

Issue date August 2020

**Southwold & District Freshwater Angling Preservation Society**  
**Fishing Society Waters - May 2019 - Reducing the Hazards**

All members, including guest members and day members should make themselves aware of the risks present in the surroundings they find themselves in and carry out their own risk assessment. All persons must take the appropriate action to ensure their own safety & that of others.



**SAFETY FIRST AT ALL OUR WATERS!**

Hazardous, high voltage overhead power lines run across Buss Creek at two places and to rear of Pond 4. All anglers must exercise extreme caution when fishing these waters!

Restricted areas are fenced off and/or clearly marked by warning signs. Their general position is shown on the related maps featured in this book. If in doubt, ask a bailiff.

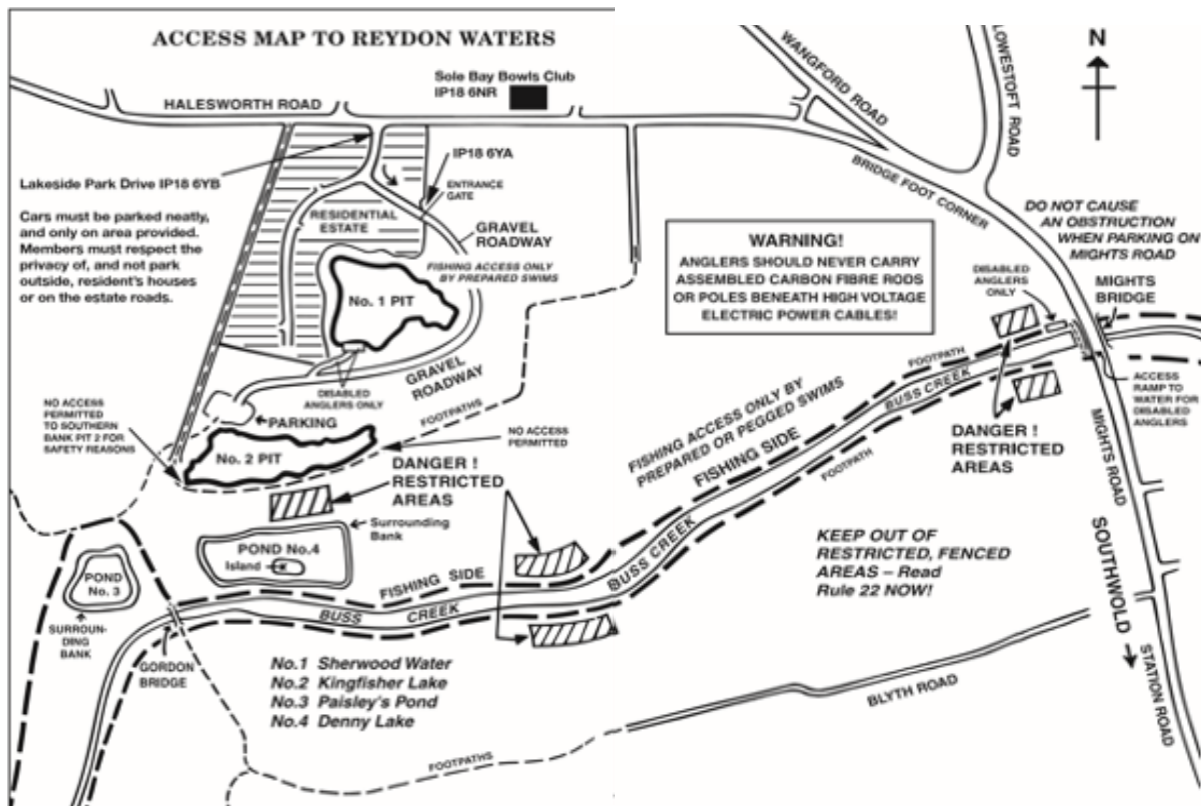
**WARNING – DEATHS HAVE OCCURRED ELSEWHERE,  
DUE TO ANGLERS BEING CARELESS NEAR HIGH VOLTAGE  
POWER LINES – SO PLEASE TAKE CARE!**

**NEVER – fish near, or approach, high voltage cables when you are carrying assembled or extended fishing rods or poles, particularly of carbon fibre, as they are excellent conductors of electricity.**

**IT COULD BE FATAL – SO LOOK OUT – LOOK UP – AND  
APPLY THIS RULE WHEREVER YOU FISH!**



**NOW SEE RESTRICTED AREAS FOR REYDON BELOW**



## Southwold & District Freshwater Angling Preservation Society Fishing the River Waveney - May 2020 - Reducing the Hazards

All members & guest members should make themselves aware of the risks present in the surroundings they find themselves in and carry out their own risk assessment. All persons must take the appropriate action to ensure their own safety & that of others. Most of the risks and hazards identified are similar to those that would apply to any member of the public using a footpath alongside a river. A certain amount of common sense is assumed; however, the following gives more information which must be considered by members & guest members using any stretch of river controlled by the Society.

### **Hazard 1 - Falling in the water (drowning) & Hazard 2 - Flooding of river and marshes -**

Care must be taken when adjacent to the water and particularly when landing fish or wading as falling in the water may result in drowning. This danger increases if there is a rise in water level or the marshes are flooded. The edge of the riverbank may be obscured by the water, as may ditches that cross the marshes. It is recommended that a flotation device or buoyancy aid is worn at all times when on, in or near water. Wearing these devices is at each angler's discretion and a matter considered at their own risk. If wading, a wading staff is advised. Extending landing net handles of appropriate length for the particular swim are recommended. Anglers must consider the increased risk if fishing alone (see hazard 14)

**Hazard 3 - Vegetation overhanging edge of river** - The strip of land immediately adjacent to the river is left in a natural state and often overhangs the water. Whilst vegetation is most abundant during the summer months, this can also occur when the river is high / in flood and vegetation lies on the water. Anglers are advised to assess if this is the case in their chosen swim before starting to fish. The use of a long bank stick may assist with probing through the vegetation to help identify the edge of the bank.

**Hazard 4 - Unstable riverbanks** - Be vigilant to the fact that the riverbank may be under-cut and potentially unstable as a result. Anglers must assess the situation but avoid taking risks by keeping away from the edge of the riverbank. Using extending landing net poles will help in this regard.

**Hazard 5 - Tripping on uneven ground** - Most of the access is along "natural" marshland which is naturally uneven. Any paths or tracks have limited, if any, maintenance so are generally uneven and may become more so through the movement of farm machinery and animals. Appropriate footwear will help reduce the likelihood of trips and slips. Look out for tree roots, brambles and other vegetation that may form a trip hazard.

**Hazard 6 - Slipping on wet, slippery or frozen ground** - Slippery, frozen or wet ground can be hazardous & requires extra care when carrying fishing equipment. Wearing appropriate footwear reduces the likelihood of slipping.

**Hazard 7 - Negotiating gates and bridges** - Gates should generally be left as you find them. They are usually unlocked and, if closed, should be opened whilst you pass through and immediately closed behind you. If locked and you need to climb over, anglers must carry out their own risk assessment to take account of the condition of the gate, its posts and the ground on either side. Gates should normally be climbed at the hinge end. Anglers should check that any bridges are intact and look safe to cross before doing so. Do not use them if they have been damaged and report the matter to the committee.

**Hazard 8 - Moving farm and other vehicles** - Anglers need to be aware that the rivers fall within working farm environments. Stay alert to any moving or working farm machinery & judge what you feel to be a safe distance to keep away from them. Other vehicles may use the farm tracks and common sense should be used to mitigate any risk. Consider wearing hi visibility clothing.

**Hazard 9 - Livestock** - Can be unpredictable and should not be trusted. An animal may appear docile but can change quickly and become aggressive, especially if spooked or they have young. It is worth remembering that if cattle are running towards you, they may not be able to turn or stop, especially if the ground is wet or frozen.

**Hazard 10 - Electrocutation from electric fences** - Electric fences which are used for the control of animals periodically discharge high voltages. Contact with the wires may result in a painful electric shock or worse. Remember fishing rods and wet lines can conduct electricity.

**Hazard 11 - Sunburn** - Anglers can be subjected to extended periods of being in direct sunlight which can be exacerbated by reflection off the water. It is recommended that Anglers

are appropriately dressed and have access to shade to limit the amount of time skin is exposed to the sun. It is advisable for anglers to carry and apply appropriate sun protection products. Anglers must use their own discretion on what precautions are appropriate for themselves.

**Hazard 12 - High levels of pollen** - Anglers must take personal responsibility for their own health and any necessary medication. The rivers lie within open countryside which is particularly susceptible to high levels of pollen from both natural and farmed sources. It is the angler's responsibility to check the expected pollen count and to take any medication that may be required with them. This may include asthma inhalers, antihistamines etc.

**Hazard 13 - Insect, reptile or animal bites / stings** - anglers are not permitted to take dogs on site, however, it is advisable to keep your distance from any you come across. It is the angler's responsibility to take precautions against insect bites / stings, especially if allergic to them. Anglers must assess if it is appropriate to carry Insect repellents and antihistamine medication and when it should be used. In the unlikely event of a snake bite, it is advisable to seek medical attention as soon as possible. A mobile phone will help to summon help if needed but be aware phone reception may be poor.

**Hazard 14 - Fishing alone in remote areas** - Lone fishing exacerbates most of the hazards identified. Carrying a mobile phone can help but be aware phone reception may be poor. If you are going to fish alone it is wise to tell someone where you are going fishing and what time you will return. You will need to factor in the fact you are alone when considering where to fish and actions you may wish to take.

**Hazard 15** - Juniors (under the age of 16 on the 16th June) are not permitted to fish Society river venues unless accompanied by a member who is an intermediate, senior or senior citizen and there is close supervision.

**Hazard 16 - Casting** - Always show consideration to other river users on both banks. Be aware should a break off occur during a cast, the weights can fly a long way at considerable speed. (see also Hazard 17)

**Hazard 17 - Eye injury from hooks** - Casting / retrieving fishing line poses a danger to the eyes. Care must be taken so as not to put yourself or other people at risk from being struck by hooks or weights. Retrieving gear when it gets caught up in weed, vegetation or other objects can result in dangerous items being catapulted at great speed when it comes free. Anglers are responsible for assessing any risk and adopting a safe method of retrieval.

**Hazard 18 - Injury from using knives / food / bait tins** - Use of knives or opening metal cans can result in anything from a minor cut to a life-threatening injury so be extra cautious. It is recommended that anglers carry a basic first aid kit and transfer bait, at home, from tins to plastic bait containers.

**Hazard 19 - Cuts from rusty metal (tetanus)** - Cuts or other penetrative injuries can lead to infection, especially from tetanus or Weil's disease. Cover any cuts, sores or scratches with waterproof plasters and disinfect any wounds that occur at the waterside. Wash hands in clean

tap water or sterilising solution or wipe. Anglers should consider carrying a basic first aid kit. Consider if any wound should be examined by a medical professional. Immunisation against Tetanus is recommended. If you get flu like symptoms you should seek medical advice and flag the possibility of Weil's disease.

**Hazard 20 - Weils disease** – (Leptospirosis) Transmitted from rats' urine in water or on contaminated objects such as line or other tackle, via cuts, sores or scratches. Symptoms include chills, nausea & vomiting, sudden headaches, loss of appetite and muscle pain. Precautions as hazard 19. If you have symptoms, seek urgent medical attention.

**Hazard 21 - Eating** - Wash your hands in clean tap water or some form of sterilising solution / wipe. Do not put your hands in your mouth after immersing in river water. Cover food carefully before eating. Failure to take such precautions may result in contamination of your food from several sources such as from your bait, Weil's disease or contaminated water.

**Hazard 22 – Lyme's disease** – (Lyme borreliosis) is transmitted by tick bites. Keep clothing (especially trouser and sleeve bottoms) tight to skin to prevent access. Ticks can be safely removed with specialist forceps, but care must be taken to ensure the mouthparts of the tick are removed and the tick is not squashed during the process. If uncertain how to do this, then contact a **medical** professional. If you develop a reddening patch where a tick has been then you should contact a health professional urgently.

**Hazard 23 - Boats and water-borne equipment** - The sections of river the Society has are regarded as above the limit of navigation. However, this does not prevent canoes or other small craft using the stretches. The E.A may also be using boats / equipment. Do not board any boats / floating equipment while using our stretches of river. Be aware that other users are mostly entitled to be there, and anglers need to co-exist with them. Always remain courteous and alert to boat traffic so that you can safely move your equipment out of the way. Avoid confrontation. Report any incidents to the committee and / or the E.A and, in extreme cases, the police.

**Hazard 24 - Other users of the river** - There are no public footpaths along our stretches of river. If you observe poaching, report the matter to the committee and, if possible, the bailiff. Remain courteous and avoid confrontation. If necessary, move away to a safe area. Consider if the police should be informed.

**Hazard 25 - Poisonous plants** – Water Hemlock can be common along a riverbank and other wet places. Take care when handling fishing line, lures etc that any plant residue is not transferred to the mouth. Hands should always be properly cleaned before eating. If you feel unwell after a fishing trip, contact a health professional urgently and explain the possibility of hemlock poisoning (remote though it is).

**Hazard 26 - Trees** Fishing (and walking) under trees can be unsafe in windy conditions. Beware of falling branches and consider if you should take another route or use a different swim.

**Hazard 27 - Lightning** - Fishing rods can be very good lightning conductors. In case of lightning it is recommended that you lay your rod flat on the ground and take shelter but not under a tree. A car is a good place. Remember walking with your rods can be equally dangerous.

**Hazard 28 - Weather conditions** -The weather can change quickly. Be constantly aware of changing conditions including rising water levels. Plan your day to avoid getting dehydrated, too hot or too cold and take appropriate clothing, footwear, refreshments and medication.

**Hazard 29 - Low light levels** – No night fishing is allowed on Society waters. Access to the site is only available between one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset, you must be off the site by this time. Whilst this reduces the risk, extra care must be taken whilst fishing or accessing or leaving the site in low light conditions. Anglers should consider using a torch if the light drops away unexpectedly (possibly due to adverse weather). Be aware that farm vehicles may still be moving or operating on site and if so, it is your responsibility to assess the risk, make yourself as visible as possible and assess how you can keep your distance from them.

**Hazard 30 - Pandemics** Anglers must follow any Government / Society advice / rules in relation to any pandemic, particularly regarding social distancing. The Society may put additional precautions in place which must be adhered to, eg closing whole or parts of controlled stretches of river. It is recommended that anglers use appropriate disinfectant wipes or sprays / gels when using common touch points such as gate latches / locks. If requested to show membership details, they should be held for inspection at arm's length.