

SUMMARY REPORT - APRIL 2020

# WHEN WE FISH AGAIN

A summary of our proposals to get anglers fishing safely again



#WHENWEFISHAGAIN



SUPPORTED BY:



Salmon & Trout  
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KEEPING OUR WATERS WILD • EST 1903



## INTRODUCTION

### How we are representing angling



Following discussions with our advisors and supporters in Parliament we have submitted our proposals to Government Ministers on how angling could be permitted as a safe, healthy, beneficial sport and why it should take its position at the front of the queue when restrictions are reviewed.

Through our work with other angling bodies, in this country and across the globe, as well as by consulting with experts across multiple disciplines - we have delivered guidelines under which angling could be safely permitted without increasing the risk of COVID-19 transmission when the Government begins to ease restrictions.

**In sharing these guidelines I want to be absolutely clear that restrictions on angling have not been lifted – that decision must remain with the government in order to align with the national effort to combat the transmission of COVID-19 and support the work of our public services.**

We have laid out the reasons why it is important and sensible for angling to be permitted as measures are relaxed and I hope that as a community we can follow the example of some of the biggest personalities in our sport and get behind this campaign in a sensible and responsible way. I would encourage you all to share those images of what you are looking forward to most about the time #whenwefishagain and portray the positive face of our sport.

We all appreciate the huge benefits that angling brings to our health and well-being, as well as the economic and social impact our sport delivers. Through this report the Angling Trust is demonstrating that there is a safe and sensible pathway to get us back on the bank without compromising the NHS or the country's fight against this dreadful Coronavirus.

Thank you for the resolve you have shown so far - [please support us by joining the Angling Trust](#) as we press the case on your behalf for the safe resumption of the sport we all love.

#### Jamie Cook

Chief Executive

Angling Trust

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



## RELAXING THE LOCKDOWN

Key reasons why angling should be permitted as restrictions are relaxed.

- Angling is already a naturally self-isolating or social distancing sport.
- We have been informed that the Government's own scientists have recently advised that the lifting of restrictions on activities such as angling would not likely result in a rise of the infection rate.
- We have examined death rates globally and presented that there is no positive correlation between COVID-19 related deaths and recreational fishing being permitted.



Angling in general and carp fishing and specimen hunting in particular are solitary pursuits where participants actively seek solitude or at least separation from others. Therefore I believe that under current circumstances easing restrictions on angling would have significant social and economic benefits.

**Peter Drennan**  
Managing Director  
Drennan International & ESP Ltd

## RELAXING THE LOCKDOWN

### Why angling should be permitted



We have 25 lakes from Yorkshire to Oxfordshire, and almost every one has been vandalised or fished illegally during lockdown. Our staff and volunteers have spent significant time repairing damaged fences and providing a human presence to deter vandals and poachers. Property has been stolen, and we have serious concerns that some of our fish may have been stolen as well. Fellow fishery owners across the UK have complained of similar illegal activity, forcing them out of isolation to protect their livelihood. With fishing safely re-introduced this would eradicate all of these issues overnight.

#### Danny Fairbrass

Chairman, Korda Developments Ltd & Embryo Angling Habitats Ltd

Angling contributes to the economy

**£4 billion**

Angling supports over

**40,000 jobs**

- Angling can engage everyone - including both able bodied and disabled participants and with well over half of the population living within 5 miles of a waterway - getting us back out fishing can be achieved without significant travel.
- We are facing an unprecedented national mental health emergency as a result of the current pandemic. Angling has proven positive benefits for both physical health and mental wellbeing - our sport can play its part in keeping people active as well as helping people with their mental health - we can play our part in avoiding a national mental health crisis that we will face as a by-product of the current pandemic.
- We want to help kick start the economy - angling contributes approximately £4billion each year to the UK economy. There is evidence in other countries, where fishing has been permitted through the lockdown, that angling contribution could increase significantly.
- Anglers continue to be the eyes and ears on waterways, alongside the Angling Trust's own Volunteer Bailiff Service which recorded 28,000 hours of community volunteering in the last year, working alongside both the Police and Environment Agency. By permitting recreational angling, we can play our part in the fight against rural crime and reduce pressure on Police Enforcement services.

# A PHASED APPROACH

Our proposal on how we can start to fish again, safely.

## PHASE ONE

Angling to be undertaken on a solitary basis - social distancing in accordance with Government guidelines must be maintained at all times.

Local fishing only – anglers must follow current Government guidance on travel for the benefit of recreational activity.

All freshwater anglers must be in possession of the relevant EA Fishing licence.

Sea angling from beach and shore to resume along with small scale private boat fishing - in adherence with social distancing guidelines.

No sharing of fishing positions (swims) except by members of the same household.

No sharing of fishing tackle or any other items.

No angler to fish within 15 metres of any other angler.

No keepnets or competition fishing.

Online and electronic day ticket payments to be made wherever possible.

Onsite shared facilities such as cafes and clubhouses to remain closed.

Fisheries unable to adhere to these guidelines should remain closed until further notice.

Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or who shares a household with any individual displaying symptoms, should not go fishing and should continue to follow Government advice on isolation.

It is clear from the data that has been collated from across the world within the Angling Trust proposal, that fishing is one of the safest sports for reintroduction as long as anglers adhere to clear safety & social distancing guidelines from the Government.

### Ali Hamidi

European Head of Media and Marketing  
Korda Developments Ltd & Tackle Guru Ltd



# A PHASED APPROACH

Our proposal on how we can start to fish again, safely.

## PHASE TWO

### SUBJECT TO ONGOING GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

Private and guided boat and kayak fishing to resume on rivers, lakes and reservoirs.

Competition fishing should only be undertaken if compliant with all Government guidelines and in accordance with the Angling Trust's existing best practice [COVID-19\\_guidance](#).

Charter boat fishing to resume under strict guidelines. Boat skippers must ensure that social distancing is always possible by limiting numbers on charter boats if not members of the same household.

Shared facilities at fisheries to re-open if compliant with current Government guidelines

Travel restrictions to be reviewed to facilitate outdoor recreation in line with Government priorities.

## PHASE THREE

Angling to continue whilst adhering to any social distancing guidelines that may be in force.

This is great news for all anglers that the Angling Trust are lobbying on our behalf to get us back on the bank as soon as some of the restrictions start to be lifted. We are all missing our fishing but we have to be sensible here and make sure we do the right things. Pleasure fishing would be a real boost to so many, so let's stay safe until the opportunity arises.

**Steve Ringer**

World #1 Feeder Fishing - FIPSED 2020



## TO CONCLUDE

### Moving forward - from proposal to reality

**These are our proposals to the Government to get anglers back on the bank safely.**

We believe we have delivered a compelling and practical solution to the Government. We will continue to represent recreational angling to get this guidance implemented as soon as the Government deem it appropriate to do so. Until that time we must continue to abide by the restrictions set out by the Government that are currently in place.

We will keep you informed as things develop and rest assured no-one wants to achieve this objective more than us.

Finally - if you aren't already a member, please join us now – we need your support now more than ever to keep doing the vital work that is needed for fishing, not only during this global crisis, but for the future of our sport, our fish and our environment.

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

Fishing isn't just fishing. For most people it's their only escape, their only chance to be active, the only time they get to be alone to soak up the best of our wonderful countryside and mentally recharge the batteries ready for another week of reality. It's a complete release from any hardships or trouble people may have.

**Dean Macey**

Commonwealth & World Championship Medal Holder

Fishing is naturally a very solitary sport and is a perfect isolation activity. If the right rules and regulations are put in place for anglers to abide by, it would allow many people to benefit, both mentally and physically from being outdoors during these challenging times.

**Marina Gibson**

Founder, Northern Fishing School



## FIND OUT MORE

Find out more about our  
When We Fish Again Campaign

DOWNLOAD THE FULL REPORT

WATCH THE VIDEO



I often hear sea anglers ask, what exactly does the Angling Trust do for them? Well, how about campaigning at the highest level to get sea angling reinstated as soon as possible, during these incredibly difficult times.

**Dave Lewis**

Sea Angler and Angling Travel Guide

Going fishing is surely one of the healthiest activities you can do, and with the kind of fishing I do, social distancing is ridiculously easy. If I see anybody within a hundred yards of me when I go fishing it would be a surprise.

**Henry Gilbey**

Bass Angler & Writer



## Angling Trust - When We Fish Again

Angling provides a wonderful opportunity to enjoy and protect wildlife while helping to make our lives bearable and healthy in these challenging times. This is excellent work by the Angling Trust...an organisation that everyone should join!

### **Hugh Miles**

Passion for Angling Award Winning Film Maker



I am delighted that the Angling Trust are working to get angling up and running in a safe and responsible way so that anglers from all disciplines can gain the undoubted health benefits it fosters.

### **Dai Gribble**

Drennan Cup Winner



We all need something to look forward to after the terrible situation we have been in and I can't think of anything better than fishing to bring back the feel good factor for many thousands of people.

### **Dave Harrell**

Riverfest Founder & Leading Match Angler



## Angling Trust - When We Fish Again

It's only since being unable to go angling that I've realised just how much I miss it, as well as the benefits that it has for me in terms of being able to relax; spend time outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine; and get away from work and computer screens for a while!

**Gary Newman**  
Specialist Angler



Once again, The Angling Trust has championed our angling cause. I have absolutely no hesitation in commending this report to you. All of us know the misery of not going fishing. This "paper" hits precisely the right note, when we needed it most and gets our fabulous sport on front footing.

**Charles Jardine**  
Expert Fly Fisherman & Illustrator



My wife and I went for our run and passed close to 143 joggers, dog walkers and cyclists yet if we had taken our exercise on a tench lake, rods in hand, we would have seen next to no one.

**John Bailey**  
Author & Angling Guide



## Angling Trust - When We Fish Again

I fully support all the efforts of the Angling Trust in this current environment and this is why it is so important for all anglers to become members. We must continue to follow the Government's social distancing guidelines so this phased proposal will help to get us all back fishing as soon as possible, improve our health and wellbeing and assist the industry to get back on track.

### **Hayley Clapperton**

Managing Director, Bait-Tech



Allowing people to fish again is a very sensible decision. Everyone now understands the need for social distancing and it's relatively easy to do on the bank. Scientific evidence is very clear that time in green and blue spaces relieves stress and is great for our mental wellbeing, and what better way than on angling. It will give a large part of the population an enormous lift.

### **Rob Hughes**

Carp Angler & TV Presenter



The Angling Trust have worked tirelessly to present a phased and sensible set of plans to the Government to get all of us back fishing safely.

### **Dean Barlow**

England Match Angler

