

Angling the Ouse

Kye Jerrom, fisheries expert at the Environment Agency, explains the fascination of the noble art and how to start, plus its benefits, both for the fish and ourselves!

Fishing is a fantastic hobby. It brings you closer to nature and I am sure it's the 'hunter gatherer' instinct within us that drives a million anglers to fish every year. It's also a great wellbeing tool, helping us to exchange the stresses and pressures of life for a few hours in a beautiful waterside location.

My love of fish and angling led me to a dream job – a fisheries specialist with the EA. Over the last 20 years I've been involved with fish ecology, habitat restoration, incident response, saving fisheries from water-quality issues and disease, fish-pass design and construction, and now fisheries enforcement.

Did you know that fishing licence income - nearly £22 million pounds pa - is invested back into improving angling, fisheries, and the environment? You can read more about the work your local fisheries team does [HERE](#).

The Great Ouse valley is a destination venue, such is the level of the sport it offers. The late Maurice [Kausman](#) OBE (Hunts Post angling columnist), was Huntingdon's angling superstar in the 50s through to the 80s. Nowadays local man, and 4x World Champion, Bob Nudd might be on the bankside. The river and its tributaries provide some fantastic venues. Hemingford Meadow at St Ives, for example, is home to the oldest angling club in England (St Ives Fish Preservation and Angling Society, 1881). And Hinchingsbrooke Country Park in Brampton, or one of the leading modern commercial fisheries like Rookery Waters in Pidley, are recommended.

Much information is now available to new anglers on the internet, and this plus the quality of angling coaching, makes it easy for anyone to take up the sport. Many local clubs offer events via the Angling Trust 'Get Fishing' campaign, or the Canal and River Trust 'Let's Fish' scheme (both part-funded by the Environment Agency). Most of these are free and offer bait and tackle, as well as top-quality advice. It's not an expensive hobby: a simple rod and tackle and a half a pint of maggots costs less than £20, and will keep you fishing for many sessions. Just don't forget your rod licence (£33 a year but free for children up to 13 years) - visit [HERE](#) for yours. The only other thing you need is permission from the landowner, or a day permit from the local club. Try it - you might just rediscover what has been under your nose all this time!



A young angler is introduced to fishing on the Great Ouse by the St Ives Fish Preservation and Angling Society. Photograph courtesy SIFPAS

The Great Ouse Valley Trust promotes for public benefit the conservation, restoration and enjoyment of the landscape, wildlife and heritage of the Great Ouse Valley and environs in the county of Cambridgeshire. For more information about the Trust please visit www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk

