

Cambridgeshire man fined over £300 after fishing illegally

Paul Smart, of Acred Close, Little Downham, was caught fishing without a licence on 30 August 2021 at Lakeside Caravan Park in Denver, Norfolk.

The case was heard at Folkestone Magistrates Court where Smart pleaded guilty. The court fined the 52-year-old £333 and imposed a £34 victim surcharge and £60 in costs. At a total of £427, this is almost 10 times more than the current price of a £45 [fishing licence](#).*

Fisheries team leader, Ian Hirst, said:

This case shows we pursue offenders through the courts and won't hesitate to take enforcement action where anglers break rules. Anyone found fishing illegally may face prosecution and a fine of up to £2,500.

All anglers need a valid Environment Agency fishing licence. The money raised through the sales of fishing licences is re-invested and enables us to improve all fisheries, including rivers, for anglers.

Our fisheries enforcement officers routinely undertake licence checks, and we urge anyone with information about illegal fishing to contact us on 0800 807060.

Licences now run 365 days from the day of purchase offering 12 full months of fishing.

Any angler aged 13 or over, fishing on a river, canal or still water needs a licence. A 1-day licence costs from just £6, and an annual licence costs from just £30. Concessions are available. Junior licences are free for 13- to 16-year-olds.

For more information or to buy a fishing licence visit the [GOV.UK website](#) or call the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386. Alternatively, you can purchase a licence from your local [Post Office](#) branch.

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by police forces and the [Angling Trust](#). Fisheries enforcement work is intelligence-led, targeting known hot-spots and where illegal fishing is reported.

Anyone with information about illegal fishing activities should report it to our incident hotline number 0800 807060. You can also report it to [Crimestoppers](#) anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Paul Smart pleaded guilty to breaching Section 27(1)(a) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975. He was sentenced at Folkestone Magistrates Court on 25 February.

*£45 is the cost of a 12-month trout and coarse 3-rod fishing licence.