



Fishing for Life

A national strategy for getting people fishing 2013-2018



substance.

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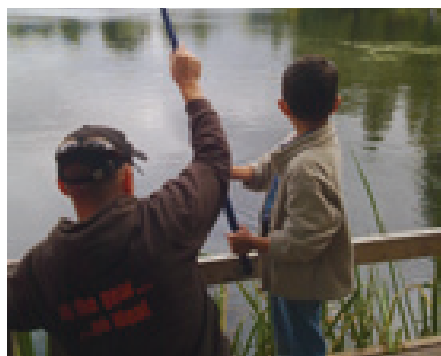
Want to be part of something big and special?

Did you know that millions of people go fishing each year? Angling is the 6th biggest sport measured by once per month participation; anyone can do it, at any age, with any ability and in lots of places.

In fact, up to four million people have gone fishing in the past two years but many more are interested in taking it up¹; the sport generates £3.5billion a year for the economy and employs 37,000 people².

But did you also know that angling has something else a bit special? Angling is used as a tool up and down the country to improve educational attainment, improve physical and mental health, restore degraded water environments, reduce crime and anti social behaviour and improve personal esteem and effectiveness.

It is a gateway to accessing, learning and caring about the natural environment.³ Now do you want to be part of it?



Angling is used as a tool up and down the country to improve educational attainment, improve physical and mental health, [and] restore degraded water environments....

Angling is coming together

The angling community is currently made up from a number of disparate bodies, organisations and individuals - government agencies, small businesses, governing bodies, individual clubs, fishery owners, environmental charities and individuals with an interest in the water environment.

But now angling is coming together. For the first time, angling recognises it has the opportunity and desire to shape something that fully reflects everything that angling can provide.

Government and the Environment Agency have recognised this and have asked the Angling Trust – the unified body for all anglers in England – to coordinate the production of a National Angling Strategy on behalf of all interests in angling. This strategy will address how to get people fishing and the associated environmental issues facing angling.

Surveys⁴ were undertaken to assess the issues facing angling and how it could be developed in the future. They have informed this strategy and the full report of the results is available at: www.anglingtrust.net/nationalanglingstrategy

A New Era for Angling

The sheer scale of angling and related activity is massive.

Not only does it involve millions of people but also hundreds of organisations and huge levels of commitment: as part of the development of this document, over 29,000 anglers and nearly 800 organisations contributed to surveys – with no other incentive than to improve angling.

In recent years angling has also become much more unified, with the creation of a single governing body, the Angling Trust which has 1,500 clubs and fisheries in membership (which themselves have nearly 400,000 members).



Over 29,000 anglers and nearly 800 organisations contributed to surveys – with no other incentive than to improve angling

There are now far greater levels of cooperation and partnership between the diverse range of organisations than ever before.

This new atmosphere and culture is outward looking. Angling now has a sense of purpose which recognises that a more coordinated, cooperative, and common sense of purpose can position angling right at the heart of people, their communities and their environment.

It seeks to involve new organisations and people to work together to unlock the enormous potential it has to offer.

What is angling?

A way of life
A focus for a holiday
A personal challenge
An opportunity and an excuse to get away from it all
A way of recovering from trauma
An opportunity to spend time by water
A source of cheap, healthy delicious food
A competitive sport
A way of meeting new people
A diversion for young people
A way of spending time with the kids
To learn new skills
A hands-on relationship with our environment
To do with your mates
An educational tool

National angling strategy

This strategy is on behalf of all the individuals and organisations that enjoy or earn their living through angling and for all those who are interested in improving education, anti-social behaviour, health and environmental outcomes.

It has been developed following the largest ever on line survey of 29,098 anglers, 785 angling related organisations and a number of consultations and qualitative interviews to find out the issues that are important to anglers so that more can be done to increase angling participation and improve the quality of fishing and services available.

A New Vision for Angling

We want more people to take part in angling more often across a wide cross section of society and generations, and for angling to be a catalyst for improving more people's lives and their environment.

The four strategic objectives we have identified are:

- 1.** We want people to take up and continue fishing so it becomes a habit for life – **getting the fishing habit**.
- 2.** We want angling to be recognised for its role in improving the nation's health and well being, increasing educational attainment and reducing crime and anti social behaviour – **transforming and changing lives**.
- 3.** We want to improve people's lives by using angling as a catalyst for bringing people and society together – **creating community waters**.
- 4.** We want people to recognise that fish and fishing are at the heart of a better environment – **hands up for the environment**.



1. Getting the fishing habit

Start 'em young! 87% of respondents to our National Angling Survey started fishing between the ages of 4 and 16, and 84% were introduced by a family member or friend who already fishes.

We need to support and encourage this good work to attract the anglers of the future. Angling is an excellent and relatively low-cost activity for young people; it offers opportunities to learn about concentration, sitting still, casting skills, practical problem-solving, respect for the risks presented by water and a greater understanding of the natural world.

In the 'Natural Childhood' report,⁵ Dr William Bird is quoted saying: "Children who don't connect with nature before the age of 12 are less likely as adults to connect with nature. They therefore lose out on the resilience nature provides when you're really stressed."

Angling offers a very intense connection with nature that runs much deeper than most forms of contact. So, getting children to start fishing young has added benefits!

But what about those with no family connection to angling? Angling taster days, school holiday programmes and family fun days are all ways in which people can try angling for the first time. Angling clubs with a junior section, particularly those with Clubmark accreditation, or fisheries with a resident coach, offer young people the chance to carry on fishing after these introductions.



Angling is an excellent and relatively low-cost activity for young people

There are many organisations e.g. Fishing for Schools, Get Hooked on Fishing and the Angling Trust that have demonstrated that angling is attractive to schools, but it requires more funding and expert support to make adoption of angling by schools more widespread.

There are many obvious links to the school curriculum, and angling would be an ideal activity for after school clubs.

There is potential for Scouts and Guides to become more involved. When the Environment Agency produced 50,000 information packs for the Scouts, it ran out of them in a few weeks, but it transpires that there's a need for more coaches to help Scout leaders teach young people how to fish.

Current programmes run by the angling trade such as National Fishing Month(NFM) and Take a Friend Fishing(TAFF) also provide newcomers with an introduction to angling.

For all these people who try fishing for the first time, we need to make it easy for them to continue fishing, to learn new techniques and improve their skills once they get hooked! There needs to be better marketing of tackle shops, angling clubs, fisheries and charter boats to provide this continuity.



But did you know that a low percentage of anglers are women or from black and ethnic minority communities? If we want angling truly to involve a wider cross section of society, we need to attract more of them and make sure that it is open and welcoming to all.

We know there is latent demand amongst the population as a whole, so not only will we widen the appeal of angling to those who would like to go fishing but also to those who have never thought of taking up the sport. **We will improve how angling is promoted, organised and made available to achieve this.**

Keeping the habit

Many of those who have taken up fishing start to drop out from about age 18 as other commitments start to influence their lives.

But we know that many come back later in life and continue for the rest of their life, contributing to their 'active ageing'. We are investigating ways to attract these people back, to make angling attractive to their lifestyle and new circumstances.

A lack of time was the single biggest barrier identified in the National Angling Survey. **We need to provide opportunities for people to fit regular fishing in around their busy lives and to find information quickly about where and how to go fishing near to where they live.**

Although lots of anglers go fishing regularly, only 14% of these take part weekly, the lowest proportion of any sport. The vast majority of anglers – 94% (27,234) in the National Angling Survey - would like to go fishing more often!

Keeping the habit (*continued*)

The Angling Trust is seeking funding from Sport England to deliver increased weekly participation amongst adults aged over 26 years and people with disabilities and for the development of a talent pathway.

A key component is the inclusion of a club development programme that provides regular weekly participation opportunities.

We can make it easier for people to fish by addressing those things that stop them. In our survey, cheaper access to fishing and more local fishing (23% each) were the most important factors that would encourage more frequent fishing.

We can't do anything about the weather but providing angling closer to where people live, making it more accessible, making it safer and providing facilities that encourage people to attend, will increase the opportunities to go fishing.

This will have particular benefits for those who are less able; 4% of the respondents to the National Angling Survey indicated that their health or disability restricts them from fishing more often. This group probably has most to gain from angling, and more to lose from not being able to access fishing.

23%

In our survey, cheaper access to fishing and more local fishing (23% each) were the most important factors that would encourage more frequent fishing.



Other routes to increase participation include increasing the opportunities for club members to get together informally to go fishing together, having more trained coaches, creating opportunities for informal and formal competitions and providing facilities and services which allow angling to be an attractive activity for the whole family to become involved in.

We know that providing information on where people can go fishing encourages them to experience more and different angling opportunities so we will investigate new ways of getting this information to them using modern technology and social networks.

All these initiatives are designed to increase the benefits to individuals, to society, the environment and to the economy from more regular and widespread angling activity.

Measures of success

We will have been successful in increasing the cross section of those taking up and increasing the frequency of angling when:

- More people, and from more diverse backgrounds, go fishing
- More people fish every week
- Angling becomes a lifelong pastime
- More fishing locations suitable for all ages and abilities are available close to where people live
- There is greater awareness and knowledge of locations to go fishing, how to get started and how to fish responsibly
- On line tools are in place which identify cheap fishing locations, places to fish and people who want to go fishing together
- Fishing clubs, local authorities, schools and other organisations have been provided with the support and tools to enable them to run a variety of introductory sessions to attract new anglers and keep them in the sport
- There is significant involvement from non angling groups who have never thought about going fishing
- There are an increased number of properly trained and qualified coaches to support more formal entries into angling and those anglers who wish to improve their skills
- Access to freshwater and the sea has been increased and these resources are well-maintained



2. Transforming and changing lives

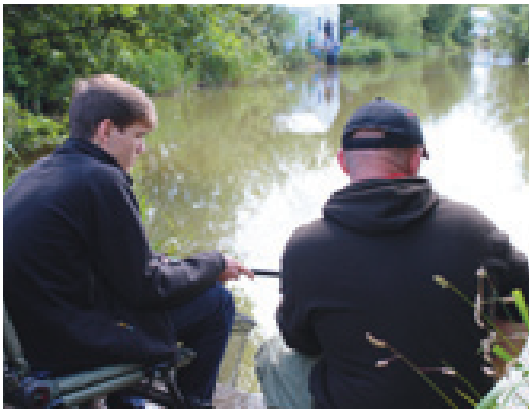
The Fishing for Answers research report⁶ by Substance presents a huge amount of persuasive evidence about the positive roles that angling can play in improving people's lives across a wide range of age groups and communities.

There has been a surge of projects using angling as a tool to tackle youth exclusion and improved personal and social development in the past decade.

These Angling-related Youth Intervention Projects (AYIPs) deliver programmes for young people that focus on: personal and social development; diversion from crime and anti-social behaviour; and attainment in education and employment.

The research suggested that these are best achieved when such outcomes are fore grounded over angling outcomes – i.e. A sport for development approach as distinct from a sport development approach.

Angling also has a huge interest from those who are 60 years and older and those less able. 24% of those who responded to the National Angling Survey indicated they were retired and 20% indicated that they had an illness, disability or infirmity that affects their physical activity.



Angling makes a huge contribution to preventative and restorative health and well being. It is a means by which people access natural environments, peace and quiet and de-stress, lessening the likelihood of mental ill health.

Angling can help increase the physical activity of inactive people, assist in recovery from physical and mental illness and work across generations, helping build young people's confidence and relationships with older people.

It is something that young people can do with people 10 times their age, and going fishing together is a great way to break down the fear of figures of authority like Police officers. So it is an activity that we need to promote more and encourage these age groups to take up and continue with.

Angling makes a huge contribution to preventative and restorative health and well being. It is a means by which people access natural environments, peace and quiet and de-stress, lessening the likelihood of mental ill health.

The Fishing for Answers report said that 87% of anglers surveyed identified 'rest and relaxation' as an important motivator for participation.



We will promote angling's contribution to the '5 Ways to Well Being': be active; give and volunteer; take notice and live in the moment; keep learning; and connecting with others.

Angling will also promote how it can assist in treatment and recovery from mental illness, promoting social connections and addressing mental health problems faced by both young and older people.

Many service providers are unaware of these benefits and we will help angling organisations to champion well-being benefits to new Public Health providers and Health and Well being Boards at the local level. This will include:

- Guidance to advise regional angling managers and local organisations on the new health structures and developing relationships with public health providers
- Compilation of evidence and good practice to support the case that others can use
- Development of pilot projects to demonstrate angling's contribution

The success of angling based youth inclusion projects needs to be promoted professionally to education authorities and youth services.

Further support is required for angling organisations to work together to enable them to help deliver these outcomes.

Support to do this will come from the establishment of a centralised, online information facility explaining the work of AYIPs; contact details of projects to assist those seeking this type of service in their area; and assisting angling projects to establish links with public health and well being agencies, local authorities, education, youth justice, and wider youth services and charities.

Better quality data are required on the effectiveness of all these intervention programmes to demonstrate that programmes are delivering the intended well being and young people benefits and to collate the benefits being delivered at a national scale.

Angling is often the first experience of being close to nature and so can form an important link to environmental education. A number of organisations use angling and the environment as part of the national curriculum but it is not widespread.

A common message from angling groups was that there is duplication of educational and promotional materials and a lack of information on what worked and how it could be repeated. There are opportunities to agree the production of generic material for a range of publications and to agree common standards or formats, so avoiding duplication of cost amongst organisations.

The advantages in time and cost savings are obvious but the dialogue that leads to that common approach and the partnerships forged as a result will be a basis for future collaboration.

87%

The Fishing for Answers report said that 87% of anglers surveyed identified 'rest and relaxation' as an important motivator for participation.



Measures of Success

We will have been successful in improving people's lives when:

- There has been an increase in the numbers of angling related youth intervention projects and young people accessing them
- Generic material that summarises the benefits of angling related projects has been put in place to aid the establishment of more projects
- A campaign to raise the profile of the benefits and successes with non angling audiences has been implemented
- Educational material has been standardised and shared between organisations to save resources and to ensure common target audiences receive the same messages
- An outcomes-based monitoring and evaluation framework has been put in place to demonstrate angling's contribution to young people's lives and highlight successful practice.



- Greater engagement with service providers
- More angling related youth intervention programmes bring more benefits
- Standardised educational material in place
- Monitoring and evaluation implemented

3. Creating community waters

Urban and country parks and heritage locations are places where people like to spend their time away from work, to relax and enjoy being outdoors; these places often include the coastline, lakes, canals and rivers. People are attracted to water; in addition, of course they also become places where people like to fish.

Local waters with good facilities and services are important community assets as well as ideal locations for introducing people to fishing. They provide on the doorstep fishing opportunities to ease worries over time, distance and cost of venues further away – all barriers stopping people fishing.

Fishing near to where people live creates a sense of community and ownership; people get together to look after their local waters so they can enjoy going fishing there together.



Far too often, urban waters, piers and harbours are closed for fishing in an attempt to prevent anti-social behaviour and environmental damage, whereas the provision of managed angling access is often the solution to these problems.

We need to work more with local authorities and key agencies such as the Canals and Rivers Trust and the National Trust to realise the benefits of the waters close to where people live. We also need to document the successes to provide evidence and good news stories of how angling can be the catalyst for bringing people together and improving the environment.

Far too often, urban waters, piers and harbours are closed for fishing in an attempt to prevent anti-social behaviour and environmental damage, whereas the provision of managed angling access is often the solution to these problems.

But these local community waters offer much more. Substance⁷ identified twelve ways in which the introduction of angling on community waters can add value, particularly related to health and well being.

The Localism Act will allow local community groups, including angling organisations to have a greater say in how local services are managed and run.

We will work with key agencies such as Locality, the Plunkett Foundation and local authorities to support angling-related organisations in running, managing and owning water based community assets for the benefit of all. We will propose and support ways in which angling can work with other bodies in partnership to bring about these benefits including the development of guidance information that is centrally available.



Angling already contributes to local tourism in rural and coastal locations. However, the angling tourism market in England is less well known and developed than perhaps Wales and Scotland.

Work needs to be done to assess the potential for its further development, but there are likely to be great opportunities in coastal towns and rural areas, particularly outside the peak tourist season.

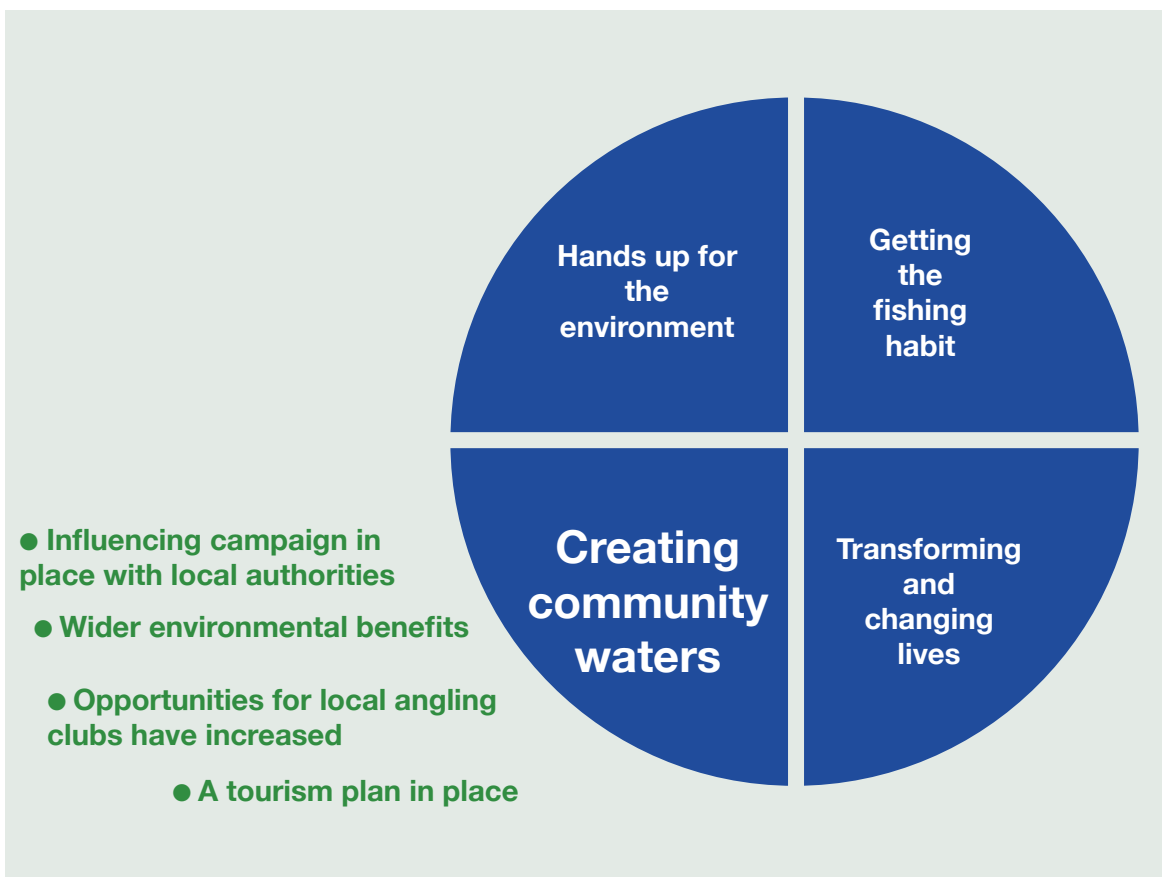
Local economic and social benefits need to be identified, and pilot projects and regional approaches need to be developed.

This will require angling organisations to work in partnership with national and regional tourism agencies and government departments (Department of Culture, Media and Sport; Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Department for Communities and Local Government)) to identify opportunities, customer demands and needs as well as funding.

Measures of Success

We will know angling has been successful in being a catalyst for improving local communities when:

- An influencing campaign with Local Authorities has been implemented to make them aware of the angling related benefits and opportunities for local management
- A volunteer programme is in place promoting how volunteers can contribute to the improvement of local environments
- A plan is developed for increasing community involvement in managing and owning local community waters, developing partnerships between angling clubs, projects and local authorities
- A central database of good practice and accessible waters has been established
- An angling tourism strategy is developed and implemented for a number of pilot projects in England
- Monitoring and evaluation schemes are in place in a proportion of these waters to demonstrate and record the benefits



4. Hands up for the environment

The presence of fish is a good indicator of water quality, and anglers have a deep understanding of the health of fish stocks and the waters that support them. Fish are one of the key components of the drive for improvements to the water environment under the Water Framework Directive.⁸

Anglers have long campaigned for the protection and improvement of the water environment because of their interest in fish and fishing. 26% (7,576) of respondents to the National Angling Survey indicated that they were interested in getting involved in environmental improvement work: there is an army of volunteers willing to help make rivers, lakes, canals and coastlines better for fish and fishing.

26% of respondents in the Angling Organisation Survey indicated that improved fish stocks would be the most important thing to help them attract new anglers (the highest single response); and that better fish stocks would encourage existing anglers to go more often.

We have come a long way over the last 30 years in cleaning up our rivers but it is now clear that there are other pressures which require attention.



Anglers need to be more closely involved in decisions about how environmental improvements are delivered and setting priorities so that fish and fishing benefit from the new investment.

The National Angling Survey found that pollution was the biggest environmental issue for freshwater angling. Accelerated programmes of work need to be put in place to ensure targets identified in River Basin Management Plans are met which will help to address issues identified in our surveys relating to poor fish stocks, pollution and low flows.

Anglers need to be more closely involved in decisions about how environmental improvements are delivered and setting priorities so that fish and fishing benefit from the new investment.

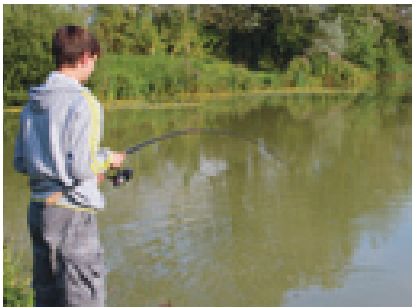
A successful sea angling sector relies on healthy marine fish stocks. In the National Angling Survey over 37% (10,387) of respondents took part in sea angling and 69% of those said that poor fish stocks was the 'most important' problem that needs to be addressed in sea angling – by some distance the highest response.

53% of respondents (more than twice any other response) said that tighter controls on commercial fishing was the most important action to address fish stocks. Recreational sea angling generates huge economic benefits for the UK economy and coastal areas. **We will campaign to improve marine fish stocks and to highlight the benefits this would bring.**

Many anglers fish on stillwaters which are privately or local authority owned. Sustainable and healthy fish stocks, and a secure future for fishing, rely on good management. Many stillwaters have no or poor management.

The Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) operates a Fisheries Accreditation Scheme aimed at driving up the competence of fisheries managers and improving the management of fish in recreational fisheries, but this has not been widely adopted.

Furthermore, by following the guidelines set out in Golden Rules⁹ anglers can also avoid and minimise the potential for a poor public image which sometimes arises from the view that anglers leave litter, fishing line and damage fish.



Healthy fish stocks, and a secure future for fishing, rely on good management.

Adopting these schemes, and investing in their promotion to the angling community, will protect the reputation of angling and sustain and develop its environmental credentials. In turn, this will help persuade decision-makers that angling is a force for good, rather than ill.

But angling can go further. Huge numbers of anglers (24% of all respondents our survey) are involved in voluntary activities associated with angling club governance and coaching activities. 26% of respondents to the National Angling Survey said that they would like to get involved in environmental improvement volunteering

Others volunteer in a range of schemes to help monitor and improve the environment. Schemes such as the River Fly Partnership, the Anglers Monitoring Initiative and the Non Native Invasive Species removals provide opportunities for anglers to monitor the health of the water environment.

26%

26% of respondents to the National Angling Survey said that they would like to get involved in environmental improvement volunteering





Organisations like rivers and wildlife trusts and others such as Trout in the Town form working parties to look after urban rivers, remove invasive non-native plants and animals and carry out environmental improvements such as the removal of litter and restoration of habitats; these all provide opportunities for local communities to engage with the water environment.

Given the interest identified in the survey, more opportunities need to be provided to allow this volunteer interest to be harnessed.

But it can only happen if national and local organisations recognise the potential and make it easier to get involved. More support is needed to make this happen.

Lots of organisations use volunteers and have put in place practices which safeguard them whilst carrying out their duties. We should learn and adopt practices from these organisations and share the information widely to avoid duplication of effort and resources.

Organisations like rivers and wildlife trusts and others such as Trout in the Town form working parties to look after urban rivers

A central hub of all environmental volunteering opportunities together with guidance and instructions in the safe use of volunteers would help. This could be developed to map and report on locations improved and where opportunities exist.

Poaching and predation are reported as issues for the environment and which affect frequency of fishing. Poaching of coarse fish on stillwaters and lakes appeared to be a higher priority from the survey than poaching of game fish.

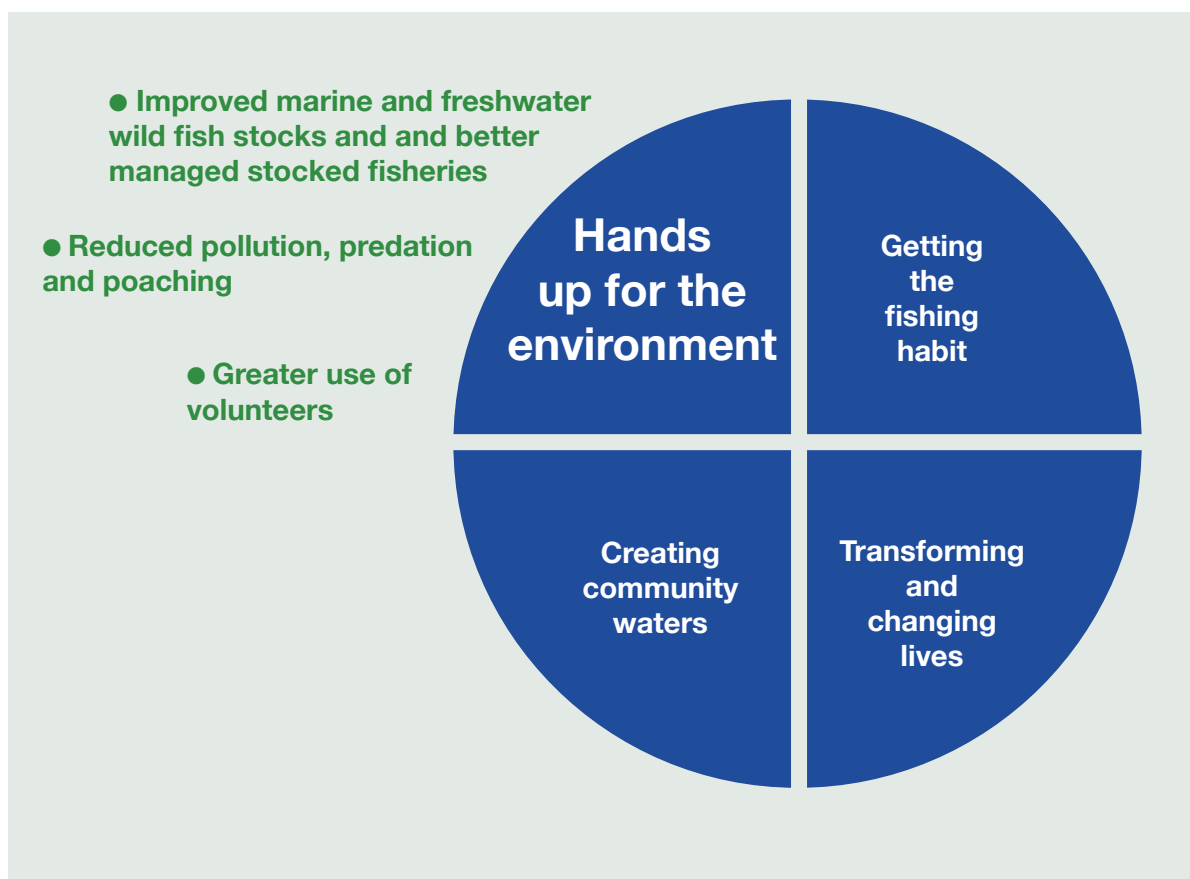
Existing pilot programmes run by the Angling Trust to help educate foreign nationals and new anglers about angling rules and codes of practice, volunteer bailiff schemes and self-help groups such as Riverwatch need to continue and expand into other parts of the country to help address these concerns. More dialogue over this issue is required with the Environment Agency and the Police.

The Angling Trust is working with other organisations to make it easier for fishery owners to control the number of cormorants and goosanders which can affect fish stocks on waters used for angling.

Measures of Success

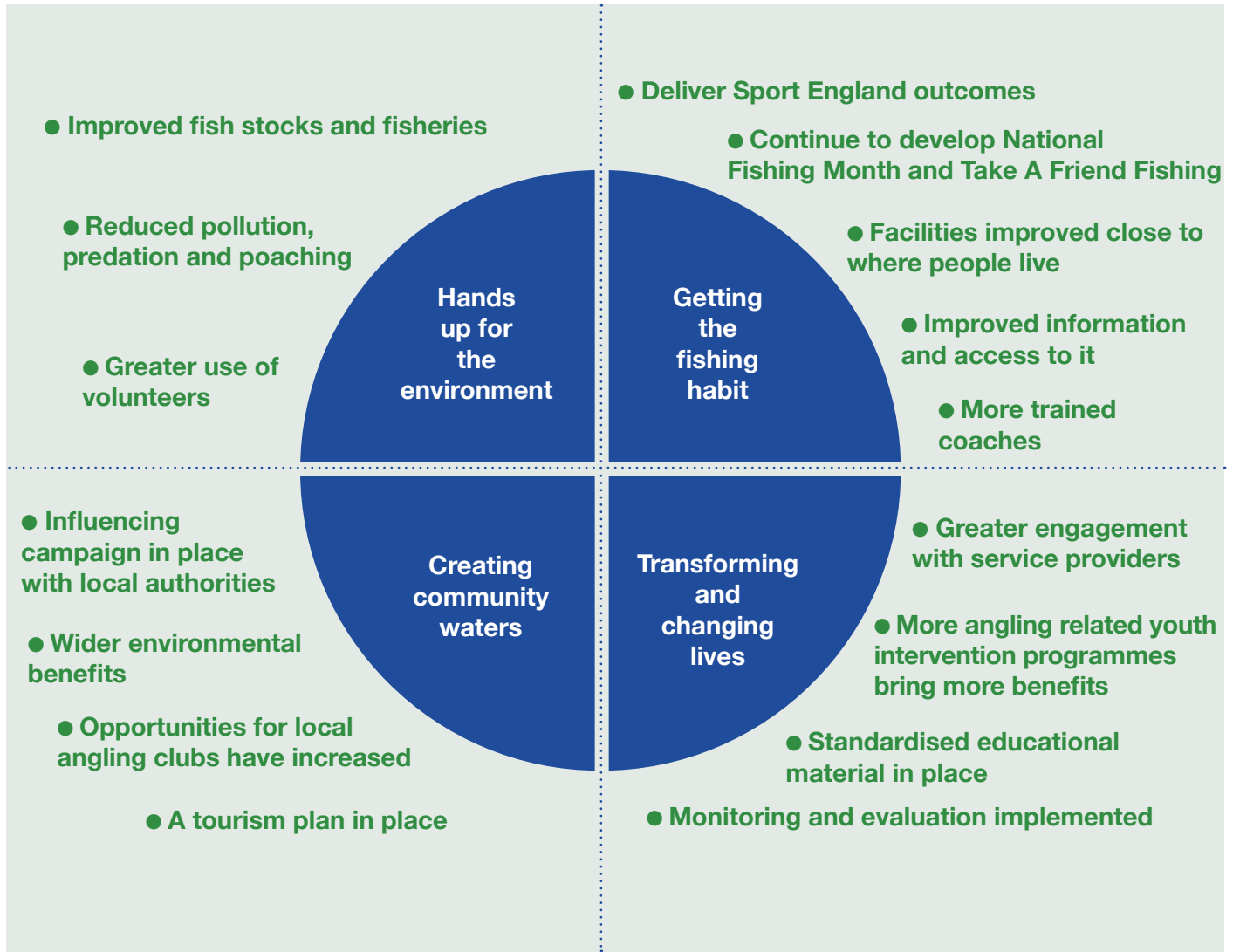
We will know we have been successful when:

- Water bodies, as defined under the Water Framework Directive River Basin Plans, meet good or better status by 2015
- Freshwater and sea anglers report that they are catching more, bigger and healthier fish
- More fisheries and angling clubs have adopted the principles set out in the IFM Accreditation scheme
- Online information is provided to map river restoration and habitat improvement work and advertise opportunities for volunteer involvement
- More environmental outcomes are being delivered with the use of volunteers
- It is easier for volunteers to help and support statutory bodies.
- High quality information on the level of poaching, and the action taken to address it has been made available and updated annually to inform subsequent action in the future.
- The impact of cormorants and goosanders is being managed to prevent excessive damage to fisheries occurring.



Implementing the strategy

Our four outcomes and main delivery components are shown below:



There are three key elements to successful implementation of the strategy:

- Adopting an inclusive and partnership approach & developing ownership
- Engaging the wider public – non angling audiences – as well as anglers and angling groups about the strategy and how they can contribute to it
- Establishing sufficient long term resources

The Language of Partnership

Many of the organisations currently delivering or using angling already work in partnership to deliver their outcomes. This strategy recognises that no one body has all the skills, resources, knowledge and experience to deliver on their own.

Such partnerships deliver a range of services and activities for example between local authorities and angling clubs and provide the basis for better mutual understanding between communities and angling.

Given the likely reductions in national and local government expenditure, angling can look to provide wider service and partnership provision in the future.

If the strategy is going to have any credibility, it must have ownership from existing and potential partners. They need to be able to see where they sit in it and how it applies to them and what they can contribute.

Angling currently takes place across a number of disparate bodies, organisations, clubs, charities but the goodwill exists to recognise that by coming together the future of angling will be more secure and the potential benefits realised.



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Individuals and organisations are also likely to feel more confident about their work and in developing approaches to non angling audiences.

This coming together is very important in particular with non angling audiences, for it is amongst them that there is a lack of understanding of what angling can deliver.

We will have to reach out to organisations we have never worked with and this will take time, to build a common purpose, to develop trust, to agree and provide evidence of outcomes and ways of working and to find resources.

Targeting of relevant bodies and organisations describing how angling can contribute to their outcomes will need to be developed for each of the main sectors. Angling needs to talk their language not its own.

Some of the current operators and delivery organisations are listed on the Angling Trust website (www.anglingtrust.net/nationalanglingstrategy). There are many more and as part of the delivery of this strategy we plan to collate much more information about who is doing what in the angling community.

Many of these will continue to grow and develop if the right support is available through implementation of this strategy.

However, there is potential for changes in the balance of delivery. We have already seen this happen in recent years with the rivers trusts being awarded a greater role over habitat improvements and improving fish passage, and the use of volunteer bailiffs for rod licence checking organised through a pilot project run by the Angling Trust.

We have identified the opportunity for local groups to take on sites currently operated by local authorities.

There may be further opportunities in other areas, particularly given the interest in volunteering expressed and with the involvement of the 3rd sector.

However, long term sustainability of partnerships and therefore delivery are reliant on continuity of funding.

Partnerships take time to develop and prosper; continuity of funding and in some cases some up front funding allows suitable and robust investment decisions, into either equipment or staff, to be made. Funding bodies need to take this into account in taking forward partnership opportunities.



We have already identified some of the common resource needs of many of these delivery organisations e.g. promotional materials, equipment.

This can be used as an opportunity to exercise their buying power if they can come together in a coordinated and partnership approach. There is a role for the Angling Trust to take on the role of coordinating this and other aspects of the strategy.

Engaging the wider public – banging the drum for angling

Angling receives very little promotion so there is a general lack of awareness of what angling is – the numbers who fish, the amount of fishing, type of fishing – and what it does: the social, environmental and economic benefits.

Also, angling has not been good enough at engaging with and talking to non-angling audiences. There is a lack of understanding as a result, with the perception that it is boring, unexciting, only about sitting around on a box.

Angling needs to tackle these misconceptions if it is to survive, thrive, grow and achieve its aim of being valued for the contribution it makes to people and society. The drum needs banging for angling.

However, promotion of angling must be recognised as a shared role amongst the range of organisations delivering or using angling for everyone has a stake in it. A more coordinated approach is required to maximise the impact and exposure.

1

Promoting angling was ranked as the highest priority for the Angling Trust in the Angling Organisation Survey



How this is to be achieved will require further discussion amongst partners delivering the work but can include a range of opportunities such as:

- Creating consensus for a single website which becomes the agreed hub for angling. This will provide information on how to start fishing, how to become a coach and where to go fishing. It will report on the range of projects using angling as a tool for development and on funding opportunities. It will be a live resource which is owned and operated by angling to promote angling to a wide range of audiences.
- Use of social media to direct users to online resources and to buying a licence.
- Professional communications and PR to promote the benefits of angling and the successes of angling organisations in delivering a better society.
- Focussed marketing investment at target groups using mechanisms and routes to which they are accustomed.



Angling is seen as old man's sport – the average age of an angler from the national angling survey was 51 and respondents were 98% male – but if it is going to attract new people it must embrace new ways of communication, working and operating which are more typical of the audience it is trying to attract.

An improved web presence would help, but it must go further than that into social networks and beyond.

There is a need for the creation of routes for keeping people involved in the activity they are doing – whether it is forums for new starters, reporting of good fishing experiences and locations, or coaches wanting further support and information on coaching and personal development opportunities – people want to feel connected, involved and part of something that is good.

Angling must embrace new ways of communication, working and operating which are more typical of the audience it is trying to attract.

The development of networks amongst similar delivery organisations will help avoid feelings of isolation, reinforce positive messages and identify common areas of working for more partnership opportunities.

The existing angling networks of regional forums and catchment consultatives should continue but they should branch out to reach into new networks outside angling.

Sufficient long term resources

There are a range of possible funding sources available from which this strategy can be implemented.

Funding for	Example organisations	What is funded
1. Getting the habit	Environment Agency	Rod licence income used for: improving facilities; coaching; education and information; access to fisheries
	Sport England	Development of angling as a sport. Funding applied to deliver the Sport England programmes 2013-2017
	Angling Trades Association	Run and co-fund National Fishing Month with EA and AT
	Individual clubs, fisheries and anglers	Use of organisation subscriptions, donations and voluntary time to increase participation
2. Transforming and changing lives	Home Office (eg, Positive Futures)	Youth inclusion; crime reduction; combating drug and alcohol misuse
	National Youth Charities (eg, Clubs and Young people; Sported)	Use of sport as a tool for young people's personal and social development
	Dept. of Health / NHS / GP consortia	Health prevention and improvement: increasing activity; preventative and restorative health; increasing well being
	Environment Agency	Rod licence income to encourage retention in angling into older age groups, pump priming of AYIPs and similar
	Sport England	Promotion of activity to improve health of inactive people
	Individual clubs, fisheries and anglers	Use of organisation subscriptions, donations and voluntary time to improve fisheries
3. Creating community waters	Big Lottery Funding (Realising Ambition)	Support sport for development
	Dept. Communities and Local Government / Locality / My Community Rights	Assisting community right to bid and right to provide funding available through locality
	Environment Agency	Rod licence income used for improving and accessing facilities
	Big Lottery Fund (Reaching Communities)	For communities most in need - both capital and revenue funding
	Private / corporate social responsibility sector	Voluntary labour, donations, knowledge, sponsorship for facility and community waters improvements
4. Hands up for the environment	Individual clubs, fisheries and anglers	Use of organisation subscriptions, donations and voluntary time to improve fisheries
	Environment Agency	Grant in Aid, Catchment Restoration funds, partnership funding, rod licence income, used to improve fisheries and fish stocks
	Rivers Trust	Use of grants, lottery awards and private donations to undertake catchment scale activities to improve river environments
	Private / corporate social responsibility sector	Voluntary labour, donations, knowledge, sponsorship for restoration and improvement work

Environment Agency

Currently, the majority of the financial resources for investment in angling come from the Environment Agency, raised from anglers' rod licences and reinvested to angling and fisheries development related projects. In 2009/10,¹⁰ Environment Agency funding in England provided for 31,000 people to receive coaching through 41 angling participation schemes, costing £0.9m.

In addition, 19 education and information projects were completed (cost £0.18m), and 118 projects to improve access to fisheries (£3.7m).

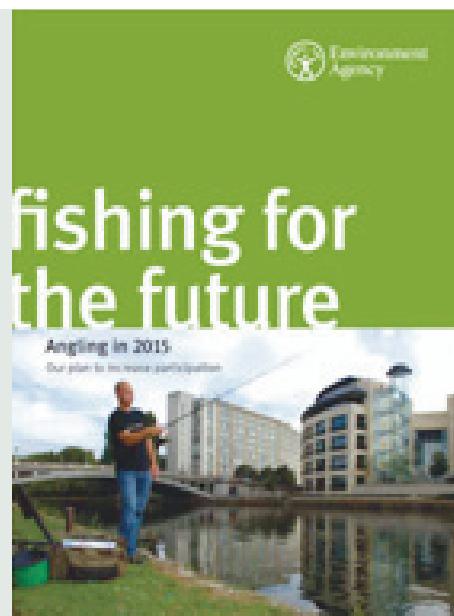
Much of this work is delivered in partnership so the actual total expenditure is much higher than this.

The EA also spends rod licence income and Grant in Aid and other partnership contributions in the improvements of fish stocks. In 2009/10, this totalled £13m across England and Wales.



£0.9m

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Sport England

Sport England has funded angling development over the last 4 years, providing £1.56 million to the Angling Development Board (now part of the Angling Trust) over this period.

This has helped build a coaching and delivery structure at national and regional levels under the auspices of the National Governing Body for angling. The Angling Trust is currently applying for funding for the next four years and a decision is expected by the end of 2012.

Sport England's criteria funding for 2013 - 2017 is restricted to a focus on increasing the frequency of participation of anglers so that they take part once a week, and the Angling Trust has been encouraged to prioritise work with older age groups, rather than growing the numbers taking part or young anglers.

For angling to develop holistically, other funds will be required to build participation levels.

There are some areas of overlap between the objectives of the Environment Agency and Sport England. Opportunities to maximise the synergies in activity and funding must be taken to make efficient use of resources.

The Angling Trust is funded by Sport England to set up groups at a county level to secure funds to increase coarse, sea and game angling participation.

41 County Angling Action Groups (CAAGS) have been set up, involving member clubs, fisheries and coaches, schools, youth organisations, Environment Agency, Canal and River Trust, and County Sports Partnerships who are interested in projects with this aim.

These groups are focused specifically on angling development. The CAAGs have attracted over £200k of external funding to support local projects (which build on Sport England's investment).

The network of CAAGs can help in using their experience of building networks and raising funds from non-angling sources, for it is to non-angling organisations that these benefits need particular emphasis.

Projects which are delivering substantial benefits for youth intervention programmes, health, education and local people generally obtain funding from the relevant national or local government or charity body.

Funding from the rod licence is used to pump prime initiatives to develop their approach and to reflect the contribution to increasing participation but the majority of their funding is via the relevant sponsoring organisation.

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Implementation Group

An overseeing Implementation Group made up from the principal national interests operating in angling together with non angling representatives should be set up to generate the atmosphere, culture and partnerships and subsequently plans for each component of this strategy.

Formal arrangements will need to be put in place between relevant organisations to co-ordinate and implement agreed work plans. Some prioritising of work areas will be required in and between the four key objectives.

An annual meeting of all angling related organisations should be held to report on progress, share knowledge and good practice, report on changes and discuss the way forward.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

The Implementation Group will also ensure that there is a much more comprehensive and robust approach to monitoring and evaluation of angling's impacts.

This is essential if angling is to demonstrate its value to both angling and non-angling audiences and funding will be sought to support the development of a new framework. A monitoring and evaluation framework needs to ensure that the targets identified in this strategy are met and reported.

This needs to go beyond the simple reporting of numbers of participants and ensure that there is quantitative and qualitative evidence that non-angling outcomes are being delivered.

It will require national coordination, but there will also be a responsibility on angling development managers, charities, projects and clubs to ensure that an accurate picture of angling's contribution can be painted.



Risks

Environmental Sustainability

Protecting and improving the environment must be an overriding requirement for all projects which aim to increase participation and the places where people fish.

Good fishing depends on a good environment so the protection and improvement to the wider resources and environment must be at the heart of angling.

Anglers have a long tradition of looking after the environment in which they operate and we see this continuing. The fact that 26% of respondents to the survey indicated an interest in environmental work demonstrates that commitment.

The survey showed the decline in river coarse fishing and the popularity of stillwater coarse fishing. We encourage stillwater owners to meet the standards set out in the IFMs Fisheries Accreditation scheme so that the resource and the environment on which angling depends are protected for the future.



We will work with others – Government, Environment Agency, fishery owners, fishing clubs, river trusts – to ensure protection of our rich natural assets of rivers and lakes.

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Poor marine fish stocks threaten the future of sea angling and urgent action is required to reverse the decline in many stocks in recent decades, otherwise angling participation is at risk.

Conservation measures such as control of commercial fishing, minimum landing sizes and reform of the Common Fisheries Policy must be adopted.

Anglers should be encouraged to play their part in this by observing minimum landing sizes, by reporting illegal netting and trading of illegally-caught fish.

They can also contribute to the future of sea angling through the Sea Angling 2012 research, which aims to find out how important the sport is to the country's economy, how many people enjoy the sport and how much fish they catch and return (see www.seaangling2012.org).

Financial resources

Implementation of the plan is subject to the funding which is available. The majority of the financial resources for investment in angling currently come from the Environment Agency, raised from anglers' rod licences.

The amount of available budget is dependent on rod licence sales annually. Licence sales and therefore income are susceptible to factors outside the control of angling – weather, big sporting events, and economic conditions – as well as the choices made within the Environment Agency.

Rod licence sales have fallen from a peak in 2009/10 due to a combination of factors – a Government freeze on marketing, lack of up to date information on where to go fishing, big sporting events, poor weather, and the poor economic climate.



Currently, 5% of rod licence fee money is used to fund projects (e.g. education, volunteering, young people) run by organisations other than the EA, but 60% of survey respondents wanted more to be spent.



Currently, 5% of rod licence fee money is used to fund projects (e.g. education, volunteering, young people) run by partners, but 60% of survey respondents wanted more to be spent.

Given the importance of rod licence income to the continuation of many of the organisations delivering environmental and social benefit, it is imperative that no fall in licence sales is allowed to continue.

The impact on charities, volunteers and businesses would be immense, as difficult choices would have to be made and some of this work would have to stop.

Previous work has demonstrated that it is possible to secure higher licence sales by taking proactive action to promote angling opportunities and using the potential for prosecution for fishing without a licence.

Without such action, the widespread benefits of angling will not be realised, and may begin to diminish.

Angling receives less funding per participant than most other Sport England funded sports.

To increase this ratio, it will have to maintain and further develop the strong, unified governance structures that have been established and continue to develop its track record of successfully delivering Sport England outcomes.

The success of this strategy in part relates to securing an increase in competition angling. Funding for competition angling is low and all competitions have become self funding as a result. Similarly, funding for national competitions is difficult to find.

However, it is clear that a wider funding base is important for the future existence of angling in all its forms, and the strategy can help in this regard too.

Potential partners and funders can view the bigger picture of what angling is trying to achieve and should pick up some areas of work not currently supported.

Having this strategy in place means that projects can be more readily prioritised according to the funds available.



Continuity

There is concern that new people introduced to the sport have difficulty finding routes into long term angling activity after their initial introduction.

Every effort needs to be made to help individuals find their way into further programmes, local clubs, and to provide information to them.

This can be facilitated by linking up the work of the various organisations involved in angling to ensure that their work is complementary, rather than conflictory or competitive.

In addition, the Angling Trust's plan to develop a club based programme of activity will also help.

Buy in, partnerships, networks

The Angling Trust could not and would not want to deliver the strategy on its own.

Although it has been invited to co-ordinate the strategy, and will play a central role as the National Governing Body for angling, the outcomes identified can only be delivered with the involvement, support, skills, knowledge and resources of the whole range of organisations currently or potentially delivering angling in all its forms.

It is up to these organisations to decide whether to become involved or not.

Many have already done so, and the more that join in will mean a more collaborative and cooperative approach rather than a competing one which has been the position previously.

There are huge opportunities for angling if we can work together and engage non-angling audiences and organisations.



Outcomes and targets

Appendix 1

Outcome	Target	Baseline	Measurement	Evidence
Getting the habit	Increase the number of people fishing	2012 licence sales	Recover to and maintain at 2009/10 levels - 1,469,994 licences	Licence sales
Keeping the habit	Increase weekly activity in adults over 26	2011 Sport England stats	Extra 12, 731 by 2017	Active people survey
	Increase weekly activity amongst those with disabilities	2011 Sport England stats	Extra 1,400 by 2017	Active people survey
	On line tools are in place which identify cheap fishing locations, places to fish and people who want to go fishing together	Establish baseline	Delivery of central website.	Website
	More fishing locations suitable for all ages and abilities close to where people live	National Angling Survey statistics on barriers. Map potential opportunities near major conurbations	Reduction of these items as a barrier by 2018. Mapping system implemented	National monitoring/future Angling Surveys Number of locations improved
	There are an increased number of properly trained and qualified coaches to support more formal entries into angling and those anglers who wish to improve their skills	Coaches survey 2012	Extra 2,000 by 2017	Records of registered coaches; monitoring and evaluation of Sport England Programmes
Transforming and changing lives	There has been an increase in the number of angling related youth intervention projects	Establish baseline	Increase in number of projects	Central record of projects in England
	Number and range of outcomes, qualifications and accreditations from interventions schemes	GHOF current outcomes measurement	Extension of monitoring 20 more projects/ organisations. Increase in number of personal outcomes	Active people survey
Creating community waters	Angling clubs have developed partnerships with local authorities to manage local waters for local authorities	Establish baseline	4 projects per year exploring right to bid/manage/asset transfer	National strategy evaluation
	An angling tourism strategy is developed and implemented for a number of pilot communities in England	5 pilots areas to be identified	Delivery of tourism strategy in pilot areas	National strategy document. Reporting of pilot projects
Hands up for the environment	Freshwater and sea anglers report that they are catching more, bigger and healthier fish	Establish baseline	Catch reports	Regular survey
	More fisheries and angling clubs have adopted the principles set out in the IFM Accreditation scheme	Establish baseline	Increase each year	National strategy evaluation
Monitoring and evaluation	All angling-related clubs and projects	Sport England stats. GHOF monitoring	Delivery of M+E framework by implementation group	National strategy evaluation to include outcomes based reporting

Endnotes

- 1 Public Attitudes to Angling, Environment Agency, 2010
- 2 Economic Evaluation of Inland Fisheries, Environment Agency, 2010
- 3 Fishing for Answers – Final report of the Social and Community Benefits of Angling Project; Substance, January 2012
www.resources.anglingresearch.org.uk
- 4 National Angling Survey (NAS) and National Organisation Survey (NOS)
- 5 Moss, Stephen (2012) Natural Childhood, National Trust
- 6 Fishing for Answers – Final report of the Social and Community Benefits of Angling Project; Substance, January 2012
- 7 Making the Most of Community Waters Localism, Health and Angling; Substance, October 2011
- 8 A European directive to improve water environments with a particular emphasis on ecology
- 9 Angling and wildlife golden rules, Environment Agency, 2010
- 10 Environment Agency website, your licence, your money, Where your money goes



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substance.

The development of this strategy has been informed by national surveys undertaken by Substance social research cooperative (www.substance.coop).

- Full survey reports are available at: www.anglingtrust.net/nationallanglingstrategy
- These reports and a wealth of other angling research is also available at www.resources.anglingresearch.org.uk



The production of this strategy would not have been possible without the financial and other support of the Environment Agency.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the hundreds of organisations and thousands of individual anglers who have contributed to the development of this strategy – without your input this would not have been possible. We look forward to working with all of you for a better future for angling.

A list of organisations that have contributed to the strategy and continue to contribute angling's beneficial outcomes is available on the Angling Trust website.

We would like to acknowledge Martin Stark in the writing and production of this document.



Fishing for Life

A national strategy for getting people fishing 2013-2018

www.anglingtrust.net/nationalanglingstrategy