

Environment Agency and Angling Trust welcome lifting of restrictions on recreational fishing

Restrictions on angling in England are eased from today (Wednesday 13th May) following updated government [guidance on outdoor activities](#).

The news has been welcomed by both the Environment Agency and Angling Trust. The Trust recently put forward its '[When We Fish Again](#)' report to the government, encouraging a phased return to the sport and highlighting the significant benefits fishing offers to both personal well-being and the economy.

Under the new government guidelines, people can fish on their own, with their household, or with one other person while adhering to social distancing rules and staying two metres apart at all times.

Outside members of your own household, people should remain two metres apart from other anglers or members of the public at all times. The most up-to-date information on these restrictions can be found at www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

The Angling Trust already advises anglers to fish no closer than 15 metres and that matches and organised angling events are still not permissible.

Anglers must also ensure they are in possession of a valid fishing licence, adhere to fisheries byelaws including the close season and have permission of the fishery owner.

Dr Graeme Storey, Environment Agency Acting Deputy Director for Fisheries and the Natural Environment, said:

We welcome the lifting of restrictions on recreational fishing. This decision recognises that fishing can be done safely while still adhering to social distancing guidelines. However, it is vital that when we do go fishing, we all do so responsibly and safely in order to continue playing our own part in protecting ourselves, others and key public services.

In these challenging times responsible fishing provides a wonderful opportunity to connect with nature and feel the range of benefits doing so can bring. If you are going fishing then you must have a valid fishing licence and adhere to fishing byelaws and fishery rules.

Angling Trust Chief Executive Jamie Cook said:

The Angling Trust have brought all disciplines of angling together in presenting a blueprint for the safe resumption of recreational fishing which has led the way for the sporting sector. Fishing delivers huge benefits to physical health, mental wellbeing, active lifestyles and our economy. Angling has shown the value of coming together as a community to speak coherently and professionally at the highest level with a single voice. I thank anglers for their patience and ask that we follow the Angling Trust guidance which is there to protect us all.

The Angling Trust have issued additional helpful advice to individuals and angling organisations which can be found on their [online hub](#).

Notes to editors:

- If you are in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, you must adhere to the guidance and regulations set by the Scottish and Welsh governments or Northern Ireland Executive at all times.
- To date, the Environment Agency have paused the majority of non-essential fisheries activity including improving habitats for fish, facilities for anglers and stocking in line with government guidelines. Proactive operational activity will be restarted as soon as possible, also in line with those guidelines.
- The Environment Agency will continue to prioritise responding to reported incidents of serious harm to the environment, subject to local conditions. The Agency is also liaising with police regarding illegal fishing incidents. The police have powers to deal with people breaking coronavirus rules and are able to achieve outcomes beneficial to public health and fisheries legislation.
- Illegal fishing, pollution and incidents harming the environment should be reported to the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60. Significant issues or serious breaches of the coronavirus restrictions should be reported to the police on 101 or the local police website.

Ends.