

# Make time to go fishing

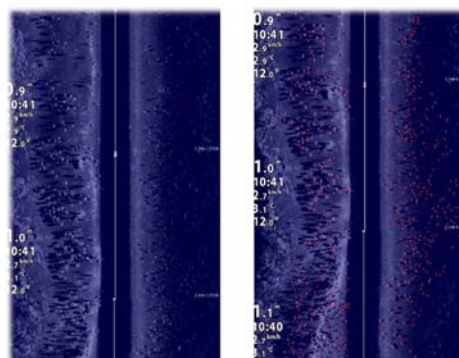


## Lincs and Northants Fisheries Update January 2018

### Fisheries Monitoring News



Monitoring supports Fenland Fisheries



Side Scan Images

In response to fish mortalities over recent years and the concerns from our fenland angling clubs we have been carrying out some work to look at winter aggregations of bream in the South Holland and North Level drains. Side Scans from these surveys have revealed very positive results. The results show large shoals of bream and roach aggregated in the river margins. Images from the Side Scan work have been provided to the clubs who are currently posting them on social media to inform anglers about the good news.

### Fisheries Monitoring Summary & Look Forward



The Welland and Witham Catchment fisheries survey programmes were completed during 2017. The team used a range of different but complementing monitoring techniques and equipment.

The techniques used included electric fishing, seine netting, hydro acoustic, side scan and multibeam sonar work. In combination these techniques have helped to paint a picture of the current fish populations present in the rivers and their tributaries.

#### When will the data be available?

The data is being analysed now and the reports will be produced and made available very soon.

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## **A Special Thank You to members of Peterborough & District Nene Angling Association**

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to members of Peterborough & District Angling Association for the on-going fisheries feedback and barbel catch return data we receive. This information is invaluable to fisheries monitoring staff and highlights the excellent knowledge and understanding of the river and fisheries ecology. We encourage all our local angling clubs to get involved with monitoring their fisheries.

## **Fisheries Monitoring Work 2018?**

During 2018 the Ancholme and Nene catchments will be surveyed using similar techniques. Working with PDAA members we plan to run a catch return scheme looking at barbel populations in the River Nene, to assess their numbers and to get an idea of the population structure present. We will continue to work on the Boston Barrier in the Haven to address and mitigate possible impacts on the fish populations present and the migratory and transitional species that use it. The long term assessment of the impact on fish populations at pump stations continues with Hull University, this is a long term study assessing behaviour and impact to lowland fish.

The monitoring team will also be carrying out fish population monitoring on the River Nene from Peterborough city centre to the Dog in a Doublet Sluice. We hope the Side Scan work will provide confidence and support a busy angling season not least for the Division 2 National Championship hosted by Peterborough & District Nene Angling Association and being held in Peterborough this September. In the near future we hope to be able to support Scunthorpe Amalgamated Anglers on the River Ancholme in establishing a healthy and productive fishery.

## **Area Fisheries Enforcement Summary**



Fisheries Enforcement across the Lincolnshire Area. Bryan Seagroatt is now trained, equipped and fully operational within the area. He has been out on patrol checking licences with Paul Caygill. Paul is based in the Yorkshire Area and works part time in our most Northern area of the patch. We have recently had a significant rod licence evasion prosecution in the area, this has attracted a good deal of media attention following an Environment Agency press release.

Brian has also attended a joint training event with Lincs Police Rural Crimes Officers working with Midlands Area. This will help build capacity for future joint patrols and assistance from Lincs Police.

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### **Lincs & Northants Fisheries Enforcement Plan**

The Fisheries Biodiversity & Geomorphology Team are currently preparing a fisheries enforcement plan for 2018/19. The plan will co-ordinate the work of our 3 FEO team members covering the patch utilising available VBS intelligence and partnership working.

### **Fisheries Report**

The Lincolnshire and Northampton 2016/17 Fisheries Report will be available soon. This will include reports from our Case Management System and National Incident Recording System.

### **Lincs and Northants - Rod Licence Checks**

Since the 1st April 2017 2,792 rod licences have been checked with 112 offence reports being issued. 106 prosecutions have been concluded with 100 of these being successful prosecutions. Total fines amounted to £10,646 with costs to the Environment Agency at £12,944.

### **Fish Movement Permitting Work**

Fish movements and equipment authorisation work has reduced significantly this quarter. Many fisheries now hold fishery site permits and this has greatly reduced the red tape burden for our customers and local fisheries staff. This is very much a step in the right direction! If you require information about Fishery Site Permits please contact your local fisheries technical officer on 03780 506 506, we would be pleased to help you.

### **Fishery Advisory Visits**

Fisheries staff have completed a number of advisory visits this quarter including a joint visit with our Angling Trust colleagues. Providing advice and guidance is routine work for fisheries staff so please get in touch if you would like us to make a visit.

### **Fisheries Project Development**

Local area Fisheries Biodiversity & Geomorphology officers have the opportunity to source internal and external funding opportunities to support and benefit angling clubs and our local fisheries. If you have an idea for improving your fishery we can advise and support you with an initial discussion and advisory site visit. Please contact your local fisheries officer on 03708 506 506. We also work in partnership with organisations such as the Angling Trust, Wild Trout Trust and local Rivers Trusts. These organisations are also able to offer specialist advice and guidance. We are happy to pass on any enquires or make referrals if required.

### **Fisheries Standby Rota**

Fisheries staff will be starting the fisheries standby rota in March 2018. Staff are available out of normal working hours to help and support any fisheries incidents. At any time during the spring and summer our Environment Management Team can call on Fisheries staff for support, or to request field support. Do not hesitate to call us if you have a developing problem at your fishery or you are aware of a potential environmental incident.

### Fish Health Incidents & Fish Mortality Incidents

2017 was a busy year for fish mortality incidents; our National Fisheries Service investigated 50 incidents throughout the year. The number of KHV outbreaks decreased slightly in 2017 with 27 mortalities being investigated and confirmed as KHV positive. Despite the cold weather we have had no reported fish health related incidents within Lincs and Northants this quarter. If you have developing problems at your fishery this spring please contact our Incident Line on 0800 80 70 60, your call will be put through to the Duty Officer.

### Water Situation Summary

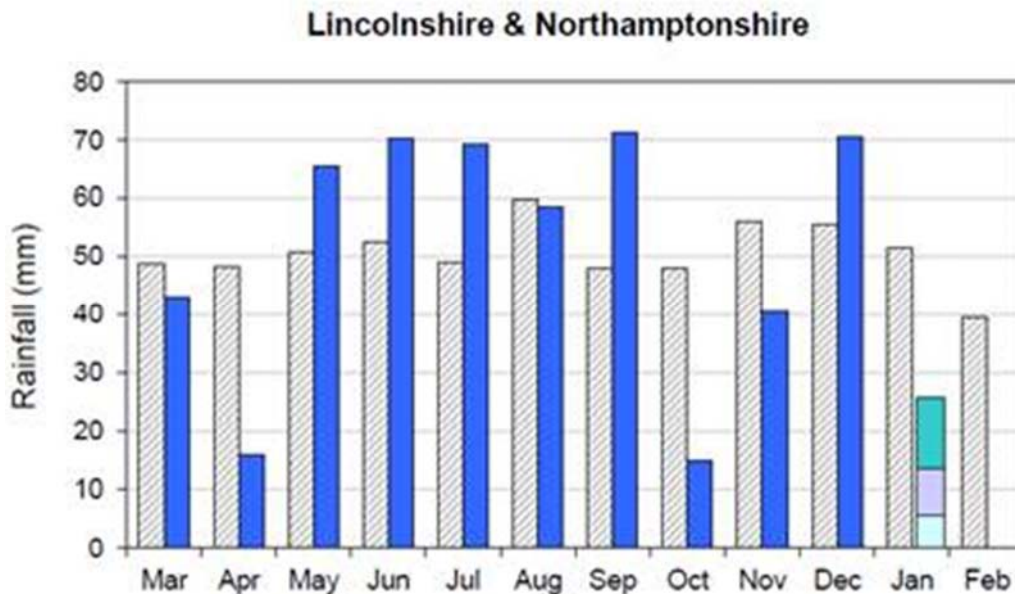
Above average rainfall in December 2017 and a wet January so far in 2018 has brought some welcome relief to the environment and water users. This follows a period of below-average rainfall in October and November which had been a cause for concern and led to low flows in the headwaters of a number of catchments including the Upper Nene, Upper Welland, Glens and River Witham. Rainfall over autumn and winter is vitally important to refill or recharge groundwater resources and storage reservoirs.

Anglers will be pleased to know that the water level in Anglian Water's Pitsford Reservoir has increased and is now back in line with the normal operating curve.

The Environment Agency's dry weather planning cell is meeting regularly to ensure that we are ready to respond to any dry weather related incidents. This will become particularly important as temperatures increase as we move into the spring season.

If you see something in the environment that you are concerned about please let us know. Please call our Environment Incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

*The graph below shows rainfall totals for our area (blue bars) relative to the long-term average in grey.*



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