Introduction

The Angling Trust is the national governing body for the sport of Angling in England. It is subject to the Sport England 'Code for Sports Governance' (the "Code") and is committed to the principles of good governance.

The Annual Governance Statement provides the stakeholders, members, supporters and sponsors with an annual report on the good governance commitment and performance of the Angling Trust.

This Statement is made in accordance with the Code for the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 (the "Reporting Period").

Our Vision

To enable people to go fishing in healthy environments.

Mission Statement

To fight for fish, fishing and the environment, creating opportunities for all within society to experience fishing in a healthy aquatic environment.

Principle Activities

- **Lobbying/Campaigning:** on behalf of members and the angling community to protect and improve fish stocks and the right to fish for them;
- **Angling and Environmental Projects:** working with the Environment Agency and others to carry out projects to improve angling and the water environment;
- **Membership and fundraising:** providing membership benefits to a wide range of categories of membership and raising funds for the Angling Trust and Fish Legal;
- Promoting and developing angling: working with Sport England, the Environment Agency and others to
 increase the diversity and number of participants in angling, the frequency of participation and the
 standards of safeguarding and coaching;
- **Competitions**: providing a wide range of Angling Trust regional and national competitions in England for all angling disciplines and supporting England's national teams to win medals;
- **Support Fish Legal:** collaborate closely with Fish Legal in accordance with a Service Level Agreement and other governance documents to enable it to take legal action to protect the water environment and the interests of its members.

Values

- Always act with integrity, respect and courtesy, whoever we deal with and seek to resolve rather than create conflict and division within the angling and fisheries community;
- Ensure that all decisions are made for the greater good of angling and anglers, the water environment and the benefits of angling for society as a whole;
- Be forthright and determined to succeed in achieving our mission on behalf of our membership;
- Be open and transparent to our members, funders and others;
- Listen and respond to the views of our membership and the wider angling community;
- Deliver agreed programmes of work cost-effectively and to high standards for those who fund us with public money or private donations;
- Base all our campaigns and legal action on sound science and factual evidence;
- Ensure that the activities and policies of the Angling Trust and Fish Legal do not conflict with each other;
- Treat all our staff, volunteers and members fairly and equally irrespective of background, religion, race, gender or sexuality;
- Seek to increase diversity in angling participation and management to reflect society;
- Make the best use of our resources to maximise delivery for minimum cost;

 Minimise our impact on the environment through use of sustainable materials and transport wherever possible.

Governance Structure

The Organisation is a company limited by guarantee. Its governing documents, including the 'Memorandum and Articles of Association' are published on its website at

https://anglingtrust.net/about-us/governance-and-policies/governing-documents/

Board

Role

The Board is collectively responsible for the long-term success of the Angling Trust and is exclusively vested with the power to lead it. George Stephenson, as Chair, is responsible for the leadership of the Board. The Board is the ultimate decision-making body and exercises all of the powers of the organisation other than those specifically allocated to other persons under either legislation or its memorandum and articles of association. It is responsible for setting the strategy of the Angling Trust and providing oversight of executive action but maintains a clear division between its management and oversight role and the executive's operational role.

Meetings and Key Decisions

The Board meets a minimum of four times a year and also on an ad hoc basis where required. The table below sets out the meetings held in the Reporting Period and summarises the key decisions taken.

Board meeting description	Date	Key Discussions/ Decisions
Regular meeting	18/05/2021	 International Competitions No shows at competitions Reputational Risk Natural England/ EA Fishery Management in SSSIs Zander Position Statement Organisation Restructure Code of Practice – Staff, Officials and Volunteers Role of Ambassadors Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Report Safeguarding Update Draft Accounts 2020/21 Amended Budget 2021/22 Report from the Nomination Committee Board Effectiveness/ Evaluation Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 Subscriber Member Rule Changes UK Anti-Doping Assurance Framework
Regular meeting	23/09/2021	 Shark Project Presentation Salmon Byelaws Governance Structure Development of KPIs Stakeholder Management and Mapping Esmée Fairbairn Foundation funding application

Company AGM	23/09/2021	 Sea angling funding application Membership pricing Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Report Policy Positions National/ Regional Angling Centre(s) Safeguarding Update Anglers Against Litter Campaign Board Effectiveness/ Evaluation Competitions Information Sharing UK Anti-Doping Approval of: Financial Statements to 31 March 2021
Regular meeting (including joint meeting with Fish Legal)	16/11/2021	 Bluefin Tuna UK Campaign Business Continuity Environmental Department Update Sport England Funding Submission Wye Pollution Sport Wales Canal & River Trust ATA Catch & Release on the Severn Competitions Advisory Group Reports Half-year financial report Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Report Governance Committee Report, inc. approvals: Revised Conflicts of Interest Policy Updated Anti-Bullying Policy Updated Governance Structure Safeguarding Update Draft Clean Sport Education Strategy Nomination Committee Report
Subscribing Members AGM	27/11/2021	 Approvals: Financial Statements to 31 March 2021 Minutes of the AGM 28 November 2020 Amendment to the Subscriber Members Rules
Regular meeting (including joint meeting with Fish Legal)	23/02/2022	 Update from the Chief Policy Advisor Welsh anglers Defra funding Canoeing Membership numbers Recruitment/ restructure Audit and Risk Committee Report Risk Register

		 AT Strategy, Business Plan and Budget 2022/23 Review of the AT/FL Service Level Agreement 2022/23 Nominations Committee Report Governance Committee Report, inc. approvals: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Re-issue of Health, Safety & Welfare Policy and Handbook Retention Policy Ant-Doping Statement Safeguarding Update Sport England Funding Application Competitions Update Adoption of UKAD Anti-Doping Rules Board Self-evaluation Survey Invitation to attend Duke of Edinburgh's memorial service
Strategy Session	23/03/2022	 Detailed discussions to shape the organisation strategy for the period 2022-2026

Composition

The Board is made up of a maximum of 12 board members and comprises the Chair, Senior Independent Director, plus four Independent co-opted directors, elected by the Angling Trust Board and four Nominated Directors who are nominated by the membership. The Chief Executive Officer is the only employee of the organisation serving on the Board in an ex-officio capacity. All appointments to the Board are made on merit in line with the skills required by the Board.

The following persons served as Board members during the Reporting Period:

Role description Name George Stephenson Chair (Non-executive) Jamie Cook CEO (Executive) Mark Summerfield

SID, Co-opted Director (Non-executive)

Fish Legal Chair & Co-opted Director (Non-executive) George Graham

Sarah Collins Co-opted Director (Non-executive) **Pete Emery** Co-opted Director (Non-executive) Jonathan Callcut Co-opted Director (Non-executive) Tim Macpherson Co-opted Director (Non-executive) Nominated Director (Non-executive) Peter Neale Stephen Beverley Nominated Director (Non-executive) John Ellis Nominated Director (Non-executive) **Neville Fickling** Nominated Director (Non-executive)

Board Responsibilities

The following area of responsibility have been allocated to specific Board members:

- Anti-Doping Stephen Beverley
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion George Stephenson

- Governance Peter Neale
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Sarah Collins
- SID & Finance Mark Summerfield
- Welfare & Safety Sarah Collins

Board Recruitment

There were no vacancies for directors during 2021/22. However, the Nomination Committee led a proactive campaign to commence a search for a new Chair, as George Stephenson's third term as Chair ends in August 2022.

The Nomination Committee agreed a timeline for recruitment which aimed for the new Chair to be announced at the May 2022 Board meeting, allowing time for a handover ahead of the September 2022 meeting. Extensive advertising across a number of platforms and following consultation with recruitment specialists yielded an impressive short-list of candidates and culminated in the selection of a new Chair, with the appointment ratified in May 2022.

Board Evaluation

An internal Board Evaluation was conducted in March 2022, the results and subsequent action plan were reported to the Board in September 2022.

Remuneration

The non-executive directors are not remunerated for their services. Their time is offered freely on a voluntary basis. Reasonable travel expenses are reimbursed when supported by appropriate receipts.

Committees reporting to the Board

The Board has established the following Committees, which report directly to the Board. Each Committee has clear Terms of Reference which identify its responsibilities and any powers delegated to it by the Board

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

Composition: ARAC comprises a mix of independent members of the Angling Trust Board and Fish Legal Committee, agreed by both bodies. At least one member of ARAC shall have recent and relevant financial experience and with competence in accounting and/or auditing. It is not necessary that the Senior Independent Director of Angling Trust be a member of ARAC. ARAC may from time to time co-opt other Board or FL Committee members to assist it in fulfilling its remit. The Chief Executive Officer of Angling Trust and Fish Legal shall attend ARAC meetings ex officio at the request of ARAC.

Role: Oversight of:

- Financial Reporting
- Internal Controls and Risk Management Systems
- Compliance, Whistleblowing and Fraud
- Internal Audit
- External Audit
- Commercial Activity

Delegated Powers: ARAC is an advisory oversight Committee and does not have executive powers. It has the power to make recommendations to the Board either in favour or against expenditure or other commitment by the organisation, by majority decision to assist the Board.

Meetings in the Reporting Period:

4 May 2021

6 September 2021

2 November 2021

7 February 2022

The following persons served on ARAC during the reporting period:

Mark Summerfield (ARAC Chair)

Peter Neale

Stephen Beverley

Tim Goode (Fish Legal Committee Member)

Charles Nichols (Fish Legal Committee Member)

Simon Bourne (Fish Legal Committee Member - until January 2021)

George Stephenson (Angling Trust Chair) – open invitation

George Graham (Fish Legal Chair) - open invitation

Jamie Cook (Angling Trust & Fish Legal CEO) – in attendance

Roland Caley (Angling Trust & Fish Legal Chief Operating Officer – until December 2021) – in attendance

Nominations Committee

Composition: Chair, CEO, three Non-Executive Directors

Role: Leads process for Board appointments

Delegated Powers: Lead process for Board appointments on behalf of Board

Meetings in the Reporting Period:

5 May 2021

16 November 2021

30 November 2021

26 January 2022

30 March 2022

The following persons served on the Nominations Committee during the reporting period:

George Stephenson (AT Chair and Fish Legal Committee member)

George Graham (Fish Legal Chair and AT Director)

Sarah Collins (AT Director)

Philip Chamberlain (Fish Legal Committee member)

Jamie Cook (AT &FL CEO – co-opted for AT Chair appointment process)

Jonathan Callcut (AT Director – co-opted for AT Chair appointment process)

Governance Committee

Composition: AT Chair, AT & FL CEO or COO, two AT Non-Executive Directors, two Fish Legal Committee members, AT & FL Governance Manager

Role: To keep under review the constitutional and other governance documents, including written policies and procedures, and Terms of Reference to ensure the efficient and effective governance of the Angling Trust Ltd, Fish Legal and ACA Trustee Co Ltd

Meetings in the Reporting Period:

28 September 2021 19 January 2022

The following persons served on the Governance Committee during the reporting period:

George Stephenson (AT Chair and Fish Legal Committee member)
George Graham (Fish Legal Chair and AT Director)
Peter Neale (AT Director)
Jamie Cook (AT & FL CEO)
Roland Caley (AT & FL COO- until December 2021)
Karen Watkinson (AT & FL Governance Manager)

Advisory Groups

In addition to the Committees of the Board, there are a number of Advisory Groups which provide operational support to the CEO and Senior Management Team. The Advisory Groups are chaired by non-executive directors of the Board and each works to an agreed terms of reference. The Advisory Groups are:

- Angling Participation Advisory Committee
- Competitions Advisory Group
- Freshwater Advisory Group
- Marine Advisory Group
- Salmon and Sea Trout Advisory Group
- Staff Engagement Group

Strategy

The Board sets the strategy of the organisation. The Strategic and Business Plan for the period April 2021 to March 2022 was agreed at the Angling Trust Board meeting 24 February 2021. Further detailed discussions to agree the longer-term (2021-27) Strategy have taken place throughout the reporting period, particularly in the meeting 30 March 2022.

The Board continually monitors progress against strategy and the agreed Strategic Objectives, which for the reporting period were:

- Grow membership and fundraising income in all categories;
- To increase participation in angling in England, offer opportunities for individuals from across our society to experience the benefits of angling;
- To establish the Angling Trust as the leading lobbying organisation in the representation of fish, fishing and the aquatic environment;

- To deliver a financially sustainable programme of competitive events across saltwater, coarse and game disciplines;
- To create World-class International teams, ensuring that a minimum of 50% of total annual team and management costs are covered by sponsorship and fundraising of Team England;
- To protect and restore freshwater and marine stocks and the environments on which they depend;
- To establish the Angling Trust as the premier representative body for fishing in Wales;
- To grow financial reserves to a minimum of 6 months' core operating cost (£700k).

Risk Management

The organisation has effective processes in place to track and report on existing and emerging risks which could affect the Organisation's ability to meet its Strategic Objectives and/or cause damage to the organisation or its stakeholders. The objective is to support better decision making and management of risk through a comprehensive understanding of risks and their likely impact. This is fully detailed in the Risk Management Policy.

The Chief Executive is supported by the Senior Management Team to identify, review, monitor and report risks to ARAC and the Board.

During 2021/22 a detailed review of the Departmental Risk Registers was concluded. The result was a more streamlined Risk Register, with smaller number of strategic risks identified.

Annual General Meeting

The members of the Angling Trust meet a minimum of once per year. The Company exercises the powers vested in it by the Articles of Association and pursuant to legislation. It is not able to override the powers of the Board but has reasonable rights to consultation and constructive challenge.

In the Reporting Period the Company met as follows:

Company Meeting Description	Date
Company Annual General Meeting	23 September 2021

Subscribing Member meeting

Subscriber members meet at least once each year, in accordance with the Angling Trust Rules of Subscriber Membership. Last year's Subscriber Meeting took place on 27 November 2021. For the second year, the meeting was held virtually in recognition of the concerns over face-to-face meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no vacancies on the Board in 2021/22, therefore no voting was required. The proxy voters and those present in the meeting, supported a second term for Peter Neale, Nominated Director. A Q&A session took place, with both presubmitted and live questions being answered.

Jamie Cook introduced a series of videos highlighting areas of work undertaken by the Angling Trust.

Meeting description	Date
Subscriber member meeting	27 November 2021

CEO/Executive Team

The CEO is responsible for the operational implementation of the strategy and manages the senior management team.

Staff Survey

The Board acknowledges its duties to employees both under the Companies Act and the Code.

It conducted a Staff Survey in November 2021. 42 members of staff participated in the survey. The results were compared to the results of the 2020 and 2019 staff surveys. Participation in the survey dropped from 73% in 2020 to 65% in 2021 and SMT has been tasked to improve uptake in 2022. 97% of respondents were satisfied with working for AT/FL – up from 90% in 2020. The Staff Engagement Group (SEG) has continued to work with the Senior Management Team to look at ways to improve communications within the organisation. A successful Staff Day was held in September 2021 and provided an opportunity for staff to learn more about the future vision for the organisation and to enjoy some social time with colleagues.

Governance Framework

The organisation is committed to the Code for Sports Governance and having achieved compliance with the Code in 2017 has put in place an ongoing governance development programme to ensure that it continues to develop its governance practices and procedures. Following the review of the Code for Sports Governance, an action plan has been implemented to ensure continued compliance against the revised requirements.

Confirmation of ongoing compliance

The organisation has communicated openly with Sport England throughout the Reporting Period, and the Board has the view that the Angling Trust has maintained its status of compliant with the Code for Sports Governance.

Diversity

The Angling Trust is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and to creating a diverse environment. We work with our members and partners to enable angling to be an accessible and inclusive sport that provides opportunities for enjoyment and achievement for all.

The Angling Trust has undertaken the following activity in the Reporting Period to increase diversity:

- Continued and expanded the Building Bridges initiative to educate migrant anglers on the legalities of angling in England.
- Secured funding from the Sport England Together Fund, to build on the success of the Sport England Tackling Inequalities fund to community angling organisations, supporting people from disabled, lower socio economic and ethnically diverse communities to remain active through angling.
- Continued to support delivery programmes engaging children and young people in angling participation, as part of the Lot 1 NASS contract delivery.
- Achieved a 'met' rating for Child Protection and Safeguarding from the Child Protection in Sport Unit;
- Launched the 'We Fish as One' campaign.
- BAME interventions are currently in development.
- Launched a pilot School Engagement Programme 'Reel Education', to support the primary school curriculum.

We are endeavouring to attract more diversity into our sport, from the Board to grassroots. A number of staff members participated in the Sport England Leading for Renewal Programme, which aims to raise both awareness and skills to proactively challenge and remove barriers to inclusivity in our sport. We now have an approved five year strategy for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

All staff have been mandated to undertake the following training in the reporting period: Unconscious Bias; Equality & Diversity; Bullying Harassment & Discrimination. We are committed to increasing the diversity of staff, volunteers (including Board and committee members), participants and coaches and will carry out initiatives to encourage more women, people with disabilities and people from black and ethnic minorities to become more actively involved in all aspects of our activities.

Approved by the Board on 21st September 2022 and signed by the Chair on behalf of the Board.