

## Tingrith Annual Report.

This is the first I believe, annual report for the Tingrith complex and I hope this gives you, the fellow Vauxhall Angling Club member an insight of what has actually been happening at Tingrith during the last twelve months. Also I hope it encourages you to visit the complex and enjoy its many challenges.

Firstly may I welcome Fergal McCrystal and Gavin Blackman to the bailiffing team, they have both been an enormous help to the committee in improving the environs of all three lakes as I will show later in the report. I must also thank Paul Caton for his continuing support and help. David de la Mere has stood down from his role as a bailiff and we all acknowledge his input over many years. Thank you David.

This is also an ideal opportunity to thank Tex Marshall and Alan Hobbs for their input in improving the complex. Its worth pointing out once again that all the work at the complex is totally voluntary, no one is paid for the work they do. This is **your** club and any help is really appreciated whether it's picking up litter you see or becoming involved in work parties. On the subject of work parties, a big thank you to all of you who were prepared to come out and help during the March to June hiatus.

During the year many of the wooden platforms on The Manor Lake and The Mere have either been replaced or renovated, platform 1 on Manor Lake can now comfortably take two anglers, or one plus spouse, Tex has installed a drainage system from behind and work parties have also laid several tons of hard core to improve access. The paths to all the platforms on Manor Lake have been widened and improved. In addition trees have either been trimmed or removed.

A Portaloo has been installed adjacent to the main car parking area, keys are available from the bailiffing team for a nominal sum, anyone caught defecating elsewhere has no excuse.

Manor Lake has not been stocked for several years, the main species are carp, perch, roach and rudd, however crucians and tench are still very occasionally netted. Personally I have landed a 15lb mirror (weighed by two other anglers) and seen roach well in excess of a pound landed.

The Mere is an astonishing lake, to many anglers it is nothing more than a small fish venue, but to many others, well! During the year Fergal and others placed barley straw bales at various points in the lake to reduce algal bloom. This appears to have worked as the only bloom seen during the summer was the harmless variety, we will continue to monitor water quality as we do on all our venues, you may not see us doing it but we constantly check water quality using state of the art equipment.

The head of crucian carp is increasing in the Mere, they are breeding and I'm told some are in the 2 to 3lb bracket. Some carp are certainly into the double figures range and for a small lake there are a lot of them! A ghostie of 17lb definitely exists. Over 800 small silver fish were removed in November and there are plans to remove even more shortly and possibly introduce chub to prevent too great a build up of small fish. The introduction of a predatory species is an ongoing issue with the committee.

Woodlands Lake has probably seen most man hours employed. We have thinned considerably the scrub on the car park side of the lake, whilst doing this we disposed of an enormous quantity of rubbish. Hundreds of beer cans, beer and spirits bottles, bait containers and large quantities of excreta and toilet paper. This is not on chaps, there is a Portaloo just a short drive away and if you carried full containers of bait or even beer come to that to the lakes, take your empties home!!! Don't leave it for someone else to clear up.

A few anglers are not keen on work that has occurred on the one bank that has been only partially cleared of scrub, we cannot as a club please everyone but the increase in air movement has most definitely improved water quality and raised water temperatures during November and December. The overwhelming majority of our members who regularly fish Woodlands have strongly expressed their approval and on seeing the volumes of discarded rubbish left by club members in the undergrowth are shocked.

On the subject of Woodlands, we are soon removing the dead birch trees overhanging the far bank, this will involve a temporary closure for a day of the lake, but we will erect signs to give you notice and hopefully you can lend a hand to expedite matters. We have also sadly, had a visit from a tea leaf just before Christmas. Helped by an angle grinder he broke into the lockup and stole several items of equipment. The police are involved as forensic evidence was left behind. The message here is if you see someone you don't recognise challenge them (safely of course) and record their vehicle registration number.

Woodlands is at times a difficult lake to fish, being deep, fish can be all over the place. There is a fantastic head of bream into double figures, similarly carp. Personally I have landed a 7lb tench only to be aced by a 9lb from two swims down a couple of hours later, both on 6m pellets at half depth only a rod length out. Perch to 3lb, ruff, roach and rudd pushing 2lb are not unusual. A worthwhile tip is to vary the depth where you are fishing, don't use too much ground bait in the colder months and try hook baits like corn, bread punch or bunches of maggots.

Cray fish, otters and eels have never been reported. Mink have not been seen for a couple of years, but watch out for the black squirrels, they are easily confused with mink until they head off up a tree! Among the stranger sightings on the bank are cheetahs and cayman, we remain unsure if the magic mushrooms or the Colombian marching powder have an involvement with these sightings. The so called cheetah likes Cornish Pasties and its tummy tickled, best places to observe this rare animal (!) are near the lockup at Woodlands and the far bank of The Manor.

Tingrith really is a great place to fish, if you don't know it, come and have a walk round. One thing you can be sure of is a warm welcome, for some reason we all talk to each other and exchange ideas. We have an increasing number of lady anglers and children coming to the venue, this is great to see and we hope that the improvements we have made will encourage more families to fish what is regularly referred to as "the jewel in the crown".

There are **no** public footpaths at Tingrith and if you see anyone you don't recognise and who is not a member of VAC or Luton AC, they should not be there. Yes we can live with dog walkers from the barn complex and Tingrith village, many of them have my mobile phone number and do let me know if they see something amiss. Some of you may remember a white Volkswagen van frequently parked near our gates earlier in the year, between us all, i.e. local residents and club members, the driver is now serving a prison sentence for various offences committed in the Tingrith area. So be alert but be safe.

In the longer term we are hoping to resurface the whole of our trackway and car parking areas, this is for the future however as the cost in just materials is substantial. Short term, as mentioned earlier, dead trees at Woodlands need to be removed and fencing around the car park replaced. We hope you, our fellow club members can help the bailiffing and committee members with these tasks.

Finally, thank you once again to the Tingrith bailiffing team for their considerable help. Walking around the venue in the middle of the night looking for possible poachers shows real dedication to the club and their willingness to help you, the Vauxhall member, enjoy your sport. If you can help the club in any way, please contact us on the telephone numbers in the membership book or by speaking with a bailiff.

