

£58,000 invested in fisheries in Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk

This financial year, over 170 projects were funded by the Environment Agency's Fisheries Improvement Programme (FIP).

The FIP funding has been matched by partners including local angling clubs and fisheries, resulting in a total estimated investment of over £3.2 million.

The Environment Agency fisheries teams in Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk were assigned just over £58,000 to deliver local improvements which would benefit wildlife and anglers.

In Essex £10,000 has been allocated to help set up a new fishery for military veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

The Environment Agency, in partnership with iCarp, are renovating Lifted Lakes near Harwich. The venue will be used to teach fishing to those with mental health issues.

One of the fishing platforms created with iCarp at Lifted Lakes near Harwich.

The money is being used to fund treatment rooms, shower facilities and fishing platforms. The venue is also intended to be used as a base for treatment and future mental health research.

Ben Norrington, Fisheries officer in Essex, said:

The project is in early stages but work is well underway with treatment rooms, toilets and lake restoration.

Updates through the year will be documented and we hope to see people enjoying fishing here by autumn.

Our FIP contribution to the iCarp project means we can reach out via angling to better people's mental well-being.

One of the treatment rooms created with the FIP funding at Lifted Lakes in Essex.

In Norfolk Cawston Angling Club received £6,000 to help with their Booton Clay Pit lake. The lake was overrun with water soldier, a rare plant which grows in ponds and lakes. Due the intense spread of the plant fishing becomes impossible until it is removed.

One of the fishing banks stabilised at Booton Clay pit.

The money was also used to stabilise the fishing banks resulting in improved access for anglers.

A fishing bank stabilised at Booton Clay pit.

Another 8 projects also benefited from the FIP funding, they include installation of toilet facilities and improvements to access at Hadleigh and District Angling Society. The building of 2 accessible angling platforms at Scole Nature Trails Trust, and an in-depth research program on the movement of sea trout in Norfolk.

Roger Handford, Environment Agency Senior Fisheries Advisor said:

Anglers often ask us about how we spend the money raised from the sale of fishing licences. The FIP is a prime example of the wide range of activities this income pays for in order to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries.

Heidi Stone, Environment Agency Fisheries Manager said:

All of the projects we fund must demonstrate benefits for anglers. The Fisheries Improvement Programme allows us to identify and invest in work supporting a local, sustainable future for angling.

The programme is a great demonstration of our partnership efforts, many of the projects completed with the support of land owners, local businesses and fisheries. It's a real team effort! The more people who go fishing, the more we can invest.

Looking forward, the Environment Agency wants to hear from more clubs and fisheries about the work and projects they would like to see undertaken.