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Anniversary Year Success For The Wheelyboat Trust

The Wheelyboat Trust's 25th anniversary year in 2010 was its busiest since its work of helping fisheries and other waters acquire wheelchair accessible boats started in 1985. Twelve new Wheelyboats were built and supplied with construction of a thirteenth well underway. These new Wheelyboats bring the total number supplied to 144.

Angling waters benefitting in 2010 were Lake Windermere, Eyebrook Trout Fishery, Blithfield Reservoir, Rudyard Lake, Upper Tamar Lake, Hanningfield Reservoir, Grafham Water and Bewl Water. Two Irish waters also had new Wheelyboats – Lough Carrigavantry in Co Waterford and the River Shannon and surrounding loughs at Mohill in Co Leitrim. In addition to these new boats, older Mk I Wheelyboats were recovered, refurbished and found new homes at Kennick Reservoir, Blenheim Estate Trout Fishery, Elinor Trout Fishery, Butterstone Loch and The Waterworks in Belfast.

Rudyard Lake's and Upper Tamar Lake's Wheelyboats are the Mk III model designed for multipurpose use as they will be used for pleasure boating and nature watching as well as fishing. The other fisheries listed all received Coulam 16 Wheelyboats – purpose-built fishing boats that look and perform like the rest of the boats in the fishery's fleet but with roll on, roll off wheelchair access.



New Wheelyboats were also supplied to Bristol Docks, Rollesby Broad and East Park Lake in Hull but these are for pleasure boating rather than fishing. Bristol's is a brand new model, the Mk IV, the largest Wheelyboat to date seating up to 12 people and perfectly suited to inshore waters.



The Wheelyboat Trust's role is to help fisheries and other waters acquire Wheelyboats for the benefit of their disabled anglers/visitors. It does this by raising funds to lower the cost of acquiring Wheelyboats and it is very grateful to the grant making bodies that help it meet this objective. One of these, The Peter Harrison Foundation, deserves special mention. It has provided the Trust with a grant enabling it to fund 50% of the cost of six Coulam 16 Wheelyboats – three in 2010 and three in 2011.

Angling is an activity that most disabled people can participate in very effectively once the barriers of access have been overcome. Getting on the water is the biggest barrier of all and Wheelyboats provide a hassle-free solution enabling disabled people, and wheelchair users in particular, to fish independently and on exactly the same terms as their able-bodied counterparts.

New Wheelyboat projects are developing all the time and 2011 looks likely to be just as busy for the Trust as 2010. Fisheries lined up for new Wheelyboats in 2011 include Derwent Water, Loch Awe, Kielder Water, Farmoor Reservoir and a second Wheelyboat for Hanningfield.

For more information about the work of The Wheelyboat Trust including an up to date list of Wheelyboat locations, visit www.wheelyboats.org or telephone the Trust's office on 01798 342222.

Photos: Wheelyboats provide disabled anglers with hassle-free and independent access to the water as demonstrated by Wheelyboat Trust Trustee, Danny Peet, with a 17lb rainbow from Toft Newton Trout Fishery and a 20lb fly-caught pike from Chew Valley Lake.

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THE WHEELYBOAT TRUST

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