerows during the main bird nesting season which is taken to be from **1 March to 31 July (inclusive)**.

We have continued to improve platforms, walkways and gateways to make them safe and secure.



There is some work to do at Ratherheath Tarn on Sunday 12th June. Though we won't be closing the venue, anglers should anticipate some disturbance, especially in the morning, when the floating islands displaced by Strom Arwen will be moved back into position.

WADAA Events

We have greatly increased the number of club events this year for both coarse and game anglers. Some casting and game coaching has taken place at Capernwray and we resumed trout fishing competitions not seen in the club for 20 years.



We'll run some more of these in the autumn and next year plan to run a more structured series of game events in a league format.

We've also continued to open up our venues to non-angling groups. Castlehead regularly hosts groups of school children who use the venue for outdoor education.



These activities not only help embed the club into the wider community, but also draw in external funding which is used to improve our facilities.

We'll run more events during the summer school holidays and publicise these closer to the dates.

Stocking

We've completed our spring stocking programme on trout venues now. As water temperatures approach the upper teens, it becomes impossible to stock trout safely.

We are now in the 2nd year of our new stocking strategy and our venues are going from strength to strength, with each water developing its own characteristics and profile. We'll continue to build on this going forwards.

Whilst coarse waters are only stocking over 4 months in winter, it is clear to see the fantastic range, size and quality of fish we now have on offer, with all of our venues containing specimen sizes.

Whether catching double figure trout from Hall More, Tigers and Spartics from Bigland, twenty pound carp from Ratherheath or 10lb tench from Skelsmergh, it is vital that anglers use appropriate tackle to handle such fish. Nets, line strengths and fish care need to be carefully considered and anglers may need to change tackle to suit.



Environmental Care

For a number of years now we've received comments from anglers regarding the amount of discarded line being left on our venues. This is almost always related to game venues. This has become very

apparent recently with the work to install the power cable for the aeration system at Bigland Tarn where significant quantities, often with flies still attached, were unearthed. Furthermore, as we strim grass and bracken during the summer months we seem to spend more time untangling line from the equipment than actually cutting.

It is very difficult to know what we can do as a club to improve this situation, as all anglers know not to throw line away.

However, we have teamed up with a national Line recycling organization:

www.facebook.com/AnglersLineRecycling

Over the course of the next few weeks we'll be installing recycling stations at the entrance points to most of the clubs game venues.



Chairman's Note

The club continues to work extremely hard to delivery the highest quality fishing experience for all of our members and visiting anglers.

Venues have never before been as well equipped and stocked and this is down to the hard work of club employees, directors and those member who volunteer and help out when needed.

Not resting on our laurels, we'll continue to work to get things better and better.

Some things would help from members too. Checking tickets is now very easy with the electronic memberships – no more leaving membership cards in the washing! Please have your cards ready for inspecting on the bank. This can either be as an electronic image saved to your phone, or a print-off on paper. Please ensure either way that you have this to hand when requested.



Many of you will have seen the comments on Facebook about the use of barbless hooks on trout waters. Please ensure you are using barbless hooks or you have flattened the barb on your flies. We do not want to start inspecting the flies you are using. However if incidents are still occurring, we will resort to inspections and penalties.

We continue to have problems with anglers not following entry times on Bigland Tarn and Farletonview and this creates us problems with the landowners.

Please note that access to either site is NOT permitted before 8am.

The club puts a great emphasis on communicating with members and I know that lots of Nick and Joanne's time is taken up with keeping members informed and answering queries. The new 'MyWADAA' functionality through the website provides you with a wealth of information and the club Facebook page provides a constant stream of updates from both members and club alike.

Please register and use these, as you will find they help your angling experience hugely.

Best of luck with your fishing for the summer months.

Mike Egner

WADAA Chairman

