

### 3. Reservoir fishing: a)

**Phone:** make sure you have a fully charged phone with the emergency number of the “ranger” stored. **Rod-** 10ft #7 is popular but a #6 would do. I will usually take a spare rod in its tube as I have broken a rod before and if you don't have replacement, it's a bummer!

**Reel:** As it's not unusual to be changing lines during the day, a cassette reel is favoured by many boat anglers.

**Net:** Long handled one is good but an experienced partner will have one so it's probably easier to share.

**Lines:** #7 WF Floater, Intermediate and Di3 are the most popular lines and a cassette reel makes any changeovers much easier. If it's very hot and sunny or very cold, some even go to a Di7 to get down to the fish but hopefully at the time of year we fish it, the fish should be up in the water.

**Leader:** 8- 10 lb Fluoro is standard for reservoir fishing, as takes can be fierce. About a 15ft leader should be manageable. It's a good idea to tie these on to your lines before the day, as it's easier than trying to set up on the boat itself. That's particularly true if you are going to fish with a dropper or droppers. I set up several 2 dropper rigs beforehand on foam reels, so that if you get a tangle (more like *when* than *if* with me,) you can scrap the rig and tie on a new one. This is another reason for strong leaders as it's not unusual to have a double hook up on a dropper rig. **However, it may be best to start with just one fly and work up through 2 and 3 fly casts as you become more confident.**

**Seat:** If you can't borrow a proper boat seat (new ones are expensive items) then bring a waterproof cushion to save your backside. **Alan Middleton kindly bequeathed his comfy boat seat to the club ,just contact AW to borrow it.**

**Drogue:** Starting out, a more experienced boat partner will have one of these. It's a sort of underwater parachute designed to slow the drift of your boat.

**Clothing:** Although we fish in May, it can still be cold out on open water so layer -up, you can always take it off and waterproofs should be taken as it is miserable being wet out there. Equally it could be sunny so take some sun screen. **Life belts are provided by Bewl and MUST be worn.**

**Bag or box:** A good size bag to take all your gear and **LUNCH**. Some use the old Shakespeare coarse boxes as they make a good platform for changing flies etc and help to keep things neat and tidy, which is important with restricted space. I have re-purposed a Stanley tool box which has the added advantage of wheels to trundle it down to the boat dock!

**Flies:** If you are not used to fishing with droppers, start off fishing **with a single fly**, until you have gained confidence with fishing on the drift and then gradually up the number of flies. Even experienced anglers can get in a tangle and that's far easier with multiple flies. Fly choice depends on how “traditional” you are. Modern reservoir anglers use a big variety of flies but Blobs, Fabs and Boobies, whilst not everyone's cup of tea, are useful weapons & Cats Whiskers can also be deadly on newly stocked fish. Humungous, Damsels, Apps Worms , Buzzers, Diawl Bachs & Crunchers can also be takers. In the dry range Big Reds , Hoppers, Stimulators, Daddies, Shipmans and Emergers can take on the right day.

A pair of flat pliers are useful to flatten out barbs if you don't have barbless flies and go on to C & R after your bag is caught- we live in hope!

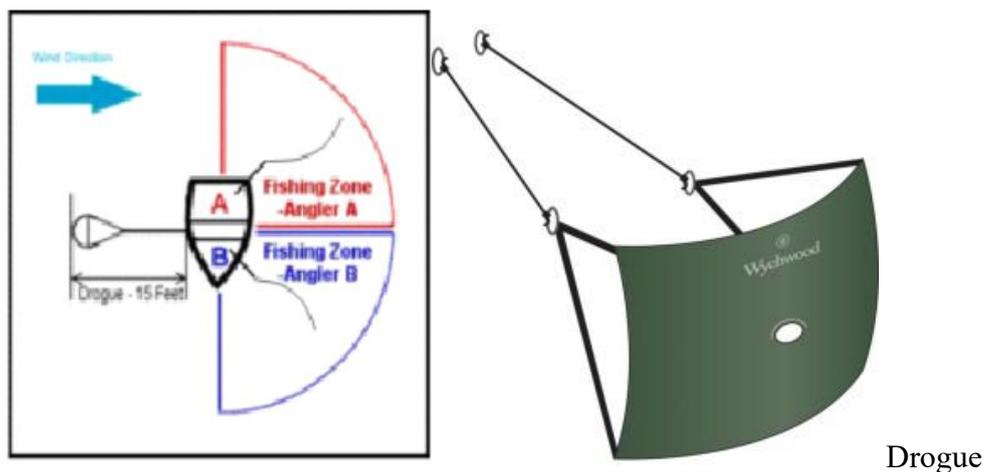
A bass bag with a strong handle- tales can be told of lost fish when bags are hooked onto gunwhales.

**YOUR FISHING LICENCE- THE EA HAVE BEEN CHECKING AT BEWL RECENTLY.**

**Reservoir fishing: b) Boat Fishing at Bewl by AW – leaning heavily on the knowledge and experience of Steve Mustchin and John Plowman.**

FIRST, I MUST SAY THIS WILL ALL SEEM VERY COMPLICATED WHEN SET OUT IN WORDS BUT WILL BECOME MUCH CLEARER/SIMPLER WHEN YOUR'E ACTUALLY OUT ON THE BOAT **SO DON'T BE PUT OFF**

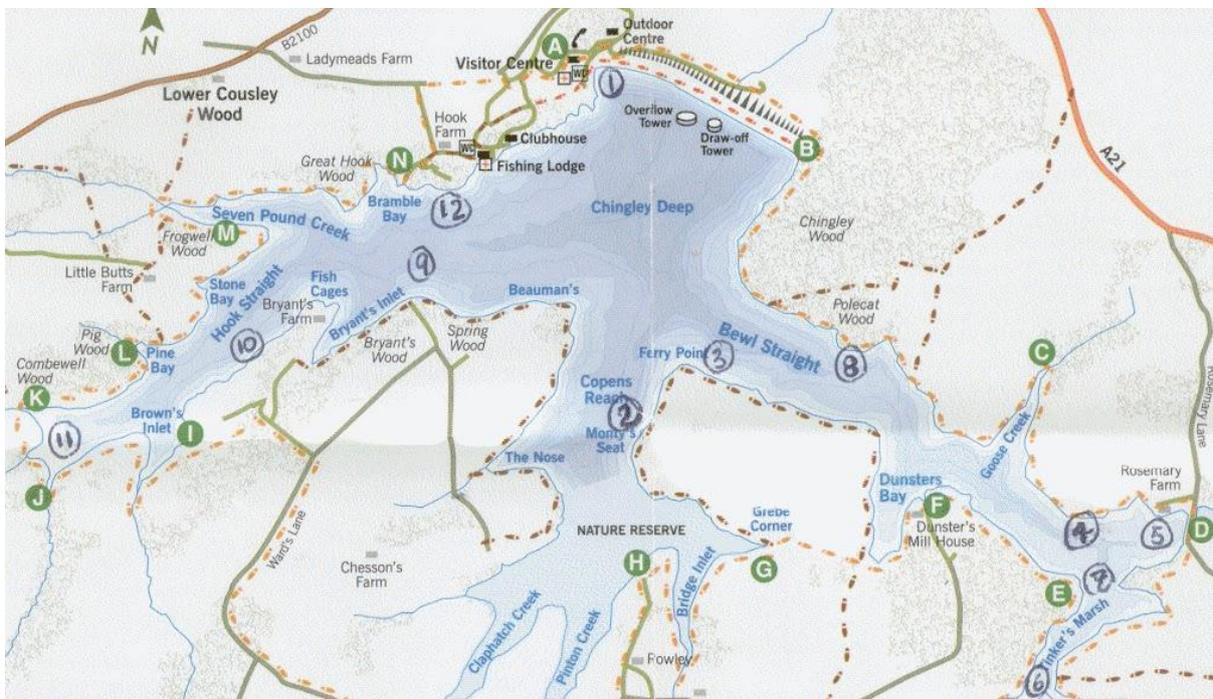
- So now you have all the gear how do you fish? The most enjoyable method for many is “**loch style drifting**”. In this you drift with the boat sideways on to the wind, fishing out of the side of the boat and you are therefore fishing with the wind at your back. So, this has the advantage of making casting easier and you are always moving over new water and hopefully new fish. Depending on the strength of the wind you may need to deploy a **drogue** to slow your progress down.



- You start your drift at the top of the wind. Motor to this point, having made sure you do not interfere with any other boat's line of drift- **this is a cardinal sin in boat etiquette**- and slowing down and cutting your motor as you near your start point.
- Having cast out of the front, you retrieve your line keeping pace with the movement of the boat. How fast depends on whether you are trying to keep your flies static or “pulling” them. If you do not keep pace, then your line will start to go under the boat and you'll be in a right pickle! Been there done that!
- As you near the end of your retrieve “**hang**” your fly or flies for several seconds, gradually lifting the line. This is very often the time that a following fish will take, as its prey appears to be getting away.
- **If you hook into a fish, hang on! Even a 2lb reservoir fish fights like double that and it's a great feeling scrapping, as they go up, sideways, down and under the boat. It knocks normal stillwater fishing into a cocked hat!**

- As you near the end of your drift you will need to reel in and if you are on drogue duty, pull this in before the boat starts up and moves off. This avoids the drogue ropes tangling with the propellor!
- If you are going to repeat the same drift line, make sure you give the line a wide berth as you motor back to the top of the wind, so you don't scare all the fish. Keeping sight of "markers" like buoys or landmarks on shore, helps you to repeat a drift.
- So **where** in the wide expanse of Bewl do you fish? This is the \$64 million dollar question. First off talk to the Bewl staff who may know what's been happening lately. Even better talk to regular Bewl fishers at the boat dock. Unless it's a serious comp, they will, more often than not, share the tactics and flies that have been working. Sometimes it's obvious where the fish are, as they are rising or top and tailing. If they are deeper, it's trickier but that's why drifting helps to **search** the water & where you may need to change lines. Quite often with rainbows if you find one fish there will be others close by, particularly if they are recently stocked. (\*More on actual Bewl locations below)
- As **depth** is also important it can be useful for 2 anglers in a boat to start off with different density lines. For example, my usual partner Steve often likes to start with a floater, whilst I often try pulling on a fast intermediate, particularly if you cannot see topping fish. Then if one method works better, one or other may change lines and or flies.

### Map of Bewl



At Bewl so much depends on **wind direction** and when the **last stocking** was. Look at the weather a few days in advance of your trip, to see what has been happening to the wind. Bewl do try to trickle stock around the reservoir in high season to give a wider spread of fish but the 3 main stocking points by lorry are from the **Boat Dock, the Dam and Rosemarys**

**Lane.** So the obvious destination for many newly stocked fish is the main bowl. Stockies also tend to like “edges”. So, a starting point with a SW wind (the prevailing wind in the UK) is often a drift parallel to **Chingley Wood** towards the NE corner of the dam. **This is why loch style anglers get so P\*\*\*\*\* off with those who anchor their boats in this area as it restricts their drifts.** Similarly, a drift alongside the clubhouse shoreline can be productive. Drifts along or across Bewl or Hook Straight may be worthwhile and I’ve had success coming out of **Copens Reach** towards **Chingley Point. Rosemarys** is the furthest point from the dock so sometimes it can be quieter in terms of angler pressure. Drifts are shorter here and many may anchor up. On it’s day this area can be prolific but give yourself time to get back to the dock if you’re in a comp!

When the fish have been in the water for longer, they may move to open water and spread out across the reservoir. As you motor out from the dock, keep an eye open for fish movement and react accordingly. The other obvious thing is to look at the boats around you to see if rods are bending! Any method anglers may also be helpful (yes, I did say that!) as, if they are using bait, they may have worked out the depth the fish are operating at.

**Lastly, I believe it has to be said that after successful day’s boat fishing, you may never look at small water fishing in quite the same way again.**

### **Reservoir fishing: c) Bewl bank fishing. By John Plowman.**

**(I have added references from the map above in letter or number form, in John’s piece)**

Now that Arlington has closed, the opportunities for reservoir fishing are limited.

Several years ago, I was a regular bank angler at Bewl. The reservoir is so large that walking around it is not an option, so you must choose your location wisely at the start of your day. With this in mind the following are my recommendations depending on wind directions.

Wind **NW TO NE.** Seven Pound Creek. **(M)**

Wind **N to E.** Rosemary Lane to Goose Creek and beyond**(D to C)** or Rosemary Lane to Tinkers Marsh. **(D to E)** On the dam **(A to B)** when fishing is allowed

Wind **SE to S.** Ferry point to Nature Reserve \*. **(3 to 2)** South bank at Rosemary Lane. **(D)**

**\*You are not allowed to fish inside the nature reserve boundary, shown by a set of buoys**

Wind **SW to W.** Dunsters Bay to Ferry point. **(F to 3)**

All of the above are easily accessible from anglers’ parking places. The rest of Bewl’s banks require more of a walk to reach them.

These local names will probably mean nothing to you so have a map of Bewl in front of you and I will describe them.

Using Google maps locate Bewl with the A21 road running diagonally across the top right corner.

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@51.0637623,0.3803411,13.5z>

You will see that the reservoir has a dam top right and three arms of water. These are: **Hook Straight** on the left; the nature reserve (**Copens Reach**) in the centre; and **Bewl Straight** on the right.

At the extreme right you will see a minor road crossing a causeway over the reservoir. This is **Rosemary Lane (D)**. Parking is available on the causeway. Moving westwards along the north bank from Rosemary Lane there is a large inlet with a stream entering. This is **Goose Creek(C)**. There is deep water around the southern end of Goose Creek. Much of the reservoir bank west of Goose Creek is inaccessible due to bankside trees.

Moving westwards on the south bank from Rosemary Lane it's fishable for a short distance to the entrance to **Tinker's Marsh (6)**. This corner can be fished but further in is not fishable other than by boat.

Driving along Rosemary Lane southwards you meet the **B2087**. Turn right and then take the next right turn along **Tinkers Lane** to "**Three Leg Cross**". Here turn right again back towards the reservoir along **Huntley Mill Rd**. Keep on this road until it ends. On your right you will be at an anglers car park called "**Dunsters**" (if you enlarge the Google map all these details will be visible).

You are now at **Dunsters Bay**. Walk around the bay by keeping to the path. At low water it is tempting to wade across the end of the bay. **DO NOT !! IT IS DANGEROUS.**

When you reach the west side of Dunsters you now have some of the best bank fishing on Bewl, when the wind is cooperating. You can walk and fish all the way to Ferry point and then into the nature reserve. **There is a line of buoys that mark the no fishing area of the reserve.**

Finally, **Seven Pound Creek (M)**. Park in the main anglers' car park and walk westwards along the bank. The first fishable bank you come to is Seven Pound Creek. It shows on the map as a finger of water pointing to the west. All the north side is good fishing and you can walk around to the point on the south side and fish on along the north bank of **Hook Straight.(10)** The south bank of the creek is not fishable.

Tickets can be purchased at the fishing lodge or on line if you do not wish to visit the lodge before fishing. [Fishing at Bewl](#)

When you enter the main gate, you will be asked to pay an entrance fee. Simply tell the gatekeeper that you are fishing. You will not be charged.

When you are parking at Dunsters or Rosemary Lane, please remember that your car will be left for a long time in a secluded place, perhaps until after dark, so make sure it is secure and no valuables are visible.

Tight lines and please contact me if you need any more help or even company at the bankside.

John Plowman [johnfplowman@gmail.com](mailto:johnfplowman@gmail.com)

