

# PREPARING FOR REOPENING

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## Getting us fishing safely again

Working in partnership with stakeholders across the angling community, we have set out in this document some clear guidance for clubs and fisheries on how to safely manage a return to angling.

Please remember that we all have a responsibility to act as ambassadors for angling. If we fish safely we will continue to support the national effort to combat COVID-19 transmission while being able to enjoy our wonderful sport.

We feel that it is important that once angling is resumed that best practice is followed in line with the advice and guidance set out in this document. So if you as a club or fishery owner are uncomfortable about your ability to safely re-open once restrictions are relaxed and do not feel able to follow this advice then we would advise you not to re-open your water.

Within these guidelines are some legal requirements, including the right to fish and the obligation for all freshwater anglers to hold a valid licence. Beyond these we hope that this sensible and practical advice, which is being employed by member clubs and fisheries across the country, will be applied by everyone to ensure the return to fishing that we have all worked so hard to secure is safe and allowed to continue.

**Gary Houston,**

**Ulster Angling  
Federation**

# IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

These guidelines are designed to make angling compliant with current Covid-19 regulations.

## 1

### Managing the number of people at your venue

- You should consider how many people each venue can safely cater for. Our recommendations are for anglers to remain 2m apart whilst fishing.
- To ensure a safe return to angling post lockdown you should consider a phased opening of venues to ensure controlled management.
- For popular venues you should consider using a simple booking system to avoid breaching any of the current Government regulations and becoming overcrowded. For example you could ask people to book in with a nominated bailiff or club official.
- Online platform Castbooker ([www.castbooker.com](http://www.castbooker.com)) provides a simple system to pre-book and pay for day tickets online. If no system is currently in place, it is recommended to look at Castbooker or similar providers. (Lagan Rivers Trust are already live on the castbooker system.)
- Where relevant, angling clubs should consider initially restricting or stopping day ticket sales to help manage demand.
- As competitions are organised gatherings these should not be permitted or accommodated, as they do not meet current social distancing guidelines from the Government.
- Anglers should refrain from using keepnets.

## 2

### Shared Facilities & Hygiene

- Onsite shared facilities such as cafes, fishing huts and club houses should remain closed.
- Access to toilet facilities should only be considered if cleanliness of the facility is guaranteed to be maintained in accordance with current Government guidelines.
- The cleaning of gates, locks, boats, catch return boxes and other items that will be handled by anglers as part of their fishing session should be considered and wherever possible the number of individuals coming into contact with these items should be reduced.
- Consideration should be taken as to whether access gates could be manned or left open, reducing the need for visiting anglers to touch and handle them.
- Club and fisheries should consider the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff members and volunteers. Government guidelines on appropriate PPE can be found here.
- Fisheries who provide shared equipment such as landing nets, matts, sling etc. – should ensure that this equipment is cleaned appropriately prior to every use.

# IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES

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## 3

### Day Ticket and Membership Sales

- Anglers should be advised not to travel to a fishery or water without confirming their ability to fish.
- Clubs and fisheries should employ remote membership options via post and online platforms wherever possible. Support to set up online membership payments is available through Angling Trust partner Clubmate, who are offering their services free of charge for three months.
- Contactless payments should be encouraged.

## 4

### Communicating with members and customers

- During this time, clubs are advised to display the guidance that anglers must follow in this first phase of our return to fishing.
- We've included basic templates in this document that you can use on your website, social media and also print off to display at venues.
- You may need to consider adjustments to your venue rules as a result of these guidelines - these should also be clearly communicated.

# A PHASED APPROACH

A reminder of our phased approach on how we start to fish again, safely.

## CURRENT PHASE

### PHASE ONE

Angling to be undertaken in accordance with Government social distancing guidelines - these may change, you must be compliant at all times.

Boat fishing permitted 2 per boat 2 meters apart.

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

Anglers must follow current Government guidance on travel for the benefit of recreational activity.

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

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

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

No sharing of fishing tackle or any other items.

No angler to fish within 2 metres of any other angler.

No keepnets or competition fishing.

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

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

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

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

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



# A PHASED APPROACH

A reminder of our phased approach on how we start to fish again, safely.

## FUTURE PHASE

### PHASE TWO

SUBJECT TO ONGOING  
GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

Shared facilities at fisheries to re-open if compliant with current Government guidelines  
Competition fishing should only be undertaken if compliant with all Government guidelines and in accordance with the Angling Trust's existing best practice [COVID-19 guidance](#).

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





**We're here to help you get  
started fishing again safely**

# APPENDIX ONE

## Sample Game Angling Club Template

### Arriving at the fishery:

- Anglers should arrive on their own unless they can prove they are travelling with someone they live with.
- Anglers are encouraged to park in every other parking space.

### Day Ticket Payments & Bookings:

- Pre-Booking & prepayment for Day & Member rods will allow the fishery to control numbers & if necessary, stagger their arrival time. Pre-booking will also allow a fishery to update customers on guidelines, it will also reduce the necessity to enter the lodge. Contactless and cashless payment is strongly encouraged.

### Bank anglers:

- To fish a minimum 2m apart. To ensure bank anglers observe social distancing, it is insisted they arrive at the fishery by themselves unless they can prove they are a husband / wife / partner or parent & child who reside at the same address.

### Boat anglers:

- Boat anglers may fish with people who live in the same household OR ONE person outside of their household as long as social distancing guidelines are able to be met.
- To ensure social distancing on the pontoon it is suggested that 50% of the fleet is operated.
- By reducing a daily boat fleet by 50% it will allow a fishery to allocate every other boat which will ensure social distancing on the pontoon & in the boats moored onto it. It will also allow a fishery to fully disinfect boats and life jackets after every use, with boats and lifejackets usage rotated for every other day.

### Cleanliness:

- Entrance gates will be opened by fishery staff or landlord representatives. Fishery staff will be disinfecting gates, styles and any surface that anglers will be in contact with. Lodge doors, desk, phone etc all touching points will be disinfected every hour. Catch return forms will be encouraged to be submitted electronically.
- Anglers who require to enter the lodge to purchase tackle will be required to use the hand sanitiser by the door, a one in one out policy should be considered.

### Fishery Staff:

Staff will all be issued with Face Shields, disposable gloves with hand sanitiser available at the lodge door, pontoon gate for customers to use. [Further guidance on suitable PPE can be found here.](#)

### Competitions:

No competitions are allowed in phase one - as they are organised gatherings and these are currently not permitted under Government guidance.

## APPENDIX TWO

### Sample Coarse Fishery / Club Template

#### Day Ticket Payments & Bookings:

- Pre-booking of swims or pre-payment of day tickets is encouraged. This will allow the club/fishery to control numbers & if necessary, stagger arrival times. Only anglers who are 'booked in' to be allowed to visit the venue. Contactless and cashless payment of day tickets is strongly encouraged. Online platform [www.castbooker.com](http://www.castbooker.com) can provide this pre booking system for a club/fishery if required.
- Angling clubs may restrict or stop day ticket sales on their venues at this time.

#### Arriving at the fishery:

- Anglers should arrive on their own unless they can prove they are travelling with someone they live with.
- Anglers are encouraged to park in every other parking space where possible. Where parking spaces aren't present, anglers are encouraged to leave suitable space (approx. 2m) in between cars.

#### Anglers:

- To fish a minimum 2m apart, in most cases fishing every other swim/peg.
- Anglers may fish with people who live in the same household OR ONE person outside of their household as long as social distancing guidelines are met.
- An Anglers fishing time to be restricted to a set period of time (suitability dependent on venue).
- This will allow for the maximum number of members to be able to get back fishing.
- Encouraged to bring disposable gloves and anti bacterial hand sanitiser to use when handling, gates, locks and other surfaces that anglers come into contact with.

#### Cleanliness:

- Entry gates to be opened by fishery staff/club representative and remain open (where possible) to minimise the number of people handling them.
- Toilet facilities may remain open but keeping them clean will be vital. A club/fishery must be confident they can keep them clean, regular disinfecting of key touch points (handles, doors, seats) will need to take place.

#### Fishery Staff and Club Representatives:

- Personal Protective Equipment should be considered. Appropriate Government guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>.
- Pre-booking systems will assist club/fishery bailiffs and minimise requirements for close interaction with anglers.

#### Competitions:

No competitions are allowed in phase one - as they are organised gatherings and these are currently not permitted under Government guidance.

# APPENDIX THREE

## Sample Sea Angling Club Template

### Distance to your beach or estuary and travelling to your venue:

- Only fish within a short car journey of your home, travel alone or with someone who resides at the same address. anglers must follow current Government guidance on travel for the benefit of recreational activity.

### Anglers:

- Fishing should be a minimum of 2m apart. Where beaches have natural breaks like groynes then one angler for each section of beach.
- Anglers may fish with people who live in the same household OR ONE person outside of their household as long as social distancing guidelines are met.
- No sharing of fishing tackle, bait or other items.
- You are encouraged to bring disposable gloves and anti-bacterial hand sanitiser to use when handling, gates, locks and other surfaces that anglers come into contact with.

### Boat and Club facilities:

- Clubhouse will remain closed but boat yards and other outdoor facilities which are allowed to open should operate a strict check in facility with only authorised boat users who have arranged in advance using the facilities.
- Social distancing should be strictly adhered to.
- While Marinas remain closed to non-commercial traffic access to boats will be restricted/prohibited according to the policy of the facility owner.
- If going out in a boat please make sure you have a full set of functioning safety equipment, radio, phone, GPS and that the engine and boat is in good working order. It is not recommended to go out solo. **Please remember if you get into difficulties for any reason the emergency services, which are already under enormous pressure, will be put under greater strain by your actions.**
- Always make sure to tell someone you have gone out and when you are planning to return.

### Kayak anglers:

- If launching and landing on a public beach make sure you are properly distanced from other beach users.
- Only travel based on what is allowed by current Government guidelines.
- When on the water make sure you are equipped with the relevant function safety equipment. Remember the emergency services, including the RNLI, are at full stretch and make sure you tell someone where you are going when you are launching and returning.

### Breakwaters, Harbour Arms and Piers:

- Venues should only open where facilities for an advance booking policy are in place. Only limited numbers should be allowed to fish at any one time, government guidelines on social distancing should be adhered to 15m between anglers. If this isn't possible, they should remain closed.
- Any facility open to the public like piers and marinas will remain closed to anglers.

## APPENDIX THREE

### Sample Sea Angling Club Template

**Competitions:**

- No competitions are allowed in phase one - as they are organised gatherings and these are currently not permitted under Government guidance.

**Bait digging and collection:**

- Bait collection is allowed only if the collector is solo or with someone residing with them in the same house.
- Sharing or selling of collected bait is not allowed – unless specific distancing policies are in place -i.e. a commercial transaction in a shop or online.

# WHEN WE FISH AGAIN - FRESHWATER



Current Guidance - Published 12/05/2020

## PHASE ONE

**! ALL FRESHWATER ANGLERS MUST BE IN POSSESSION OF THE RELEVANT FISHING LICENCE**

- ✓ YOU SHOULD ONLY TRAVEL TO FISHING VENUES ON YOUR OWN OR WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD & ABIDE BY CURRENT GUIDELINES ON SOCIAL DISTANCING
- ✓ YOU CAN FISH WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD OR ONE PERSON OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSEHOLD - BUT STICK TO SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES
- ✓ MAINTAIN A DISTANCE OF 2M FROM OTHER ANGLERS WHILST FISHING
- ✓ ONLY TRAVEL BASED ON WHAT IS ALLOWED BY CURRENT GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES
- ✓ MAKE SURE YOU HAVE PERMISSION TO FISH BEFORE TRAVELLING. MANY CLUBS & FISHERIES HAVE IMPLEMENTED BOOKING SYSTEMS. FISHING WITHOUT PERMISSION IS ILLEGAL
- ✓ PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO CLUB & FISHERY NOTICES - IF UNSURE SPEAK TO A VENUE FOR GUIDANCE
- ✓ USE HAND SANITISER BEFORE & AFTER TOUCHING LOCKS, GATES ETC HANDLED BY OTHER ANGLERS. DISPOSABLE GLOVES ARE RECOMMENDED
- ✗ DO NOT LEAVE HOME IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 & FOLLOW GOVERNMENT ADVICE ON ISOLATION
- ✗ NO KEEPNETS OR COMPETITION FISHING - GOVERNMENT ADVICE STILL PROHIBITS ORGANISED GATHERINGS OF ANY KIND
- ✗ NO SHARING OF FISHING POSITIONS / PEGS EXCEPT BY MEMBERS OF THE SAME HOUSEHOLD
- ✗ NO SHARING OF FISHING TACKLE OR OTHER ITEMS

# WHEN WE FISH AGAIN - SALTWATER



Current Guidance - Published 12/05/2020

## PHASE ONE

**! AVOID FISHING FROM PIERS & BREAKWATERS IF YOU HAVE OTHER ALTERNATIVES, TO HELP AVOID OVER-CROWDING**

- ✓ YOU SHOULD ONLY TRAVEL TO FISHING VENUES ON YOUR OWN OR WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD & ABIDE BY CURRENT GUIDELINES ON SOCIAL DISTANCING
- ✓ YOU CAN FISH WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD OR ONE PERSON OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSEHOLD - BUT STICK TO SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES
- ✓ MAINTAIN A DISTANCE OF 2M FROM OTHER ANGLERS WHILST FISHING
- ✓ ONLY TRAVEL BASED ON WHAT IS ALLOWED BY CURRENT GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES
- ✓ SEA ANGLING FROM BEACH AND SHORE IS ALLOWED ALONG WITH SMALL SCALE PRIVATE BOAT FISHING (WITH MEMBERS OF YOUR OWN HOUSEHOLD OR ONE PERSON OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSEHOLD) - BUT STICK TO SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES
- ✓ PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO CLUB, HARBOUR & LOCAL COUNCIL NOTICES - IF UNSURE SPEAK SEEK LOCAL GUIDANCE
- ✓ USE HAND SANITISER BEFORE & AFTER TOUCHING LOCKS, GATES ETC HANDLED BY OTHER ANGLERS. DISPOSABLE GLOVES ARE RECOMMENDED
- ✗ DO NOT LEAVE HOME IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 & FOLLOW GOVERNMENT ADVICE ON ISOLATION
- ✗ NO COMPETITION FISHING - THE CURRENT ADVICE STILL PROHIBITS ORGANISED GATHERINGS OF ANY KIND
- ✗ NO SHARING OF FISHING POSITIONS / MARKS EXCEPT BY MEMBERS OF THE SAME HOUSEHOLD
- ✗ NO SHARING OF FISHING TACKLE OR OTHER ITEMS