

# Fishing for Good



## The strategic plan for the Angling Trust 2023 - 2028

[www.anglingtrust.net](http://www.anglingtrust.net)

# Vision

Promote, develop and protect angling for all

# Mission

To fight for fish, fishing and the environment, championing the joy of angling and all its benefits from grassroots to elite levels.

# Values

- ➔ **PASSION** - We place anglers and angling at the heart of everything we do.
- ➔ We **LISTEN** to our colleagues, members, stakeholders and the wider angling community.
- ➔ We **RESPECT** each other and ensure angling is inclusive and open to all.
- ➔ We are **ACCOUNTABLE**, transparent and strive to deliver the best for angling and the environment.
- ➔ We **COLLABORATE**, learn and grow together.



# Why does the Angling Trust need to communicate a plan?

Angling has a rich heritage and delivers huge benefits to individuals, communities and the environment. We have a diverse community of participants but unlike most other sports we don't have a single set of clearly defined rules or a consistent environment where our activities take place. Fishing is wonderfully accessible and varied with three unique disciplines and many subtle nuances which mean that an expert in one area can be a complete novice in another.

Anglers have a unique connection to the environment. Our ability to participate is dependant on access to healthy aquatic environments with strong ecosystems of wildlife from which fishing is a positive dividend. As a result, anglers have done more for conservation and preservation of the environment than almost any other independent stakeholder.

Yet despite this, angling faces threats, as do the environments we depend upon and the fish we dream about. The community requires a voice on big issues and our collective scale is not reflected in our level of influence as anglers – **Fishing for Good** seeks to change that.

**Fishing For Good** lays out a plan for angling and the community, it is designed to provide clarity of the role and priorities of the Angling Trust and how we are focused on delivering against the core pillars which define our pastime and will support growth, representation and visibility at all levels. This is not a journey we are on alone and this plan lays out how, by working together, anglers, clubs, fisheries, coaches, volunteers, partners and investors can collaborate and deliver greater impact.

Ultimately this is a vision for all within angling, whether it is in saltwater or freshwater, game or coarse, for competition or pleasure, through our pillars of success we are structured to embrace the incredible diversity of our sport and its participants across campaigns, advocacy, participation, competitions, advice and support.

The Angling Trust is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and also a membership organisation. The board is made up of 11 volunteer directors and the Chief Executive Officer is accountable to the subscribing members for managing the strategy.

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## Fighting for fish, fishing and the environment

The global pandemic, and the Angling Trust's proactive response to the challenges this presented through the When We Fish Again campaign, solidified the need for a strong, united voice for one of the largest sporting and recreational activities in Britain. Now is the time for the Angling Trust to share a clear, focused and transparent strategy for the future and build upon the foundations we have established.

We are the recognised National Governing Body for the sport of angling, a partly publicly funded organisation with limited resources. We are also a leading environmental NGO with a rich heritage. We work in collaboration with Fish Legal (initially the Anglers' Co-operative Association and later the Anglers' Conservation Association), a membership organisation that has used the law for over 70 years to protect members' fishery interests from pollution, over-abstraction and other impacts which can prove devastating to fragile water ecosystems.

An active and engaging strategy is vital to communicate our purpose and impact to partners and members across multiple sectors.

**Fishing For Good** is just the start and can provide a foundation for more people to go fishing more often in healthy, vibrant environments. We will harness the drive, passion and commitment of our community within this journey which will increase participation, safeguard access, deliver international success and create an effective, united representative body accountable for the delivery of this vision for fish, fishing and the environment.

**Jamie Cook, CEO Angling Trust**





**We place anglers and  
angling at the heart of  
everything we do**



# Goals for the future

**Whether in freshwater or saltwater, through the pillars of campaigning, advocacy, participation, competitions and membership support, the Angling Trust will play a leading role:**

- ➔ **Promoting “Fishing for Good”**
  - Increasing recognition for our sport and promote fishing as a fun activity with proven benefits for its participants and the environment.
- ➔ **Fighting for fish, fishing and the environment**
  - Combat pollution, over-predation, abstraction and other threats to our sport.
- ➔ **Promoting the proven benefits of angling**
  - to the mental health and wellbeing of those who fish, to the wider community as a whole and to the environment.
- ➔ **Improve angling access and influence**
  - Create new, accessible opportunities for people to enjoy fishing within their communities.
- ➔ **Protecting the legal right to fish**
  - Combat challenges to access, protect anglers’ rights and challenge recreational and commercial over-exploitation of fish and the environment.
- ➔ **Support efforts to combat illegal fishing and fish theft**
  - to combat illegal or damaging fishing activities.
- ➔ **Increasing diversity, reach and promotion of angling**
  - across participation, habitat improvement, competitions and environmental volunteering.
- ➔ **Delivering the “Gold standard” in competitions**
  - Creating opportunities for all from grassroots to elite participation.
- ➔ **Developing pathways to international success**
  - in national teams across all angling disciplines.
- ➔ **Ensuring good governance and safeguarding**
  - Implement a sport wide diversity, inclusion and equality strategy.
- ➔ **Providing Inspiration for all**
  - Establish role models and pathways to participation through coaches, volunteers and community leaders both locally and nationally.
- ➔ **Listening, learning and acting**
  - Embed advisory group structures, welcome input and feedback and input from across all core pillars of activity.

# How will we be different by 2028?

The angling community will have a clear understanding of the role and impact of the Angling Trust and Fish Legal with more members and stakeholders partnering and supporting us in achieving our goals.

## Promoting “Fishing for Good”

More people will be fishing more often.

Through our Love Fishing Love Nature campaign more anglers than ever will be engaging positively with the environment.

Our Get Fishing programme will be established across all three disciplines of angling nationally.

Angling will be a prominent activity at a series of significant public engagement events.

A schools engagement programme will be established, creating awareness of angling and new pipelines of participants.

## Fighting for fish, fishing and the environment

Through our Love Fishing Love Nature initiative the work anglers undertake to protect and enhance the environment will receive greater recognition.

Our advocacy will have played a part in delivering meaningful change to regulation, enforcement and compliance in the area of sewage pollution.

We will have taken further steps to counter agricultural pollution in both England and Wales.

We will have made significant progress in securing proactive and sustainable management of saltwater, freshwater and migratory fish species

We will be seen as guardians of nature – campaigning against over-predation, abstraction and litter.

Individuals, organisations and external stakeholders will be supporting the work of the Angling Trust and Fish Legal.





## Promoting the proven benefits of angling

We will have gained wider public recognition for the benefits to physical health and mental wellbeing that angling provides.

Our leading role in the environmental sector will have been enhanced with greater recognition of the role of anglers in protecting and improving the environment.

More external advocates and influencers will be positively promoting angling to a national audience.

Angling will receive consistent, positive coverage in mainstream media and communications.

## Improve angling access and influence

We will help ensure that everyone has access to vibrant, healthy local fisheries.

We will have countered inaccurate and misleading claims by other water users about their rights of access.

We will have developed exemplar access agreements in line with Government policy available for members to utilise.

Recreational angling's place as a key stakeholder in both marine and freshwater management will be augmented and cemented with the Angling Trust providing anglers with a respected and united voice.

# How will we be different by 2028?

## **Protecting the legal right to fish**

We will have maintained partnerships with government departments and support active All Party Parliamentary Groups across angling and the environment.

Our influence with policymakers at a local, regional and national level will have increased in both marine and freshwater with a stronger regional structure of representation.

## **Support efforts to combat illegal fishing and fish theft**

Our relationships with enforcement services will be resulting in less illegal angling activity.

The visibility, understanding and impact of our voluntary enforcement services will have increased.

The proactive work we carry out through our Building Bridges programme engaging and educating migrant communities will have developed further as we expand the reach of angling.



## **Increasing diversity, reach and promotion of angling**

We will positively drive the sport to become more open, establishing angling as an inclusive activity accessible for all with opportunities focussed on underrepresented groups.

More women, girls and families will be fishing regularly with more participants from across different cultural and socio-economic groups enjoying all disciplines of angling.

Information about how and where to fish will be reaching a broad cross section of society driving engagement through our community participation campaigns.

Our engagement with clubs will mean that more individuals are members of both their club and the Angling Trust.

The angling community will have a greater understanding and visibility of the role and impact we deliver across saltwater and freshwater.

## **Delivering the “Gold Standard” in competitions**

Will be a key pillar of our delivery, offering market leading events across game, sea and coarse disciplines.

Our partnerships at local, regional and national level will increase opportunities for participation in competitions at all levels.

We will have developed sponsorship and partnership agreements providing bigger prize pools and greater media exposure for our market leading events.

Our national championship structure across game, coarse and sea will have undergone review with high quality organisation and delivery.

Our ticketing and administration systems will deliver a gold standard customer experience.

# How will we be different by 2028?

## Delivering pathways to international success across all disciplines

Team England will have achieved medal success across multiple disciplines, developing a greater profile and presence both within angling and the wider community.

We will host major international events and established a blueprint for applying this to multiple disciplines.

All representative England teams will receive support to participate in elite international competitions.

Long term commercial partnerships will be established.

## Ensuring good governance and safeguarding

As an organisation, sport and pastime, we will have a greater focus on the welfare and safety of our people, our volunteers and our community.

We will ensure that we have appropriate approaches in place to support personal development and increase opportunities for our staff and community.

We will have increased the accessibility and diversity of our organisation and our activities at all levels with a board more representative of the broad community to whom fishing is accessible.

We will have increased the number and diversity of coaches across levels one and two with greater levels of retention and community engagement.

A level three qualification and accredited guide assurance scheme will be in place to support elite participation and talent development.





## **Providing Inspiration for all**

Membership will have increased across each discipline and be growing with an enhanced membership proposition and a greater diversity of categories.

Anglers, clubs and fisheries will be better connected and informed through the regional and national networks we have established.

We will work more closely with the Angling Trade, to provide advocacy on their behalf and to promote and develop the angling economy.

Income and fundraising will have increased allowing for further reinvestment into services.

We will be leading proactively on tackling discrimination and racism across the sport of angling.

We will be recognised as the representative authority for our members across game, sea, coarse and competition angling in England and Wales.

## **Listening, learning and acting**

Funding to support recruitment and retention will come from a broad base of vehicles, sectors and partners.

We will value our employees, volunteers and stakeholder community.

We will at all times act with integrity, fairness, dignity and honesty to earn the respect of others.

We will be accountable for our environmental impact.

We will have made notable progress towards our commitment to achieve Carbon Net Zero by 2050.

We will embrace technology, lead, innovate and welcome change.



# Why are we well placed to deliver for angling?

## Strengths and influence

- One of the largest participation sports in Britain, around 2 million people took part in angling as a pastime in 2019.
- Accessible to all ages and abilities.
- Almost 1 million freshwater fishing licences purchased annually and an estimated 800,000 individuals regularly fish in the sea.
- Over 2,500 member clubs and fisheries.
- Over 500,000 individual members actively engaged within the club infrastructure.
- Vibrant and diverse competition programme across multiple disciplines from grassroots to international elite participation.

## Political impact and influence

- Leading NGO, bound in a collaborative relationship with Fish Legal which has been making polluters pay for environmental damage since 1948.
- Excellent political links and advocacy structure - secretariat of two All Party Parliamentary Groups.
- Alignment and active partnership with two separate government departments.
- Leading member of a number of powerful regional, national and international coalitions with influence across multiple policy areas.



- Key stakeholders in major environmental issues due to legal expertise and unparalleled reputation. Active supporters include scientists, politicians, influencers and trade representatives.

### **Economic value**

- Angling contributes over £4b per year to the UK economy, providing thousands of permanent and seasonal jobs.
- Achieves proven benefits to rural and regional economies in line with the levelling up agenda.
- Delivers sustainable investment into coastal communities and economic injection during tourist low season.
- Recreational sea angling contributes double that of the commercial fishing sector to the UK economy.
- Freshwater fishing licences contribute over £24m annually to the treasury.

### **Social Impact**

- Vital role to play in offering recreational and sporting opportunities to a diverse cross section of society.
- David Bellamy famously described anglers as “the custodians of our waterways - without whom our rivers would be treated as sewers” indicating the leading role we play in community-led environmental activity.





- Scientifically proven to benefit mental wellbeing and combat PTSD, angling is now offered as a social prescribing intervention by the NHS.
- Positive public profile through mainstream media.
- Exceptional base of volunteers at local, regional and national levels - 57% of anglers engage in environmental volunteering annually (Natural England society average = 4%).
- Vital engagement to community-based blue and green spaces through beneficial form of outdoor recreation.
- Integrates underrepresented social groups into environmentally-based volunteering and action, benefitting communities.
- Accessible and beneficial to all - in 2019 26% of new participants attending Angling Trust Get Fishing events were female and almost one in five regular anglers recognise themselves as having a disability.
- Reel Education Programme, reaching 56,000 school children, stimulating an interest in fish, fishing and the environment.

### **Weakness and challenge**

- Enormous diversity which creates a challenge in resourcing and priority.
- No public funding for either talent development or elite performance.
- Lack of awareness in the angling community of the role the Angling Trust plays and the work it carries out.





## Threats and opportunities to achieve change

- As an activity and sport which relies upon a healthy aquatic environment, sustainable fish stocks and access, we face significant threats which must be countered proactively.
- Pollution is a national scandal. Whilst sewage is a huge problem agricultural pollution is also a major contributor to the destruction of our aquatic habitats.
- Environmental factors such as abstraction, predation, habitat destruction, recreational/commercial misuse and exploitation all present threats locally, regionally and nationally to saltwater and freshwater environments, habitats and fish populations as well as other wildlife key to the ecosystem.
- Anti-angling sentiment exists in areas of society - we must counter with strong evidence.
- Our talent pathways and elite teams rely heavily on fundraising, donations and self-funding to compete internationally, potentially creating an economic barrier to selection.
- A lack of knowledge and awareness of the accessibility of angling opportunities for all within society.



# Funding our ambition

***Our mission is 'to fight for fish, fishing and the environment, championing the joy of angling and all its benefits from grassroots to elite levels'.***

**This is a broad ambition and as such we need to secure funding from a range of sources to enable us to deliver and to create opportunities for all stakeholders within our community to access the resource they need to contribute.**

## External funding

Maintain our status as the established and recognised National Governing Body for angling in England, building on our long term public sector partnerships with both Sport England and the Environment Agency.

Develop our existing links and continue to deliver tangible outcomes in Wales in partnership with Visit Wales and NRW. Invest in representing Welsh anglers, clubs and fisheries providing clear vision and impetus for fishing in Wales.

Explore opportunities to work with existing and new partners where our objectives and goals align.

## Partnerships and sponsorship

We will engage multiple stakeholders aligned with our objects and strategic priorities, reducing our reliance upon individual public sector funding partners to deliver organisational goals.

We will build on the foundations we have formed with trade and external partners to deliver investment to defined outcomes across the pillars of the organisation.

## Fundraising

We will review our structures and explore the benefits of charitable status – creating opportunities for foundations, trusts, charities and individuals to support our work in focused areas.

By building a clear legacies and donations proposition for clubs, fisheries and individuals each can invest in outcomes aligned to their constitutions, ethos and passions.

In diversifying our fundraising portfolio we will increase opportunities for a wider cross section of our community to participate.

## Membership growth and support

Reviewing our value proposition and developing new communication channels to increase membership income to reinvest directly into delivery of our plan.

Supporting member clubs and fisheries to meet good governance standards and implement best practice across multiple areas of their operations to ensure long term sustainability of access and opportunity at a community level.

## Leveraging and identifying delivery funding for the community

We will continue to support member clubs, fisheries and community groups to access wider pools of funding to improve infrastructure, increase access and deliver interventions.

Achieve growth by researching, securing and establishing new funding streams accessible to our community - signposting these opportunities and offering practical support in securing resource.

A fisherman wearing a cap and a vest is seated in a small boat on a calm river. He is holding a fishing rod that is bent, suggesting he has caught a fish. The boat is equipped with various fishing gear, including a net and a red bucket. The background features a lush green landscape with dense trees and rolling hills under a clear sky. The water reflects the surrounding greenery.

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## How will we measure our success?

Our strategy will be delivered by living our values and working together as one angling community.

Over the next five years we will use a range of measurements to ensure we monitor our progress against the key performance indicators set out within our departmental and regional plans. Through our structure of a volunteer board, advisory groups, senior management team and expert staff in multiple spheres we will set clear short term goals as a roadmap to reach our collective objectives.

In particular, we will monitor the number and diversity of people engaged with

angling, focusing on how, when and why they fish. We will survey a range of areas to ensure our members, volunteers and workforce are fully supported. And to make sure our voice is being heard, we will evaluate our external profile and impact.

When we see an increase in our membership, more people fishing more often, international competition success and greater recognition from our community and the wider public of both our work and the benefits of angling, we will know we are on the road to achieving our key objectives.





## Working in partnership

Angling is a community and this strategy is designed to support all within our sport.

We are grateful for the support of so many organisations and individuals who share our vision for the future of angling and the environment.

## Our Trade Partners

The Angling Trust would like to acknowledge the support given by our trade partners:



# Our Strategic Partners

The Angling Trust would like to acknowledge the support given by our strategic partners:



# Our Sponsors and Supporters

The Angling Trust would like to acknowledge the support given by our sponsors and supporters:



We are supported by over 2,500 clubs and fisheries, thousands of volunteers and over 200 tackle shops and trade supporters.

We thank them all.



# ANGLING TRUST



**Registered Office and Membership team:**

Angling Trust Ltd, Eastwood House, 6 Rainbow Street, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8DQ  
0343 5077006 (Option 1)

**Competitions, Coaching and Finance teams:**

Angling Trust Ltd, The Old Police Station, Wharnccliffe Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 5GF  
0115 822 4660

[www.anglingtrust.net](http://www.anglingtrust.net)