

THE AIRMAN

Originally dug as a clay pit, The Airman was purchased by SDAA in 1965 and has slowly matured into an excellent stillwater venue catering for both specimen and pleasure anglers. The lake is around 4 acres in size and with depths to 30 feet in places (*see below for depth map*). The fish respond to a range of fishing styles and are often found patrolling the shallower reed lined margins. The reed beds are also a haven for a wide range of birds and insects with the lake designated as part of a County Wildlife Site.

The Airman is licensed to hold Wels catfish with the original stocks being direct descendants of the catfish originally introduced into the UK in 1880 by the Duke of Bedford. The catfish have thrived and specimens well over 60lb are now present, making it a very special club water. There is a good head of stunning carp to 30lb and the club has been regularly stocking the lake with small numbers of quality carp to ensure the long term future of the carp fishing (*see below for details*). When the catfish are dormant during the winter months the pike maintain the predator anglers' interest with fish over 20lb regularly reported.

Pleasure anglers can also enjoy some excellent sport from the smaller species. Track down the roach shoals and bags well over 20lb are always on the cards, with nets often including several fish over 1lb, with a 2lb roach a real possibility. Specimen roach to over 3lb have been caught in the past with the biggest roach often accidental captures by carp anglers. The lake holds a good head of bream from 'skimmers' through to specimens into double figures. There has been a notable increase in the numbers and size of tench caught in recent seasons, with anglers now able to catch several fish in a session with tench to double figures. Perch have always been present in good numbers but larger specimens over 3lb have started to show in recent years.

The lake has secure gated access with the ability to park directly behind the four pegs in the large car park. There are 20 comfortable pegs in total, with the majority being large enough to easily accommodate a bivvie. Despite rumours to the contrary, the lake is rarely overcrowded and good pegs are usually available all year round.

Significant investment has been made to improve access in recent years. The entrance was renewed in 2010, the footpath around the lake reconstructed in 2013 & 2014 and the car park renewed in 2017. The swims were all rebuilt during 2018 & 2019 using 3m wide oak boards within a scaffold pole frame. All steps down to the swims have been replaced with ramps and fresh wood chippings are regularly applied to the swims.



John Dickman 60lb 13oz catfish



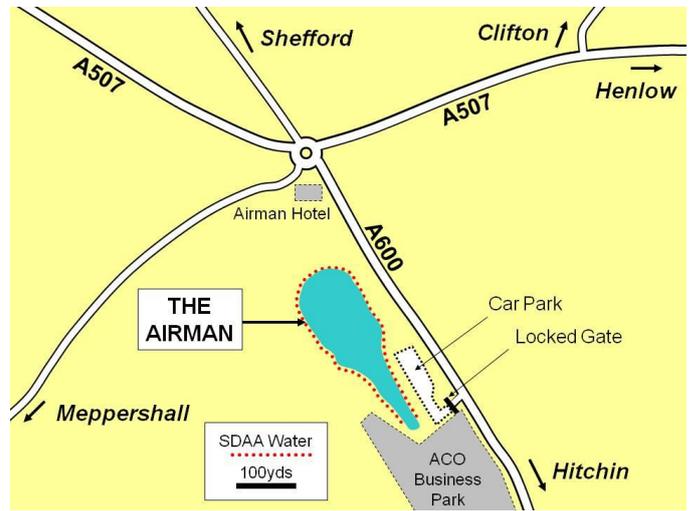
Gareth Teakle 29lb 1oz mirror



Allana Fehr 2lb roach



The Airman in Spring



Location

- The Airman is just to the south of the A507/A600 roundabout near Shefford. Taking the A600 towards Hitchin the entrance is located on the right just north of the ACO Business Park. [Entrance Grid Ref. TL15863730, Sat Nav SG17 5SQ (ACO)]

Species Present

- Catfish, carp, pike, roach, bream, tench, perch and rudd.

Fishery Rules

These rules apply to The Airman, in addition to the full set of Club rules:

- Night Permit required for night fishing (Junior Night Permit holders must be accompanied by a night permit holder over the age of 18 and occupy the same swim whilst night fishing).
- Fishing from pegs 1-20 only (*NB pegs 21-24 were closed to fishing from the 2020/21 season*).
- Strictly no stalking/fishing between pegs, including the bank between pegs 1 and 20.
- To safeguard catfish, use of double hooks, treble hooks or uncoated wire traces is banned on this venue between 1st April - 31st October.
- To safeguard both pike and catfish, a coated wire hooklink material (e.g. Catfish Pro Pikesafe or AFW Surflon Micro Supreme) must be used by catfish anglers when using fish live or deadbaits.
- No parking on the tarmac entrance, vehicles must not be driven over the kerbs or block access to swims and footpaths. 5mph speed limit.
- Do not disturb the black bait boxes as they may contain rat poison.
- The use of leadcore is not permitted.



Peter Rose 26lb pike



Peter Swallow 11lb 9oz tench

Recent Carp Stockings

<p>November 2009 AJS Fisheries C3 'scaley' carp 12 mirrors Average: 7lb (range: 6-8lb)</p>	 <p><i>8lb mirror (2009)</i></p>
<p>October 2011 AJS Fisheries C3 'scaley' carp 10 mirrors Average: 8lb (range: 7-10lb)</p>	 <p><i>9lb mirror (2011)</i></p>
<p>November 2014 VS Fisheries C4 carp 14 mirrors plus 1 common Average: 9.5lb (range: 7.5-11.25lb)</p>	 <p><i>11lb mirror (2014)</i></p>
<p>October 2016 VS Fisheries C4 carp 10 mirrors Average: 9lb (range: 7.25-10.5lb)</p>	 <p><i>10lb 8oz mirror (2016)</i></p>
<p>November 2018 VS Fisheries C4 carp 15 mirrors Average: 11.75lb (range: 9.5-13.25lb)</p>	 <p><i>12lb 4oz mirror (2018)</i></p>

THE AIRMAN DEPTH MAP

