

BAIT GATHERING

“

There is growing concern within the recreational sea angling community that bait gathering activities by sea anglers will be restricted within particular IFCA districts due to fears of the environmental impact this activity is having and the lack of data about that impact.

ANGLING TRUST
POSITION STATEMENT
Author: Hannah Rudd
Published: 01/03/23
Review date: 01/03/23



Background

The collection of bait for recreational sea angling is a traditional activity that has been passed down through generations and was, until now, largely unregulated. Lugworm (*Arenicola spp.*), ragworm (*Nereis spp.*) and crabs (particularly 'peeler') represent the vast majority of bait used by most British sea anglers targeting a wide variety of fish, and most are collected from complex intertidal mudflats and coastlines in estuarine environments.

While bait gathering remains relatively small-scale at a local level, its total commercial value has been estimated between £25-30 million annually, making marine bait an important socio-economic resource in these areas.



Why it matters

Since the implementation of the 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act, Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) have been responsible for managing the collection of angling bait as a marine resource. There is growing concern within the recreational sea angling community that bait gathering activities by sea anglers will be restricted within particular IFCA districts due to fears of the environmental impact this activity is having and the lack of data about that impact.

What is the Angling Trust doing?

The Angling Trust will continue to support anglers and angling clubs in opposing any proposed byelaws that will threaten the freedom to collect bait at certain sites; safeguarding continued access to bait digging sites while ensuring minimal disturbance to surrounding ecosystems and vulnerable species.

How can you help?

By joining the Angling Trust, you can help to continue our work to ensure the impact on the law around bait digging does not unduly restrict our ability to dig for bait.

The Angling Trust and Fish Legal have produced a useful [Bait Collection Code of Conduct](#) which is openly available to all and helps to guide anglers through the increasingly complex laws surrounding the issue of bait collection around our shores.

Thank You!

TO ALL OUR TRADE
ASSOCIATE PARTNERS
FOR SUPPORTING THE
WORK OF THE
ANGLING TRUST



IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE ANGLING TRADE AND WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT OUR WORK, FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED BY EMAILING JOHN.CHEYNE@ANGLINGTRUST.NET



ANGLING TRUST

We are a not-for-profit organisation representing anglers, fighting for fish, fishing and the environment. We are recognised by the Government as the National Governing Body for angling in England and partner with Visit Wales and Natural Resources Wales to promote Fishing in Wales. We are a member-based organisation made up of anglers of all disciplines providing a united front to represent, grow and protect our sport. By becoming a member of the Angling Trust you are helping to protect the waterways you fish in and the fish which live within them, ensuring their health and protection for future generations.

[Click here for more information about how to join the Angling Trust](#)

Angling Trust Limited is a company limited by guarantee, company number 05320350.

Angling Trust & Fish Legal, Eastwood House, Rainbow Street, Leominster, HR6 8DQ.

Telephone: 01568 620447 Email: admin@anglingtrust.net Website: www.anglingtrust.net