

Fishery Plan for, Funtley Pond, Fareham, Hants.



February 2017,
by
Steve Mottershead

Contents

- Description of water
- Stocking levels
- Current Status
- Identified problems
- Long term plan
- Requirements for successful instigation of plan
- Conclusion

Description of water

Funtley pond is approximately four acres in size and is managed as a mixed fishery. The pond was formed when the well-known Funtley Brickyard came to an end, and the pit was allowed to flood. A large amount of builders waste was deposited in the pond when the houses were built. This has unfortunately left a legacy of snags being created in the form of debris such as electrical conduit, concrete blocks, window frames, tree stumps and cars etc. The lake was decreased in size when the existing housing estate was built.

Car parking is a problem as there is only a small lay-by, which holds about 4 cars, which is full more often than not by residents and their visitors. Cars can park on the grass, but this is really only possible in dry weather.

The pond is very deep in places with depths of up to 16ft. This depth of water can make the management of the lake very difficult at times depending on the task involved. Life buoys are strategically positioned around the lake to safeguard members and the public.

Portsmouth & District Angling Club purchased the lake in the 80's along with some surrounding land that borders the pond. There is a public right of way around some of the pond and some of the residents in Lakeside and The Waters (who either back onto the pond or have views across some of the pond) have had views about what should be done to the pond or the trees.

The water level can vary a fair amount from the summer to the winter level. This can give problems when deciding on an agreed swim level, as they can look a little unsightly when the level is

low or become flooded when levels rise. The paths , particularly at the east end of the lake, become very boggy in the winter.

Many members appear to find fishing this lake difficult due to its unusual depth and snags. The pond is open to fishing 365 days a year and is also open to day tickets.

Stocking Levels

Funtley has always been managed as one of the Clubs mixed fisheries, and as such it boasts many species such as carp, tench, bream, perch, and pike as well a reasonable head of silvers.

Among these species are some large specimen tench and some reasonable double figure carp. The bream are caught up to around 8lb plus and can provide good sport for those who fish for them. There have been large numbers of rudd and some roach but these numbers do appear to have dwindled. The lake would benefit from a stocking of silver fish such as rudd and roach.

The predation of the lake is carried out by perch, which have in the past been caught up to 2lb plus, and a good head of pike, some of which achieve double figure status.

Since 2011, the following stocking has taken place:

7 Lower Berryfield mirror carp in 2011 (sizes were 3 -9lb)

70 Baffins common carp in 2016 (1-4lb)

The bottom feeding fish seem to thrive here in the deeper water. Funtley is not normally threatened by cormorants providing a haven for tench generations to grow.

Current Status

Funtley Lake is owned by the club but we are very limited in the work that can be done. Since the last 5 year plan, a fair bit of maintenance work was carried out and the majority of the swims were in a reasonable state. Several paths and swim accesses have been improved. However in the last couple of years little maintenance has been done and many fishing stations were in need of repair. Early in 2017, after a major work party, , most of the swims are in a reasonable state and accesses/paths have been improved.

Fishing is still variable with many anglers struggling with the depth and snags. However, there are some great fish caught by those who know the water and who put the time in.

Most of the swims are easily accessible however in recent years, parrots feather and reeds have restricted the margins in a few swims. The parrots feather is intrusive and needs management.

The paths can get a bit muddy. The club took advice on work it should do around the public right of way particularly where it floods. We were advised not to put in new structures (eg raised walkways) as we would be liable if the general public injured themselves.

Car parking can be a problem on the water and there is no easy answer. Residents park in the same area as the anglers. The Club has applied for a car park before, but permission was denied and it's likely that any car park we provide will also be used by residents!

At present the grass surrounding the lake needs frequent cutting. We do have a lawn mower and in addition we do have support from the local authority who can cut it.

After some problems in the past (the container, the bench, illegal dumping, illegal extension of gardens), we now have a reasonable relationship with the residents. Some still see the lake as the communities and expect us to cut trees for views or not put piles of materials for work, however we have worked round most of these.

We did have a strong bailiffing team however this has disbanded recently. We need to keep a presence on the water otherwise the water will be abused with litter, bad angling practices and poaching.

Identified Problems

- Bailiffing - a new bailiffing team is required to ensure we have a regular presence on the water and discourage poachers.
- Parrots Feather - on one hand we are lucky that it won't grow in deep water however it does block the margins in a number of the swims. This makes landing fish difficult. We started an eradication in 2016 however it was not continued and the parrots feather soon returned.
- Reeds - the Norfolk reed grows strongly in the shallower water at the east end of the pond and needs a yearly cut to prevent it encroaching into fishing areas.
- Fish Stocks - there has been a reduction in the silver fish.
- Swim maintenance - many of the swims need maintenance in terms of some fronts, dressing and/or steps

- Snags - the lake is full of snags. Divers have identified 5 vehicles and there is also a lot of building rubbish discarded illegally when the houses were built. Add on the tree roots, rushes etc and the fish have a lot of cover to get snagged in. It would be a huge risk/cost to reduce the snags and we need to keep advising members to fish appropriately for the species they target.

Long Term Plan

The long-term plan for Funtley Lake is to continue to manage it as a mixed fishery but to improve its reputation in some specific areas. The targets for the fishing are (some may take longer than 5 years):

- Provide the fun anglers with the opportunity of a good bag of fish of mixed species. This includes specimen tench and bream as well as smaller silvers, smaller carp and perch.
- Provide a reasonable head of all sized carp for the 'general' carp anglers to target. These should include some 20lb plus fish and some more attractive fish.
- Become a decent winter fishery for anglers who would like to get a few bites on the colder/ shorter days. With some suitable stocking this water could provide winter fishing for a number of different angling styles.
- Provide sport for the predator anglers with all round pike fishing (get a few runs and some double figure fish) and some large perch.

The club would like to improve the parking however this is not easy - previous plans (many years ago) have been rejected. There is also an underlying concern that any additional parking will be used by the residents, otherwise it will be objected to by the residents. (Remember the container).

Requirements for successful instigation of plan

- Enlisting of more bailiffs and help for the Pond Warden
- Annually reduce Reed-bed and Parrots feather to stop encroachment on the water. Consider water dyes as an option for removing the Parrots feather.
- Stock the following fish:
 - Rudd/Roach - A regular stocking of 500 -1000 fish each year for the next 3 years. Include some quality rudd from Brownwich if they become available.
 - Access perch stocks, consider adding 50-100 small perch a year for next 2 years.
 - Ide - subject to EA approval, try a trial stocking of Ide and supplement them the following year if they go well. These fish, plus the roach, perch, pike and carp will provide winter fishing for a wide variety of anglers.
- Monitor growths and catch rates for all species.
- Re-investigate into provision of a car parking area. One consideration is to improve the durability of the grassy area with permeable matting, mesh or paving which allows the grass to grow through. (e.g GrassProtecta from

Terram). We may have to investigate the possibility of drop kerb.

Conclusion

Funtley can provide fantastic sport and some specimen fishing for Club members (and day ticket members) to enjoy.

It could be an ideal venue to provide a range of different types of winter fishing for the members. It already has some reasonable carp and pike fishing but this could be supplemented by better perch and also silver fish. This will require some investment as well as agreements to the stocking policy with the EA. However the results could be excellent for the club in 2 or 3 years' time.