

FRESHWATER INFORMER

Issue 343 - March 2026



**Free
Magazine**

**Peter Lee,
Cracking Winter Carp
Wylands Fishery**

Catch Up With:

Medway Man

The Friendly Fisherman

In The Edge With Alex

Plus Special Guest Writer Ali Laker

URBAN



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Welcome to the March 2026! edition of The Freshwater Informer

Well, what can I say about the month we've just had? It's been wet, it's been cold, and at times it's been hard to find the motivation to get ourselves out on the bank. Winter has certainly reminded us who's in charge.

I've managed to get out when I can. I've blanked, yes – but even those sessions have been enlightening in their own way. There's always something to learn in fishing, even when the nets stay dry. What's really stood out to me over the past few weeks is just how many dedicated anglers are still putting in the nights, braving the elements, and staying keen for their angling.

That commitment says everything about our sport.

Like many of you, I can't wait to see the other side of this weather. The thought of milder mornings, active fish, and being able to truly enjoy the lakes and rivers around us again is something to look forward to.

Over the past month we've also attended a couple of shows, where I've had the pleasure of speaking with a wide range of suppliers and companies. It's been fantastic to engage with so many people who share the same passion. A number of them have kindly supported us with products to give away on our Facebook page, and it's been great to see those prizes so well received by you all.

Looking ahead to March, I'm aiming to get out more and put a few proper sessions in. With a bit of luck – and maybe a break in the weather – I'll have some bank-side stories to share in the next edition. As always, thank you for your continued support of The Freshwater Informer. Tight lines, and here's to brighter days ahead



As always, a massive thank you to each and every one of you who reads, shares, and supports The Freshwater Informer.

I'm working hard behind the scenes to continue growing the magazine and to bring you even more great content as we move through 2026.

If you've got a venue you think we should visit, or a story you'd like to share, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Until next time—tight lines, and make the most of every second on the bank.

Have a great Month tight lines to you all

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Tricklebrook Fishery



Dan Cannon - Trickle Brook - New Lake



Harry Hubbard - New Lake Mirror at 31lb



George Stevens - 22lb Mirror



Dan Cannon - Trickle Brook - New Lake



Charlie Young- New Lake



Joe Bonner - 17lb - New Lake



Oscar 25lb 7oz Common - Specimen Lake



Oscar 25lb 7oz Common - Specimen Lake



Oscar 27lb 12oz Mirror - Specimen Lake



Oscar 27lb 12oz Mirror - Specimen Lake



Jack Acres - 27lb 14oz - Dove Lake



Adam Sartain - Quarry Lake - 21lb Common

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3. NO NUTS OR PARTICLE
4. BOILIE AND PELLET ONLY FOR SPECIMEN AND BACK LAKE - ALL BAIT WILL BE INSPECTED
5. ALL FISH MUST BE RETURNED TO THE WATER AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE FOLLOWING CAPTURE. NO STANDING. FISH MUST BE HELD LOW OVER A MAT/CRADLE FOR PHOTOGRAPHS
6. MINIMUM 15LB LINE AND NO BRAIDED MAIN LINE
7. NO SACKING OR RETAINING OF FISH IS PERMITTED. THE REMOVAL OF FISH FROM THIS VENUE WILL BE VIEWED AS A CRIMINAL ACT
8. EACH ANGLER MUST HAVE A MINIMUM OF 42 INCH LANDING NET AND A LARGE PADDED UNHOOKING MAT/CRADLE REGARDLESS OF TARGET SPECIES ON SPECIMEN AND BACK LAKE
9. BARBLESS HOOKS ONLY
10. NO LEAD CORE, NO FUSED LEADERS OF ANY KIND INCLUDING SAFEZONE
11. NO FIXED LEAD RIGS. ALL LEADS MUST PASS FREELY OVER LEADER KNOTS. RIG CHECKS WILL BE CARRIED OUT
12. RECREATIONAL DRUGS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED - IMMEDIATE BAN FOLLOWS
13. PLEASE INFORM FISHERY MANAGEMENT OF ANY SNAGGED TACKLE OR FISH
14. ANY FISH OVER 28LB MUST BE REPORTED TO BAILIFF
15. NO DOGS ALLOWED
16. BARBECUES ALLOWED IF OFF THE GROUND
17. NO BAIT BOATS
18. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY OF THE RULES WILL RESULT IN BEING ASKED TO LEAVE AND/OR BANS WHERE APPROPRIATE AND NO REFUND WILL BE OFFERED
19. TRICKLEBROOK IS NOW OPERATING A ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY TO ANY ACTS OF AGGRESSION OR ABUSE TOWARDS ITS BAILIFFS AND STAFF
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In The Edge With Alex

"The relentless rain since the beginning of the year has seen most of the rivers in our area out in the roads and, judging by the ever increasing number of potholes, most of the roads are now in the rivers..."

With plans for a visit to the River Rother quite literally washed away, it was a case of finding a stillwater that was neither flooded, nor a quagmire, for my angling fix.

I wracked my brains for a venue that would be both accessible, and offer the chance of a few fish, before settling on the old horse pond. Actually two waters, upper and lower, the venue contains what is undoubtedly my favourite winter species, perch.

I have to be honest and admit that I've never previously caught any perch of a meaningful size from the ponds, but all of the ingredients are there. Plenty of bite-sized bait fish, lots of cover, reasonable depth, and ample hearsay and rumour. All the things that made me feel that it could produce a surprise or two. As it turned out, I was in for a surprise, although not the type I was expecting...

The horse pond is a reasonable walk from the nearest parking. In my younger days I may have covered the distance with all the enthusiasm of a young colt with spring fever. In the gloomy conditions, with damp in my bones, I lumbered along more like a worn out pack horse, eventually arriving at the gate, lightly steaming from the excursion and moisture in the air.

Both ponds contain perch, but I was drawn to the upper. Smaller and more intimate, during the summer months float fished maggot will result in a constant stream of greedy, and obliging, 'wasps'. Little perch of three to four inches with unrelenting appetites. I'm not sure of what size perch are capable of breeding, but it stands to reason that if there are lots of little ones then there must be at least a few bigger ones.

The ponds were created by damming the small stream that runs through them. Both have the classic teardrop shape, so common in waters of this type, although the upper has a more pronounced bowl with shorter, narrower, shallows leading to the inlet.

I chose to setup in a swim on the transition between the bowl and the shallows, which gave access to an inviting looking rhododendron bush that folded out over the water and looked to provide the perfect cover for any marauding stripeys. The depth was around three feet, which seemed to be a fair compromise between the deeper water of the bowl and the much shallower inlet. Having 'walked' a float fished king prawn into position, tight against the front of the overhanging rhododendron branches, the next step was to bait up.

This is where my cunning plan started to go awry. As some readers may be aware, my preference when perch fishing is to bait up in a way that encourages bait fish into the area. My thinking is that by attracting small silvers into the swim, they create a lot of activity which in turn attracts the perch. The perch arrive, the silvers scatter, and all that is left is a nice big hookbait for the perch to take. Because of this, I like to use a groundbait that creates a cloud throughout the water column, without worrying too much about the feed value of said groundbait. I generally use a mixture of any leftover bags that I have kicking around in the bottom of my bait cupboard, bulked out with wholemeal flour, pellet dust, or similar. For this trip I had half a sliced loaf which needed using, that I figured, with a bait box full of water and a little effort, I could turn into a passable tub of mashed bread. I grabbed a handful of slices, tore them into small pieces, and then kneaded them into the water until the contents of my bait box resembled a spill in a snowglobe factory. I then simply added some dry ground bait to help bind it together, and balled it out over the float. For 30 seconds or so, it looked great. Flakes of bread hung in the water, whilst the crushed hemp and pellet in the proper ground bait sent up a fizz to the surface. Surely it would only be a matter of minutes before my swim was a seething mass of small roach and rudd. Then it started to go wrong. In my haste to get fishing I hadn't been as thorough in the mixing process as I might have been. Handfuls of bread pieces were unfurling and popping up around the float, before being carried

off towards the shallows on the ripple. I was frustrated, but hoped that there would be enough bait around the float to at least bring some of my plan to fruition.

An hour later, the float remained stationary and my mood hadn't improved. What's more, I could hear sploshy noises coming from up by the shallows. Probably the ducks and moorhens enjoying a free feed I thought to myself, and carried on sulking. Fifteen minutes after that I could bear it no longer and went to investigate. The lower pond has some carp in, but the upper is very much carp free, so imagine my surprise when, cruising around in some fallen branches, was a double figure mirror carp lazily mopping up pieces of floating bread without a care in the world. I stood and watched open mouthed, and as my eyes adjusted to the water, I spotted a second carp. Another mirror, larger than the first. This one was reluctant to come to the surface, instead it was doing a steady laps of the shallows, taking any bread that had sunk to the bottom, before returning to the sanctuary of the branches.

As I watched, a plan formed in my head. I rushed back to my swim, cut off the float tackle, tied on a size 6 hook, grabbed the last couple of slices of bread, plus my landing net, and made my way up to the inlet.



Right at the head of the pool is a swim, largely forgotten due to the shallow water and proximity of the snag branches, but the perfect ambush point to put my plan into action. In true Hanzel and Gretel fashion, my aim was to get the larger of the two fish to follow a trail of breadcrumbs out of the branches and into open water, where I could present my freelined hookbait. I squeezed half a dozen pinches of bread, so that they would sink, and spread them in a pattern in such a way that the carp would follow the trail out of the snags to my right, but only encounter my hookbait once it had turned to face open water. My thinking was that I could then let it run freely towards the bowl and play it out before trying to

get it back through the relatively narrow gap next to the snags. I swung my bait out to the left. The water was so shallow that I could see it on the bottom. It wasn't long before a dark shape ghosted into view. Each nugget of bread blinking out of existence as it passed over it. The fish turned slightly and approached the final piece. The one with a hook in it. No hesitation. One moment it was there, the next it was not. I struck and braced myself, expecting an explosion of spray as the fish realised its mistake. Instead, it sat on the spot and flared its fins. I've experienced this behaviour before with unpressured fish, especially close in. With pressure from the rod coming from almost directly overhead, the fish don't know how to react and flounder for a few seconds before they get their bearings.



A few seconds was all I needed and I hurriedly bundled the carp into my landing net before it could react. From hooking it to landing it took under twenty seconds.

I didn't have scales large enough to weigh such a fish, but it had to be close to the twenty pound mark and more than made up for my poor preparation.

I might still be waiting for my first specimen perch from the horse pond, but as the old saying goes – You should never look a gift horse in the mouth.

Alex



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Paul Deadman

Paul Fished Pullens Lake and what a session he had 40lb 14oz, 41lb 8oz, 43lb15oz and 44lb.6oz This shows you just how good of stamp of fish there is at Elphicks Fishery

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This beautiful setting needs to be visited and enjoyed!

Prices start at £10 per session on the coarse lakes. For the specimen lakes prices start at £20 for the day rising to £30 for a 24hrs ticket (up to 3 rods). Lessons now available for all ages. Gates open at 7am and close at 6.30pm (Winter hours 7am to 5pm)

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Jay - Elphicks -Prairie Lake 35lb 5ozs



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More House Farm Fishery



catch

catch

In order to fish any of our specimen lakes you must become a member first. To do this simply continue with your catch booking then upon arrival of the venue we will sort out your membership and issue you a membership card. We have been asked to add multiple tiered memberships by you amazing anglers so that's just what we've done!



More House Farm is a rapidly expanding fishery set in the beautiful Mid Sussex countryside. It currently boasts five lakes. They are all set in very tranquil surroundings, bordered almost entirely by open countryside.

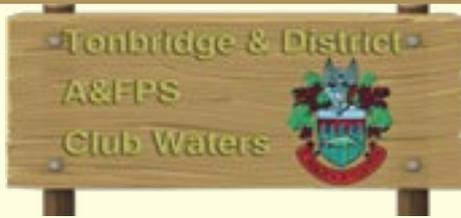
We also have Two new Specimen carp lakes called Oaks and Dogwood that were built June 2020 and opened October 2021. Oaks has 5 pegs on it with carp ranging from 15lb – 33lb.

Dogwood has 11 pegs on it separated by islands we have 18 tench and carp ranging from 8lb – 32 lb and already the lakes are showing great promise and as soon as the Pictures come in I will make a new section on the website for them.

The fishery is located at More House Farm
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For a map and further directions to find More House Farm please go to our contact page.

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Tonbridge & District Angling & Fish Preservation Society.

MATCH RESULTS

HOUGHTON CUP - FINAL PLACINGS

1st - Phil Edwards	42 points
2nd - Andy Jones	26 points
3rd - John Cooper	21 points

WINTER PEGDOWN - Haysden Lake 16 fished

1st - Ben Groombridge	28lb 4oz
2nd - Steve Parker	24lb 4oz
3rd - Ian Seamer	20lb 6oz
4th - Pete Groombridge	7lb 7oz
5th - Martyn Hill	3lb 2oz
6th - Nick Dann	1lb 8oz

CATCH REPORT

With the continued rainfall, river catch reports have been thin on the ground but some of the stillwater catches have been productive with Bream making up the better weights. With the colour dropping out of the river, the Pike have become active and some quality specimens have been recorded.

Tony Cooper had a fantastic day, catching the same 11lb fish twice, a 13lb 8oz fish and a new PB of 24lb 12oz. Jason Craven had a nice 14lb 12oz river fish and young Ellis Williams landed a PB of 18lb 4oz. Other notable captures were had by Alex Stokes and Chris Woods.



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URBAN

Fish of the Month Prize Winner



John Honniset - Wylands Fishery - 32lb Maises



Dan Cannon - Tricklebrook - New Lake



Apsey Beaney - 28lb Common Cackle Hill



Darren Lee - Ratfyn - 33lb Mirror - Monster Red Bait



Ross 30lb 8oz kingfisher lake - Mousehole Fishery



Barry Hancock 37.10 North Lake



Joe Bonner - Tricklebrook 17lb Common



Jack Hurst - Darford Lakes - Ace Bait Pineapple

**FRESHWATER
INFORMER**

This competition is open to all species. To be in with a chance of winning, send your catches to: info@freshwaterinformer.com or our Facebook Page, Winners will receive a:

Freshwater Informer / Urban Baits Session Pack 2kg of Boilies 1kg Stick Mix, 500ml Liquid and Hook Baits to match in either their **Nutcracker, Red Spicy Fish, Tuna & Garlic, Strawberry or Fully Loaded Range**

🎉 Winner's Spotlight 🎉 A huge congratulations to John on landing a stunning 32lb Common from Maisies at Wylands Fishery — our Urban Bait Prize Winner!

Your continued support is what makes these giveaways possible! Stay tuned for next month's prize – you won't want to miss it!

In The Edge With Alex
YouTube

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BAIT AVAILABILITY DEPENDENT ON TIDE AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

TACKLE SHOP & VENUE UPDATE



After a busy period behind the scenes, Wylands Farm Tackle Shop is now back open and stocked better than ever.

With a renewed focus on quality, reliability, and modern carp angling, we've introduced exciting new brands for the 2026 season. Reinforcing our commitment to providing tackle and bait that consistently performs on our waters.



NEW FOR 2026

ELVATE BAITES

Developed by respected angler Dan Hawkins, Elevate Baits has quickly earned recognition across the carp scene. Built from years of UK and overseas experience, we're excited to see how these baits perform on our lakes this season.

SONIK

We're now stocking the full range from Sonik — well-designed, dependable tackle at accessible price points. Selected specialist items will also be introduced throughout 2026, with more brand additions coming soon.

TACKLE SHOP & VENUE UPDATE



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- Thursday: 10:00 – 12:00
- Friday: 08:00 – 14:00
- Saturday: 08:00 – 14:00
- Sunday: 08:00 – 12:00

(Extended hours coming as we move into the warmer months).

Anglers are always welcome to drop in, have a chat, and top up on essentials throughout the winter.

MEET THE TEAM

Supporting the shop is a refreshed on site team combining experience, enthusiasm, and a genuine passion for carp.

Our newest team member, Logan, is a dedicated local carp angler with a strong commitment to fish welfare and venue improvement. Always happy to share advice, Logan encourages anglers to use our interactive rig tank, allowing rigs to be tested and refined before casting out,



OUR FOCUS

As Wylands Farm continues to develop, our aim remains clear:

To create a welcoming, safe, and progressive angling environment – for our visitors and for the fish that call our waters home.

We look forward to seeing you on the bank.

Wylands Farm Fishery Team

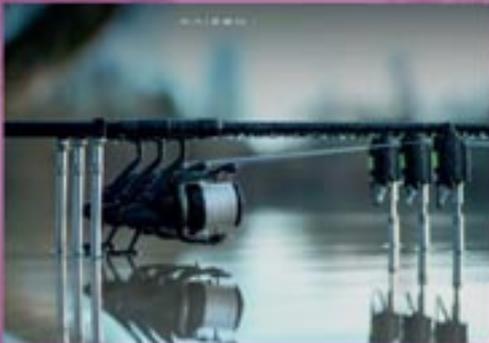




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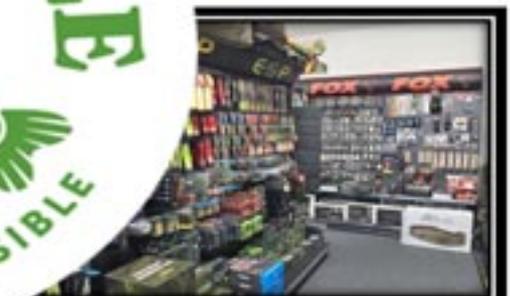
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GUIDED FLY & LURE FISHING DAYS WITH ANDY LUSH

FLY FISHING One of Andy's favourite methods is no longer just for trout. In recent years Andy has been successful at catching specimen carp, throughout the summer from local day ticket waters.

CARP: Andy shares his knowledge and experience in this rapidly growing form of fly fishing. He has written two blogs for Fulling Mill specifically detailing the tackle and tactics he uses; follow this link www.fullingmill.co.uk

TROUT: Boat fishing on Bewl Water or Powdermill reservoir, learn how to locate and catch fish on these large intimidating waters, or fish one of the smaller local fisheries. Learn where trout find their food during the changing seasons; understand this and you will 'catch more fish'.

LURE FISHING: A day afloat with Andy, fishing local reservoirs for Pike, Perch or Zander will see you learning how to search these large bodies of water. Fishing from a boat while using different styles of lures, fish finders and drogues is all part of a successful reservoir angler's armoury.

WEBSITE: View available options here: www.thefriendlyfisherman.co.uk
TO BOOK A DAY email: info@thefriendlyfisherman.co.uk with your contact phone number and Andy will call you back and discuss details.



Young Guns on the Bank



Harrington Blowers celebrated his twelfth birthday, with a fishing trip to the Sandwich Lake at Elphicks, guided by Andy Lush "The Friendly Fisherman". Despite the wet and windy weather, he didn't let that dampen his spirits.

After a slow start Harrington was pleased to finally see his float disappear. His tactic of trickle feeding pellets around his float did the trick, landing six carp up to 14lbs on the pellet waggler.

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Lakedown Trout Fishery & Taproom - Check Facebook for March Events

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The Fishery was originally designed & created in 1981 by actor & Rock legend Roger Daltrey.

The four spring-fed lakes totalling approximately 20 acres have an abundance of aquatic fly life.

"A visual assault on the senses. There can be no prettier fishery in this land. Spikes of bright yellow flag decorate the banks which are thick with beds of rose bay willow herb, bee-haunted fox gloves & spotted orchid. A place where wild browns & rainbows live side by side"

Lakedown Tap Room is situated on our family farm and trout fishery; Lakedown Trout Fishery, Swife Lane, Burwash, TN21 8UX.

Lakedown Brewing Company is a family run, independently brewery in the heart of rural East Sussex. We brew modern and traditional beers in cask, keg, can and bottle. We are proud to brew the best versions of the beers we love.

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As the lane is narrow, please drive slowly.



Andy Lush - The Friendly Fisherman

A Beginner's Guide to Pike Fly Fishing. Part 1

There is a growing interest in this form of fly fishing, largely due to the availability of quality pike fishing on trout reservoirs around the country. Fly fishing gives access to these pike throughout the trout season, while still fishing within fisheries rules. The most famous of these waters has to be Chew Valley Reservoir near Bristol [BS40 8XS]. Pike of monstrous proportions are caught each season, with the best tipping the scales at over 40lbs!



A nice pike on the fly for Andy

I've fished for pike for over 40 years and fly fished for nearly as long, but until recently I'd never combined the two disciplines. In this article I'm going to give a brief overview on tackle and tactics required to catch pike on the fly.

What excites me most is the prospect of fishing on a warm spring day, with the sun on my back, surrounded by acres of shallow water that could contain marauding pike, eager to feed



Don't they hang on!

after the rigours of spawning. What could be more exciting than this, and the possibility of catching one of the water's elusive large residents that inhabit these food-rich waters? Now you can see why I, like many others, am drawn to trout reservoirs across the country. This is a beginner's guide; so if you've already fished for pike, it will give you an advantage over those seeking their first pike while fly fishing. Location is always key to success, but I will discuss that later in this piece.

Tackle

First of all, there's a need for powerful tackle for pike, mainly due to the size of the flies we use, but also due to the size of the fish, and the fact that we are going to return them to fight another day.

Rod & Reel

Although pike can be handled on light tackle it's irresponsible in my view to use an outfit lighter than #9 weight; in fact, I would strongly recommend a 9' #10 weight outfit unless fishing for small pike or using small flies. Pick a reel which has sufficient line capacity to match the rod, that can also hold 100 yards [91m] of backing line. I always intend to play pike off the reel, so a smooth clutch is essential in my book. Choose a model that has spare cassette spools; these will be required to house a selection of sinking lines. Cassette spools are a much cheaper option than traditional spare spools, so there's no reason not



Pike Line Require Large Reels

to have enough appropriate lines.

Lines

When choosing fly lines, always buy the best you can afford; casting can be a real pain, especially if the line doesn't shoot smoothly through the rod rings. You must buy 'Pike' or 'Saltwater' taper lines as these have a more powerful, shorter weight-forward profile to load your rod quickly and efficiently. These lines also have a shortened front taper to assist the flies' turnover; they also have a stronger braided core than trout lines.

My first-choice line is an Intermediate which sinks between 1.5-2 inches per second [4-5cm]. When bank fishing or casting from an anchored boat, this is your best friend, giving you "depth and speed control", using the "count down" method to fish through the layers of water.

When boat fishing, an extremely useful tactic is to fish "on the drift"; you can then search vast areas of water. This is when other densities of fly line are required, because you will need to balance the wind speed, the pike's depth and the fly's retrieve speed required to provoke a take. In addition to the Intermediate, I carry a Di3 [sink rate 3 inches per second, 7.6cm] and Di7 [sink rate 7 inches, 17.7cm], with these I can work through the water levels efficiently, fishing depths ranging down to 20-30 feet [6-9m].

My final choice would be a floater; it has limitations due to the need for short leaders; this line is only going to be useful when fishing on the surface or over very shallow weedy water. I'm sure in the future fly line manufacturers will introduce more lines to satisfy the increasing demands of pike fly anglers.

Leaders

Large flies up to 8 inches [20 cm] require much shorter leaders to "turn them over". I've found leaders between 5-7.5 feet [150-230 cm] are perfect; you'll know when it's right, as the fly follows the line, "in harmony" as opposed to "fighting against it." I use a wire 'tippet' on my leaders; I'm currently using E.T. single strand titanium wire in 20 lb, but I'm always trying other materials, so my choice might change in the future. My tippet is 12-18 inches [30-45 cm] in length; I use a size 2 Mustad fast clip to attach my flies: these are strong, allow fly movement and enable me to change flies quickly, even with cold hands. I attach a small strong barrel swivel to the other end of my wire trace. The body of my leader is made from 'Seaguar Ace-Hard', a saltwater grade fluorocarbon which is strong, thin, abrasion resistant and quite stiff, which helps turn my fly over. I tie a large loop knot in either end of my fluorocarbon, so I can use loop to loop connections to the trace swivel and the fly line; most modern fly lines now have a welded loop as standard. I usually use a 5-6 foot [150-180 cm] length of fluorocarbon; I sometimes find it necessary to chop my leader length down when using very large or heavy flies. Fast clips make changing flies quick and easy



Casting

Casting pike flies all day requires good casting technique; if you're new to fly fishing, I strongly advise you invest in a casting lesson: it's so much easier and less tiring to cast pike flies, once you've learnt how to "double haul". Making do is not an option in my opinion; it just makes the whole process that much harder than it need be!

In next month's article, I will cover the tactics and techniques in detail required to fish for pike throughout the year.

Tight lines

Andy Lush



**Junior
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See Page 15 & 35
for more details for
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Fish With Carl

 MFC Store Prize Winner — Joey Lukehurst 



 **MFC Baits Prize Winner with The Fresh-water Informer** 

Joey Lukehurst – A Day Session That Turned Into a PB to Remember

What started out as just a simple day session quickly turned into one I'll never forget. With limited time and no expectations other than enjoying a few hours by the water, I packed light, kept things simple, and focused on finding the fish rather than settling straight into a swim.

It just goes to show that you don't always need a long campaign or a week-long trip to achieve something special. Sometimes, all it takes is a short session, the right decisions, and a bit of belief. Congratulations, Joey — proof that every cast counts.

 Fish With Carl Winner: Alfie Petcher 

 **Fish With Carl – Signed Book Winner!** 

There's nothing quite like your first pike — and for young Alfie Petcher, this was a moment he won't forget in a hurry.

Fishing the beautiful River Stour in Kent, Alfie set out in search of predators and was rewarded with his very first pike. The fish fell to a wobbling sardine bait, a classic and effective method when targeting river predators. Fishing a sardine this way takes concentration and patience, slowly working the bait through the water to entice a strike — and when it came, it certainly got the heart racing!

The River Stour is well known for producing some quality fish, and there's something extra special about catching a pike from flowing water. For Alfie, this wasn't just about landing a fish — it was about learning a traditional method, spending time outdoors, and building memories that will last a lifetime.

Every angler remembers their first pike, and this one marks the beginning of what we're sure will be many more adventures on the bank. Well done, Alfie — a fantastic achievement and a proud moment all round. 

A big well done to Jacob on a fantastic day's fishing — and congratulations on winning a signed Fish With Carl book!





Bailey hills - 29.5lb Common Carp



Harley Williams First 2 of the year from Brooklands on the peachy nut as usual



Harley Williams - Night Time Mirror



Hudson Scott - Geddes Hill - 14lb 6oz Common



Hattie - Mousehole Fishery



Kobe Roadknight - River Lea, Hertfordshire



Harley - 17lb Pike - Royal Military Canal Hythe



Luoie - Aged 6 Darenth Big Lake 13lb



Joshua Hedderly - Pike at 22.5 lb



Theia Ayles - (9) Method Feeder - Mirror Carp



Ellis Williams landed a PB of 18lb 4oz



Danny Jenner - 24lb - Cottington Lakes Fishery



Eli Laker - Iden Wood Fishery (Orchard Lake) - 11lb Mirror



Jayden Manchett - Claygate

The Freshwater Informer Word Search

Complete and fill in the word search please then take a photo and email into info@freshwaterinformer.com with your name and email contact and I will collate them all and complete a draw for a prize which I will draw and post a video of the draw once I have the entries. Competition closes on the 28th March 2026

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The Prize for this giveaway is a complete bait bundle which I have got from Crafty Catcher complete with PVA everything that you need for a session carp fishing including your Hook Baits, Pellet and Glugs



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Wayne - Kingfisher -
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Dave - Mousehole Fishery -
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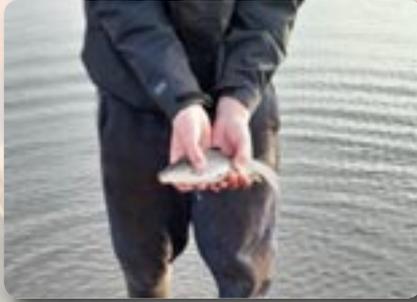
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The Freshwater Informer Young Writer Spotlight

By Eli Laker

Hi, I'm Eli, I am 14 years old and I started fishing in March last year. My journey began when I visited a local pond with my friend. Armed with an unused whip my uncle had brought me 5 years previous, and a few slices of bread. We sat there all day and caught nothing! But I loved it. The following day we did the same; we walked that mile every day until eventually I caught him. A beauty! No bigger than my hand, yet perfect in every way. From that moment, the adrenaline rush, I knew I'd like to invest my time in carp fishing.



Books, podcasts, TikTok's and TV shows, I couldn't get enough. I have cousins, uncles and my grandad who all fish too and were all eager to guide and support me. In the weeks that followed I worked digging my nanas allotment and helping neighbours to earn enough money to afford my own Advanta rod and reel and a carp care kit. A kind man that I met in the shop also sold me an Advanta landing mat and net for just £10! Armed with all my new gear my parents took me off to Iden Wood Fisheries where we visited 3 or 4 times a week throughout summer. Who knew you could have such fun doing homework down the lake!

I am lucky to have parents who have always encouraged me to be outside and to find the beauty in nature. Mum sat with her binoculars- a keen twitcher-, and dad eager to help me out in any way so long as it didn't involve touching a fish. The scenery, the nature, the other anglers always so friendly and helpful. I felt grateful to be there. I caught and caught, mainly from the surface, my confidence was building!

After 5 months of day tickets, I was gifted a well-loved bivvy. My first 24 hours down Iden Wood Specimen Lake along with my cousin. 16 fish caught between us the biggest being 19lb 8oz. It was



great, up all night, listening to the noises of the woodland, the Tawny Owls, the mist over the lake at first light then the beautiful sunrise. I was tired and achy from the floor, but the I had done it. It was the best feeling ever. We headed back the next day to Iden match lake where my 19lb was replaced by a 22lb mirror carp. I couldn't believe a simple dog biscuit on a Korda size 6 hook would catch such a monster fish.

As Autumn came, I moved on to fishing on the bottom of the lake with a method feeder as a favourite - 14mm cheesy garlic pellet, practised making my own rigs with my uncle and cousin (it's a working progress!) and invested in some high-quality thermal clothes. The cold wasn't going to stop me!

Into winter with chilly hands, a broly, wellies and using small amounts of natural baits such as sweetcorn or maggots. For my 14th birthday in December, me and my parents were joined by my uncle and cousin down at Shirkoak Fishery where my uncle was the only one to catch. A lovely 18lb carp. New Year's Day we spent back at Iden, fishing the only part of the lake that wasn't frozen. Another blank but it was still great fun.

At the weekend I went to the Carp show at Brands Hatch. What a day it was! The stall holders were so helpful and informative. Even as busy as it was they all had time to talk to me about my

purchases or help tell me what the best thing to buy for whatever I needed or wanted. I met a few famous anglers as well and cannot wait for the next one.

I have only been fishing a year, but it has been the best year ever! Fishing has changed my life; it has taught me a new, more mature respect for nature. Learning patience and to be calm and quiet, how to speak to other anglers and listen to advice and stories. Even just attempting a new skill and the excitement of having a new hobby to fill time. I want to encourage every young person to get out there and try it. Thanks for reading and tight lines everybody.

Eli Laker



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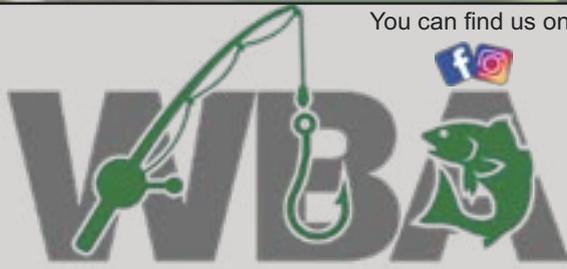
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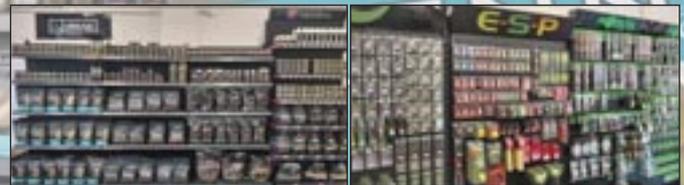
Friday 10am - 9pm

Saturday 8am - 4pm

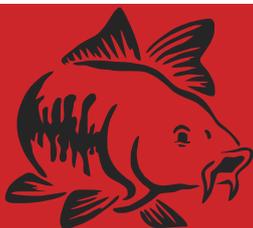
Sunday 9am - 1pm

Contact number: 07738 261541

Contact email: winchelseabeachangling@gmail.com



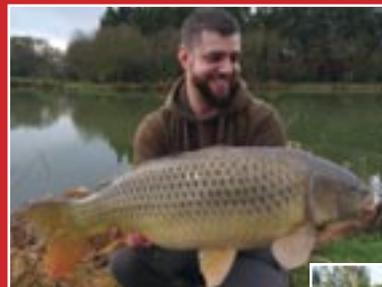
Winchelsea Beach Angling - Unit 5 Suttons Industrial Park
Winchelsea Beach - East Sussex - TN36 4LZ



Shirkoak Fishery and B&B

WHY NOT TRY A POD?

The perfect Christmas Gift

This beautiful tranquil fishery is situated on the outskirts of Woodchurch village, stocked with carp to 30lbs+ and Pike to 20lbs+.

Night fishing is permitted by prior arrangement only. We can also offer food delivered to your swim, our full English breakfast is proving extremely popular!



Fishing prices start from £15 for three rods for 12 hours.



OAP TUESDAY
£10 incl. bacon roll
Pre-bookings only

Shirkoak Fishery, Bethersden Road, Woodchurch, Ashford TN26 3PZ

Follow us on Facebook 'Shirkoak Fishery' for regular updates 

www.shirkoakfarm.com

For more information please call Hugh on **07973 410973** or **01233 860279**

Cackle Hill Lakes & Coarse Fishery



SPECIMEN LAKE'S 1 & 2

2 Rods / 3 Rods

24 Hours = £35 & £40

48 Hours = £60 & £70

36 Hours (2days 1 night) = £50 & £55

36 Hours (2nights 1 Day) = £55 & £60

60 Hours = £80 & £90

72 Hours = £95 & £110

Mixed Lake - 1.5 acres

2 rods - £20 per Adult - £17 for over 65's & Juniors

Extra rod £5

Species present in our lakes

- Common Carp up to 40lb • Mirror Carp 47lb+ • Leather Carp 32lb+
- Grass Carp 42lb+ • Catfish 125lb+ • Tench 8lb+ • Bream 8lb+
- Perch 5lb+ also F1's, Rudd, Roach and Chub

**Full Lake Bookings
are Available**

CAKCLE HILL Tackle and Bait Shop



ALL YOU NEED FOR A GREAT DAY'S FISHING

Stocking fantastic brands e.g. Mainline Shelf Life and frozen boilies, pop ups and dips. Also a variety of quality groundbaits, particles and pellets, Fox, Korda, Clothing, Gas, Batteries, headlamps, catapults, rigs, alarms and much more...

CAKCLE HILL HOLIDAY LODGES

... perfectly placed for both fishing and golf with a Nick Faldo designed golf course just over the road.

Biddenden boasts a Michelin starred restaurant as well as a traditional tea shop and a popular pub, while nearby

Headcorn has a good selection of shops and a station with trains to London, Canterbury and the coast



Spacious 1, 2 or 3 bedroom holiday fishing lodge, ideal for fishing groups or families, set within the grounds of Cackle Hill Lakes Fishery

Available all year round



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The Medway Man

Bob Morris

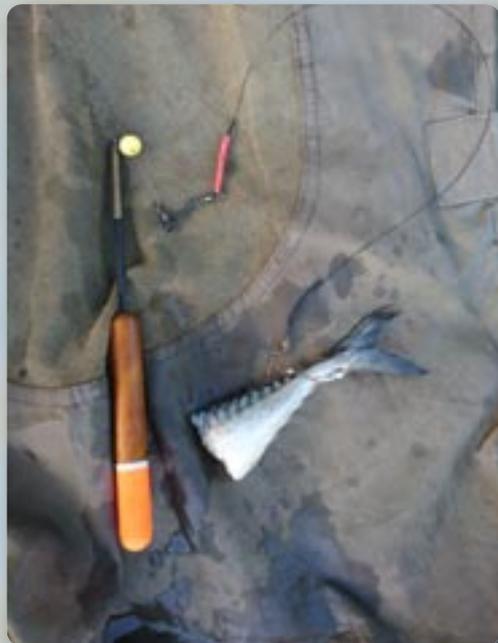
March 2026

With the winter elements showing us once again that droughts and hosepipe bans can rapidly be replaced by monsoons and floods it has been a difficult time for fishing. This is particularly relevant to those of us that have decided, for a variety of reasons, to become 'fair weather fishermen or at least becoming a bit more discerning when deciding on the viability of a session.

Im not saying that I have become allergic to rain or icy conditions yet, but I feel that I have done my share of sitting out on grizzly, muddy banksides over the course of my angling career. I don't mind freezing days, particularly when I'm piking and I have to say that I have ever found that it puts them off the feed. I can't say the same about coloured water though and often find that I struggle to get a pull from a pike, whether it is on a lake or a stretch of river. A recent session demonstrates the above rather well, I think. Having not been able to get out for a week or so due to various commitments I decided to take a chance on a grim looking morning. I arrive at the lake to find that recent rain had made the water a muddy brown colour and the persistent foul conditions mean that I had to sit under the brolly all day something that I hate doing, in fact I rarely



carry one. As you can imagine I had a total blank, got soaking wet as I was packing up, slipped over in the muddy car park and hurt my knee and then found that the gate lock had jammed!!! I blamed the brown water for my lack of action and decided not to fish there again until this situation had improved. It is true however that some venues are consistently murky during winter months and as it is unlikely that the pike will go on hunger strike, it must be possible to catch them.



My recent cold weather fishing has been aided by a Christmas present from my daughter. It is a chargeable battery heated waistcoat, and I must say that after being initially sceptical I am now getting used to using it and find that even on its lowest setting it keeps my body extremely warm. I have even had to open my coat or even turn it off for periods to adjust my temperature. Battery lasts for about six hours - which is a pike fishing day. Battery does have to be left on charge until I use it, as it will run down otherwise. Also, the zips are a bit on the flimsy side, and I am notoriously bad with zips! Still in the initial trial stage but I'm impressed so far and will report on it again soon.

On the pike front it is still slow, but I am now getting regular action and doing a few experiments with tactics which is difficult to do when you are blanking. One current trial is the use of stiff hair rigs with

my single hook rigs. The reason that I am trying this is that a couple of times when casting any sort of distance, particularly into the wind, I have reeled back to find the hook embedded in the bait and this could affect my chance of hooking a pike. Again, this is an initial experiment but so far, a couple of takes have resulted in successfully landing fish and I will continue with this tactic until I have reached some conclusions. I enjoy trying new tactics as this seems to add an extra element to my fishing and taps into the essence of what it is all about. Once we reach a stage where we know everything, I am sure that I will want to give up -although I can't see that this will ever happen with fishing as there are too many variables. Long may it remain so

The pike season is coming to an end shortly and I am already dusting off my float and feeder tackle in readiness for the spring effort in fact a couple of evening sessions have already produce some action on the float with a couple of nice carp to show for it. I was hoping to get a few sessions in on the river this winter, but conditions have seemed against me with my opportunities for getting out seeming to always coincide with flood conditions or similar. I am quite happy to fish when the flow is strong and water levels are up again this time of year – but there are limits! Never mind, still a few weeks to go however so I might just turn it around and end on a winter river high 😊

Bob Morris



BobMorrisCustomRods Bob-Morris-93450776 Bmt1@btconnect.com 01322 866015

Rods & Odd Jobs, Call Bob!

2nd Book Still Available

 A promotional graphic for a book. At the top, contact information is listed: 'BobMorrisCustomRods' with a LinkedIn icon, 'Bob-Morris-93450776', an email icon, 'Bmt1@btconnect.com', and a phone icon, '01322 866015'. The background is a scenic view of a lake with trees. On the left, a book cover is shown at an angle. The cover features the title 'TALES OF A MIDWAY MAN' in red, the subtitle 'Don't Fence Me Off' in black, and the author's name 'BOB MORRIS' at the bottom. Below the title, there are two small inset photos of the author. On the right, the text 'Rods & Odd Jobs, Call Bob!' is written in large, bold, orange letters. At the bottom, the text '2nd Book Still Available' is written in white.

Coarse Fisheries	Tackle & Bait Supplies
Beaver Farm Fishery Eastbourne Road Newchapel, Lingfield RH7 6HL 01342 324006 / 07710 656041	Absolute Tackle 12 Wealden Forest Park Herne Common, Kent CT6 7LQ 01227 636724 / 07809 330854
Charlies Lakes Steeds Lane, Kingsnorth, Ashford TN26 1NH 07857 539785	Anglers Den 6 North Road, Pevensey Bay BN24 6AY 01323 460441
Chart Hill Lakes Chart Hill Road, Chart Sutton ME17 3EZ 07398 571337	Angling Specialist (ASH) 29 Queen Street, Horsham RH13 5AA 01403 264644
Chequertree Trout and Coarse Fishery Bethersden, Near Ashford TN26 3JR 01233 820078	A.R. Tackle 8 Castle Street, Hastings TN34 3DY 01424 422094
Coombewood Fishery Redbrook Street, High Halden, Near Ashford TN26 3JH 07895 679569	Bait Bucket Tackle Warehouse Unit T Rich Industrial Estate, Avis Way, Newhaven BN9 0DU 01273 933050
Elphicks Fisheries Spelmonden Road, Horsmonden TN12 8EL 01580 854702	Best Buddies 248 Horn Street, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 4JR 01303 487144
Eureka Fishery Nicholas Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent TN25 4AG 07597 879621	Bodle Angling Cuckfield Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8RE 01444 247757
Furnace Brook Fishery and Fish Farm Trolliloes, Cowbee, near Hailsham BN27 4QR 01435 830835	Chris Brown Products email: chrisofoaks@gmail.com www.cbproducts.co.uk 01892 723670
Gabriels Fishery Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP 07730 066088	Edenbridge Angling 132 High Street, Edenbridge, TN8 5AY 01732 247702
Gabriels Fishery Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP 07730 066088	Eastbourne Aquarium & Reptile Centre 19-21 Seaside, Eastbourne BN21 3PP 01323 730635
Greenacres Farm Fishery Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden TN27 8EH 07933 934942	Henfold Bait & Tackle Henfold Lakes Henfold Lane, Newdigate, Dorking RH5 4RW 07956 043922
Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT 01580 854702	Jack Frost Reynolds Place, West Green, Crawley RH11 7HB 01293 521186
Horam Manor Fishery Horam Manor Farm, Horam TN21 0JB 01323 840889 / 07707 759364	Gabriels Fishery Tackle Shop Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP 07730 066088
Horsmonden Lakes Grovehurst Road, Horsmonden TN12 8BQ 01892 838576	Medway Tackle Supplies 11 Twydall Green, Gillingham ME8 6JY 01634 475260
Iden Wood Fishery Coldharbour Lane, Iden, Rye TN31 7UT 01797 280180 / 07906 232225	MFC Outdoor Store 9 Station Road, Hailsham BN27 2BE 01323 846883
Knightingales Fishery Stone-In-Oxney, Near Tenterden TN30 7HA 07941 176205	Mud Pigs Unit 1, Browns Lane, Uckfield, T22 1UN 07494 785273
Mousehole Lakes , Maidstone Road Nettlestead, Near Paddock Wood ME18 5HR 07725 783405	Orchard Tackle 58 High Brooms Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9DB 07494 670328
Orchard Place Farm Fishery Pearsons Green Road, Paddock Wood TN12 6NY 01892 838576	Pinions Baits 431 London Road, Ditton, Aylesford ME20 6DB 01622 718580
Pittlands Lakes Churn Lane, Horsmonden, Paddock Wood TN12 8HL 07716 065900	Polegate Angling Centre Unit 7, Birch Industrial Estate, Eastbourne BN23 6PH 01323 486379
Sandwich Lakes Coarse Fishery Sandwich Ash Road (A257), Near Canterbury CT3 2DA 07936 409912	Romney Angling 59, High Street, New Romney TN28 8AH 01797 362889
Shirkoak Fishery Bethersden Road, Woodchurch, Ashford TN26 3PZ 07973 410973	Scotties Fishing Tackle 25 Southwick Square, Southwick, Brighton BN42 4FP 01273 592903
The Lakes at Beachborough Beachborough Park Newington, Near Folkestone CT18 8BW 07469 809877	South London Angling Centre 286 Lee High Road, London SE13 5PJ 0208 852 4451
Tricklebrook Fishery Colts Hill, Five Oak Green TN12 6SH 07743 955812	Sussex Bait Developments Falkenil Fishery, Saltmarsh Lane, Hailsham BN27 2RJ 07971 303949
Willows Angling Centre Bax Farm, Lower Road, Teynham ME9 9BU 01795 520887	The Tackle Box 251 Watling Street, Dartford DA2 6EG 01322 292400
Wylands Farm Wylands Farm, Powdermill Lane, Battle TN33 0SU 01424 893394	Winchelsea Beech Angling Unit 5 Sutton Industrial Park Winchelsea Beach TN36 4LZ 01843 581784
Trout Fisheries	Angling Clubs & Societies
Brick Farm Lakes Windmill Hill, Herstmonceux BN27 4RS 01323 832615	Hastings Bexhill & District Postal enquiries to S.Corke, 2, The Sidings, Bexhill On Sea TN40 1RF Chris Pagan 07429 655237 / Steve Potter 07935 268174
Cinder Hill Fly Fishing Membership available from: Email: r.nathan@btinternet.com 01892 770903	Tonbridge & District A & FPS For all enquiries please email: info@tonbridge-angling.co.uk
Coltsford Mill Trout Fishery & Fly Tackle Shop Mill Lane, Oxted, Surrey RH8 9DG 01883 715666 / 07798 605867	Bromley (Kent) & District AS PO Box 895, East Grinstead RH19 9ND Email: bdas-kent-enquiry@bdaskent.co.uk
Spring Hill Trout Waters Albans Farm, Romford Road, Pembury TN2 4BB 07951 304515	Linton Angling Society Jason Tuckey on 07983 56922 or email lassecretary@lintonangling.co.uk
Tenterden Trout Waters Coombe Farm, Chennell Park Road, Tenterden TN30 6XA www.tenterden-trout-waters.co.uk 07880 722868	Wantsum Angling Association 07570 505934 or contact via website www.wantsumaa.co.uk
Lakedown Trout Fishery email lakedowntroutfishery@gmail.com 01435 883449	



Scan for Website
and more details



Pittlands Lakes Angling Club
Churn Lane
Horsmonden
TN12 8HL

PITTLANDS LAKES

07716 065900

At Pittlands Lakes we provide Day and Night Tickets to ALL
The onsite Bar and Restaurant is open during the season for a
variety of hot and cold refreshments including breakfast and
lunches, all at reasonable prices. Winter and Summer times
vary please check with us.

**CARAVAN CLUB SITE THAT OFFERS MEMBERS
CARAVAN AND MOTORHOME FACILITIES**

*Even if you're not fishing please come and sample our
Sunday roasts and enjoy the beautiful lakeside views*



Our toilets are brick-built and open
throughout the season, including disabled
toilet and shower room.

Night fishing is very popular and is available
every night of the week, with just 24hrs notice
to secure a place, please call 07716 065900.



We have designated kids fishing with their own
lake complete with pole hire, nets and bait for
all children under 16 who must be
accompanied by an adult.



There are 3 other lakes for the more experienced
angler with Catfish to 100lbs, Carp to 32lbs+,
Bream, Roach, Tench, Crucian and Perch.

**Night fishing booking from £30 per
night and Day sessions from £10.
Maximum 2 rods**



FRESHWATER INFORMER



Photo by Alex Coutts