



Virtual Fisheries Forum 19/05/21 – Anglers Against Litter

Q&A Session with Dr Emily Smith

Q. In terms of the materials available on the website, are there any which we can download or have sent to us?

A. Yes there are – I've already mentioned the Anglers Against Litter branded bibs, but we also have [Take 5 posters](#) available which can be used for placement on club or fishery noticeboards to raise awareness. We also have a number of tackle box stickers available which clubs could distribute amongst their members for example. Some elements can be downloaded and other we can post to you. Alongside this we also have a free 'clean up toolkit' available to download on the website which includes information on what equipment you may need if you are thinking of doing a litter pick, where you can borrow items from, and a template press release that can be sent to local press to get some positive publicity about the event.

Q. In terms of health and safety for a litter pick, does the toolkit include a risk assessment template that we can use?

A. Yes - the toolkit contains a [risk assessment](#) which has all the generic issues included such as Weil's disease, slips trips falls etc to provide a guide for people. The wider toolkit is designed to make things as simple as possible, and we're constantly on the lookout for feedback – so if you see something which you think should be changed, or is absent, please let us know.

Q. Could you expand on the ways in which anglers can support the campaign?

A. I've already touched on the 3 main ways in which anglers can get involved, but the key thing is to be able to put a figure on our involvement. Being able to go to the Environment Agency or other bodies with a statistic that says 'x number of anglers are clearing 5 items of litter every time they go fishing' is actually really powerful. [That's why it's so important to pledge your involvement in 'take 5'](#). It's also worth checking that collection of litter from your surroundings is written into your club's rules to encourage this further. From a broader perspective, you can also support by the campaign by simply being the voice that encourages recycling practices etc with friends, family and fellow anglers and informing them of the line recycling scheme.

Q. How do you go on with public liability insurance if different groups are involved?

A. I have followed this up to get a more comprehensive response on this. We would encourage every club to check their insurance. If an event is organised by an AT club, then the activity should be covered under working parties' activities as long as it remains in the context of their insurance e.g. it is occurring on or near the banks of their fishery, on a club water rather than at another site. This would mean that any participants taking part should be covered by that club insurance. The best thing would be for a club looking to do litter picks on their waters is to mention this to insurer so that litter picks are included as one of their recognised activities of their working party.

Q. Has any progress been made in approaching large tackle retailers/manufacturers to actively reduce their utilisation of single use plastics? How realistic is it for the angling trade to progress away from using throw away packets for hooks/swivels etc?

A. There has been a lot of progress made on this recently and it's still happening. There are certain companies out there leading the way such as Aptus Tackle whose packaging contains zero single use plastics. Larger companies like Korda are now cutting down with their rigs being sold in paper wallets etc. Throughout my conversations with these companies it's become clear that these changes are being driven by demand from anglers ourselves which is really great to see. Ultimately it's a big issue that will take time however. One positive to come is the launch of a new plastic packaging tax which is due to come into force next year, which should go a long way towards fixing this problem.

Q. What do you see as the biggest challenge in communicating this campaign to the angling community?

A. It's been amazing in the last year with the shift towards everything going online. What is striking is how circumstances have really forced people to now start making use of online tools such as social media, and webinars like this. Therefore a lot of our communications have been online and we are now reaching audiences that we've previously never had. But it's also important to recognise that we as the Angling Trust can only reach so far, which is why it's crucial to spread these messages further so that every corner of the angling community ends up aware of the campaign and the issues it looks to tackle.

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