

Press release: Rod licensing blitz identifies 23 offenders

Environment Agency Officers led a series of rod licence enforcement patrols around various sites in Essex and Norfolk, on the back of intelligence received. They were joined by colleagues from Essex and Norfolk Police forces, the Broads Authority and volunteer bailiffs from the Angling Trust.

Over a total of three days (6, 9 and 10 September 2017), eight Essex fisheries were checked, and one river stretch patrolled in Norfolk (the River Bure).

Officers checked dozens of anglers, stressing the importance of buying a rod licence and explaining how the income is reinvested in fisheries. A total of 224 rod licences were checked and 23 offenders identified (a 10.26% evasion rate).

Lesley Robertson, Enforcement Team Leader at the Environment Agency, said:

These checks were badged under the name Operation Springfield II. The Operation focused on rod licence evasion and raising awareness of the need for anglers to purchase and renew their rod licences.

Our Officers patrol the watercourses all year round, including holidays and weekends. Those who avoid buying a rod licence and are found fishing illegally may face prosecution and a hefty fine. Anglers should ensure they are properly licensed before going out to enjoy this worthwhile hobby.

Essex Police Rural and Heritage Crime Officer, PC Andrew Long, said:

Like other forces across the UK, Essex Police have joined with the Environment Agency and Angling Trust to work together and tackle criminality surrounding theft of fish and unlawful fishing.

This has an impact on one of the country's most popular pastimes, with more than 1.5 million people buying rod licences every year.

Taking part in unlawful fishing can have a detrimental effect on the environment so it's important for us to work in partnership with the Environment Agency and ensure everyone has the correct licence to do this.

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Notice: NG13 9NE, Sheardown Farms Limited: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit and decision document

- Operator name: Sheardown Farms Limited
- Installation name: Green Lane Farm Poultry Unit
- Permit number: EPR/ZP3433ZP/V004

Press release: New figures reveal junior fishing licences increase 25%

Sales of junior fishing licences across England and Wales, have received a welcome boost over the summer, according to the latest figures from the Environment Agency. The figures reveal junior fishing licence sales increased by 25.7% from 2016/17. The fishing licence, which is now free for 12 to 16 year olds, shows figures increased from 52,117 at the end of 2016/17 to 65,487 as of 21 August 2017.

The increase in sales is welcomed by the Environment Agency which highlighted the challenge of attracting juniors to the sport given the popularity of game consoles, TV and social media. The rise in sales figures was helped by last year's changes to fishing licences which included making them free to anyone aged 12 to 16*.

Figures from 2009 to 2016 showed a 52.6% decline in junior licence sales reaching just 52,117 in 2016. It's hoped that the recent increase marks the start of an upward trend that will help secure the future of the sport. The free juniors fishing licence is supported by hundreds of partnership fishing events run alongside partners including the Angling Trust, Get Hooked on Fishing and National Fishing Month. The events include free family fun days and taster sessions which help remove barriers for juniors and families enabling them to consider taking up fishing.

Kevin Austin, Head of Fisheries at the Environment Agency, said:

Children today have a wealth of technology at their fingertips, and coupled with the costs parents face, it's easy to see why fewer children are enjoying outdoor activities. We're really pleased to

see that a growing number of young people are taking up the offer of a free junior licence, helping them to enjoy the great outdoors and this great sport.

Today's children are the anglers of tomorrow. It's important we attract them to the sport early and offering a free fishing licence is one way to achieve that. Not only does fishing offer great health and educational benefits, angling generates over £1 billion for the UK economy and creates over 37,000 full time jobs.

The Environment Agency works in partnership with the Angling Trust, Get Hooked on Fishing and National Fishing Month to offer free fishing events and activities. To find an event close to you take a look at www.getfishing.org.uk.

The free junior fishing licence is made possible as a result of income generated from adult fishing licence holders.

ENDS.

Notes to editors

- Figures quoted are for England and Wales
- *Juniors still need to get a licence in order to fish but the licence will be free www.gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence.
- These changes have also been implemented across Wales. Natural Resources Wales is the lead.
- Anglers are legally required to hold a valid fishing licence to fish in rivers, lakes and other inland waters in England (except the River Tweed) and the Border Esk (and its tributaries) in Scotland.