



Grayling

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Area 9 Day

River Wharfe at Ilkley – 14th November

Peter Chambers Area 9 Secretary

Courtesy of Ilkley Angling Association and their Secretary, Dave Martin, twelve Society Members had a very enjoyable day fishing a double bank, 1.5 mile stretch of the Wharfe at Ilkley. Those of you who know the Wharfe will appreciate that it is prone to rise very quickly if there is rain up the Dales. Unfortunately, this happened on the scheduled date of 31st October, and we had to revert to the fall-back date of 14th November. Many eyes were nervously watching the EA River Levels chart after a downpour on the prior Thursday when the river started rising. Fortunately, the Wharfe can fall as quickly as it rises and we were met with almost perfect conditions on Sunday morning, with the river falling and improving as the day wore on.

Over tea and bacon sandwiches Dave Martin gave a very comprehensive brief to the assembled anglers and it was then 'off to the river' situated literally 30m from the **Riverside Hotel**, where we had congregated.

The River Wharfe at Ilkley is a classic Yorkshire freestone river, offering a mixture of pools, glides and riffles. Access is excellent, with paths running along both banks, plenty of parking, 3 bridges, and a set of steppingstones at the downstream limit. Wading is relatively easy over fine gravel and sand, becoming more challenging in places where the bed consists of cobbles and larger boulders. As their very informative website shows (<https://ilkleyanglingassociation.co.uk/>) the beats run literally through the centre of Ilkley town and so anglers must expect to share the bank side paths with walkers and families using the park, but none of this proved a problem.

The weather was perfect for fishing, dry with broken cloud and mild temperatures, the water was running clear and falling, it was only the fish that refused to come out to play! However all but two anglers caught, with the nymphers having the better of those trotting or sticking to the dry fly – (although plenty were rising) – but everyone voted it a very enjoyable day, on an excellent stretch of water.

