

The Social and Community Benefits of Angling

Research Task 2

Angling and Young People

Interim Report

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substance.

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Executive Summary

Angling and youth policy and practice

- Services for young people are expected to take a holistic approach to young people's needs, involve young people and their families in the shaping of decisions, and work in an integrated, cross agency approach to achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes and the Scottish equivalent Getting it Right For Every Child. In addition the government's 10 year youth strategy aims to transform negative conceptions of young people and increase the delivery of positive activities that build young people's social and emotional skills. While angling organisations are already orientating themselves to this direction, there is still a need to make explicit their contribution to specific policy outcomes.
- In particular angling is well placed to contribute to the government's educational strategies, working both in extended schools, delivering alternative educational provisions, and reducing the number of young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) in line with the 14-19 reforms.
- Angling also has the potential to contribute to the government's health and wellbeing strategies by being part of the 5 hours of physical activity offer, encouraging healthier lifestyle choices, providing activities within and developing green spaces that facilitate mental and emotional wellbeing, and delivering health and wellbeing education to some of the most hard to reach young people.

Angling as a tool of engagement.

- Angling is an activity that is well suited as a tool of engagement for young people, including some of the most hard to reach young people. Skilled coordinators recognise this and use the 'buzz' of catching a fish to motivate young people's re-engagement with learning and assist them to develop the personal, social and emotional skills needed to thrive. The vast nature of angling practices allows for the delivery of flexible sessions that can be shaped to facilitate inter-generational engagement, peer bonding, confidence building, the recognition and celebration of achievement, engagement across social barriers, and can be adapted to both group and 1-2-1 work.

Angling and 'places to go and things to do'.

- 'Places to go' and 'things to do' have become key elements in government strategies for young people. Local Authorities in particular have a statutory obligation to publicise comprehensive, accurate and accessible data on facilities and venues, as well as positive activities in their area. Angling has the potential to do more in relation to this key government agenda.
- Young people's limited mobility, through lack of money, poor access to transportation or protective parenting means local spaces can have a greater impact on young people's wellbeing. However young people find themselves increasingly excluded from local community centres. Angling interventions that seek to develop free and accessible waters within community spaces can therefore have a positive impact on young people's lives, creating opportunities for them to not only take up angling as a recreational activity but

also potentially to increase their participation in community life and develop a sense of belonging.

- Positive activities are those thought to facilitate young people's personal and social development. They tend to be structured, with a clear goal or purpose, and engaged in over time. Angling is already contributing to the provision of positive activities, offering a diverse range of sessions that often go beyond fishing itself. Angling projects that engage with some of the most disaffected young people are enabling young people to expand their supportive network, come into contact with wider members of the community, and helping them access services that can further assist their development.
- While there are many angling venues, projects and organisations offering young people places to go and things to do, this information remains fragmented, difficult to access and not necessarily orientated to young people's needs. There is therefore a great potential here for the collation and linking of information at a national level, as well as greater cooperation at the local level to ensure angling venues and activities are included in Local Authorities' statutory obligation to publish such information.

Typology of Approaches to Angling and Young People.

- We have identified four distinctive angling approaches which impact on angling delivery styles and outcomes for young people. These represent where projects and organisations working with young people are concentrating their efforts. The categories are therefore not mutually exclusive and many projects employ elements from each in their delivery.
 - i) The Sport Development Approach* is orientated toward taking a structured approach to providing safe, quality opportunities for young people to engage with angling. In this respect it is contributing to the provision of things to do and places to go, and attempting to meet government targets in encouraging young people into physical activity. However our initial work suggests that a pure sports development cannot realise the full value of angling in terms of personal and social developmental outcomes for young people. Consequently care needs to be taken to avoid too narrow a focus on sports development that might marginalise other ways in which angling can benefit young people.
 - ii) The Diversionary Approach* is shaped by the perspective that if young people are engaged in a constructive recreational activity, they are not then involved in anti-social behaviour or crime. As a result the diversionary approach tends to result in short term provision, directed at crime hotspots and delivered during the school holidays. However, we have found angling intervention work goes well beyond temporary diversion, affecting behavioural change amongst young people who are excluded from school, engaged in anti-social behaviour, or NEET through long term personal and social development work. It is important therefore to adequately communicate the wider work that angling organisations do in order to secure sustained funding and raise angling's profile.
 - iii) The Educational Approach* is extremely varied ranging from approaches to engage young people in the curriculum, provide opportunities for experiential learning outside of the classroom, to delivery of angling-related qualifications. However the focus on qualifications as measurable 'outcomes' may well be obscuring the

valuable personal and social developmental work that also occurs as part of some angling courses. In particular, engagement in angling courses can be orientated towards building young people's confidence; tailoring courses to suit their wider developmental needs; raising aspirations to go on to further education, employment or training; and strengthening parent-child relationships. As a consequence it is clear that a greater degree of communication is required to express these outcomes and signpost the ways in which angling's contribution to the educational agenda goes well beyond 'qualifications'.

iv) The Personal and Social Development Approach appears to result in the most meaningful engagement with the hardest to reach young people. It is characterised by long term engagement that seeks to build young people's social and emotional skills in order to enable them to cope with difficult situations. Such engagement is facilitated by the creation of supportive relationships that provide young people with 'safe spaces' where they can develop a sense of belonging, and mobilize a supportive network when needed. In relation to angling projects this approach results in a delivery focus that seeks to develop competent young people rather than competent anglers. The Personal and Social Development Approach has great potential to engage and transform outcomes for some of the most disadvantaged young people. However this type of engagement is only possible through sustained, long term engagement. Commissioners and funders therefore need to recognise and make allowances for the achievement of these long term outcomes.

Angling and Developmental Approaches

- Outcomes for disaffected young people are shaped not only by approach but also by personnel and organisational models. The diversity of approaches and consequent delivery styles requires different sets of skills and qualities from practitioners. While our research has begun to identify some of the key qualities for this sort of work, we highlight that there is a need to investigate further how coaching qualifications and other skills training needs to be adapted for more developmental outcomes.
- Angling intervention projects utilise independent venues, community partnerships and non-venue based approaches. While aspirations amongst angling projects tend towards securing their own site, there are many advantages in alternative models. In particular learning from partnership and non-venue based models show how such delivery can facilitate greater community engagement, develop young people's sense of belonging, and develop assets that have a benefit beyond young people. Learning from these types of examples can also be applied to venue based models. However a clear advantage of project-owned venues is the potential to have more control over delivery, widening young people's engagement to site maintenance and vocational experience, developing their sense of ownership and allowing for greater influence over site decisions.

Emerging Issues

- Government policies make clear that all organisations working with young people should empower them to have a voice in the services affecting them. While angling organisations may ask young people to identify activities or venues they wish to visit, few have developed more extensive means for

young people to participate in the shaping of activities and projects. In particular there is a danger that 'feedback' is interpreted as a form of monitoring and evaluation rather than part of the personal and social development of young people. Exploring emerging best practices around 'participation', 'empowerment' and 'ownership' is therefore a key priority for the next research stage.

Introduction

This report forms part of the feedback from the first year of *The Social and Community Benefits of Angling* research project, funded by the Big Lottery Fund and undertaken by Substance. It will report on the second of four Research Tasks within that project: 'How can angling combat the exclusion of young people?'

The purpose of this report is to provide a framework for understanding the role of angling as it relates to intervention with socially excluded young people and provide an initial policy review as well as identifying the range of activities being offered through angling. Future research will be shaped around the typology set out in this report.

As an *Interim* report, it is work in progress highlighting the shape of the research so far. It is split into five sections:

Section 1: A brief overview of relevant policy and literature

Section 2: A preliminary analysis of the potential benefits of angling as a tool of engagement and ways this might be achieved

Section 3: A typology of different approaches to angling interventions with young people

Section 4: Different delivery mechanisms

Section 5: Emergent issues and future lines of inquiry.

This report is based on site visits and interviews with young people and organisations delivering angling based interventions, as well as those clients/partners commissioning such work. The research is focused around an action research approach with one organisation in particular, the Get Hooked On Fishing Charitable Trust (GHOF) which serves as the principal case study. GHOF has over nine years experience in engaging some of the most hard to reach young people in multiple projects established across England and recently in Scotland. The focus on GHOF has meant that much of this interim report covers England. However we have also explored other organisations using angling with young people which has included projects in Scotland and in addition to GHOF, research has been undertaken with nine other angling inclusion projects across England and Scotland. This has been further supplemented by interviews and visits to angling clubs, schools, councils and community ponds. A list of organisations participating in the research can be found at the end of the report.

A key aim of this research period was to begin to identify the range of angling intervention activities currently being employed. This has included: informal and semi-structured interviews with project coordinators; observation of delivery sessions; interviews with parents, young people, teachers, youth workers or other clients and partners engaged. These multiple perspectives in combination with our own observations are building a complex picture of how and why angling is used as a tool for intervention with young people. A great deal of additional taped interviews, particularly with young people, has also been collected during this research stage that will be analysed and used to inform the following year's research phase.

Section 1. Angling and Young People: The social and political context

There is to date very little literature on the potential benefits of angling as it relates to young people. Much of the evidence remains anecdotal, while the scale of engagement and range of practices has yet to be collated. Substance conducted some of the first research in this area in its 2006 report for the UK Home Office and Countryside Agency Social Exclusion Unit *Getting Hooked: Get Hooked on Fishing, young people and social inclusion*. Although there has been an increasing interest in this area of work, as well as the social problems it seeks to address, this research has in part been funded because there is an identified evidence and knowledge gap about angling's role in relation to key policy agendas for young people.

The 'youth problem' has remained high on the political agenda and there is a need to assess angling's role in the current climate if it is to successfully engage with current debate and promote its benefits for young people, especially those who are marginalised.

1.1 The policy context of engaging young people

1.1.1 *The Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework*

The *Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework* (ECM) is a framework against which all youth services are assessed. It has five wellbeing outcomes (and 24 sub categories)¹:

Be healthy:	Physically; mentally and emotionally; sexually; make healthy lifestyles choices; choose not to take illegal drugs.
Stay Safe:	Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation; from accidental injury and death; from bullying and discrimination; from crime and anti-social behaviour; have security, stability and are cared for.
Enjoy and Achieve:	Be ready for school; attend and enjoy school; achieve national education standards at primary school; and secondary school; achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation.
Make a Positive Contribution:	Engage in decision making on the community and environment; engage in law abiding, positive behaviour; develop positive relationships and choose not to bully; develop self confidence to successfully deal with the challenges of life.
Achieve Economic Wellbeing:	Engage in post-school further education, employment or training; be ready for employment; live in decent and sustainable communities; access to transport and material goods; live in households free from low income.

¹ *Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework*
<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-00331-2008.pdf>

The Scottish equivalent *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC), is similar in approach identifying eight well being indicators²:

Safe	Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.
Healthy	Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health; access to suitable healthcare; support in learning to make healthy and safe choices.
Achieving	Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school, and in the community.
Nurtured	Having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed or, where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting.
Active	Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community.
Respected	Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions which affect them.
Responsible	Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles in their schools and communities and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision and being involved in decisions that affect them.
Included	Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

Both of these sets of outcomes/indicators are to be achieved through **a holistic approach to young people's needs; the involvement of children, young people and their families in the shaping of provisions; and an integrated, cross agency approach**. All organisations working with young people are expected to adopt these approaches and show their commitment to securing these well being outcomes and indicators.

While we have found many angling projects and organisations already clearly state their commitment to these outcomes, there is still a need to demonstrate exactly *how* they are actually contributing to them through rigorous monitoring and evaluation that signposts activities to the ECM and GIRFEC outcomes.

Angling schemes already working with hard to reach young people are well placed to build local partnerships to secure better outcomes for young people. This could include coordinated working with Local Authorities, Schools, Youth Offending Teams and Primary Care Trusts. Some projects and clubs are also already engaging young people and families in the shaping of provisions. This needs to be built upon,

² *Getting it Right For Every Child*. 2007:2
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/163531/0044420.pdf>

highlighting and sharing best practice to encourage more angling groups to do the same³.

1.1.2 *Aiming Higher for Young People – A 10 year strategy for positive activities*

Following *ECM*, the *Youth Matters* green paper (2005), focused more specifically on improving outcomes for 13-19 yr olds. Following consultation, the government has renewed its commitment to, 'empowering' young people, and providing them with places to go and things to do, and an opportunity to contribute to their local community, as well as better access to support and information⁴.

These outcome frameworks have shaped subsequent government policy on children and young people, most notably *Aiming Higher for Young People – A 10 year strategy for positive activities* (2007).

The strategy aims to:

- Transform negative conceptions of young people through positive activities and a reversal of the view of young people as 'problems' to be addressed.
- Release funding for investment into young people's services
- Address the additional problems faced by some of the most disadvantaged young people
- Contribute to young people social and emotional development through the increased provision of positive activities and extended schools.
- Develop positive activities that are supported by trusted adults and quality professionals.
- Encourage empowerment and young people's ability to influence services.
- Increase access by overcoming barriers such as cost, information, transport, safety, lack of confidence or low aspirations.
- Ensure the provision of high quality services that include face to face work with young people.

The strategy focuses on providing a holistic response to the needs of young people. It shifts delivery emphasis away from viewing young people as problems in need of diversionary activities to prevent them engaging in crime or anti-social behaviour, to emphasising the role of positive activities in increasing young people's social and emotional skills in order to manage risk and live healthier, happier lives. Importantly the strategy also recognises the importance of addressing not only opportunities for personal development but also transforming the *contexts* in which young people live.

For angling projects to bring themselves in line with *Aiming Higher* they will need to demonstrate that they are:

- **Providing opportunities** for young people to positively contribute to their communities through activities such as volunteering, which have the potential to transform negative perceptions of young people.
- **Delivering structured positive activities** that engage young people in developing social and emotional skills through sustained engagement.
- **Empowering young people** to influence the services provided for them so that they are "attractive, accessible and appropriate for their needs."⁵ This requires a commitment to not only providing systematic opportunities for

³ See Section 5.2 of this report for our plans to investigate 'making a contribution' and the shaping provisions further.

⁴ DfES (2006) *Youth Matters: Next Steps. The Government's Response to the Consultation*. The consultation included over 19,000 responses from young people.

⁵ *DCSF (2007: 54) Aiming Higher For Young People: A Ten Year Strategy for Positive Activities*

young people to provide feedback, but may also involve helping young people develop the skills necessary to be able to contribute.

1.1.3 Education, Extended Schools and Alternative Provisions for young people

Educational attainment is a powerful route out of poverty and disadvantage. Angling can further its role in this field by contributing to three major policy developments that address young people's engagement in education.

	Relevant Policy content	Angling's potential contribution
Extended Schools (<i>Extended School: Building on experience</i> . 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools and LAs expected to provide a wide menu of activities outside of school hours by 2010. ○ This should include sporting activity and parental support services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After school angling clubs. ○ Re-engaging young people at risk of exclusion or otherwise disengaged with education through angling intervention projects. ○ Delivering out of school angling OCN, BTEC or ASDANs. ○ Engaging parents in angling sessions.
Alternative education provisions. (<i>The Back On Track</i> white paper (2008))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools to make more use of alternative provisions as a form of early intervention when young people are identified as being at risk of exclusion. ○ Greater integrated approach between schools, special schools, children services and the third sector in managing young people with challenging behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivering angling courses leading to recognized qualifications. ○ Greater coordination with local schools and alternative education provision strategies of LAs. ○ There are two angling projects currently registered on the National Database of Providers of Alternative Provisions⁶.
14-19 Reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The 14-19 reforms will reduce the numbers of those not in education, employment or training (NEET) by raising the minimum age of young people leaving education or training to 17 by 2013, and 18 by 2015. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engaging young people between 14-19 yrs in educational opportunities and training. ○ greater emphasis on promoting and demonstrating how angling intervention acts as a gateways for young people to further learning or employment in line with LA's NEET strategies.

⁶ This can be found on Teachernet. <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/altprov/database/database/>. A brief search has revealed GHOF Midlands and Anglinf4success to be the only registered angling based providers. Only those registered as independent schools can submit their details. This is predominantly determined by the amount of hours taught per child. More details can be found on the site.

1.1.4 Health and Wellbeing.

It is the government's ambition to reduce by 2020, the proportion of overweight children to 2000 levels. This is being led by the Department of Health (DH) and the DCSF as set out in *Healthy Weight, healthy Lives: a cross-government strategy for England*.⁷ The strategy focuses on five key areas.

- The healthy growth and development of children
- Promoting healthier food choices
- Building physical activity into our lives
- Creating incentives for better health
- Personalised advice and support

In addition, the *PE and Sport Strategy for Young People* aims to offer all young people aged 5 to 16 the opportunity to participate in five hours a week of PE and sport by 2011.⁸ Two hours will be provided in the curriculum with an additional three delivered through extended schools, voluntary or community providers. This will coincide with the encouragement of more children into leadership and volunteering roles in sport.

Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures: the strategy for children and young people's health (2009), builds on the previous two strategies by making explicit a commitment to mental as well as physical health. In particular it highlights the importance of 'healthy neighbourhoods' where children are encouraged and have the opportunity for physical activity in green spaces. Research on the physical and mental health benefits of green environments have highlighted the positive effects they can have on reducing blood pressure and positively affecting mood and self-esteem,⁹ assisting physical recovery,¹⁰ having a restorative effect on stress,¹¹ and improving concentration in children with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD).¹² The benefits of contact with nature are perceived to be so great that Louv and Frumkin (2007) have argued that land conservation could be seen as a 'public health strategy'.¹³ Angling and its related conservation/environmental activities therefore has a potential role to play in improving young people's physical and mental health and wellbeing.

While a great deal of health and wellbeing education will be provided in schools, for example through Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), the National Youth Agency (NYA) commissioned report *Being healthy: The Implications for youth work on Every Child Matters*, raised concern that this may mean those most

⁷ DH (2008) *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government Strategy for England*.

⁸ This is reduced to 3 hours (non curricular) for 16-19 year olds. DCSF (2008) *PE and Sport Strategy for Young People*.

⁹ Pretty J, Griffin M, Peacock J, Hine R, Sellens M and South N, (2005) 'A countryside for Health and Well-Being: The Physical and Mental Health Benefits of Green Exercise' *Report for the CRN*.

¹⁰ Ulrich R S. (1984) 'View through a window may influence recovery from surgery' *Science* 224, 420-21

¹¹ Hartig T, Mang M, Evans GW (1991) 'Restorative effects of natural environment experiences' *Environment and Behavior* 1991; 23: 3-27. But see also Kaplan (1995) 'The restorative benefits of nature: towards an integrative framework'. In *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. Vol 15, No 3.

¹² Taylor AF, Kuo FE and Sullivan WC (2001) 'Coping with ADD : the surprising connection to green play settings.' *Environment and Behaviour* 33 : 54-77

¹³ Louv, R. and Frumkin, H. (2007) *The Powerful Link Between Conserving Land and Preserving Health, Land Trust Alliance Special Anniversary Report, 2007*

in need of such education are not reached because they are already disengaged from school¹⁴. Where angling projects are already engaging some of the most hard to reach, particularly those excluded from school, there is the opportunity to engage in more informal education on healthy lifestyle choices, drugs, or sexual health, and/or signpost them to appropriate services. CAST North West's OCN programme in Drugs and Alcohol Awareness is a clear example of this.

It is clear that angling can play an important role in helping to achieve a wide variety of health and wellbeing outcomes. It is important therefore to not only recognise but actively promote angling's benefits in this area.

Our initial findings show that angling can contribute to the government's health agenda by:

- Being part of the 5 hours a week physical activity offer;
- Improving physical activity in everyday life (through increasing access to fishing venues and encouraging young people to cycle or walk to them where appropriate);
- Promoting healthier food choices (particularly in relation to sea and game fishing);
- Providing activities within and developing green spaces that facilitate mental and emotional wellbeing;
- Providing opportunities for health and wellbeing education.

Our research has begun to show that many young people engaging in fishing would not describe themselves as 'sporty'. Angling can therefore be a way to engage young people who are uninterested in 'traditional' school sports in other forms of physical activity. These activities can include less sedentary fishing styles, conservation and construction work, as well as hiking or cycling to fishing venues.

¹⁴ Hunter, B and Payne, B. *Being Healthy: The Implication for Youth Work of Every Child Matters*. Report for the National Youth Agency (NYA).

Section 2 Angling's Potential as a 'Tool' of Engagement for young people

2.1 The Distinction of Angling

As with many activity based interventions for young people, the majority of those using angling stress that fishing is a 'tool' to get young people 'hooked'. Workers argue that if young people enjoy what they are doing it becomes much easier to deliver outcomes related to education or personal development. Nonetheless, angling, as it is delivered/used with young people does contain elements which make it particularly useful for engaging some of the most hard to reach young people. This was initially highlighted in Substance's report *Getting Hooked* but is being explored in greater depth in this research. Below we summarise some of the key ways in which angling has a distinctive offer to make as a positive activity for young people.

i) Angling as 'The Great Leveller' (understanding success and failure)

Those working with young people will often point out how angling is the 'great leveller', in that once you are on the water everyone, regardless of age, gender, wealth or physical ability starts from the same slate. Anyone can compete and succeed regardless of their background. For young people who may feel disadvantaged in one form or another (ie through poverty, or poor academic attainment) being able to succeed from a *level* starting point can be an appealing, confidence boosting experience.

There is no doubt that angling is a skilled practice where years of experience and training can improve a person's ability to catch. However unlike many other sports there is also a perceived element of 'chance'. Environmental factors are considered to have an impact on success rates. Everything from the particular peg, to weather conditions, to fish not being interested, is often cited as a 'legitimate' reason for not catching. Personal 'failures' can therefore be mitigated through legitimate factors beyond one's control. This is important when dealing with young people who may have low self esteem.

The School Team

The Thomas Adams School angling team came 19th in this year's National Schools Championship. While they were clearly disappointed, the banter between them shifted quickly from personal scrutiny to mutual engagement in identifying a particular swim as being poor. It was 'just not a good day' to catch. These were not just 'excuses'- members of the team recognised that they could improve for next year by practising striking, concentrating more, and changing baits. But what was notable was the relative ease in which pressure and self scrutiny was reduced by appeal to external factors. In this way the negatives of 'failures' were not so personally destructive.

In contrast, successes are celebrated, playing down 'luck' and focusing on achievement. Success can be all the greater by highlighting how they were over those who are commonly believed to be more capable than themselves (ie skilled anglers or coaches). This potential to celebrate success and mitigate failure allows angling to be a useful tool for engaging hard to reach young people.

ii) The importance of catching

For some young people the experience of 'success' and the 'buzz' of catching is enough to generate the interest and motivation needed for angling to be an effective tool of engagement. As one coordinator explained:

'once they've got that little inkling, they've had that fish on, that is when you'll know. Because if he's actually smiling and buzzing off it, you're going to change him, because he'll want more and more.'

Good practice therefore emerges where that initial success can be assured by the skilled delivery of coordinators. There are numerous ways in which a coordinator can try to maximise the potential of catching fish. A GHOF coordinator explained that he always kept one particular area heavily ground baited a few days prior to the scheduled fishing session. If he identified a young person to have particularly low self esteem or unable to catch he will manoeuvre them to the baited location before the end of the day. In this way he is able to use angling with a greater deal of precision to facilitate particular positive developmental outcomes.

iii) Graduated skill development

Even after that initial catch there are always increasing levels of skill development and challenges for young people to engage with. Fly fishing serves an interesting example here. At a GHOF project we have visited regularly, young people were told that fly fishing is difficult, requiring skill and co-ordination. But as the day progressed young people and coordinators recognised multiple milestones to be achieved, everything from putting a rod together, to making a good cast. This ensured that there were always achievable points of success for young people to reflect upon.

iv) Expressing and recognising achievement

In terms of recognising achievement the use of photography is one of the most widespread practices. Young people post pictures to Facebook/Bebo, keep them on their phones to show each other, and put them up on their walls. These photographs function as an expressive map of 'distance travelled', allowing young people to look back at their progress.

The use of photography is also important for young people as a means of having their success recognised by others. Many of the young people we have visited are often described as underachievers in school. Having a space in school that displays their achievements can be a rewarding way of gaining positive attention. As one child told us, he liked it when the teacher came to visit them fishing because she took pictures of them which she would later show in class.

The various angling intervention projects also use photo displays to record the achievements of young people echoing photographic displays found in family homes. These forms of visual display and the discussions held around them communicate that young people 'belong' to this particular 'family' and that people here take an interest in their progress and development.

v) Peer groups

Because angling can be practiced across age ranges, it serves as a valuable opportunity for widening peer interaction.¹⁵ Expanding potential peer groups, allows



young people to 'hang out' away from prior negative influences. Moreover the peer bonding and acceptance practices observed around angling tend to revolve around successful fish catches rather than acts of anti-social behaviour.¹⁶ By incorporating different ages, young people get to meet older peers who can serve as positive role models, while older peers can take on a mantle of responsibility because they have younger children looking up to them. This is at the heart of the peer mentoring scheme used by GHOF. As one youth inclusion worker using GHOF peer mentors explained:

'Any subject that I want to cover with a young person, I could cover until I was blue in the face and that young person would probably listen to my advice but would either take it or leave it...Get another young person to come in and speak to that young person, and they walk out of that room believing every word they said.'

vi) Inter-generational engagement

Inter-generational engagement that brings young people and adults together 'is a powerful way to change negative conceptions'.¹⁷ Young people engaged with angling will potentially encounter other fishermen, dog walkers or other members of the community. While angling schemes generally teach young people how to interact safely in such situations and show consideration to others around them, such activities also allow the opportunity for adults to engage with young people. Most commonly adults appear more willing to approach younger people fishing to ask them if they have 'caught anything', and fishermen will at times offer assistance in landing or unhooking a fish, offering advice, spare hooks or tying rigs. While such small moments of engagement may seem fleeting and of little depth, they signal an important point of connection that can sow the seeds for transforming young people-adult perceptions of each other.

vii) Increasing engagement across social barriers

Because angling can be practiced by everyone, there is potential here for angling to break down social barriers through encouraging participation and shared experiences between black, minority and ethnic (BME) groups, those with disabilities¹⁸ and other

¹⁵ Our increasingly age segregated society means that young people often do not get the opportunity to interact with older or younger peers. Camino, L and Zeldin, S. (2002) 'From Periphery to Center: pathways for Youth Civic Engagement in the Day-to-Day Life of Communities.' In *Applied Developmental Science*. Vol 6, No 2. 213-220.

¹⁶ For example see work by MacDonald on graffiti and peer groups. MacDonald, N (2001) *The Graffiti Subculture: Youth, Masculinity and Identity in London and New York*. Basingstoke, Palgrave.

¹⁷ DCSF (2009) *Creating a Sense of Belonging*. p14

¹⁸ Very important considering recent publicised cases of young people's involvement in anti-social behaviour targeted to disabled groups. For example:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/leicestershire/8268521.stm>

marginalised young people. These should be perceived as learning opportunities that bring young people into managed yet unfamiliar contexts so that they can develop not only a personal awareness of others in the community but also experience interaction for themselves.¹⁹

viii) Targetting social skill development

There are many ways to structure sessions, and skilled practitioners will understand the benefits of fishing particular styles for creating particular social or learning environments. Working with a brief to deliver a school session that encouraged socialisation between young people considered socially awkward, 'loners' or antagonistic to each other in school, a GHOF coordinator designed a session around one of their smaller ponds. By keeping technique restricted to the use of uncomplicated whips and positioning young people on separate pegs but in view (and shouting distance) of each other, the environment was set for the catching of a fish to be a social event. Over the course of the session, we observed that young people slowly began to take interest in each other's successes and failures, eventually rushing over to look at each other's catches or offer assistance with landing a fish.

ix) Providing one to one engagement opportunities

From the perspective of youth work and personal development one of the most commonly cited advantages of fishing is the opportunity for 1-2-1 engagement with a young person. Young people can be positioned around the water in such a way that allows for private 1-2-1 discussion with a worker without the need to obviously remove them for a group. As one youth worker remarked this is particular useful when working with a group of 'lads' because there is no stigma attached to being removed from what is going on for a 'private chat'. Moreover angling, depending on the style practised, is conducive to reflection and contemplation, and appears to be particularly effective with young people who may otherwise be quite agitated or hyperactive. Sitting by the water's edge waiting and watching for a bite allows workers to talk to young people in an informal way that can be less intimidating than a scheduled meeting.

Summary Table of the Distinction of Angling.

Aspect of angling	Benefit delivered
Angling as 'The Great Leveller'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Downplaying backgrounds, abilities or social/educational disadvantage. ○ Mitigate self criticism of 'failures' while still celebrating success.
Importance of catching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using the 'buzz' of catching to generate interest and the motivation that enables angling to be used as a tool of re-engagement.
Graduated skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensures all young people can identify and experience an element of success to reflect on.
Expressing and recognising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintaining a young person's personal record of

¹⁹ It is important not to over ascribe the positive contribution angling can make in such situations. Angling can provide a space for interaction, however it cannot deal with the structural problems that may be behind antagonism between groups. Angling intervention can only therefore be part of a much broader tool kit that attempts to deal with social problems.

achievement through photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> distance travelled and achievements. ○ A way to have success recognised and celebrated. ○ To express belonging and signify the interest taken in young people's progress.
Peer groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing the opportunity to engage in and develop alternative, positive peer groups. ○ Increase positive engagement between younger and older peers. ○ Development of 'role models' and peer mentors.
Inter-generational engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunity to engage with appropriate adults and wider adult members of the community. ○ Potential to improve negative perceptions between adults and young people.
Engagement across social barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing awareness of BME, disability, or other marginalised social groups through shared experiences.
Targetted social skill development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tailoring session to the development of particular social skills outcomes.
Providing 1-2-1 engagement opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunity for 1-2-1 youth work while engaging in an activity. ○ 1-2-1 work without the stigma of needing to remove young people from group activities.

2.2 Angling and Key Youth Policy Themes

In order to ensure that all young people have access to positive leisure time activities, Local Authorities have a statutory obligation to publicise comprehensive, accurate and accessible information on facilities (places to go) and positive activities (things to do) in their area²⁰.

2.2.1 Places to go: social spaces and exclusion.

Having places for young people to go emerged as a key need in the government's consultation with young people,²¹ it has consequently shaped gov't policy²² and increasingly focus has been given to providing suitable places for young people. When addressing the need to reach socially disadvantaged and excluded young people, there is a pressing need to consider the effects of local policies and practices that increasingly marginalise young people from community spaces. Young people often find themselves restricted because they do not yet drive, may have limited funds to take public transport, or may be constrained by protective parents who do not allow them to bike or travel far.²³ As a consequence **local spaces can have a**

²⁰ Crabbe, T (2009a) *DCSF Information and Signposting Project: Sharing the learning. Taking Positive Activities Information Further*. Substance

²¹ See DfES (2006) *Youth Matters: Next Steps. The Government's Response to the Consultation*. And Crabbe, T (2009b) *DCSF Information and Signposting Project Extension Report. Activity Mapping: Summary of funding and method* which highlighted a need for Friday and Saturday night provisions. Substance.

²² See DCSF (2009) *Aiming Higher For Young People*. And *Creating a Sense of Belonging 2009*.

²³ See Kegler, MC; Oman, RF; Vesley, SK; MCLeroy, KR; Aspy, CB; Rodine, S & Marshall, L (2005) 'Relationships among Youth Assets and Neighborhood and Community Resources'. *Health Education & Behavior*, 32 (3), 380-397. And Weller, S & Bruegel, I

greater impact on young people's sense of wellbeing because their limited mobility means they have fewer opportunities to escape the local environment.²⁴ Having local places where young people can go and feel safe is consequently an important means of improving their quality of life.

However there appears to be an increasing trend in the **criminalisation of young people's presence in urban spaces**. From the disbanding of groups of young people on street corners to the banning of 'hoodie' wearing youths from shopping centres, young people can often find themselves unwelcome in local centres. Such spatialised exclusion is detrimental to promoting young people's community engagement and sense of belonging.²⁵ It is important to question therefore whether providing recreational spaces for young people on edges of localities compounds a sense of ostracisation when not coupled with suitable spaces in the centre.

In relation to angling there are some interesting developments that seek to offer young people **freer access to fishing venues within communities**. This is a pressing need given that fisheries and private clubs now own many of the waters across England and Scotland. When dealing with the most marginalised young people, even a minimal, token payment may well prove a disincentive. In addition, unstructured informal recreational activities can be more appealing for initial engagement²⁶, and contrary to the perceived formality of junior clubs.²⁷ Freely accessible waters can therefore be important if participation in angling is to be taken up by some of the most disadvantaged young people.

Organisations such as Catch 21/Thames 21²⁸ that assist in the clean up and development of ponds in local parks across London are contributing to the establishment of accessible, free waters.

Victoria Park, in Tower Hamlets.

The Victoria Park Angler's Alliance (VPAA)²⁹ was set up in 2003 to improve the quality of the lakes and encourage angling participation. Partnered with the EA and the Local Council they raised funds to redevelop the East Lake, cleaning it and installing fishing platforms while volunteers assisted with the planting. It was opened in 2005. Today the East Lake is available for free public fishing, with free coaching activities provided by Catch 21 and VPAA during school holidays. Regular, led activities encourage engagement and reduce the potential of these waters becoming hazards to young people, local communities or the environment through incorrect use.

(2009) 'Children's 'Place' in the Development of Neighborhood Social Capital'. *Urban Studies* 46 (3), 629-643 on parents' attitudes affecting young people's spatial mobility.

²⁴ See Matthews, H (2003) 'Children and Regeneration: Setting an Agenda for Community Participation and Integration'. *Children & Society* 17, 264-276. In addition the recommendations to DCSF made by the Ofsted *Good practice in extended schools* www.ofsted.gov.uk/.../Good%20practice%20in%20extended%20schools.pdf report encourages the integration of extended schools programmes with regeneration programmes to improve the general environment for children and young people.

²⁵ See Weller, S & Bruegel, I (2009)

²⁶ One GHOF coordinator pointed out about the formality of OCN, 'it's too structured and the type of youngsters I largely get resent it...no question about it, they rebel'. See also *Aiming Higher* 2009: 68.

²⁷ See Staffordshire Youth Anglers (SYA) box on section 3.1 of this report.

²⁸ <http://www.thames21.org.uk/Catch21.html>

²⁹ <http://www.victoria-park-lakes.co.uk/VPAAsite/Welcome.html>

Other notable free fishing schemes include The Liverpool Park Lakes Scheme³⁰ which requires anglers to register for free in order to access the waters. Again fishing activities and matches for young people are arranged throughout summer.

Recognising young people's needs

While some local councils do appear to invest in the development of free waters, there are considerable tensions. These appear to revolve around issues regarding the potential for anti-social behaviour, cost of maintaining facilities, but also a tension between those who wish to see parks as recreational spaces, and those who may wish to see them as environmental spaces. It is notable where such tensions have erupted, for example in Victoria Park, a key issue was lack of information between conflicting groups. There is the potential for anglers and environmentalist to view each other in opposition, however this does not necessarily have to be the case. While aspects of the research focusing on 'participation' will go on to explore these themes, from the perspective of providing places for young people to go, greater attention needs to be paid to:

- the reasons for not allowing free fishing access to young people,
- to what extent these are shaped by overly negative perceptions of young people,
- what strategies may well be in place to transform not only young people's attitudes to local spaces but also adults attitudes to the presence of young people in local spaces,
- how to recognise and take into account the importance of providing such venues for young people when decisions are being made about the use of local assets such as park pond.

It is not the intention of this report to suggest all ponds be converted for young people's use, only that balanced consideration is give to the suitability of such places for young people's angling recreation. Policy makers, funders and commissioners can facilitate this process further by supporting projects or schemes that develop such angling opportunities. We would also recommend the collation and promotion of information on accessible, free waters.

2.2.2 Things to do: positive activities for young people.

Positive activities are generally regarded as those that allow for personal and social development. Specifically "it is the characteristics and nature of the activities, rather than the particular kind of activity, which has the most significant impact on outcomes and the development of social and emotional skills."³¹ **Structured activities that have a goal or purpose are thought to have a greater impact on developmental outcomes**³².

Larson for example argues that structured voluntary activities are important opportunities for young people to develop 'initiative'.³³ He explains that because learning tends to be externally directed and more rigidly structured in the school environment, young people are not often given the opportunity to experiment or shape their own learning. In contrast, where young people may be able to shape their

³⁰ <http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/Images/tcm21-151074.pdf>

³¹ DCSF (2009) *Aiming Higher For Young People: A Ten Year Strategy for Positive Activities*: p21.

³² DCSF (2009) *Aiming Higher For Young People*.

³³ Larson (2000). 'Towards a psychology of positive youth development'. In *American Psychologist* Vol 55, no :1

own activities, such as in recreational time, it can be the case that they do not necessarily engage with activities that sufficiently challenge them. For Larson then the development of initiative is best facilitated by activities that:

- Have enough **structure** so young people are challenged and need to concentrate
- Have enough **flexibility** so that they can take responsibility for directing some of the activity themselves.
- Engage young people **over time** so that young people have enough opportunity to develop.

Sustaining participation through a diverse range of activities

Substance research on Positive Futures has shown however that in order to keep young people interested and offer appealing, challenging activities, it is necessary to wider the agenda of what is offered³⁴. Diversification should not be done for its own sake however but related to the skills and availability of staff. GHOF projects often include visits to sea life centres, fisheries, matches and angling events as well as hiking, laser shooting, involvement in construction projects, fund raising activities, and peer mentoring. Skilled coordinators are able to use and adapt these activities to continue working with some of the most socially excluded young people to develop their confidence, social skills and address anti-social behaviour.

Broadening supportive social networks

Engagement in positive activities has the potential to broaden young people's social network, allowing them access to support, opportunities or facilities that can improve their ability to thrive. The creation of 'safe spaces', where young people feel confident and supported enough to engage in challenging activities, is facilitated by approachable, well trained coordinators. These coordinators can then become important nodes on a young person's network, allowing them to connect with wider services that may otherwise be unappealing or difficult to access.³⁵

CAST North West³⁶, an angling project based in Wigan, are currently engaged in a pilot scheme offering 16-19 year olds not in employment education or training, the opportunity to do a fishery management course. Having spoken to the young people on the course the staff realised that many of them had not been to see a Connexions worker and seemed to be reluctant to organise and attend the meetings. The project therefore invited a local Connexion worker to a delivery session in order to facilitate initial meetings.

2.2.3. Promoting angling's 'places to go' and 'things to do'.

There are currently many angling venues, projects and organisations offering young people places to go and things to do across the UK. However this information remains fragmented. In addition not all angling activities are delivered by angling projects. From Sept 06 to end of Oct 09, 791 fishing sessions were delivered across the country as part of 43 Positive Future schemes. We also found for this period, 176 other sessions being delivered across 12 other projects ranging from Kickz, to youth

³⁴ Crabbe, T (2006a) *Going the Distance: Impact, journeys and distance travelled. Third Interim National Positive Futures Case Study Research Report*. The report stresses however that diversification should not be done for its own sake but in response to young people's interests and related to the skills and availability of staff. p 35

³⁵ DCSF (2009) *Aiming Higher For Young People* p68.

³⁶ <http://www.castnw.co.uk/> Cast NW are unrelated to the CAST angling project running in Nottingham.

inclusion programmes and housing trusts. Activities covered coarse, sea and game, and ranged from single sessions to longer 15 scheduled hours of engagement.

For angling to increase the visibility of its offer to young people it will need to develop the means to accurately disseminate information about angling facilities (places to go) and angling activities (things to do) in a way that is accessible to young people.

- **Nationally:** The Angling Trust has taken some positive steps in this direction with the implementation of a searchable map of angling clubs and the creation of the national Fishing Week page. However care and resources are needed in order to keep information up to date and accurate in covering the scope of activities provided, particularly by non-angling 3rd parties. In relation to where to fish there are sites such as Waterscape.com and Flyfishing-Directory.co.uk. Again the information is not necessarily detailed enough, easily accessible, or appropriate to young people's needs.
- **Locally:** There is a need for angling activities to be integrated into LAs wider promotion of young people's places to go and things to do.

While the range of information may seem vast, learning from the DCSF Information and Signposting Project shows the extent to which this information could be coordinated into formats that are attractive and easily accessible to young people.

Plings

The DCSF Information and Signposting Project (ISP) has been using Substance's Plings Platform to deliver a pilot with twenty LAs to gather, manage and share positive activity information. Plings enables LAs to coordinate the gathering of accurate information on activities by pooling data from different departments and allowing providers to update information directly. This can include activities delivered by private and third sector providers.

Once the information is pooled young people, parents and providers are then able to search it via activity type, location or organisation but, more importantly, the information can also be syndicated to other social media channels including third party websites, social network sites, digital TV, text messages and leaflets.

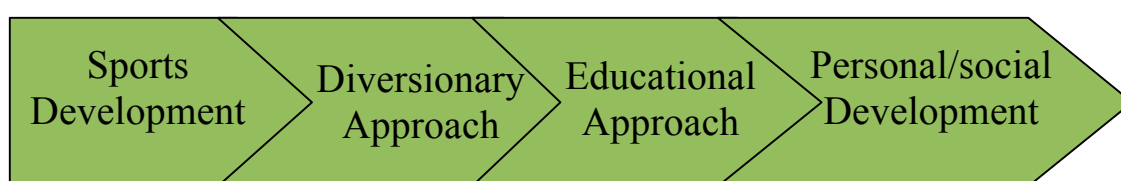
Feedback has also shown how this process can allow LAs and providers to think about how they present activities to young people, to consider the inclusion of 'richer' information on accessibility, using features such as Google maps and calendars. In addition LAs have the opportunity to review the pattern of provision in their area, identifying gaps, and via tools which are now being developed, to analyse and monitor feedback that can help inform the commissioning of further positive activities.³⁷

³⁷ www.plings.net

Section 3 A Typology of Approaches to Angling and Young People

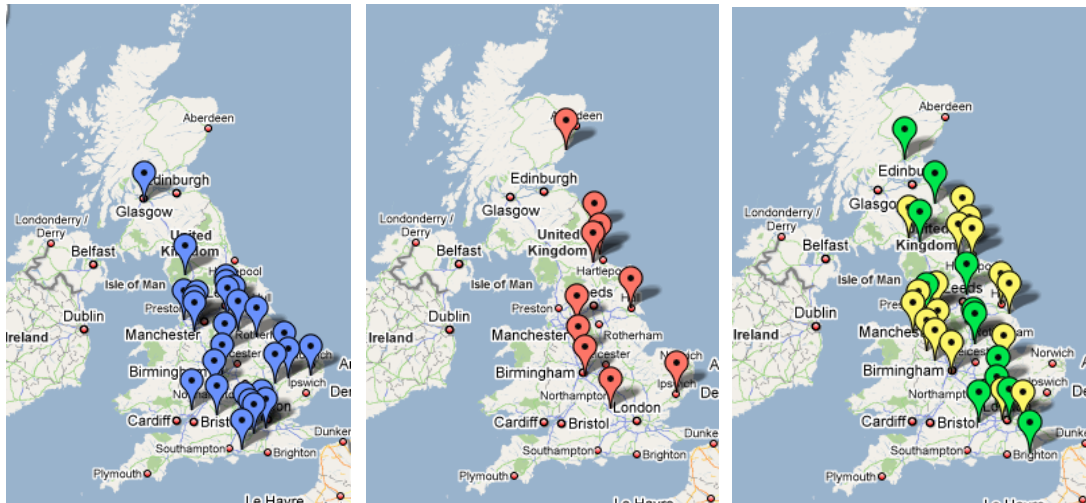
The rationale behind engaging young people in angling inevitably shapes the style of delivery and consequent outcomes. Just as angling practice is itself diverse, so too are the styles of engagement currently being employed. Understanding this relationship will enable greater tailoring of support to those institutions seeking particular outcomes. As a working model, the approaches to angling intervention have been categorised into four broad categories. These serve as theoretical markers to delineate where projects and organisation are concentrating their efforts. It is important to note however that these categories are not mutually exclusive and many projects employ elements of each throughout their sessions.

The following table identifies the strategic leads, delivery organisations/key partners and particular characteristics of the four approaches.



DCMS/ Sport England	Home Office, Police/Youth justice system	DCSF Alternative education/extended schools Youth Task Force	DCSF 10 Year Youth Strategy
Angling Clubs and ADB/AT	Police, Fire service, YOT, Councils.	Schools, Colleges, angling projects	GHOF and some angling projects
Progression and development via matches, clubs and training. Structured events. Involvement of coaches.	Temporary, activity sessions. Often targeted to specific 'hot spot' areas and young people. Aim is temporary diversion but often with a belief activity could be taken up beyond the session.	Attainment of qualifications. Re-engagement with learning. Aim to improve truancy and keep young people from exclusion. Recognise and award personal and social development. (ASDAN) Gateways to further learning or employment	Personal and social development. Use and development of peer mentors. Focus on social skills, responsibility, and confidence. Gateways to employment, training, further development.

We have looked at a range of projects and interventions that encompass the breath of these approaches. Although by no means comprehensive, the maps below indicate where we have identified projects that 'fit' these different 'types'. As the diversionary approach now tends to shape commissioning and justification of activities rather than projects themselves, a map has not been compiled for this group. While the potential for delivery crossover makes the mapping of projects somewhat imprecise, this preliminary step has already begun to show a limited range of coverage in the South West of England.



Map of groups offering the sport development approach; educational approach; and personal-social development approach where yellow is GHOF and green are other intervention projects.

3.1 The sports development approach

Sport England's 2008-2011 strategy is focused on creating a 'world-leading community sport system' that will meet government sport participation targets for 2011.³⁸ This will be achieved through a commitment to three outcomes.

- *Grow* – increase the number of people taking part in quality sporting activity
- *Sustain*- maintain the numbers of people engaging in sport through greater satisfaction.
- *Excel*- improve opportunities for talented people to progress to elite levels.

Angling, is one of 46 sports commissioned to deliver the Sport England outcomes. This will be met through the Angling Development Board's (ADB) *Whole Sport Plan. 2009-2013* (WSP)³⁹ and will impact on the ways in which angling engages young people.

The WSP outcomes for 2013 are:

Grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increasing junior club membership to 10,000. ○ 500 more opportunities for young people aged 11-19 to engage in volunteering, leadership or mentoring programmes
Sustain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 160 clubs achieving Clubmark ○ Increasing the number of coaches by 1,000.
Excel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increasing the talent pool to 10,000 and developing the infrastructure to identify and develop talented young people.

These outcomes are to be achieved through the Angling and Young People Programme (AYPP) that will develop a School Club Link Programme where clubs offer schools extra-curricular coaching sessions and the opportunity for interested young people to continue on in the club's junior section. The School Club Link Programme therefore forms an important part of the 'grow' and 'sustain' strategy.

³⁸ In particular the 5 hour a week offer of physical activity for children

³⁹ ADB (2008) *The Angling Whole Sport Plan. 2009-2013*.

Quality angling engagement will be maintained through Clubmark, which is awarded to those clubs meeting the standards for facilities and good practice when working with children and young people.⁴⁰ The ADB has also been working to standardise coaching qualifications into a single UK Coaching Certificate (UKCC) endorsed scheme and has produced child protection policies and procedures for anyone working with children and young people in angling.

The delivery of the WSP will be assisted by the newly appointed ADB regional officers who will work to improve angling sports development at a regional level by assisting clubs to gain Clubmark; identifying opportunities for club funding; improving club links with schools; and creating more opportunities to train as an angling coach. Where links between clubs and community programmes such as GHOF are encouraged, they are principally identified as a means of providing some of the most marginalised young people with suitable exit routes into clubs and/or encouraging voluntary and leadership opportunities in angling.⁴¹

Worksop and District Angling Association: the sport development approach in practice.

Worksop and DAA has a long history of engaging young anglers and provides cadet (10-13⁴²), junior (13-16) and intermediary (16-19) level sections. Young people can join for free at any stage and follow a skills development path tailored to their needs. While the club clearly seeks to develop young people's angling skills, they have a relaxed attitude and are careful not to push their cadets or threaten expulsion for untidy boxes or inconsistent attendance. The section managers believe attendance becomes more regular however because the club offers what young people want:

- classroom and bankside sessions that focus on developing angling skills and techniques,
- regular local matches throughout the holidays,
- the opportunity to progress from cadet through to adult level,
- the opportunity to compete as part of a team in national competitions.

The club works closely with the local schools to promote sections, events and matches, and provides advice and coaching to school angling teams⁴³. The most notable success to emerge from Worksop and DAA is Matt Godfrey, three times under 18 coarse fishing world champion. He joined Worksop as a cadet when he was 8 years old and progressed through the levels, winning his first individual title for the English team aged 14.

The section managers are keen to stress however that the angling club offers more than just angling skills development. In particular they claim to:

- Provide a diversionary activity in an area where there are perceived to be

⁴⁰ Clubmark then serves as a form of quality assurance for parents or those wishing to support or work in partnership with clubs

⁴¹ The ADB currently offer OCN Introduction to Angling and The Environment aimed at 11-14s, and Coaching Level 1 for 16yrs and over. Recognising the 14-16 gap, the ADB is working to develop an Angling Leaders Award to address this.

⁴² Although exception can usually made to accommodate children from 8 yrs and upwards.

⁴³ Notably Valley School which won this year's Angling Trust Daiwa Schools National Championships, beating 29 teams.

- limited provisions for young people.
- Facilitate opportunities for parents to meet and talk with other parents and spend some quality time with their children by encouraging them to attend bankside sessions as additional supervisors⁴⁴.
- Develop young people's social skills through teamwork:

'We try and teach them life skills as a team member so they can communicate better with different levels of ability. The children that come to me some of them are complete novices like these. Some of them are quite skilful because they've been fishing with their dads and granddads for X amount of years. So with different levels of ability we have to tailor it to the individual but we try and get them to fish as a squad - as a unit of members. They're improving their communication skills.'

The Scope of the Sports Development Approach

The development of safe accessible angling clubs for young people clearly contributes to the drive towards offering young people 'places to go' and 'things to do'. However our initial work suggests potential limits in the ability of a sports development approach to facilitate more personal and social developmental outcomes for young people.

The characteristics of the sport development approach as set out in Substance's report on Positive Futures *Knowing the Score*⁴⁵ describe it as:

- Belief in sport for sport's sake,
- Activity driven
- Focused on development of mass participation⁴⁶
- Highly structured and standardised
- 'Expert' driven
- Fixed-term national/regional programmes
- Institutional

Studies have questioned the ability of a narrowly defined sports development approach to deliver wider social and community benefits.⁴⁷ In reference to vulnerable young people the win-lose dynamic, or 'performance-orientated culture', can be potentially demotivating or detrimental to those with an already fragile confidence.⁴⁸ For more developmental outcomes and for work with more vulnerable young people sport can be utilised as a means of engagement rather than perceiving it to have a particular developmental quality in itself.⁴⁹ Projects adopting this approach seek to address personal and social development rather than focusing on the development of young people to excel at a particular discipline.

⁴⁴ See Weller, S & Bruegel, I (2009) who highlights how young people themselves can serve to establish social networks that allow for the embedding of parents within communities.

⁴⁵ Crabbe, T (2006) *Knowing the Score. Positive Futures case Study Research: Final Report*. Manchester: Substance

⁴⁶ Angling 'taster days' exemplify this.

⁴⁷ For example Lawson, HA (2005) 'Empowering People, Facilitating Community Development, and Contributing to Sustainable Development: the Social Work of Sport, Exercise, and Physical Education Programs'. *Sport, Education, and Society*, 10 (1), 135-160.

⁴⁸ Larson cites the works of Roberts and colleagues here to explain how the focus on winning can create an atmosphere in which talent is seen as an innate endowment. Critique of performance therefore has the potential to be demotivating because it is interpreted as a sign of an innate skill deficiency. Larson 2000: 179.

⁴⁹ Crabbe, T (2006a):32.

While angling clubs such as Worksop already recognise they are having a broader impact, there is still great potential for angling bodies more widely to recognise and address a range of young people's needs. This could involve supporting angling clubs to engage young people in conservation activities, or increase outreach and/or educational work that goes well beyond what is offered through a narrowly focused sports development approach.

What might an angling club run by young people look like?

Staffordshire Youth Anglers (SYA) was set up as a club by a group of young people and their parents after they found no local angling club met their needs. A key priority for them was to form a social group that enjoyed angling and wanted to continue it as a form of recreation, but were not interested in matches or taking a more serious skills development attitude. Under young people's steering the club has flourished to offer social events including bowling, as well as fund raising for local charities and the development of an environmental pond for pond dipping. They invite speaker's, work on projects such as building bat boxes, raise funds to visit fisheries or angling events, and function primarily as a social club built around a shared interest in fishing.

The ADB's definition of a club is admirably extremely wide, recognising everything from informal gatherings of anglers to more structured water owning groups. However, care needs to be taken in development work to avoid too narrow a focus on sports development that might exclude approaches such as that taken by the SYA. In addition, greater clarity may be needed for those delivering a range of more 'developmental' work as to where they may 'fit' within the WSP and the development of the School-Club Link Programmes.

It is important to align the full range of desired outcomes from angling for young people with appropriate approaches and recognise potential strengths and weaknesses.

In 2009 Sport Scotland funded a Business Development Manager for the Angling Development Board of Scotland (ADBoS), which is a partnership body that brings together the main angling governing bodies in Scotland. The Business Development Manager will be responsible for implementing an angling development strategy based around: development of coaches to UKCC standard Level 2; establishment of a series of approved delivery centres based around existing angling facilities; implementation of a club angling programme to be rolled out by the coaches. The club angling programme will seek to engage local communities in a variety of ways depending on local opportunities and priorities. Alongside more traditional sport development – such as creating 'player pathways', there will also be workforce development, grass roots development initiatives, education and social inclusion work such as anti-bullying, crime and anti-social behaviour reduction.

We will be monitoring the developments of ADBoS over the coming year to explore further how their approach will take shape in practice.

Many funders have supported taster days in angling which are characterised by time limited sessions which enable engagement with as many young people as possible⁵⁰. They tend to be short term in that they last only for the day or over a limited number of weeks, usually during the school holidays. Coordinators, coaches and event

⁵⁰ Usually round 20 minutes long but we have witnessed 1 hour long sessions also.

commissioners at times give very different reasons for putting on these events. Justification has included:

- Providing a fun, diversionary activity for local children and families.
- 'Boosting numbers' for evaluation and monitoring purposes.
- Increasing the visibility of an organisation.
- Providing opportunities to work with peer mentors.
- Encouraging more young people to take up angling.

Clearly 'taster days' can serve a variety of positive purposes. However we have some doubt over the ability of taster days to affect long term angling engagement when they are not accompanied by wider signposting of suitable exit routes to junior clubs or accessible waters⁵¹. Recognising these potential limitations, some funders (including one EA region) have turned to commissioning and supporting angling venue development and sessions that focus on longer, quality engagement rather than mass participation. This approach is justified with reference to the view that regular sustained participation is more likely to result in young people's long terms uptake of angling.

3.2 The diversionary approach.

Policy emphasis on the provision of activities for young people has been particularly shaped by the Youth Taskforce's perspective that if young people are engaged in positive activities they are not involved in crime. As a result a key focus has been on making activities available:

- **where they are most needed:** targetting areas of anti-social behaviour, with the police and Youth Taskforce data on crime hotspots influencing the commissioning of activities.⁵²
- **when they are most needed:** in particular during the holidays and on Friday and Saturday nights.⁵³

On the ground, youth offending teams and youth inclusion workers go on to stress that while part of their role is to introduce young people to new activities that will give them the same 'buzz' as they get from anti-social behaviour, successful diversion requires **activities that are easily accessible**.

'It's very important when we look at leisure time and constructive use of leisure time for young people, that we don't provide them with something that they could not access without support from ourselves. That would be like setting them up to fail, because as soon as the services withdraw, the young people can no longer access it because of funding or lack of support.'⁵⁴

Going beyond the diversionary approach.

The Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme was launched in 2003 primarily to fund diversionary activities for 8-19 year old considered 'at risk' of engaging in crime or anti-social behaviour. Initially focused on offering summer programmes, engagement tended to involve large numbers of young people, over short and infrequent periods of time.⁵⁵ However the 2009 PAYP review *Creating a*

⁵¹ Accessible here includes a need to look at cost, transportation and how welcoming clubs or fisheries are to young people.

⁵² See Home Office (2009) *Youth Crime Action Plan: 1 year on*.

⁵³ See DCSF (2009) *Positive Activities for Young People: extending Friday and Saturday Night Provisions* and Substance report for the DCFS Crabbe, T (2009b).

⁵⁴ From interview with youth inclusion worker.

⁵⁵ Crabbe, T (2009b):22.

Sense of Belonging marks a shift in approach by emphasising the importance of **sustained participation** and a developmental agenda that recognises the value of positive activities in helping the most marginalised young people overcome a distrust of adults and authority. The provision of positive activities is therefore seen to go beyond diversionary recreation to facilitating other outcomes such as the development of a sense of inclusion and belonging for young people in their communities.

Similarly, the police have begun to look beyond the diversionary approach to early intervention and the recognition of how positive activities might help in **rebuilding police-community relationships**.⁵⁶

The BAIT Project (Bestwood Angling Interest Team)⁵⁷ was set up in 2005 by Police beat manager Gary Poyser in response to high levels of young people engaging in anti-social behaviour on the Bestwood estate, Nottingham. Having found very little on offer in the area, the intention was to provide young people with an appealing activity that would also allow Gary to talk to young people, get to know them, find out what was going on in the estate and signpost them to any other people, services or positive activities they might need. Ultimately this would be a means of early intervention to steer young people away from anti-social behaviour and crime.

Gary soon found however that having young people engaged and attending the club provided the opportunity to establish a relationship between the police and young people in the community. This has enabled Gary to address misconceptions about the police force, discuss drug use and anti-social behaviour and create channels for communication that allows both the police and young people to get a better understanding of each other. Working in communities where there are local anti-police feelings is nonetheless challenging, but through the BAIT Project and angling fun days that engage whole families, Gary believes he is breaking down some of the barriers that exist.

While the previous examples show a growing recognition of the value of engagement beyond a purely diversionary approach, we have found that amongst funders, commissioners, partners and the public, there is a residual view of angling as an activity whose primary goal is to keep young people occupied and away from crime.⁵⁸ As a consequence many angling organisations continue to use the diversionary approach to justify what they do even though they deliver positive outcomes well beyond this.

There is nonetheless a growing body of literature that critiques over simplified claims that make a link between the provision of sporting activities and the reduction of crime.⁵⁹ Substance research on Positive Futures⁶⁰ explains:

⁵⁶ *The Positive Activities for Young People: extending Friday and Saturday Night Provisions* (2009) report recognises that the use of police officers as coaches or support workers in the provision of activities can be a good way of improving police community relations, although it does raise concern over the role of police to deliver such activities alone as sees their role more in commissioning.

⁵⁷ <http://www.bait-project.co.uk/activities.php>

⁵⁸ This has been observed and recorded in numerous interviews when asking people what they believe the key benefit of angling activities or projects to be.

⁵⁹ Smith, A (2004) 'Using Sport in the Community Schemes to tackle Crime and Drug use among young people: some policy issues and problems. In *European Physical Education Review*. Vol 10: 3 Ruiz, J (2004) *A Literature Review of the Evidence base for Culture, the Arts and Sport Policy*. Report for the Scottish Executive Education Department. France,

'it is not possible to make direct connections between the impact of sports based social interventions such as PF [Positive Futures] and reductions in crime or substance misuse precisely because so many *other* factors are at play than the young people themselves'.⁶¹

Trying to 'prove' the value of angling engagement in reference to direct claims to crime reduction is not therefore the most productive strategy.

What is needed is a cultural shift that recognises angling's contribution beyond diversion. This means a shift from the use of crime reduction statistics, or numbers of young people engaged, as evidence for the success or failure of projects working with young people. Angling, as delivered by angling intervention schemes, has the potential to go well beyond just keeping young people occupied for a few hours a day. This can only be achieved when funding provisions allow for longer term engagement, and a focus on monitoring and evaluation that asks for quality rather than quantity.

3.3 The Educational Approach.

The educational approach covers an extremely complex array of practices from the use of angling as part of reward days to its deployment as part of alternative education provisions. The following therefore sets out only a preliminary guide with the proviso that the impact of such an approach will be something researched in more depth over the coming year.

3.3.1 Curriculum Engagement.

The success and popularity of programs such as Salmon/Trout in the Classroom⁶² testify to the important way in which angling and its relationship to the wider environment can play a role in classroom learning. The Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* in particular emphasises environmental learning as a key subject area, and promotes interdisciplinary learning that cuts across subject boundaries so that students can make connections across different areas. Angling projects already delivering fishing programs in educational settings stress that learning about angling can involve basic maths and English skills, biology, physics, environmental science, history and citizenship. Where these are delivered in a coherent, engaging format, young people have the potential to learn not only basic educational skills but can also develop a deeper understanding of angling's relationship with the environment.

3.3.2 Outdoor, green and informal learning.

There has been growing recognition of the value of learning outside of the classroom⁶³. Both the National Curriculum, and more explicitly Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence, incorporates an emphasis on learning outside as part of its guidelines

A; Sutton, L; Sanda; A & Waring, A (2007) NYA Report *Making a Positive Contribution: the Implications for Youth work of Every Child Matters*.

⁶⁰ Positive Futures is a leading example of how a developmental approach can be successfully used to engage some of the most hard to reach young people across the country.

⁶¹ Crabbe, T. (2006a) p50.

⁶² This involves supporting schools to hatch salmon/trout eggs, learn about their life cycle, before eventually releasing them into rivers. These 'In the Classroom' programmes are delivered across both England and Scotland, and supported by the Environment Agency, the Wild Trout Trust, Galloway Fisheries Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage, and many more local river trusts such as the Wandle Trust.

⁶³ See Learning Outside the Classroom www.lotc.org.uk and also the Institute for Outdoor Learning. www.outdoor-learning.org

for schools. Outdoor learning redirects attention away from a narrow concern with *what* young people learn to a greater emphasis on *how* they learn, in particular encouraging **experiential learning** through touch, smell, sound and movement. The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom claims children learn best through real life experiences.⁶⁴ In particular education outdoors provides the opportunity for children and young people to make sense of the world around them, building 'bridges between theory and reality' and improving their attitude to learning.⁶⁵

The opportunity for **informal learning** also facilitates personal and social development, potentially enabling young people to developing the ability to deal with uncertainty⁶⁶. For those with emotional and behavioural difficulties, research has highlighted how outdoor education has the **potential to improve educational gains**, reduce disaffection and decrease the risk of permanent exclusion,⁶⁷ while green play can positively impact on young people with Attention Deficit Disorder.⁶⁸

The LOtC manifesto claims that learning outside has the potential to **develop young people as active citizens and stewards of the environment**.⁶⁹ Indeed research seems to show that an emotional affinity to nature can be traced back to present and past experiences in the natural environment,⁷⁰ and for young people in particular learning in 'natural' environments are more appealing and impact on their desire to look after the environment.⁷¹

As providers of outdoor learning experiences, the potential for angling to contribute to quality outdoor, green engagement is vast. Two GHOF examples highlight what can be achieved.

GHOF Easington has been working with peer mentors drawn from Easington Community Science College to deliver environmental education days to children from the local primary schools. This has involved beach litter picking, rock pooling, fishing and will culminate in a collage drawing together everything they have learnt. These activities were provided for by peer mentor fundraising.

⁶⁴ <http://www.lotc.org.uk/Council-for-LOtC/CLotC-Overview>

⁶⁵ LOtC (2009) *Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto*. p3

⁶⁶ LOtC (2009)

⁶⁷ Fox, P and Avramidis, E. (2003) An evaluation of an outdoor education programme for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties. In *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 8 (4) 267–283.

⁶⁸ Taylor AF, Kuo FE and Sullivan WC (2001) 'Coping with ADD : the surprising connection to green play settings.' *Environment and Behaviour* 33 : 54-77

⁶⁹ LOtC (2009)

⁷⁰ Kals, E, Schumacher, D and Montada, L (1999) 'Emotional Affinity toward Nature as a Motivational Basis to Protect Nature'. *Environment and Behavior*, Vol. 31, No. 2

⁷¹ Ballantyne, R, Packer, J (2002) 'Nature-based Excursions: School Students' Perceptions of Learning in Natural Environments.' *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education* 11 (3), pp. 218-236.

GHOE North East Lincolnshire have established a nature trail and pond dipping area around the council owned waters that they use in Immingham. This includes a series of 'interpretation boards' that detail the insect, bird and plant life in the area. Local schools are now using the site as a space for their own environmental lessons.



3.3.3 *Extended Schools.*

Some angling provisions are already being offered as part of extended schools activities, particularly as after school clubs. However there is the potential to develop this further in line with the push to increase extended schools activities by 2010. In particular angling can be incorporated into offers of BTEC or OCN course in out of school hours to re-engage young people with learning. The involvement of parents in extended school angling activities can also be shaped to develop closer parent-child bonds, provide parents with additional support, access to learning and/or the help transform what may be negative attitudes towards authority and education.

3.3.4 *Qualifications and recognising achievement*

Assisting young people to attain national qualifications at 16 and go on to further education, training and employment is an important step in meeting the ECM outcome 'Enjoy and Achieve' and 'Achieve Economic Wellbeing'. It is important to recognise however that the value of education is as much about the *process of learning* and not just the resulting 'qualification'. Many angling projects engaged in delivering qualifications consequently:

- Re-engage young people with learning by building confidence and recognising their individual needs.
- Combine education with the development of social skills and supportive relationships to help them succeed.
- Prepare young people for the transition to adulthood and employability by raising aspirations and signposting appropriate routes.

There are currently three main angling related qualifications on offer, all of which deliver far more than the attainment of 'certificates'.

i) OCN

National Open College Network (N-OCN) courses are nationally recognised accreditations. The range of angling related OCN being delivered varies greatly but the majority appears to be 10-20 week Introduction To Angling and the Environment verified through the ADB/AT.

CAST North West: re-engaging young people in learning.

CAST North West⁷² offers 38 week courses comprising of the new Step-Up OCN Progression awards.⁷³ This involves them delivering OCN modules in numeracy, literacy, english and IT as well as drugs and alcohol awareness. The courses are made accessible and appealing by a delivery design that uses angling to frame the content. CAST NW engage young people who have been excluded from school, are at risk of exclusion or returning from custodial sentences. They adapt courses to suit the learner and can deliver on a one to one basis, working with schools or support workers to identify a young person's particular education needs as well as their style of learning. CAST NW are therefore able to work with young people in a way that may not be possible in the school environment. However coordinator Neil Farnworth is keen to stress that accreditation is not just their intended outcome:

'If we can get them through a qualification then all well and good, but it's about enrichment and building confidence and self esteem, if we can build confidence and self esteem, that child will go on to learning because he'll feel more relaxed when he's doing it so.'

Those commissioning, funding or promoting angling OCN courses should therefore consider the importance of the developmental work being carried out in the educational approach rather than focusing on attaining 'qualification' as an end in itself. The real value is not just in the 'qualifications' being achieved but in the styles of delivery that lead to wider developmental impact.

GHOF North East: working with parents

The flexibility of the OCN is well illustrated by the pilot conducted by GHOF in Witton Park. This particular OCN evolved out of consultation with local services that wanted to encourage familial bonding. The course targeted specified young people and their parents or careers. Predominantly father and child, pairs worked together to complete an OCN coursework portfolio. In addition multiple sessions were scheduled for the parent and child to fish together. While the course resulted in an OCN qualification, the primary outcome sought was the encouragement of greater parent-child communication. The OCN provided an opportunity to develop parent-child relationships over the 10 weeks course through mutual engagement in an enjoyable activity and striving for a shared goal.

ii) BTEC

BTECs are well known and respected qualification that can be equivalent to GCSE grades and can be built upon at college level.⁷⁴ We have identified the principal angling related BTECs on offer to under 16's as Land and the Environment, and Fishery Management⁷⁵. The emphasis is on practical, vocational learning and is 100% coursework.

⁷² Based in Wigan. <http://www.castnw.co.uk/>

⁷³ These results in greater points equivalent to GCSEs.

⁷⁴ In particular Sparsholt college, but also numerous post 16 colleges across the UK.

⁷⁵ Currently on offer to under 16's in Easington Community Science College as a level 2 Certificate equivalent to 2 GCSE's grade A*-C.

Lord William's School's BTEC: raising employment aspirations.

Lord William's school has been offering BTEC Introductory Level Certificate in Land and The Environment for 4 years. The course delivered over 2 years results in a qualification equivalent of 2 GCSE's at grade D-G and allows students to take a vocational module in Sport Fishery. It is promoted to those students who may need extra incentive to engage with education and have the potential to perform better in practical, outdoor, vocational style courses. For some of the students, this is one of the few qualifications they will leave school with.

While young people's enthusiasm for fishing is used to motivate engagement with their studies, a key benefit of this particular course is its emphasis on future employment. The course introduces young people who enjoy outdoor work to a range of employment opportunities in the land based industries (over 250) and helps them identify routes towards these jobs.⁷⁶ On our visit, one of the current students was involved in letter writing to the EA to ask for advice on pond design. He has since decided to pursue a future career with the EA.

Every member of last year's BTEC group have gone on to further education or training.

iii) ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network)

This appears to be the most common way in which angling is incorporated into school level qualifications.⁷⁷ While the level of learning and styles of delivery vary greatly, the emphasis is on experiential learning through project work. In relation to angling, schools can engage external projects/organisations to deliver relevant coursework or learning experiences.⁷⁸ True to the ASDAN ethos is the desire to recognise and reward student's personal and social development, particularly for those who may struggle with other academic work. As one GHOF coordinator explained:

'I like ASDAN because you have the opportunity of the short courses. And you can have as part of it sport and fitness, as part of it peer mentoring, and it's a personal development thing so it's not necessarily going to be prescriptive: [i.e.] you must learn the countryside code, or you must learn the water cycle...With ASDAN it's different because you agree your own targets in keeping with what you want. I see a kid and he can't communicate well so let's work on that and we agree that we want him to get involved in team work.'

3.3.5 The impact of an angling educational approach.

While it is beyond the scope of this research project to provide statistical evidence for a relationship between truancy, expulsion and angling intervention programmes, over the course of the next year more qualitative data will be gathered on the progress of individual young people considered at risk in order to show how such relationships are having an impact.

Some key findings so far suggest:

- Sessions can have a knock on impact on behaviour in other classes.
- They can break negative reinforcement cycles by offering young people the potential to succeed at school.

⁷⁶ This includes a visit to Sparsholt college.

⁷⁷ ASDAN courses/awards contribute a series of points that can be built into GCSE equivalents.

⁷⁸ Organisations such as Angling In Schools, Angling For Schools, and GHOF deliver ASDAN courses, or activities that are then used for ASDAN portfolios in schools.

- Outdoor space itself can enable young people to regulate their behaviour more effectively.
- Truancy can be improved when young people are more willing to attend a full school day for fishing courses/activities or require good behaviour/attendance to take part in a fishing related activity.⁷⁹
- Re-engaging young people in learning through angling can lead to raised aspirations for future learning, training or employment.

Those engaged in the angling educational approach need to concentrate on more thorough monitoring and evaluation of the wide variety of outcomes being achieved, in order to successfully signpost how the educational approach is delivering more than 'qualifications'.

3.4 The personal/social development approach

3.4.1 Developmental Outcomes

Over recent years there has been a marked policy shift away from viewing young people as 'problems to be managed' to viewing them as 'resources to be developed'.⁸⁰ As a consequence the deterrent approach to anti-social behaviour has increasingly given way to a recognition that 'healthy' adolescent development can best equip young people to deal with life situations. The 'deficit model' which sought to remove risks such as crime and drugs from young people's lives has been replaced with one that seeks to prepare young people to deal with such encounters through 'asset building'⁸¹ or the development of 'capabilities'.⁸² Such assets or capabilities are believed to protect (by reducing the likelihood of young people engaging in risky behaviour), enhance (enable young people to 'thrive, grasp opportunities and be successful in school) and build resilience (to more successfully cope with difficult situations when they occur).⁸³ The development of these assets, or social and emotional skills, are further enhanced by the development of supportive connections that foster belonging, provide safe spaces, and networks that can be mobilised when needed.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Extended services in particular are believed to improve pupil motivation, attendance and consequent academic achievement as well as reduce expulsion rates. DCSF (2007) *Extended Schools: Building on experience*.

⁸⁰ Lerner, RM; Brentano, L; Dowling, EM; Anderson, PM(2002) 'Positive Youth Development: Thriving as the Basis of Personhood and Civil Society.' *New Directions for Youth Development* 95, 11-33. Also Roth, JL & Brooks-Gunn, J (2003) 'What Exactly is a Youth Development Program? Answers from Research and Practice.' *Applied Development Science* 7 (2), 94-11.

⁸¹ See Benson list of 40 internal and external assets important to positive development. Benson, P, L. (1997) *All Kids our Our Kids: what communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.

⁸² Fraser-Thomas, J *et al* (2005) 'Youth Sport Programs: An Avenue to Foster Positive Youth Development'. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy* 10 (1), 19-40. See in particular Lerner *et al*'s 5 C's for positive youth development: competence; character; connection; confidence; and caring (and compassion). Lerner, RM; Fisher, LB; Weinberg, RA (2000) Towards a science for and of the people: promoting civil society through the application of developmental science. In *Child Development*, Vol 71, 11-20

⁸³ Benson (1997) summarised in Frazer-Thomas *et al* 2005: 22-22. But also very much the basis for the promotion of positive activities for young people in *Aiming Higher for Young People* (2007)

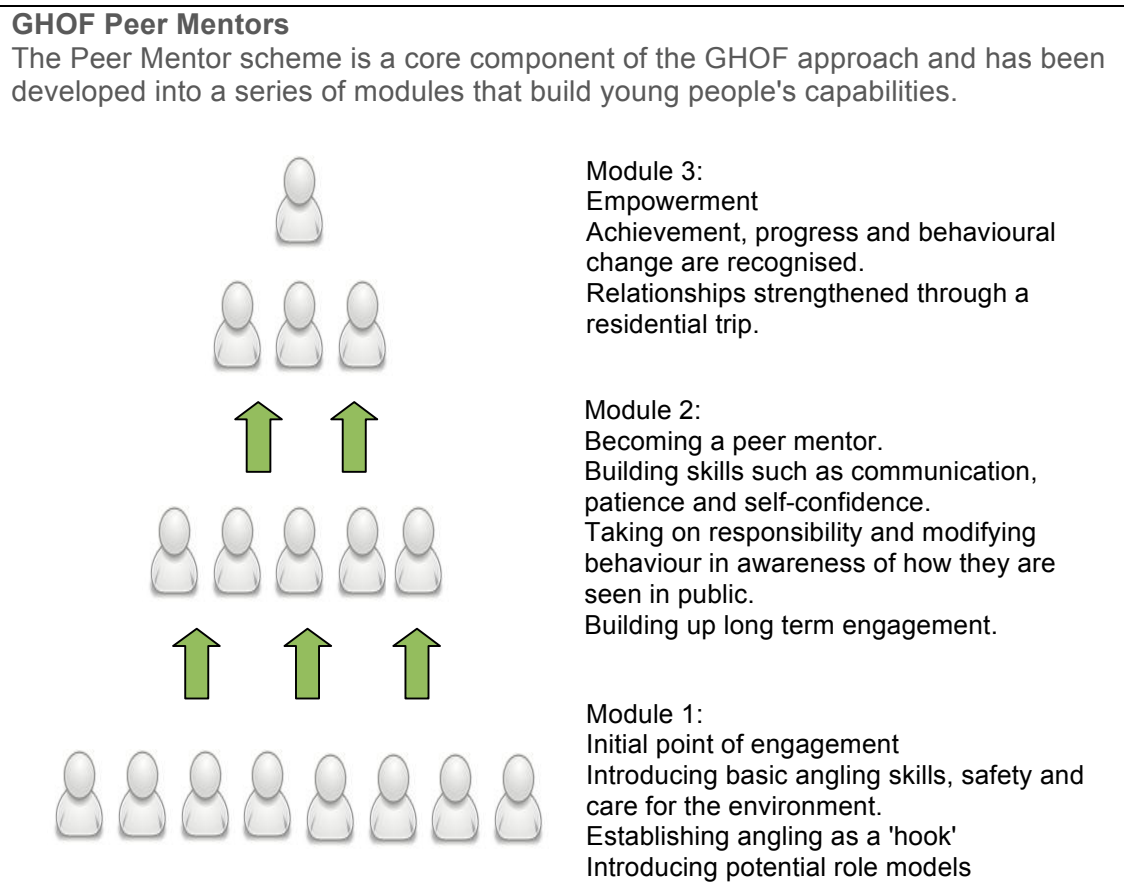
⁸⁴ Roth and Brooks Gunn 2003, Frazer-Thomas *et al* 2005, Larson 2000 amongst others.

Those projects or organisations wishing to facilitate positive youth development therefore tend to provide:

- Physically and emotionally safe environments;⁸⁵
- Offer structured 'positive activities' that provide challenging opportunities;
- Allow for the development of a sense of belonging;
- Provide supportive adult relationships;
- Encourage the 'empowerment'⁸⁶ of young people;
- Engagement with young people over a longer period of time.

What is important about the personal development approach when delivered through angling projects is that the development of fishing ability is secondary to the development of personal and social capabilities. Such schemes use angling only as the 'tool' to achieve positive developmental outcomes with the intended outcome being that they leave as competent young people rather than competent anglers. Whether they take up fishing afterwards or not is of no real concern.

While many different activities offered through angling projects have the potential to be delivered via a personal development approach, the most illustrative is the peer mentor scheme run by GHOF.



⁸⁵ This does not have to be a consistent physical locations, such as club houses, but instead describes a particular supportive atmosphere.

⁸⁶ 'Empowerment' is a contested term that can hold multiple meanings. The following research period will therefore unpick exactly what empowerment, and similar claims such as 'ownership' and 'participation' actually mean in the practice of angling organisations that work with young people.

The aim of the GHOF peer mentoring system is to help develop personal, social and emotional skills for some of the most excluded/marginalised young people, as a consequence GHOF staff identify potential peer mentors amongst those they believe will *benefit* most from the experience.

Progression through modules is therefore encouraged in young people who show a motivating interest in angling, respond well to coordinators, and show a willingness to help others.

Long term engagement allows coordinators to work more consistently to influence young people's personal and social development. The peer mentor scheme facilitates this not only through their stepped module work but also in encouraging peer mentors to stay on and assist long after modules have ended. This type of consistent engagement can provide socially marginalised young people with a supportive network and an important sense of belonging.



3.4.2 Elements of Developmental Approaches

i) Looking beyond individual development

There can be a tendency for a youth development approach to foreground the development of individual assets (such as self-confidence, educational attainment) without giving adequate attention to the contextual relationships that shape young people's experiences and outcomes. Contemporary development theories stress the relational nature of positive youth development. This means a recognition of the dynamic relationship between individuals and contexts (such as family, peer groups, schools, local community, and larger social structures and institutions). Bringing about 'healthy' adolescent development therefore requires identifying those relationships between the individual and their ecologies that may require transformation in order to generate nurturing environments.⁸⁷ If a young person is not 'thriving'⁸⁸ it may well be necessary to change the context not just the individual. In part this may well explain the success of projects that provide opportunities for learning outside of the school environment. As one tutor explained:

'some of the kids we take are big trouble in class and are pussycats when we take them out. They don't cause us any trouble...Just being outside of the hustle and bustle and the demands of the classroom, and the peer pressure. You've got to be tough if you're in school haven't you. And when you're out, you don't really need to be'.⁸⁹

Our observations of young people at fishing sessions have also shown that young people often manage their anger or agitation by walking away from trigger situations, something that may not be possible in a constricted class room environment.

⁸⁷ Lerner *et al* 2002: 15. See also Kiser, L, J; Bennet, LA; Brubaker, SJ (2007). 'Exploring Neighborhood Ritual and Routine Processes Related to healthy Adolescent Development'. In *Children, Youth and Environments*. Vol 17, no 4.

⁸⁸ Lerner *et al's* (2002).

⁸⁹ Vocational tutor working with disaffected young people in school.

While bringing about structural change may well be beyond the scope of many angling projects, identifying the structural limits on individual development is essential if we are not to oversell the outputs of a personal development approach to both young people and funders. Many projects already work on such a level, for example in recognising the impact of changing peer groups⁹⁰ and strengthening parent-child bonds.⁹¹ Nonetheless this is still an area in which angling projects engaging in positive development could expand best practice.

ii) Encouraging participation

Sutton (2007)⁹² gives good examples of the variety of youth development projects that encourage participation and how particular youth development philosophies will shape the type of participation made available. She categorises these participatory processes into three broad approaches;

- **social integration:** where the focus is on personal development of skills that will enable successful community integration (such as vocational training, developing a strong sense of self, and positive relationships);
- **civil activism:** where young people develop and express a 'youth voice', engage in campaigning and decision making;
- **community improvement:** where young people are involved in hands on activities to improve their surroundings, including planting or restoration projects, volunteering or educating the community.

Currently the majority of angling projects focus on social integration through the development of young people's personal capabilities. However it is worth noting that all three styles are valuable for positive youth development. Through campaigning that influence provisions for young people, to producing videos on anti-social behaviour or water safety, or engaging in environmental clean ups, angling intervention schemes are well placed to expand their delivery. Our continuing research will therefore identify and highlight best practice that develops the potential for young people to participate in and contribute to transforming the communities that they live in.

iii) Contributing to local communities and transforming negative perceptions.

Having the opportunity to contribute is a key outcome of the Every Child Matters framework. Angling's emphasis on developing environmental awareness lends itself particularly well to young people's involvement in community improvement work.

The CAST⁹³ allotment clean up.

Having learnt skills from environmental work they were doing in exchange for fishing access at Newstead Abbey, the young members of CAST angling project volunteered to resurrect the overgrown village allotments. The allotments had last been used over 30 years ago and had since become overgrown by hedges reaching 20ft in places. It took CAST volunteers 2-3 months to clear the site, learning fencing, path laying, and teamwork in the process. As they uncovered the site, older residents would come and watch the allotments 're-appear', leading to the decision to place a bench for them at the site. Today the allotments are thriving and back in popular use.

⁹⁰ By creating a new peer group focused around fishing

⁹¹ Through parent-child matches or family fishing days.

⁹² Sutton, S. E (2007) 'A social justice perspective on youth and community development: theorising the processes and outcomes of participation.' In *Children, Youth and Environments*. Vol 17: 2.

⁹³ <http://www.castangling.co.uk/index.html>

The impact of the volunteer project is felt not only in the local community but also amongst young people themselves. As one CAST members summarised:

'It makes you feel good inside...when you go for a walk in the allotments... and you see friends growing tomato plants, you think 'I've had an impact'. I've helped restore that.'

While many projects do already encourage such community improvement activities, to maximise the opportunity for transforming negative community perceptions of young people and help young people develop an awareness of other people's needs, attention should be paid to the possibility of encouraging young people and the community to work *together* on projects.⁹⁴ This should coincide with greater public recognition and celebration of the contribution made by young people to their communities.

iv) Providing opportunities for young people to speak and be listened to

In order to keep activities appealing and relevant to young people's needs, most of the angling intervention projects visited will ask young people what they may want to do in terms of organising trips, (for example visits to fisheries or angling events), or expanding activities (such as trying alternative fishing techniques).

Less frequent however are projects that inform young people or ask for their input into decisions that shape the running of projects more widely. GHOF NE Witton Park is an exception here in that the peer mentors are informed of all major decisions facing the project and asked for their contributions regarding possible site development. As a consequence the peer mentors exhibit a strong sense of belonging and 'ownership'.

Rarer still are projects that involve and encourage young people to identify community issues that impact on their lives, or they feel strongly about, and give them the opportunity to speak out or attempt to change things. If what is desired are moral and civic minded young people then what is required are institutions and spaces that allow for such development to occur. There are no short cuts to developing a young person's orientations to contribute to their community. A litter picking day may well appear as a punishment rather than opportunity for personal and social development if not framed appropriately. It is important therefore to offer young people the chance to not only have a say on the activities provided for them, but to also encourage them to identify those projects they wish to get involved in.

Section 4 Angling and Developmental Approaches

The point of differentiating angling engagement into delivery styles is not to promote one over the other, but to make clear what should be expected as outcomes of such projects. They can be used as a yard stick to measure success, to highlight where there is an area in need of funding, and to showcase the diversity of outcomes possible when angling is used as a tool of engagement. To be able to claim that angling can have a social and community benefit one needs to clearly set out what that outcome will look like.

⁹⁴ See the recommendation in *Aiming Higher for Young People (2007)* and *Creating a Sense of Belonging (2009)*. Also See Camino, L and Zeldin, S (2002). While concerns over safety, such as CRB requirements may make such opportunities more complicated to organise, this should not stand in the way of what is potentially an important aspect of personal/social development and community integration.

Our concern in this Research Task is predominantly, though not exclusively, with the more marginalised young people and the *developmental* approaches needed for angling to deliver those outcomes. In this section we highlight the appropriate ways in which angling can and does deliver developmental outcomes, including:

- Personnel
- Organisational Approaches
- Venue based approaches
- Partnerships
- Non-venue based approaches

4.1 Personnel: Finding the right man or woman for the job

As the previous sections have outlined, there are a variety of different ways in which young people can be engaged through angling. Because each rationale results in a different delivery style, it is unlikely that a single person will have the skill to cover all eventualities. What is required to teach a young person the techniques of match fishing in the sports development approach varies greatly to those that are required for engaging the most hard to reach young people in personal and social development. Even with the best of intentions some people may not be suited to engaging some of the most excluded young people. Successful engagement therefore relies on getting the right man or woman for the job.

Aiming Higher states that, 'evidence shows that ultimately it is the practice of professionals and volunteers working directly with young people that transforms outcomes'⁹⁵. Previous Substance research has also found this, stressing that while there is no archetypal practitioner when it comes to engaging hard to reach young people, the most successful projects tend to strike a balance between 'buddy' and 'bounded' personalities.⁹⁶

Buddy relationships	Bounded relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interest in participants' wellbeing. ○ Familiarity with and knowledge of personality traits. ○ Concern over their future plans. ○ Co-receptive trust and respect. ○ Warmth, joviality and humour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistency and reliability. ○ Setting of appropriate boundaries relating to language and behaviour. ○ Written or unwritten codes of conduct. ○ Purposeful and developmental aims to the relationship.

Our research on angling personnel continues to confirm these findings. As one young person explained the best coordinators are:

'Funny I think, but strict at the same time. They have fun with you but there's a line. It keeps you in line. You learn...I like it, if I don't get told what I am doing wrong then I just keep doing it wrong.'

With the shift to a single UKCC coaching qualification, some questions need to be asked around the suitability of 'coaches' for delivery across all of the four angling intervention approaches identified.

⁹⁵ *Aiming Higher for Young people* (2007) p68

⁹⁶ *Crabbe, T* (2006b) p 20-21.

'A good fisherman doesn't necessarily make a good teacher...I see a lot of coaches who are brilliant fisherman but they can't pass on the information. Some of them just sit by a child- but you've got to be able to pass the information on, and if you can't do that what's the point in the licence.'

The view expressed by this teacher is not an isolated one but highlights a need to reflect further on what it is coaching qualifications provide, what the coaching is intended to deliver, and what different skills they represent to prospective clients.

Over the next research period greater emphasis will be placed on identifying the types of skills and qualities required to deliver developmental angling interventions. In particular more understanding is required around the level of both angling and teaching skill needed to deliver personal and social development outcomes. Our next phase of research will therefore explore:

- The extent to which coaching courses can adequately cater for and recognise the varying needs and styles of delivery that angling engagement involves.
- To what extent accessibility, cost, and content of angling courses may restrict or enable angling's role in community and social engagement
- How angling compares with other coaching qualifications for positive activities (such as football)
- Identify and share best practice in delivery styles and techniques for engaging some of the hardest to reach young people.

4.2 Organisational Approaches

While the rationale behind the use of angling as a tool of intervention will shape styles of delivery and outcomes for young people and the local community, organisational constraints also have a great impact on what is possible. The venues and partnerships built by angling intervention projects inevitably affect the degree to which education and personal/social development outcomes are achievable; the sustainability of the project; and the degree of wider community engagement and impact.

In delivering angling sessions projects need to consider:

- *Facilities* (such as toilets, cafeterias, classroom facilities)
- *Expense* (ie use of a fishery or transportation)
- *Safety* (in relation to not only suitable waters but also density of other people in the area and visibility)
- *Other users of the water* (while getting young people to develop awareness and consideration of other water users is part of a development strategy, some users may be antagonistic towards young people fishing near them)
- *Degree of challenge* (for example identifying an area where fish can be caught).

Many angling projects view the development of their own site as the most successful way to manage these considerations. The most common justification being to enable more comprehensive delivery (often tied to greater independence) and/or to become more financially sustainable. Below we consider a range of organisational approaches we have researched, providing examples and reflecting on the advantages of each model.

4.2.1 Independent Venue Based Projects

j) GHOF North East - Witton Park and the social enterprise model

Social enterprises are businesses trading for social purposes, where surpluses are reinvested in the business or local community to secure their social objectives. Rather than profit for owners or shareholders, the social objective must be central to the business.⁹⁷

Witton Park, Bishop Aukland, is GHOF's flagship site. It was initially created with a Countryside Agency grant of 237,000, as an angling and conservation site to be run in partnership with the local angling club. However when tensions emerged with the club,⁹⁸ GHOF secured funding from the Coalfield Regeneration Trust⁹⁹ to purchase both the site and club, establishing Get Hooked North East Ltd as a social enterprise to run the project. Today Witton Park is a 38 acre site comprising 3 lakes, a teaching space, tackle shop, café, and runs as a commercial fishery alongside delivering GHOFNE sessions.

There are clear benefits to the Witton Park model which shape not only the type of delivery possible but also the potential developmental outcomes that can be achieved. In particular GHOFNE can:

- **reduce the cost of services** by reducing the costs associated with delivery such as outsourcing venues.
- **have flexible delivery options.** There are no partners to negotiate venue use with, and they are able to make use of surrounding land for construction, environmental or residential activities.
- **provide vocational experience.** The tackle shop and café are run by GHOF peer mentors. This allows young people to build their vocational experience and take on a greater degree of responsibility for the recreational facilities they use. GHOFNE have also taken on an apprentice in administration and office management.
- **become a 'safe space' that facilitates long term engagement.** It is not uncommon to find young people just 'hanging out' with both staff and peers at Witton Park. This provides GHOFNE staff the opportunity to engage in long term developmental work, building strong relationships and a welcoming place that young people continue to come back to for help and advice.
- **develop young people's 'ownership' of the site.** Young people are fully engaged in the construction and maintenance of the Witton Park site. They are also kept informed of important decision and asked for their contributions. As a consequence we have found that the young people associated with Witton Park, demonstrate a deep sense of responsibility and respect for the venue.

'Ownership', 'empowerment' and 'participation' can mean a variety of different things in practice. While many groups working with young people claim to deliver these outcomes, we have found Witton Park to be one of the few places where young people appear to be able to contribute *extensively* to the shape and direction of the site. This coincides with young people appearing to have developed a sense of

⁹⁷ Note this is different to a business model in which a company reinvests only some of its profits to social and environmental projects.

⁹⁸ See Brown (2006) for a more detailed description. *Getting Hooked: Get Hooked on Fishing, Angling and Youth Inclusion*. Manchester: Substance.

⁹⁹ On the basis that GHOF would deliver to former coalfield areas.

belonging that sees them returning again and again. Our research will therefore investigate further what is meant by 'ownership', 'empowerment' and 'participation', why this is considered important for personal and social development and to what extent angling intervention projects are taking steps to deliver these outcomes.

ii) Les Webber's Angling Projects- Wraysbury.¹⁰⁰

Angling Projects was first established by Less Webber in 1976 with the aim of teaching young people to fish. At the time, with no waters of their own, angling courses would be held on borrowed waters or school buildings. However in 1988, through the support of Cemex, the project was given the use of an old sailing club house and lake next to the gravel works in Wraysbury. At this time the project also began to focus on reaching some of the most hard to reach young people, working with the Metropolitan and Thames Valley police and adopting the slogan “get hooked on fishing not drugs or crime”.

What is most remarkable about Angling Projects is that the site (which includes residential space for 22 people), and angling educational courses are all offered *free of charge*. This has meant that throughout its time Angling Projects has seen over 40,000 young people pass through from all over the country that would otherwise not have been able to afford such an opportunity¹⁰¹. The work of Angling Projects is made possible because the project is well supported by donations of bait, money and equipment from fishermen and women, tackle shops, users and groups who fundraise for them. In addition all Angling Projects staff are volunteers, who have all been fully CRB checked, have first aid training but are not necessarily registered coaches.¹⁰² In 2008 Les Webber was awarded an MBE for services to angling.

While the voluntary model is unlikely to be sustainable across the country, there are important elements to consider:

- **Free provision:** While there are often funds to target some of the most deprived young people, a targeted approach inevitably means that there are those on the borders who slip through the net. In providing a free facility, Angling Projects can help groups reduce their costs, making residential angling trips and courses affordable to those who have limited access to funding opportunities.¹⁰³
- **Making full use of assets:** Angling Projects encourages the use of their grounds for construction and horticulture work with school BTEC groups and City and Guilds courses.
- **Outreach work:** Angling Projects supports wider angling activities helping to set up tackle libraries in schools, providing donated tackle and advice to emerging clubs and youth groups, and working with local councils on fun day events.¹⁰⁴
- **Serving as a network hub:** because Angling Projects engages with a wide variety of groups, it has become a point of contact for the informal exchange of ideas, links and advice- putting people in contact with each other.

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.angling-projects.org.uk/index.html>

¹⁰¹ This includes school groups, youth projects, junior angling clubs to more targeted work with the police, and support groups working with children at risk or with special needs.

¹⁰² This does mean however that the project survival requires that it continues to attract people willing to give up their time to help young people.

¹⁰³ It is worth noting that although the facility is free, groups wishing to go use Angling Projects still have their own costs to meet such as transportation, food, and may need to pay their own staff if they are not voluntary.

¹⁰⁴ Most recently Hillingdon, where a two day fun-day event attracted over 600 participants.

As a consequence Angling Projects has become a great asset to a variety of different groups across the country.

4.2.2 Community Partnerships

While there are clear advantages to the independent venue model, the most common way in which angling intervention projects are organised is through varying types of partnerships¹⁰⁵. Common partners include, councils, local community trusts, angling clubs and fisheries. The principal reason for this is to gain access to waters, particularly given the limited range of free waters for coarse and game fishing.

But there are many additional advantages of the partnership route. These include:

- **access to a more desirable location**, that may be easier to access, easier to fish, have disabled access, and safe;
- **access to other facilities** that include toilets, café or teaching space;
- **access to financial support and/or increased funding opportunities**;
- **providing exit routes** for young people (such as an angling club or child friendly fishery)
- **reducing the cost and travel time for clients** by delivering directly to them or using available local waters.
- **opportunities for transforming community-young person relationships**. Partnerships with councils or private parks can allow young people to access waters in the heart of local communities that bring them in contact with a variety of people. This can be both in terms of fishing activity, but also opportunities to be involved in maintenance of the site.¹⁰⁶
- **delivering angling as part of a wider activity offer**. A good example of this is the Fishing4u project in Hastings. Now in its 7th year it has been incorporated into the provisions advertised and promoted through the council's Active Hastings Scheme. This 'nested' approach means Fishing4u can advertise and deliver fishing sessions in some of the most deprived wards in the area, or invite some of the most excluded young people to take part in activities which appear to be part of a more general activity offer.¹⁰⁷ Many coordinators across a great many angling schemes often voice concern that they do not want angling to be seen as something that is only offered to 'the naughty kids'. Allowing angling sessions that target anti-social behaviour to be part of a mainstream provision can help to dispel this type of stigma.
- **developing a greater range of accessible networks** for the project and/or young people involved that could be mobilised for assistance with funding, donations, volunteers, employment or training opportunities, or accessing more clients.

GHOF's work in Billingham illustrates the wider benefits that can be achieved through a partnership model.

¹⁰⁵ These need not be financial but can be about access or promotion.

¹⁰⁶ Through negotiation with Newstead Abbey young people from CAST (Newstead) are given permission to fish in exchange for carrying out conservation work on the grounds and treating the area responsibly.

¹⁰⁷ The recommendations of both the *Extending Friday and Saturday Night Provision (2009)* and those of the *Creating a Sense of Belonging (2009)*, reports suggest reducing stigma by promoting activities as open to everyone rather than just targeting anti-social behaviour.

GHOF Teesside- Charlton's Pond, Billingham

In the heart of the housing estates of south Billingham, banked by hedges and obscured from the road lies Charlton's Pond. The pond, once a site of anti-social behaviour, was cleaned up and re-established as a productive fishing venue through a grant secured by GHOF Teesside coordinator and members of the local angling club. Today the angling club, who own access to the pond, and GHOF Teesside have developed a symbiotic relationship. The club has an active junior section for young people in the community to belong to, and provides the opportunity for GHOF to identify potential peer mentors or those young people that may benefit from GHOF intervention.

Key characteristics of engagement at Charlton's Pond make it stand out however as an example of what can be achieved through partnership working:

- **location:** its location in the urban environment makes Charlton's particularly accessible to young people from the local area.
- **exit routes:** young people are directed into the club where they can access not only the benefits of engaging in regular positive activity, but also additional GHOF support if necessary.
- **'safe space':** young people know many members of the community and feel comfortable fishing on their own because there is always a club facilitator on site. Club members and the GHOF coordinator take an interest in young people's development, not only looking out for their safety but also serving as a network of informal control and surveillance.¹⁰⁸
- **transform community-young person relationships:** the venue is accessed by not only fishermen but other recreational users increasing opportunities for positive intergenerational contact.
- **regular matches as community 'rituals' that celebrate young people's achievements:** the Saturday 'weigh in' of the junior matches held throughout the summer has become a 'social event', drawing in local residents who do not necessarily have children competing. The event involves a community procession around the pond stopping to offer each young person praise and encouragement as the scales are read. Community rituals such as this serve to celebrate young people's achievements, reinforcing a sense of belonging to the community and strengthening existing bonds.¹⁰⁹

Charlton's pond goes well beyond just having an impact on young people's development. As the local councillor for Billingham South recognises 'its falling somewhere between an asset and civic amenity'. The pond is used by not only the record numbers that have now joined the angling club, but also local residents of all ages as a recreational space for walking, picnicking and watching the wildlife.

'It's the community engagement as much as anything. Once that's caught up things seem to flow from there, the interest grows...Where you get a community working together, even if it's just starting from such basic recreational interests, they can go on from there'.

¹⁰⁸ This was illustrated by the successful mobilisation of group guilt and peer pressure by club members in response to thefts at a local tackle shop. For further explanation of the role of informal social control of young people in community networks see Kegler *et al* (2005)

¹⁰⁹ Community rituals serve a variety of functions, such as communicating social norms, reaffirming belonging and strengthening existing bonds. See Kiser *et al* (2007) in particular.

A partnership model can mean that a great many more people have an interest in seeing the project succeed. However partnerships usually involve a degree of negotiation and compromise which at time can be frustrating for projects. At Charlton's, the growing popularity of the pond as a fishing venue now means it can sometimes be difficult to accommodate both the adults and young people that want to use the small pond, as well as deliver GHOF session. As a consequence working with the Billingham Partnership, funds have been secured to build a training pond on some disused grounds alongside Charlton's. This site will be managed by the GHOF coordinator solely for social and community work and the training of young people. The success of Charlton has inspired an ambitious bid to develop a cycle way that will link Charlton's pond to nearby allotments, nature reserve and community farm, increasing the range of activities young people and the local community can access. As the Billingham South Councillor explained, Charlton's has been 'like top seed, it's growing and it's absolutely marvellous'.



GHOF Dave Munt weighing in after a junior match, and view of Charlton's Pond

4.2.3 Non-Fishing Venue Based Projects

Continuing on from the partnership theme there are also organisational models that do not necessarily seek to have a single fishing venue.

i) GHOF Shropshire

The GHOF project in Shropshire offers fly fishing as a principal mode of engagement. It does not have its own site and delivers across the whole stretch of the county. As a consequence the project requires multiple sites to reduce the travelling time of those it engages. The project coordinator reduces cost and manages the angling experience by accessing private waters which are given freely for training young people in exchange for the coordinator maintaining them. Grasping such opportunities has the potential to involve wider members of the community in the work of GHOF. In one such case GHOF Shropshire, supported by the EA, has been working with Thomas Adams School to assist in the renovation of a nearby private pond whose owner has donated access. Young people from the school will be involved in its clean up and the construction of pegs that will eventually result in the school using it for outdoor lessons as well as recreational fishing activities.

ii) GHOF North Liverpool

Another example can be found at GHOF Liverpool which functions as a part of North Liverpool Positive Futures. Sharing the Positive Futures building enables young people to 'drop in' or 'meet up' to discuss future events or tie rigs and prepare for angling sessions. GHOF Liverpool creates a supportive environment for the young people they engage with without needing a specific fishing venue. While this is due to having the positive futures building as a 'safe space', they also work to create a sense of belonging that is not physically located.

This is achieved through using them for multiple delivery sessions, going away on 'reward' fishing trips and excursions, and working together to prepare for sessions. One of the first things to be issued to a peer mentor is his GHOF hoodie. While this is used as a 'uniform' to enable peer mentors to recognise when it is that they are 'working' and need to be aware of their conduct as representatives of the organisation, it also serves as a powerful tool of belonging. One recently joined young person cited it as a key positive about the organisation. He told us that he could not believe it when he had said he had wanted to get a bit more involved and the GHOF coordinators had given him the top. They just 'accepted me' he said. For him the top rather than being a symbol of work/recreational life carried a deeper meaning as a symbol of inclusion.

5 Conclusions, Emerging Issues and Future Research Themes

5.1 Key Findings and Recommendations

Initial Finding	Recommendations
<p><i>Places to go and things to do.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angling has real opportunities for providing places to go and things to do for young people and the potential to do more in relation to this key government agenda. • There are many angling related activities being delivered across the country. • However clear information on angling venues and angling activities for young people remains fragmented and difficult to access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to collate and link information on things to do and places to go for young people in relation to angling on a national level. • Work in cooperation with Local Authorities to ensure fishing activities and venues are included in their statutory obligation to promote activities for young people. • Collate and make accessible information on free, cheap and accessible fishing waters for young people.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some instances, opportunities for young people to access suitable fishing waters can be limited due to waters being located away from transport links, privately owned, clubs and fisheries restricting junior access, and, or cost. • Schools and youth organisations in particular have mentioned the sometimes prohibitive cost of venues and coaches but also a lack of accessible <i>local</i> waters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise support for projects/organisations involved in influencing decisions or creating opportunities for young people's access to waters. • Consider the impact on young people when making decisions about access to waters. • Assist schools and organisations to identify and access local waters for educational and developmental work.
<p>Sport Development Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A narrow focus on a sports development approach may obscure or marginalise other ways in which angling can contribute to young people and limit an understanding of its potential. • In particular some angling provisions are still shaped by mass participation (for example through taster days) without paying enough attention to long term engagement and suitable exit routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that angling can have a wider impact on education or personal and social development, but recognise that this may mean different styles of delivery are required. • Prioritise support for angling clubs and organisations providing a wider range of activities for young people, such as conservation. • Focus on commissioning and funding projects orientated to long term, quality engagement.
<p>Diversionsary Approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move focus away from a diversionsary approach to one that promotes how

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is increasing recognition that positive activities can have a value beyond diversion from crime or antisocial behaviour. • However within angling and policy there remains a limited perspective that sees angling's value as an activity that will only keep young people occupied and out of trouble. 	<p>angling can engage young people who are involved in anti-social behaviour, excluded from school or at risk of exclusion, and/or Not in Education, Employment of Training (NEET), through quality long term work that focuses on re-engagement with learning, and personal and social development.</p>
<p>Educational Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angling is already contributing to education in a variety of different ways. However the benefits and outcomes of this diverse approach is not clearly communicated. • In particular there is a need to make explicit angling's educational contributions in relation to government/LA strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioners, funders and providers should consider the <i>quality</i> of delivery and recognise the developmental aspect of educational work rather than just focus on 'qualification' attainment as markers of successful engagement. • Develop monitoring and evaluation that clearly signposts the variety of ways in which educational programmes are meeting government/LA strategies and ECM/GIRFEC outcomes.
<p>Personal Development Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many angling projects are successfully engaging some of the most hard to reach young people through a developmental approach. • This is best achieved through a long term approach to participation and signposting of developmental pathways that may include non-angling outcomes. • Delivery tends to focus on personal and social development (PSD) work that prepares young people to engage in society through the development of personal skills. However there remains a need to further include PSD work that empowers young people to act in their communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt monitoring and evaluation that records qualitative information that better illustrates the type of personal and social development (PSD) work being done- i.e. 'distance travelled'. • This should coincide with clearer articulation of angling's PSD approach to partners, funders and clients. • Prioritise commissioning and funding of projects orientated to long term PSD outcomes. • Step up PSD approach into empowerment by encouraging young people to engage in civic activism and community improvement work.

5.2 Emerging Issues

Empowering young people to influence decisions affecting them.

The requirement to give young people a voice in the services affecting them is a fundamental right enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹¹⁰ The government's commitment to ensuring such participation has shaped initiatives such as Agenda 21, the Children's Funds, and New Deal for Communities and is made explicit in the *Youth Matters* agenda that seeks to empower young people to participate in decisions affecting them.¹¹¹ ECM/GIRFEC, *Youth Matters, Aiming Higher* all make clear that organisations working with young people should enable this type of contribution.

However the ability to deliver participation in which young people's voices are heard and listened to have been met with the same challenges previously documented for encouraging participation and empowerment in adults.¹¹² In particular France *et al* have raised concern over the ability to get contributions from the most hard to reach young people,¹¹³ and a need for greater clarity over what young people's 'contribution' might mean.¹¹⁴ It is important however that organisations are aware of how making a contribution is an important part of young people's personal and social development.¹¹⁵ This means developing practices that generates quality feedback from young people that will go on to shape provisions rather than seeing feedback as just another form of monitoring and evaluation 'paperwork'.

While the majority of angling organisations state a commitment to ECM/GIFREC, few have developed extensive means for allowing young people to participate in the shaping of activities and projects. Over the next research period we will therefore seek to highlight where best practice in this area is emerging with the intention of identifying how other angling organisations and projects can strengthen this aspect of their delivery.

5.3 Ongoing Research Themes

This research period has primarily focused on establishing the wider context around angling and young people, identifying the range of approaches and delivery styles. The next stage will focus in more depth on the engagement of the most hard to reach young people and the longer term effects of engagement through angling projects, continuing work with GHOF as a principal case study as well as reviewing other projects' approaches. We will:

- **Identify the range of marginalised young people being engaged and where gaps may be present.**

¹¹⁰ Article 12 of the UNCRC. www.unicef.org/rightsite/

¹¹¹ France, A *et al* (2007) p3

¹¹² On some of the problems with the participation and empowerment agenda that have emerged in International Development see Cooke, B. and Kothari, U. (eds.) (2001) *Participation: the New Tyranny?* London: Zed Books. Kapoor, I (2002) 'The devil's in the theory: a critical assessment of Robert Chamber's work on participatory development'. *Third World Quarterly* 23: 101-117

¹¹³ See also Mathews (2003) who points out there is no single young person's voice and there is a danger the most vocal and used to participating will tend to dominate.

¹¹⁴ France *et al* (2007): 6

¹¹⁵ See Sutton (2007).

- **Identify best practice** for working with some of the most hard to reach young people.
- **Identify the skills and qualities required** for working with disadvantaged young people.
- **Explore coaching qualifications and training** in relation to content and expectations of potential clients.
- **Explore the use of role models and peer mentors** in more depth.
- Explore how angling interventions are attempting to increase **'empowerment', 'participation' and 'ownership'** in their delivery.
- **Identify how angling can be a gateway** to other positive activities and forms of engagement.
- **Track young people's development as they pass through projects** to more clearly illustrate and explore the ways in which angling intervention has an impact.
- **Establish young people's own perspectives** and experiences of angling intervention
- Explore further angling's contribution to the **health and wellbeing of young people.**

We will continue to monitor development in angling approaches and delivery styles in a range of other projects in England and Scotland. In particular we intend to:

- Continue to collate and map the variety of angling offers across England and Scotland.
- Explore the development of Plings as a way to map and monitor angling provision for young people in England.
- Follow the development of ADBoS and its work with young people
- Follow the approach taken by Angling For Youth Development (AFYD) that seeks to establish a community lead model across Scotland.
- Explore the business models and delivery plans adopted by projects we have identified as establishing their own venues over the coming year.

Appendices

Participating Organisations.

The following lists only organisations that have been involved, but we would also like to thank those unnamed individual coaches, parent, young people, youth workers, teachers and youth offending/inclusion workers who have contributed to the research so far.

AFYD

Angling Projects (Les Webber's)

BAIT Project

Borderlines

CAST

CAST North West

Catch 21

Fishing for Schools (Countryside Alliance Foundation)

Fishing in schools (Hull)

Fishing4u

GHOFF

Pilgrims Angling Club

Staffordshire Youth Anglers (SYA)

Worksop and District AA

Easington Community Science College

Lord William's School

Bridge College (Stockport)

Thomas Adam's School

ACE Education project (Wigan)

Wear Kids (Sunderland)

Billingham Council and the Billingham Partnership

Hemlington Park

Leegomery Pond

Angling Trust

Angling Development Board

Salmon and Trout Association

Professional Anglers Association

Environment Agency

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