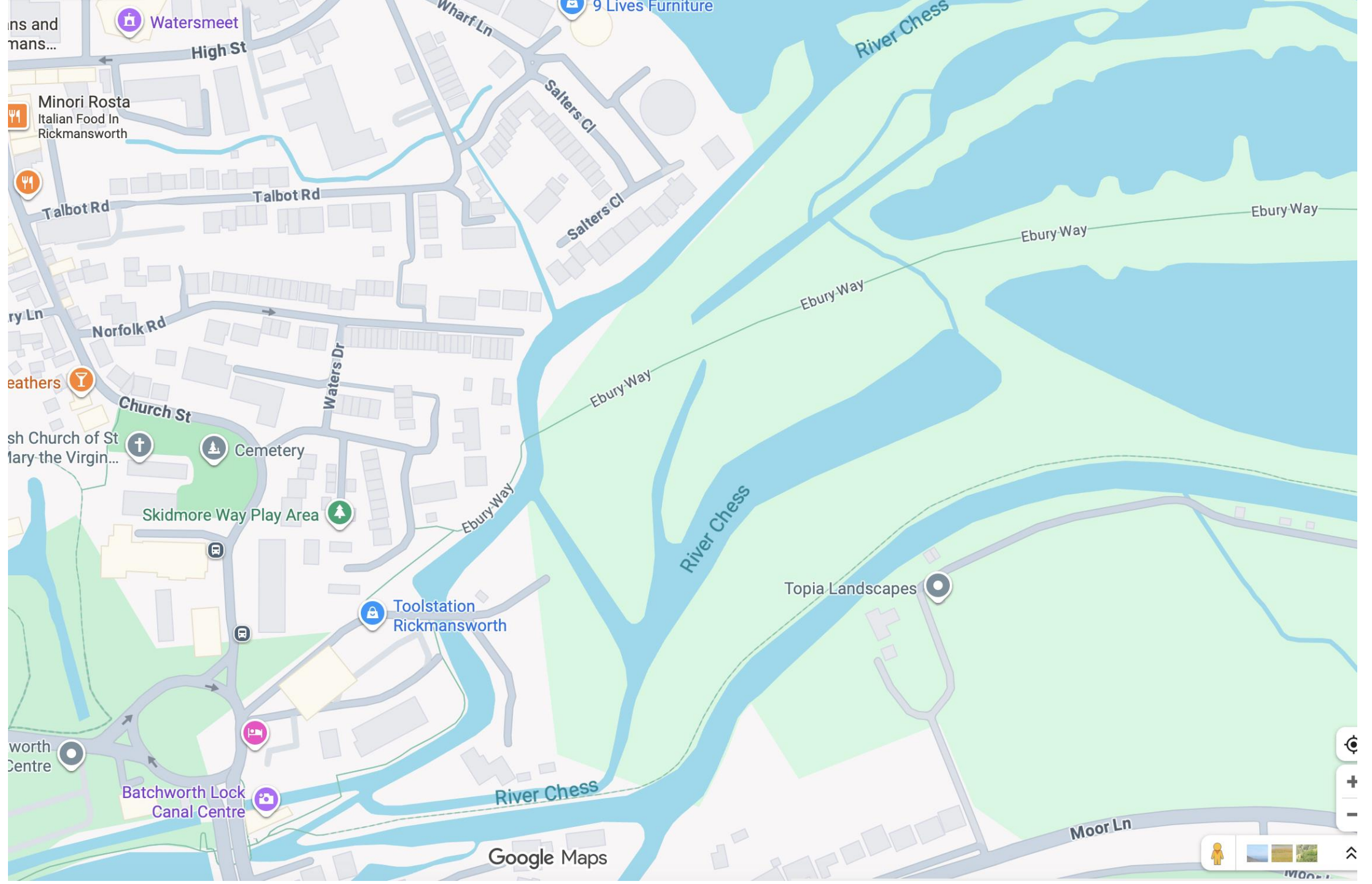
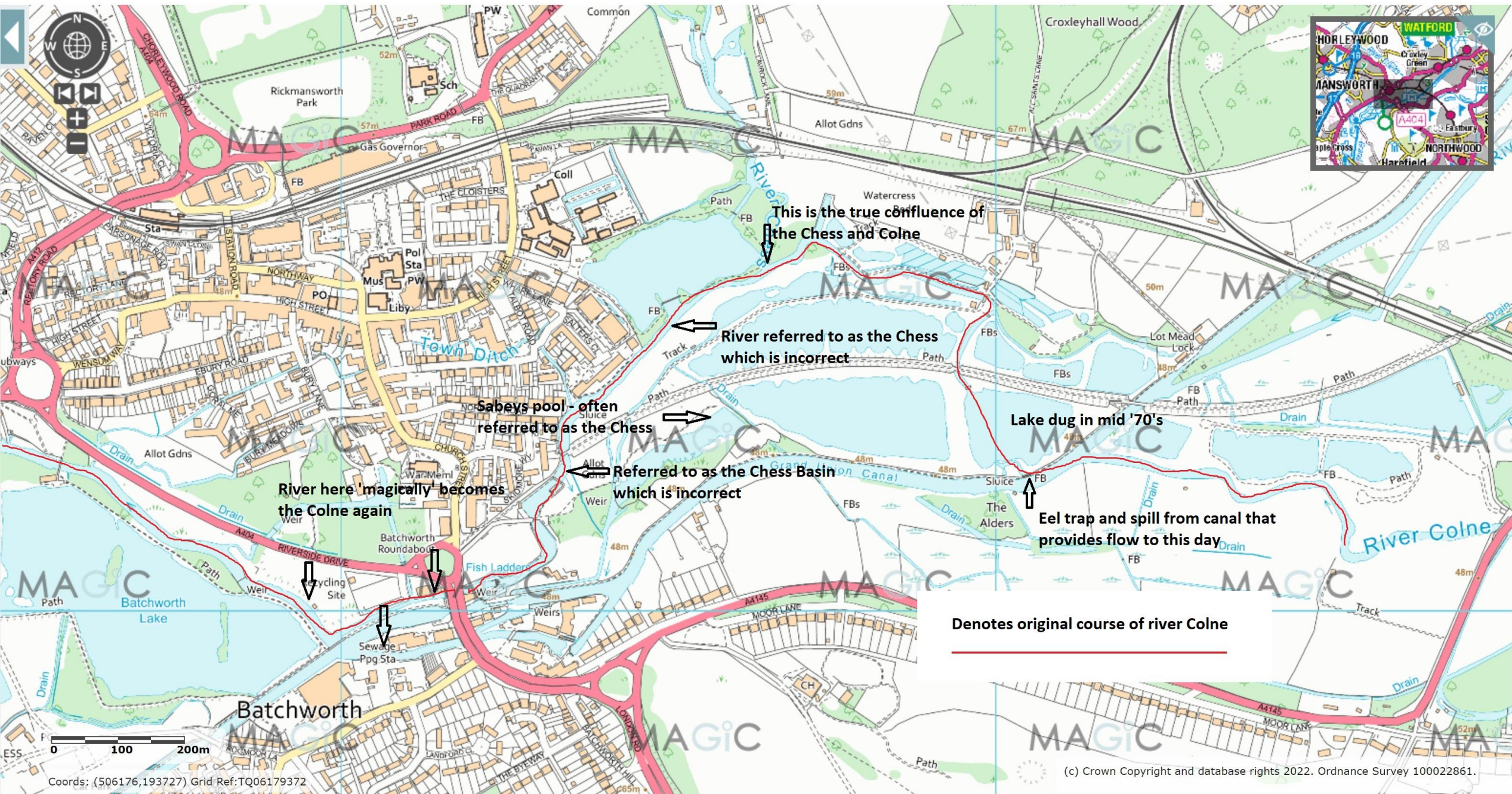














Lydia























ANGLING TRUST



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AnglingTimes

THIS WEEK

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW FROM THE WORLD OF FISHING



"WE MUST SHOW THE POSITIVE SIDE OF WHAT WE DO"

Campaign launched to highlight the beneficial environmental impact of fishing

ANGLING TRUST
LOVE FISHING
LOVE NATURE

Water voles have benefited from the Colne Valley project.



Conservation of birdlife is another key crossover.

A NGLING and wildlife trusts have been at loggerheads in some areas of the country recently, but a new campaign might be about to change that.

In our June 25 issue we reported how fishing had been suspended at numerous wildlife trust sites, including Nottingham's Attenborough Nature Reserve. Nottingham AA controlled the lease there, and its secretary, Dave Tynes, stated that some Trust members view anglers as the enemy of wildlife. But, judging by a successful project in the Colne Valley, things don't have to be that way.

Tony Brooker, Chairman of the Colne Valley Fisheries Committee, has helped on a

series of accredited angling and nature conservation management courses, where participants received expert tuition on fishery management, as well as ecology, and worked with local wildlife trusts. It quickly became apparent that the vast majority of work that enhances angling also benefits the environment, particularly with endangered species such as water voles.

"While there are differences in opinion, anglers and wildlife trusts have lots in common," Tony explained. "We both want the best for the environment and we can both get along - anglers just need to show the positive side of what we do."

Lydia Harris from the Hert's and Midd'x's Wildlife Trust was part of the same project,

and soon realised just how passionate anglers are about their surroundings.

"So many anglers told me they enjoy being outside and being part of nature as much as the fishing experience itself, and I thought, bang! We have something in common," she said.

"It's been a joy to work with the anglers in the Colne Valley - their proactive approach to fishery management and conservation is testament to just how much they care."

Tony got in touch with the Angling Trust to see how he could expand his project, and they came up with the Love Fishing Love Nature (LFLN) drive, under which they're calling for all anglers to get in touch and share their stories of positive

environmental impact.

Liberty Besman, Environmental Projects Officer at the Trust, said: "So much of the conservation work anglers do goes unheralded. Through LFLN, we aim to highlight the many conservation successes achieved by clubs, fisheries and anglers."

● To share your Love Fishing Love Nature story, contact libertybesman@anglingtrust.net

ANGLERS URGED TO 'FISH RESPONSIBLY' IN THE HEAT

WITH soaring summer temperatures and low water levels in many rivers, angling clubs have begun offering guidance to anglers to help safeguard the welfare of delicate species such as barbel and pike during the heatwave.

Nottingham Piscatorial Society (NPS) controls miles of top fishing on the River Trent, and club officials said they were monitoring the situation,

testing water temperatures and dissolved oxygen levels twice a day.

"We've taken guidance, and we know that if water temperatures reach 25°C and dissolved oxygen levels drop below 5mg per litre, fish mortality rates will increase," said club secretary Mark Morris. "Although we don't want to stop people from fishing, if the situation doesn't improve, closing the stretches for a

short period could be the right move."

Meanwhile, Leeds & District ASA president Dave Rushton offered advice to anglers who catch barbel and other species, in the heatwave.

He said: "Try and land fish quickly, and once in the net, leave it in the margins to recover. A large landing net allows the fish to sit comfortably and lower in the water. Also, consider if you really need to put the fish through the stress of taking its photo."

"Ideally, unhook it in the water, and ensure it's upright and facing upstream. Then, wait for it to 'kick' before releasing. If you're not totally sure it's ready, give it more time."



Give fish time to recover in the heat before releasing them.



CHANCE SPOTTING PAYS OFF

'MUTANT' GRASS CARP CAUGHT FROM TINY RIVER!

WE'VE had no shortage of strange species reported this season, but this freakish albino grass carp from a shallow urban river is one of the most unusual-looking of all.

It was caught by Twickenham angler Laurence Davies from a tiny waterway next to his work yard. After clocking off one day, the 22-year-old tree surgeon peered into the water running under a small bridge he used to fish from years

ago, and was shocked by what he saw.

"I spotted this mutant-looking grass carp cruising around and immediately rushed home to get my tackle," he said.

"After hooking on a bit of freelined bread, I flicked it out and watched the fish take the bait without hesitation. It's the second slightly unusual fish I've caught lately, because I also managed a sea trout from the River Thames a few weeks back."

BAIT GIANT STILL GOING GREEN



SwimStim is just one of the products to feature the new packaging.

ONE of the biggest players in the bait industry has taken another significant step along the path to making its products fully environmentally friendly by launching a new range of recyclable packaging.

Dynamite Baits' new 'EcoChoice' labels, which can now be found on some of its most popular offerings including the SwimStim and Silver X bait ranges, not only guarantee that the packaging is recyclable and as minimal as possible, but also that the bait itself has been made with ingredients from responsible sources.

More of its products will soon display the label (below right), and Duncan Lennox, Dynamite's joint managing director, is proud to be driving the firm towards full sustainability.

"It's a pioneering step", he said. "We've had to work hard to make some products meet our standards but will continue to raise the bar."



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Jack's
Swim

Sabey's Pool

– angling site or nature reserve?

It's both!

Communications Officer, Debbie Bigg visited Sabey's Pool in Rickmansworth to find out what a committed group of anglers are doing for conservation.



Walking through the ornate gate flanked by twisted vines and crossing a chalk stream, there's a feeling of entering a secret garden as you come into Sabey's Pool and this special site, alive with birdsong and the sporadic plop of a fish breaking the lake's surface is indeed quite magical – it is an idyllic haven abundant with wildlife that one rarely sees in 2025.

Sabey's Pool was a former marina, used by 'Sabey's' – a company which used their boats to transport rubbish out of London. It's been a fishery for many years since run by West Hampstead Angling and Conservation Society. One of my guides, the Society's Environmental Advisor, Tony Booker told me how he fished there as a boy aged nine, becoming Club Secretary in his teens – it's clear from the early introduction that Tony has poured his heart and soul into protecting this unique place. Put Tony together with my other guide, Fisheries Manager, Anthony Johns, a relatively new kid on the block, and you have a pair of anglers, who have put conservation at the very heart of their operations.

Between 2019 and 2023, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust in collaboration with Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative (now renamed as Colne Valley Fisheries and Conservation) led a project which trained over 40 fisheries managers how to maximise biodiversity alongside providing satisfying angling. With support from the Trust, the knowledge gained enabled those who completed the course to prepare their own habitat management plans, integrating fishing with wider nature conservation. Inspired by hearing about the project on the radio, Anthony bagged himself a place on the project's conservation training course and that began a long-term relationship with the Trust. A well-informed, integrated management plan for the site ensued and what Anthony, Tony and the society's volunteers have achieved since is truly inspirational.



Kingfisher with fish © Tony Booker



Sabey's Pool © Debbie Bigg

Firstly, take the cutting down of trees – often a contentious subject but here there is a real case for the greater good. The additional light afforded by selective removal has increased the site's biodiversity, with extensive nettle patches now giving way to a much more diverse range of vegetation. More light and wind reaches the lake and without fallen leaves rotting in the water, the problem of silt and stagnant water has been eradicated. This has all had a positive effect on the abundance of invertebrates and the many fish species that subsequently feed upon them – resulting in bigger fish and happy anglers!

Habitats for Water Voles have been created by planting Yellow Flag Iris, with seeds collected from existing plants grown in the on-site aquatic allotment. Volunteers at Sabey's Pool lugged 40 tonnes of hardcore to create a more sinuous shoreline of bays and spits for Water Voles to thrive in. Now, neatly submerged in an abundance of vegetation, two distinct populations of these, our most endangered mammals thrive here, thanks to that huge physical effort. The Water Voles can take comfort from the presence of an American Mink monitoring raft too, albeit today it is virtually redundant such is the success of the Trust's partnership with the Waterlife Recovery Trust to eradicate the predatory invasive non-native species (INNS), which has been the biggest threat to their survival over the past 50 years.

The planting of the irises has also helped to reinforce the banks of the lake, which have come under erosion

from the burrowing activities of the American Signal Crayfish, another INNS, for which the fishery has an Environment Agency license to 'trap and despatch'. Tony tells me that within a three-year period, they have trapped over 1.5 Tonnes of the unwanted guests, who are responsible for creating substantial amounts of sediment through their tunnelling.

Birdsong is at an off-the-scale level, our feathered friends seem very happy to be here and it's easy to see why. The showiest member of their order, the Kingfisher makes frequent darting flights across the lake from its breeding ground – another of the Society's conservation projects – a vertical bank created by the anglers with specially made nesting holes, where two or three broods a year have been raised each year since its construction.

"Everything you do for conservation helps your fishing."
– Anthony

And there's more...Virginia Creeper, another INNS, has been controlled to enable more plant life to flourish. Fisherman's huts on the site are made from plastic sheeting manufactured from recovered plastics found in the sea and rivers – they are also flood-proof, which is useful considering flooding events at the lake are becoming more frequent. The aquatic



Tony with American Signal Crayfish

allotment is dominated by sedge and, according to our Conservation Manager, Tim Hill, is "one of the best fen habitats in the county".

A maelstrom of bats appear at dusk, Grass Snakes are regularly seen and Canada Geese goslings have recently hatched...Next-up a pond is planned to provide further habitat for dragonflies and damselflies.... I could go on...there's a lot to say about Sabey's Pool and all of it is positive but overall, this is a fine example of the approach needed to managing land and water in the quest to turn the nature crisis around.



FIND OUT MORE

Online

If you're a custodian of land in Hertfordshire or Middlesex and would like advice on enhancing it for wildlife, the Trust may be able to support you – contact us at info@hnmwt.org







