

Fisheries Improvement Programme 2026

Phase 2

Guidance for applicants

June 2026

Every year the Environment Agency will reinvest over £1M in projects to support clubs, fisheries and other partners to improve local fish stocks and angling opportunities.

The Fisheries Improvement Programme (FIP) is funded from the coarse, trout and eel fishing licence income and provides a direct benefit to anglers. We have already supported over 200 projects developed by angling clubs and other partners.

This note is aimed at highlighting a further opportunity to award funds to additional projects which can be completed before March 2027.

Be aware that there is limited extra budget and time available to deliver projects so only apply if your works are a priority and 'ready to go'. Even then in some cases we may be unable to support immediately and good projects may have to wait until after April 2027 to commence.

Who can apply?

We welcome project proposals from clubs, fisheries, NGOs, local authorities or other community organisations involved in angling.

To be eligible, the projects must be in England and involve a form of angling covered by an Environment Agency non-migratory trout and coarse fishing licence. Projects only benefiting salmon or sea trout, and sea angling projects cannot apply.

We welcome proposals from river, canal and stillwater fisheries. If you do not own or manage a water, you may still apply, but should obtain in advance the permission of the organisation who leases the venue.

We particularly encourage proposals from small angling clubs with limited finances; usually run by volunteers and with smaller needs. Our support could make a real difference for the survival of these clubs and a limited investment could result in the turnaround in their fortunes and an increase in membership.

It is not necessary to be an Angling Trust member club or affiliated organisation to apply.

What can you apply for?

To be considered a project must provide angling benefits and the water where the project is planned must be fished. We will prioritise applications from clubs with open membership or fisheries selling day tickets to maximise the number of rod licence holders benefitting. The funding criteria is as follows-

1) Sustainable and resilient fisheries: maintain, improve and develop fisheries to address impacts and pressures, including -

- **Coarse, trout and eel habitat and fish passage projects:** these are the key reasons for sub-optimal fish stocks.
- **Proactive management of prolonged dry weather and/or climate impacts:** including equipment to monitor water quality and limit the impact of an incident. Ideally aim to identify and address the underlying causes of distressed fish.

2) Accessible angling: providing better angling access and safe facilities for all, including -

- **Angling infrastructure:** new and upgraded platforms, pegs and pathways for rivers and stillwaters. Considering the needs of less able-bodied anglers and health/well-being benefits. Support for the installation of facilities like toilets, storage facilities, signage and security.

- **Community and urban fisheries:** develop and manage fisheries in local areas where a need and interest has been identified (may require both habitat and access work).

We will not pay for new or replacement fish stocks.

We also reinvest licence income to deliver the [Angling Improvement Fund](#) (focusing on otter/cormorant predation and biosecurity), and the [Get Fishing Fund](#) (angling participation) are administered on our behalf by the Angling Trust. Do not use FIP to apply for funding proposals covered by these funds.

How to proceed

We cannot stress enough the importance of engaging with your local fisheries officer- it is much better to discuss your plans taking on board any advice, before applying, rather than just submitting a speculative idea.

It is good practice for a club or fishery owner to have a management plan setting out actions to improve the venue and stocks and therefore identifying where and how FIP investment is needed. A more general club development plan that could be used is available [here](#).

Log onto the [portal](#) and complete the online application form. Answer all the questions as this will enable us to assess your project, we are looking to fund works where there is a good understanding of the need and benefits. We must be confident that the work required can be safely delivered on budget and to time.

All communication will be with the main contact person as detailed on the form, by email or by phone.

The Portal will be only open for four weeks so please prepare project specifications, quotes and ensure you have the relevant permissions. DON'T DELAY.

Successful applicants will be required to sign a project agreement and accept our Terms and Conditions (T&C's) governing the delivery of the project. In some circumstances, offers may be made for less than the amount applied for.

If you have taken time to submit a project proposal we will read each and every one and consider how best to take forward the work. We realise that anglers are passionate about their sport and we want to support you and together we can make fisheries better for all.

Key Dates

Date	What is required
3 August 2026	On-line project portal hosted by the Angling Trust opens. When a proposal has been submitted it will be checked and applicants may be contacted to clarify information.
28 August 2026	Portal closes only projects received by this date will be considered for funding.
By 30 September 2026	Project are reviewed and a decision on whether to fund or not complete.
By 30 October 2026	Successful applicants contacted by Area officers to agree project arrangements. Unsuccessful applicants informed.
By 31 March 2027	Complete all FIP projects and ensure payments are made in full.

Any Questions?

If you want to discuss your idea with an Environment Agency fisheries officer call 03708 506 506 and ask for your local officer.

For advice on filling out the online form contact Andy Petch or Chloe Guy at the Angling Trust (aifadmin@anglingtrust.net).

For general questions about the Fisheries Improvement Programme contact Roger Handford (roger.handford@environment-agency.gov.uk).

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
0345 988 1188

www.gov.uk/environment-agency

Volunteer Rates (June 2026)

General, unskilled labour	Specialist, skilled, trained labour	Specialist services	Professional services
Per hour £12.71/ Per day £94.05	£35.55 / £263.07	£56.31 / £416.69	£90.58 / £670.29
Eg supervised scrub clearance, ditch-digging, planting, basic administrative support	Eg certificated activities which require training, such as operating dangerous equipment, driving off-road vehicles, using chemicals	Eg supervising, training, surveys, diving, designing, photography	Eg consultants, lawyers, planners, engineers, auditors, accountants