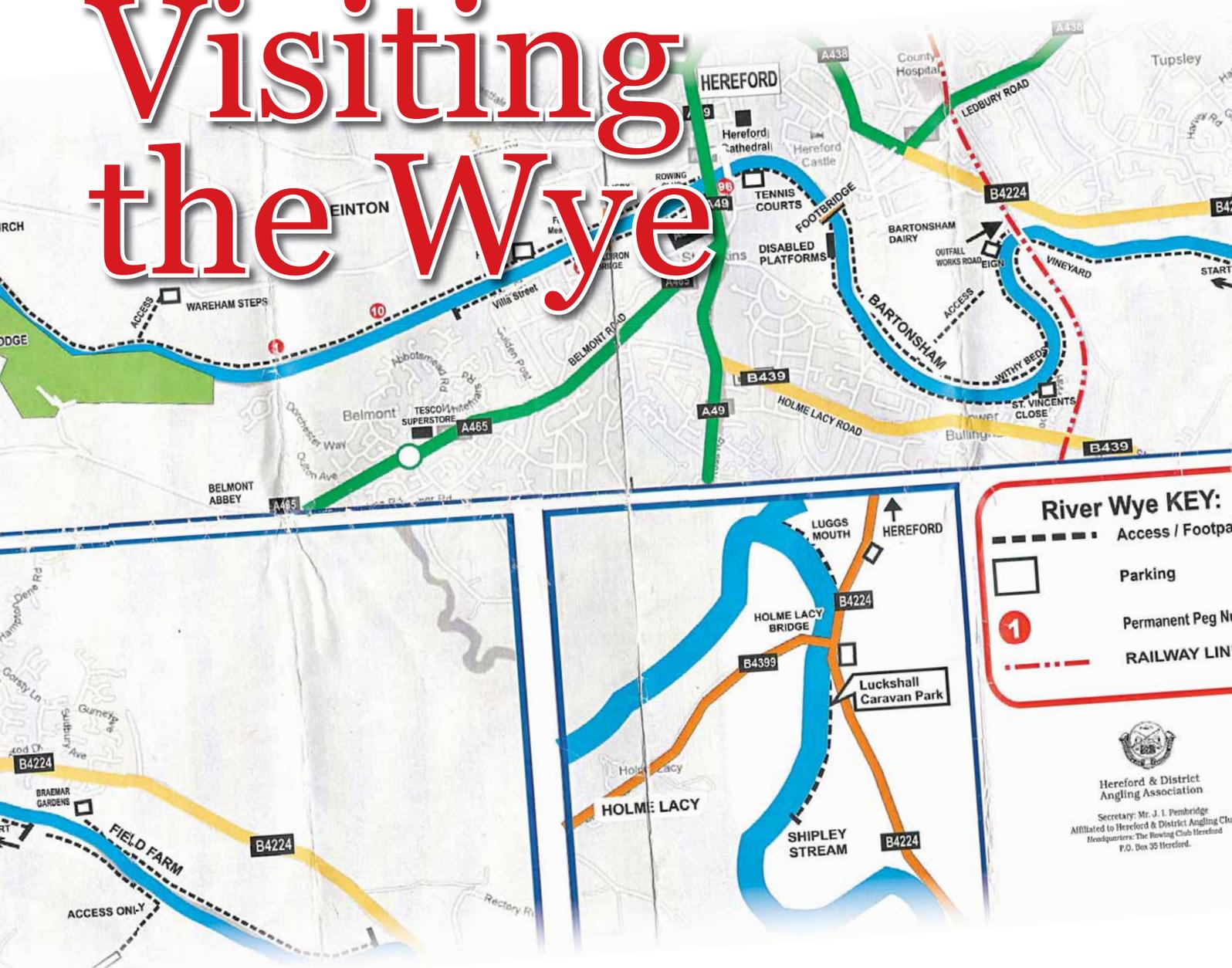


# Visiting the Wye



If you ask “what’s the best barbel river in the Country?”, many anglers would probably settle for the Wye.

**I**t doesn’t produce the big doubles you might catch on the Ouse, Lea, Ivel, or other rivers around the country. Some would say the Trent is a strong contender with both big fish and fish in numbers.

The Wye however has barbel in vast numbers, with fish of a good average size and the surroundings in which you fish can often be quiet magical. The Wye barbel fight harder than any I have encountered anywhere else, they are

pristine muscle bound fish.

But of course, the Wye is a lot more than just a barbel fishery, there are so many chub on some days it’s hard to avoid them. The autumn fishing for quality roach and dace can be spectacular with 40lbs bags and bigger not unusual, particularly when there’s a bit of colour in the river. These vast shoals of silver fish attract predators of course and the pike fishing particularly on the Hereford Town section will not disappoint. The best fish of the 2011/12 season

was a specimen of 39lbs, several big twenties were caught and double figure pike are there in numbers. Likewise the area around Ross produces good pike, a 35lbs fish was recently reported. For anglers who like the challenge of river carp fishing, don’t ignore the Wye, the section below the Old Wye Bridge in Hereford around the area known as the Tennis Courts produced Carp to 40lbs last summer, with a good few fish over 20lbs. During October 2011 a match was won with a

single carp of 35lbs.

The Wye of course was once famous as a game fishery, whilst those days are unlikely to return current trends suggest the river is steadily improving as a salmon fishery, although due to the comparative lack of salmon anglers on the river these days it’s difficult to properly assess the subtle improvements. The signs nonetheless are there to be seen, in the last few weeks of the coarse season kelts (spent fish returning to the sea) were seen all along

the river in good numbers with Pike anglers catching many of them accidentally whilst lure fishing. The numbers of juvenile salmon (Parr) has also shown a marked improvement due to increasing numbers of mature fish making it to the spawning redds and the improvement in water quality. This is due to the Forestry owners in the areas around the headwaters of the river taking steps to reduce the acidity of the streams draining the pine forest plantations, young salmon don't do well in acid water and farmers taking steps to reduce the amount of silt run off into the river. There are brown trout in good numbers and grayling to specimen size. During the late spring a large migration of shad occurs on the Wye, these fish of the herring family take a fly very readily and fight like mini tarpon. So the Wye has something for everyone, but how best to access it?

There are miles and miles of the Wye available to visiting angler on various day tickets. The Wye and Usk foundation has dozens of beats up and down the river. These are all available for coarse or game fishing

angler, but value for money the Hereford and District waters offer the best tickets on some of the most varied fishing you will find in one area.

Day Tickets at £6.00 are available from both Woody's and Sue's angling shops and are great value if you are planning a one off visit, they do have restrictions though. You are only allowed to fish with one rod and must be off the river at sunset. If you plan to visit for a week's fishing or make a number of visits during the season a much better option is to plan ahead and apply for an annual non-resident of Hereford ticket. These are currently £45 a calendar year with application forms available on the H&DAA website just make certain you allow plenty of time for the ticket to be posted back to you before planning to visit. The annual ticket is the better option as it also allows fishing with two rods, night fishing and access to a couple of local ponds if a change from river fishing is wanted.

The annual ticket also allows members to fish the famous Bunch of Carrots water at Hampton Bishop from mid October when the salmon season has finished.

is available in a small public car park near a small church and is accessed off the road from Hereford to Breinton. The Breinton road runs from the new bridge in Hereford parallel to the river with the Asda's Store on the opposite side of the bridge. This road gives various access points to the left hand bank; as you go along it signs for the rowing club and the waterworks museum will be visible.

From the car park at Breinton Springs it's a short walk to the river, downstream from here is a mixture of fast gravel runs, a couple of deep salmon pools and some slower steady glides. All of this water produces good bags of barbel and chub, with excellent dace and grayling fishing if you want to trot the fast glides. Incidentally you are allowed to fish maggot during the whole of the coarse season on H&DAA waters, this is not allowed on many other beats until the game fishing season ends in October.

The next available parking is off the Breinton road in a small lay-by near a very large house called Warham Court this clearly marked on most good maps but if using a SatNav the

deeper gulley except when the river has 3 or more foot of flood water on when the fish can be caught under the rod top close to the bank. The downstream peg on this pool which is below the small bridge and stream is also known for quality roach fishing. Downstream from here for a hundred yards or so is steady water until you get to a small concrete building on the bank here the river picks up pace and becomes a very fast gravel run, an area known for big bags of barbel.

Back onto the Breinton Road and heading downstream the next access point is at the Waterworks Museum follow the track to the river where free parking for several vehicles is available around the pump house. This area is in the middle of the permanently pegged match section. The pump house area is the high 30's with the lower numbers upstream and the higher numbers downstream and on the opposite bank nearer to town. The upstream section is a mixture of steady glides and gravelly runs all of this area will produce fish but is definitely more reliable with some colour in the river. The pegs from the pump house downstream are numbers in the 40's and 50's the area is known as Ferry Meadow. The water here averages around 5 feet at normal levels and is all steady water. This is a good area in high water conditions and particularly reliable during autumn and winter. Staying on the left hand bank you will eventually come to the Rowing Club which marks the end of the section at peg 65. Before reaching the rowing club you come to a footbridge which gives access to the opposite bank with peg 72 just upstream of the bridge and the highest peg 96 downstream almost opposite the Rowing Club. This whole stretch from the footbridge downstream

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are bookable in advance and are limited to small numbers of anglers on any day. The fishing is generally good on all their beats but can be expensive ranging from £20 to more than £50 (on the game beats) per angler per day, which can get expensive if you are up for more than a couple of days.

The tackle shops in both Ross and Hereford have various day ticket options they can offer the visiting

Like a lot of the Wye the Hereford stretches can be a problem for parking, particularly if you don't want to walk far, with a little local knowledge this can be overcome on most of the sections.

The upstream limit of the Hereford fishery is at Breinton Springs the fishing here is on the left hand bank going downstream with the Belmont Golf course on the opposite bank. Free parking

postcode is HR4 7PD.

The lay-by has room for half a dozen cars if parked sensibly. There is a gate and clearly marked footpath to the river which is a short walk. The path brings you onto the river at Belmont Pool (not to be confused with Belmont Pools which is a small Stillwater fishery nearby) there are a number of good barbel swims in this area, generally fish to the middle of the river into the

is surprisingly deep with 10 feet of water in many swims. This area of the river is not particularly prolific for the barbel although the odd ones do get caught the main quarry here is the huge shoals of roach, dace and chub. It fishes here with some colour in the river and with a few foot of flood water in the river the roach in particular can be caught very close to the bank. This area is also the place to find the big pike they are not hard to find in clear water conditions if you start to catch a few silver fish the pike will come and find you. Often the first thing you know about it is something rising from the depths to grab a dace you are playing near the surface.

To access the pegs from 72 to 96 there are two parking options either park in Charles Witts Avenue (HR2 7BB) near the small recreation area which is next the river or park at the very rear of the ASDA car park from where the river is a very short walk. With Asda you must first go to the customer service desk and ask permission or you will almost certainly get a

river deepens a little and is now at the Tennis Courts area, it's from here the carp are generally caught by casting to the far side reed beds. Moving further downstream a little, just above the Victoria Bridge are some good barbel swims and below the bridge the river alternates from fast runs to steadier water the whole area being excellent for barbel. A word of caution here, this stretch is in a public park and does get busy with canoeist, children and swimming dogs during the warmer weather. At the downstream end of the park the flow of the river pushes across to the near side making it possible to fish close in under the rod top, the downside is that the bank is quite steep. There are lots of chub and barbel along this section with some very nice grayling in the winter. The swims here are along a paved public footpath which can be accessed by either parking in the street on Hinton Crescent (HR2 6AN) which is also very near to Sue's Angling Centre or at Acacia Close (HR2 6BP). The fishing on the

immediately adjacent. The flow here is very fast with the deeper water under the rod tip but there are only a few accessible swims due to the steep nature of the bank.

Further downstream away from the houses you come to the pipe bridge from the water treatment plant (this is not a foot bridge) below here the river flows through a series of salmon croys before entering the section known as the black hole which is just above the railway bridge. There is soon to be a new footbridge across the river here which will be accessible from Outfall Works Road where HDAA have parking. All of this area is good barbel fishing but it does vary according to river levels and the time of year. Below the railway bridge is a large pool known as Walters Wall and the Vineyard this is very popular area for barbel with big bags of fish often caught. Below this the whole section is single bank fishing on the right bank with houses opposite, this section is over half a mile long is steady water and has lots of chub and barbel. A particularly good

onto the left hand bank and start back upstream at the Victoria Bridge near the tennis courts.

Having crossed the bridge access to fishing is from the left hand bank going downstream the first couple of hundred yards is a steep bank with the flow and deeper water under the near bank there are a few swims along here and all are worth fishing.

From the end of the steep bank you enter a very large meadow behind Bartonsham Farm Dairy, parking is available at the dairy but you must ask a member of staff where it is ok to park before leaving your car. The dairy is accessed from the B4224 Fownhope road out of Hereford (Post Code HR1 2QW). From the dairy the whole east bank downstream to Outfall Works Road is a flat easy walk but it is a long section. If you want to access the section from the downstream end then park at the car park in Outfall works road (Post Code HR1 1RY). This whole section is good streamy water with the deeper water towards the far side a lot of which is not easily accessible particularly the section downstream from opposite the chip shop peg to the pipe bridge. There are barbel and chub in big numbers all through this section of the river which does lend itself to stick float fishing as a change from ledgering. There are also some excellent roach dace and grayling throughout this area particularly in the autumn and winter months.

The remaining HDAA sections are all on the left hand bank and a little further out of Hereford. Remaining on the B4224 Fownhope Road on the right hand side of the road is Braemar Gardens (Post Code HR1 1SJ ) parking is available in the street here with access a short walk onto the river. Here you will be opposite the downstream

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ticket if you stay more than a couple of hours.

The next section is on the right hand bank and runs downstream from the Old Wye Bridge this can be accessed using the ASDA car park as above or by using the long stay car parks in Wye Bridge Street (HR2 7RA) which are unfortunately not free. Just below the old bridge the river is very wide shallow and weedy local anglers often wade to the middle of the river and trot for the chub and barbel. Below these shallows the

right hand bank finishes at what is known as the chip shop peg. The chip shop being in Acacia Close where parking is available. There is no access to the right hand bank below here as the path is closed due to bank side erosion but the fishing continues a few hundred yards further down at St Vincent's Close (HR2 6EL) which is off the Holme Lacy Road B439 on the left before the railway bridge. There is parking in a HDAA designated car park at which point the river is

area is the swims opposite the old people's home and downstream to the HDAA boundary. The last few swims are particularly good for chub and home to a rare shoal of Wye bream which run up to close to double figures. The bottom end of this section was until recently accessed by parking at Rotherwas Chapel this arrangement has recently ceased and no access is available to HDAA members, requiring a very long walk from St. Vincent's Close.

We now need to move

limit of HDAA on the other bank where a large boat is permanently moored. The section known as Field Farm runs downstream to the top end of the Carrots Fishery most of it is a straight weedy section with the fish in the runs between the ranunculus beds. Towards the end of the section the river turns a sharp left hand bend which is a very good area for barbel as is the straight immediately below it where the fish are in the deeper water from the middle to the tree lined far side. The trees opposite mark the start of the Sink Green Farm fishery. This area is particularly good for barbel throughout the summer/autumn months with some huge numbers of fish until the colder weather pushes them downstream to the deeper water on the Carrots Fishery.

The bottom end of Field Farm can be accessed by parking in a small lay by just along the road from

the Carrots pub there are well signposted steps over the flood bank from where the path turns right along the flood bank behind some houses the path will then turn left over a ditch and runs around the edge of the

towards Fownhope, as the road rises up the hill the Wye will be seen through the trees on the right. This fishing here on the left hand bank is HDAA water from Lugg's Mouth downstream to Holme Lacy bridge. It

Lacy bridge at Luckshall Caravan site the fishing is on the HDAA ticket but the section gets very busy with anglers staying at the site which caters for touring vans, motorhomes, and tents and sells HDAA day tickets

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field to the river at which point the fishing is up or downstream.

Back on the Fownhope Road the Bunch of Carrots Pub will be seen, there is designated parking here but only to be used if actually fishing the Carrots waters (available to HDAA members from mid October) carry on down this road over the Lugg bridge at Mordiford . Carry on through Mordiford

can be very good barbel fishing on this fast gravel stretch particularly early in the season its drawback being that parking is tricky. The best option is to park at the bridge and walk back along the road until you pass a cottage, with gardens that back on the river. Just after this walk through the orchard to the river.

The remaining section is downstream of Holme

. Parking is available for a small fee and the fishing can be very good throughout the stretch if you don't mind it busy. The HDAA water finishes at Shipley Stream opposite the Holme Lacy number 2 beat.

If visiting the area hopefully the above will give a little guidance on what is a lot of water to go at and the tips on where to park will shorten the walk.

# Barbel Fisher BACK ISSUES

I am pleased to advise that copies of Barbel Fisher numbered from 4 to 22, along with 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31 and 32 are available for £4.00 each (inc. P&P).

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