

Annual Governance Statement 2022/23: The Angling Trust

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 2022 to 31 March 2023 (the "Reporting Period").

Our Vision

Promote, develop and develop angling for all.

Mission

To fight for fish, fishing and the environment, championing the joy of angling and all its benefits from grassroots to elite levels.

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

- **PASSION** – we place anglers and angling at the heart of everything we do.
- We **LISTEN** to our colleagues, members, stakeholders and the wider angling community.
- We **RESPECT** each other and ensure angling is inclusive and open to all.
- We are **ACCOUNTABLE**, transparent and strive to deliver the best for angling and the environment.
- We **COLLABORATE**, learn and grow together.
- 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/>

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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. The 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
Extra-ordinary Meeting	05/05/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of a new Chair (from September 2023)
Regular meeting	24/05/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching Update • Culture of Safeguarding • EA Contract • DEFRA – CHART Programme • Carbon Net Zero Strategy • Team England • Influencer Strategy • AT Five Year Strategy Development • Insurance • Safeguarding Update and Implementation Plan • Focus Risks • Succession Plan • Delegation of Authority • Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Report
Extra-ordinary Meeting	10/08/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance Renewal
Regular meeting (including joint meeting with Fish Legal)	21/09/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reel Education - School Programme • Conflicts of Interest (EA Contract) • Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Report • Governance Committee Report, inc. approvals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Committee Evaluation Tool ○ PD34 AT/FL Social Media Policy ○ PD63 AT/FL Code of Conduct for Directors ○ TR06 Governance Committee Terms of Reference ○ New AT/FL Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy ○ New Policy on the Passing of a Member of the Royal Family ○ Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 ○ New AT/FL Crisis Management Plan

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Board meeting description	Date	Key Discussions/ Decisions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PD15 AT Customer Complaints Procedure ○ PD41 AT Subscriber Member Rules ○ PD38 AT Memorandum & Articles of Association ○ New AT Anti-Doping Policy ○ Board Effectiveness Survey Results 2022 and associated actions ● Salmon and Sea Trout Advisory Group – Salmo Manifesto ● HMRC Trust Registration ● Competitions Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ World Championship Hosting Bid ● Welfare and Safety Update (inc. Safeguarding) ● 2021/22 Audit and Draft Accounts
Regular meeting	16/11/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Membership Update ● Funding Opportunities and Support for Clubs and Fisheries ● CEO Report ● CFO Report ● Operations Report ● Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Report ● Safeguarding Update ● Whyte Review ● Focus Risks ● Salmo Charter ● Competitions Proposal ● Allocation of Board Responsibilities ● Board Effectiveness Action Plan ● UK Anti-doping Update
Company AGM	16/11/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review of the Audit Completion Letter 2021/22
Subscribing Members AGM	26/11/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approvals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minutes of the AGM 27 November 2021 ○ Amendment to the Subscriber Members Rules ● Presentation of Financial Statements to 31 March 2022
Regular meeting	23/02/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appointment of an Interim Chair ● Chair Recruitment Process ● Strategy, Business Plan and Budget (2023/24) ● Delegation of Authority ● AT/FL Service Level Agreement 2023/24 ● Charity Status ● CEO Report

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Board meeting description	Date	Key Discussions/ Decisions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFO Report • Operations Report (inc. Welfare and Safety) • Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Report • Substance Funding Award • AT Transgender Position • EA Contract Award • Report from the Nomination Committee • Sport England Continued Compliance Statement

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:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role description</u>
George Stephenson	Chair (tenure ended 23 September 2022)
Sir Charles Walker	Chair (23 September 2022 to 30 January 2023 – resigned)
Jamie Cook	CEO
Mark Summerfield	SID, Co-opted Director
George Graham	Fish Legal Chair & Co-opted Director
Sarah Collins	Co-opted Director
Pete Emery	Co-opted Director
Jonathan Callcut	Co-opted Director
Tim Macpherson	Co-opted Director
Peter Neale	Nominated Director
Stephen Beverley	Nominated Director (appointed Interim Chair 23 February 2023)
John Ellis	Nominated Director
Neville Fickling	Nominated Director

Board Responsibilities

The following area of responsibility are allocated to specific Board members:

- Anti-Doping – Stephen Beverley
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – Chair
- Governance – Peter Neale
- Safeguarding & Child Protection – Sarah Collins
- SID & Finance – Mark Summerfield
- Welfare & Safety – Sarah Collins
- Sustainability – Jamie Cook

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Board Recruitment

The search for a replacement Chair to take over from George Stephenson at the end of his nine year tenure, culminated in the appointment of Sir Charles Walker in September 2022. Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances, Sir Charles resigned from the role in January 2023. The Board appointed Stephen Beverley to the role of Interim Chair during the search for a replacement.

Planning also commenced for the director roles which will become vacant in 2023/24.

Board Evaluation

The results of an internal Board Evaluation were reviewed by the Governance Committee and Board and an action plan was agreed, which will be monitored by the Governance Committee.

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:

5 May 2022
5 September 2022
9 November 2022
6 February 2023

The following persons served on ARAC during the reporting period:

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Mark Summerfield (ARAC Chair, Angling Trust SIN)
Peter Neale (Angling Trust NED)
Stephen Beverley (Angling Trust NED)
Tim Goode (Fish Legal Committee Member)
Charles Nichols (Fish Legal Committee Member)
Jamie Lamb (Fish Legal Committee Member)

George Stephenson (Angling Trust Chair – until September 2022) – open invitation
Sir Charles Walker (Angling Trust Chair – September 2022 – January 2023) – open invitation
George Graham (Fish Legal Chair) – open invitation

Jamie Cook (Angling Trust & Fish Legal CEO) – in attendance
Anna Neal (Angling Trust & Fish Legal Chief Finance Officer – from May 2022) – 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 April 2022
21 December 2022
7 March 2023

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

George Stephenson (AT Chair and Fish Legal Committee member – until September 2022)
Sir Charles Walker (AT Chair and Fish Legal Committee member – September 2022 to January 2023)
Stephen Beverley (AT Interim Chair – from February 2023)
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 2022 – (April 22 meeting)
Mark Summerfield (AT SID – from February 2023 for AT Chair appointment process 2023)

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:

12 September 2022

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

George Stephenson (AT Chair and Fish Legal Committee member)
Stephen Beverley (AT Interim Chair)
George Graham (Fish Legal Chair and AT Director)
Peter Neale (AT Director)
J Mark Phillips (FL Committee Member)
Jamie Cook (AT & FL CEO)
Anna Neal (AT & FL CFO)
Stuart Sharp (AT Head of Delivery)
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 2022 to March 2023 was agreed at the Angling Trust Board meeting 21 February 2022. Further detailed discussions to agree the longer-term (2023-28) Strategy have taken place throughout the reporting period, culminating in the “Fishing for Good” strategy document, published in May 2023.

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).

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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 2022/23 a facilitated workshop was held, in which the Board were asked to identify the areas of 'Focus Risk' and agree the reporting arrangements against the identified risks. Building on the work to streamline the department risk registers in 2021/22, the risk register is now used as a management tool in the monthly progress meetings with department heads.

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	16 November 2022

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 26 November 2022. After two years of virtual meetings, there was a return to a meeting in person. Turnout was disappointing, however those in attendance enjoyed a number of talks and workshops, highlighting the wide-ranging work and achievements of the different departments.

There were no nominated vacancies on the Board in 2022/23, therefore no election took place. The proxy voters and those present in the meeting, approved the minutes of the 2021 Subscriber Members AGM and supported minor changes to the Subscriber Member Rules. A Q&A session took place, with both pre-submitted and live questions being answered.

Meeting description	Date
Subscriber member meeting	26 November 2022

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.

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The annual Staff Survey was conducted in November 2022. The results were compared to the results of the 2021, 2020 and 2019 staff surveys. The Staff Engagement Group (SEG) has continued to work with the Senior Management Team to look at ways to improve communications within the organisation. Another successful Staff Day was held in September 2022 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. We await the results of the 2023 Factcheck Questionnaire to assess our compliance against the new requirements of the Code. 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, submitting a confirmation of compliance statement.

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.
- Using 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;
- 'We Fish as One' campaign continues.
- BAME interventions are currently in development.
- 'Reel Education', to support the primary school curriculum.
- Statement to the effect that we encourage under-represented groups to apply for vacancies included in adverts and Job Descriptions

Following the publication of our five year strategy for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, work has been undertaken to update our Equality Policy and replace with an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. This work included stakeholder consultation in order to best represent our members and community.

We have continued our commitment to mandating all undertake the following training: Unconscious Bias; Equality & Diversity; Bullying Harassment & Discrimination; Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk. 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.

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Approved by the Board on 12 December 2023 and signed by the Chair on behalf of the Board.

Eric Prescott, Chair