



Colchester APS Ltd Newsletter.

2026/7

www.colchesteraps.org



Barbel & Chub Territory

CHAIRMANS REPORT – Last year turned out to be a very good year for CAPS, the most notable news being, we have purchased another water at Fingeringhoe which we have named Upshers Lake in memory of a former Chairman Reg. Along with Olivers this secures our future for years to come. Thanks are due to our Fisheries Director Andy Howard and Estates Director Dan Jarman for the hard work in getting this water & especially Andy & Ed for all the work that they have done getting it ready the new season.

It is good to note our Membership numbers continue to flourish and all our Fisheries are performing well.

I will end by thanking all Board members and all Bailiffs for their continuing hard work throughout the year.

Mick Turner.

WEBMASTERS REPORT – From a caps website (www.colchesteraps.org) perspective, 2025 continued the recent trend in that our website needed to deal with increasing volumes (up 41%) and pressures that were placed in front of it. This is especially crucial during the busy joining period from mid-February to the beginning of April. As with previous years we guaranteed renewal for existing members of the previous season providing you join during the period mid-February until we open to new members, which in 2025 was 7.30am on the 1st April 2025. Demand on the 1st April was unprecedented with over 500 people trying to join at 7.30am which resulted in us reaching our membership limit in just 4 minutes! Closing the site down so quickly, unfortunately meant some people were ultimately disappointed who wanted to join.

Due to the continued rise in new member demand on the 1st of April we have reflected on best and how fairly we can look to manage the new member applications and in 2026 we will change the way in which we handle this. We will be introducing a facility where from early Jan 2026 to the 31st March 2026 you can put your name down via the website to register your interest in joining the club. On the 1st April a computerised random draw will take place and those lucky enough to be selected will be emailed instructions on how they can join. Full details of this process will be communicated out. We will see how successful this is in 2026 before deciding if this is what we will do in future years. The process for existing members to renew will remain as is.

Our new database has also enabled us to now contact our membership via email for notification of the AGM and our annual newsletter, saving us from ever increasing postal charges. As was mentioned last year, it is important if you want to be kept up with communications such as these that when you rejoin online in 2026 you click the button that shows you agree to subscribe to email communication from the club. The website continues to drive a large number of views as mentioned earlier viewing figures are up 41% over the previous year with almost 123,000 sessions! During what has been a challenging year for water closures and measures needing to be quickly put in place the website remains a vital asset in keeping our members updated with the very latest information.

As I mention every year, we continue to encourage members to post pictures of their catches be it Carp or some of the other excellent species such as Roach, Tench, Bream and Chub that exist in our waters. And, finally, thank you to all those who have contributed to the website or our very active Facebook group page.

Ian Carter.

MATCH SECRETARY REPORT – Yet another good season with very good attendances in all matches. All match results can be seen on the CAPS Matches Facebook page together with the current match man of the season table. There is a link on the c.a.p.s website so that you may ask to join the group.

We had 2 junior matches again this season, which were very well attended. With prizes for the biggest total weight and the heaviest fish in 4 separate age groups. These were under 10, 11- 13, 14 - 15-year-olds and 16–18-year-olds. Lots of prizes were donated by Korda/Guru together with a bundle of rods and some bivvies donated by Fox. There were also the usual trophies donated by CAPS. So, a massive thank you goes out to all those involved, not forgetting the helpers on the day, Mark Orin together with Ed Young and his partner Kim. There were some fantastic weights with 2 weights over 100lb recorded, not bad for a 4-hour junior match. We will have another 2 matches next year. So just check the website www.colchesteraps.org or the centre pages of the 2026/27 rule book.

Olivers lake - Still producing the goods with fantastic results and nice bags of Skimmers, Tench, Carp, Roach together with Crucians. The top match weight on here this season going to Matt Gould, on peg 31 with a 188lb 10oz of mainly Carp. The winter silverfish matches here are also very popular with, at the time of writing, matches selling out.

Prestons lake - Fished hard this season, with the Roach a bit thin on the ground at the start of the season but soon turned up in force later on. The Bream didn't really show well this season, but the odd Carp did. Top weight on Preston's lake this year was from Martin Chalk, who was on peg 3, with 4 Carp for 50lb 2oz.

Brookhall - Has fished very well this season. This is now a really productive venue with lots of weights over the magical 100lb. Also, with the work Rob Houlding has done to keep the lake tidy makes this an excellent venue. Thanks Rob. Top weight here this season went to one of our newer members "Rob Smith" on peg 24, he had a magical 201lb 14oz!

Layer Pit - We had the usual silver fish match at Layer pit this season with all top weights made up of Bream with the top 2 weights all over 100lb. The top weight here this season went to Dean Field who was on peg 18 on the point with 130lb 4oz of bream.

Lodge Farm Lake - has fished ok. The Bream were a little elusive this year with most of the top weights made up of Carp. Top weight here this season went to Kevin Howell, with 108lb 14oz of mainly Carp.

A big thank you to Paul Connell and Mick Turner for helping out organising matches in my absence. I hope the coming season will be another good one. There will be a few matches on our new water "Upshers Lake" these will all be on Thursdays.

Due to the numbers wanting to fish, **All** members need to book in to our club matches to secure a place, so just text, email, phone or message me via messenger. Don't forget A full list of all this seasons results are on the c.a.p.s matches Facebook group and on our website www.colchesteraps.org

Andy Howard.

FISHERY OFFICER REPORT - Wow what a very incredibly busy season for fisheries it's been. To start with, the icing on the cake, so to speak, our brand-new water **Upshers Lake**. Well done to Dan Jarman for negotiating the purchase of this lake. When we first took over it was so wild, there was barely anywhere you could actually get to the lake. Now after a few months of chopping down trees and clearing swims with a digger, we finally have the otter fence up and a grand total of 16 swims. All swims are large with plenty of room. The lake is fairly deep with depths around 13 foot which shallows up to around 8 feet at the carpark end. There is still work to be done on the carpark, paths and swim fronts but we are confident of an April 1st 2026 opening. A massive thanks goes out to Ed Young and Phil Saville who together with me have done most of the work.

Stocking wise, it's a little unknown what exactly in there but test sessions have produced plenty of carp ranging from 2lb up to 19lb but larger fish have been spotted. There are plenty of quality Roach and Rudd and I personally had a Tench around 5lb. We have since taking over ownership, stocked 5 x RH fisheries Mirror Carp between 10 and 14lb We also stocked 850 or so Crucian Carp together with 300 Crucians and 300 Tench that were given to us by the EA (that's where some of our licence money goes). We have a few more Mirrors on order which will hopefully arrive before April. All in all we confident the lake is well stocked.

Layer Pit - This year we finally managed to get the path completed around the venue. It is now much safer to walk around the whole pit. You may have seen on Ali Hamidi's Instagram about some carp stocking into Layer he had organised with RH fisheries for us to collect. So fellow member Matt Gould and I, together with his son and friend went to personally collect and hand pick the fish. 66 prime Mirror Carp between 9 & 16lb were stocked into Layer in late November. These go with the 20 x c4 (10-12lb) VS fish that were stocked mid-February 2025. A few of the smaller Commons have been removed this year and another 100 - 150 are planned to be removed in February 2026. This will not only allow new and existing fish to grow, but also to have a better breeding stock, keeping the gene pool healthy. VS fish that have been stocked in recent years are now being caught much bigger with one particular fish stocked in 2018 at around 6lb 8oz coming out this year at 21lb!

Wellhouse Mersea - Unfortunately, as you may know we have lost the carpark lake at Mersea. All the fish had to be removed. This was sprung on us about a week after we had the car park resurfaced. The Bream and a lot of the small silverfish were taken by Sudbury & district long Melford AC. The Tench and around 10 of the smaller Carp were put in Lodge farm, all the Pike together with around 200lb of silver fish were put into Inworth 2, the rest of the Carp and silvers (which included the 30lb+ fish) were put into the Mersea north lake. We still have the fishing rights on the north lake so, with the extra stock, this should make it a worthwhile visit.

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FISHERY OFFICER REPORT (Continued...)

Inworth - As I mentioned, Inworth 2 has had a nice stocking of pike from small fish up to the largest of around 20lb. This is a reasonably large lake so they should do well and hopefully grow. On Inworth 1 earlier on in the season we introduced a dye to try to keep the weed down as when it reaches the surface it acts as a wind break, slowing the oxygenation process down, this was largely unsuccessful, we did have low oxygen levels again so a stronger dye will be used next season. A spodding ban was also put in place to reduce the amount of particles going in which seems to have worked, as more fish are being caught and they are getting bigger. Ten C4 (10-12LB) VS fish were also stocked mid-February 2025. The lake was also treated with a bacteria which digests organic matter. This was also used on several other waters and the results are very good. This is a much cheaper and effective alternative to introducing lime.

Bovington - The Bovington complex has had a few problems again this year also. Dye and bacteria were also introduced here in the spring and their effects have been ok and the amount of weed has been reduced. However there has been huge amounts of particles being introduced by anglers and this produced another oxygen crash in the autumn on Bov 2. Bov 1 not being affected as much. Due to last years KHV outbreak, it hasn't had the angling pressure. There are still some good fish in there and a re-stocking of carp back in Feb 2025 will hopefully ensure sport to come. So together with the guidance of the EA we now have introduced a spodding ban on both Bovington lakes to try to reduce the amount of particles that are fed into the lakes, most of which do not get eaten and sit on the bottom rotting.

Olivers - This continues to fish well and the Crucians that were stocked a couple of years ago are doing very well with most of them being caught around and over 1lb. Bacteria has also been introduced here too this season which seems to have worked very well. Extensive work on the tree lines has been done to remove snags and a couple of dangerous trees on the spit have been removed.

Brookhall - Bailiff, Rob Houlding, has done his usual superb job looking after the lake, so not much work was needed here. The lake was treated with bacteria to reduce the organic matter on the bottom.

Snake Pit - We had low oxygen levels here last season so work has been carried out on Bankside vegetation to allow the wind onto the lake. However the weed has grown to the surface, which acted as a windbreak and slowed the oxygenation process. Dr Bernice Brewster was consulted, and a report was made. She suggested the use of dye to reduce the weed levels and a bacterial treatment for the rotting organic matter on the bottom. These treatments were applied, and initial reports are good. The lake will be treated with dye again next spring. – It is a shame that members do not share their catches with the committee from snake pit like they do on all our other waters. By doing so we don't have much of an idea as to the stocking levels, so we cannot come up with a stocking plan. We don't want to share you captures with other members just a photo and weight sent to myself, or any other committee member will suffice. This way we can maintain a low but healthy stock in snake pit for years to come.

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FISHERY OFFICER REPORT (Continued...)

Rectory Pool - Rectory has been fairly quiet this season due to last seasons oxygen crash and fish kill. A re stocking took place at the middle of February last year with 10x c4 (10-12lb) and 20x c3 (6-8lb) VS fish plus a few large Commons to 18lb. One of the c4's has been reported at over 20lb so they are growing fast!

Preston's - Not too much work has gone on at Preston's apart from general maintenance. We did treat the lake with a bacterial treatment and I did plant Lillie's in front of peg18, they seem have taken ok, and if successful I will try to get some more planted around the islands to start with. Hopefully next season we can get some proper steps built in the carpark swims and do the usual maintenance on the track and car park.

Lodge Farm - Again, with great work from Ed Young and his wife Kim, not forgetting bailiff Alan, major works are not needed so much. Ed has done quite a bit of maintenance on swims and has also obtained a crayfish trapping license to remove some of the nuisance crayfish that are quite troublesome in the warmer months. Fishing has been good here with a couple of new 30's coming through.

Brakes Pit - The overflow pipe between the two lakes has been sorted out, so it now flows freely and the water level on the long lake is now at a constant level. The swims on the round lake have been re-situated and the island on the long lake has been cleared of debris and dead trees. The fishing on both these lakes is getting better by the year with numerous 40's now being caught on the round lake as well as the long lake.

River Stour and River Chelmer - Not much work goes on here, as when swims are cleared they soon grow back. Any discerning river angler these days knows to take swim clearing items with them when they go, or to go before a session to clear a swim or two.

As you can see a very busy year! Most of the problems on our waters this past couple of seasons appear to be from huge amounts of particles that are being fed, so please have a thought when you go fishing about what bait you are putting in. Switching particles for higher protein baits such as pellets and good quality boilies can be a much better alternative as the fish will feed on them better, they will grow faster and they are more likely to be eaten, thus not sitting on the bottom of the lake and rotting. The club will monitor the amounts of particle baits that are being fed and may have to take further actions on other waters.

A massive thank you to all who have helped out this season with various works and netting operations. Without your help a lot of things that have been done this season would never have been possible.

Andy Howard.

Fishery Stocking 25 / 26



Picture...

- 1, Andy & Ali with one of the RH Fisheries Mirrors on its way to a Caps venue.
- 2 & 6, iHeart Carp being selected for caps.
- 3 & 4, Crucians and Tench being stocked into Upshers Lake.
- 5, Carp stocking into Upshers Lake.

TREASURERS REPORT - With regard to the Club's financial position, as you are probably aware, we have been able to build up a strong savings position since Covid and this allowed us to purchase Upshers Lake during the year. We continue to invest in our waters as noted throughout this newsletter and will look to rebuild our savings to keep us in a strong position should another lake come up for sale in the local area. Lake ownership secures the future of the Club and provides certainty when investing in developing the waters. As with most things in recent years, our costs have continued to rise, but we are continuing to ensure the Club is getting value for money across the board. Thank you to all of the Committee and Bailiffs for keeping things moving forward this year, the strong position the Club finds itself in is down to these individuals.

Looking forward to seeing you all on the bank at some point and please do make the most of the Fisher Green access, it's a great opportunity for the membership to experience something truly unique in Essex.

Dan Jarman.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY REPORT - Figures remain near our stated limit, as we reached our limit with new membership applications within five minutes of opening on the web site on 1st April. As usual existing members will have until 31st March to renew and then we will run a computer draw for new members from the waiting list.

We have decided to increase adult fees by £5 up to £105 and night season tickets also by £5 to £85 all other fees will remain as before. The slight increases go towards our new water.

To end this report, I must thank Kay Howard for all her hard work processing memberships and also Club Secretary Ian Carter for monitoring the Membership situation on-line.

Mick Turner.

BAILIFF OFFICER REPORT - Let me start by thanking all our bailiffs for their commitment, effort and time that they give to the club.

I'll keep this short but serious. After a couple of incidents this year, any abusive or threatening behaviour towards any of our bailiffs (or club officials) will be taken with the upmost seriousness that it deserves and with only one outcome - life time ban.

Secondly, the use of drugs on our waters is against the law and will not be tolerated, this also carries a lifetime ban. I personally spend a lot of time at our venues along with our bailiff team, rule breaking will be dealt with decisively and promptly.

I look forward to seeing you all on the lakes this coming season.

Thank you,

Ed Young.

H & S / WELFARE REPORT – Sadly this year we must report some near misses that came close to a very sad outcome. The wading rule must be strictly observed and was further reinforced this year when a young angler came close to losing his life at one of our venues. This proved to be a traumatic experience for them and those involved. Further disregard for H&S has been seen recently with social media images of members walking on ice covered lakes! Our rules have been put in place not to stop you enjoying our sport but to ensure you continue to enjoy it. Please when you receive your new club book read the rules section first. Have a safe season and remember we all want to enjoy our sport and wherever possible be respectful and kind to your fellow angler.

Wayne Clarke / Steve Howell.



A view looking along our newest venue... Upshers Lake.



Another view of Upshers showing one of the 16 swims under construction.



With Langridge, Seventy Acre and Hooks Marsh also available on the Fishers Green upgrade its not just river fishing you'll gain!



Matchman of the year – Top 6 (from left to right) ... Bill Walker, Dean Field, Julian Collop, Bob Davis, Warren Young and Paul Connell.



Andy showing us its not all "work and no play" for a busy Fisheries and Competitions Officer. Thanks for all the hard work this year.



A classic Barbel & Chub swim on the old Lea. Once described as a 2-mile-long Chub swim and you can see why with such character.

The last word – Many of you will be aware that the club are in the process of joining the Fishers Green Consortium (see cover pic and above images). As this newsletter goes to print we cannot currently confirm the news, however, please keep an eye on Facebook for updates as this will be a tremendous addition to your club ticket should you wish to upgrade (Upgrade tickets will be limited and available for a small charge). Have a great year!

Steve Howell.