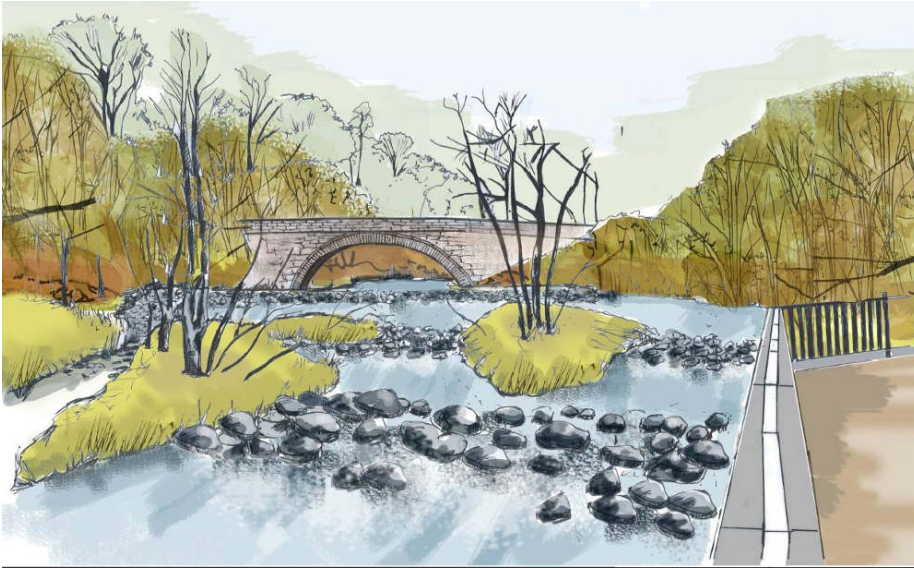


Fishing – Williams beats weather to land top prize



An artist's impression of the Howden Weir project at Livingston

Steve Williams travelled a long distance from Jarrow near Sunderland to win the Bass Rock sea angling challenge. He edged Dunbar angler Chris Empson with Andy Brown of Musselburgh third.

Shaun Gardener from North Berwick landed the heaviest flatfish and below the cliffs at Dunbar at The Rocks Hotel proved to be the best location for cod on the day.

The top three bags and the heaviest fish were all landed there and the successful baits included lugworm, crab and shellfish cocktails on 4/0 and 2/0 pennel on a bottom rig system.

The wild weather, with seven-foot seas, a 30mph east wind and rain storms hampered the anglers in the five-hour competition.

And the event allowed anglers to pick their spot between Seton Sands and south of Berwick.

Craig Ogilvie, one of the organisers, said the club's next

open tournament will be in May on Belhaven Beach and this is especially for youngsters.

Meanwhile, bailiffs on the North and South Esk have carried out a joint patrol with local community police officers to share knowledge about the river and fishery rules.

However, the Forth District Salmon Fishery Board (FDSFB) said that bailiffs could not do their work without the support of local eyes and ears.

Appealing to the public for help, the board said: "If you spot or hear of illegal fishery activity within the Forth make sure you report it to the head bailiff on 07887 835549 or call the police on 101.

"If you are out on the River Tyne or Esk and spot illegal activity you can also contact the bailiffs on 07736 466725 or for the river Avon 07736466723."

For clarification, the North Esk rises in the Pentland Hills near Carlops and flows past Penicuik and Auchendinny and continues through Roslin Glen and the Penicuik–Dalkeith Walkway, past Polton, Lasswade and Melville Castle.

The South Esk starts in the Moorfoot Hills and flows through Gladhouse and Rosebery reservoirs past Temple then to Newtongrange before running through Dalkeith. The rivers converge near Dalkeith Palace.

In West Lothian, work on the Howden Bridge weir on The Almond will help migratory fish like salmon, sea trout, brown trout, lamprey and eel over this redundant structure.

The project is part of RiverLife: Almond & Avon, a partnership between the Forth Rivers Trust (FRT), West Lothian Council and The City of Edinburgh Council funded by Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), The Scottish Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund Scotland.

Finally, Water of Leith bosses have urged anglers to send in their catch returns as soon as possible so they can gauge what is happening in the river.

One catch return for River Esk submitted to Musselburgh and District Angling Club brought a smile on social media. It said: "48 average sized leafs, three branches and a crisp packet. I thought the crisp packet was a fish when I saw the flash, but no. My return is a blank, but I'll be back with a bang next year."

And West Lothian Angling Association host their monthly fly tying session in the Mid Calder Community Centre on Monday at 7.30pm. It's free to attend and non-members are welcome.

Equipment and materials are provided.