



# Water Quality Monitoring Network Campaigning Guide

## Challenging the pollution crisis

The Water Quality Monitoring Network (WQMN) has two aims ...

- To engage anglers and angling clubs in better understanding the state of their waters.
- To empower anglers and angling clubs to address the pollution blighting their waters.

The WQMN data has already demonstrated that a significant proportion of our waters across England and Wales are experiencing ongoing persistent pollution. This is not unexpected given that under the last Water Framework Directive assessment only 14% of rivers in England achieve Good Ecological Status<sup>\*1</sup> and none achieved Good Chemical Status.



**Pollution on the Medway in Kent**

Whilst the WQMN data does not necessarily identify the actual sources of pollution, in its annual report on progress against the targets set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan DEFRA identifies the major pressures that cause water bodies to fail to achieve Good Ecological Status. The most recent progress report indicates that after the physical modification of rivers (a factor unavoidable in many urban environments), the main three drivers preventing water bodies achieving Good Ecological Status are ...

1. agricultural pollution (affecting 40% of water bodies),
2. sewage and wastewater (affecting 36% of water bodies),
3. and run-off from towns, cities, and transport, referred to as urban diffuse pollution (affecting 18% of water bodies).

Having recognised that their waters are polluted what can anglers and angling clubs do to address the pollution and its sources?

In some cases, it might be possible to undertake practical habitat work that reduces or intercepts pollution before it enters our waterways; or instream habitat enhancements that can help to mitigate the effects of pollution. The Angling Trust, in collaboration with a range of other organisations, will be providing guidance and advice on how to undertake such habitat works.

However, in many cases the causes of poor water quality and sources of pollution will be outside the control or remit of angling clubs and therefore angling clubs will need to undertake local campaigns to highlight the issues and to demand action from government, regulators, and polluters.

This short guide is designed to help angling clubs successfully campaign for better water quality and to challenge the pollution crisis.

[\*1 Good Ecological Status (GES) is a metric for assessing the health of the water environment. It is assigned using various water flow, habitat, and biological quality tests. Failure to meet any one individual test means that the whole water body fails to achieve good ecological status. This indicator, and the statutory framework that supports it, have been retained in UK law after the UK's departure from the European Union.]

### Collaboration

Whilst angling is the one of the largest participation sports in Britain, with around 2m people taking part annually, our voice will always be stronger and louder if we work with other interested parties to campaign for cleaner rivers and waterways. Many other water users and the wider community are appalled by the state of our waters and share the same goal, an end to pollution. Building a coalition of partners helps to achieve that goal.

Other interested parties may include:

- conservationists
- ornithologists
- tackle shops
- fisheries
- riparian owners
- boat trip and canoe/boat hire companies
- local shops, pubs, restaurants, and accommodation providers
- riverside residents and communities
- dog walkers
- wild swimmers
- canoeists and paddleboarders
- boaters



Avonvale River Action Group on World Rivers Day

Interested organisations may include:

- local Rivers Trust
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- British Trust for Ornithology
- local Wildlife Trust
- Parish Council
- Town/District Council
- Women's Institute
- Chamber of Commerce
- British Canoeing  
(where your river is navigable)

Campaigning organisations include:

- Surfers Against Sewage
- River Action UK
- Sustain
- Thames 21
- Soil Association

Before starting your own campaign, does one already exist that you can join?

## Building a Campaign

Before starting to write a press release or calling your local MP you will need to:

- 1. Agree the campaign objective**
- 2. Develop the campaign strategy and tactics**
- 3. Formulate a plan**
- 4. Recruit and organise resources**
- 5. Come up with a name and personality for the campaign**

### 1. Agree the campaign objective

It is important to be clear about what you are campaigning for and what you want to have achieved at the end of the campaign, the objectives.

Clear objectives will help you to focus the campaign, will inform your plan, and help recruit the right support and funding.

The objectives will relate to what the WQMN results have revealed. If the causes of pollution are primarily the water industry, then the campaign might focus on reducing untreated sewage discharges or better water treatment. If the causes are primarily agricultural then the campaign might focus on more farm advisory visits, enforcement, and prosecution.

Example:

*The campaign objective is to return the river .... to its natural state by 2035. To see an end damaging discharges from the ..... STWs, ensure that all farmers in the catchment are operating within the Farming Rules for Water, and to create a riparian habitat that is more resilient to pollution and its effects.*

## 2. Develop the campaign strategy and tactics

The campaign strategy clarifies what you need to do to achieve the campaign objective.

Example:

*The angling club in collaboration with the local community will use the results of the WQMN to demand action from the local water company and Environment Agency to address the sources of pollution whilst undertaking practical habitat improvements that prevent pollution entering the river or mitigate its effects.*

The campaign tactics define how you will realise the campaign strategy.

Example:

- *Issue press release*
- *Write to Water Company and EA*
- *Run community event*
- *Meet with Rivers Trust*
- ...

## 3. Formulate a plan

In simple terms the plan should define:

- For each tactic
- who is responsible
- and when will it be done?

Tactic	Responsibility	Timeline
How will you realise the campaign strategy?	Who is going to be responsible for managing and delivering the activity?	When will the activity be undertaken or completed?

All tactics should contribute to achieving the campaign strategy and help realise the campaign objective. Don't sweat every detail, particularly activities that won't happen for some time as things will change and the plan will need to reflect that.

Example:

Tactic	Responsibility	Timeline	Completed
<i>Issue press release highlighting the poor state of the river</i>	<i>Tony</i>	<i>Press release send by mid September</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Write to water company requesting meeting to discuss sewage discharges and plans to address them</i>	<i>Jim</i>	<i>Letter to be sent by end of September.</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Write to EA highlighting the farms of concern and requesting the Farm Advisers visit as a priority</i>	<i>Mary</i>	<i>Letter to be sent by end of September.</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Organise event to communicate pollution issues to the wider community</i>	<i>Bob</i>	<i>Event to be run during first week in October.</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Arrange meeting with Rivers Trust to explore habitat projects</i>	<i>Laura</i>	<i>Meeting to be held by end of October.</i>	<i>No</i>

Review progress and revise the plan on a regular basis to ensure delivery and keep it relevant.

#### 4. Recruit and organise resources

Campaigns don't just happen, they need committed people to make them happen. You will need people with a range of skills and capabilities and a mix of different experience.

Having a clear plan will help you identify the sort of people you need to involve or how best to deploy the people you already have.

Successful campaigns need:

- **Leaders**                      Someone who owns the objective and strategy, acts as a figurehead, and communicates passionately.
- **Creatives**                    People who are good at coming up with ideas and new approaches.
- **Networkers**                 People who are good at connecting with others and building coalitions.
- **Communicators**            People who can articulate the campaign in a clear and compelling way, both in writing and verbally.
- **Organisers**                 People who are good at planning and organising.
- **Doers**                         People who are happy to get stuck in and make things happen.
- **Fundraisers**                People who are good at applying for grants and raising money.

### 6. Come up with a name and personality for the campaign

A short pithy name that sums up what you are trying to achieve will help to communicate the campaign objective and grab people's attention.

Examples:

- *Windrush Against Sewage Pollution WASP* (Cotswold Rivers)
- *Up Sewage Creek* (River Severn)
- *Avonvale River Action Group* (Warwickshire Avon)
- *Nidd Action Group* (River Nidd)
- *Ilkley Clean River Group* (River Wharfe)
- *Windermere Lake Recovery* (Windermere)
- *End Sewage Pollution* (River Thames)
- *Recovering Our Rivers* (Herefordshire Wildlife Trust)
- *Clean It Up* (The Times)
- *Save Britain's Rivers* (i News / New Scientist)
- *Better Rivers – An End To Pollution* (Soil Association)

Every campaign has a 'personality' that typically reflects the values and culture of the organisation running it. The campaign's personality will inform the tone of voice of campaign communications, branding, style, and approach.

Examples:



#### Windrush Against Sewage Pollution

The campaign is serious, data and evidence led, based on a science based analytical approach.

<https://www.windrushwasp.org/>



#### Surfers Against Sewage and the End Sewage Pollution Coalition

The campaign has a younger feel, is more radical and activist.

<https://www.sas.org.uk/>



#### Up Sewage Creek

The campaign has a more informal, community feel. Protest led.

<https://www.upsewagecreek.com/>

## Campaigning Options

There are a number of ways to make people aware of the pollution crisis facing your waters and to demand action to address it:

- a. **Press releases**
- b. **Letters to the editor**
- c. **Letters to MPs**
- d. **Social media**
- e. **Events and protests**

The media won't come and find you, you need to go out and engage the media and create a compelling reason for them to want to talk to you and present your position. Press releases are a great way to engage with print and broadcast journalists, but it is always at the journalist's discretion as to whether they are picked up, published, or broadcast. It is important to keep an eye on the media and to see what coverage other campaigners are getting.

Members of Parliament are supposed to represent their constituencies and the concerns of their constituents. Writing to your MP can help to make them aware of the issue and to garner their support.

Social media gives you more control and can be a great way to bypass the mainstream media and get straight to the audience and may also be picked up by journalists.

Events and protests help to give the campaign a greater profile and can attract the attention of journalists.

### a. **Formulating a press release**

The following will help you to formulate an effective press release that will get journalists attention.

#### 1. **Create a compelling headline**

The headline needs to grab the journalists and the audience's attention. Keep it short and to the point and make sure it tells the story in one line. Include any keywords.

#### 2. **Formulate a newsworthy angle**

Every good news story has an angle, or in other words, a perspective that your story will take. By setting up a clear perspective, you can attract more journalists looking for something newsworthy.



Great angles can include:

- Local impact - how is your story impacting the local community?
- Conflict - is your press release giving another side to a conflict?
- Progress - is your press release highlighting progress made towards a specific problem?
- Drama - does your press release evoke an emotional response for readers?

### 3. Summarise the key elements succinctly

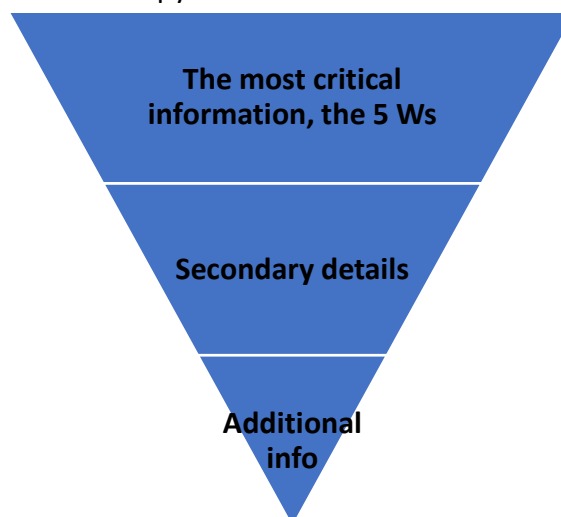
Some press releases employ a one sentence/paragraph summary or bullet points at the start of the release to summarise the essential details. It makes it easier for the journalists to grasp the story and the angle.

- Keep bullet points to 1–3 medium-length concise sentences.
- Incorporate the 5 Ws – Who is the story about. What is happening. Where is it happening. When will/did it occur. Why is it important.
- Add keywords and supporting keywords.
- Help the reader understand the story.
- Make the angle clear.
- Get the reader excited to learn more (e.g. state a question).

### 4. Put your most important information first

An effective press release format follows the ‘inverted pyramid’:

- 1) **The most critical information, the 5 Ws** – Who is the story about? What is happening? Where is it happening? When will/did it occur? Why is it important?
- 2) **Secondary details** – Quotes and other details in descending order of importance.
- 3) **Additional info** – Supporting information. Dates and times for events. Contact details.



### 5. Add media contact details

Reporters / journalists will need to know who to contact for more details. This section is provided at the end of a press release.

Make sure to include the following details:

- Point of contact - this should be a name and job title for who to reach.
- Email address - give them the best one to reach the preferred point of contact. You could also include a mailing address.
- Phone number - in case they'd like to call, rather than email.

# New moves to track down river polluters

THOSE responsible for polluting the rivers and waterways have been warned - steps are being taken to trace who you are.

Members of Mottam St Andrew Fly Fishing Club say that the River Bollin, which they use, is unfit for humans to enter or pets to swim in.

They are taking part in a scheme to monitor water quality and test levels of pollutants such as phosphate and nitrate as well as electro conductivity.

Results can then be shared online as part of a national network set up by the Angling Trust and supported by the Grayling Society.

And Ron Taylor, chairman of the fishing club, says the data can be used to help trace the source of the pollution and

change environmentally unfriendly practices.

Ron, also a conservation officer for the Grayling Trust, said: "For anglers along with all others who enjoy our rivers are entitled to expect the water to be clean, this initiative is a very positive step."

"The target may be a long way off but recommendations for change need evidence to support them which angling clubs can help to provide by involvement in this scheme."

"The disgusting behaviour of those responsible the lack of understanding of the general public and other contributors can be addressed relying on accurate readings over a significant period and armed with evidence of the trends in pollution

which will be exposed."

The group says that waste can also be dumped in both the River Bollin and Dean and also bad farming practices add pollution.

In addition that there is also a lack of enforcement action from the government and other authorities that is failing to address the problem.

Ron has now appealed for other groups to get involved.

He said: "The time has long since arrived for local people and groups to get involved both with hands on action and applying pressure using all the platforms modern technology provides."

"All angling clubs with access to rivers in our region and nationally for that matter, ought to be joining the network to help

accurately expose the state of our rivers."

"The evidence of early readings taken by the clubs volunteers from the Bollin indicate that the river is polluted and unfit for humans to enter or for that matter pets to swim in."

Any groups who join the project will be given test kits at a nominal cost and the necessary training.

The tests will need to be taken at least monthly and take no more than half an hour to be carried out.

Electro conductivity measures how polluted a river is because water conducts electricity easier the more dissolved substances it contains.

Anyone interested in participating can contact Kris Kent at the Angling Trust at [Kristian.Kent@anglingtrust.net](mailto:Kristian.Kent@anglingtrust.net).



● Anglers say the River Bollin is unfit for humans to enter

Article in local paper as result of angling club campaign

## b. Writing to the editor

Where other parties (government, regulators, water companies, farmers etc) have got positive media coverage for their cause, particularly in print media, it is worth writing to the editor, most magazines and newspapers have a letters page, to present the campaigns side of the argument. This is particularly important if the coverage is inaccurate, misleading, or biased. If you don't set the record straight, then people will assume the original article was correct. It may also generate an opportunity to put the campaigns side of the argument across in a further article or broadcast.

### Successful letters to the editor

- Keep it short and simple, no more than 300 words.
- Avoid jargon and keep the language simple.
- Be opinionated but don't rant.
- Don't be afraid to be contentious; let your feelings be heard, newspapers like that.
- Name drop! Politicians will keep a careful eye on when and where their name is mentioned in the media. If you include the name of your MP or another key decision-maker, you can guarantee that they, or at least someone from their office, will take notice.
- Aim for a start, a middle and an end
  - Start - tell the reader what you're talking about. Put a hook in if you have one.
  - Middle - some facts about the issue.
  - End - what can the reader do? A call to action - or just to think about the issue.

If the media in question doesn't publish letters in this way but you feel that the coverage was inaccurate, misleading, or biased then writing a letter of complaint may be an alternative approach. This can sometimes result in corrections being published or present an opportunity to present your side of the argument.

## c. Writing to your MP

As a constituent, your views and interests are a priority to your Member of Parliament. Writing to your MP is an important way to ensure that they are aware of your concerns and take action to end the pollution crisis. You can do this by email or by letter. Writing to your MP is a great place to start in order to build a relationship with your MP.

### Who is my MP?

To find your MP go to ... <https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons>

### 5 top tips for writing to your MP:

#### 1. Use the right address

Guidance on contacting your MP can be found at ...

<https://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-an-mp-or-lord/contact-your-mp/>

If it's easier to drop a letter into your MP's constituency office by hand, that address can usually be found on their website.

#### 2. Keep it simple

When writing to or emailing your MP, it's best to be as brief, succinct, and clear as possible. An introduction outlining why pollution is important to you, a bit on the impact it has, with a final note on what you want the MP to do is ideal. Avoid using technical terminology as much as possible. For an MP, no more than 3-4 paragraphs is best. As MPs do have a high volume of correspondence, it's good to be as clear and concise as possible. Before you write your letter, it's a good idea to have a look at the MP's website if they have one, or their voting record in parliament. You may be able to reference some of the issues they're interested in, or a particular time they supported efforts to address pollution. Mentioning something they're interested in or have done in the past can help your letter to stand out and make them more likely to take action.

#### 3. Tell a personal story

If you have personally experienced pollution, in any form, that gives you knowledge and expertise that your MP is quite unlikely to have themselves. If you feel comfortable with sharing some of what you experienced in that time, it can make a big impact on how an MP acts. That isn't the only way to talk about the issue from a personal perspective though.

#### 4. Use good information to support your email or letter

MPs are strongly motivated by issues of concern to their constituency and to their constituents, but they have a huge number of issues to think about on a day-to-day basis. They may also carry their own personal biases. As a constituent you can play an important role in shaping their views and teaching them more about the issue of pollution. When writing a letter as a constituent, it's also a good idea to talk about your local area, as that is where your MP's main interests lie.

#### 5. Have a clear action for your MP to take

It's great to use your email or letter to raise awareness of the issue of pollution, but it's always best to use it as an opportunity to tell your MP exactly what it is you want them to do.

There are lots of ways an MP can make an impact, so you can ask them to:

- Speak about river pollution in Parliament.
- Submit written questions.
- Table a debate on pollution or any related concerns you have.
- Write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, or Defra Ministers with responsibilities for the water industry or agriculture, on your behalf.
- Write to your Local Authority's Chief Executive, local water companies CEO, Ofwat or Defra on your behalf.
- Participate in campaign events in Parliament hosted by the Angling Trust or other relevant campaigning organisations.
- Attend a constituency event or protest.

#### Dos and Don'ts

- Do include your own Address and Postcode so the MP knows that you are one of their constituents.
- Do get other members from the club to write similar letters to the MP. This will add weight to your campaign.
- Don't just send 'cut & paste' emails or letters. They are too generic and easily ignored.

#### MP Surgeries

MPs hold regular surgeries to meet constituents and discuss local issues. They are normally by appointment. It is a good idea to follow up your letter(s) to the MP by making an appointment to discuss the campaign in person.

## MP Titles

As a rule of thumb, 'Rt Hon.' (short for Right Honourable) is only used if your MP is a Secretary of State or has previously been one (once given the title, they keep it forever, even if they return to the backbenches). Otherwise, you usually don't need to do anything except add 'MP' to the end of their name when writing to them. There are a few exceptions; for example, if the MP has received an Honour from the Queen, they may use the title of 'Sir' or 'Dame'. MPs who have a parent who has served or who is serving in the House of Lords are also able to use the title 'The Hon.' (short for The Honourable) but are unlikely to expect you to know that! If you're not sure, it is usually best to check online.

You could also contact a member of the House of Lords

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/lords/whos-in-the-house-of-lords/get-in-touch-with-members/>

Sometimes your MP might not be the best person to contact. MPs and members of the Lords can usually only help with issues that are the responsibility of the UK Parliament. Often the right person to contact will be a local councillor, the Citizens Advice, or an ombudsman. Depending on the issue, if you live in Scotland, Wales, or Northern Ireland you may need to contact your MSPs, MSs or MLAs.

<https://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-an-mp-or-lord/who-should-i-contact/>

## d. Using social media

Social media offers a powerful way of presenting the campaign's position. It's a great way of showing the wider world how much you are doing to restore and protect your waterways.



It is important to think carefully about how you are going to use social media and to have a plan:

### 1. Where is your audience?

Before you set up a new Facebook page or X account first think about who you want to be communicating with and which social media platforms they are using. Also think about which platforms other parties are using. Journalists source a lot of their material from social media, particularly X (formerly Twitter)

### 2. Build a presence on the right platforms

Once you know which platforms your audience are using you can set up accounts and create pages if you haven't already.

### 3. Formulate a plan

What are you trying to achieve? Setting a goal or target will help you to focus efforts and identify the right. How are you going to achieve your goal? What sort of content will help you reach your goal and how often do you need to post content. Little and often is more likely be more effective than a long post once in a while.

### 4. Post regularly and effectively

Don't wait for something post worthy to happen, generate regular content that supports your strategy. A picture paints a thousand words, photos and videos are more impactful than just a paragraph of text. Keep posts short and to the point. If you want people to do something as a result of reading the post (fill out a petition, attend an event, write to their MP), make sure there is a clear call to action.



A clear call to action and visible hashtag

## 5. Tag relevant organisations and people

Tagging, mentioning, @ing... call it what you will, interacting with other people by including them in your posts is fundamental to the way social media works. A common mistake on social media is using these platforms as a one-way street, purely to broadcast information. Above all, social media is about being sociable, and getting the most out of it requires a significant degree of interaction with other accounts - whether that's other campaigns, local MPs, journalists, supporters, and influencers.

You can even tag the Environment Agency and local water companies or other polluters, so they are aware of your campaigns.

Tagging is a powerful tool for facilitating this interaction, and it can help boost your social media presence in three important ways:

- **Increase engagement** - when you tag someone, the chances are that they'll re-share your post to their own followers. This has the potential to widen the reach of your post significantly, spreading the word about your campaign.
- **Strengthen partnerships** - tagging people is an effective way to build relationships online, particularly with other campaigns that complement yours, as you help them gain more exposure as well as benefiting from extra exposure when they tag you.
- **Acknowledge contributions** - if someone's played a key role in your campaign, tagging them on social media is both polite and a great way to acknowledge their contribution.

**Always tag the Angling Trust - @anglingtrust**

## 6. Use Hashtags to boost the campaigns reach and engagement

Hashtags are words and numbers following the # symbol that categorize and track content on social media. You can add hashtags to social posts, bios, and comments on most social media platforms. Using hashtags is essentially a way to group together conversations or content around a certain topic, making it easy for people to find content that interests them. If you are using social media to promote your campaign, then you should use hashtags.

**Always hashtag the Angling Trust, the Anglers Against Pollution campaign and the WQMN - #anglingtrust #anglersagainstpollution #WQMN**

## 7. Reposting and sharing

Encourage your network to like and follow the campaign page, like campaign posts and to share/repost campaign posts to their personal feeds.

### **8. Direct message journalists and influencers**

Don't wait for journalists and other key influencers to find your campaign, direct message them to highlight your campaign and to encourage them to engage with you. Keep it short and pithy and incorporate the 5 Ws – Who is the story about. What is happening. Where is it happening. When will/did it occur. Why is it important.

### **9. Respond promptly to comments and direct messages**

Check your accounts every day and always respond to people comments, it shows you are interested and engaged. If people direct message you, respond immediately or send a holding message until you are able to do so.

### **10. Don't ignore criticism**

Not everyone is going to like what you say or do, or agree with your views and opinions. Don't take it personally. Ignoring people won't make them go away, show that you value their position, address their concerns or points of view factually and with well-founded arguments.

## **Responding to questions**

Finally, when dealing with the media or engaging with other parties you will have to deal with questions. Thinking through the sorts of questions you may be asked in advance will help you to prepare and provide factual, compelling, and persuasive responses.

Before doing an interview, it is worth rehearsing with a colleague or family member. Think of the questions you might get asked and ask your colleague or family member to play the role of the journalist. Then with them, rehearse your answers.

Try and make the main point you want to get across the first thing you say in your answer. Try and keep your answer short and to the point. Avoid jargon and technical or scientific language. Try and remember that you are talking to a person who knows nothing about the issue and speak to them in a way they would understand.



## e. Events and Protests

Events are a great way to promote the campaign to a wider audience. They can be formal affairs with an agenda and speakers making presentations or they can be informal get togethers where interested parties can come together and find out more about the campaign, share experiences and get involved.



Protest at Manningtree against sewage pollution in the Stour

Whilst both formal and informal events will need a degree of organisation formal events will need more coordination.

### Formal events



Severn Pollution Meeting held at Shrewsbury

You will need to think about:

- **Funding** – events will normally incur some costs (venue hire, postage, promotion, catering etc). Do you have campaign funds to cover these costs, or do you need to raise funds first? You could make a charge or ask for donations on the night, or perhaps find a sponsor.
- **Venue** – you will need somewhere to hold the event, big enough to comfortably accommodate the expected number of attendees and with the necessary facilities.
- **Speakers** – who should you invite to speak at the event? Who has something interesting to say in support of the campaign? Do you want to invite representatives from all sides of the debate or just supporters of the campaign?
- **Agenda** – you will need to organise the speakers and other elements of the event in some sort of order. It is useful to have a beginning (welcome, housekeeping, introductions, agenda) a middle (presentations grouped in a logical order) and an end (summary, conclusions, next steps and thank yous)
- **Invitations** – if you want specific people to attend it is best to ask them personally and follow up with an invitation. You might want to invite the local MP or local councillors, the press, and media.
- **Promotion** – you will need to tell people the event is happening. Social media is a great way to share the event. You can also put-up posters and encourage word of mouth. Let the Angling know what you are doing so that we can promote it.
- **Set up and clear down** – you will need help setting the venue up before hand and with clearing up afterwards.
- **Audio visual equipment** – if people are making presentations, you will need a PC, projector and screen, speakers etc. Sometimes these come with the venue or can be hired if you don't have them. Do you want to record the event or maybe even livestream it so that you can reach an even wider audience?
- **Catering** – do you want to provide teas and coffees or something to eat, maybe even a drink? It might encourage people to come or to stay on afterwards. Some venues will have facilities you can use, or they can organise it for you.
- **Publicity** – if you want to share what happened at the event afterwards you might want to organise someone to take photos or video the event. If the press or media didn't attend the event you can send out a press release detailing what happened.
- **Outputs and outcomes** – do you need to produce a summary of what happened at the event, anything that was discussed or agreed, any next steps or future campaign activities?

## Informal events

There can be many opportunities for a campaign to run informal events that help engage a wider audience and raise awareness of the issue and the campaign. These might include:

- Local village fetes, shows or country fairs.
- Festivals
- Sporting events
- Farmers markets
- Store events

The best opportunities are those with a high footfall and where the attendees are likely to be sympathetic to, or interested in, your cause.

You will need to think about:

- **Booking** – at most of the above opportunities you won't be able to just turn up, you will need to book in advance. Some shows will charge but may make exceptions for charities or not-for-profit organisations/campaigns.
- **Facilities** – are facilities (tents, tables, chairs, power, wi-fi etc) provided by the organisers or do you need to organise these?
- **Weather forecast** – for outdoor events weather can have a huge impact. If you expect volunteers to be outdoors all day in the summer sun, you will need shelter and hydration. If it is wet and cold volunteers will need shelter, warm clothing, and a hot drink.
- **Volunteers** – you are going to need people to man the stand and answer people's questions. You will need enough volunteers to cover the duration of the event and allow people to have a break.
- **Standing out** – at bigger shows it is all too easy to get lost in the crowd. How can you make your stand, stand out?
- **Promotional materials/handouts** – if the campaign has a name is it worth printing the name on a gazebo, banner, pop-up banner, t-shirts for volunteers etc? You can only deal with so many people and share so much information at an event. Having a handout can help to provide more information. If the campaign has a website/social media page include a QR code on the materials so that people can quickly link to the website/social media page.
- **Fundraising and Donations** – events can be a great fundraising opportunity. If you are using the event to raise funds you may need some petty cash. In an increasingly cashless society do you have an electronic way of accepting donations or paying for raffle tickets etc?

### Why Protest?

The time may come when you want to organise people to protest around your issue. Protest is an important and effective tool to both bring increased attention to your issue. Protest also has the benefit of adding individuals and resources to the wider campaign.

### Nine steps to organising a protest

#### 1. Build a team you can trust

As you begin to organise your protest, the more like-minded friends and community members you have at your side, the better! Reach out and ask if they want to help you organise. Seek out local or regional organisations who work on your issue and invite them to organize with you.

#### 2. Identify your goals

Ask yourselves what you are trying to achieve through the protest. Are you trying to build awareness? Do you aim to build a larger coalition to continue work on your issue? Are you trying to be seen and heard by an elected official or influential figure? Be clear with yourself and others about the objectives behind your actions. This will help you develop the best strategy, and later reflect on elements that can be improved.

#### 3. Define your strategy

With your goals in mind, try to imagine the most effective protest to achieve those goals and focus on making that protest happen. Ask yourselves: when and where will you hold the protest and why? What type of protest is required to achieve your goal? The most common modes of protest are marches and rallies. But protests can take many forms: sit-ins, walk-outs, or vigils.

#### 4. Check whether you need to contact the authorities

Learn what local authorities require for public demonstrations in your community. You can often find specific permit requirements and guidelines on your local government's website or by calling your town hall. Do you need a permit and what are its requirements? Are there restrictions such as amplified sound restrictions or fines for littering? When talking to the authorities, don't shy from being clear about your needs, for example, to clear a road of traffic or provide a portable toilet. You be the judge if you should adhere to the terms of the local requirements; violating those terms could invite confrontation, which your invitees may not be interested in or prepared for at all. Make it clear to the authorities, and your supporters, that safety is a priority. Ask the authorities to maintain contact during the protest, and tell them how to do so.

### 5. Get the word out

Assuming your objective is to have the largest turnout possible, you will reach more people by diversifying your outreach. You may want a versatile graphic to draw people's eyes to your invitations. Why not incorporate the Anglers Against Pollution logo to tie it into the Angling Trust's wider campaign. Get the word out through every social media channel that will reach your intended audience, and don't forget the Angling Trust social media channels. (One of the benefits of working with an established group like the Angling Trust is it broaden your social media reach.) Put up posters where people can see them like public bulletin boards and lamp posts. Ask shops if you can put posters up in their windows. But nothing beats face-to-face outreach. Time permitting, visiting neighbours, and personally inviting them with fliers in hand is a highly effective way of growing a protest. Let the Angling Trust know about your protest so we can promote it.

### 6. Have a plan for being visible

Invite local television stations, newspapers, radio stations, and bloggers to your protest. Tell them what's special about your protest and give them the most precise information about the protest you can. Encourage your invitees to post videos and photos to social media and give them a hashtag.

### 7. Build community

Every stage of protest planning is an opportunity to build solidarity and community. Keep an intentional lens on inclusion and intersection. Invite a wider circle of friends over for planning meetings. Sign-making parties are a great way to build relationships in advance of your protest.

### 8. Leave no trace

Leaving a mess is not a good look for your team or your cause. Make sure people know your expectations up front about discarding signs and literature. Set an example by picking up litter from your group. When you see someone littering, point them to the nearest garbage can.

### 9. Learning from experiences

You want to learn from your experiences, so you do an even better job organizing your next protest. After your team has had some time to reflect (but not too long after your protest) get your organizing team together to discuss how the protest went. Review how you did with each of the ten steps. Document the conversation for the next time you plan a protest. And finally, be proud of what you have accomplished; you organized your first protest.

### Other good practices

- **Keep up the momentum**

Your protest is likely to draw many new folks who want to get further involved in the cause. Use the protest to make sure they know what the next action is. Hand out flyers for your next meeting or for another protest. If you don't have an immediate next step for them, get your clipboards out and collect email addresses with the promise of further action.

- **Get creative**

Find a time or location that helps bolster your message. Be theatrical if you want; great photos spread faster and help get your message out. Puppets, themed costumes, or other artistic expressions help draw attention.

- **Go deep on your strategy**

You may be trying to influence a politician or other influential figure. If this figure has not responded to protest in the past, consider another approach. Everyone with power draws that power from someone else (donors, for example). You may want to consider protesting the origin of their power, for example, protesting a politician's top donor or a university president's allies on the board of directors.

- **Be Spontaneous**

If a protest is not pre-planned or expected by authorities, it can draw urgency to your cause and, as it grows, can give a feeling of momentum. Of course, to draw a crowd and the press to a spontaneous protest, more work will have to be done in a shorter amount of time.



Supported by:

**ORVIS**<sup>®</sup>



The Grayling Society

***Flambeau***<sup>®</sup>  
Est. 1947



Esmée  
Fairbairn  
FOUNDATION



Angling Trust, Eastwood House, 6 Rainbow Street, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8DQ

Email: [admin@anglingtrust.net](mailto:admin@anglingtrust.net)

Tel: 0343 507 7006