

Fishery Plan for Abshot Pond

2015 - 2020



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FMO

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Introduction

This is the second 5 year plan for the Abshot Pond, and the first one following the complete renewal of the water which was carried out in 2012. The first management plan covered the period 2007 - 2012. It was decided to allow a settling in period for the water before producing the updated plan.

The following is a summary time line of events which occurred , following the identification and agreement of the plan to eradicate the Top Mouth Gudgeon (TMG) which were first identified in 2005:

Water closed for fishing: 4th October 2011

All fish removed: October 2011

Silt removed, FFZ s built: November 2011

Water disinfected: February 2012

1st restocking: 18th April 2012

Fishing restarted: 16th June 2012

Date Water will be confirmed clear of TMG: February 2016

Description of Water

Abshot Pond is a small fishery of approximately 1900 sq mts (0.5 acre) sited in the western wards of Fareham. It is roughly oblong with sides of 50metres and 40 metres. 3 corners have Fish Free Zones (FFZs). The depth of the pond varies from about 3' along the north bank, through to nearly 4' along parts of the channel.

There are currently 10 swims the majority of which have been in the same position for over 20 years. Swim 8 was moved after the renovation work so that it was more centrally located between 7 and 9. All swims were renovated in 2012.

The desilting in 2011 removed about 50 cubic metres of silt. A silt trap was introduced into the input stream in 2012.

The bank, which used to leak, near swim 3 has been reinforced with Bentonite in 2012. The outflow monk was completely rebuilt in 2012. Additional drainage was added between pegs 4 and 5. There are no known leaks from the pond, and there is no flooding after rain.

The large oak by swim 2 was blown over in the storms of 2013. It completely crushed swim 2 and the entrance gate. The oak has been mostly removed and the swim/gate repaired, but the main stump remains as a feature at the entrance to the pond.

Stocking Levels

Abshot pond has been stocked from scratch with the following:

Tench

Crucian Carp

Roach

Rudd

Perch

Since these restockings, the fish have recruited. In 2015, large numbers of small tench, rudd, perch and crucians have been caught. The fish have also grown with the largest tench over 6lb, crucians are to 14oz, and rudd go to 1lb.

A netting in February 15 produced several perch over 2lb but these have not been caught yet.

In 2014, 4 large KOI carp were illegally stocked into the water. These were successfully removed before they caused issues.

Current Status

Abshot is an old style farm pond fishery. It has 10 fishing stations. It is unique within the club as it is the only Stillwater with no carp present. In 2014, the water was visited by the National Crucian Society who validated the water as a true crucian water. This status is currently rare in the country and it is one of only 10 such waters in the whole of England. The water was featured in the Angling Times in June 2015.

It has become very popular with:

- Senior members who like the easy access and pleasant surroundings
- Traditional anglers who utilise old style equipment and methods
- Anglers who like to catch crucians

- Young anglers who are guaranteed a bite and a fish

Each of the 10 fishing stations is unique offering its own opportunities. The aim is to provide lilies and marginal reeds for each angler.

The pond suffers from very few litter problems,

Predation is limited. There is a resident heron (not a problem) and cormorants have been sighted so cormorant lines are put out in winter. No damage to fish has been seen.

The water has shown no signs of the algae problems of old. This is almost entirely due to the silt removal, control of nutrients and the new stocking.

There is a 6 week closed season which is part of the lease. It is not seen as necessary for this water and should be removed if possible. Continued feed for the fish will benefit their growth, and angling presence will reduce the risk of predation.

Car parking is in a layby about 30 metres from the entrance. This was extended in 2015 to provide more space. It still suffers from puddles in the wet, and is subject to illegal fly tipping.

Identified Problems

- ❖ Surveys show there are too many perch in the water. We did not realise that perch love eating small crucians.
- ❖ The pond still has some silt and there is a risk of excessive nutrients entering from the farms and causing algae problems
- ❖ It is a continued concern that cormorants will find the water.
- ❖ Although the pond is generally rubbish free, the car park suffers badly from fly tipping.
- ❖ The status of the water could be impacted badly if there is any more illegal stocking.
- ❖ The oak trees remaining at the pond are over 200 years old. Although 2 have now gone, 2 remain within the fishery and may cause problems in the future.
- ❖ The car park has been extended and dressed but it does suffer from large puddles and mud after rain.
- ❖ The fish recruit heavily in the pond. This is good but the water runs a risk of becoming overstocked.
- ❖ The closed season is unnecessary and is probably detrimental to the growth of the fish.
- ❖ The FFZs were planted with mix species but they they have become overgrown with burred reeds and their roots. Some little lily has come out of the FFZ.

Long Term Plan

The fishery aim is to continue to provide great crucian and tench fishing. The 2017 target for the crucians is to provide mixed sizes from juvenile to 2lb with all anglers able to catch a crucian. The 2020 target is for 3lb+ crucians. The 2017 target for the tench is to provide mixed sizes from juvenile to 7lb with all anglers able to catch a tench. The 2020 target is for 8lb+ tench. It is expected the fishery will also provide Rudd and Roach to over 1lb and a very small number of 2lb+ perch.

The water will remain suitable for children's coaching (it has been regularly used for Beavers and disadvantaged children coaching). The water can also be used for small matches.

In terms of stock management, nothing can be done until after February 2016 when the TMG eradication can be finally confirmed. At this point, the policy for each year will be:

- Remove perch of all sizes

- Reduce numbers of small 3/4 year old tench

- Reduce rudd in the range 2-4oz

- Thin crucians to provide stock for other crucian ponds within the club

- Monitor roach and thin if they become overstocked

No stocking is required.

In terms of silt management, the existing policies should remain in place. Primarily groundbait should be controlled,

reeds will be managed and the silt trap should be dug out every 4 years (next dig in 2016)

In terms of plant management, the lily planting/cultivating will be continued so that each swim has a significant feature to fish to. Reed removal will continue where the reeds are intruding into fishing areas. Lillies will be cut in swims 4 and 5 to maintain a fishing area. The reeds in the FFZs will be thinned and roots removed to allow more invertebrate growth and additional plants to establish (such as iris and marigold). Any little lily outside the FFZ will be removed.

The ongoing maintenance will include general water, swim and path management including pruning and strimming. There is an area behind swim 8 which is subject to winds. Evergreen plants have been put in to try and provide a wind break. The soil is poor so further planting maybe necessary.

The closed season can be removed from the water. It will be replaced by the occasional swim closure.

The car park drainage needs to be improved. Additional signage has been added but anglers also need to park neatly to maximise space. The layby is not part of the clubs lease so work and parking will need to be done in a way which does not restrict access for the farmer. It might be possible to agree signage or a dummy camera with Fareham BC to reduce fly tipping.

The cormorants will need to be monitored. Lines will continue to be put up from October to March. Further deterrents can be considered if they do become a problem.

The oak trees will be monitored but nothing can be done unless they become dangerous, in which case Hampshire County Council will be contacted.

Requirements for successful instigation of plan

There is little support required to fulfil this plan. The fish removals will need teams to carry out (netting or fish outs) , and the silt trap dig out will be best done with some support.

The Committee may need to be involved with the removal of the closed season and discussing fly tipping with FBC.

All other activities can be carried out by the local team.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Abshot is currently a unique water for the club which requires little effort or spend to maintain.

It can be a source of fish for other waters for years to come, whilst providing specimen crucian and tench fishing

for members. It has the capacity for small matches and small coaching sessions.