

Bristol Water Fishery Report February 1st – 28th



BW Lakeside

It's been a productive month at Bristol water fisheries. Stocking has commenced at both Chew Valley and Blagdon Lakes, with plenty of quality fish being welcomed into the lakes. Once again, our entire boat fleet has undergone rigorous winter maintenance, and all been serviced by our skilled fisheries carpenter and rangers. Repairing these boats can be either simple or major repairs, sometimes rebuilding whole new sections of the boats to meet safety standard, keeping all our anglers safe out on the water. We have also welcomed back our pike anglers for our February pike trials with some huge fish being caught on from both boat and bank.

Pike Trials

The 2025 Pike Trials start on the 1st of February. All the 2025 tickets went on sale on the 11th of January at 10am. Anglers eager to come back to try their luck for the 40+ fish of a lifetime. There were a total of 1660 tickets up for purchase and all had sold out in a staggering 19 minutes this year. This could be largely attributed to Lloyd Watsons amazing new record at Chew last February, making this February trials highly anticipated by our predator anglers. The first day of the trials saw keen anglers lined up at the gates, eager to get on the boats and bank to start their angling. There is a maximum of 20 anglers on the banks around Chew and 20 boats that go out on the lake itself, making the tickets highly desirable due to their exclusivity. During the first week of the trials, we had an impressive number of 20lb+ fish landed, with standout catches including:



Ben Humber 39lb



Kevin Shore 29lb 12oz



Alan Buckingham 37lb



Lee Noakes 34lb 04oz



Ed Wade 28lb 05oz



Darren and Thomas Chapple 23lb



Nathun Perry 25lb 04oz



Phil Spinks 34lb 12oz



Mike 22lber



Preston and Gary Jarvis



Jenson and Gary Jarvis



Brad Perry 31lb



Ian Hawkins 32lb 03oz

As the second week of the Pike began, we continued to see some incredible catches with multiple 30's and countless 20's being caught off the boat and the bank.



The magic started on the 18th of Feb when Steve Butcher, landed a monstrous 41lb 9oz. Steve and his boat partner, Alan Grainger, have been fishing at Chew since the trials began in 2001. Despite catching 30s elsewhere, they had never broken the 30lb mark at Chew. The pair were fishing between Wick Green and Spring Bay, casting a sardine 15-20 feet from the boat into shallow water. Their hunch paid off in spectacular fashion when their

bait was taken by this true Chew giant! A well-timed early strike set the hook perfectly in the scissor of the fish, which immediately powered into deep water, giving the anglers time to prepare their net and clear space in the boat. After a quick photo, the fish was carefully returned to the water to rest and recover, before swimming off strongly. This catch was even more meaningful for Steve, who sadly lost his father last year. On the day of the capture, he was wearing his father's waterproofs, life jacket, woollen hat, and watch, keeping his dad's spirit with him for this incredible moment.

We also had some very strong weather leading to 2 days being rescheduled on the second week for the boats. However, this didn't stop Catalin Rusu from landing another massive 44lb pike from Walley Bank despite the adverse conditions on the 21st of Feb. Fishing alongside bank partner Alexandru Stoica. A lifelong lure angler with a passion for pike fishing, he has caught multiple 20s and a 30lber, but this fish was on another level! Despite only fishing at Chew for the past two years, mostly from boats, he made the bank count in spectacular fashion. Catalin cast a whole mackerel 50m out. At around 3 PM, the rod screamed off, and he was locked in, with the waves pushing it toward the lodge. With skill and patience, he guided the pike safely to shore an incredible moment for any angler!





The next day saw yet another 40lb pike caught at Chew. Barry Maksymczuk, who landed an incredible 40lb 4oz pike on Saturday, 22nd February.

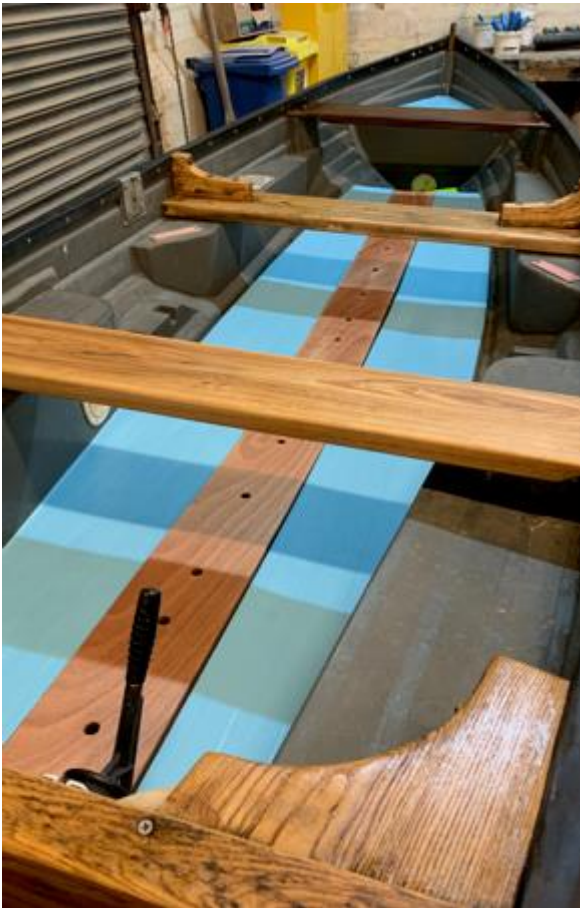
Fishing with his brother Chris, a lifelong angling partner, the pair targeted Wick Green after hearing of recent big catches. Barry launched a Savage Gear Trout imitation lure into the wind, allowing it to settle as the boat drifted over the deeper gutters near Wick Green. As he retrieved the lure, he suddenly felt a powerful hit. Instantly, he knew he was into something special. The pike stayed deep, eluding its true size as it used the wind-driven drift to its advantage. When it finally surfaced, both brothers were stunned at the size of the monster fish. Acting quickly, they guided it safely into the net, ensuring it was well-rested before lifting it aboard for a swift, respectful photo. After a few moments of admiration, the Chew giant was placed back in the water, where it recovered strongly before kicking away into the depths. In the first week, we saw a 39lb lure-caught pike by Ben Humber (Photo included in page 3), believed to be Chew's biggest lure caught pike, but this beast takes the crown! To make it even sweeter, Barry's previous PB was 27lb. Besting it by a massive 13lb and 4oz.

February Pike Conclusion

A huge thank you to all the anglers who joined us for an incredible February pike fishing season at Bristol Waters. We've seen some truly remarkable fish caught, with many personal bests shattered and unforgettable moments on the bank and boats. We're already looking forward to welcoming you back in October for another round of world-class pike fishing. Until then, tight lines and see you soon!

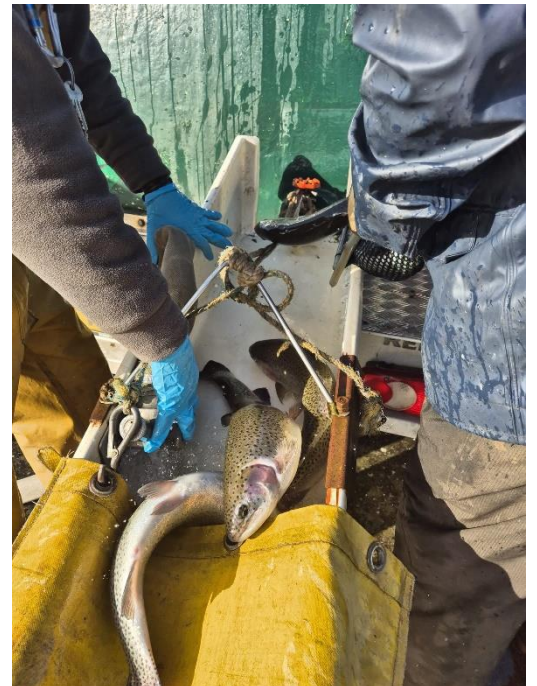
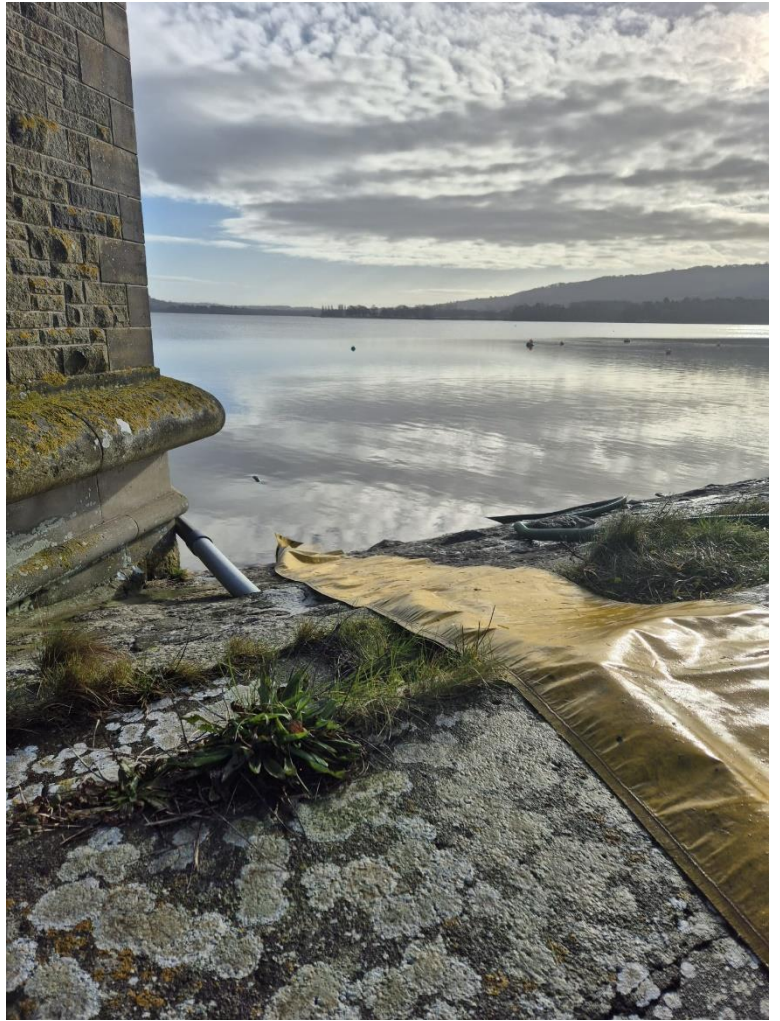
Winter Boat Maintenance Program

Every winter, our entire fleet of boats undergoes a full maintenance program at the carpenter's workshop at Blagdon Pumping Station. Each boat is carefully assessed to ensure it meets the high standards required for a safe and enjoyable fishing experience. Some boats only need a deep clean, a fresh coat of paint, and a thorough inspection, while others require more extensive work, including the replacement of worn sections, new fittings, or structural repairs. Our expert carpentry team uses their skill and experience to restore each boat to peak condition, ensuring they are ready to take to the water for another busy season. This essential winter maintenance not only extends the lifespan of our fleet but also guarantees that anglers have the best possible experience when they visit Bristol Waters. A huge thanks to our dedicated team for their hard work and attention to detail. Keeping everything shipshape and ready for another fantastic year on the water!



Trout Season Preparation

Our dedicated team of rangers has been working hard behind the scenes, carefully stocking Chew Valley Lake, Blagdon Lake, and Barrow Tanks 1, 2, and 3 with top-quality trout in preparation for the upcoming season. With 19,000 fish introduced across our waters, we're ensuring a fantastic start to what promises to be another exciting year of fishing. Chew and Blagdon will open on March 6th, with the Barrow Tanks following on March 28th. Now is the perfect time to dust off your rods, clean your lines, and get your flies ready. The countdown to the new season is on, and we can't wait to welcome you back! Many anglers have already bought their season tickets and are eager to get on the banks. Here are some photos of the team stocking the lakes with our top-quality fish!



Overview

In the coming month we will welcome back our trout anglers and predator fly fishers for the 2025 season. The first event is on Sunday the 2nd of March and is the BRFFA's Barrows Bash. This is to be held at Barrows tank 3. This is now all fully booked and is a pegged event.

The fisheries staff want to wish everyone who is fishing on our waters the best of luck for the coming season and as always tight lines!



THE BRFFA BARROW
BASH 2025

Early season bank match open to all.
Date: Sunday 2nd March 2025
Exclusively on Barrow Tank No°3
Pegged with rotation
Fishery Rules
Date: Sunday 2nd March 2025
Cost £30 per entry
Prize Table tbc
Fishing 8am till 4pm
MORE INFO TO FOLLOW - Put your name in the comments or click the Clubmate link to secure your spot.

BRFFA