

Club is stunned by Canal & River Trust's...

Grafton Willows chainsaw massacre

GRAFTON Willows – the best known and most popular angling 'feature' on Nene's 15 mile canal holding – are being axed!

By the time you read this they will probably have gone...reduced to piles of logs and chippings.

The quarter mile of far-bank fish-holding greenery is being massacred by Canal & River Trust contractors who told me: "We're taking the lot down to the ground. It's sad but it is what we've been told to do."

Pollarding, or necessary trimming, would have been one thing – but this is akin to official vandalism destroying wildlife habitats, fish cover, and scenery popular with boaters, anglers and walkers alike.

It is only in recent years that the trees had recovered from another over-the-top 'maintenance operation' a couple of decades or so back, and Nene are furious they were not consulted on the latest decimation.

Club secretary Neil Stafford said: "We pay the Trust a lot of money each year for fishing rights, and they should respect that. There has been a complete absence of customer service in this."

I was fishing the 'Willows Thursday when work began, alerted the Nene, and repeatedly had to warn passing boaters – who were unaware of the risk they faced from falling 40 foot chainsawed boughs – that they were cruising into danger.

● *BY co-incidence another arm of the Trust – the good guys in fisheries led by John Ellis – have this week stocked another quarter-ton of silverfish elsewhere on the Nene's length.*

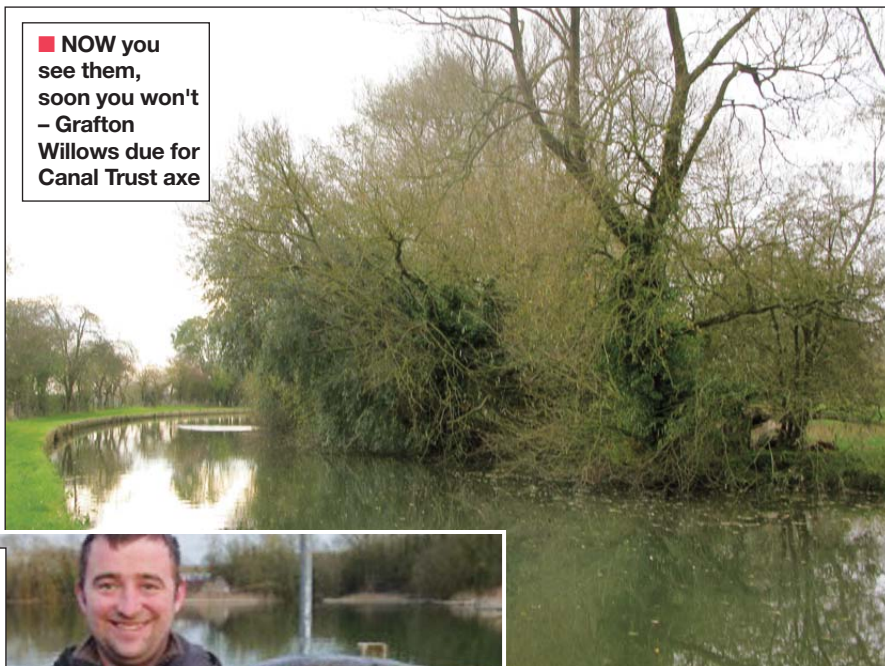
Amazing how different parts of the same organisation can have such totally different attitudes to PAYING customers.

● MEADOWLANDS individual league second round: Tony Wickham 73-6, Jonny Jenkins 65-12, Nigel Smith 49-2.

● BISHOPS Bowl open: Greg Satcher 70-4, Geoff Ringer 56-12, Rob Ross 36lb.

● CASTLE Ashby Sunday opens: Grendon, Rolly McEaney 70-4, Gerald Greene 27lb, Bob Reed 15-12; Scotland silverfish, Nigel Fawkes 22-6, Grant Howie 15-14, Keith Bishop 12-12.

● WHITE Hart Flore, Flecknoe: Drew Adams 49-13, Robin Wickham 41-5, Dave Walker 40-12.



● DAVENTRY, Peatling Pools: Barry Carr 35-12, Graham Cheney 29-6, Carl Hulley 26-14.

● TOWCESTER vets, Dennets: John Balhatchett 18-4, Les Ramsden 17-3, George Cooke 13-2.

● TOWCESTER, Bairstows: Mick Goodridge 18-2 (two carp), Paul Robinson 3-4, John Balhatchett 1-8.

● COUNTY vets, Canons bottom: Alf Gillard and Alan West both 12-8, Ron Coles 9-7.

● OLNEY, RBL open, Ouse, lowest turnout for years: Steve Glidewell 6-9, Mike Fairey 6-3, Roger Clutton and Paul Clayton both 5-13.

● FINEDON, Ringstead shallows Nene: Dave Ross 10-5 chublets, Roger Brain 4-7-8, Dave Roberts 7-9.

● FLORE & Brockhall, Broadwater Tove: Buster Matthews 5-4 (and scooped the £50 golden peg), Jim Tanser 3-11, Paul Humphries 3-1.

● FIXTURES: Tuesday, Olney Ouse open 01234 240061 ■

Matches, catches, even rough patches? If there's a tale to tell call Trevor Johnson on 01908 270000 (office) or 07801 183381 or angling@intermediauk.com (click link to email)