

The Angling Trust

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Over the past 18 months, discussions between all the national angling and conservation organisations have been gathering pace, with the aim of bringing together all the functions of the major membership organisations into a new, single body for all angling interests. The discussions resulted in these organisations signing a merger agreement on Sunday 19 October, this will mean that the National Federation of Sea Anglers, along with the Anglers' Conservation Association, National Federation of Anglers, the National Association of Fisheries and Angling Consultatives and the Specialist Anglers Alliance will all pool their resources to create a new organisation called the Angling Trust on 5 January 2009.

This new organisation will actually comprise two elements: the Angling Trust Ltd. and, an unincorporated association based on the ACA, which will be renamed Fish Legal and will take legal action against polluters and anyone else damaging fisheries. The Angling Trust will, subject to agreement with Sport England, be the governing body for sea, coarse, and game fishing in England. This will involve running all the national and international competitions and investing in angling development and education programmes.

The strengthened organisation will use its more powerful voice to campaign and lobby government and other decision makers on all issues affecting anglers in both freshwater and marine environments: pollution, abstraction, commercial overfishing, aggregate extraction, predator control, access by canoes to rivers, fish theft, poaching and illegal fish movements to name just a few.

The Angling Trust will protect recreational angling as a legitimate pastime and promote its benefits for the environment, society and the economy. To protect our freedom to go fishing, we need to make sure that more people understand the many positive things it contributes to communities.

Each of the participating organisations will nominate a board member and an alternate. Additional board members will initially be co-opted by the board but then in future the members will nominate and elect board members at the AGM.

The existing volunteer structure of regions and specialist groups will continue to provide specialist advice to the board of the Angling Trust under the chairmanship of their board director.

What will this mean for individual members?

In addition to everything included in your current membership package, you will now get all the benefits offered by the founding organisations plus some new benefits, which will include enhanced insurance, access to Fish legal and an exciting new card free loyalty programme, more fully described at the end of this briefing note.

All existing life members of all the organisations will be granted honorary life membership of the Angling Trust and Fish Legal.

All individual members of founding organisations will also be granted free membership of the Angling Trust (which automatically includes membership of Fish Legal) until their renewal date in 2009, when they will be invited to renew their membership. Individual subscriptions will be £20 for all adults and £5. A table of fees for clubs and other organisations follows. We would be very grateful for any donations from our members in addition to the minimum subscription to help with the start-up costs.

What does this mean for clubs and other membership categories?

When renewal notices for 2009 are issued to clubs, they will be invited to join the Angling Trust at rates tabled below.

Clubs and riparian owners with their main address in England will be required to join the Angling Trust in order to qualify for subscription to membership of Fish Legal. Clubs with their main address in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will only have to join Fish Legal, and their subscriptions rates will reflect this. We are currently looking at the areas the legal service can cover to see how helpful it could be to Sea Angling clubs, obviously pollution prosecutions are less relevant here, but issues over access may be.

Summary of principal benefits for Angling Trust member clubs

- Right to organise Angling Trust branded competitions;
- Discounted third party liability insurance (increased buying power will enable better cover and value);
- Advice on club and fishery management by distribution of updates and one-to-one help with non-legal issues as required;
- Free advertising of member clubs/fisheries etc. via the Angling Trust web site and in publications;
- Support for club campaigns and action on issues affecting their fishing, such as illegal netting, aggregate extraction, restrictions on access etc.;
- Assistance with CRB checks and advice on child protection issues;
- Clubmark accreditation;

Organisation Membership Rates (Angling Trust)

Category	Annual Subscription
Clubs - under 50 members	£50
Clubs - under 200 members	£100
Clubs - over 200 members	£150
Clubs - over 500 members	£200
Clubs - over 1000 members	£250
Commercial Fisheries	£250
Individual Riparian Owner (not	£50
Charter Boats	£50
Trade	£50

Fish Legal Membership Rates 2009

Category	Annual Cost (England)	Annual Cost (Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)
Club 1 – 50 members	£55	£60
Club 51 – 200 members	£110	£121
Club 201 – 500 members	£168	£185
Club 501 – 1000 members	£326	£360
Club over 1,000 members	£546	£600
Fishery Owner	£168	£185
Riparian Owner (not for profit)	£55	£60
Riparian Owner (commercial)	£168	£185
Salmon Fishery Boards	N/A	£525

What about Direct Debits?

The Angling Trust will write to all members of all participating organisations at least a month before their renewal date inviting them to complete a new Direct Debit mandate or to join online using their credit or debit card.

Fish 4 Free

New members of the Angling Trust will automatically be enrolled in a new card free loyalty programme called Fish 4 Free. Once members have activated their account, they will be able to earn points automatically when they shop on the high street with participating retailers (e.g. Debenhams, Comet, Halfords), or online via the Angling Trust web site at over 100 online retailers including eBay, Amazon, the Trainline and Powergen. These points can then earn members cash back when they make angling-related purchases such as fishing permits, tackle and even their annual season rod licence, or they may be donated to the Angling Trust. Members will receive about 3p for every £1 they spend – far more than supermarket loyalty schemes.

This ingenious new programme will raise money for the Angling Trust from the retailers and provide significant discounts to its members on things they actually want. More details will be available in the New Year and a leaflet about the scheme, and membership of the Angling Trust, will be sent to all 800,000 season freshwater rod licence holders by the Environment Agency in March 2009.

All the founding members believe the creation of the Angling Trust is the first step in creating a powerful, representative body for all angling, able to gain the attention and influence that the size of the sport merits. To achieve this, we need your continued support in the form of membership, please join.

Questions and Answers relating to the creation of the Angling Trust (AT) and its impact on NFSA members.

Merging 5 organisations with separate membership fees, organisational and regional structures, offices and rules is a complex task. While most of the major decisions relating to the Angling Trust have been decided, many of the minor details are still being finalised. In the following answers, a D signifies a definite decision, a P indicates the very likely answer but it could be amended, ?? indicates it has yet to be finalised but is being worked on.

Question	Answer	D,P,? ?
What will be the name of the new organisation?	The Angling Trust	D
When will it start?	First week in Jan 2009 providing all necessary documents are in place	D
What will it cost to join?	See above briefing note for full details of all membership categories. Individual adult membership will be £20, junior £5.	D
When and how will I be asked or able to join?	Just before your normal renewal date you will be sent a request to renew your membership as a member of the Angling Trust.	D
If my membership runs until June 2009, will I still be insured?	All the benefits, including insurance, you are entitled to under NFSA membership will continue for the full 12 months. From January onwards they will be provided by the Angling Trust.	D
How will clubs be affected by the integration?	When their 2009 renewals are sent out, they will be invited to join Angling Trust under the new fee structure, which for many will be cheaper.	D
Will individuals and clubs still be eligible for third party insurance cover?	All individual members will still receive 3 rd party insurance cover as part of membership, clubs will be able to take advantage of the AT insurance cover, which is expected to be a better level of cover at a more competitive rate.	D
What will happen to the NFSA Regions?	There are widely differing regional structures within the founding members. For the foreseeable future (at least a year) no changes are envisaged at all. Regions will continue as they are, under current rules, with the support of the AT	D

What happens to the competitions and conservation groups?	These groups will continue, membership and rules (if applicable) unchanged, initially under the guidance of the marine committee, but eventually, if they wish, under the guidance of directors with special responsibility for these areas and support from dedicated AT staff.	D
What happens to the Buckfastleigh office and the staff in it?	The AT recognises the need for a strong presence in the SW, for all forms of angling. Details of who fill what staff roles cannot be finalised for legal reasons until after the merger takes place. The AT will ensure sufficient experienced marine staff are retained to support our side of angling. A new smaller, cheaper office will be sought in the area.	P
What will the regions and committees be called?	Sometime During the year they will become AT committees or regions, for example, The Marine committee will become the Angling Trust Marine Committee from Jan 5 th .. Once logos etc are finalised, that change will be made to other areas, such as competitions.	P
What will I get if I join?	See briefing note for outline details, full details will be provided when renewal notices are issued.	P
I am a life member, what happens to me?	Your life membership will be transferred to Angling Trust.	D
What happens to the grant NFSA regions currently receive from HQ?	This is currently under discussion, there is no guarantee it will continue.	??
What happens to existing divisional assets?	Under current NFSA rules, these assets belong to the divisions and will remain so. The rules also say if a division closes, any remaining assets should be repatriated back to NFSA. This rule will be reviewed during the next year. There is no expectation of any repatriation.	D
Will Individual or club members be able to influence board appointments?	Yes, most board appointments will require AGM approval by members. There will be a mechanism whereby members can nominate candidates for board appointments..	D
Will there be a mechanism for raising issues?	Yes, apart from the normal committee route, there will a mechanism for requesting big issues for consideration via the AGM or an EGM.	D
Should I join?	If you want a strong organisation representing and protecting your interests, Yes.	