

Mid Northants Trout Fishers Association

Coaching Report for the Angling Trust October 2021

Highlights

- **A successful restart after the pandemic**
- **Great team effort**
- **Excellent feedback from attendees**

This project has been supported by an award from the Angling Improvement Fund, which reinvests a share of Fishing Licence income to improvement projects and activities at fisheries. The Fund is administered by the Angling Trust and supported by the Environment Agency.



Background and Planning

Our club has coached fly fishing since 2014. With a team of 8 coaches and additional volunteers we provide sessions at Pitsford and other venues. We enjoy coaching and believe it helps to:

- Promote our club, the trout fisheries and the sport of fly fishing
- Attract and support new members
- Progress new anglers from beginner to intermediate skill; hopefully catch more fish and enjoy the sport
- Contribute in general to angling development

About a quarter of our club members have received some coaching. Because of the pandemic, we did very little coaching in 2020. However we were keen to restart in 2021, with suitable precautions.

Using a grant of £495 from the Angling Improvement Fund we purchased PPE to protect our coaches and attendees; we advertised sessions in a local magazine; we replaced some of our tackle. As usual we also advertised through social media, web sites and with the help of Pitsford fishery staff.

We adapted our risk management and other systems, following COVID requirements. We reviewed them when restrictions were eased. We provided extra training for our coaches.





Delivery

COVID meant that we could only coach in small numbers and outdoors (fly casting, tackle advice, water bugs). To reduce physical contact as much as possible we changed to online booking with Eventbrite, provided PPE, temperature checks and disinfected kit between groups. Kev Rowley designed new learning materials on water bugs, which are especially popular with the juniors.

Online admin enabled us to manage coach / attendee numbers more effectively.

Pitsford Sessions

- We started with 4 learners per session and increased to 6 when rules were relaxed in mid-Summer. There were 2 sessions on each date.
- The coaching is free of charge.
- We coached 58 people, each receiving about 1¼ hrs of tuition; mostly single or double handed fly casting or general tackle advice.

Attendee Analysis:

- Aged from 7 to 75 years (average age 51)
- Included some family groups new to fishing
- 20% were females
- 17% were already club members, the majority were non-members

Other Coaching

- We provided other casting and boat sessions (1 to 6 hours) for another 14 people:
 - Mid Northants members
 - Wellingborough Nene AC

“Saved Hours”

The total number of hours for all our coaching was just over 200 including all sessions, preparation, coach training and admin (the original estimate was 175 hrs). This is despite having to start the season in April, a month later than planned.

Feedback

Very informative, with knowledgeable and experienced coaches working in a covid secure way.

A most professional experience all round.

The instructor was excellent and talked me through ways to improve and allowed me space to practice.

The feedback response rate was 26%, from which:

- The majority rated the sessions as excellent:

MNTFA Pitsford Sessions Feedback Ratings					
	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1. Overall organisation of the session				20%	80%
2. Welcome / administration				13%	87%
3. Access / facilities				20%	80%
4. The quality of the coaching				7%	93%
5. Health and safety measures			7%	20%	73%

- The majority (93%) were very likely to recommend the session to other people and to attend similar events.

We are looking forward to 2022.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to:

- The Angling Trust for the funding and guidance
- Our coaches and volunteers
- Anglian Water Management and Pitsford staff for providing the facilities and helping to promote the sessions

Seumas Halliday

Project Lead

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