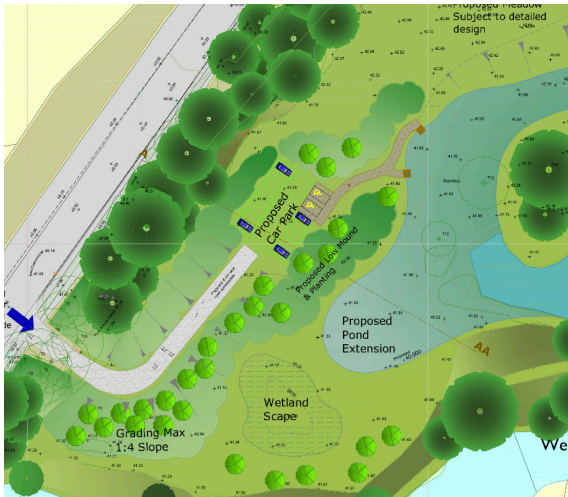




## September 2025 Newsletter

These are exciting times for Dorking AS and its members. We are now seen by many as one of the most proactive angling clubs in the South East - having carried out a number of transformative campaigns. We have led the way on water quality testing, gravel enhancement, mink trapping, riverfly monitoring and a host of other important initiatives. Most encouraging is the way in which members have come forward in good numbers to help and support the work being conducted. Strong membership involvement demonstrates a real sense of engagement and is unquestionably helping to build a real sense of community at our club. With a growing reputation among the local fishing fraternity, it's no coincidence that there's been a sharp increase in membership numbers over the last 3 years. All bodes well for the future ><>

### PUDDENHOLE UPDATE



As you'll see from the pictures overleaf, construction work on Puddenhole is gathering pace. Of course the fine weather has been a big help, enabling Kenward to make great strides in moving forward with the project.

Large volumes of earth were taken from one section of the newly extended lake in order to build-up and compact the access road. The aerial photograph on the left will give you a clearer idea of the area we are referring to.



The scale of the project is really quite breathtaking and it will take some years to fully develop the lake and 15 acre conservation site. However, with the EA, the Angling Trust and other environmental groups keen to assist, we are confident of realising our ambition of creating a haven for anglers and wildlife.

When complete, Puddenhole will be about as far removed from a commercial fishery as you can get. The aim being to establish a carp-free stillwater in wholly natural surroundings - an idyllic venue that will be the envy of other clubs.



## **PUDDENHOLE PROJECT PROGRESSES AT PACE**

Construction work came to a temporary halt recently while a crossover document (S278) was submitted for approval by Surrey Highways. In the meantime, following consent from the EA, Kenward has been busy dewatering and desilting Puddenhole Lake. Excavators have removed accumulated sediment to a depth of 500mm to 700mm, restoring the lake to its original depth and capacity. It's our intention to use the nutrient-rich silt for future landscaping and planting schemes on the site. The crossover documentation is now being processed and we are confident that work will commence on the access road and car park over the next two weeks.





## RIVERFLY MONITORING GETS UNDERWAY



Riverfly monitoring began on the North Bank section of the Mole in August. Dorking members have been trained up for this vitally important work, a campaign supported by the Environment Agency and funded by the South East Rivers Trust.

Certified volunteers collect monthly samples of freshwater invertebrates from the riverbed, focussing on key-sensitive groups. Crucially, a significant decline in macroinvertebrates, such as cased caddisflies and stoneflies, could indicate a potential pollution incident. Results from kick sampling are then uploaded to RMI's cartographer database, which provides a long-term record of river health.



Anglers are seen as natural guardians of our aquatic environment and as such are best placed to monitor the rivers they fish. The EA and SERT are looking to expand monitoring to other Dorking sections of the river, with more Riverfly training scheduled for October. To find out more about this pioneering citizen science initiative visit: [www.riverflies.org](http://www.riverflies.org) If you would like to take part please email: [volunteer@dorkingas.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@dorkingas.co.uk)

## MINK TRAPPING SUCCESS



Thanks to the efforts of Dorking AS volunteers, mink continue to be trapped along the River Mole. These voracious predators can have a devastating effect on native wildlife and are chiefly responsible for the 90% decline in the water vole population.

The Waterlife Recovery Trust is actively working to eradicate mink from the UK. Indeed, they have achieved a significant landmark by successfully removing mink from a large area of East Anglia. To find out more about the great work they do visit: [www.waterliferecoverytrust.org](http://www.waterliferecoverytrust.org)

It's important to remember that, for every mink caught, up to 500 prey animals a year will be saved. It's a critical conservation measure in preventing the extinction of native species like water voles.

If you see a water vole while fishing on the Mole, please report it to the club by emailing: [watervoles@dorkingas.co.uk](mailto:watervoles@dorkingas.co.uk)



## FISH SURVEY ON CASTLEFIELDS



Our long-awaited fish survey on the Mole finally went ahead at the end of July. It was attended by a number of club officials, Dorking volunteers and the Angling Trust. The event marked a major milestone in the progress made by the club and there was a genuine sense of anticipation among those gathered as the monitoring team's boat slipped slowly into the water.

The survey identified multiple fish species, including chub, barbel, roach, dace, perch, pike, stone loach and even an eel. Various year classes of chub and barbel were recorded which suggests successful spawning and survival over multiple years. The presence of young barbel is particularly encouraging - especially as we are looking to extend our gravel enhancement work to include Castlefields. We hope to work with Brockham AS on this stretch in order to improve natural recruitment. It's part of a wider plan by the EA to encourage greater collaboration between angling clubs on the Mole.



### NEW SURVEY SITE

As a new survey site, Castlefields will now be monitored every 3 years. Conducting regular surveys helps to track and identify changes in species composition, abundance and size distribution. This will provide a valuable insight into the fish present, allowing for effective management and intervention.

Following the electro-fishing, the EA will provide the club with a fish population report, detailing the numbers of different fish species recorded. Observations on the day were that the fish survey had met all its objectives.



The club would like to thank Betchworth Park Golf Club for their cooperation in allowing the EA team access to the site. Also, a big thank you to Martin Smith. Martin owns the land and fishing rights to the opposite bank and was kind enough to remove a couple of trees that had very recently gone into the water.







## ILLEGAL FISHING ON THE MOLE

Poaching, fish theft and illegal fishing are serious issues for clubs and fisheries. Unfortunately, members have reported fish being taken from the North Bank section of the Mole. Of course club bailiffs can't be on the water 24/7 so we would ask members to keep a watchful eye out for this sort of criminal behaviour.

In order to police our waters more effectively, the club has taken on two additional bailiffs. Terry Oliver and Trevor Gorringer are local anglers and long-time Dorking members. Along with our current bailiffs, they will be carrying out regular patrols on our fisheries to enforce club rules.



All bailiffs are to be issued with ID Cards and they will make direct contact with the EA and local police if illegal fishing is found to be taking place. We are also linking up with the Angling Trust's 'Operation Traverse', a multi-agency initiative aimed at tackling these crimes.

## CASTLEFIELDS COMPLAINTS



**CLICK ON GUIDE TO READ**

We have received a number of complaints recently regarding the behaviour of some of our younger anglers fishing Castlefields lake. Juniors have been witnessed fishing with two rods, leaving rods unattended, surface fishing, mishandling fish and failing to take litter home - the sort of rule breaking that will simply not be tolerated by the club.

There have also been a number of incidents reported of shouting and running up and down the lakeside. Most concerning is the fact young anglers have been seen entering the lake in order to retrieve tackle. Needless to say, activities around water come with an element of danger and by going into the water juniors are putting themselves in harm's way.

Castlefields is a tranquil spot where members go to relax, unwind and enjoy the peace and quiet. The continued disregard for club rules and the sort of anti-social behaviour we have seen will result in membership being withdrawn. Not something we want to see happen.

As a club we are keen to promote responsible fishing practices among all anglers, but especially our juniors. It's important to develop good habits from an early age and with this in mind we are looking to host coaching days for juniors through the Angling Trust.

Can we please remind parents that juniors (under the age of 12) must be accompanied by a responsible adult when fishing a Dorking AS water.



## JUNIOR COACHING COURSES



If club angling is to flourish into the future then young people are crucial to its long-term sustainability. For this reason, Dorking AS is consulting with the Angling Trust about the possibility of hosting coaching days for our juniors. Events would be run by the Trust, with fully trained and vetted coaches offering professional fishing guidance.



In light of this, we are reaching out to parents and grandparents to see if there is sufficient interest in the club organising junior coaching days. Children do not necessarily need to be current junior members of Dorking, but it's the club's hope that they will join over time.



As a club, we're keen to inspire youngsters to pick-up a fishing rod. That's why Junior membership is free for children aged 8 to 12, while Intermediate membership is just £25 for 13 to 17 year olds. Those of us who fish, know only too well the positive effects of spending time by the water. By introducing youngsters to the joys of fishing, you could spark a lifelong passion for angling. To register your interest in junior coaching email: [membership@dorkingas.co.uk](mailto:membership@dorkingas.co.uk)

## BECOME A LEAD COACH

There is also the opportunity to take up a Level 2 coaching role through bursaries provided to the club by the Angling Trust. If you are a Dorking member who's passionate about fishing and would like to pass on your knowledge of our sport to the next generation of anglers, then please contact the club by emailing: [volunteer@dorkingas.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@dorkingas.co.uk)

## CLUB FACEBOOK SITE GETS A FACELIFT



As part of our efforts to improve membership communication, the club is launching a new Facebook site. Of course social media has an important role to play in the running of an angling club, offering an online platform by which to reach anglers quickly and effectively.

A dedicated volunteer will ensure regular content posting and consistent engagement. We will share news stories, club updates and showcase forthcoming events, all with the aim of building on the growing sense of community at Dorking AS.

Not only will it allow us to communicate with anglers, it will provide us with the opportunity to expand reach and connect with a broader audience on relevant topics of interest. With the facebook makeover almost complete, we will update members when it's ready to go live.



**GRAVEL CLEANING TO  
COMMENCE ON THE MOLE**

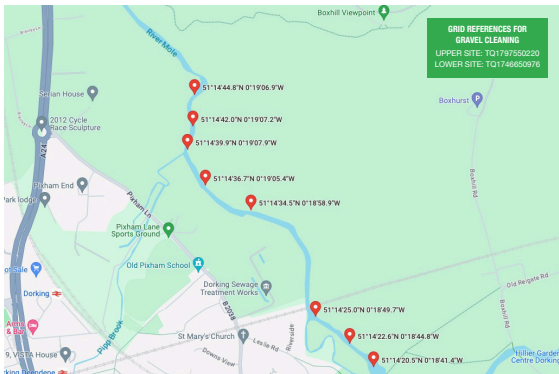


Gravel enhancement work will be taking place again on the North Bank from September through to October, as an aid to natural recruitment.

Raking these precious spawning sites on the Mole will help to desilt the gravel beds, giving fish eggs a much greater chance of survival.

Dates have yet to be confirmed, but members will be notified of the upcoming works through Clubmate. Swims affected will include the basin down to peg 69 and an area stretching from peg 79 to below peg 87 - see opposite.

If you haven't previously volunteered and you'd be interested in participating in this essential habitat improvement work, please email: [volunteer@dorkingas.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@dorkingas.co.uk)



## TREVOR HARROP AWARDED BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL

The Avon Roach project was founded by Trevor Harrop and his late friend Budgie Price. Their groundbreaking enhancement initiative is a shining example of the positive effect anglers can have on conservation.

Trevor and Budgie were almost single-handedly responsible for bringing the Avon's dwindling roach population back from the brink. They successfully returned roach to this iconic river through an innovative breeding programme - a technique now being adopted on rivers across the UK.



In recognition of services to angling, Trevor was awarded the BEM (British Empire Medal). Sadly New Year's Honours are not given posthumously so Trevor accepted the honour on behalf of both himself and Budgie. Fittingly, Budgie's widow was present on the day too.

In recent years, Trevor has turned his attention to gravel enhancement work on the Hampshire Avon to boost barbel numbers. He has also been kind enough to pass on his knowledge to our club. In order to encourage other clubs to take up the practice of gravel cleaning, we are currently working on a video highlighting the methodology used by Trevor's team.