A Strategic Review of Angling in Northern Ireland:

Final Report - February 2014

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In partnership with

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This report has been prepared by the consultants and is intended to inform the development of an angling strategy for Northern Ireland. The review has been advised by a steering group comprised of the following organisations: Sport Northern Ireland (lead partner and primary funder), Northern Ireland Tourist Board (funder), Department of Culture Arts and Leisure Inland Fisheries Loughs Agency (funder), The Ulster Angling Federation, The Irish Federation of Sea Anglers Ulster Provincial Council, The Ulster Coarse Fishing Federation.

The report provides the evidence base that supports the conclusions reached about issues which need to be addressed and which were the subject of testing with the stakeholders in a two-stage consultation which has informed detailed recommendations which will lead to the development of a strategic action plan for angling in Northern Ireland, to be prepared by the Steering Group that has cross-agency support.
2. INTRODUCTION

Northern Ireland is well endowed with angling waters. Its high rainfall combined with numerous lakes and rivers have provided an environment in which different inland fish species have thrived. The varied coastline and waters supplied by the Gulf Stream also provide an ideal aquatic environment for a variety of sea fish. Indeed, Northern Ireland’s rivers and lakes have sustained fisheries for centuries and fish stocks continue to support recreational fisheries of considerable significance. Angling has the potential to attract visitors and to promote enjoyment, health and wellbeing for local communities. Whilst there are factors which have constrained the development of the activity an inquiry in 2001 by the Northern Ireland Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee into inland fisheries outlined the potential for development in the sector. In particular, the report of the inquiry emphasised the capability of angling to support the expansion of tourism in Northern Ireland and stated that ‘it is beyond doubt that thriving recreational fisheries, particularly on rivers for salmon and on some Loughs for coarse fish, have a major role to play in this development’. The inland water resource combined with the extensive coastline and inshore waters have the potential to provide more opportunities to participate in angling and for all to enjoy the outdoors if a joined up approach to planning and management can be achieved.

The overall aim of the review is to provide information on the scale and characteristics of participation in angling in Northern Ireland and to identify the opportunities and constraints to the further development of the activity. It is intended that the review will provide the information that will enable the development of a strategic action plan for angling in Northern Ireland that has cross agency support.

For the purposes of this study, angling refers to opportunities to fish for game, coarse and sea fish species but not including inland commercial inland fisheries or commercial sea fisheries.

This document provides information on the issues and challenges that have been identified from research and consultations that need to be overcome to realise the potential of Northern Ireland to be a place where angling can be enjoyed by all, deliver healthy lifestyles and is a key economic driver through tourism visits.

The invaluable information received from surveys and consultation which took place helped the consultants to establish the views of stakeholders with an interest in angling, to confirm whether these are the right issues and to decide what actions and activities might be recommended to overcome the constraints and challenges highlighted.

We are greatly indebted to all those people who have given up their time to contribute to the review process.
3. **CONTEXT FOR THE REVIEW**

While angling is a recognised sport it has not been identified as a priority for Sport Northern Ireland nor has it been seen as a key product for tourism growth. In going forward, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board are developing activity clusters that will deliver a high quality experience for the visitor and angling can play a part in activity packaging, working with a range of other tourism partners.

A love for the natural environment, special landscapes, secret places, fantastic coastlines and the wildlife that inhabits them, is a strong part of the fabric and culture of life in Northern Ireland and the value of the outdoors to go to for recreation, relaxation and enjoyment is well documented and researched. However to maximise the potential of the water spaces to benefit local communities and visitors through opportunities they present for angling, government, landowners, the recreation industry and voluntary organisations need to work together to ensure that there are opportunities to grow this interest and love for the outdoors to provide angling in a sustainable manner.

A previous report into the economic impact of angling was carried out by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) in 2007 and the findings of that study indicated that at that time there were 30,000 game, coarse and sea anglers in Northern Ireland and that the levels of participation encompass a broad range of ages and social classes/levels of income. They found however that although angling is predominately a male sport it has the potential through broader social interaction to appeal to a range of ages and social classes. This report re-examines the evidence of levels of participation and who takes part.

Angling has considerable potential to contribute to the Northern Ireland’s Programme for Government which sets out the strategic priorities for all Government Departments and Agencies. Angling can make a particular contribution to:

- Growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future
- Creating opportunities, tackling disadvantage and improving health and wellbeing
- Building a strong and shared community
- Delivering high quality and efficient public services.

It has been suggested that angling can contribute towards helping to divert young people away from anti-social behaviour; by not being associated with any particular flags or emblems, angling has strong levels of participation across the political divide including cross community memberships within individual angling clubs. Through this inclusive approach, angling has already helped to develop contacts and relationships which have contributed towards enhancing social cohesion and there are examples where angling has been used as tool to enable learning particularly about wildlife and the environment. Further evidence is provided in this report of the wider benefits that can accrue from participation in the activity.

It has also been suggested that angling can contribute to a healthy living lifestyle and can bring physical activity benefits. While most anglers felt that catching a fish contributed considerably to a feeling of mental well being which stemmed from
taking part, with a significant number of anglers highlighting that relaxing, undertaking a healthy outdoor activity and releasing stress were factors that contributed most to their fishing experience. Evidence from earlier research also suggests that by promoting the benefits, significant savings in departments and agencies can be realised. This was felt to be particularly relevant in the cases of health and crime reduction. There are also examples of angling being used in Northern Ireland and in other parts of the UK as a tool to improve education, anti-social behaviour, health and environmental outcomes and a number of case studies are included in this report. Angling is clearly demonstrating that it can deliver significant outcomes across a range of important social agendas.

In addition to the benefits that accrue to local communities the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) is responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination. The overall aim is to ensure tourism contributes to the creation of a dynamic competitive economy. Activity tourism is one of the key themes and within that tourism angling represents a key product to deliver growth and competitiveness for Northern Ireland tourism. The delivery will be through both domestic and overseas marketing and co-operative partnerships in both public and private sectors.
4. THE ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE REVIEW

Sport Northern Ireland’s business is designed to provide people, especially young people and underrepresented groups, with pathways and options for lifelong sporting and personal development.

Sport Matters: The strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009 – 19\(^1\) has highlighted the need for increased participation in sport and physical recreation. Outdoor recreation activities are recognised by SNI as being able to make a significant contribution to increasing participation levels and this has been evidenced through the Trends in Outdoor Activities research undertaken by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland in 2008\(^2\). This research reported that in the period 1998 – 2008:

- The number of venues used for has increased by 340% (421 new venues identified)
- The number of outdoor sports clubs has increased by 8% (17 new clubs)
- The number of participants involved in outdoor sports has increased by 152% (26,654 new participants)

However, the above figures do not include those participating in angling as it was recognised at that time that this activity would warrant a study of its own.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) is responsible for the development of tourism and the marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination to visitors within Northern Ireland and from the Republic of Ireland.

The Department for Culture Arts and Libraries (DCAL) is responsible, under the provisions of the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966, for the salmon and inland fisheries of Northern Ireland and provides advice and guidance on matters relating to the conservation, protection, development and improvement of salmon and inland fisheries to angling clubs, fishery owners, and a range of other water users and interested parties.

The primary responsibility for biodiversity and water quality rests with Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) but also Loughs Agency for the relevant Loughs and river systems.

The Loughs Agency is an agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC) and was established as one of the cross-border bodies under the 1998 Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland. Under the Agreement, the Agency took over the fisheries protection functions of the Foyle Fisheries Commission and was given both an additional cross-border operational area in Carlingford and the additional functions of developing aquaculture and marine tourism. Importantly, for the development of this strategic review key roles of the Agency is in the “the management, conservation, protection, improvement and development of the inland fisheries of the Foyle and Carlingford Areas, as well as

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promotion of development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters.

There are 3 recognised governing bodies for angling in Northern Ireland:

1. The Ulster Angling Federation
2. The Irish Federation of Sea Anglers Ulster Provincial Council
3. The Ulster Coarse Fishing Federation
5. THE REVIEW PROCESS

In accordance with the brief that was issued and confirmed by the Steering Group at the commencement of the project the study has comprised of a number of key stages to identify the issues and recommendations that have been identified.

Document Review and Issues Papers

The initial research to identify the key issues has built on the work of Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) who prepared a report on behalf of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, The Loughs Agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board examining the social and economic impact of recreational fishing in Northern Ireland. Reviews of the documentary evidence have been undertaken revisiting their main data sources and other reports from the UK and Ireland to give a current picture of angling in NI. This has included analysis of licence and permit applications and club memberships. The aim has been not only to update the longitudinal data from PCW but also to interrogate the current data and examine the issues which arise from a wider set of questions regarding the constraints and opportunities facing the activity.

PWC highlighted a number of difficulties in identifying and analysing data – for example sea anglers do not need permits, many anglers are not members of any club or organisation, personal data such as ethnicity can be sensitive and is not always available. It was acknowledged by the Steering Group that the current review faced the same difficulties and it was agreed that the balance of this study should be on establishing the strategic issues which influence development rather than seeking to fill gaps in participation data or prepare registers of facilities which may already exist or if not would be costly to pin down. Details of a survey of sea angling that has recently been undertaken by the Agri Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) are not yet available but when published should help the Steering Group to fill gaps in information about that activity.

This final report follows an interim report that had been presented to the Steering Group meeting on the 30th April 2013. The interim report comprised a series of themed issues that were explored examining constraints to participation, how angling has been promoted to visitors within Northern Ireland and abroad, factors affecting access to facilities and the governance of angling.

Document Review

A variety of published and unpublished documents have been reviewed in order to identify participation and trends and factors influencing further development and examples of what might be considered good practice within Northern Ireland, other parts of the UK or abroad.

Meetings with Key Stakeholders

A series of initial meetings and telephone conversations took place with the key actors who are responsible for providing or managing access to angling facilities and with a wide range of user groups. These discussions were invaluable to begin to
identify the issues which may need to be addressed. At an early stage a focussed workshop was held with local authorities to test some of the issues which had been identified in initial meetings to examine what they saw as the key constraints and opportunities. A list of initial consultations undertaken is attached at Appendix 1.

**Questionnaire Surveys**

The development of an electronic survey questionnaire was agreed as the basis for capturing the views of angling clubs identified by the three NI angling governing bodies. Quantitative and qualitative data was collated to build a current picture of opportunities for angling in Northern Ireland, including infrastructure and facilities provision as well as participation trends and perceived barriers and constraints to the wider take up of this sport. A survey with local authorities was also conducted and a range of angling businesses also provided their views on the constraints and opportunities influencing the jobs and growth agenda.

The on-line survey phase of this study was undertaken in the months of March and April 2013. Responses were collated via email (and telephone where necessary) and follow up phone calls and emails were made in order to ensure that the maximum number of participant responses were submitted. A total of 184 questionnaires were circulated, 66 to angling clubs (84% response rate) 65 to angling business (13% response rate) and 26 to Northern Ireland Local Authorities (77% response rate).

**Second Stage Consultation**

The second stage consultation was intended to help the consultants establish the views of stakeholders with an interest in angling, to confirm whether the issues identified from initial research and discussions are the right ones and to decide what actions and activities might be recommended to overcome the constraints and challenges that have emerged. The consultation ran from Early May to mid-June. In addition to a web-based opportunity to contribute it also included a series of open consultation meetings held from 20th to 22nd May.

Meetings were held at:

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3 A meeting planned to be held on the afternoon of 21st May at the LoughsAgency did not proceed.
6. ANGLING PARTICIPATION ISSUES

6.1. Why is angling important

Angling is in many ways often a ‘hidden’ activity. It is not something that commands great media attention (or income) like football, cricket or rugby even though it has as many if not more participants. It is not often a part of the everyday ‘vista of life’, like seeing people cycling or running, although it goes on all around us⁴. As referred to above it has not been a priority for Sport Northern Ireland or the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

Angling does not have the visibility of many other activities and for most people anglers may only be noticed occasionally by the general public – by the river or on the beach when visiting the countryside or coast, it is perhaps reasonable to say there is general public ignorance of the activity. There is widespread belief that angling is entirely sedentary, and probably involves “sitting still, in the rain, under an umbrella, doing and catching little”.

At times angling is also considered somewhat sceptically as a ‘sport’ – usually based on ill-conceived assumptions about physical activity levels – yet angling does deliver key sports-based outcomes and generally meets standard definitions of sport: of active participation, competition (that is both formal and informal, elite and community), a structure of governing bodies and clubs and activities that attract support and resources from public agencies. In addition angling has some distinctive features from other sports delivering added value in areas of social and community benefits that are derived from participation in the activity.

Yet angling is an activity undertaken by millions of people. It is the 6th biggest sport in the UK measured by once per month participation; an estimated four million people have gone fishing in the UK in the past two years at least 60,000 in Northern Ireland⁵. Many more are interested in taking it up if opportunities are available. It also has the potential to generate economic benefits, many in rural areas where the job opportunities are limited as the section on tourism shows.

There are a number of ways in which the physical activity involved in angling offers something distinctive from other sports, and when considered collectively these distinctions demonstrate that angling plays a key role in getting people active, particularly those who might otherwise fall outside of ‘mainstream’ sports participation⁶. The distinctions are summarised below:

- Provides opportunities for activity for the less able that many other sports do not;
- Needs to be understood in relation to the ability of participants;
- Helps keep or encourage people to be active later in life;
- Provides sustained duration of physical activity;
- Provides opportunities for green exercise with inherent added health benefits.


The NI government is increasingly concerned with addressing issues such as community cohesion, social inclusion and active citizenship, or, in more general terms developing social capital. A growing body of research shows that angling is also a tool that can help to improve education, address anti-social behaviour and deliver health and environmental outcomes. It can deliver significant outcomes across a range of important social agendas.

Angling is a life-long leisure activity for many; it is a source of enjoyment for participants and a valued source of employment and income for others.

**KEY ISSUE:** Angling is an activity which has the potential to deliver a range of social benefits yet its value is largely unrecognised. There is a need to raise the profile of the sport and the opportunities which arise from increasing participation.

**Conclusion:** It is clear that angling to date has had a low profile and there is a need to enhance its status as a vehicle for getting people active and for the part it can play in contributing to social cohesion and in terms of benefit to the economy. A feature of the consultation was that anglers across Northern Ireland had a very similar view of the difficulties and opportunities that the sport faces; there was a consistent concern that angling is under-developed, needs fresh resources to build capacity among the clubs and also to develop tourism based on angling. It needs strategic thinking to take it forward!

The fact that Sport NI and NITB had commissioned the review of angling was welcomed by the consultees, who hoped that it would be the start of a process to revive angling not only from a social perspective but very much from an economic point of view. Consultees also welcomed the breadth of the study brief, which they hoped would encourage a broader consideration of the subject to be undertaken.

“... For too long pastimes and activities have been pigeon holed by those participating in a particular interest and also by the bulk of society in NI. Much of this is due to the many years of the troubles and lack of political input. However the subject deserves of much greater consideration by other government departments not least the NIEA, planners, economic development...” (submission by a respondent to the Web consultation, May 2013).

A number of respondents felt that the outcomes of the review could help drive the NI Assembly's various policies and associated agendas covering areas such as economic development and the environment. Respondents clearly felt that angling has lacked the support it merits and argued that there has been a history of neglect.

“If clubs were supported they could be better managed and angling would develop rapidly”. (Comment from a workshop attendee)

Angling as an opportunity to create new and long-lasting economic activity has not been properly understood. It deserves to be allowed a stronger political profile as a holistic approach by the many government departments and agencies that have

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Comment from interview with Local Authority representative
overlapping responsibilities that impinge upon angling. A number of respondents indicated that the review is long overdue!

A variety of recommendations are made throughout this report about how the profile of angling might be enhanced and a more joined-up approach achieved.
6.2. The benefits of participation

The social and community impact of angling

There is persuasive evidence about the positive roles that angling can play in improving people’s lives.

The PWC report set out the substantial economic benefits that can accrue for the development of angling\(^4\). However, drawing on evidence from recent surveys, other published research and interviews with key stakeholders, it is clear that angling can also contribute to a range of social and community goals in Northern Ireland. Although the basis of research on the social impact of recreational angling is more limited, a number of studies have been conducted that outline a range of social outcomes from angling. These include benefits to education, crime reduction, social cohesion, health and the environment. Evidence suggests that by promoting angling, significant savings in other public sector departments and agencies can be realised.

One of the principal benefits from angling in Northern Ireland is its ability to encourage and facilitate participation and interaction among a diverse range of individuals and groups. In 2005, for example, it was estimated there were just under 30,000 game, coarse and sea anglers, with the PWC survey showing that the levels of participation encompass a broad range of ages and social classes / levels of income. Angling, however, was predominately a male sport.

By not being associated with any particular flags or emblems, angling has strong levels of participation across the political spectrum in Northern Ireland, including cross community memberships within individual angling clubs. Through this inclusive membership, angling has helped to develop relationships which have contributed towards enhancing social cohesion between the two main communities.

The Assessment of Economic Impact of Sport in Ireland\(^7\) outlined a number of benefits including:

- The benefits to well-being through participation in sport;
- The particular benefits for health through increased physical activity;
- Through sustaining a healthier population, sport reduces the costs of health service provision;
- Increased productivity with associated economic benefits;
- Community benefits, including the contribution to social capital and social cohesion arising from participation and volunteering more generally;
- The financial benefits for the Exchequer through increased economic activity and reduced health service costs.

The assessment highlights the very significant contribution provided by sport to the Irish economy. It also demonstrates the vital role played by sport in supporting the development of social capital and in contributing to the health and quality of life of the Irish population. Importantly, the assessment also demonstrates that there is a very significant net overall return on government investment in sport in Ireland.

**KEY ISSUE:** Angling has the ability to bring communities together across the political spectrum and is a potentially valuable tool in supporting community cohesion, there are some examples of good practice but considerable potential remains untapped.

**Conclusion:** There is a need to develop and share good practice. Whilst this report identifies a number of case studies and as part of the consultation, people reported to us examples of successful schemes, much more can be done to “spread the word”.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** That consideration is given to holding a regular, perhaps an annual angling conference and networking event at which clubs, governing bodies, statutory agencies and community organisations can discuss the constraints and opportunities in developing angling and share good practice about what works.

The other major channel through which individual participation in sport benefits society as a whole is through improvements in workforce productivity. It has been estimated by Medibank in Australia that a worker who commences regular sport and recreational physical activity will have a 4% increase in productivity. The Irish Sports Monitor reports that 18% of adult population is sedentary (less than 20 minutes physical activity per week) and 32% of the population is just active (getting 20 minutes exercise only once per week). This implies that there could be significant productivity gains if these members of the population were to begin regular exercise. Angling has the potential to contribute to this process particularly through its appeal to those groups who are not attracted to more mainstream sporting activities.

**Health benefits**

Well-documented physical health benefits of participation in sport, including angling are:

- reduced risk of diabetes, cancer, heart disease, osteoporosis and
- improved blood pressure, bone density, immune system, and body composition;

Compelling recent evidence from the Republic of Ireland indicates that those who do not participate regularly in physical activity suffer much steeper declines in physical and mental health throughout the life course than those who do regularly participate.

One of the most important social impacts of angling identified from recent studies is the benefits to personal health that can be delivered. Angling is a source of outdoor recreation which can provide benefits in relieving stress and helping people to relax and unwind. Research has found that seeking relaxation and undertaking activity out of doors is considered one of the main reasons for people participating in angling and, in some cases, this is actually more important to the individual than catching fish. This was highlighted by research conducted in Australia which examined the motivations behind angling; the study concluded that ‘relaxation’

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received the highest score in terms of the level of importance (3.53 out of 5). ‘Catching fish’ received a lower score of (3.14 out of 524)\(^9\).

By helping participants to relax angling can also bring psychological benefits. Introduction to angling programmes that have been introduced in Northern Ireland have been taken up by a range of mental health and victim support groups such as Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health, Rethink, Praxis, Wave, and North and South Armagh Victims. These organisations have recognised the benefits to participants which have helped them to address mental and social problems\(^8\).

In support of this conclusion research in England and Wales on sea angling has also outlined the health benefits that can be gained from participation in that discipline of the sport. 83% of the respondents indicated that they felt some or significant positive effects and of these, 44.6% indicated a significant positive effect on health. Overall, only 1.9% indicated a negative effect\(^9\).

The value of outdoor recreation is increasingly being promoted amongst health professionals. For example, it is recognised that the pollution filtering role of vegetation has significant relevance for such health issues as asthma, and that moderate exercise in green surroundings can make a positive contribution to healthy living. A healthier and more active population reduces the strain on acute clinical services affording potential savings to local health providers and the NHS.

Importantly, participation in angling can take place throughout the life course contributing to lifelong activity and ‘active ageing’\(^10\).

**KEY ISSUE:** There is evidence that a wide range of physical and mental health benefits can be accrued from participation in angling that appeals to individuals who are not attracted to more formal sport and that angling can offer opportunities to participate throughout the life course. This suggests that stronger links with the health service would be beneficial in terms of the impact this could have on individuals’ health, and in terms of cost savings to health budgets.

**Conclusion:** Health as a specific topic was not raised during the consultations except when participants were prompted. It went unquestioned that angling had health benefits related both to fitness and to wellbeing.

One participant argued that although it is supposed to be a cross-cutting issue, departments and agencies are not collaborating to promote health, for example it was suggested that the Department for Regional Development (DRD) should encourage NI Water to promote access to their properties because of the high value of the health benefits. Another felt that without clear engagement and support from the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) other official bodies would not feel that they had a mandate to promote health and angling together.

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**Social cohesion benefits**

With high levels of participation, and involvement across a range of age and income groups, angling can contribute towards building social cohesion. This benefit from angling was demonstrated by research in Germany which found that recreational fishing was a popular leisure activity with about 3.3 million people aged 14 or older having taken part in 2002. The research showed that angling was evenly distributed among all social classes and was particularly popular among younger people. In this way, angling provides important social benefits by encouraging participation among a range of age groups and social classes and facilitates social interaction. Similarly, studies in England and Wales have highlighted the benefits of angling in encouraging participation across a broad social mix. Research shows that sea angling is enjoyed across a wide spectrum of different social classes. These findings are also supported by research in the United States which showed that the experiences which anglers rated as most important included: nature appreciation, personal achievement, social affiliation (including meeting new people, increasing fellowship, and spending time with friends and family).

Angling, therefore, provides opportunities to bring together a range of age and income groups and facilitates interaction and relationships that can contribute to rebuilding communities.

**Angling First Ltd**

Angling First Ltd has brought together pupils from two schools across the community divide, Dunmurry High and St Colum’s Twinbrook. Through an introductory programme, angling provided the opportunity for pupils from both schools to come together in a neutral setting, share their experiences in learning how to fish and develop relationships. In fact, the value of angling in being able to develop this cross-community engagement is even more striking given that it was the first time many of the pupils had personal contact, despite the schools only being located ½ mile away from each other.

Angling is also regarded as a popular sport among people with disabilities as an activity that is accessible to all and can help people with disabilities socialise, build a sense of independence and integrate into the wider community. The sport is unique in offering opportunities for competition alongside able bodied participants.

**Tagit Fishing Club**

This was established in 2011 in partnership with Castlereagh Borough Council, Ards Borough Council and DCAL to promote angling as a sport through a series of activities and programmes for local people, providing social development opportunities. Aimed at children it can also cater for disabled anglers. The club recently provided the first of a number of fishing stands. Events have been supported by DCAL, Department of Justice and the Policing Board. Access to a lake was
recently secured and the club expect to take over the management during 2013. Another initiative of the club is to develop a project in Belfast to provide a fishing complex.

**Street Fishing**

Launched in France, Street Fishing is now spreading across Europe. It is an active and innovative way of predator fishing from the banks of rivers, canals and harbours in urban surroundings. It is encouraging young people to take up the sport and is seen as a fashionable thing to do. It allows busy anglers time to fit in sessions between work. It promotes catch and release and shows participants the proper way to handle fish. It is a flexible way to fish and requires little kit – a gateway for new anglers to join the sport.

**Crime reduction benefits**

Evidence suggests that angling can be used as a tool to reduce crime and people at risk of offending through broader social interaction among a range of ages and social classes. It is suggested that angling can contribute towards helping to divert young people away from anti-social behaviour.

**Get Hooked on Fishing**

In England the police originated scheme, ‘Get Hooked on Fishing’, has targeted socially excluded young people aged 10 to 16, 75% of whom have been referred by crime prevention agencies as being at risk of offending. This programme teaches angling and the associated environmental values to young people and is seen as a way of encouraging them to participate and focus on a positive recreational activity. Research has shown that the initiative has proved to be successful in diverting young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour. Of the 660 youngsters who have been through the programme, 98% are still fishing and none has offended. Truancy is also down 75%, academic standards have risen and of the 12 peer group leaders recruited from each year’s intake to help to carry the scheme forward, not one of school leaving age is unemployed and several have gone on to higher education.

**Loughs Agency**

In Northern Ireland, angling programmes targeting young people from deprived communities and socially excluded young people have been established by the Loughs Agency in partnership with the Youth Justice Agency. Under this scheme, the Youth Justice Agency contributes funding to support the Professional Angling Guides and Instructors Network (PAGIN) to take young people on day trips and introduce them to angling. 12 young people have participated at different levels with 6 completing a reparation order and 3 completing the ‘Introduction to Angling’ course.

In addition, charitable organisations have been involved in encouraging socially excluded young people in areas of high crime and deprivation to take up angling.
Angling First

Angling First aims to introduce the sport of angling to young people as a positive alternative to engaging in anti-social activity. The sport of angling is also introduced to adults regarded to be vulnerable in nature with the aim of improving their mental health. Services are accessed through organised groups and delivered at their purposely developed pond located just outside Dromore Co. Down.

In 2005, the charity, worked with a total of 596 young people over a one and / or four day period from a range of deprived areas in Northern Ireland including, Ardoyne, Tigers Bay, Twinbook, Old Warren and the Garvaghy Road area of Portadown.

Following the programme, the charity can point to a wide number of individuals who have taken up the sport on a regular basis, one child having actually gone on to represent Ireland at angling competitions at junior international level. Evaluations of the scheme have found that of the 596 young people introduced to angling in 2005, 75% went fishing after the charity fishing trip and 17% have taken up angling on a regular basis.

The impact of schemes such as these is particularly significant in view of the considerable cost to the taxpayer of keeping a young offender in a secure unit.

**KEY ISSUE**: Although there is clear evidence that angling can contribute to addressing crime and community safety is the full value of the part it can play recognised by the Government Departments and Agencies responsible?

**Conclusion**: Although there is evidence of the value of angling being recognised by the Department for Justice, the Department for Social Development and the Youth Justice Agency it is considered that there are further opportunities for a more joined up approach to develop angling which would meet mutual objectives of social inclusion and increasing participation. Whilst there are examples of projects where angling led initiatives have been successful in addressing issues of crime and anti-social behaviour much more could be done if the activity is to achieve its full potential.

**RECOMMENDATION 3**: Evidence from successful projects is drawn together by the bodies responsible for angling and is used as the basis for an early meeting with the Department for Social Development, Youth Justice Agency and the Department for Justice to see how joint initiatives might be pursued in the future.

**Educational benefits**

Angling can also provide educational benefits. Being an outdoor recreation activity, angling offers the potential to learn more about wildlife, ecology and the natural environment. By building an understanding and awareness among those who take up the sport it also increases the likelihood of anglers actively caring for the environment.
The Assessment of Economic Sport in Ireland supports the view that participation in sport and other forms of physical activity results in improved academic performance. Sport, including activities such as angling, has the potential to improve academic performance via:

- Increased energy derived from fitness;
- Reduced disruptive behaviour;
- Improved cognitive functioning as a result of increased cerebral blood flow or improvement of brain neurotransmitters;
- Productive diversion from time spent in classroom; and
- Relationship between motor and mental skills and increased self-esteem.

The Kinnego Centre

On the shores of Lough Neagh Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, this is a special unit for children with social, emotional or behavioural problems. Pupils attend their mainstream school two days a week and the Kinnego Centre three days a week. The aim of the centre is to help the children return to full time mainstream education.

As part of a broader educational initiative, thirty pupils took part in an introduction to angling scheme, delivered by Angling First during 2005. Before participating in the scheme, the Kinnego Centre work closely with Angling First to discuss the individual needs of the children and tailor the programme accordingly. As well as teaching the pupils how to fish emphasis can be placed on education (science and the environment) and / or social and behavioural skills (through team building exercises).

From completing the scheme and learning how to fish, the pupils have gained a sense of achievement and have now been opened up to new interest / activity which they can pursue with their friends. Staff at the Kinnego Centre have identified an improvement in the personal development of some pupils. In particular, while the pupils have learned to fish and gain more understanding and appreciation of the environment, the scheme has provided a way of encouraging the children to work together, develop relationships and relax. By building these relationships and social skills, the scheme has helped the children to open up and talk to staff.

The Thomas Adams School

This school in Wem, Shropshire, has included a certified fly fishing course on its curriculum which aims to improve pupils’ knowledge of the countryside. In these classes, pupils can earn credits for a certificate of personal effectiveness, which has been accredited by the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) to be the equivalent of a GCSE.

Angling can also be used as a way of promoting broader educational aims.
The Dublin Angling Initiative

The Dublin Angling Initiative was set up in 1995. Its principal aims are to promote, develop and improve angling in the Dublin and Greater Dublin area and is sponsored by the Inland Fisheries Ireland.

During the summer months the main work of the initiative is taking young people from National and Secondary schools, summer projects and youth services throughout Dublin City Centre and its suburbs on fishing courses. Already thousands of young people have been introduced to the joys of sea, coarse and game angling at the venues that are accessible by bus and rail from Dublin City centre.

The Initiative has also been a catalyst in setting up fishing clubs for many of these young people and given them a hobby they can enjoy for life.

Another vital role of the Initiative is to stock waterways and small lakes in the Dublin area, thus providing anglers with a greater variety of fishing. The partners are aware of the need for more angling locations and the initiative has assisted in the creation of new fisheries. During the winter months, the Initiative visits schools in Dublin promoting the benefits of angling as a pass time and the need to protect and conserve our aquatic environment.

Fishing competitions for juniors and a host of other events feature on the calendar of the Dublin Angling Initiative, attracting greater interest to the sport year after year.

Some local development partnerships in Northern Ireland have received funding through the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) to encourage schools to participate in angling and river conservation.

The Lower Bann Partnership

The Lower Bann Partnership has received funding to develop a project in which local schools adopt a section of a tributary river. Under the scheme, school children are encouraged to participate in angling and the river is used as a basis for learning about conservation. In addition, the scheme assists in protecting the environment by monitoring pollution and acting as a ‘river watch’.

The Loughs Agency has actively encouraged participation in angling through a range of events aimed at the education and community sector. These events include taster sessions, 1 day angling experiences and fishing trips and courses in fly tying and casting for both young people and adults. The Agency organised the first registered event in 2005 as part of the UK wide campaign ‘National Fishing Week’ through the Youth Fishing Festivals. Through this campaign, the Agency has encouraged nearly 300 young people to take part with many picking up a rod for the first time. During the 2 day festival, participants are educated about the environment, river life, safety, casting and fly tying as well having a fishing experience. Around 70% of participants have continued with the sport after the festival and purchased juvenile licences and permits. Many young people have also encouraged their friends and family to take part in the sport.
In the delivery of angling awareness sessions, the Agency utilises the skills, experience and training of the National Angling Guides Association and the Professional Angling Guides and Instructors Network (PAGIN) to ensure a professional and safe experience.

**Loughs Agency**

In the 2005/6 term, the Loughs Agency, through PAGIN, worked with approximately 28 pupils in the Western Education and Library Board area. 14 of these pupils completed a fly tying course in June 2006. In addition, the Agency hosts an annual angling fair at their headquarters which is attended by around 4,000 to 5,000 people over a weekend.

The Loughs Agency has developed and undertaken many other educational programmes for schools and community groups which promote learning about wildlife and the environment. Stemming from the Agency’s interpretative centre ‘Riverwatch’, (which has had nearly 30,000 visitors since opening in 2003), outreach programmes have been created such as ‘Salmon in the Classroom’, ‘Vital Signs’ and ‘Adopt a Stream’. These programmes are focused on educating children in fishery welfare and environmental aspects of waterways within their communities and combine published material, fieldwork and interactive work with teaching in the classroom.

**KEY ISSUE:** Although many of the above programmes have been recently introduced, making it difficult to fully evaluate their impact, it is evident that angling has made a contribution to the education and development of children, yet there is no coordination between the organisations and agencies involved and the full value of angling as an educational tool is not always realised.

It was suggested at two of the meetings that the Education and Library Boards should be involved; otherwise promoting angling to school-age children would be an uphill task. However other comments indicated that the Education and Library Boards lacked the capacity to get involved and were largely focussed on fulfilling their statutory functions such as special education needs and school transport. It was also suggested that there was a role for the Department of Education although few specific ideas were forthcoming about how schools might be more engaged. Offering coaching and targeting schools was suggested, as was learning from good practice.

**Conclusion:** The main message coming from the consultations is that the key opportunity to influence participation amongst children will be through schools. Consultees felt that opportunities for schools to pursue initiatives are influenced by:

- The availability of somewhere to fish;
- Issues about engaging schools outside teaching hours; and also
- The cost of transporting children.

Angling was felt to be a good way to introduce pupils to practical aspects of the environment, for example the Hon. Irish Society has an outreach project with local schools where they introduce pupils to the life-cycle of fish by providing aquaria and salmon eggs. One of the participants at the Larne meeting, a retired vice-rector of
school and a keen angler, used to take fishing parties out and arranged competitions between schools and they were very well supported.

A suggestion was that schools would be interested in angling if there was a Duke of Edinburgh badge for angling in NI. At present it can be included in a general skills award but there is nothing specific to angling.

Another suggestion was that a jointly-badged scheme between the Loughs Agency and DCAL to promote angling in schools would be a positive development. Both organisations are involved in education initiatives and there may be benefits from sharing experience and working more closely together in this area which is essential if more young people are to be introduced to the activity.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** The Loughs Agency and DCAL should collaborate to develop a programme of educational outreach initiatives through partnership with stakeholder interests aimed at stimulating greater interest and involvement in angling amongst young people.
6.3. **UK and Republic of Ireland Policies and Strategies to Support Participation**

There have been a range of studies carried out and strategies developed in other parts of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland that provide a benchmark for the way forward in developing participation in angling in Northern Ireland.

**Fishing For Life: A National Strategy for Getting People Fishing 2013-2018**

The UK Government and the Environment Agency asked the Angling Trust – the newly created unified governing body for all anglers in England – to coordinate the production of a National Angling Strategy on behalf of all interests in angling. This new strategy explores “how to get more people fishing more often, dealing with environmental issues and how angling can deliver more beneficial outcomes for non-angling communities.”

To do this, the strategy seeks to encourage angling to be involved with new organisations and people to work together to unlock the potential it has to offer everyone. The recently published strategy is based on the largest ever survey of anglers in England and Wales (involving over 29,000 anglers) as well as a survey of nearly 800 angling organisations.

The overarching vision for angling is to enable more people to take part in angling more often across a wide cross section of society and generations, and for angling to be a catalyst for improving more people’s lives and their environment.

Four strategic objectives are identified:

1. To encourage people to take up and continue fishing so it becomes a habit for life;
2. For angling to be recognised for its role in improving the nation’s health and well-being, increasing educational attainment and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour;
3. To improve people’s lives by using angling as a catalyst for bringing people and society together;
4. For people to recognise that fish and fishing are at the heart of a better environment.

For angling to thrive, grow and deliver more benefits to society as a whole, the strategy recognises that anglers and angling groups will need to do things differently to involve a wider range of organisations and agencies as well as the general public. To implement the strategy an implementation group is being established made up of the principal national interests operating in angling together with non-angling representatives.

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In Scotland, the Angling Development Board of Scotland (ADBoS) leads participation development, funded principally by Sport Scotland.

Their strategy is about creating a fairer society where everyone is able to participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential, based on the belief that opportunities to go fishing should not be denied to anyone because of their race or ethnicity, gender, marital or civil partnership status, disability (particularly when reasonable adjustments can be made to overcome physical barriers), age, religion or belief or sexual orientation. The strategy acknowledges however, that in some cases, such as remote Highland lochs, easy access may never be possible.

As well as the economic benefits, the strategy recognises that fisheries represent an important social resource for Scotland’s people and can contribute to:

- Ambitions to improve the health and wellbeing of the nation;
- Education and awareness raising of rural and environmental issues, and reconnect people with the countryside;
- Education about the importance of freshwater fish to cultural and natural heritage.

The strategy refers to concerns that too few people, especially young people, are coming into angling and that positive action to address recruitment is required.

The Strategy sets out a number of measures and activities covering education and coaching to encouraging and broaden participation in angling.

**SportScotland**

The extent and nature of participation in angling goes far beyond the act of simply holding a fishing rod, delivering many social and environmental benefits through a number of ‘associated activities’.

The Angling Development Board of Scotland (ADBoS) has secured SportScotland funding to support ongoing work to the 2015 Commonwealth Games to deliver:

- A 10% increase in Club Angling approved clubs;
- 10% increase in people participating in Club Angling;
- 50% increase in international level elite anglers;
- Delivery of 72 Club Angling programmes;
- Engagement with 60% of new Community Sports Hubs to embed angling within broader sport provision across all regions of Scotland.

ADBoS are also:

- Developing new proposals for social inclusion angling delivery and are targeting “Cashback for Communities” (proceeds of crime) funds to assist with this;

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- Supporting continued professional development of coaches;
- Working with the Scottish Qualifications Authority to launch a secondary schools based angling National Progression Award which will sit on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

**Irish Angling Development Alliance**

Founded in 2010, covering the whole island of Ireland and seeking to promote non-confrontational support for anglers and angling issues their annual report (16) refers to creating environments that will cater for all membership including social angling clubs. The organisation represents 3,000 anglers.

Main areas of activity include:
- Coaching - training coaches to implement junior development programme;
- Activities including schools programmes; summer camps; Saturday clubs; also involve parents;
- Working in disadvantaged areas to give children new positive activity to engage in;
- Development of junior angling and schools programmes;
- National Youth Development Officer working with local authorities throughout NI;
- Promoting events - angling festivals, competitions;
- Equality officer to work with minority groups and nationalities;
- Working with statutory bodies, including DCAL, Loughs Agency and Inland Fisheries Ireland.
6.4. **Who participates?**

“Angling is much bigger than we originally thought” (Sport England,)

Recreational angling is a very popular participation sport. In England and Wales, for example, some 3.9 million people – 9% of the population aged 12 years or over – went angling (freshwater coarse and game angling) in the years 2000-2001. The EA Public Attitudes to Angling 2010 report said that 9% of the population over 12 years of age in England and Wales (equivalent to 4.2 million people) had been fishing in the last year. Based on sales of licences by DCAL it is estimated that approximately 3% of the population over 16 went angling in 2012 but this figure takes no account of sea fishing or those people who fish without a licence. It was commented as part of the consultation that there may be a significant number of people fishing without a licence so the above figures may be an underestimate. In addition early results from the AFB survey of the number of people sea angling may be as many as 30,000 (1.6% of the population).

Research on sea angling estimated that around 2 million people went sea angling at least once in England and Wales in 2002, approaching 4% of the population.

Although the estimates vary, it is clear that recreational angling in the UK has millions of participants and therefore must be acknowledged as making a valuable contribution to getting people active in outdoor settings.

Angling is the 16th highest participation sport in England in terms of weekly participation and 6th in monthly participation. However, because angling is classed as a low intensity activity, it ranks at only 29th in terms of Sport England funding (0.4% of available funding) yet Sport England’s calculations place angling as:

- The 6th highest monthly participation sport (970,000);
- 16th in weekly participation at moderate intensity (138,000);
- Having the 3rd most satisfied participants in all sports (1).

The Sport England criteria however focuses on the number of adults participating in at least 30 minutes of sport at moderate intensity at least three times a week (“3x30”). As such, angling has been classified as a low intensity activity. However it could be argued that such a classification does not take into account:

- The variation of activity in types and location of angling;
- The often long duration but less frequent nature of angling activity;
- The relationship of activity intensity to the ability of the individuals taking part.

**Trends in participation: Levels of participation in Angling in Northern Ireland**

In respect of domestic angling, the number of anglers in NI fell to about half its previous level during the period of political unrest, but is now rising. From the Household Survey for NI in 2006 4% of the population of NI go fishing once a year or more (3% over 16 based on DCAL licence sales). An all-Ireland survey conducted by the Central Statistical Office (CSO), suggests a slightly lower percentage. The

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General Household Survey of 2002 indicated a participation level in angling in the UK of 5.6% whilst more recently the EA ‘Public Attitudes to Angling’ (2010) report said that 9% of the population over 12 years of age in England and Wales (equivalent to 4.2 million people) had been fishing in the last year. Sales of the Environment Agency Rod Licence (a legal requirement for anyone fishing in freshwater in England and Wales) increased by 35% over the period 2001 to 2010. In Scotland, however, participation in angling is reported by Sport Scotland\textsuperscript{14,15} to be about 3%.

In respect of domestic angling, DCAL in 2011 inserted some angling-related questions into the Continuous Household Survey. Their report confirms low participation by women in angling – about 1% of the general population or 12% of the angling population – but showed an age distribution in the angling population that was much more evenly distributed than was reported by the governing bodies, who felt that the majority of anglers were elderly or middle-aged. The results might be a reflection of the nature of the membership of clubs rather than of the wider angling community.

\textsuperscript{14} Sport Scotland (2008). Sports Participation in Scotland, Research Digest no.110. Glasgow
\textsuperscript{15} Sport Scotland (2002) A Profile of Angling in Scotland, Research Digest no. 91. Edinburgh
Angling Research Resources, an angling charity in England, undertook a survey of anglers participating as part of a promotional project in 2010. They had a high response – over 25% - by women but felt that this was not representative of angling more widely. The Environment Agency’s ‘Our Nation’s Fisheries’ (2004) is one of a number of studies that estimates participation by women at about 5%. DCAL’s recent survey\textsuperscript{16} ‘Angling and usage of inland waterways by adults in Northern Ireland’ confirmed the predominance of men among domestic anglers, where a figure of just one in seven anglers were women.

In respect of ethnicity, Angling Research also asked participants about their ethnicity and felt that the responses were representative. “There are very few black faces on our riverbanks”.

Given the legal requirement to possess a licence before an individual can engage in recreational game or coarse angling in Northern Ireland, the best available indicator of the size of the population of game and coarse anglers is the number of licences issued by the two fisheries agencies. A total of 19,328 NI resident anglers purchased game/coarse licences from the Fisheries Conservation Board during 2005. This compares with a total of 18,476 during 2004 and 17,662 in 2003, implying an overall increase in the estimated number of local anglers purchasing licences of

\textsuperscript{16} A continuous household survey. Only 20 women anglers responded, so this figure is derived from quite a small sample.
9.4% over this period. Since then the figure has been fairly static with 19,697 resident licences being purchased from DCAL in 2012.

From analysis of the total number of licence holders in the DCAL area, it was estimated that, in 2005, there were 18,482 resident and 5409 tourist or visiting coarse and game anglers Northern Ireland. By 2012 the number of resident licences had risen to 19,697 but the number of tourist licences had fallen slightly to 5106.

Sea Angling Survey: It was estimated by PWC that 5,061 NI residents were engaged in recreational sea/shore angling during 2005, however as indicated above, early results from the AFBI survey, which at the time of completing this review was not yet published, indicate that numbers could be as many as 30,000.

**Conclusion:** As the above figures indicate it is difficult to provide clear information on the total number of anglers in Northern Ireland because of the difficulties with the various surveys and the numbers of unregistered anglers. However it is not unreasonable to suggest that 3% of the population of Northern Ireland went fishing at some time in 2012. Angling is undoubtedly a popular sport across Northern Ireland and across different sections of society. The Continuous Household Survey shows that of the 36 sports included in the survey, angling is the 7th most popular in Northern Ireland.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** In order to share information from this review and the results of the AFBI Survey an early meeting between the Steering Group and representatives of the AFBI Steering Group to develop a dialogue and share information on sea angling and explore joint initiatives to consider the issues arising.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:** That DCAL continues to monitor participation to develop a longitudinal dataset, purchasing space in commercial omnibus or household surveys.

The survey of angling clubs undertaken for this review has shown that almost 68% of clubs that responded are involved in game fishing, 38% coarse fishing and 6% involved in sea fishing.
The demise in angling club members over the past 20 years has been fairly drastic (National Coarse Fishing Federation of Ireland).

Despite some anecdotal evidence about the decline in club membership in all three categories of angling—sea angling, coarse fishing, and game fishing, combined with an increase in the average age of club anglers, the results of the survey of over 60 angling clubs in Northern Ireland undertaken as part of this review indicates that overall club membership is not declining, with membership in all categories showing an overall increase or staying the same. The table below shows increases in participation in all age groups, particularly marked for the over 50s and also junior boys.
Table 1. Changes in club numbers in Northern Ireland in the last 3 years

<table>
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<th>Decreased</th>
<th>Stayed the same</th>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Changes in club numbers in Northern Ireland in the last 3 years

Early results from the AFBI survey indicate that the majority of sea anglers are male with 78% in the 35-65 age group.

Participation in angling in UK and Republic of Ireland

It is useful to compare information available on trends in participation in Northern Ireland with recent surveys carried out elsewhere in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.
Republic of Ireland

In the 1970s and 1980s, angling in the Republic of Ireland was an essential part of tourist traffic to Ireland, but the 1990s saw the beginning of a decline in visiting overseas anglers, initially a decline in coarse anglers but also, more recently, a decline in other forms of angling. By 2006, Ireland was attracting approximately 103,000 overseas anglers, compared with 173,000 in 1999.17

The decline is driven by a combination of factors, associated with changing angling trends in the UK such increased provision in GB, foot and mouth disease, 9/11, decline and perceived decline of some fish stocks, reduced water quality, drift netting, fish farming, negative publicity etc. Other factors identified in Northern Ireland which may also apply in the South include inadequate and poorly targeted marketing investment, lack of co-ordination and poor information provision18. These issues are discussed in more detail in Tourism section

England and Wales

The National Angling Survey was undertaken to help inform the development of a new national strategy for angling in England and Wales referred to above. Along with a survey of angling organisations, it sought to gather the views and experiences of as wide a cross-section of anglers as possible9.

Over 29,000 anglers took part in the online survey, one of the largest studies of anglers ever undertaken. Respondents came from all backgrounds, 97% were male, with an average age of 51 and 95% white. 65% were employed or self-employed with 23% retired. The largest proportion of anglers were coarse fishermen and the majority of those fishing were using still waters (57.6%). However, all disciplines of angling were represented and 37.2% took part in sea angling.

The Environment Agency (EA) Public Attitudes to Angling 2010 report13 stated that 9% of the population over 12 years of age in England and Wales (equivalent to 4.2 million people) had been fishing in the last year. Sales of the EA Rod Licence (a legal requirement for anyone fishing in freshwater in England and Wales) increased by 35% from 2000/01 to 1,431,981 in 2011.

Scotland

In Scotland, sports participation statistics show that around 3% of adults (16+years) and 3% of children (8-15 years) took part in angling during the most popular two months of each year 2006-200812.


**Socio economic characteristics of anglers**

An analysis of the socio-economic characteristics of anglers is vital to understanding more about the profile of anglers and influencing how angling participation is developed. This information has been taken from several sources including the PWC report, based on statistics from 2005 and from more recent surveys across the UK.

Individual participants in Northern Ireland have not been directly surveyed as part of this review but it is reasonable to assume that many of the findings of the previous surveys will be representative of participants in Northern Ireland.

In the National Angling Survey in England and Wales in 2012 by Dr Aidan Brown participants were asked to give details of their employment status and the type of work they do. 90% were employed or retired.

![Figure 5. Employment Status of Anglers. Source: Brown (2012) by permission](image)
The type of employment of anglers was skewed towards the professions; commercial, public-sector and educational professions together made up just over 40% of the total.

**Income**

The National Angling survey in England shows that angling is enjoyed by a range of different social classes. 31% of all survey respondents in this study had an income of less than £15,000 while 30% had an income between £25,000-£59,999 whilst 4% of respondents had an income of £60,000 or more. As anticipated, visitor anglers were better represented across the higher income ranges than the local anglers.

**Employment**

Most respondents to the Substance survey were employed (51.4%), with a significant number self-employed (14.3%), nearly a quarter of respondents were retired. The greatest percentage was 26.1% who described themselves as professional (commercial), with 12% as professional (public sector).

**Age**

While the full demographic breakdown is not available for licence holders in Northern Ireland, analysis shows that angling is popular among all age groups. Of all the 24,803 licences purchased by anglers in the DCAL area in 2012, 11% were juvenile licences and 21% were senior citizen licences. Information available from DCAL permits shows that the demographic spread is greater with 21% of the 13,670 permits being purchased by juveniles and 20% by senior citizens.

The survey of clubs undertaken for this review shows 51% of club anglers are over 50 years of age and 10% are juveniles which is a very similar percentage to licences sold.
Young people

Given the importance of attracting more young people into the sport it is important to understand some of the factors that may influence their participation in angling. In the National Angling survey of 219 young people, 96% said they would like to participate more often, but only 53% agreed that it was easy for them to go fishing when they wanted to. Meeting the needs of young people is important to widening participation and there is a recognition that the barriers apply differently to specific underrepresented groups. Whilst the issue of costs has already been identified a number of other factors have been identified in the survey as inhibiting the involvement of young people as follows:

- Lack of junior angling clubs and coaching events;
- Cannot travel to venue on their own, particularly when fisheries are located out of towns;
- Clubs too dominated by match fishing and competitions;
- Poor disability provision;
- Lack of toilet facilities (for girls in particular);
- Non angling parents do not know how to take children fishing and fisheries are not always welcoming to family groups.

The Irish Angling Development Alliance Annual Report 2012 identifies a fall in the number of young people taking up angling suggesting the following reasons as contributing to this change:

- Growth and availability of home computers and computer based games;
- Raised profile of other sports such as soccer, rugby and GAA;
- Longer working hours and less parental participation;
- Perception of health and safety risks;
- Loss of suitable fisheries;
• Breakup of stable family units;
• Perception of costs of taking up angling.

The National Angling survey indicates that 87% of anglers began fishing between the ages of 4 and 16 with nearly 74% between 5 and 12 showing the importance of youth development for the future of angling. Over 38% of anglers were introduced to fishing by a parent; 19% by another family member and 26.6% by a friend, suggesting that familial and friendship groups are vital for the development of angling participation.

![Age started angling](image)

Figure 8. Data Source: Brown, A (2012). National Angling Survey. Substance: UK

Respondents to the consultation generally were very experienced anglers. At most of the meetings held it was suggested that people who become anglers usually start off fishing with male family or family friends close to home; for children the most common introduction was said to be through coarse fishing. Social change was suggested as a possible reason why fewer children are fishing. The number of single-parent families is increasing and single parents may struggle to find the time to take children outdoors. As caring often falls to women, who are less likely to be anglers, there is less likelihood of children being taken fishing. Opportunities for single-gender days were also mentioned as being important for some BAME groups.

**Loughs Agency: Dads and Lads**

The Loughs Agency has been instrumental in the successful development and implementation of this grass roots programme. They have identified the barriers to participation and have put in place activities to address these difficulties and as a result, levels of engagement have increased which will bring lasting benefits to the Agency and their catchment.

The Agency has developed a mechanism that they feel can be replicated to overcome social inclusion issues, such as religion, gender, ageism and the constraints facing people on welfare support. The pilot projects of this initiative have
progressed from one day taster sessions through to a detailed programme of engagement – covering aspects such as fly tying, entomology, health and safety, fish welfare, legislation and fishing techniques. Although the programme is called ‘dads and lads’ – it does include boys and girls, as well as mums, aunties, uncles and guardians. The programme aims to support progression of participants from a one day session as novices and end as club anglers. The Agency plans to roll out this SMART pilot programme throughout the Foyle and Carlingford areas in the coming 3 years – covering the three disciplines of game, coarse and sea angling.

The Learmount area of the Foyle catchment is one example where the programme has already proved to be successful. In this case at the commencement of the project the Agency felt that the village in the upper reaches of the River Faughan had a growing population of young people who were disengaged from the river and angling and the community only had a small number of older male anglers. As a result of the programme, the number of anglers increased in all age ranges with growing numbers of first time senior anglers with and over 40 junior anglers. A new angling club has been established - the Learmount Angling Club.

Although the programme has been extremely successful the new club faces the barrier of finding accessible water due to the location of the river which is close to L’Derry. This means that the club cannot afford the high prices of membership and day tickets and the long waiting list. The existing public fisheries are often difficult to fish by novices who experience poor catch records and private “put and take fisheries” are too expensive for local people.

The junior anglers have however benefitted from the low cost of a junior licence and the DCAL season permit (£2.00 for a 12 month junior licence and £2.00 for a DCAL season permit) and the ongoing support of the Loughs Agency programme of events.

It has been suggested that in the future the club might explore the opportunity to fish derelict waters in the area in order to maximise the community spirit that has developed and offer the opportunity for young people to develop their angling skills and potentially represent the area in regional competitions and Provincial and National teams.

**Child Protection**

The introduction of measures to safeguard children participating in sporting activities has impacted across many sports. Angling clubs have indicated that it can be quite onerous to go through the procedures, especially when much of the angling that has taken place with children in the past has been on an informal basis. In Northern Ireland there seems to be a fear of litigation and some clubs are transferring to limited company status to avoid liabilities. There is evidence that other clubs lack the capacity to comply with the procedures preferring not to provide opportunities for children. The club survey indicates that over a third of clubs that responded do not have a child protection policy.

“Sport is failing to attract new young people because of lack of coaching and restrictions on working with young people” (angling club response)
Table 2. Angling clubs & child protection policies

KEY ISSUE: Only 66% of angling clubs which responded to the survey have a child protection policy which presents a serious constraint to development within these organisations and is a priority to address.

KEY ISSUE: There is clear evidence of the importance of engaging young people, including those children of primary school age. Opportunities to engage in angling when very young and as part of family groups seems to lead to lifelong participation.

Conclusion: It was a consistent theme in the consultation that there was insufficient capacity within angling to take the sport forward and there was a need to provide support for this. Clubs are run by volunteers who often lack the skills to run clubs on a more business like basis. The recruitment of young people is a problem in all outdoor activities and just like other sports angling also needs to take positive action to attract young people. Proper child protection systems are needed if clubs want to be pro-active and encourage young people. Where young people are coming into the sport it is being driven by coaching, particularly in coarse fishing. There seems to be little sports development in angling apart from initiatives from organisations such as IADA and there is a pressing need to build capacity in the sport.

Opportunities for coaching (teaching) and supporting participation by young people are needed, combined with child protection processes. There is a need to engage children at a young age then even when they leave angling - as they will when they become teenagers and young parents - they will probably come back; and they will probably bring their children with them. So there is a need for resources for sports development to work on encouraging participation by young people and helping clubs to be more active. An officer or officers could be recruited to work with the three governing bodies, clubs and community organisations to enable angling to “catch up” with other sports and to learn the lessons of what works. Such individuals do not need to be angling “experts” it is more important that they have the sports development skills and ability to grow capacity in the system.

RECOMMENDATION 7: that the partners supporting this review should cooperate to recruit sports development staff. We advise that they should be independent of existing agencies or governing bodies and their role should be to focus on the recruitment of young people and to enhance the capacity of the governing bodies and clubs. Sport development skills rather than knowledge of angling are the key requirement.
**RECOMMENDATION 8**: that the sports development resource is located within an organisation that is seen as independent of existing structures and organisations and is managed by a small management group of the organisations involved.

### Disabled participants

Unlike many other sports, angling allows disabled people to take part alongside the more able bodied.

The PWC report indicated that 1175 permits (8%) and 1,385 licences (6%) were sold to disabled persons in 2004. In 2012 the figures were 1650 permits (12%) and 1837 licences (8%) respectively.

In 2011 the England and Wales National Angling Survey showed that nearly 20% of respondents had some form of illness or disability that affected their physical activity, showing that angling remains an activity for all abilities. This is significantly less than some other surveys of anglers which suggested that as many as 39% of anglers had a disability (80% of those have their physical activity affected)⁹.

What is a concern is that only 52% of clubs who responded to the survey provide any opportunities for bank fishing by disabled people and a lower figure of 42% provide wheelchair access. Opportunities for disabled people to fish from a boat under the auspices of a club are 31%.

![Figure 9. Facilities for disabled anglers in Northern Ireland.](image)
Does your club offer any of the following facilities for disabled people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank fishing</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat fishing</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair access</td>
<td>42.1%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Facilities for disabled anglers in Northern Ireland

**KEY ISSUE:** Angling is a sport where disabled people can take part and compete on an equal basis with the able bodied, but opportunities to be involved in club fishing are constrained by lack of facilities to cater for their needs.

**Email re disabled participants from British Disabled Angling Association (BDAA)**

“We do not have any data on numbers of disabled anglers in NI, the only information that we have is that of the Environment Agency England and Wales which for disabled concessional licence holders currently stands at around 54,000 for England and Wales. These figures are not broken down into impairment groups the data is relatively useless in terms of increased participation as they do not identify those with mobility needs or other impairment groups specifically”.

**Conclusion:** Participation by disabled people was not raised as a problematic issue during the consultations. There was general goodwill and willingness to accommodate disabled anglers, and recognition that disability can mean more than physical impairment. It has been suggested that clubs lack the capacity to provide facilities for disabled people and that there is a need for grant aid to support provision.

‘Disabled and included mean the same thing in Fermanagh’ said one participant.

Although angling for people with disabilities was not raised as a key issue as part of the consultation it seems that there is considerable potential to raise levels of participation if facilities were improved and the needs of disabled anglers better understood. Whilst there is considerable goodwill to encourage angling opportunities for people of all abilities there is a lack of a joined up approach to provision and some of the infrastructure that has been provided presents access difficulties.

Better provision for disabled anglers will, of course, also be beneficial to other users such as families with young children and older anglers.
**RECOMMENDATION 9:** That the partners collaborate to provide grant aid to clubs to support the provision of facilities for anglers with disabilities.

**RECOMMENDATION 10:** That design guidance is commissioned to provide advice to public and private sector bodies and clubs on provision of facilities for anglers with disabilities to which all applicants for grant aid are required to comply and is used by public sector agencies in enhancing access provision.

**Ethnicity**

The overwhelming majority of respondents to the national angling survey in England and Wales describe themselves as White British (93.23%), with another 1.3% as ‘Any Other White Background’. Just 0.7% described themselves as belonging to any other ethnic background, with 1.6% preferring not to say and 3.1% as ‘other’. This domination by white British is broadly in line with other surveys.

![Ethnicity of anglers participating in National Angling Month 2010
Source: Angling Research](image)

Figure 10. Ethnicity of anglers participating in National Angling month.

**Sex**

97.3% (26,964) of respondents who answered all questions in the National Angling Survey were male and 2.7% female. This is a higher percentage of male anglers than some other surveys - e.g. the Sport England Active People Survey which suggests that 7.5% of anglers are female (although this is a percentage of those taking part in the sport once per month). 7% of Environment Agency Rod Licence holders are female.

All studies point out that anglers are predominately male; however the opportunity exists to promote the sport and encourage greater participation levels among women and girls. While the number of female anglers has been increasing in recent years, the number of respondents to the PWC survey indicated that in 2005/06, only 4% were female. Although not directly comparable responses to the club survey indicated that only 1.3% were women.

**KEY ISSUE:** A very small proportion of anglers are women or from black and ethnic minority communities particularly those who are members of clubs. This would suggest that there are particular barriers to participation which need to be explored further if equality issues are to be addressed.
Conclusion: the consultations identified that the majority of anglers in Northern Ireland are likely to be white middle aged men. At Ballymena and at the Enniskillen meetings it was suggested that the best way to introduce groups that are not well represented to fishing and to keep their interest is through put-and-take fisheries where people can enjoy quick results. The same was suggested as a means of encouraging women to fish where appropriate facilities can be provided. Club facilities need to be improved if women are to be accommodated. In Wales the Welsh Government is funding a grant aid scheme to foster the provision of opportunities for water related recreation (The Splash Fund); a similar scheme jointly supported by the agencies involved in angling may be an opportunity to develop angling in Northern Ireland.

RECOMMENDATION 11: Sports development initiatives need to incorporate opportunities for women and girls focussing on increasing the capacity of clubs to be able to accommodate the needs of women members.

RECOMMENDATION 12: Grant aid schemes should afford a high priority to provision of toilets.
6.5. Barriers to Participation in Outdoor Recreation

There are no specific studies which have provided a detailed exploration of the barriers to participation in angling. However, there have been a number of studies which have explored issues associated with participation in outdoor recreation. These factors will have important implications for future initiatives to increase participation in angling.

As well as individual preferences, research undertaken in recent years from England, Wales and Northern Ireland has suggested that certain groups are less likely to participate in outdoor recreation than others because of the barriers they face, particularly people with a disability, people from minority ethnic communities and people living in areas of disadvantage. If participation is to be increased it is important to understand and seek to address these barriers to participation. A wide ranging review undertaken in Wales has highlighted however that certain groups are not necessarily underrepresented because they face particular barriers but because they have different preferences. Under-representation does not necessarily equate to social exclusion; many people have the opportunity to participate but for preference reasons choose not to because outdoor recreation is not how they wish to spend their leisure time. Understanding these preferences and considering broadening the range of opportunities to attract other users could be another issue that needs to be addressed.

In 2008 a review was undertaken in Northern Ireland on behalf of the Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) to explore the barriers to the use of the outdoors for recreation. The research examined why people with a disability, people from ethnic communities and people from areas of disadvantage faced barriers in accessing outdoor recreation. The study also considered whether there were barriers faced by providers of outdoor recreation in meeting the needs of these communities. While the information provides a useful overall picture of barriers to participation, some of which will be relevant to angling, the review did not specifically consider participation in angling.

The main barriers identified by CAAN were:

- Difficulties with public transport - particularly in rural areas, and problems for people with limited mobility accessing public transport
- Attitudinal problems - some providers, parents/carers and participants had negative attitudes towards some groups, particularly people with disabilities
- Language barriers - for minority ethnic communities, people with a hearing impairment and people with learning or reading difficulties
- Lack of information - in appropriate formats, and a lack of information in general
- Lack of awareness - underrepresented communities not targeted sufficiently

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• Dependence on others - some people with disabilities are dependent on others to accompany them to outdoor facilities, this restricts their opportunities.

• Lack of time and or motivation - in common with the general population lack of time/motivation was felt to be a major barrier to taking part.

• Poorly maintained paths - an issue particularly for people with visual impairment and wheelchair use.

The Welsh Outdoor Recreation Survey\(^9\) carried out in 2011 provides information on participation preferences in outdoor recreation:

• 60% of the adult population in Wales stated that they would like to visit the outdoors more often the same proportion as recorded in 2008.

• Around a quarter of Welsh adults (26%) would like to visit beaches more often, 17% would like to visit hills, mountains or moorland and 13% would like to visit other coastal areas or a woodland/forest.

In terms of activities 30% of Welsh adults would like to take part in walking more often, 8% would like to take part in off-road cycling and 6% would like to do more road cycling or sightseeing.

A lack of time was the most frequently mentioned barrier to participating, mentioned by around a third of respondents (32%). Poor weather was also given as a reason for not participating - mentioned by 11% of adults in 2011.

Comparing the results of the 2011 surveys with results from the previous Welsh survey in 2008, increases were recorded for sightseeing or visiting an attraction (from 40% in 2008 to 47% in 2011), visiting children's playgrounds/ outdoor play areas (from 31% to 38%), wildlife watching (from 23% to 32%) and informal games such as Frisbee or golf (from 13% to 24%). Smaller increases were also recorded for participation in road cycling, running, picnicking and fishing.

In 2011, there were variations in the barriers to taking visits in the last 4 weeks provided by different sub-groups within the population including the following:

• Too busy/ lack of time (31% overall) - more likely to be mentioned by those in paid employment (55%).

• Other health reason (19% overall) - more likely to be mentioned by those aged 75 and over (30%), those with no academic qualifications (30%), those not in paid employment (25%) and those with no children (21%).

• Physical disability (15% overall) - mentioned by a higher proportion of those with a household income of under £16,000 (26%), those living in Communities First areas (25%), those who are unemployed (25%) and those with no academic qualifications (22%).
In 2008 the Countryside Council for Wales commissioned a systematic review of why young people, older people, women, ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities are less likely to be participants in outdoor recreation than other groups. The review found that participation barriers exist in three main areas:

- Individual issues – those personal and psychological constraints that affect a person;
- Social interactions – the influence of other people’s attitudes and behaviour;
- Physical or practical aspects – these can include lack of facilities or opportunities, lack of transport or cost of taking part.

General conclusions drawn were that people from lower class groups were particularly motivated by opportunities for fresh air and exercise and this was contrasted with young people who were more motivated by socialising with friends.

Lack of interest was assessed in this review and the findings indicated that this was greatest amongst ethnic minority groups followed by people from areas of multiple deprivation and then young people. The study found that there was no cultural habit of using the countryside amongst some ethnic groups and that for young people the lack of a social context “that the countryside is boring” and ‘not for them’ was a factor.

**Barriers to fishing more often**

A number of the barriers appear to prevent more people taking up angling and influence the opportunities to participate more often.

The main sources of information include responses received from clubs as part of this strategic review along with the findings of the National Angling Survey in England and Wales.

Recreational sea angling faces some particular issues and the recently completed survey by AFBI has reported that the key issues are:

- Numbers of fish;
- Lack of access to the coast or to a boat;
- Lack of time;
- Weather;
- Water quality.

National surveys in the UK indicate that the key factors that are rated of most importance to the fishing experience of visiting anglers are the quality of angling, quality of information on fisheries, accessibility/access to angling waters, the attractiveness of the natural environment and the friendliness of the people. Other factors such as cost (cost of angling and the cost of angling equipment) and the availability of accommodation are rated as being less important.

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“In this area it is a pastime passed down through families through generations” (Maine Angling Club)

Figure 11. Scores out of 5 by angling clubs when asked to rate the importance various barriers to participation in angling.

Significant barriers to participation include the following factors:

**Access to water**

One of the biggest barriers identified in the club survey is access to the water where access across land to get to privately owned fisheries (not the permission to fish) was a key issue. Landlords’ liability is often cited as a reason why anglers are not granted access more readily.

Some comments from clubs on the constraints include:
- “Land closed off by land owner... lost both disabled angling areas”
- “Landowners control access to water but this can be a barrier to fishing”.
- “Northern Ireland used to be well known for its fishing but over the years the authorities have constructed fisheries management as a protection and conservation activity rather than a combined conservation and leisure activity.”

**KEY ISSUE:** Respondents to the consultation have indicated that the balance between fisheries management as part of protection and conservation of habitats has taken precedence over the importance of inland water for angling. Responsibilities for these different aspects of the management of inland water are located in different Government Departments and Agencies and coordination is lacking. Reconciling issues of conservation and recreation are not unique to angling but there is a need to explore whether there may be a management solution to the
issues by working together. (Issues are explored in more detail in the Governance Section)

**KEY ISSUE:** Despite clear evidence that there is no legal precedent for a landowner being held liable for allowing access over land to reach angling waters the fear of litigation is constraining opportunities to gain access.

**Conclusion:** Some of the consultees indicated that there is a perception that landowners are unwilling to allow people across their land unless they (the landowners) are indemnified against any claims arising from accident or injury. In practice this means that access can be restricted to club members so that unaffiliated anglers are effectively barred. Although affiliation by a club to the governing body brings third-party insurance, nevertheless, landowners perceive that they to face the risk of litigation and discourage fishing from anglers who are not members of a club. It was reported as part of the consultation that as angling isn't necessarily a team sport or a group activity not all anglers will want to be affiliated to a club.

It was suggested that the issues are not litigation orientated rather one of security and abuse of property. It is crucial therefore that angling clubs are properly run and have the resources to bailiff and secure property when needed. Too often clubs are run on a shoe string and this frustrates landowners.

The extent to which litigation issues present a barrier is not entirely clear, but the need for insurance was a strong and recurring theme, not only in the consultations but also in the written evidence and in the meetings with stakeholders. The creation of local facilities with secure access in all areas must be part of the solution. It was suggested at Enniskillen and at Ballymena that there should be a national insurance scheme that would relieve landowners of the risk of litigation. Development officers could help broker access deals with the landowners and in Fermanagh there is already an example of the local authority taking on the need for insurance. The issues of Occupiers Liability have been thoroughly researched by Sport NI and despite the findings that there is no evidence of a successful liability claim more needs to be done to communicate this message. There is no doubt however that if landowners are to be persuaded to allow access this is best achieved under the auspices of a club that a landowner can contact if there are problems, in the expectation that the club can police its members.

Members of affiliated clubs are automatically insured for third-party liability. Responses to the consultation indicated that insurance cover does not apply when clubs allow visiting anglers to fish their waters and the position with children is unclear. If necessary, it is suggested that provision is made to extend insurance cover to all anglers fishing under the aegis of an affiliated club.

There is however a tradition of much of angling in Northern Ireland being informal and not organised through clubs. This is particularly true of sea angling where only 30 respondents of a total of over 200 replies to the AFBI questionnaire indicated that they were members of an organisation, 85% were unaffiliated anglers.

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21 Sport NI (undated) The Impacts of the Occupiers Liability Legislation: Summary Factsheet
RECOMMENDATION 13: The development of codes of practice for clubs is incorporated as part of the work of the development officers to encourage responsible angling and to increase the capacity of clubs.

RECOMMENDATION 14: Access officers should be considered as a post within club structures, or available to clubs, to address the issues of access to land and to act as the liaison between the club and the landowner.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Sport NI should continue to promote the findings of its research into current occupier’s liability in conjunction with the other parties to the review.

RECOMMENDATION 16: The position of visitors and children relative to third-party insurance needs to be clarified and a leaflet specific to public liability in angling should be published by the partners to the review.

Accessibility of fishing facilities

In the National Angling survey just under a quarter of anglers (23%) said more local fishing provision was the most important thing to encourage participation (something that would allow increased participation but taking up less time). This is borne out in Northern Ireland where consultations indicate that there is “little good quality coarse fishing water available within 35 miles of Belfast”. This is a barrier to getting schools and children fishing. In addition, the time needed to travel to travel to distant facilities is a potential further constraint.

“We Used to have large numbers of juniors but numbers dropped away because of lack of interest...venues too far away for parents to bring them” (Lurgan Coarse Angling Club)

KEY ISSUE: The importance of local fishing is a key factor in influencing young peoples’ opportunity to participate, one of the areas that have been referred to as having particularly poor provision is the Greater Belfast area. If the potential of angling to reach large urban populations is to be addressed then additional water needs to be found or created in this area.

Conclusion: To get young people and under-represented groups fishing there is a need to concentrate efforts in, and close to, centres of population. There is a need to create an environment that successfully retains those that try the sport by providing facilities that encourage a successful outcome on their first encounter. This also includes the provision of facilities and accessible water. At each location where consultation meetings took place we found ambiguity about the quality of fishing. In particular there was conflicting advice on the availability of water to fish around Belfast. It wasn’t clear from that discussion whether the availability of fishing is a problem for all fishing or just for game fishing - trout - around Belfast. It was suggested that in the greater Belfast area there is little opportunity for angling with the water quality in Belfast Lough not particularly high and very poor in the River Lagan. The broader issues of water quality need to be addressed first.

Barriers to wider participation have been identified above, particularly the need for toilet facilities if the number of female anglers was to increase. Facilities can be simple – toilets, tea making, a place to sit under cover. Particular facilities are
needed for physically disabled anglers. There is evidence that new anglers are taking up the sport where fisheries provide good parking, toilets, café facilities and good stocks of fish to catch. The development of a network of safe, stocked fisheries, close to population centres across all counties along with a sustainable development programme would encourage all to go fishing. Early success on those fisheries will encourage them to join clubs and move on to other waters.

**RECOMMENDATION 17**: A strategic network of accessible fisheries should be developed that are designed to specific standards to cater for the needs of young people and people with disabilities, such centres to offer quality coaching to introduction to the sport and to develop standards of performance. An early priority is given as part of this initiative to developing a centre in proximity to Belfast.

**Poor fish stocks**

Angling clubs responding to this survey and in particular sea anglers have identified poor fish stock as one of the most important barriers to increasing participation. This supports findings in the National Angling Survey that identified more and bigger fish to catch (13.4%) as an important factor influencing participation. The AFBI survey has indicated that the number of fish and small size is a significant constraint to the development of sea angling.

**KEY ISSUE**: Many of the issues that have been reported to us that have resulted in poor fish stocks are beyond the scope of this study to address. Commercial fishing in Loch Neagh and in the coastal waters of Northern Ireland is blamed for the decline of fish stocks. The regulation and enforcement of commercial fishing is complex and the impact on recreational angling is a by-product of the problems associated with the current system. Similarly claims that the decline of fish stocks as a consequence of the impact of pollution and invasive species have been, and will continue to be, the subject of scientific studies. What is clear however is that the voice of anglers has not always been heard because of a lack of coordination amongst the voluntary bodies and agencies concerned.

“There is no point going to fish in a lake and no fish in it” (quote from an angling club response).

**Conclusions**: There is no doubt that the issue of fish stocks is a key factor influencing the development of angling and this issue is given high priority by the UAF and was mentioned by participants at all of the workshops. Whilst it was pointed out that there is good fishing if you know where to go this is not the case everywhere and the consensus seems to be that numbers and size of fish have declined. It was accepted that the enforcement of angling regulations would not resolve this issue and is associated with the wider concerns about commercial fishing and in some cases pollution or changes to the aquatic or marine habitats. In order to develop potential opportunities for increased participation and revenues to the NI economy a healthy sustainable population of fish must be in evidence. The issues of the management of commercial fishing are beyond the scope of this review but the concerns of anglers are not always heard because of a lack of coordination in the representation of these issues.
Research Opportunities: The development of angling in Northern Ireland is currently hindered by a lack of information on which the agencies can base their decisions. Whilst the Loughs Agency has a well-developed collaboration with Glasgow University and supports a sizeable PhD programme the review has raised a number of issues where research would be valuable to the sponsors. These range from market-related research, for example to deliver a better understanding of the needs and experiences of visitors, to wider applied social research - for example with disabled anglers so that measures to accommodate their needs are based on identified rather than theoretical needs. Such research is not expensive and there are a number of research topics implicit in this review that could form the basis for a Masters dissertation or a small piece of commissioned research. There is also an opportunity to attract the attention of Universities and Higher Education institutes so that students and lecturers are aware of the research opportunities available in angling.

RECOMMENDATION 18: That the sponsors develop a programme of small grants to support masters’ dissertations on angling and also small commissioned studies to assist the clubs and governing bodies. The programme should be publicised to the HE sector in NI.

Facilities for Fishing

The availability of facilities to support angling activity and in particular to encourage participation by under-represented groups is an important issue. The lack of appropriate facilities, including toilet facilities has already been mentioned as a deterrent to female anglers.

![Figure 12. Angling Club Facilities in Northern Ireland](image)

KEY ISSUE: Whilst the majority of angling clubs which responded to the survey provide car parking the lack of toilets will act as a significant barrier to female participation
in angling. Clubs without toilets cannot realistically be "development clubs" where new participants especially women are encouraged to take up the activity.

**Conclusion:** Many of the barriers to wider participation were identified as part of the consultation and the need for toilet facilities if the number of women and girls is to increase is referred to above. Facilities can be simple – toilets, tea making, a place to sit under cover can all contribute to encouraging participation.

It was indicated in the consultations that new anglers are taking up the sport where fisheries provide good parking, toilets, café facilities and good stocks of fish to catch.

**RECOMMENDATION 19:** Grant aid schemes afford a priority to providing infrastructure for clubs.

Derelict Waters

One of the issues that arose during the consultation is that regarding the development of Derelict Waters for Angling under the 1966 Fisheries Act. To quote from the Act, this section applies where:

a) The Department is of the opinion that any inland waters should be developed for angling; and
b) The person who is entitled to the fishing rights in those waters is unknown or cannot be found.

Where the Department may:

a) Undertake the development of those waters for angling; or
b) Authorise an approved developer to undertake such development in accordance with an approved scheme submitted to the Department by that developer.

Schemes for development of derelict waters N.I. A scheme submitted to the Department for the purposes of section 3 shall be:

a) In such form and contain such particulars as may be prescribed by regulations; and
b) Accompanied by such documents as may be so prescribed.

It is understood that the responsibility for administering the derelict waters scheme is the DCAL and that 7 Derelict water applications have been granted and that 5 Derelict water applications are pending.

**Conclusion:** Derelict water applications are not necessarily additional to the DCAL Public Angling Estate waters as those successful applicants as fishery owners can restrict access to club members only. However it is possible that Derelict Waters may offer the potential to increase opportunities for angling where there is a shortage of opportunities to meet the needs of local communities.
RECOMMENDATION 20: That an audit is undertaken of potential Derelict Waters in areas where there is an identified need for more water particularly in the area around Belfast. Subject to the outcome of an audit the Department advertise the derelict water application process which is outlined in the Fisheries Act 1966.

Licences and permits.

There is evidence that the licensing regimes are acting as a barrier to participation in angling. There are three licensing regimes in Ireland. DCAL has a suite of licences and the Loughs Agency has a slightly less complicated range. Ministers have said previously that they would like to see an all island licence. In the Republic, IFA has just a single licence, which is for salmon fishing. A number of clubs and organisations have indicated that licensing needs to be reviewed.

“99% of anglers don’t understand the current system” (comment from an angling club).

“The complexity of angling regulations and licences...... needs a simplified system with a single authority and single licence across the UK” (Angling Club response).

The fact that the licensing system for angling is over-complicated was readily acknowledged by officials in DCAL and LA; a specific recommendation for change has not been made as there are bigger issues to address. It would, however, be valuable to know if the system actually is an impediment to the development of the sport. Licensing generates income that can be ring-fenced as coming from anglers; it is also an important source of data of the sort that will be needed to evaluate any actions arising from the Assembly’s revived interest in angling. Although suggestions were made as part of the consultation regarding the merits of an all-Ireland licensing system there are difficulties with such an approach22 which could impact both on the income and information that the current system generates.

KEY ISSUE: The extremely complicated arrangement of licences and permits is not well understood by resident anglers. Although it has not been possible to survey visitors there seems little doubt that it will be a factor influencing decisions to travel to Northern Ireland to fish. A key priority must be to explore the opportunity to simplify the system.

Conclusion: There is no doubt that licensing is complex, especially for visiting anglers who might want to fish in different areas of NI and ROI. It was generally felt that it is very confusing for a travelling angler to be asked what part of such a small country he or she wishes to fish. It was suggested that one licence at to cover all the fishing was appropriate. There were calls for a harmonization of the game licence – so that there is one game licence that covers all of NI and hopefully would include the Republic of Ireland (ROI)

RECOMMENDATION 21: Any future survey of visiting anglers should explore their attitudes to the licensing system in NI.

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22 Because RoI does not require licences for trout or coarse fishing.
**RECOMMENDATION 22:** Further discussions are initiated between DCAL and the Loughs Agency to explore ways of simplifying the licensing system.

**The cost of participation**

Cost is an issue that is increasingly important during difficult economic times and is an additional barrier particularly to young people and those at the threshold between junior and adult ages. The issue was raised by several angling clubs and local authorities including Glens Angling Club and Ulster Council of the Irish Federation of Sea Anglers.

The National Angling Survey also identified cost as a significant barrier. Reviewing the numbers of young people holding junior Environment Agency (EA) Rod licences that were eligible to transfer to adult licences in the 2009-10 season, only 34.4% renewed, amounting to a ‘drop-off’ of 65.6%. While the increase in EA rod licence fees from £5 for junior to £25 for adults cannot alone explain the drop off, young people revealed it was the combined cost of Rod Licence fees, adult fees for club membership and adult day water charges that was prohibitive for those turning 16.

‘I believe that membership prices for people still in education should be the same price as a juniors because they do not work and therefore struggle to find the money they need. Another of my local clubs requested that because I am 16 I need to pay £30 instead of the £6 I paid last year’ (comment from juvenile angler)

Sea anglers cited costs as the third most significant reason for not participating (11). For those in employment or self-employed cost was cited more frequently as the ‘biggest barrier’.

**Coaching**

There is evidence that non angling parents do not know how to take children fishing and fisheries are not always welcoming to family groups.

“Complete beginners may find it difficult to ‘get started’” (local authority response to survey)

“We cannot have school programmes, coaching and events as the number of venues is too limited and no one organisation can provide training and venue improvements as grant schemes are not available to fund it” (Northern Ireland Carp Anglers Society)

**KEY ISSUE:** Whilst there are some good examples of taster sessions and coaching for young people undertaken by organisations such as the Loughs Agency there is evidence of a shortage of coaches able to work with young people and a lack of a coordinated programme and funding to offer these opportunities across Northern Ireland.

**Conclusion:** Acquiring recognised coaching qualifications for sport in Northern Ireland is complicated. If a governing body is affiliated to a UK body – such as canoeing which is part of the British Canoe Union then they go down the UKCC
route and gain their coaching qualifications that way. If a governing body is part of an all island federation (such as equestrian sports) then they gain their qualifications through the Irish scheme under Coaching Ireland.

If they are a standalone body for NI (such as UAF) then they can choose which avenue to go down. The problem is that both the IFSA and the UCFF are part of all island organisations that are affiliated to the Angling Council of Ireland. Therefore if IFSA and UCFF want coaching qualifications they should go through Coaching Ireland.

Also Coaching Ireland and UK Sport do have reciprocal arrangements whereby they recognise each other’s qualifications.

However under the Good Friday agreement citizens of NI can consider themselves British, Irish or both – so there is nothing to stop individuals gaining a qualification in the direction that they feel most comfortable with. Early discussions are required with Coaching Ireland – so that all angling interests have a sense of ownership in the systems of standard-setting and delivery that might emerge.

**RECOMMENDATION 23:** The Steering Group should hold discussions with Coaching Ireland about their role in angling coaching in NI.

**RECOMMENDATION 24:** The Angling Forum for NI (recommended on page 137) includes a sub-group to focus on coaching opportunities and recognitions.

**Lack of time**

The National Angling Survey indicated that the biggest factor by far limiting the frequency of respondent’s angling is a lack of free time due to family and work commitments with over 59.5% of anglers saying that this was the biggest barrier they faced. A lower proportion of the under 16 respondents said that lack of time was the most important factor (52.2%).

For Sea Anglers, ‘lack of time’ was proportionately a little higher with 64% of respondents who said they went sea angling saying that lack of time was the most important factor. This is consistent with the AFBI survey which pointed to a lack of time as a constraint on sea anglers participating more often.

Those people with a disability or health issue that limits their physical activity also rated lack of time as the single most important issue with 39.1% saying that this was the most important issue.

However this issue was not raised in the survey of angling clubs in Northern Ireland, perhaps reflecting the fact that the responses were made on behalf of the organisations rather than individual anglers themselves. It is reasonable to assume that individual anglers in Northern Ireland would demonstrate a similar response rate to elsewhere in the UK. It has to be recognised that together with poor weather, outlined below, there is very little that angling organisations and clubs can do to address these issues.
Poor weather

The National Angling Survey revealed that the second highest barrier to participation, after a lack of time, was the weather (7.9%), perhaps unsurprising given the poor weather experienced in 2012. A similar proportion of sea anglers cited poor weather as a barrier.
7. ANGLING TOURISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND

7.1 Introduction

Whilst participation and social equity are key themes in the brief for the review these issues are covered elsewhere in this report. This section concentrates on the why and wherefore of increasing the contribution of angling to the economy.

Whilst the brief for the study is concerned in particular with what might be done to attract visitors from outside Northern Ireland there is a reasonable amount of evidence to show that the needs of visiting anglers and domestic anglers fishing away from home are closely aligned. In fact anglers fishing close to home are also likely to value good quality information and spend more time fishing as a result. Whether it is an afternoon away from work for a domestic angler or a long weekend away for a group of English Midlands pike fishermen, what is on offer is a holiday.

Angling tourism is under-researched - not only in Northern Ireland but across the UK and Europe. As no single body of data can answer the questions raised by the brief this review of angling tourism has, therefore, drawn on information from a number of sources inside and outside NI. It has also been informed by wide ranging discussions with those who have an interest in the subject. Evidence suggests there is a fairly consistent pattern of behaviour among anglers and good correlations between studies in different countries. NI could gain a better understanding of both domestic and visiting anglers by gathering more information from its permits and licences and developing longitudinal data sets to identify trends.

With coarse and game angling the tourism industry in NI is in competition especially with high-profile nearby destinations of Scotland and the Irish Republic that have built their reputations over many years. They are strong ‘brands’ that feature continuously in the angling press. More recently Wales has promoted itself effectively with a modern promotional campaign under the banner ‘Fishing Wales’. It has a clear focus on addressing the needs of visiting anglers. In contrast NI is almost invisible in the angling press.

With sea fishing Iceland and Norway have emerged as premier destinations for European sea anglers. This is reported to be because the quality of sea angling in the once-renowned British Isles, including Ireland, is widely considered by anglers in the UK and overseas now to be poor. This is seen as a result of a perceived year-on-year deterioration over the past two decades linked to over-exploitation by commercial fishing. This may or may not be the case but for marketing purposes it is perception that matters more than scientific argument. In the course of this study it became clear that sea fishing in NI, like game and coarse fishing, is variable. There is excellent fishing available but accessing it requires local knowledge.

The review process has concentrated on visiting anglers because these are the people who bring new money into the economy. Domestic anglers also support jobs but here the rationale for promoting domestic angling away from home is largely to do with redistribution of money from urban centres to rural areas. But both groups have the same needs and actions taken to support visitors will also support domestic angling.
The issues identified below are very loosely based on a 6-P approach:

- **Product**: What are you offering, what features does it have and what benefits does it deliver?
- **Price**: What does it cost in time, money and resources?
- **Place**: Where can people ‘buy’ what you offer?
- **Promotion**: How will you make people aware of your offering?
- **People**: In this case this applies to organisations.
- **Processes**: Again, institutional issues predominate.
- **Physical**: Location, accessibility and output.
7.2. **What is the potential of angling?**

Recent surveys undertaken by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in the Republic of Ireland show that whilst walking is by far the most popular activity in visits to Ireland, angling is comparable to golf and cycling in levels of participation by visitors.

![Figure 13. Most popular activities for visitors to Ireland](image)

When we charted the CSO’s total value of each of these activities we find that it looks just like the graph of the number of people taking part.

![Figure 14. Total expenditure of active visitors to Ireland](image)

And indeed, when visitor spend per person is analysed it shows that they all spend a similar amount – about €800.

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23 CSO’s *Tourism Trends from 2007* has a lot of information. More recent reports include CSO country of residence survey and Failte Ireland survey of overseas travelers 2008.
And this looks comparable to what is found in NI. The PWC report of 2007\textsuperscript{24} found that visiting anglers spend about £720 during their holiday. A study in Scotland (Scottish Executive 2004) using a slightly different way of counting, found similar results for visitors outside the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The NI and Scottish studies also indicated that the amount spent by each angler per day was comparable in the two countries.

However, NITB report that out-of-state visitors in general spend less than this in NI – they use a figure of around £40. This is perhaps because the figure includes all types of visit rather than leisure visits. PWC suggested that this arises because many visitors from the Republic of Ireland and Britain, who make up the majority of visitors, have family ties so perhaps don’t use commercial accommodation. The implication is that active leisure visitors spend more than out of state visitors taken as a whole. Note that leisure visits make up just 20% of all out of state visits to NI (NITB).

\textsuperscript{24} PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS LLP 2007. The Social and Economic Impact to Northern Ireland, and a reaswithin the LoughsAgency, of Recreational Fisheries, Angling and Angling Resources. Belfast: Joint publication: DCAL, NITB, LoughsAgency.
**KEY ISSUE:** We can say that a visiting angler is as valuable to the NI economy as a visiting golfer, walker, cyclist or horse-rider and all these groups spend more than average for out-of-state visitors.

**KEY ISSUE:** There seems to be a ‘going rate’ per day for active holidays in the UK and the Republic. Unless NI thinks that it has a better angling ‘product’ (it hasn’t) than its competitors it should concentrate (a) on increasing the number of angling visitors and (b) encouraging visitors to stay longer.

**KEY ISSUE:** NI should perhaps avoid trying too hard to increase daily visitor spending as this risks the perception that NI is an expensive place to fish. Go for more people and longer stays.

**Conclusion:** Walking is by far the most popular outdoor activity undertaken by visitors. Angling, however, compares to cycling, golf and horse-riding both in terms of the level of participation and the income generated overall and per visitor. It’s profile, and the support it has received as a tourist activity in NI is, however, much less than these other activities. There is a good case for directing more resources towards angling as part of Northern Ireland’s ‘offer’ to tourists.

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7.3. Visitor numbers

The number of visiting anglers to NI appears to be increasing slowly. PCW thought that income from visitors would rise by about 40% between 2006 and 2015 if no additional promotion was undertaken, but this could be more than doubled with modest promotion.

Caution is needed since many of the trends identified in the literature are based on quite short timescales. A trend might be nothing more than a phase of an underlying economic cycle. This is illustrated by the chart below, taken from a 2007 CSO report on tourism to Ireland, which shows fluctuations of up to 45% in certain activities over an 8-year timeframe. Since 2007 numbers fell back again.

![Figure 17. Activities Undertaken by Overseas Visitors to Ireland, 2000 – 2007. Source: CSO](image)

To identify trends in participation and to provide the basis for encouraging growth in this sector it is necessary to estimate the number of visitors to Northern Ireland who travel to Northern Ireland with the primary objective of engaging in angling.

As it is necessary to possess a licence to engage in game or coarse angling in Northern Ireland, the best available data on the numbers of visiting anglers to Northern Ireland is through the figures available from the DCAL and the Loughs Agency based on the numbers of game and/or coarse angling licences purchased by visitors from outside Northern Ireland.

It is important to note that a large number of licences are issued on a joint coarse/game basis, which allows coarse anglers to also engage in game angling. If these licences are excluded it is estimated that the DCAL issued a total of 802 ‘pure’ game licences and a total of 286 ‘pure’ coarse licence to visitors to NI during 2006. In 2012 these figures were 682 and 458 respectively.
As a licence is not required to engage in sea or shore angling in Northern Ireland (except where fishing for salmon or sea trout), it is much more difficult to estimate the number of visiting/tourist anglers engaging in sea/shore angling. The PWC survey asked visitors to state their primary interest in angling and the findings from this survey indicated that some 10% of angling visitors to Northern Ireland who responded to the survey stated that their primary interest was in either sea or shore angling. As this report was being finalised AFBI were in the concluding stages of a survey of sea angling. The report of the survey was not available but informal discussions with AFBI staff indicated that participation in sea angling was underestimated in the PWC report.

The survey of angling clubs undertaken as part of this review indicates that significant numbers of visiting recreational and competition anglers do so under the auspices of local clubs.

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Table 4. Number of visitor anglers to Northern Ireland waters in the past 12 months

As a group anglers are cost-conscious. The National Angling Survey in 2012 in England and Wales found that after lack of time to go fishing the biggest factor that stopped people fishing more was cost. This is a potential source of competitive advantage for NI following the effective devaluation of the £GBP against the €Euro. Also, British visitors do not have the transactions costs of currency exchange in NI.
Tourism figures relating to the UK from the Irish Tourist Industry Confederation report; Tourism Opportunity, Driving Economic Renewal, February 2011 indicate that visitor numbers from Great Britain in the 10 years up to 2007 remained static at 1.8 million per year. Post 2007 the figures decline rapidly to just 50% by 2010. By mid-2012 a further fall of 5% was indicated. These figures do not indicate the cause of decline, both economies were struggling over this period, but the increased £GB cost of visiting the Republic of Ireland could well be a factor. Andrew Flitcroft, editor of ‘Trout and Salmon’ reported that his readers are saying the Republic of Ireland is too expensive and they are looking elsewhere.

26 We are grateful to Ashley Hayden for this analysis. http://www.anishanglenworld.com/index.php/media/reading-between-the-lines/
### 7.4. Who are these visiting anglers?

There is little direct evidence from NI but we can extrapolate from elsewhere. Data from the Republic of Ireland shows that visiting anglers are predominantly white, in employment or retired with a predominance of professional people, they come mostly from Britain, though France, Germany and Holland are also important. Few visiting anglers are women.

**Figure 19. Origin of active visitors to Ireland.**

This chart illustrates the figures from the CSO surveys in Ireland. Britain is the most important source of visitors – probably England and SE Wales rather than Scotland - and in Europe the bulk of visiting anglers come from France, Holland and Germany.

For NI the PCW study (from a very small sample) indicated a similar proportion of anglers from GB but much fewer from Europe and 35% from the Irish Republic. Fishermen from the Republic spend very much less than visitors from Britain and Europe, perhaps because they have less need of accommodation and have tackle suited to local conditions - they don’t need to buy more.
KEY QUESTION: Since 2008 Sterling has devalued against the Euro, making the Republic of Ireland an expensive fishing destination for UK residents. Is NI less costly? (Market research needed) If so this is a potential competitive advantage in attracting visitors from Britain.

KEY QUESTION: Why are so few European visitors fishing in NI when they make up over a third of visiting anglers in the Republic of Ireland?

KEY ISSUE: Understanding the angling market, both domestic and visitor, in NI require much better information than is currently available. A starting point should be to redesign the licences, and permits for the public estate, to yield better information.

KEY ISSUE: Is there an opportunity for NI to present itself to anglers as welcoming and caring through promotion of Northern Ireland as a top destination for disabled anglers? Economically the return would be small but the presentational value could make NI a distinctive destination.

KEY ISSUE: The key market for NI is Britain, which should be the priority focus for any promotional campaign. In Europe the target markets are, in order, France, Germany and Holland. Anecdotal evidence from consultations as part of this review indicated that the number of European anglers was at one time a lot higher.

KEY ISSUE: The key demographic groups in these markets are white professional men. Women and ethnic groups should be welcomed but not targeted in any marketing campaign.

KEY ISSUE: One study reported that anglers from the republic of Ireland spend per visit only one sixth as much as visitors from Britain and Europe. Any promotion of NI angling to overseas visitors should treat anglers from the Republic of Ireland as domestic and concentrate on Britain and mainland Europe.

Conclusion: By far the biggest market for angling in NI is the British mainland – 61% by number and probably significantly more by value, given the lower spending by
visitors from RoI. The small proportion of European visitors relative to the number visiting the Republic is a concern and the reasons would be worth investigating through the Tourism Ireland market survey programme. The perceived price differential between the RoI and NI, reported in the consultations and by an angling journalist, is an opportunity to promote NI angling to the British market but the evidence indicates that the opportunity was not being fully exploited.

Whilst there are undoubted benefits for building social capital through angling this is not relevant to angling tourism. Marketing should be designed to target the core demographic groups.
7.5. What do visiting anglers do?

Over 80% just come to fish. The remainder come to do other things and take some time off to go fishing. From an Analysis of licence data combined with survey responses PWC reported that just over half of visiting anglers are game fishermen, 40% are coarse fishermen and 10% are sea anglers split equally between boat and shore fishing. This split between game and coarse fishing is similar to that reported by DCAL in their survey of angler views of fishing on the DCAL estate. However, Mark Bowler, the editor of ‘Fly Fishing and Fly Tying’ thinks that travelling anglers might be behaving a little differently today, with more people trying different types of fishing rather than sticking to a particular routine.

When they are in NI visiting anglers spend their money in a very similar way to angling visitors to the Republic. PWC found the following pattern:

The ‘other angling items’ is mostly permit and licence costs. So we can see that anglers are very much like any other holidaymaker. Almost three quarters of what they spend is on accommodation, meals, transport and gifts and souvenirs. Only a quarter of what they spend is specifically to do with angling.

PWC found that anglers from the Republic of Ireland behave more like domestic anglers. In particular they spend only 6% as much as anglers from Britain and Europe. Most visiting anglers come to NI during the summer, with the numbers greatest in May and September. It means that they are vying for accommodation with other visitors.

![Pie chart showing spending habits of angling visitors to Northern Ireland.](image)
At present NI is not attracting very many visiting anglers. PWC estimated about 5,000 visitors – 4,500 fishing in freshwater and just 500 sea anglers. It is hard to be accurate, however, because sea anglers don’t need licences or permits, which are the key source of information on freshwater anglers.

In respect of the characteristics of sea anglers visiting the Republic of Ireland a survey conducted through the website www.anirishanglersworld.com, answered predominantly by British anglers, showed that Ireland is still perceived as having good fishing (better than the UK). Sea anglers like to travel in groups staying 4 – 7 days, see Ireland as easy to get to, and are interested in species variety as against pure size. A study by Drew Associates (2004) indicated that about 150,000 sea anglers in England and Wales travel outside GB to fish for an average of eight days per calendar year. About 12,000 of these sea anglers fish in the Republic of Ireland. PWC report, however, indicates that NI gets only 500 visiting sea anglers from all destinations. This could be seen as an opportunity but equally one can argue that the returns from promoting NI as a sea angling destination would be poor because the baseline is so low. Even a 100% improvement would be barely noticeable.

An important finding by PWC was that almost none of the anglers they surveyed had fished in Northern Ireland in the previous five years. This means that NI is failing to attract repeat visits by anglers, even though the visitors were generally happy with their experience. For any business the most important customers are the ones you already have. This is because the cost of gaining new business is usually much higher than maintaining a relationship with an existing customer. Angling journalists painted a different picture, however, where there is a group of anglers who fish NI regularly, know where the good fishing is but keep a fairly low profile and don’t want their experience to be spoilt by increased numbers. Such a group would be unlikely to participate in surveys.

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27 As sea anglers do not require licences it is very difficult to say how many visiting sea anglers there might be. Anecdotal evidence from the consultations indicated that the PWC figure was low.

The favoured accommodation for visiting anglers is self-catering, followed by Camping, B&B and Hotels. A trawl through the tourist accommodation web pages for NI shows that few businesses are ‘angler aware’; the take-up of the ‘Anglers Welcome’ branding is low.

**KEY ISSUE:** The way that money from visiting anglers enters the NI economy is mostly through catering, accommodation and travel rather than spending on tackle and fishing. Promotion of NI as an angling destination should include a programme to encourage greater awareness in these service industries of the opportunity and offer help and advice on marketing accommodation and catering to anglers. This will also serve the domestic market.

**KEY ISSUE:** Promoting coarse and sea angling is a potential way to expand the season for angling tourism into the winter during the game fishing close season (Mid October to early March).

**KEY ISSUE:** Sea angling appears to be good in parts rather than universally. Selling NI as a sea angling destination must be location-specific.

**KEY ISSUE:** Rather than targeting sea angling a better approach might be to take the view that a rising tide lifts all boats. General promotion of angling will inevitably lead to increased sea angling.

**Conclusion:** The main beneficiaries of increased angling tourism would be pubs and restaurants, hotels, holiday lets and B&Bs. With some notable exceptions there is a lack of awareness among these providers in Northern Ireland of the potential opportunities to service visiting anglers and not only attract new summer business but also extend their season. The issue here is likely to be the availability and quality of information. Unless a provider is an angler there is at present little to make them aware of the nature and scope of the opportunity and the strategies they need to adopt to develop the market for angling accommodation and subsistence.
7.6. What do Visiting Anglers think of their Fishing Experience?

PWC attempted to survey anglers who had visited Northern Ireland and found that overall they were happy with their experience. The two issues over which their expectations were not met were the quality of the fishing and the accessibility to fishing.

However, the difficulty with this data is that people who spend a lot of money on a product are probably inclined to tell themselves that it was worthwhile – the online-product-review syndrome. Also, anglers who haven’t had a good time will have less goodwill and probably be less likely to respond to a survey. Missing from the survey, of course, are anglers who haven’t fished in NI, some of whom will have considered but not proceeded with a visit.

In the PWC survey, local anglers reported a considerable gap between what they aspired to in their angling and what they experienced. It is worth including here the chart from their report. DCAL do undertake a survey of the views of anglers fishing on its public waters but it is designed for a different purpose and does not look at levels of satisfaction with the overall angling experience.

Figure 23. Satisfaction Levels among Domestic Anglers. Source: PWC 2007

It is difficult, therefore, to form a view. PWC reported that visitors were satisfied with their fishing holidays, but on the other hand they also reported that very few visitors make a return visit. The inference one can make is that the experience of visiting anglers is not poor, but it isn’t wonderful either and the competition is delivering a better fishing experience.

Angling aside, as a visitor destination NI ranks equally or better in terms of visitor experience than the rest of the UK or the Republic of Ireland. NITB cite the TNS 2007 visitor survey:

29 From a survey with a small number of participants.
**KEY ISSUE:** More information is needed on what visiting and domestic anglers think about their fishing experience. Contact details should be gathered from the licence and permit schemes and used to gather feedback, through surveys, from the angling population.

**Conclusion:** Disappointment with a holiday is usually to do not with the actual experience of the visitor but rather with the gap between what was expected and what was experienced. There is good evidence that Northern Ireland is a nice place to visit; visitors are made welcome and people are friendly. Yet it appears that repeat business is weak. The consultation and surveys indicated that angling in NI varies in quality according to factors such as local weather and also with the season. “Book your bed before you come but not your fishing” was one comment. The underlying issue seems to be with information: do people know what to expect before they come? Do they know in advance how to access local knowledge? Can they go online and see in real-time how the fishing is going?
7.7. What do Visiting Anglers Want?

Ashley Hayden, a sea angler, sums this up well on his website ‘An Irish Angler’s World’ http://www.anirishanglersworld.com/ in a posting of an article he wrote for the Irish Anglers Digest he said:

“... is Ireland marketing an angling product that cuts the mustard through media that delivers results, and more importantly is there room for innovative ideas and thinking to further strengthen that message? As a home tourist angler living in Ireland my experience is that the message is too general and needs to be sharpened up greatly. From what can be caught, where and when, to venues, boat hire, deep sea charters, fishing guides, angler friendly accommodation, local amenities, pubs and restaurants. The full gamut of a fishing holiday experience needs to be presented in a focused medium that is easily accessible. Time today is limited and money hard come by, it is important for visitors to hit the ground running when planning a fishing break. A good experience could mean possible repeat business for the services used, so it is vital to get the mix right”

PWC used nine factors in their survey of angler’s satisfaction:

- Quality of angling;
- Accessibility;
- Quality of information;
- Cost of angling;
- Quality of accommodation;
- Availability of accommodation;
- Cost of accommodation;
- Attractiveness of the natural environment;
- Friendliness of the people.

7.8. The Quality of Angling

The advice from both the freshwater governing bodies was that the quality of angling is inconsistent. This can be because of changes in the behaviour of fish in a particular locality that make them difficult to catch or it might be related to factors such as low rainfall or heavy rain that affects the fishability of a water. Their advice was that visiting anglers should not plan a visit around a single fishery but instead should think in terms of a visit to a catchment that in which they can move around to find the best fishing. The implication is that they would need access to local advice or even to the services of local fishing guides.

For sea angling the message was that at present the quality of the fishing is poor and could not form the basis for a sustained promotional campaign. However, the picture was uneven and there are ‘hot-spots’ so that in some areas, particularly in the Loughs Agency coastal areas, sea angling events and competitions could be held successfully. It is clear from information from the Loughs Agency that excellent specimen fishing is available in NI though the species named were mostly Elasmobranches (members of the shark and skate family) that are susceptible to over-fishing31, plus Pollock and bass that also has particular conservation needs. As with coarse and game fishing in NI the message seems to be that there is a good sea angling product but it is specific to place, species and season and needs to be presented carefully with the value of local knowledge emphasised.

IFSA, contributing to the consultation, argued that Northern Ireland has great potential for sea angling. They argued that this potential has not been properly recognised and can only be realised if the commercial marine fishery is managed to take account of the needs of recreational sea anglers.

AFBI (2009) survey cited the data below from Sea Angling Ireland to illustrate the scope of sea angling in NI.

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31 AFBI (2009) says: ‘Due to the late maturity, slow growth rate and slow recovery rate elasmobranch species are particularly vulnerable to over-fishing.’ (p.11) from: Recreational Sea Angling in Northern Ireland prepared for DARD Fisheries and Environment Division.
Perceptions of Quality

The picture here is confusing. There is a wide acceptance that good quality fishing is available in NI but little information on where it is and how it is accessed. One journalist felt that whilst there is a lot of club angling available public fishing is in short supply: ‘... they have rivers that they keep quiet about. I’d love to fish them’. Another journalist enthused about the fishing in Northern Ireland and it was only at the end of the discussion that it transpired he was speaking about his experience in Donegal. Again the issue of information arises.

Respondents suggested that with one or two exceptions Northern Ireland does not have classic ‘branded’ fisheries that are known to all anglers and thus have nothing to prove - for example Corrib, Moy and Mask in the Republic, the Tweed and Spey in Scotland and Chew and Blagdon in England. Thus marketing NI requires a tailored approach that promotes the quality of its fish and gives visitors confidence that they will find good quality fishing. One respondent divided visiting anglers into two camps. (1) Well-heeled fishermen who want to fish alone or in small groups of friends, much like in Scotland where fishing on beats means that fishing numbers each day are restricted. (2) Fishermen who are happy fishing alongside numbers of

Table 5. Scope of sea angling in NI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Catch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portrush Harbour</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Pool, Portrush</td>
<td>Coalfish, Pollock, wrasse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skerries Rocks</td>
<td>Big Pollack, Ballan wrasse, codling</td>
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<td>Dunseverick</td>
<td>Ballan wrasse, mackerel, large Pollack, big coalfish, conger eels</td>
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<td>White Park Bay</td>
<td>Flounder, turbot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ballintoy</td>
<td>Plaice, dabs, turbot, Ballan wrasse, mackerel, Pollack, coalfish, cod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballycastle</td>
<td>Pollack, Ballan wrasse, flounder, bass, small turbot, dabs, plaice, dogfish, whiting, codling, sea trout, coalfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torr Head</td>
<td>Tope, Pollack, coalfish, Ballan wrasse, mackerel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layd Church</td>
<td>Cod, conger eel, dogfish, wrasse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon Rock, Cushendun</td>
<td>Codling, flounder, whiting, plaice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick Point</td>
<td>Codling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenarm</td>
<td>Plaice, coalfish, codling, dogfish, conger eels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackarch</td>
<td>Pollack, coalfish, conger eels, rock cod, Ballan wrasse, mackerel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballylumford Harbour</td>
<td>Wrasse, cod, whiting, haddock, dogfish, coalfish, Pollack, conger eel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portmuck and Browns Bay</td>
<td>Pollack, wrasse, small coalfish, dogfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobins Cliffs</td>
<td>Wrasse, Pollack, mackerel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackhead Lighthouse</td>
<td>Ballan wrasse, dogfish, conger eel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitehead Promenade</td>
<td>Wrasse, cod, whiting, flounder, plaice, haddock, dogfish, Pollack, conger eel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrickfergus Harbour</td>
<td>Cod, whiting, flounder, haddock, dogfish, coalfish, conger eel, mullet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangor Pier</td>
<td>Large conger eel, wrasse, coalfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlock Head</td>
<td>Mackerel, Pollack, coalfish, wrasse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donaghadee Pier</td>
<td>Pollack, coalfish, wrasse, mackerel, whiting, coaly, deb, codling, rockling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballyhalbert Pier</td>
<td>Pollack, coalfish, whiting, rockling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portavogie</td>
<td>Pollack, codling, rockling, coalfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portaferry</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramore Head</td>
<td>Pollack, mackerel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magilligan</td>
<td>Flounder, bass, dogfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roe Estuary</td>
<td>Flounder, silver eel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
other fishermen, perhaps being used to stocked fisheries. For the first group finding
water to fish in NI probably requires knowledgeable advice.

So the general perception seems to be that the fishing is good but finding out about
it is awkward and that visitors are sometimes not welcome on club waters. All three
journalists and editors interviewed made this last point. Travelling anglers have a
choice that locals don’t. If they are not confident in a destination they will go
elsewhere.

Consultations and evidence from the Foyle area added to this picture. There is little
doubt that riverfishing for wild trout is available in abundance in parts of Northern
Ireland. The opportunities in the Loughs Agency area, for example, could form the
basis for an exceptional trout angling holiday. Finding out about such opportunities,
however, is not as easy as it could be.

Evidence of Quality

We found no impartial – scientific or official statistics – evidence about the quality of
fishing in NI. With the possible exception of Pike fishing NI seems to lack the steady
stream of news about fish catches, specimen fish, fishing competitions and fishing
events that one sees for other parts of the UK. For sea fishing there are conflicting
narratives about the availability and quality of fish and the damage inflicted on sea
angling by excessive commercial fishing. We cannot say how accurate such
narratives might be, but they are not helpful to the cause of sea angling in Northern
Ireland. Until this is resolved the marketing of sea angling in the face of competition
from Iceland, Norway and the Faeroes will be an uphill task.

AFBI’s report included a table, shown below, categorises the specimen fish caught
by species. The data indicates a predominance of specimens from the shark and
ray family (Tope, dogfish, skate) and relatively few cod, ling, conger and bass.
Judging by this evidence the specimen fishing, for example in pursuit of cuckoo
wrasse, is likely to have narrow appeal. However, the data does not accord with
anecdotal evidence from the consultation of high quality bass fishing. It might be,
therefore, that there is a mis-match between reported and actual experience. Note
that sea anglers are likely to be wary of reporting catches of commercially valuable
species for fear that commercial fishing boats will act on their reports and fish an
area out.
### Table 6. Irish specimen fish caught in NI waters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballan wrasse</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackmouthed Dogfish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blonde Ray</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cod</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conger eel</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuckoo ray</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuckoo Wrasse</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dab</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilthead Bream</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Greater spotted Dogfish</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Grey Gurnard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herring</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Homelym Ray</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesser spotted Dogfish</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ling</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaice</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pollock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spur dogfish</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thick lipped Mullet</td>
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<td>Three bearded rockling</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tope</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Trigger fish</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turbot</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY ISSUE:** There is little to indicate to a visiting angler how the quality of fishing they can expect compares to other possible destinations. There is rhetoric of high-quality but little evidence.

**KEY ISSUE:** The position of sea angling need to be resolved before it can be marketed as a viable tourism product. Scientific and/or statistical evidence is needed relating to the number, species, size and location of angling quarry so that a sustainable tourism offering can be developed.
7.9. **Accessibility**

1. **Access to fishing and competition between visitors and locals**

   In our discussions with the Angling Governing Bodies they were ambivalent about the quality of fishing in NI. A recurring theme was to do with access to water. They reported that a significant proportion of the fishable waters in Northern Ireland are not accessible. This means reduced capacity for angling and potential competition between visitors and domestic anglers. UAF advised us that local anglers are mostly interested in salmon fishing, so there would be little competition if visiting anglers were encouraged to fish for trout. Another theme was the difficulty that clubs have in getting new fishing, ownerships are complex and not registered, derelict water is common.

2. **Access to fishing locations**

   A recurrent theme, emphasised strongly by all the governing bodies, was that access across adjoining land in order to get to a fishing site is problematic.

   **KEY ISSUE:** There is too much emphasis on where one cannot fish rather than where fishing is available. Visitors - out of state or domestic - don't care about where they can't fish - they just want to know what's available, when, if it is any good, how much it costs and how they book it.
7.10. Cost of Angling and Accommodation

The cost of angling and accommodation in NI appears to be comparable with its competitors, in fact for trout and coarse fishing the low cost in NI is probably a source of competitive advantage.

Availability of Accommodation

This has not been reported as an issue by visiting anglers though domestic anglers in the PWC survey reported it as problematic. It can be difficult to track down suitable accommodation on websites, however. The Discover Northern Ireland.com site http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/accomfinder/ works well so a link to a central angling site plus an opportunity for accommodation providers to adopt an ‘Anglers Welcome’ labelling in return for meeting certain requirements is probably all that is needed. In walking the ‘Walkers Welcome’ initiative is an example of this approach http://www.qualityintourism.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Cyclists-Walkers-Welcome1.pdf, as is the Cycle Touring Club’s ‘Cyclists Welcome’ scheme. The CTC scheme allows cyclists to recommend establishments and nominate new ones on the web-site.

**KEY ISSUE:** The accommodation finder available for NI works well. An ‘Anglers Welcome’ initiative for accommodation providers, which could be nominations-based or standards-based, would help promote angling.
7.11. **Friendliness of local people and attractiveness of the natural environment.**

NI seems to perform well in these areas. Whilst PWC highlighted discontent among local anglers the visitors were more positive. Other surveys indicate that NI performs well. For visiting anglers the extensive opportunities to catch wild rather than stocked fish for both coarse and game fishing is a strong plus point.

**Conclusions:** It can be said that at present Northern Ireland does not have a true angling product within its tourism portfolio. It has a collection of assets of variable, and in the case of sea angling disputed, quality. Some of these are likely to be very good but there is little to show this.

The angling ‘shop window’ in NI comprises a highly diffuse scattering of websites and promotional material some of which is of high quality. The lack of cohesion stems in part from the complex governance of Angling in NI, this is referred to elsewhere in this report, where a number of bodies have a legitimate voice and feel obliged to make a contribution. The single most effective thing that Northern Ireland could do to promote angling is to bring all this information together so that domestic and visiting anglers can visit a single website from which they can then be directed as appropriate to their needs. This issue of information is covered in more depth in section 8, on facilities and their promotion.

For angling the institutional arrangements for tourism in Ireland make it difficult to present visitors with a single ‘shop window’. However, the needs of travelling domestic anglers, anglers visiting from the Republic of Ireland and visiting anglers from overseas are very much the same. Tourism Ireland cannot promote angling in NI to the key British and Western European markets unless there is a proper infrastructure, especially an informational infrastructure, within Northern Ireland. NITB can develop this product but cannot then promote it to its core market in mainland Britain - this is the job of TI. Developing a tourism market for angling in Northern Ireland on an all-island basis, however, is likely to fail. From the websites and from comments by people who were consulted or spoken to directly as part of the research it is clear that even in the Republic of Ireland, where angling is an important part of tourism, angling is promoted through what is essentially a focus on the Western Loughs and the surrounding catchments. Angling is strongly place-specific; it cannot be sold as a generic concept. For example no angler, when asked where they fish, will say ‘Scotland’ or ‘Ireland’ or even ‘Northern Ireland’. They will say ‘the Tay’, ‘the Corrib’ or ‘the Lower Bann’.

It can be concluded then that selling angling is really about selling places. That a successful angling ‘product’ for NI will be built bottom-up as a compendium of local fishing opportunities. Together these will form the product that the tourist institutions offer to their markets. Building this product will require planned action, it will not happen without intervention.

**RECOMMENDATION 25:** That planned action requires collaboration between the two tourist bodies responsible for promoting Northern Ireland. There is a need to agree to a programme of promotion for angling in NI, identify named staff to have oversight and arrange for regular officer-level meetings to monitor and evaluate progress. Progress on the project should be reported to the angling forum.
**RECOMMENDATION 26:** Those organisations with a specific mandate to promote water-based recreation and/or tourism – NITB, DCAL, Sport NI, Waterways Ireland, Tourism Ireland and the Loughs Agency should form an officers group with responsibility for overseeing and enabling the development of angling tourism in Northern Ireland.

Such a programme will require full-time staff. In the short term there is a need to draw together the information, bringing the different sources together following the example of ‘Fish Wales’. Another short-term task is to energise the accommodation and catering providers, initially by linking to existing databases of accommodation and catering but in the medium term developing greater awareness of the opportunity offered by angling and possibly developing a branded angling-aware market in accommodation and catering.

At the same time there is a need to work with the clubs and other organisations to build the product. What is available, where is it, how do you get to it, how is it fishing at the moment, where can you go, where do you stay, who will give you local information, who are the local guides? It is difficult to see this coming about purely through voluntary effort and we suggest that a grant aid is offered to encourage clubs and others to develop and offer information.

**RECOMMENDATION 27:** A grant scheme is developed by the Agencies with responsibility for water related recreation, to provide support to angling clubs and other organisations to develop information on where to fish in their area, and how to access local opportunities.
7.12. Promotion

Linked to the institutional complexity is the fact that Northern Ireland has little or no profile in the angling press. The journalists we spoke to contrasted with the pro-active approach of Fáilte Ireland with that of the tourist bodies responsible for NI. One editor reported that he had removed a NI site from an article of fishing in Ireland because Failte had supported the visit by his reporter but there had been no contribution from NI.

We suggest that NI has a low profile in the angling press because uncertainty about responsibilities has led to inaction by both of the tourist agencies responsible for Northern Ireland. Domestic anglers account for 85% by number and perhaps 90% by economic contribution of all angling in NI. These anglers read the UK and Irish fishing journals, as do anglers in the Republic of Ireland, and we suggest that NITB explore the opportunity to take a pro-active approach and encourage coverage of NI angling in journals published in the UK. Stories are a powerful means of communication yet there are few or no stories about NI in the fishing press. There are few accounts of specimen fish, few stories of the beauty of NI and the wildness of its fish. It is such stories, rather than any scientific or statistical data, that provide what the angling community regards as evidence of angling potential and provides the incentive to visit a new venue. This applies as much to an angler in Belfast considering a trip to Fermanagh as it does to an angler in Birmingham.

Sea angling and coarse fishing competitions are an important means of promotion. It is telling that the highest-profile competitions in NI are supported not by tourist agencies but by two cross-border bodies, the Loughs Agency and Waterways Ireland, that each has an independent mandate to promote leisure activities.

“We need more stories about the fishing in Northern Ireland.” (Quote from workshop participant)

RECOMMENDATION 28: NITB and TI agree a programme to bring angling journalists to NI to demonstrate what is on offer. The key people are those who write for the British market in each of the three fishing disciplines.
8. ACCESS TO FACILITIES, INFORMATION AND ADVICE

8.1. Introduction

In the extensive survey of clubs that has formed part of this review questions were included about the facilities that clubs have to offer and the means by which they promote them. Full details are available in the survey report. This section draws on the results of the survey and consultations and also extensive research on the web to look in more detail at current information on angling in Northern Ireland and review the potential for a more unified, user-centred approach.

The underlying questions are concerned with the facilities available to anglers in Northern Ireland, how information is currently communicated and how current practice in NI compares with recent innovations elsewhere, particularly in Wales and Scotland. The issues raised in this section mirror those from the section above on tourism.

The first part of the section discusses the way that society now relies on online information to inform much of its decision-making, and the implications of this trend for angling in NI. The second part then looks at current practice in NI and conclusions are reached by examining the way that an integrated approach to providing online information has been developed in Scotland and in Wales.

There are some excellent examples of good practice in NI, for example the local authority website for Fermanagh, and there is also a lot of good quality information available. However, action is necessary to bring all this together to provide a more coherent picture of what exists that is easily accessible to all. Angling should be an important sector for Northern Ireland tourism offering potential sustainable economic growth opportunities in rural and coastal areas. The potential for growth appears to be significant both for visitors to Northern Ireland and within Northern Ireland itself.

Whilst the experiences of anglers who do visit Northern Ireland appears broadly satisfactory4 there are concerns regarding lack of information on where to fish, facilities available and confusion over access and complex licensing requirements which may act as a barrier to participation amongst potential visitors and the resident population which are explored in the section on participation. There appears to be considerable interest on the part of prospective visitors but they have difficulty in accessing and using the information they require to take the final decision to travel in Northern Ireland and there is evidence that local people lack the information they need to make informed decisions about opportunities to take up the activity and how to get fishing17.

**KEY ISSUE**: There is confusion among the public about where to turn to for information and advice, the rules and regulations controlling angling in Northern Ireland and information how new users can get into angling.

Anglers need to be directed to where their expectations will be best met, it is not one size fits all! Some of the current information provision is difficult to navigate and reflects the structure of the activity and has sometimes been developed reflecting the nature of the providers rather than meeting the requirements of anglers. Providing the right information to potential participants is particularly important given
the dominance of independent, rather than package travel holidays and in meeting the needs of local anglers who need the right information at the right time to trigger a desire to take part. It is particularly important in attracting new anglers to Northern Ireland and visitors from within Northern Ireland to take up the activity to provide the right information in that way participants obtain a good quality experience that will encourage sustainability in the long term. Prospective new participants need more and different information than repeat regular participants who may be more familiar with angling in Ireland.

Some of the best online examples of information that were found in respect of tourism were in the commercial sector. The website of Baronscourt estates, for example, illustrates a top-class integrated tourism product showing prices, real-time news, accommodation and local guides all packaged together. Visitors know what to expect when they make their booking.

In general, however, the tourism industry and information for local people is hindered, by a lack of joined up communication on facilities. The principal challenge is its fragmented nature, reflecting the different interests of governing bodies, clubs, small businesses and public sector bodies, making communication and consolidation of information difficult within the activity and the ways in which information is communicated to consumers.

**KEY ISSUE:** There is a current lack of coordination concerning the management of on-line information on where to fish and associated facilities in Northern Ireland.
Fishing: T&C & Links

For Prices and Availability please enquire.

Please note the fishing is let as a package with the estate accommodation and is subject to availability. The maximum number of rods per beat is 2, the estate has two beats to let at any one time.

Terms & Conditions of booking fishing

A deposit of 50% of the full rental is required before a booking can be confirmed. This deposit is non-refundable unless we are able to resell the fishing which we do not guarantee to be able to do. Please take out adequate travel insurance to cover your holiday. VAT is included in the quoted price. A customary tip to the ghillies of £50 per rod per day is recommended.

The balance of the rental is due 30 days before arrival, unless this is a late booking.

Full Terms and Conditions please click here.

Course day for the accommodation / weekly rentals is Friday unless agreed otherwise. Possession of the apartment is from 3:00hrs on the day of arrival to 10:00hrs on the day of departure. Late arrivals must telephone the Estate Office in advance. +44 (0)28 9156 1583.

Fly Fishing Guides and Instructors:

Russell M Whitman, Guided Fly Fishing, www.guided-flyfishing.com
Jerry McNair, Instructor, +44 (0) 7785205880
Tom Woods, AIFAA, +44 (0) 38 6546 6699
Stevie Mann, AIFAT, www.anglinglicensing.co.uk

Salmon Fishing:
Salmon Fishing, River Mourne
Catch Update: Current Season
Salmon Fishing Gallery (1)
Salmon Fishing Gallery (2)
5 Year Catch Records
Old Fishing Reports
Trout & Salmon (Mourne's feature)
Fishing Terms & Conditions
Fishing Availability & Rates

Other Sporting Breaks:

Pike Fishing
Rough Shooting
Driven Woodcock Shooting
Shooting Terms & Conditions

Figure 25. Baronscourt Estate Webpage and fishing information
8.2. The definition and concept of e-tourism

The term ‘e-tourism’ is used here to refer to e-business in the field of outdoor recreation and tourism – i.e the use of ICT to enable outdoor recreation and tourism providers and destinations to operate more efficiently, and to reach and serve consumers more effectively with facilities to search, compare and book tourism products. E-business not only embraces the use of new media, such as the Internet, e-mail, twitter, Facebook and apps etc. but also enables more efficient use of traditional media such as brochures and advertising. It incorporates the ability to conduct sales online, with fundamental implications for the way public, private and voluntary sector businesses work.

The use of digital marketing and social media can provide a low cost yet effective means of promoting angling in Northern Ireland, for example, Facebook and Twitter are free to use and very easy to implement. What is more the use of social media can significantly improve search engine optimisation, by helping to raise Google searches for specific topics (e.g. angling opportunities in a specific location) to the top of the search page, and can also increase the number of ‘clicks’ on relevant angling websites (e.g. club websites or angling retailers) thereby raising the angling sector’s online profile.

In addition, embracing new social media and new technologically inspired activities to increase the ‘shareability’ of its messages can broaden the angling sector’s reach beyond existing users. The use of Twitter, for example, could enable angling clubs and businesses and tourism bodies to engage more flexibly and informally with the public. Similarly, Facebook profiles offer users the ability to update their ‘friends’ on current activities and events thereby demonstrating to people what angling has to offer them. This is especially important in encouraging younger people to take up this sport. Indeed, social media is now an integral part of many young people’s lives, with the latest Ofcom research suggesting that almost half of young people aged between 8 & 17 have a profile on a social networking site.

The survey of angling clubs undertaken for this review show that the use of social media such as Facebook and twitter are rated relatively highly in terms of their potential to promote angling in Northern Ireland and the angling sector should, therefore, be more widely encouraged to utilise social media forums more to maximise this potential.
Figure 26. Scores out of 5 given by angling clubs when asked to rate the importance of various marketing strategies.

KEY ISSUE: The use of digital marketing and social media can provide a low-cost yet effective means of promoting angling in Northern Ireland. In addition, social media, such as Facebook or Twitter, may have the potential to encourage younger people to participate in angling, and the angling sector in Northern Ireland should therefore be encouraged to utilise social media forums more fully to maximise this potential.
8.3. E-tourism - opportunities and constraints

The Internet provides direct access to potential anglers, and is also a tool for communication between the various sectors and organisations within Northern Ireland concerned with developing tourism and participation in angling. Increasingly, it provides consumers and intermediaries with far richer information, and the opportunity to make more informed choices about whether, how and where to fish in Northern Ireland. It also offers tourism organisations, community groups and businesses the tools to promote, communicate and transact with consumers and other angling providers.

In angling the growth of the use ICT to provide information to users has been sporadic and sometimes reactive in some quarters. A lack of knowledge about "how to" and financial resources have no doubt been factors that have constrained development, while the absence of a joined up approach has meant that systems have emerged on an ad hoc and uncoordinated basis. However, products such as central reservations systems (as used by travel agencies) have demonstrated that with proper planning and funding, ICT can both improve consumer service and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of encouraging participation and ensuring sustainability in the long term.

The internet offers the potential to break out of the "cycle", the internet cuts costs and facilitates the direct creation and management of websites. Websites also offer more comprehensive information, through internal content and links. Websites can be particularly important in improving the match between tourism and the surrounding economy. A local angling club website can, for example, be a portal to nearby suppliers and surrounding community interests. This type of information and depth of knowledge increases the likelihood that visitors and prospective participants from the local area are aware of the angling opportunities before they arrive, and begin to build goodwill between facility operators and the surrounding community32.

Perhaps the main conclusion to be drawn from the literature is that ICT can only do so much to minimize the difficulties associated with small size, isolation, and limited budgets but by working together there is an opportunity to enhance the potential of ICT to promote opportunities for angling in Northern Ireland.

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8.4. Problems and pitfalls

It has been argued that traditional sources of exclusion are duplicated on the internet. Access to the internet is unevenly biased in favour of the middle and upper classes of largely urban centres\(^3\). Consequently those people who are already marginalized are becoming even more so because they are unable to access the new technologies available to wealthier communities\(^4\). The key challenge, therefore, becomes one of ensuring equality of access while at the same time tackling the consequences of marginalization and underdevelopment.

**KEY ISSUE** A significant barrier to maximising the potential of ICT in the angling sector is that a significant proportion of tourism businesses and other organisations that wish to increase participation are not proactive in their use of technology and the Internet and appear to have a limited awareness of the scope of e-business. Allied to this is the fact that the whole online process can appear intimidating, time-consuming and financially prohibitive to clubs and an insufficient priority to local authorities in the promotion of angling.

Whilst electronic trading in tourism is a growth area for larger operators, it is much less so for many small organisations that makes up the bulk of the angling sector. The lack of e-business awareness and skills suggests that the main barriers preventing angling organisations using ICT are cost, lack of knowledge, lack of time and a belief that the existing methods of gaining “business” are satisfactory.

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8.5. Key trends in e-business and e-tourism

Use of the Internet has been increasing dramatically around the world – nearly ten-fold over the past six years. Growth is forecast to continue for the next five years, with web enabled mobile devices helping to stimulate this trend. It is not yet clear when this is likely to reach saturation point or maturity, but some 39% of all UK households are now able to access the Internet from home.

- Approximately 87% of adults between 16 and 24 used social networking sites in 2012, compared to 48% of all adults.
- Access to the internet using a mobile phone more than doubled between 2010 and 2012, from 24% to 51%.
- Increasing proportions of Internet users are buying online, with a predicted 32% of UK users forecast to use the Internet for retail transactions over the next five years.
- Travel and tourism will gain an increasingly large share of the global online commerce market, from an estimated 30% today to around 50% in the future.
- User profiles broadly match the target markets of many tourism organisations – Internet users tend to be relatively wealthy, well educated, and interested in independent travel.

Data from the Office for National Statistics about Internet usage concludes that:

In 2012, 33 million adults accessed the internet every day, more than double the 2006 figure of 16 Million. There is a consistently high (43-52%) level of Internet usage amongst all age groups up to the age of 55. Older people have a lower (but certainly not insignificant) level of usage – almost one third of those up to 64 and one-sixth for those 65+.

However, there are certain differences in how individuals make use of the Internet when analysed by age. For example, those adults aged 16 to 24 are proportionately, the largest users of many of the available Internet activities and in 2012, this age group were most likely to engage in online activities that focused on leisure or recreation.

35 Data taken from the ONS Household and Individuals survey [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/releaserelease?Parody=part2/intera-access---households-and-individuals/2012-part2/stb-a-2012part2.html#a-b-key-points]
8.6. **Stakeholder and customer requirements:**

This section outlines the needs/requirements of key stakeholders in relation to ICT provision and online facilities information for angling in Northern Ireland.

**Angling Clubs & members**

- Ability to access real-time on-line information on local conditions, including water levels and weather conditions to enhance the quality of anglers fishing experience (possibly through the use of webcams stationed at fishing sites similar to the system adopted by the Wye and Usk Foundation);
- More effective and strategic consolidation of information into one uniform website;
- Better marketing of clubs activities and opportunities;
- Facilities to enable the building of online communities to support local/regional product;
- Availability of ‘real time’ information/updates news and events of regional, national and international competitions.

**Angling Businesses & Tourist Providers**

- Opportunities for formation of local/regional product consolidation and distribution;
- Opportunities for domestic promotion to consumers;
- Facilities to enable the building of online communities to support local/regional product creation, marketing and sales;
- Effective communication and co-operation between public sector governing bodies involved in promoting angling in Northern Ireland;
- Ability to market cost-effectively.
- Ability to quickly search in-depth, up-to-date, accurate information (including special offers) on available angling related activities or events, and many other topics - and create schedules and map-based itineraries.

**Visitor Anglers**

- Ability to access consolidated databases with clear search criteria and maps that does not require any advance knowledge of the area’s geography or fishing infrastructure;
- Fast low cost, direct access to accurate information, with facilities for sophisticated search for suitable angling opportunities;
• Clear product pricing, and information on where to purchase licences/day permits;

• Up to date and readily accessible information on facilities available at fishing sites, for example, disabled access, appropriate toilet facilities for women and families, parking facilities and rest areas.
8.7. The current position in Northern Ireland

The accessibility and quality of on-line information available on where to fish in Northern Ireland was analysed across a range of sources including government department websites, local authorities, tourist information centres, angling representative bodies, angling club websites and other voluntary organisations. A review of facilities information available at specific fishing sites was also conducted as well as availability of information on licensing and permits restrictions.

Web searches on fishing in NI yield numerous sources of information, some of them of high quality. For example the NI Direct site [http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/angling-latest-news](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/angling-latest-news) is informative and useful.

The sites include government departments, agencies, cross-border bodies, local authorities, commercial interests, interest groups, clubs and others. However, unless a potential visitor has a good understanding of the geography of NI it is very difficult to form a picture of what is available and how they can make a fishing holiday in Northern Ireland.

There is little integration between fishing information and the other information that both domestic and visiting anglers need – accommodation, transport, boat hire, restaurants and shops.

The division of responsibilities between DCAL and the Loughs Agency is of no interest to anglers, either visiting or domestic. In the eyes of consumers it makes no sense for each organisation to have a separate website for angling nor does it make sense for local authorities and Government agencies to have separate angling websites. Bringing all this information together to a single point of access is perhaps the most effective action that might be taken to promote angling tourism.

**KEY ISSUE**: Information on angling in NI is often good quality but is highly diffuse and scattered. Unless you are familiar with the geography of NI it is also difficult to work out where the opportunities are located and how accommodation and travel fit with the fishing opportunities. The single most important action to promote angling in NI would be to bring all this information together and make it available in one place.

**Information on angling opportunities in Northern Ireland**

At present, the most comprehensive source of information concerning where to fish in Northern Ireland may be found at NIdirect [http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/angling](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/angling). This provides information on fisheries by each county including geographic location (see figure 27) as well as key information about each fishing area, including nearest town, area/length, species found there, when to fish there, methods of fishing allowed (e.g. fly fishing, spinning and worm fishing), daily bag limit, size limit, and licensing/permit regulations.
Most angling websites in Northern Ireland focus on game angling, perhaps reflecting the limited opportunities for coarse fishing although with the introduction of roach, bream and rudd in the 1960’s alongside the native pike, opportunities for coarse fishing in Northern Ireland do exist, yet there is a distinct lack of information for visitors on where and when to fish for these species. Evidence from the consultations indicates that a seasoned coarse angler in Northern Ireland will change his or her fishing locations and methods according to the season and local conditions. Given this, if the angling tourism sector is to maximise the opportunities for visitors to have a quality coarse angling experience, there is a need access to this type of information, which is currently unavailable.

**KEY ISSUE:** Online information available on fishing opportunities in Northern Ireland tends to display a bias towards game angling due to the fact that facilities/resources for game angling are more publicly available, whereas the majority of coarse fisheries are privately owned or managed and currently unable to promote a joined up approach.

There is very little information available on sea angling opportunities in Northern Ireland, and there is a perception that access to fishing is limited in some places particularly at the coast because of the lack of fish because of conflicts with commercial fishing. DARD provides no information on suitable locations for shore angling in Northern Ireland, similarly charter boats operating across Northern Ireland are poorly marketed and there is no comprehensive database of charter boat operators which visitor anglers can access when planning their trip.

**KEY ISSUE:** There is a lack of online information pertaining to sea angling opportunities in Northern Ireland, for example, the DCAL website provides no information on sea angling due to the fact that this activity is managed by another Government Department (DARD), thereby reflecting the lack of a joined up approach.
A review of Local Authority websites found that information on where to fish provided by Local Authorities in Northern Ireland is sporadic and in many cases limited, with many local websites offering little or no information on where to fish in their area. A small number of local authorities do provide a link to the DCAL angling pages, whilst others direct users to local tourist information centres for more detailed information on fishing opportunities in their locality.

However some local authorities do offer more than a ‘signposting’ service, for example Fermanagh District Council provides an interactive map for game and coarse fishing (see figure 28) including a link to 2013 Fermanagh angling guide which provides users with detailed information on species found at each site, details of boat hire companies in the area, permits and licensing regulations and disabled access information.

Where local authorities do provide information on angling opportunities in Northern Ireland, this information can be difficult to find and there was little consistency with regard to where this information is accessed, for example, for example some Local Authority websites this information may be accessed within the ‘tourism’ section, some in the leisure and ‘culture section’ some in ‘outdoor activities section’.

**KEY ISSUE:** Information available from local authorities is disparate and hard to find in many cases although others demonstrate good practice which could be a model to follow. Opportunities for a more joined up approach may arise from the Review of Public Administration.
In Northern Ireland, there are three recognised governing bodies that represent the needs and interests of anglers in discussions with public bodies, government and other NGO’s. These are:

- Ulster Angling Federation (representative for game fishing)
- Ulster Coarse Fishing Federation (representative body for coarse fishing)
- Ulster Council of the Irish Federation of Sea Anglers (representative for sea angling)

Of the three representative bodies, the Ulster Angling Federation possesses the most comprehensive and user friendly website. Currently under development, this website contains information on current news and events, policy and consultation documents and other information relating to game angling.

In addition, this website offers a comprehensive database of member angling clubs which is very accessible via an interactive map divided by county and provides contact details including relevant email addresses of member clubs.

The Irish Federation of Sea Angling also has its own website which offers information on competition results and upcoming events; however this website does not appear to be regularly updated and does not provide any information on suitable locations for sea angling in Northern Ireland.

The coarse angling federation does not have its own website, and contact details for this body are most easily accessible via the Outdoor NI website, an online guide to Outdoor Activities in Northern Ireland. Consequently information on where to go for coarse angling in Northern Ireland and details of coarse angling clubs is limited.
A low proportion of angling clubs have their own websites, and only game angling clubs appear to have email addresses that may be accessed via the UAF website. This makes it particularly difficult for potential new users to access information on the waters licenced or leased by angling clubs.

Whilst many angling clubs do not have their own websites, some use social networking websites and other social media through which to advertise their services. Facebook webpages are a common example, and may have certain advantages over more traditional online forums. Social media can provide unique opportunities for angling organisations to engage connect and develop unique relationships with people in a creative and dynamic medium.

KEY ISSUE: Existing anglers would like to be able to access ‘real-time’ information on local conditions, including water levels and weather conditions as well as information/updates news and events of regional, national and international competitions.

Information on angling licensing and regulations

Institutional arrangements with regards to angling licensing and regulations laws are complex and on-line information relating to this may be accessed from a range of sources making it particularly difficult to navigate.

This is further complicated by the fact that DCAL and the Loughs Agency issue separate angling licences in their respective jurisdictions (however, on payment of a supplement, licence holders are allowed to fish in either). What is more, rod licensing laws differ depending on where you are, for example, a rod licence is required by law for each rod used by anyone over 12 years in areas covered by DCAL but is required for all ages in areas covered by the Loughs agency (there is no requirement to have a licence for sea angling, except when fishing for salmon or sea trout).
Whilst DCAL do provide a very comprehensive guide on licensing permits and regulations this only applies to their waters, thus making it very difficult to access information on licensing regulations (and where to purchase permits) in relation to privately owned fisheries.

In addition to a rod licence, it is also a requirement in Northern Ireland that anglers hold a permit to fish in publicly or privately owned waters. Permits or day tickets are documents which a typically issued by the fishery owner (person who holds the fishing rights) which allows the angler the right to fish in that fishery.

DCAL angling rod licences and permits may be purchased via their “do it online” section. Users are directed to the angling permits booking pages where they are required to choose from a number of options, relating to their permit/licensing requirements (see figure 31) after which they are taken through a series of steps to make their purchase. Alternatively DCAL provide a comprehensive list of rod licensing distributors categorised according to county, included addresses and phone numbers if users prefer to purchase their permits in person.

There is currently no on-line facility for purchasing rod licences and permits for the Loughs Agency owned waters and anglers must purchase these in person, either from the Agency head office, or from one of their local distributors listed on their website.

Other fisheries outside the public angling estate require by law the purchase a rod licence (either from DCAL or the Lough Agency), however permits must be purchased from the fishery owner themselves, whether this is a private individual, company, or angling club. However information on how and where to purchase...
permits for areas outside the public angling estate owned by DCAL and the Loughs Agency are especially difficult to find.

**KEY ISSUE:** As many angling clubs and private fisheries do not have their own websites, there is no comprehensive database detailing where angling permits can be purchased in relation to these fishing sites.

**KEY ISSUE:** Institutional arrangements with regards to angling licensing and regulations laws are complex and on-line information relating to this may be accessed from a range of sources making it particularly difficult to navigate.

Angling regulations are equally complex and differ between areas. For example, bag limits and size limits vary depending on whether you are fishing on Loughs Agency or DCAL public estate or private fishery owners sites that tend to apply their own bag limits and minimum sizes where this information is generally provided on the permit you purchase. Information on angling regulations is available from a range of sources (e.g. DCAL and Loughs Agency Website) but there is no unified single document which provides users with all the necessary information.

**Information on Facilities available at fishing sites**

Angling tourists require a wide array of information when making the final decision to travel to Northern Ireland. What is more, the on-line accessibility of information relating to facilities (e.g. toilet facilities, disabled access, nearby accommodation, parking etc.) available at fishing sites in Northern Ireland is important in terms of encouraging younger people and less active groups to take up this sport. Yet, information on facilities available for angling in Northern Ireland is limited, and where this is made available, users are required to access this information from a range of sources making it difficult to navigate.

DCAL does provide information on fisheries which have special facilities or provide suitable access for anglers with disabilities. This includes detailed information on disabled access, car parking and distance to water, gradient and path width at suitable fishing locations, as well as information on how to get to these sites illustrated with maps. However, this information is restricted to fisheries provided in the public angling estate and there is no comparable guide for Lough's agency regulated waters. Similarly privately owned fisheries and angling clubs do not, as a rule, provide detailed information on facilities available at waters owned, leased or licenced by them. Information available on disabled access for sea angling opportunities in Northern Ireland is severely lacking, and charter boat operators do not generally provide this kind of information.

**KEY ISSUE:** The lack of information regarding facilities available at fishing sites in Northern Ireland therefore makes it particularly difficult for certain groups (such as women or disabled people) to make an informed decision about where to going fishing in Northern Ireland and may, therefore, discourage these people from participating.

As well as a lack of information, there is evidence from the survey of a lack of investment in suitable access and facilities at many fishing sites in Northern Ireland. This is a reflection of a combination of factors in part, due to funding, coupled with
the fact that ownership of fishing rights to water in Northern Ireland is often ambiguous resulting in angling clubs reluctance to invest in facilities where the legal right to fish is unclear and they have no security of tenure.

**Conclusion:**

In concluding this section of the review it can be said that whilst there is a wealth of on-line information on where to fish and associated facilities in Northern Ireland, there is a current lack of coordination concerning the management of this information.

There is a strong case for a more centralised approach to the provision of information via an interactive website, which would act as a ‘one top shop’ for information on angling and associated products/activities in Northern Ireland.

The approach in Scotland and Wales has been to create a central portal for all information with consistent formatting and excellent detail on individual service providers, including costs, details and photographs so that the angler knows who is most likely to suit his needs before he/she before planning their visit. This system operates on the basis of consolidated databases with clear search criteria and maps. These demonstrate an information flow and presentation that does not require any advance knowledge of the area’s geography or fishing infrastructure. The approach in Scotland and Wales therefore offer examples of ‘best practice’ regarding online provision of information as indicated below.
8.8. The way forward: Some examples of best practice

Where to fish?

Visit Scotland offers a comprehensive database which users can search to find suitable opportunities for fishing, categorised according to coarse, sea, salmon and trout fishing depending on user’s preference. This database also offers a comprehensive list of options to tailor the search to users specific needs, including fishing by region, maximum/minimum price willing to pay, location and species search and water type.

Visit Scotland

![Fish in Scotland](image)

Figure 32. Visit Scotland: angling website

Similarly, Visit Wales has devised a user friendly interactive map detailing fishing opportunities across the country, whereby users can click on the area they wish to go fishing and filter according to fishing preference, categorised according to game, coarse and sea angling.
In respect of sea angling, both the Visit Scotland and Visit Wales systems provide a list of suitable areas to go shore fishing, and also provides a comprehensive charter boat directory categorised by region, which provides contact details (and websites where available) for charter boat operators offering sea angling opportunities to tourists and includes information on species caught, price range and min/max number of people they can cater for.

**Information and Advice**

Visit Scotland offers comprehensive information and advice pertaining to the different types of angling opportunities offered across the country which may prove useful to those new to fishing. This includes information on licensing and angling regulations; types of fishing; best times to go fishing; types of species to fish for and equipment required.

Both the Welsh and Scottish system regularly update their websites with live or ‘real time’; information, such as local weather conditions and current river levels, enabling users to make more informed choices about where to fish thereby enhancing the quality of their fishing experience.
Visit Wales

![Visit Wales Website: weather and tides information](image)

Figure 34. Visit Wales Website: weather and tides information

Visit Scotland

![Visit Scotland Website: current river levels information](image)

Figure 35. Visit Scotland Website: current river levels information

Similarly, Visit Wales allow anglers to upload photos of their recent catches and tell their ‘story’ about their catch, thereby making users’ online experience more interactive.
Visit Wales

Figure 36. Visit Wales Website: recent catches

Facilities

When searching for fishing opportunities in Scotland, the System gives users the option to filter searches based according to their specific requirements, including the availability of toilet facilities, rest areas and disabled access at fishing sites. Similarly Visit Wales provides users with information on facilities available at fishing sites by way of a facilities key which may be viewed at the bottom of the page.
Visit Wales

Visit Scotland also provides specific information and advice for disabled anglers, including information on access and equipment requirements as well as a signposting service to disabled angling organisations across the country and a comprehensive list of fisheries that provide suitable access for disabled anglers.

Visit Scotland

Both the Scottish and Welsh system provides a comprehensive list of tackle shops categorised according to region (and interactive map in the case of Visit Wales) with relevant contact details and a direct link to the retailer’s website where this is made available.
Conclusions

Both the Scottish and Welsh systems offer users a comprehensive and consolidated web interface which act as a central point of call for information pertaining to opportunities for angling in their respective regions. This makes it very easy for new and existing anglers to find information on the different kinds of opportunities for angling (i.e. game, coarse or sea), where to find these opportunities and facilities available at fishing sites. This kind of information provision makes it much easier for potential anglers to access information pertaining to angling opportunities that meet their specific needs and therefore serves to create a more inclusive online environment, which may encourage hitherto underrepresented groups to take part in this sport. What is more, opportunities for accessing live or ‘real-time’ information on local conditions, including water levels and weather conditions as well as information/entities, news and events enables users to make more informed choices about where to fish, thereby enhancing the quality of their fishing experience.

It is not only visitors who need good information, domestic anglers will also have an improved experience if they can access information, share information online and through the social media and join online communities of interest. There is also a reputational issue for Northern Ireland more generally – people today simply expect good online information and are intolerant of companies or destinations that don’t provide it.

One of the consultees made the very useful point that an angler who catches a good fish will very quickly be on Facebook telling their friends. The sponsors of this report do not need to set all this action in train themselves; if they can establish a good framework anglers are likely to do the rest. This is an aspect of empowerment and is covered in the next section on governance.

The infrastructure of angling in NI is underdeveloped. The clubs have little capacity to do more than serve the immediate needs of their members for access to stocked water. Providing information and developing online communities is beyond most of them and they will need support and resources. Although they are related we make a distinction between the information needs in respect of tourism, which requires a marketing approach and involves a different set of stakeholders to those related to sport development.

For physically disabled anglers good information is a necessity. If fishing away from their regular site they need to know in advance about the facilities available to them and the hazards they might face so that they can plan appropriately. This also applies to young families and to elderly people.

A constant theme throughout the consultations was that anglers visiting Northern Ireland should be willing to be flexible and to move to where the fishing is good. In
this scenario knowledge of what is available regionally, rather than at a single site, is a valuable asset.

**RECOMMENDATION 29:** That the sponsors of the report develop a mechanism to encourage clubs and other organisations to develop and maintain an online presence both through websites and social media. This mechanism should have two elements: 1) Access to expertise and 2) Development Grants.

Providing good quality, up to date information for disabled anglers should be a priority. We believe that a dedicated person is needed to look in depth at the information already available, see how this fits with the needs of clubs and visitors and develop a more integrated approach for the whole of NI. We advise that this person should have skills in communication and does not need an in-depth understanding of angling.
9. THE GOVERNANCE OF ANGLING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

9.1. Introduction

The Governance of Angling in Northern Ireland is complex. Like any sport or organised activity, angling has its typical architecture of representative bodies, clubs, events, rules and administrative processes. However, because the sport is concerned with the pursuit of often wild aquatic organisms, some of them rare or endangered, the sport of angling is intertwined with the management of water – a crucial resource for all of society – and of aquatic environments and species.

Management of these aquatic environments and resources is highly regulated so that compared to most sports, angling has a whole array of additional legislation and regulation to contend with. Furthermore, the sport is diffuse, carried out at relatively low intensity over very large areas of countryside that is in the ownership of many landowners with diverse objectives.

Water is an important economic resource for wider society in Northern Ireland. The people and organisations responsible for managing water bodies in Northern Ireland have to maintain a difficult balance not only between economic and environmental constraints but also the ownership rights of riparian landowners, the rights of interest groups such as anglers and other users and the broader interest of society in amenity and access.

So, inevitably, there is a large group of stakeholders in angling. In NI, the institutional arrangements are particularly complex because responsibilities are shared in some fields with cross-border bodies. This makes it difficult to delineate responsibilities and allocate resources. This complexity makes decision-making difficult and, as angling is never going to have a priority comparable to that of health, education, crime and the many other contested fields of contemporary politics, it has failed to attract the sustained attention necessary to maintain it as a resource and pastime for the people of Northern Ireland.

Whilst attention has been focused elsewhere, angling in Northern Ireland has fallen into a slow decline. It has become a pastime largely of the middle-aged and elderly with recruitment of new anglers coming from a relatively narrow sector of society. Experience elsewhere in the UK, however, shows that such decline is not inevitable. Also, experience in England shows that the sport should be well able to look after its own affairs given a measured amount of support and development from the NI Government and its Agencies. An energised angling sector in NI should be able to address for itself many of the difficulties it faces.

The complexity outlined above is, in some ways, a distraction rather than a real problem; the Assembly is not going to change, its implementation of the European Habitats Directive or the Water Framework Directive simply to accommodate its anglers. We can set such notions aside and apply a much narrower focus. It is suggested that the way forward is to frame angling within the context of sport development, where the aim is to re-energise the sport through capacity building and collaboration, so that the anglers themselves can promote their interests alongside all the other stakeholders in water and the aquatic environment.
The section draws on information gathered during interviews and consultations with officials and stakeholders, the outputs of a series of surveys undertaken as part of the study and from a wide range of literature.

Reflecting the brief, this section looks first at angling as a sport, covering themes such as the arrangements for governing bodies and the effectiveness of sport development. It then touches on angling as an outdoor activity that fits with the objectives of the Assembly’s policies in this area and as a component of community and social development.

The paper then takes a standard approach to exploring Governance, looking at the legislative framework, identifying the bodies responsible for various areas of legislation and regulation and commenting on their impact on angling. Much of this will be familiar to readers so much of the information is presented graphically. The lead responsibility for angling lies with DCAL, who with the Loughs Agency operates the licensing scheme and permits for fishing on public waters.

There is strong case to invest in capacity-building in game, sea and coarse fishing clubs in Northern Ireland and to facilitate the development of the three governing bodies into organisations have the capacity to develop and administer the sport.
9.2. **Angling as a Sport**

**Is Angling a Sport?**

The UK Sports Councils apply the definition of sport in the Council of Europe’s European Sports Charter 1993, which is:

“Sport means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels.”

Anglers do not perform in front of spectators and they do not engage in intensive physical exertion. The competitive and performance-orientated aspects associated with many sports are not immediately apparent in angling. However, angling delivers many of the high-level strategic objectives of the sport agencies in the UK. In Northern Ireland the national strategy for sport ‘Sport Matters’ has the succinct high-level objective of promoting “A culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport.” Aspirations for sport in NI include:

- a world class start and lifelong involvement in sport,
- physical recreation for all people,
- world class performances by teams and individuals and,
- A sustainable sporting and physical recreation culture that contributes to broader Government objectives.

In terms of participation and lifelong involvement angling ranks with any sport; from young children to those whose sporting activities are constrained by disability or the infirmities of old age angling can be enjoyed by large numbers of people at little expense. Also, people can take up angling at any age. The physical exertion in angling is less intense than more active sports but is sustained for a longer time so that the benefits for physical fitness of participants compares favourably with other sports\(^\text{36,37}\). Not all angling is competitive but opportunities do exist for club anglers to compete at local, national and world levels. For education, community development, the development of social and personal skills in young people and for promoting an understanding of the natural world angling fits well with a wide range of government objectives.

Elsewhere in the UK angling has attracted increasing sport-agency support, particularly in England where it fits with the objectives of increasing participation from across society, continuing and growing levels of participation and opportunities for individuals to develop skills and excel. (The headings are: Grow, Sustain, Excel)

\(^{36}\) Research indicates that anglers in NI spend about 20 days each year fishing. PWC (2007)

The Governance of Angling as a Sport: The Role of Sport NI and the National Governing Bodies.

Sports in the UK are organised through National Governing Bodies (NGBs). These are independent organisations that lead the development and delivery of their sport nationally and locally.

Whilst there is no all-island organisation covering sport, the Irish Sports Council and the Sports Council for Northern Ireland (SCNI) co-operate directly on a number of areas. The areas of co-operation and potential further collaboration are discussed at the All-Island Planning Group, a high level group which include both Chairpersons and Chief Executives. The Group address issues including coaching, high performance, research, strategic planning, and co-ordinating support to governing bodies.

The Angling NGBs in NI are membership organisations each with a number of affiliated clubs at local level. As an example of what NGBs might do, the Angling Trust in England – the single NGB for angling – describes its role so:

“We represent all game, coarse and sea anglers and angling in England. We lobby government, campaign on environmental and angling issues and run national and international competitions. We fight pollution, commercial over-fishing at sea, over-abstraction, poaching, unlawful navigation, local bans and a host of other threats to angling.”

The UK Sports Councils take a joint approach to recognising Governing Bodies. The criteria they use for recognising a Governing Body are set out in Appendix 5. For angling all the recognised bodies in the UK also have responsibility for disabled participation in their sport.

In NI and Scotland the three branches of angling – sea, coarse and game fishing – each has its own representative body. In Wales and England they are merged into a single organisation. In Scotland where the NGB structure is similar to NI, the Government established a Freshwater Fisheries Forum Steering Group (FFFSG) to advise on the production of its national strategy for angling, published in 2008.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>NI</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>Wales</th>
<th>England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Game Fishing</td>
<td>Ulster Angling Federation (UAF)</td>
<td>Scottish Federation Anglers National Association</td>
<td>Federation of Welsh Anglers</td>
<td>The Angling Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea Fishing</td>
<td>Ulster Provisional Council of the Irish Federation of Sea Anglers (UPC-IFSA)</td>
<td>Scottish Federation of Sea Anglers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse Fishing</td>
<td>Ulster Coarse Fishing Federation (UCFF)</td>
<td>Scottish Federation of Coarse Anglers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Angling governing bodies in the UK

In NI the UAF operates solely within Northern Ireland. The other two bodies are linked to all-Ireland organisations: UPC-IFSA is a branch of IFSA - an all-Ireland representative body and UCFF is the provincial council of the National Coarse Fishing Federation of Ireland.

**What is recognition?**

The joint policy statement (2010) by the Sports Councils in the UK states that recognition is a process shared by all five Sports Councils. It determines (a) the organisations that govern recognised sporting and (b) the sporting activities and bodies that the Sports Councils are willing to consider supporting and working with. Recognition is a requirement for many funding streams, but does not in itself bring a right to Sports Council funding.

National Governing Bodies of sport are typically private organisations that govern a particular sport through the common consent of the sport itself. Recognition is an acknowledgement of this situation and does not in itself confer additional authority or rights.

All three of the Angling NGBs in NI meet the criteria for recognition set out by the joint policy statement by the UK sports councils (2010)\(^4\).

Recently the Irish Angling Development Alliance has emerged as an all-Ireland organisation outside the NGB framework. IADA initially focussed on coarse fishing but has recently extended into game and sea fishing.

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What is expected of recognised National Governing Bodies?

At the basic level NGBs are expected to set standards for their sports and to set the rules for competitions. However, the sports councils also expect them to have a vision for the future that serves the whole sport, not only their immediate membership. This includes: ‘... pathways for development for participants, coaches, officials and volunteers and to create links with informal participants’.

The joint policy statement is quite clear on the development role of NGBs. It includes:

- recruitment into the sport, especially of young people;
- co-ordination across the clubs of bids for external funding – often from the Sport Agencies but also more widely;
- the development of facilities
- oversight and support for coaching and training standards;
- co-funding of club-based activities such as competitions;
- promotion of participation by disabled people; and,
- Development of common administrative procedures e.g. Disclosure for club officers working with children and vulnerable people, H&S policy.

The Sports Councils also want NGBs to have a vision for how they will develop themselves and expect them to have a strategy for doing so. A further expectation is that NGBs will promote ethical and legally compliant behaviour among their members - for example in meeting health and safety requirements, ensuring that there are no avoidable barriers to participation, that equality and diversity requirements are met and that clubs that work with young or vulnerable people have disclosure procedures in place.

NGBs are also expected to represent their sport and the views of their members. They are seen by the Sports Councils as representative bodies and they are expected to take an active role in discussions and consultations that impact upon their members and to contribute to policy development.

The Scottish Government's Freshwater Fisheries Forum

In order to develop its strategic framework for freshwater fishing, published in 2009, the Scottish Government established a Freshwater Fisheries Forum's driven by representatives of the many divergent interests in the sector. Chaired by a senior official the forum was able to call upon specialised help where members felt it was necessary. The Strategic Framework document was developed through the Forum and takes into account responses from a public consultation that was undertaken in 2007.
9.3. What did the research show?

The survey indicated that the NGBs for angling are not exercising currently a strong leadership role. In a question in which angling clubs were asked which partners they work with on development the most frequently cited were DCAL, the Loughs Agency and Local Authorities.

Whilst we can infer from the behaviour of the clubs that the NGBs are not seen as the first-stop for development activities there is recognition among the clubs that the NGBs do have a role in sport development.

Figure 39. Angling club partnership with other organisations.

Figure 40. Opinions on the responsibility for the promotion of angling in Northern Ireland.
Missing from this picture is Sport NI, reflecting the fact that until recently angling has been a poor fit with the agency’s high-level objectives, centred on competitive sport, and thus a low priority for the agency. The NI Government’s increasing interest in greater participation in sport, however, makes angling more relevant to current objectives.

This might not, however, be the sole reason. In our interviews it became clear that the NGBs and their member clubs had a low success rate in bidding for funds from various official providers, including Sport NI. There appears to be little experience of successful partnership funding in the majority of clubs, and in discussions with the NGB representatives it was suggested that this was due to a lack of capacity and experience in organisations that depend largely on part-time volunteers.

In terms of development we found that 10% of clubs had no programmes to recruit new members and 25% were taking no action to recruit anglers from disadvantaged or minority groups. Only 66% of clubs had child-protection policies and only 60% had health and safety policies.

Overall, however, clubs were open to recruiting new members and welcomed visitors. We suggest that any failings in administration, and missed opportunities to attract new resources, are to do with capacity in terms of time and training.

**KEY ISSUE:** Compared to their equivalents elsewhere in the UK the NGBs in NI appear not to have the capacity to fully represent their members’ interests, for example UCFF does not have a website independent of the NCFFI.

**KEY ISSUE:** Clubs seem to be making little effort, or are having little success, in applying for grants available from funding agencies to deliver sport and social objectives. We suggest that this is because of capacity constraints.

**KEY ISSUE:** Sport development by the NGBs appears to be low-key. We were given mixed messages on the health of the clubs in terms of maintaining and growing their membership. Growth in participation appears to be happening outside the club system.

**KEY ISSUE:** The developmental and promotional role of the NGBs is not fully understood by the clubs and the NGBs are less active than might be expected in promoting angling and in leading developmental activities.

**KEY QUESTION:** Is the angling sector in NI sufficiently developed to support 3 governing bodies? Would the sport be more strongly represented and developmental activities more strongly resourced if the NGBs collaborated more formally or, indeed, merged.

**KEY QUESTION:** Is there a role for Sport NI in leading a capacity-building initiative to help NGBs and their clubs operate more effectively in representing and developing their sport?

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41 National Coarse Fishing Federation of Ireland
The Angling Trust in England

The Angling Trust is the National Governing Body for Angling in England. The Trust’s Angling Whole Sport Plan 2009 - 2013 secured funding for angling from Sport England on the Sustain and Excel outcomes and from the Environment Agency on Growing Participation. The Trust’s achievements between 2008 and 2011 include:

• Growth from 2 to 13 staff and 5 part-time staff;
• Green rating Sport England business assurance;
• The establishment of 29 County Angling Action Groups;
• Securing £232,000 funding additional to Sport England Funding;
• Attracting 13,000 participants in County and club projects (11,000 under the age of 18);
• The development of a new recognised coaching standard; 1040 new coaches qualified, £75,000 in coach training bursaries;
• Approving 53 ‘Clubmark’-standard angling clubs;
• Organising 86 flagship National Fishing Month events in 2011; and
• Achieving a Sports Satisfaction rating of 85%.

The experience in England where a single governing body covers all aspects of angling. The Angling Trust\(^{42}\) has been successful in attracting resources to develop angling. Source: SUBSTANCE 2012. (Permission sought)

Angling Coaching in NI

Coaching is also addressed in section 8.6 and in recommendations 23 and 24. There are two sides to training – accrediting bodies set and monitor standards whilst awarding bodies provide training and award qualifications to successful participants. Angling coaching in both the UK and in Ireland is remarkably complex with considerable dispute and competition between the various organisations that offer training and award qualifications. The overall picture is that other than in game fishing coaching is informal, or disorganised, with no accreditation available above level 2 – though there has been some attempt to develop higher-level accreditation in the Republic of Ireland.

Looking at current practice in Northern Ireland there are two accreditation routes for coaches.

• Coaching Ireland has an all-island remit. For angling it lists The Angling Council of Ireland as the governing body it works with. Whilst ACI has links with the coarse and sea fishing NGBs in NI it does not appear to have an affiliation with UAF, the game-angling NGB. From their website ACI appear to have offered coaching courses, covering all types of angling in a single qualification, prior to April 2011 but not subsequently.
• Sports Coach UK is the lead sports coaching body in England and works with other UK sports councils to develop high standards of coaching. Whilst it does not provide accreditation its subsidiary 1st4sport Qualifications offers level 1

\(^{42}\) Previously the Angling Development Board
and 2 coaching qualifications in England, these are QCF courses, regulated by Ofqual so are recognised across Europe. Outside England it provides advice on coaching to sports councils. In game angling the Game Angling Instructors Association GAIA focuses on three skill disciplines; single-handed casting, double-handed casting, and fly dressing. Each of these disciplines has two levels of competence; GAIC (Game Angling Instructors Certificate) and APGAI (Advanced Professional Game Angling Instructors). GAIA also operates in the Republic of Ireland.

An important point is that the awards in both the UK and RoI are valid across the EU so, for example, a level 1 or 2 qualification properly accredited and awarded in any EU country are recognised in all counties.

The Scottish Anglers National Association SANA offers a game fishing coaching qualification, the Scottish Game Angler Instructor Certificate (SGAIC) that is acknowledged by APGAI. In coarse and sea fishing training in coaching appears to be generic, based around the National Coaching framework. In England the Angling Trust offers level 1 and 2 courses though 1st4sport. During the consultations it was suggested that the UAF are interested in collaborating more closely with APGAI to establish a UKCC coaching course for game anglers in NI.

**Illustration: Angling Coaching Qualifications in England**

There are two levels of angling coaching qualifications available: the 1st4sport Level 1 Award in Coaching Angling Qualification (L1ACAQ) and the 1st4sport Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Angling (L2CCA). Both qualifications are accredited by the Qualification Curriculum Authority (QCA) (Now the Teaching Trust) and are awarded by a recognised awarding body, 1st4sport Qualifications.

The Professional Anglers Association (PAA) is a representative body for coaches, mostly in coarse and sea fishing. The Salmon and Trout Association (STA) used to offer a qualification STANIC – STA National Instructors Certificate – but this has been subsumed into the GAIA qualifications.

**KEY ISSUE:** the process for accreditation of coaches and the mandate of the awarding organisations in angling coaching in NI is confusing. This might hold back the development of the sport.

**KEY ISSUE:** Coaching and tuition potentially are an opportunity for promoting angling tourism.

**KEY ISSUE:** Outreach to young people requires a much more rigorous approach to disclosure and to safety and also the engagement of people with recognised coaching qualifications.
9.4. **Angling as Outdoor Recreation**

“Our Great Outdoors”, The Draft Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland, identifies a number of relevant strategies adopted by Government or its Agencies. To these we can add the recent Sport strategy for NI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Department / Sponsor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Our Passion, Our Place” - the NIEA strategic priorities 2012 - 2022</td>
<td>Northern Ireland Environment Agency</td>
<td>DoE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020.”</td>
<td>Northern Ireland Tourist Board</td>
<td>DETI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A Fitter Future for all - Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022”.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>DHSSPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Shaping our Future” The Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>DRD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy - People and Place”</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>DSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Sport Matters’</td>
<td>Sport NI</td>
<td>DCAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8: Strategies of Government Organisations Supporting the NI Outdoor Recreation Initiative**

The relevance of angling to these strategies derives from the following factors:

- Angling takes place outdoors and is a means of incentivising large number of people to undertake outdoor activity;
- Angling is accessible to people of all ages and social groups, it is relatively inexpensive and participants can take up the sport at any stage in their lives;
- Angling can be a social activity and help young people in particular develop not only team skills but also build confidence and self-reliance;
- Angling has strong educational benefits, placing people directly into the natural world and requiring them to develop an understanding of a natural environment;
- It is appropriate and relatively easily accessed by participants with both physical and mental disabilities.

There are indications that angling contributes to health through improved physical fitness – linked to the duration rather than intensity of activity – and to mental health linked to the restorative effects of time spent in outdoor and natural environments.
Forest School has its roots in Finland after the war, when children were often taught outdoors because of a shortage of schools. Today Forest Schools are found across the UK. Children are taken outdoors on a regular, usually weekly, basis to work together on tasks that require collaboration and organisation. An evaluation by the New Economic Foundation showed great improvements in children who had difficulty socialising or displayed poor behaviour at school.

An Angling School would be a perfect alternative to the Forest School referred to above.

There is no doubt that angling contributes towards Assembly objectives in social and community policy. However, for these purposes angling is a means to an end and not in itself a special tool for delivering social objectives. Walking, cycling and most outdoor sports will have similar benefits so that angling should be considered when it is particularly appropriate – for example because of location or the suitability of angling for a particular group – for example disabled people.

For angling itself the purpose of engaging or presenting itself as an opportunity for meeting social objectives is, essentially, a mechanism for driving and broadening recruitment and long-term retention of participants in the sport. For the agencies involved in supporting angling the aim should be to facilitate access to angling organisations and programmes by bodies charged with delivering social policy.
9.5. The Institutional Framing of Angling in Northern Ireland

As described in the introduction, angling is subject to a range of environmental legislation and also by UK-wide acts covering topics such as diversity and equality, child protection and health and safety. It is also influenced by a number of all-Ireland and cross-border arrangements. The brief for this study emphasises the opportunities for angling to contribute to social policy, which extends the range of stakeholders to include the departments, for Education, Health, Justice and Community and Social Development. The aim here is to map out the relevant statues and the Government organisations that have a role in angling. After covering both official and voluntary all-Island organisations the section covers cross-border bodies then departments of the NI Assembly and their agencies. It then covers a range of relevant statues.

All Ireland Bodies

In addition to the all-Ireland bodies listed below there is a strong tradition of collaboration between institutions in the two jurisdictions. Relevant to angling is the collaboration between the Irish Sports Council and the Sports Council for Northern Ireland. Areas of co-operation and potential further collaboration are discussed at the All-Island Planning Group, a high level group which include both Chairpersons and Chief Executives. The Group addresses issues including coaching, high performance, research, strategic planning, and co-ordinating support of governing bodies. The Coaching Strategy for Ireland was been developed in partnership with the Irish Sports Council (ISC) and Sport Northern Ireland (Sport NI).

Official Bodies:

Tourism Ireland is the all-Ireland body with responsibilities most relevant to Angling. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee that was established under the framework of the Belfast Agreement of Good Friday 1998. It is responsible in overseas markets for promoting tourism across the whole of Ireland and operates under the auspices of the North/South ministerial Council through the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in the South. Tourism Ireland works with the two tourist boards on the island, Fáilte Ireland and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, who are responsible for product and enterprise development and marketing to tourism consumers within the island of Ireland.

Coaching Ireland, based in the University of Limerick, has the lead role in the development of coaching in Ireland on an all-island basis. The main objectives of Coaching Ireland are to raise standards, lead the development of coaching and work with NGBs on sport development.

Voluntary / Third sector Bodies:

The National Coarse Fishing Federation of Ireland (NCFFI) is the management body for all coarse anglers in the north and the south of Ireland whether as club members or as individual anglers. UCFF, the governing body for angling in NI is a provincial council of NCFFI. NCFFI is a member of the Angling Council for Ireland.
The Irish Federation of Sea Anglers (IFSA) represents the interests of sea anglers in the North and South of Ireland. The Ulster Council of IFSA is the recognised governing body for sea angling in NI. IFSA is a member of the Angling Council for Ireland.

The Angling Council for Ireland (ACI) suggests on its website that it is the recognised governing body for five different branches of the sport of angling throughout the island of Ireland namely, Sea Angling, Coarse Angling, Pike (game) Angling, Trout Angling, Salmon and Sea Trout Angling. Whilst the Northern Ireland NGBs for sea and coarse fishing are members of ACI, ACI is not recognised as a NI NGB in its own right. UAF, the NGB for game fishing in NI is not a member of ACI. ACI organises coaching courses accredited through Coaching Ireland using European accreditation procedures that apply also in NI.

The Trout Anglers Federation of Ireland (TAFI) also claims Governing Body status for all Ireland, in this case for game fishing, where its provincial council, the Ulster Angling Council, is claimed to represent game fishing in NI. It doesn’t – this role is taken by UAF – but it does organise competitions in Northern Ireland. TAFI was a member of ACI until late 2011 when it rescinded its membership, leaving the governance of game fishing in the republic of Ireland in an ambiguous state.

Volunteering in Northern Ireland

In addition to the angling-specific bodies above there is a well developed infrastructure to support volunteering in Ireland, much of it organised on an all-Island basis.

![Volunteering infrastructure in Northern Ireland](image)

Figure 41. Volunteering infrastructure in Northern Ireland

**Diagrammatic Representations of how volunteering support is organised in NI**

The governance of angling in NI is so complex that any attempt to explain it in words would quickly leave the reader bewildered. The diagrams that form part of this report attempt to set out the responsibilities of the various agencies and departments in diagrammatic form.
North-South Implementation Bodies (Cross Border Bodies)

There are six North South Bodies that operate on an all-island basis. All operate under the overall policy direction of the North South Ministerial Council, with clear accountability lines back to the Council and to the Oireachtas and the Northern Ireland Assembly. Two are relevant to Angling.

Waterways Ireland

- Recreational use of the waterways
- Competitions
- Outreach and Education
  - disabled facilities
  - Children and schools
- Promotion
  - can promote overseas - e.g. competitions, cruising.

Loughs Agency (Cross-Border Body)

- Rod Licenses
- State Fisheries - Freshwater
  - Permits
- Marine
  - Competitions
- Tourism
  - Grant scheme
  - Can promote overseas
- Outreach
  - Enforcement of protection and management measures in 1966 act.
  - Delivery of & Fulfil Obligations, reporting to DCAL
- Fisheries Officers

Figure 42. Diagram of cross border bodies in Northern Ireland.

WaterWays Ireland

Has responsibility for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of specified inland navigable waterways principally for recreational purposes.
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (consisting of two Agencies i.e. The Loughs Agency and Lights Agency)

The Loughs Agency has responsibility for the promotion and development of Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough for commercial and recreational purposes in respect of marine, fishery and aquaculture matters. The Lights Agency was intended to deal with marine navigation and is not relevant to Angling.

Northern Ireland Assembly Departments, Agencies and Statutes

The devolved institutions in Northern Ireland are constituted under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, with several institutional reforms having taken place since then. Angling is completely devolved. Whilst some of the legislation that impacts upon angling is UK or Europe-wide, for example EU directives on water, nitrates, habitats and species protection, the Assembly has varying degrees of discretion in the implementation of such legislation. The main international convention affecting angling is the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) that was adopted by the UK in 1992. This applies across the UK and its implementation is complex. NI, as part of the UK, is also party to the NASCO agreements relating to salmon conservation.

DCAL and Sport NI

DCAL is the lead department for angling. It is responsible for the 1996 Fisheries Act, has a policy role that encompasses the Loughs Agency areas and manages public fisheries. Outside the area administered by the Loughs Agency it operates the rod licensing scheme and also the permits scheme for its own fisheries. Through its sponsorship of Sport NI it is also responsible for angling as a sport.

Following the Public Authorities (Reform) Bill [NIA 19/07 the Fisheries Conservancy Board, an executive body that was responsible for the conservation and protection of the salmon and inland fisheries outside the LA areas, was merged with the inland fisheries branch of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and its functions transferred to DCAL in 2008.

\*43 In strict terms the area administered by the Loughs Agency of the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission
Article 4 of the Fisheries (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 amended the procedures for developing derelict waters, which are waters where it is impossible to establish or trace the owners of the fishing rights. The provisions empowered DARD to develop derelict waters or to authorise an approved developer to develop the waters in accordance with a scheme submitted to and approved by the department. These powers are now exercised by DCAL.
DARD

DARD was responsible for inland fisheries prior to their transfer to DCAL. Today its activities remain highly relevant to angling. It is responsible for the NI rural development programme that provides support for rural businesses, such as accommodation on farms. For the marine environment it is responsible for Fisheries, Aquaculture & Vessel Licences. It sponsors the Rivers Agency that is responsible for Flood alleviation and for drainage and drainage maintenance programmes. It sponsors AFBI, which is the repository of scientific expertise in fisheries and it sponsors the Loughs Agency in NI.
Department of the Environment and the Environment Agency

DoE influences angling through its sponsorship of the Environment Agency (EA), which is responsible for management of water both as a resource and as a habitat. It regulates many activities that impact directly on angling, such as abstraction, and its responsibility for river basin management plans mean that it has a strategic role if not for angling then certainly for the resource upon which angling depends.

In an Assembly debate on 18th October 2011 relating to a pollution incident on Sixmilewater River MLAs argued that the Environment Agency lacked capacity to enforce environmental legislation and, paraphrasing Member’s contributions, it was applying a ‘light touch’ in its enforcement duties. In the debate MLAs stated that in addition to acute polluting incidents from industry diffuse pollution from domestic
septic tanks, from agriculture and from urban and road run-off was damaging aquatic habitats. MLAs commented on the complex responsibilities spread across Assembly departments for managing and regulating water bodies.

**Figure 47. Department of environment responsibilities for managing and regulating water bodies**

**KEY ISSUE:** The issues of pollution and enforcement of legislation has been forcibly drawn to our attention as part of the consultation. The representations made to us echo those made by MLA’s as part of the Assembly debate referred to above. The lack of capacity of the Agency and the complexities of responsibilities appear, (from the anecdotal evidence put to us) to be having a detrimental effect on angling.

**Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry (DETI)**

DETI has three areas of operation relevant to angling. It sponsors the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, it is responsible for economic development and it has the policy lead for the third sector including social enterprise.
Department of Justice (DoJ)

DoJ is included here because rehabilitation and young offenders are covered in the brief for the study. DoJ does not impact upon angling directly but is in a position to make use of angling to meet its own objectives and in so doing it is likely to assist with recruitment of young people into the sport and also assist with capacity-building among clubs and NGBs. Across the UK there are several examples where offenders have been deployed in outdoor activity with very positive outcomes in terms of personal development and re-offending. A number of case studies are included in the section of this report dealing with participation.
Key Statutes and Regulations

1966 Fisheries Act Lead Department DCAL
DCAL is the policy lead in respect of the 1966 act whilst implementation and enforcement is divided territorially with the Loughs Agency though the Agency has its own enabling legislation (see below). The activities covered by the act are summarised in the figure below.

A Sketch of the 1966 Fisheries Act

DCAL responsible for policy & enforcement is split with the Loughs Agency. (NOTE: DCAL has sole responsibility throughout NI for policy relating to salmon.)
The Act bestows powers for the acquisition of easements to allow access to anglers to fish on publicly owned waters.

**Foyle Acts and Fisheries Order: Lead Department: DARD / Loughs Agency**

The Foyle Fisheries 1952 Act and subsequent Act and Order of 2007 is similar to the 1966 Act in the ground that it covers.

![Figure 50. Foyle Fisheries Act, 1952, 2007 & Fisheries Order 2007](image)

**NASCO Measures**: Lead Department: DCAL

NI, through the UK and EU, is a Party to commitments made to NASCO, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation. Northern Ireland's Atlantic salmon management strategy is aligned to the agreement reached by NASCO and its Parties to adopt and apply a Precautionary Approach to the conservation, management and exploitation of the salmon resource and the environments in which it lives. The national (UK-NI) management strategy is based on the application of that approach consistent with the 3 main NASCO agreements which address:

1. Fishery management
2. Protection and restoration of habitat
3. Aquaculture, introductions and transfers, and transgenics (including diseases and parasites)

The strategy utilises datasets and reportstrends compiled from work undertaken up to and including 2007. This provides the baseline against which to monitor and report progress in implementing the management approach. The most recent implementation plan was submitted in 2013, IP (13)10. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has overall policy responsibility to ensure implementation of the strategy.

The Department liaises with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) which has responsibilities for aquaculture and fish health matters and with the Department of Environment (DOE) and its agency, the Environment and Heritage Service, which deal with broader water quality matters.

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44 Text adapted from the Implementation Plan – European Union – UK (Northern Ireland)
Coarse Fishing Byelaws, the European Eel Regulation, Water Framework Directive: Lead Department DoE

Conclusions: that can be drawn from the above are that responsibility for angling-related matters scattered across a wide range of institutions in Northern Ireland. For some of these bodies angling is an awkward fit with their core responsibilities and the linkage to the sport might not be a priority to time-pressed officials embedded in processes where there is no recognisable mandate to take account of the needs of angling activity. An example of joining-up that would benefit angling is DARD’s Rural Development Programme. This could be a key resource to develop angling tourism and the department has a direct role in recreational sea angling through its responsibilities for the marine environment. DCAL is responsible for stocking waters in Northern Ireland and contracts AFBI as a source of scientific expertise and advice that is a key resource for angling opportunities in Northern Ireland.

Even where officials do understand their potential role in any angling review it has proved difficult to understand the decision-making processes and responsibilities. Things are clearest when angling is categorised as a sport, but this gives little access to those who are responsible for the environmental and resource management processes in NI.
The two key organisations for angling in NI – DCAL and the Loughs Agency – historically have acted relatively independently and there appears to have been a lack of joint initiatives at the practical, rather than policy level. In both organisations fisheries management is seen as the key priority with conservation and fisheries science rather than recreation attracting the bulk of resources.

Angling would benefit greatly from closer co-ordination between departments and agencies in NI. Departments and agencies do not all fully appreciate the impact of their role in respect of angling.

RECOMMENDATION 30: That an officers group should be established within Government to bring together officials from each of the agencies and departments, including cross-border bodies that co-report to the Assembly, that have responsibilities that impact upon angling. We suggest that this should be chaired by an officer of sufficient seniority to endow the group with the status necessary to keep the participants engaged over time and should be independent of the organisations with a statutory responsibility for angling.

RECOMMENDATION 31: That formal membership of the officers group should be restricted to representatives of statutory bodies, so that policy matters and political concerns can be discussed openly.

NB. The establishment of an officers group under “Chatham-House” rules, with other interests attending on an invited basis the model of operation of the Countryside Recreation Network.

KEY ISSUE: Historically and currently official bodies responsible for various aspects of fisheries have concentrated on conservation rather than recreational aspects, despite the potentially high economic value of domestic angling and the part it can play in health and wellbeing.

In respect of tourism, angling in NI is under-developed and takes place almost in the absence of support and promotion from the two tourism bodies. Angling cannot be promoted to overseas visitors without a domestic infrastructure to support them during their stay. It is to the credit of the Loughs Agency and Waterways Ireland that they have applied their mandate to support recreation in a way that attracts overseas visitors, for example through fishing competitions and providing good quality information.

The current arrangements for angling tourism need to be re-energised. The key markets for angling tourism are Britain and Europe but promoting NI to these markets – the responsibility of Tourism Ireland – requires the development not only of a domestic infrastructure but also promotion in ‘overseas’ journals and attracting journalists from media that actually are read by most domestic anglers. Visitors from the Republic of Ireland spend no more or less than domestic anglers and are a distraction rather than an opportunity for the promotion of angling tourism. RoI is not a priority market for angling in NI.

KEY ISSUE: Promotion of the angling product in Northern Ireland to overseas visitors is ineffective and appears to have slipped between the fingers of Tourism Ireland.
**KEY ISSUE:** Representation of NI angling at overseas trade shows lacks coordination. Individual agencies and organisations appear to attend as and when they think fit. The journalists and some of the anglers we talked to spoke of competing messages and there appears to be no unified strategy for promoting NI angling.

Whilst the Republic of Ireland has been promoted successfully over many years as an angling destination this has resulted in little or no spill-over of visitors to NI. Our discussions with angling journalists supported this view, indeed even in the Republic of Ireland there are complaints that angling promotion is concentrated on the Western Loughs and the Shannon catchment and achieves little for other areas. In our view angling in NI cannot be promoted effectively as part of a generic all-island promotional activity. NI needs a promotional programme that is specific not just to Northern Ireland but to specific geographical opportunities in NI and tailored to the opportunities and constraints that operate there.

Whilst events such as Waterways Ireland’s ‘Classic’, Pike and current ‘World Lures’ events are promoted effectively these are one-off events rather than part of an integrated promotional programme that maintains a sustained presence in the market.

In the absence of a unifying touristic programme – domestic and more widely – the various organisations with a role in angling have taken independent action, this includes local authorities, to promote angling and recreation within their particular mandate. The result is that the user is presented with a complicated mix of information and that resources are diluted through replication rather than addition.

**KEY ISSUE:** NI needs a promotional programme for angling that is specific to Northern Ireland and tailored to the opportunities and constraints that operate there.

**KEY ISSUE:** A more joined-up approach by TI, NITB, Loughs Agency, DCAL and Waterways Ireland would yield benefits for tourism

In respect of representation of anglers and angling clubs the ambiguity and competing claims over which bodies do or do not represent their sport is unhelpful. Sport NI is the arbiter here and should make its position clear. Whether angling in NI needs such a complex representational architecture is open to question. Also open to question is whether minor subsidiaries of all-island representational bodies are an appropriate means of meeting the particular needs of their members in NI. One could argue that angling would be supported more effectively if it spoke with a more co-ordinated voice within Northern Ireland.

The governing bodies currently recognised by Sport NI appear to be meeting the day to day needs of their members but from the perspective of sport development they are not proactive. They lack the capacity to take their sport forward. The representation of women and young people in the sport is a key failing and this is partly because there are no effective outreach programmes in place. The NGBs do seem willing to take on these challenges but cannot do so without help.

Common to all of the consultation meetings was a sense that the anglers welcomed the opportunity to meet each other to discuss common issues.
**RECOMMENDATION 32:** There should be a person appointed to lead the development of angling as a sport in NI. An officer should be jointly funded by the partners to the review and hosted by Sport NI in order to have access to departmental and agency officials as a fellow public servant and to be answerable as a public servant. This person should have expertise in sport development and knowledge of angling should not be a pre-requisite.

**KEY ISSUE:** In the consultations the issue of greater collaboration between the three governing bodies was explored in some detail. Anglers were keen to see this and there was a significant voice calling for a single governing body. Although this is not recommended a structure akin to the Scottish model, of an angling forum supported by DCAL, should be explored.

**RECOMMENDATION 33:** An angling forum is established in Northern Ireland that provides an interface between the governing bodies and the Government and also an opportunity for dialogue and collaboration between the three Governing Bodies to be led by Sport NI. We suggest that such a forum should have a senior status and be seen as a representative voice for anglers in NI.

**KEY ISSUE:** To varying degrees the NGBs lack capacity to develop the sport strategically. A more unified approach combined with a capacity-building programme for clubs and NGBs would be of value.

The coaching arrangements for angling are opaque and complex. Whilst game fishing is relatively well served by GAIA the infrastructure for coarse and sea fishing coaching is much less developed. There is competition between different organisations and a variety of routes to accreditation and the awarding of qualifications. Generic coaching qualifications are offered often, rather than qualifications specific to a particular activity. These generic coaching qualifications are at a very low level – 1 & 2 – that are more appropriate for hobbies than a recognised sport. Aspirations by the various organisations to offer higher level courses do not appear to have been realised in any significant way.

**KEY ISSUE:** Coaching arrangements require greater clarity and leadership from Sport NI.
10. NEXT STEPS

Angling is a popular sport in Northern Ireland but it is largely invisible. There is a feeling that angling has been off the radar; many of the authorities have focused on their responsibilities for conservation and protection and administering their own affairs - there has been a lack of a joined up approach!

This report has identified the social, educational and community benefits of angling. It has explored the issues associated with access to information, the difficulties faced by the tourism industry in marketing and promotion to visitors and those of governance of the activity. These issues need to be addressed to help to inform new approaches to support the development of angling and encouraging increased participation both as a means of helping underrepresented groups to get involved and to promote Northern Ireland as a tourist destination for angling with the associated economic benefits that will accrue.

There are many examples of good practice across organisations in Northern Ireland who are doing excellent work to promote the sport and address the issues that have been identified. Supporting work with young people to introduce them to angling and then to maintain that involvement is absolutely vital for the future of the activity.

The need for a co-ordinated programme to promote angling is paramount, to raise awareness of the opportunities and to maximise the potential. A number of issues arise from the current arrangements for the governance of the sport and the respective roles of the public and voluntary sector that need to build links between the many agencies involved and develop partnerships with other government agendas to explore joint interests, e.g. health and justice.

There is a need for infrastructure to support the development and growth of angling, a need to build capacity of clubs, with selected centres focusing on coaching and the need for financial assistance to support initiatives to address the issues.

The consultation on the issues raised in an interim report presented to the Steering Group have been amplified and prioritised by the responses to the consultation which ran for a 6 week period from the middle of May to the 14th June. A wide range of individual anglers, representatives of clubs and other stakeholders have contributed to the process of shaping the findings of this report for which there is broad consensus. It is now for the Steering Group to consider the report and accept or reject its findings and the recommendations which will then become the basis for developing a strategic action plan owned by the partners which will become the focus for the way forward. Although not part of the brief for this study it is our view that the action plan needs to be time limited and to identity clear targets and responsibilities for determining the way forward through which all of those who have committed considerable time and knowledge to the process will benefit.
### Appendix 1

**Stage 1 Consultations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Nature of Consultation</th>
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APPENDIX 2

List of Organisations Directly Receiving the Questionnaire Electronically or Contacted by the Consultants by telephone to complete a Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Angling Clubs</th>
<th>Angling Businesses</th>
<th>Local Authorities</th>
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<td>Downpatrick &amp; District Angling Club</td>
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<td>Get Hooked</td>
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<td>Enniskillen Angling Club</td>
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APPENDIX 3

Angling Issues from Stage 1 Consultations undertaken (Suggestions made for improvements in italics)

NITB and Sport Northern Ireland to do something together and fund a development officer for angling.

Participation

1. Not always acknowledged as distinctive from other sports, potential to play a key role in getting people active, particularly those who might otherwise fall outside of ‘mainstream’ sports participation.
2. Provides opportunities for activity for the less able that many other sports do not
3. Needs to be understood in relation to the ability of participant
4. Helps keep or encourage people to be active later in life
5. Provides sustained duration of physical activity
6. Provides opportunities for green exercise.
7. Whilst angling delivers key sports participation outcomes, by analysing angling participation within a rigid sports/exercise framework, many of the benefits that come from participation are unrecognised within formal funding structures and assessments.
8. Angling is one of the few sports where individuals with very different characteristics and abilities can genuinely compete on similar terms against each other but this is not often recognised.
9. Angling is poor at accounting for participation; at monitoring and evaluating impact and at demonstrating how it meets sports based outcomes.
10. Can be used as a tool to improve education, anti-social behaviour, health and environmental outcomes potential to deliver significant outcomes across a range of important social agendas not always recognised.
11. Angling is considered somewhat sceptically as a ‘sport’ – usually based on ill-defined assumptions about physical activity levels
12. Potential to facilitate participation and interaction among a diverse range of individuals and groups not always understood.
13. Evidence suggests that angling can contribute towards helping to divert young people away from anti-social behaviour and build social cohesion but potential not realised.
14. Can be used as a tool to enable learning. This specially relates to using angling as a way of promoting learning about wildlife and the environment but not part of school curriculum.
15. Research in England and Wales on sea angling has also outlined the health benefits that can be gained from participation in the sport. 83% of the respondents indicated that they felt some or significant positive effects and of these, 44.6% indicated a significant positive impact on health but is that acknowledged by health sector in NI?
16. Range of initiatives to increase angling participation and the social benefits of angling, but there is no co-ordination of these activities at a national level.
17. Angling governing bodies are not good at broadening the base of participation which is the basis on which development is funded and links are not well made with the social and community benefits angling can deliver.
18. Barriers to participation include: not knowing what to do; not having equipment; not having someone to go fishing with; not being able to access fishing locations.
19. There are examples of the Department of Justice supporting angling
20. Club membership in sea angling, coarse fishing and game fishing – is declining and the average age of anglers, at least of club anglers, is increasing. (However, this is anecdotal rather than supported by data at present.)
21. With regard to the home market every youth will dabble in fishing at some point but lack of proper support and coaching often means they don't try it a second time.
22. I have recently completed level 1 1st4 Sport Angling Coach at my own expense after trying to get on the course for over a year. Have now found out it could be next year before level 2 will be run in Northern Ireland!
23. We are overbooked most days and could easily grow to a 2nd boat.
24. Angling clubs can be protectionist of outside influence.
25. The sport is failing to attract new young participants due to lack of coaching and restrictions while working with young people.
26. The club has a very successful, well supported coaching programme for juniors, the only drawback is that the fishing on most of the venues is so poor it puts off the young anglers. If we had a purpose built fishery well stocked with coarse fish and on site facilities, we would be much more successful.

Suggested Improvements to Increase Participation

- An Angling development fund. DCAL do have a water-sports fund and angling clubs can bid into but there has been limited take up so far.
- Angling needs to be re-introduced into schools (schools cup is currently run and needs to be reinforced) – also mentioned by IADA.
- Examples of what works esp. from the South of Ireland.
- During the week there is capacity for the public angling estate to be used for community and social purposes.
- Angling taster sessions run by local authorities need to be followed up and links made to clubs if they are to be effective.
- There is potential to build a business around training. (How about an all Ireland training opportunity?) Loughs Agency has a grants fund that can support training.
- The professional angling association PAA http://www.paaauk.com/ teach children about the environment as well as how to fish – they teach also coarse fishing.
- Develop a fishing Academy – Tollymore?
- The benefits of angling as a means of community capacity building with little distinction made between people in respect of their values and affiliations needs to be better understood there is great potential especially shore fishing.
- Combine fishing instruction with cooking of fish and associated activities, rather than just the taking of fish.
- Promotion of the sport in women’s magazines with coaching and taster days
- DCAL to work with Health Service/Local Councils to provide taster sessions
- Reduced rates, teaching opportunities for working with young people
- Links with Disabled Sport NI
- More taster days are required to be put in place by Governing Bodies. Free Coaching would be of great help.
- Coming into schools and giving demos etc. Local authorities could help promote all types of angling on what facilities they have.
- In our club six junior anglers who have been selected for Ireland at World Championships level in 2013 because we have a development ethos.
- A purpose built fishery facility would greatly enhance the success of our programme.
- All juveniles should be able to join any club at the same price, or for free for the first year.
- Local authorities should keep stocking levels at a set amount per stocking. Tackle prices can be expensive for those starting out, especially juveniles.
- More promotion for all types of angling is required throughout N.I. Equipment should be made available for helping with taster events.
- Angling Course during Newry and Mourne Summer Scheme
- Web Site Fly Tying Classes Coaching Youth development

**Marketing and Promotion**

1. An inquiry in 2001 by the Northern Ireland Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee into inland fisheries outlined the potential for development but not realised.
2. PWC report recommended NITB give consideration to developing a strategy that increases the promotion of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination for anglers but not developed;
3. Lack of clarity about which Agency should take responsibility for the promotion of angling
4. There is at present a lack of information and marketing of opportunities;
5. Too many voices promoting angling another much more strategic approach was needed and that things needed to be more integrated.
6. NITB class domestic and visitor participants all as “visitors” – so whilst the marketing might differ the offer to both groups is the same.

Strategic Review of Angling
7. In respect of tourism one could say that angling is almost invisible. DCAL attends shows and undertakes other promotional activity but this is very ad hoc and there is a lack of consistent marketing/promotion.

8. Northern Ireland cannot be "sold" on its own – it has to be part of an all-Ireland approach but very few of overseas visitors come to the north.

9. There is little real time information i.e. webcams so anglers know when to go fishing.

10. Trout fishing in the Loughs Agency areas are under utilised (this probably applies to Northern Ireland generally).

11. Too many voices promoting angling another much more strategic approach is needed and things needed to be more integrated.

12. Many anglers report difficulty in finding our fishing, either via NITB or other sources.

13. NITB website is the main channel for angling tourists coming to NI, and it is currently not fit for purpose.

14. I believe it is how this information is portrayed is the issue. I don’t believe the country is marketing itself properly to attract the tourist to the sport.

15. All my marketing/promotion costs have been financed by myself with no assistance whatsoever in startup grants etc.

16. Angling is not promoted in Northern Ireland like it is done in the South of Ireland or Scotland. Fermanagh being the exception.

17. There is an abundance of information, but a lot of it is confusing and out of date.

18. Angling has not been promoted by the Tourist Board and Sport NI ignored the sport.

19. DCAL still seem only interested in promoting the Public Angling Estate at the expense of all other fisheries.

20. Information is not very joined up - there are various sites but they can be hard to find.

21. There are very few Brochures or Info available on Sea Angling in NI.

22. The information provided is mainly restricted to DCAL Waters, and biased towards game angling.

23. The majority of quality coarse fisheries are privately owned or managed and not coordinated in terms of promotion.

24. Department waters have been decimated by the human/animal predators, poor restocking programmes and no on site management.

25. The information on the DCAL web site about angling on Lough Erne is inaccurate and often misleading as it was prepared by someone who was not aware of some of the restrictions that exist on the lake i.e. use of ground bait and maggots in the Lower lake and the restrictions imposed on access to islands during the nesting season for protected birds. That a game fishing licence and permit is required for all fishing from a boat within the game fishery.

Suggested Marketing/Promotion Improvements

- There is a need to determine the USP for angling in the North and to be clear on the angling product.

- There is a need to demonstrate the benefits that angling can bring.

- Loughs Agency has an Events fund for angling or marine tourism; this could be used to fund competitions and can be paid annually. Additionally is not a major concern.
- DARD is responsible for the rural development programme and this is an opportunity for angling tourism.

- The Tourism Development Scheme funds capital projects.

- The Tourism Innovation Fund can fund development activities such as feasibility studies, the introduction of media platforms and apps, product development.

- The events fund of NITB could be used to support angling competitions—perhaps helping with media and publicity.

- Fermanagh has the biggest concentration of Gillies and guides in angling. (A possibility for 'LEARN TO' holidays?)

- Baronscourt in County Tyrone [http://barons-court.com/sporting-breaks-in-northern-ireland/pike-fishing/](http://barons-court.com/sporting-breaks-in-northern-ireland/pike-fishing/) is a good example of an integrated approach where they offer a range of outdoor experiences including pike and salmon fishing but also holiday lets and high-quality food sales.

- Combine fishing instruction with cooking of fish and associated activities, rather than just the taking of fish.

- Promotion of the sport in women’s magazines with coaching and taster days.

- Promotion of the relaxing and therapeutic aspects of the sport.

- Angling clubs should get help and assistance to promote themselves at UK and Irish Game fairs like the CLA or Scottish.

- TV film series.

- Consider there should be links on all official guides to angling club websites.

- Northern Ireland Tourist Board has good advertisement in where to go to fish. Would like to see a website where all rivers and lakes are named and a few photos and a bit of info about each venue.

- Although information can be gained from websites on how to access DCAL waters, this tends to be vague and out of date, there needs to be more detail about species available and the better pegs available at the venue. The information needs to be current.

- **All fisheries need promoted as a NI resource.**

- The only real source of information to visiting anglers would probably only be local knowledge or else Google.

- Local angling reports i.e. Banbridge angling club have a good website and regularly updated
If a website were to be made available on all northern waters with information on each river or lake with contacts for people to be able to ask a question before their visit would be invaluable?

Facilities Information and Advice

1. Confusion among the public about where to turn to for information and advice, the rules and regulations controlling angling, what coaching qualifications mean and ultimately how to get into fishing.
2. There is a lack of information on the potential to increase the utilisation of existing resources and opportunities, with their capacity for exploitation.
3. There is a lack of information on the potential for the development of new locations and opportunities for sustainable angling for specific species sectors.
4. There is a lack of information on the potential for increasing angling opportunities for commercial enterprises.
5. There is a lack of comprehensive information about angling opportunities.
6. There is a perception that access to fishing is limited in some places particularly at the coast because of conflicts with commercial fishing.
7. Barriers to participation include not being able to access fishing locations.
8. Lack of participation by disabled people is due to the lack of suitable access and facilities.
9. Can’t travel to venue on their own, particularly when fisheries are located out of towns.
10. Poor disability provision and lack of toilet facilities for women.
11. Lack of local provision.
12. Difficulty of accessing marine fishing locations.
13. Poor fish stocks.
14. There is a lack of information on how people can access the outdoors – rights and responsibilities, range of activities.
15. There is a need for a spatial plan to provide opportunities to meet the needs of communities (Down Council example).
16. Lack of zoning of water areas to provide for different types of activity.
17. From the anglers perspective DCAL fishing venues provide good quality fishing and are good value.
18. Currently slipways aren’t maintained or their design is unsuitable for modern practice.
19. The biggest issue in Northern Ireland is access to the water - that is access across land to get to the fishery, not permission to fish.
20. Perceived lack of fish stocks is the most important obstacle to getting more people fishing.
21. Knowledge of where to go to get good fishing, with good facilities, is next most important.
22. The only real source of information to visiting anglers would probably only be local knowledge or else Google.

Suggested Facilities Information and Access Improvements

- Loughs Agency has funding for Capital spending – for example on styles, bank access, car parking, and fishing stands.
- Disabled facilities – to get people onto and off boats and allow them to move around whilst on the boat and also facilities for shore fishing or pier fishing.
- Design guidance on slipways.
- Managing rather than banning fishing – a "fishing welcome" attitude.
- Provision of better bank and boat fishing facilities suitable for the disabled.
- Most of the advice is collated and written by civil servants etc. and is spread over many Gov. and local council websites. This needs to be coordinated and made available in user-friendly language.
- Single point of contact for information offering a comprehensive overview of angling. Sea, coarse, specimen, Lough and river should all have sections. Detailed knowledge can then be offered by angling clubs, councils etc.
- Portrush has no wheelchair access to boats. Council will not build any.
- Discussions about needs and grants for enhanced facilities.
- Better access is required.
- Derry City Council are willing to work in partnership with angling groups and others to secure external funding to put access and angling infrastructure in place.
- Greater access to water i.e. Loughmacrory Lough,
- The key is working with key stakeholders who have good local knowledge and understanding to provide a high quality facility.
- Investment and funding is required for clubs to consider developing and managing their own waters.
- Only game anglers are listened to because they raise the greatest amount in licence fees.
- My club is family orientated, we provide safe places for angling where camping, toilets and coaching are available, and we manage our venues very well. This integrated approach offers opportunities for families.

**Governance**

1. Confusion among angling clubs and fisheries about the required measures to protect young and vulnerable people which can deter them from offering activities for new anglers.
2. Lack of junior angling clubs and coaching events.
3. Clubs too dominated by match fishing and competitions.
4. Fishing and fisheries are not always welcoming to family groups.
5. The cost of participation is a barrier to young people, particularly at the threshold between junior and adult ages (the combined cost of Rod Licence fees, adult fees for club membership and adult day water charges that may be prohibitive for those turning 16).

6. Cost of fishing is prohibitive.

7. Confusion in legislation is a key issue and the lack of clarity between DCAL and DOE responsibilities is a key issue.

8. Licensing and permit systems are too complex.

9. Permits/ease of access for young people needs to be simplified.

10. Access legislation is an issue as people can’t get to water to fish.

11. There is a perception that farmers will be liable if they allow access and there is no incentive for them to allow access.

12. Farmers own land but not fishing rights which are often not clear. (Deed to prove fishing rights don’t exist.)

13. Commercial fishing has had an impact on charter boat operators as there are no fish.

14. Governing bodies need to work more closely together. If governing bodies don’t collaborate they should not receive funding.

15. DSD funding is available in Neighborhood Renewal Areas and this has been used to support angling projects in some areas.

16. If opportunities are to be maximised then the Department of Health need to be persuaded of the benefits.

17. An issue in Northern Ireland, which is much more pronounced than in Great Britain, is a claims culture.

18. It has a unique public angling estate but is this the right approach?

19. There are three licensing regimes. DCAL has a suite of licences and the LA has a slightly less complicated range.

20. Angling has been off the radar; the authorities have focused on their responsibilities for conservation and protection.

21. The authorities have constructed fisheries management as a protection and conservation activity rather than a combined conservation and leisure activity.

22. So far there has been no formal liaison between DCAL and Department of Justice.

23. At present the authorities are not getting full value from their licensing as they are not gathering the right information to allow them to market angling properly.

24. Anglers can be seen as a nuisance and problematic for conservation. It also prevents the development of angling as a role development activity that generates jobs, income and wider commercial activity.

25. Sea anglers and leisure fishing are seen as peripheral to fisheries policy.

26. The inshore fishery in Northern Ireland is under intense pressure from domestic commercial fishing interests and from an angler’s perspective is "fished out".

27. There are by-catch issues between the North and South stop whilst Ireland doesn’t allow commercial Bass fishing this is not the case in the North so there is always the possibility of Bass caught in the South being landed in the North. Any difference between the regulations in the North and South is likely to be exploited by the fishing community. "Black fish" is a continuing important issue.

28. There is little good quality coarse fishing water available within 35 miles of Belfast. This is a real barrier to getting schools and children in groups fishing. (There is plenty of water with fish but little water with access).

29. Complexity of angling regulations, licence and licensing authorities can confuse. DCAL need to start protecting fisheries from hydropower, canal development,
destruction of habitat and start promoting especially our wild fisheries and stop using our licence money to run the Public Angling Estate.

**Suggested Governance Improvements**

- Ministers have said that they would like to see an all island licence. In the Republic IFA have just a single licence, which is for salmon fishing. An all island licence would have implications for revenue for LA and DCAL.

- A simplified system with a single authority and single licence across UK would be a step forward.

- Free licences and permits for visiting anglers would be a good promotional move?

- The Loughs Agency is very receptive to a sports development approach that engages young people to take part in the sport.

- A proportion of the licensing income could be used as a development fund for the clubs – with a properly formulated sports development programme?

- Angling development board to be established including reps from DCAL / Department of Justice and DSD.

- Establish an officials group within the Northern Ireland government that is focused on angling and the use of angling (and the public fishing estate) to achieve wider policy objectives such as public health (outdoor activity, fitness, mental and social well-being, social capital), youth development, programs for young offenders, environmental education and so on.

- Many of the existing leases for reservoirs are coming up for renewal so new arrangements could be introduced.

- One representative body for angling

- Protected areas free from commercial fishing.

- A unified approach to take responsibility although the Loughs agency looks after the seas in its own area no one – no authority – has actually taken responsibility for sea angling within the 12 mile limit.

- Resolve the issues of derelict waters so that they can be opened up for fishing.

- Address the issues of the perception of landowners’ liability (rod licence to pay for insurance for all anglers?)

- Single integrated government department.
Environment

1. There are no fish so it is not possible to meet demand for sea angling.
2. Commercial fishing is a significant constraint.
3. Pollution is a constraint on some rivers such as the Upper Bann and Loch Neagh.
4. The local authority are unsure about whether to invest in angling platforms at Ballyronan (Loch Neagh) because the quality of fishing is poor because of pollution.
5. The Upper Bann is a drain (NIEA to advise on the issues).
6. Rubbish and litter at angling sites was felt to dissuade land owners from encouraging access.
7. There are issues of alien species which are affecting the habitats e.g. Zebra mussels impact.
8. Introduced species may be causing damage to habitats but the science does not appear to be clear.
9. Lower Bann water level management regime is not angling-friendly; this is an issue which needs to be discussed.
10. The well-documented and serious decline in salmon, eel and coarse fish stocks and a series of very wet summers has caused river levels to remain too high for angling, for lengthy periods at the peak of the fishing season.
12. Address the specific problems of commercial over-fishing and illegal fishing in Lough Neagh.
13. Restrictions in the number of available licences alongside strict planning regulations particularly where the river is designated as an ASSI/SAC make progression of potential projects difficult.
14. Landowner with hydro and some farm owners using agricultural process which may conflict with angling interests.
16. If nothing is done to control invasive species especially Cormorant predation on inland fisheries and rivers there will be no point in developing angling in Northern Ireland.
17. Unfortunately our club is permanently occupied with opposing developments which we believe pose significant environmental risks to our river. This includes an ongoing judicial review against DOE, two ombudsman cases against DOE Planning, Ongoing objections to ten unauthorised mineral extraction sites, three hydroelectricity proposals, a wind farm and a major Roads Proposal. This leaves us little time to promote angling on our river.
18. A local farmer carrying out unauthorised in-river works has reduced water levels significantly. Although being an ASSI/SAC, DOE failed to prosecute.
19. Lack of independent verified information on numbers of adult salmon returning to our rivers so that a proper ongoing management programme can be put in place supported by all stakeholders.
20. By the proper enforcement of the existing by-laws by Waterways Ireland who have singularly failed to enforce any by-law on the lake using the excuse they are introducing new laws.
21. If I wanted to open a trout fishery the Ministry would throw money at me, but because we are Carp Anglers and Carp are considered invasive species we get absolutely no assistance from anyone and everything we do we have to fund ourselves.
22. Effective bye-laws particularly in respect of speed limits on this body of water (Lough Erne) - currently uncontrolled.
23. ASSI and SAC prohibit our Association from carrying out necessary enhancement works and fishery management.

**Suggested Improvements to Address Environment Issues**

- Use of environmental protection education to give them a more rounded view of fishing,
- Ban scallop boats from all waters to protect the sea habitats
- Most anglers are keen to support angling regulations and often would support a more active policy of enforcement of the rules
Appendix 4.

**DCAL Licences and Permits**

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<th>Type of Licences</th>
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Strategic Review of Angling
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<td>N/</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL SALES</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>123</td>
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<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Criteria Used by UK Sports Councils to Assess Applications for NGB Status.**

**Governing body jurisdiction:** The governing body must be able to demonstrate the extent of its jurisdiction and its relationships with Home Country and UK/GB level governing bodies in the same sporting activity, and with the international federation or organisation.

**Governing body influence:** The NGB should also demonstrate that it is the prevalent governing body within the relevant jurisdiction, to show that it is best placed to govern and develop the sport.

**Sporting uniqueness:** The sporting activity must not be a variation of an existing recognised sporting activity. Where a sporting activity is similar to another but has developed a significant independent cultural status, SCs may consider accepting it. This is particularly likely to apply to established sports that are already recognised.

**Sporting rules:** The sporting activity must be defined by rules where appropriate, or where this is not appropriate, the applicant must provide a clear definition of what the activity is and evidence that this definition is comprehensively accepted within that jurisdiction. The governing body must show that it has control or influence over the sporting rules, either as owner of the rules, or through its membership or affiliation to the rule defining body (or other mechanism that may exist within the sport).

**Competition structure:** Any activity where competition is possible, the applicant must demonstrate that it has established, controls and/or influences the competition structure that enables participants to compete at local, national and international level.

**Sporting vision and development:** The governing body must demonstrate that it has a vision for the promotion of the sporting activity, for example, in terms of its development and levels of participation, serving the whole sport, not merely its membership base and creating links with informal participants. It must be able to demonstrate pathways to development for participants, coaches, officials and volunteers and seek to create links with informal participants.

**Governing body vision and development:** The body should also be able to demonstrate that it has a clearly defined strategy for the development of its organisation.

**Sporting injury risk:** Where a sporting activity presents risk of injury, the applicant should demonstrate that is has taken measures to minimise and control risk to participants.

**Ethical and legal considerations:** Ethical considerations will be taken into account when considering the sporting activity part of the application. For example, it must be demonstrated that there are no barriers to participation, including access to premises, facilities and services, and that the sporting activity is one that the Sports Councils, in their discretion, would wish to be associated with. The activity also must be one that is not prohibited in any way by UK law.
## Appendix 6. Comparison of qualification levels between the NQF and QCF frameworks\(^{45}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>NQF Qualifications examples</th>
<th>QCF Qualifications examples</th>
<th>Framework for Higher Education examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>Entry level certificates</td>
<td>Entry level VQs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills for Life at Entry</td>
<td>• Entry level awards,</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>level</td>
<td>certificates and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>diplomas</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Foundation Learning</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tier pathways</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Functional Skills at</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entry level</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>GCSEs graded D-G</td>
<td>Level 1 VQs:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NVQs at level 1</td>
<td>• BTEC awards,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Skills level 1</td>
<td>certificates and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Skills for Life</td>
<td>diplomas at level 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation Diploma</td>
<td>• Functional Skills level 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• OCR Nationals</td>
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<td>• Foundation Learning</td>
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<td>Tier pathways</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GCSEs graded A*-C</td>
<td>Level 2 VQs:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NVQs at level 2</td>
<td>• BTEC awards,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Level 2 VQs</td>
<td>certificates and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Skills level 2</td>
<td>diplomas at level 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills for Life</td>
<td>• Functional Skills level 2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>AS/A levels</td>
<td>Level 3 VQs:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Extension Awards</td>
<td>• BTEC awards,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
<td>certificates and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Skills level 3</td>
<td>diplomas at level 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NVQs at level 3</td>
<td>• BTEC Nationals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cambridge International</td>
<td>• OCR Nationals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Awards Advanced and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Progression Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NVQs at level 4</td>
<td>Original NQF Level 4*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Key Skills level 4</td>
<td>Level 4 VQs:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Certificates of higher</td>
<td>• BTEC Professional</td>
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<td>education</td>
<td>Diplomas, Certificates</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and Awards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Certificates of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>higher education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 7. Departmental and Agency Responsibilities

DCAL
DCAL Inland Fisheries Group is responsible in Northern Ireland for the supervision and protection of salmon and inland fisheries and for fostering the establishment and development of those fisheries.

AFBI
The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), is a leading provider of scientific research and services to government, non-government and commercial organisations. It has scientific capability in agriculture, animal health, food, environment, biosciences and economics and conducts a wide range of projects for both the public and private sectors including DCAL, Loughs Agency, DARD and NIEA.

Loughs Agency
The Loughs Agency is a cross-border body, exercising a statutory remit for conservation, protection and development across the Foyle and Carlingford catchments. Objectives for these river systems and sea areas include development of fisheries and aquaculture, conservation and protection of inland fisheries and sustainable development of marine tourism.

DARD
The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) aims to promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside in Northern Ireland. The Department assists the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the need of the consumers, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

NIEA
NIEA takes the lead in advising on, and in implementing, the Government's environmental policy and strategy in Northern Ireland. The Agency carries out a range of activities, which promote the Government's key themes of sustainable development, biodiversity and climate change. Overall aims are to protect and conserve Northern Ireland's natural heritage and built environment, to control pollution and to promote the wider appreciation of the environment and best environmental practices.

Appendix 8. Copy of electronic surveys sent to angling clubs, businesses and local authorities

Angling Club Survey

HOW TO

1. Name of organisation

2. Address

3. Contact Telephone

4. Email

5. What is the job title for your current position?
   - Secretary
   - Committee member
   - Owner
   - Chair
   - Treasurer
   - Trustee
   - Other (please specify)

6. What form of angling is your organisation involved in?
   - Coarse
   - Game
   - Sea
   - Other (please specify)

Facilities
HOW TO

7. Please list the main areas where your club fish (inc. name of water, extent/townlands and address/postcode/grid ref)

Area 1
Area 2
Area 3
Area 4
Area 5

8. Please indicate the current management arrangements for these areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Controlled area</th>
<th>Leased/licensed by club</th>
<th>Owned by club</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9. Which of the following facilities do you have as part of your club?

- [ ] Club House
- [ ] Boats
- [ ] Slipway
- [ ] Equipment Hire
- [ ] Car Parking Facility
- [ ] Toilets
- [ ] Bar
- [ ] Access
- [ ] Angling Platforms
- [ ] Other

Other (please specify): 

10. Does your club offer any of the following facilities for disabled people?

- [ ] Ramp/flooring
- [ ] Equipment
- [ ] Movable Access
- [ ] Other

Other (please specify): 

Strategic Review of Angling
11. Would you be interested in expanding your disabled fishing facilities if funding were made available?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

12. Where can potential users go to find information on where fish in Northern Ireland?

- Government websites
- Angling centres
- Tourist information centres
- Angling Club Websites
- Local Authorities
- Angling Representative Bodies
- Other (please specify): [NOTEBOOK]

13. In your opinion, is there sufficient information available to potential users on where to fish in Northern Ireland?

- Yes
- No

14. In your opinion, is there sufficient information available to potential users on the facilities available at fishing areas in Northern Ireland?

- Yes
- No

15. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to Q. 12 & 14

[NOTEBOOK]

Membership

16. Approximately, how many members are there in your club?

[NOTEBOOK]
17. If you have this information, can you tell us the approximate numbers of?

- Men: 
- Women: 
- Boys under 13: 
- Girls under 13: 
- People aged between 13-19: 
- People aged 20-30: 
- People aged 30+: 
- People with disabilities: 

18. Of your active members, approximately how many of those live within:

- 1-10 miles: 
- Between 10 and 20 miles: 
- Over 20 miles: 

19. If applicable, approximately how many visitor anglers have used your waters on a temporary membership basis over the past 12 months?

- None: 
- Less than 10: 
- Between 10 and 100: 
- Between 100 and 1,000: 
- 1,000+: 

20. If applicable, approximately how many visitor anglers from each of the following areas have visited your waters over the last 12 months?

- European mainland (within 30 miles): 
- North or Scotland: 
- Ireland: 
- Europe: 
- Other: 

21. If applicable, please indicate the number of visitors for:

- Recreation: 
- Competition: 
- Other: 

**HOW TO**

22. Please indicate whether the number of members registered with your club has changed over the last 3 years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>Royal Licence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Under 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>U16C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>E rehearsal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Needs with a disability</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Where applicable, please indicate why you think this change in club numbers has occurred:

   

**Participation**

24. Does your organisation encourage new people to take up angling?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

25. If answered no, why is this the case?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for non-participation</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don't want more members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laws of tenancy in your area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above question:

   

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*Strategic Review of Angling*
HOW TO

27. In your opinion, what sorts of initiatives are/would be most successful in encouraging people to take up your sport?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree or Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to nature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach programmes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing information on access and places</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</table>

Other please specify:

28. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above questions

29. In your opinion, how important are the following in terms of developing angling in Northern Ireland?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Rather Important or Unimportant</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting fish stocks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving access to facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging and facilitating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Help promoting angling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Help with running major and other events</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Other please specify:

30. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above questions

Strategic Review of Angling
### HOW TO

31. In your opinion, how important are the following in terms of discouraging more people from taking up angling?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of places to fish</th>
<th>Lack of rules at angling sites (e.g., litter, not catch our parents)</th>
<th>Cost of angling</th>
<th>Lack of time</th>
<th>Angling equipment</th>
<th>Lack of good quality tackle</th>
<th>Lack of information available on where to fish</th>
<th>Time it takes to level in certain areas</th>
<th>Public perceptions of poor safety/image of angling</th>
<th>Difficulties of necessary sites being oversubscribed, access, poor quality equipment</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>Important</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

32. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above question:

33. In your opinion, which of the following groups offers the most potential in terms of promotion of angling?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Young Groups</th>
<th>Fishermen</th>
<th>Angling clubs</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

34. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above question:
### HOW TO

**Club structure/management and promotion of activities**

35. What other organisations have you worked with in the area to develop your sport?
- [ ] Other Angling Trusts
- [ ] Commercial Fisheries
- [ ] Local Authorities
- [ ] Angling Benevolent Fund
- [ ] Angling Charity
- [ ] Local River Trusts
- [ ] RACD
- [ ] RAOL
- [ ] Angling Trust
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Other please specify: 

36. In your opinion, how important are the following in terms of promoting angling in Northern Ireland?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Neither Important nor Unimportant</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Press/TV Advertising</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaflets</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of Mouth</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other please specify:

37. In your opinion, who should take responsibility for the promotion of angling in Northern Ireland?

- [ ] Angling Clubs
- [ ] Angling Benevolent Fund
- [ ] Local Authorities
- [ ] Angling Trust
- [ ] Other
- [ ] Other please specify: 

---

Strategic Review of Angling
38. What steps does your organisation take to promote its activities to the wider community?

39. In your opinion, what could be done to encourage the following underrepresented groups to take up angling in Northern Ireland?

40. Is there anything your club does currently to encourage greater participation in angling for any of the groups identified?

   ○ yes
   ○ no

41. If yes, please provide details:

42. Does your club have a child protection policy?

   ○ yes
   ○ no

43. If answered 'yes' to Q 42. do you think this impacts on your organisations ability to encourage young people to participate in angling, and if so why?

44. Does your club have a health and safety policy?

   ○ yes
   ○ no

45. How are the needs of children/people with disabilities considered by your club?
### HOW TO

#### 38. What steps does your organisation take to promote its activities to the wider community?

- [ ]
- [ ]

#### 39. In your opinion, what could be done to encourage the following underrepresented groups to take up angling in Northern Ireland?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent(s)</th>
<th>Grandparent(s)</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Friends</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 40. Is there anything your club does currently to encourage greater participation in angling for any of the groups identified?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

#### 41. If yes, please provide details:

- [ ]

#### 42. Does your club have a child protection policy?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

#### 43. If answered ‘yes’ to 42, do you think this impacts on your organisation’s ability to encourage young people to participate in angling, and if so why?

- [ ]

#### 44. Does your club have a health and safety policy?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

#### 45. How are the needs of children/people with disabilities considered by your club?

- [ ]

---

Strategic Review of Angling
**HOW TO**

46. How much funding (if any) has your club secured over the last 10 years and from what sources?

**Environmental and conflict issues**

47. In your opinion, what are the most important environmental issues facing anglers in your local area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Very Unimportant</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack trout in streams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial fishing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsepoachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of waterbodies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exotic species</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

48. Are there any environmental designations in place which restrict angling activities in your local area (i.e. through conservation designations)?

- Yes
- No

49. If yes, please provide details

50. In your opinion, are there any conflicts with other users/interests in the areas where your members fish?

- Yes
- No

51. In your opinion, how might these conflicts be overcome (please indicate if you wish your views to remain confidential)?

Strategic Review of Angling
52. Thank you for completing our survey. If you have any further comments please use the space available below:
**Local Authority Survey**

**HOW TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANGLING IN NORTHERN**

1. Name of local authority: 

2. Position at organisation: 

3. Contact Telephone: 

4. Email: 

5. Please indicate whether your local authority provides any opportunities for: 
   - [ ] Course Angling
   - [ ] Sea Angling
   - [ ] Other (please specify) 

**Facilities**

6. Where applicable, please list the main areas where you provide opportunities for angling (inc. name of water, extent/townlands and address/postcode/grid ref): 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Please indicate the current management arrangements for these areas: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Managed by Local Authority</th>
<th>Managed by Angling Club</th>
<th>Managed by Charity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANGLING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

8. Do you offer any of the following facilities as part of this provision:

- Clubhouse
- Boats
- Slipway
- Equipment Hire
- Car Parking Facilities
- Bivvys
- Nets
- Jetty
- Angling Platforms
- Disabled fishing facilities
- Wheelchair access
- Other

Other (please specify):

9. Where can potential users go to find information on where to fish in Northern Ireland?

- Government websites
- Local Angling centres
- In-restaurant information websites
- Angling Club Websites
- Local Authorities
- Angling Federation websites
- All other listed

Other (please specify):

10. In your opinion, is there sufficient information available to potential users on where to fish in Northern Ireland?

- Yes
- No

11. In your opinion, is there sufficient information available to potential users on the facilities available at fishing areas in Northern Ireland?

- Yes
- No
### How to Increase Opportunities for Angling in Northern

12. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to Q. 10 & 11

#### Membership

13. Approximately, how many people fish in the areas for which you are responsible for on an annual basis?

14. If you have this information, can you tell us the approximate numbers of?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Leg: 18+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Leg: 13-18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People aged 18-25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People aged 26-50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People aged 50+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. In the areas where you provide fishing opportunities, please indicate approximate numbers of people that have visited these waters over the last 12 months:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within your local authority area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside range of Northern Ireland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Ireland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. If applicable, please indicate the number of visitors for:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# How to Increase Opportunities for Angling in Northern Ireland

17. Please indicate whether the number of anglers within your local authority area has changed over the last 3 years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>Decreased</th>
<th>Stayed the Same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with a disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. Where applicable, please indicate why you think this change in numbers has occurred:

[Blank space for response]

## Participation

19. Does your organisation encourage new people to take up angling?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

20. If answered no, why is this the case?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don't have more members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not currently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of capacity or time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Blank space for other reason]

21. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above question:

[Blank space for explanation]
### How to Increase Opportunities for Angling in Northern Ireland

22. In your opinion, what sorts of initiatives are/would be most successful in encouraging people to take up your sport?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>倡议类型</th>
<th>不重要</th>
<th>重要</th>
<th>非常重要</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>培训和指导日</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>鱼类养殖</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>有意识的计划</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>提供有关钓鱼地点的信息</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>其他</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above question:

[空格]

24. In your opinion, how important are the following in terms of developing angling in Northern Ireland?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>倡议类型</th>
<th>非常不重要</th>
<th>不重要</th>
<th>非常重要</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>水质监测和监测</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>提高水质</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>提高饮用水和设施</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>水资源恢复</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>水资源保护</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>鼓励参与钓鱼</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>支持垂钓俱乐部和组织</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>其他</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above question:

[空格]

26. Where appropriate, please explain your answers to the above question:

[空格]
30. What other organisations have you worked with in the area to develop your sport?

☐ Angling clubs
☐ Commercial fisheries
☐ Other local activities
☐ Angling bodies
☐ Local government
☐ Local river trusts
☐ Other
☐ Other (please specify): ________

31. In your opinion, how important are the following in terms of promoting angling in Northern Ireland?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotional Method</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Neither Important nor Unimportant</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Press/Advertising</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Websites</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of Mouth</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other (please specify): ________
HOW TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANGLING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

32. In your opinion, who should take responsibility for the promotion of angling in Northern Ireland?
   [ ] Angling Clubs
   [ ] Government
   [ ] Local Authorities
   [ ] Tourism Board
   [ ] Other [please specify] ____________________________

33. In your opinion, what could be done to encourage the following underrepresented groups to take up angling in Northern Ireland?

   [ ] Youth
   [ ] Disabled
   [ ] Women
   [ ] Senior
   [ ] Under 15
   [ ] Under 12

34. Is there anything your local authority does currently to encourage greater participation in angling for any of the groups identified?
   [ ] Yes
   [ ] No

35. If yes, please provide details: __________________________________________

Environmental and conflict issues
36. In your opinion, what are the most important environmental issues facing anglers in your local area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Unimportant</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Neither Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low fish density</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial fishing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions of water quality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invasive species</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37. Are there any environmental designations in place which restrict angling activities in your local area (i.e. through conservation designations)?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

38. If yes, please provide details:

39. In your opinion, are there any conflicts with other users/interests in the areas where your residents/visitors fish?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

40. In your opinion, how might these conflicts be overcome (please indicate if you wish your views to remain confidential)?

41. Thank you for completing our survey. If you have any further comments please use the space available below: