

# Merthyr Tydfil Angling Alliance Page 1

## Newsletter March 2020



Following a conversation between the Directors and consulting the latest advice from Angling Trust and others see below we are asking all our members not to fish our waters until advised that this is safe to do so.

Whilst we understand the proven benefits on active lifestyles, physical health and mental wellbeing that angling provides, as well as many anglers opinions that as an often solitary pastime angling could be a perfect way to isolate oneself, the current government advice is that angling in any form is NOT currently classified as one of the safe exercises in which to participate.

As an alliance we also have a duty of care to the community on a whole and that should any angler become injured on the river bank or become involved in an accident whilst travelling to the river then that in itself would cause avoidable impact on all emergency services, which could in turn have a significant impact on those needing emergency care during the pandemic.

We hope that all anglers will understand that we, as a responsible Association, and also the angling community in general, must take action to protect ourselves, our families and our communities through this period and that you will support us through what will hopefully be a short term closure.

We will continue to review the situation as it develops and update you in due course.

**Because of this all day tickets sales have been suspended and sadly the bait shack not being an essential business has had to shut temporary . All competitions Senior Junior Carp have been cancelled until further notice.**

**We will review any future advice that may be announced**

Thank You MTAA Directors

**Welsh Water**

Hi Tony

On Sunday, due to the Coronavirus outbreak, we decided to stop fishing on our sites, so as to reduce interaction between our staff and customers, and also between customers. As you are aware, some areas can become quite crowded. Originally, this wouldn't have impacted on yourselves, as fly-fishermen on Cantref and Talybont would generally be few in number, and would naturally be a fair distance apart from each other due to the nature of the sport. However, on Monday evening, the Government stated that it was no longer permitted for people to be away from their homes if they didn't fulfil any of the categories that were highlighted as exemptions. Following this, DCWW has decided to close its sites to all activities. Unfortunately, this would apply to fishing, as this would not qualify as one of the exemptions. This means that NO fishing is permitted on our sites for the foreseeable future.

This isn't something that we would ideally want to do, but to help protect the health of our staff and visitors, and with current Government rules, I'm sure that you understand that it is unavoidable. Hopefully the situation with the virus will be brought under control soon, and we can resume normal activities, but at the moment, to help protect public health, this is a decision that we think is correct.

Kind Regards Marc Ranger

**Latest advice - stop fishing and stay safe: Angling Trust**

We must all do what is required of us by the Government and work together to fight this pandemic. Therefore, until further notice we should all refrain from fishing. This is about saving lives and supporting the NHS. We have been in contact with the Government regarding its view on fishing as a permitted activity and hope to update you all shortly. A new post has indicated that



We have experienced in our time some very damaging work on our fisheries from pollution to unauthorised work but did not expect the restoration of part of a river bank to support house foundations on our fisheries to result in:

The picture below is looking down from just below the Gauging station on the Taff at Merthyr towards Jacksons Bridge. The house in the distance where the machine is had its foundations undermined in the flood ( as seen on Television) so remedial actions was need fast. Permission was granted to Merthyr Council to carry out the work as well as to shore up the bank in the foreground of the picture. This permission was then abused and one of the best pools on the river that some of us fished for over seventy years ago was filled in to carry out the work. They could have come up through the trees on the right hand side to do this work.



If you look closely at the picture on the next page you will see that although the Road way has gone it has been spread out across the whole of the pool area leaving what was a good holding pool no more than in lower water a shallow rapid. This a pool that since the opening of the fish pass at Merthyr town records show a salmon Redd at the end of it.

Knowing the high floods that do come down the Taff and the fact that the pool is one of bedrock ledges we hope that the next big floods, possibly now next winter, will scour the pool back to what was its natural and historical place in our river system. There is however no excuse for what has happened and Natural Resources Wales will be taking this up with the scheme promoters Merthyr Council.

There is no doubt that the winter floods and landslips caused by the heavy rain and blocking culverts have done serious and unquantifiable damage to our rivers. We will never know how many Redds or indeed fish we have lost during the last flood the highest ever recorded on the river Taff. We are not in isolation in this as all river have suffered the same.



Picture of the work COMPLETED?? Note the swirls indicating how shallow the river now is in what was a deep channel



The picture on page three shows how it had to be left. The pool is full of very loose gravel so, it will in time we are hoping that floods will bring it back to the wonderful pool it has always been.

When we stocked our large Carp in both Cyfarthfa and Top Pond late last year we advised to feed them through the winter to this end we bought food to do this. Our Thanks to Tom Jehu and Rhys Evans for doing this and it has paid dividends with the fish putting on weight. The mild winter has also kept them on the feed.

We reported on the land slip in our last news letter and now we have had time to visit and been able to look at it the little river Taff Fechan is in need of some tender loving care to return it back to some normality we are currently talking about how this can be done with Natural Resources Wales. It will take a lot of planning.



Above as it was and below as it is.

