

1. The worst fears of coarse anglers were confirmed last Friday when it was announced that thousands of fish have been killed after kerosene was released into Nelly's Beck at Eaglescliffe, near Stockton. A pollution alert has been issued over the incident and the source of the pollution is thought to have been identified, however the information cannot be released due to an ongoing investigation process. Jonathon Shelley of the E.A. said "Some of the kerosene has already made its way into the River Tees, and around 2,500 fish have been killed in the beck. A visible iridescent sheen and odour is also evident in the Tees, running along the left bank and around 1km downstream of Yarm Bridge, and Yarm AA stretch is probably the most popular NE river coarse fishery due to the close season angling is already closed till June.

2. Following a recent site meeting between the Environment Agency, the Tyne Anglers Alliance and Newcastle Country Parks, it seems that we are getting somewhere with Throckley Reigh. After all there are not a lot of coarse fisheries north of the Tyne, so any attempt to improve those that are there is to be applauded, and hopefully most member clubs that make up the Tyne Anglers Alliance will welcome the decision to spend £4,000 on improving Throckley Reigh by building two new fishing platforms, along with a large disabled friendly peg on the Reigh. Over the past three years the TAA with EA help have increased stocks in the water and perch, chub, roach, crucians and tench are now present in this pleasant sheltered fishery. If it is a success we are hopeful the EA will pay for more pegs next year if the budget allows.

3. If like me, you have found renewing your annual rod licence online to be nothing like as simple as it should be, then there is a great temptation to visit web sites that offer to do this for you. But beware, as other internet sites levy a charge for helping you buy, avoid www.rodlicence.net and www.rod-licence-office.com as you will be charged £47 instead of £27 for a full adult licence. The only price you should pay is for a licence itself, and the cost of a trout and coarse fish licence is £27, or £18 for over 65 and disabled anglers, with a junior concession (aged 12 to 16) costing £5 and under 12 year old free.

4. Hexham AA formed a sub-committee to review Health & Safety and Risk Assessments and one of their sub-committee, Colin has carried out a review for HAA re the insurance policy from Angling Trust that Insure4Sport provide us (I am fairly sure that the TAA will have the same policy). Colin is fine with any TAA clubs using the info from his review that he flagged up after wading through the fine details, but juniors fishing Wydon unaccompanied will no longer be possible. Sad but unfortunately this issue is one we must get right.

5. Anglers are being reminded by the EA that the coarse close season is in operation on our rivers but in week one since the close season began EA fisheries enforcement officers have caught 11 people locally breaking the law and facing fines that could actually be a maximum of £50,000.