

Fines for Merseyside anglers caught fishing illegally

Joe Edgar of Baker Street, Huyton, Louis Cannon of Knowsley Lane, Liverpool and Anthony Wood of Harsefinch Road, St Helens were each ordered to pay £389 after appearing at North Cheshire Magistrates Court on the 11th May 2022.

The total included a fine of £220 for fishing without a licence, with costs of £135 and a victim surcharge of £34. An annual fishing licence would have cost them just £30 a year.

On 17th October 2021, while on patrol at Carrside Fishery near Ince Blundell, Environment Agency Fisheries Officers discovered Mr Edgar and Mr Cannon fishing illegally. Both failed to produce a rod licence when asked.

Additionally, on the 17th October 2021 an Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officer, who was on routine patrol in Formby, spoke to Anthony Wood, who was also found to be fishing without a licence at a popular fishing spot near Rosemary Wood.

Following the verdict, Damien Linney, Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officer, said:

This case shows how seriously the courts take these offences and we hope the penalty will act as a deterrent to any angler who is thinking of fishing without a licence.

Fishing illegally can incur a fine of up to £2,500 and offenders can also have their fishing equipment seized. We inspect rod licences throughout the North West and work 24 hours a day, seven days a week to check on cases of illegal fishing and other associated fisheries crime.

Money raised from fishing licence sales is used to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries, benefitting anglers. Those cheating the system risk prosecution and a criminal conviction.

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 available). Junior licences are free for 13 – 16-year-olds. Licences are available from www.gov.uk/get-a-fishing-licence or by calling the Environment Agency on 0344 800 5386 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday.

The Environment Agency carries out enforcement work all year round and is supported by partners including the police 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 can contact the Environment Agency incident hotline 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.