

Wales Fisheries Forum

Paper Title:	Wales Fisheries Forum – update paper
Paper Reference:	14th March 2025
Paper By:	Ben Wilson, Dave Mee, Rob Evans and Dave Charlesworth Contribution by Ceri Thomas Fishing Wales - Angling Trust

Purpose of Paper:	To provide the WFF with an update on various matters
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Introduction

This paper is intended to save time in the meetings by covering a number of matters and removing the need for extensive debate. Further discussion on any of the matters covered here is, however, welcome.

Contents:

Rod licence sales update
Fishing in Wales update
Sustainable Fisheries Programme Update
Annual Regulation Report
LIFE Dee River
Four Rivers for LIFE
Fish Eating Birds update
NRW publishes Annual Regulation Report
Buyer Beware
Recent News Items

[Fencing will improve river quality in the Cothi Valley](#)

[NRW publishes interim State of Natural Resources Report](#)

[New net fishing rules proposed to protect salmon and sea trout on the River Dee](#)

[River Usk fish pass restoration plans highlighted at community drop-in session](#)

[Ystrad Mynach man fined for fishing without a rod licence at Penallta Pond](#)

[Using nature-based solutions to support water quality improvements in Pembrokeshire](#)

[River restoration benefits catchment and the environment](#)

Rod licence sales update sales to end January 2025

Rod licence sales in Wales continue to grow with the number of rod licences issued end of January increasing by 3,118 (+9%) compared with the same time in 2024. Additional income raised to date this year in Wales is just under £90,000. Encouragingly, Junior licence registrations increased by just over 1,500 and the number of unique anglers increased by 2,500 (+8%) compared with the same time last year.

The total number of Migratory rod licences sold in Wales to date this year is just over 2,500 (income £140,000) which is very similar to the same time last year. Full migratory licences (all categories) are down by just under 200 units this year, but Junior Migratory licence sales increased by 168 units (note: the migratory salmonid licence also covers Coarse and non-migratory trout fishing).

Duty increases (2025/26)

Rod licence duties will be increasing from 1st April 2025 (click on the link for full details: <https://get-fishing-licence.service.gov.uk/guidance/new-prices?lang=cy>).

This is the third year of previously approved duties. The Environment Agency and NRW are now considering duty options for 2026/27. Options include a duty freeze and an inflationary increase and, again, any consultation could propose duty increases for one or more years. Whichever option is selected, there will be informal discussions with stakeholders followed by a formal consultation providing the opportunity for interested parties to give their views before both EA and NRW submit an application for approval to WG and Defra Ministers.

Free rod licences

We continue to see increasing applications for rod licence waivers from various groups across Wales. Feedback from organisers is positive with several groups already applying for renewals for 2025. Many report positive outcomes in terms of mental health and other benefits for participants. We try to keep the application process as straightforward as possible whilst ensuring waivers are only issued to appropriate groups with proper supervision and clear objectives. Before issuing new waivers we first consult with local Fisheries and Enforcement Officers.

Comment from a Pembrokeshire homeless charity following a series of angling coaching days run by the Pembrokeshire Federation of Angling Coaches (PFAC)

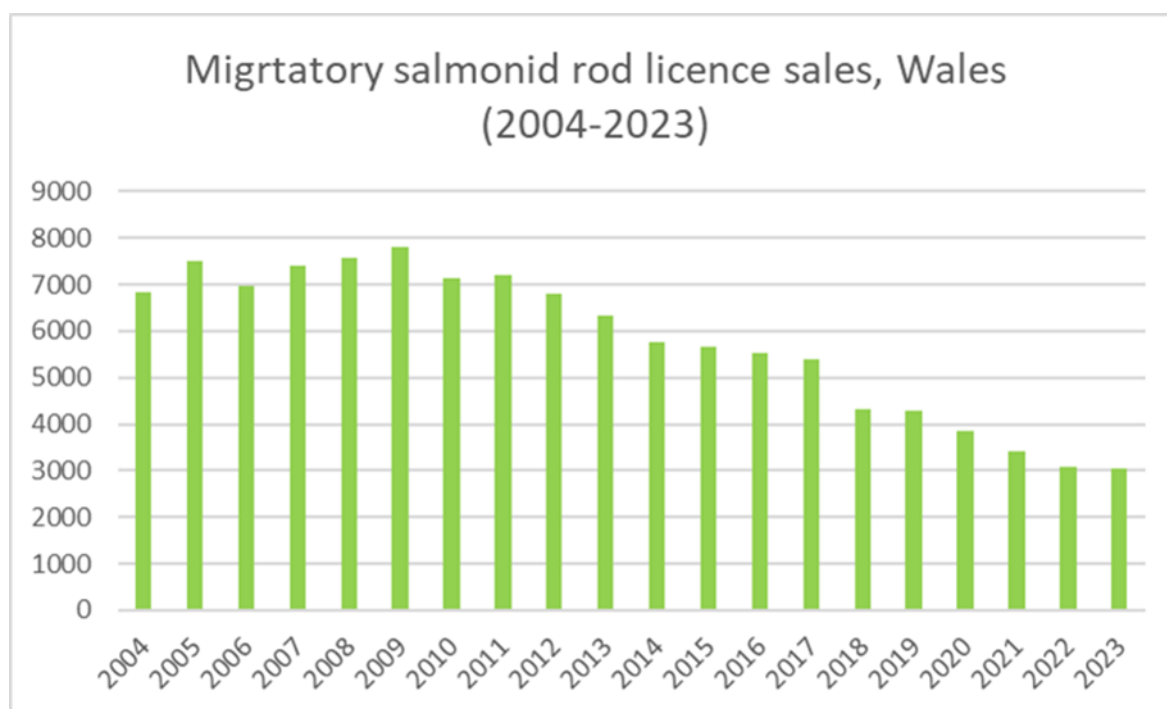
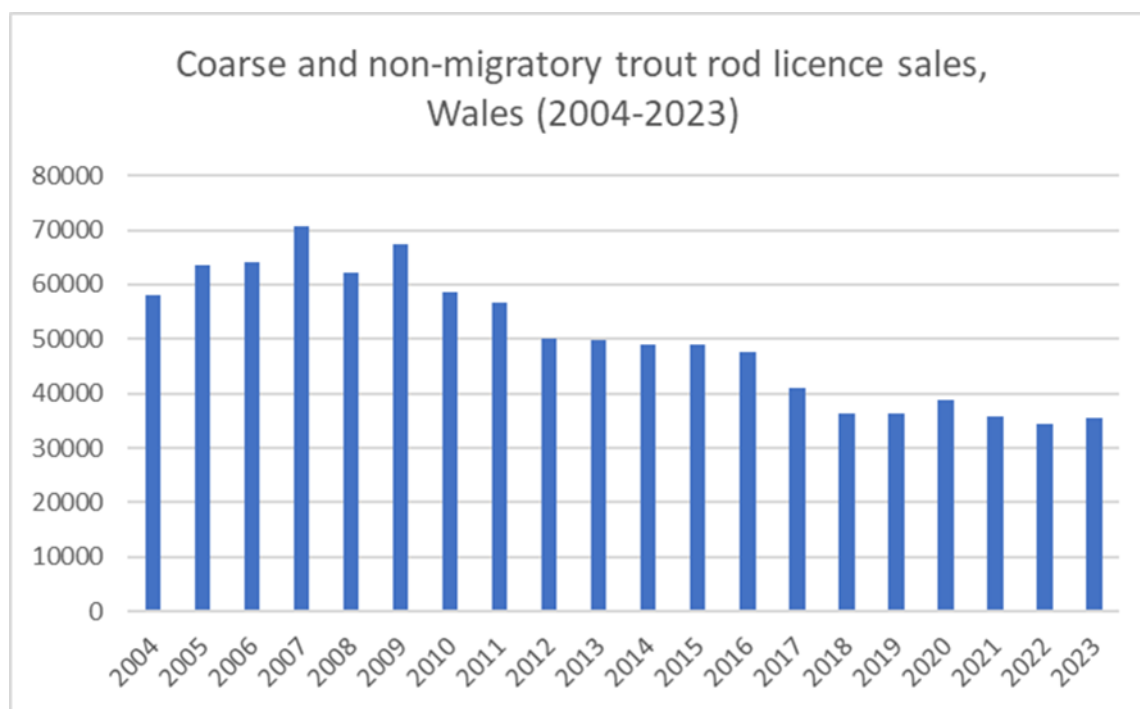
“All the gentlemen enjoyed their day out. It did us all good.

Two of them were talking about getting a fishing licence to fish at Puddleduck. One of these is currently homeless, so it was great to hear him talking about doing something”.

Take a Friend Fishing (TAFF) is a national initiative that encourages participation by lapsed and new anglers through the offer of a free licence. For more details see: [Take a Friend Fishing - register for a free one-day fishing licence](#). Uptake in Wales to date has been relatively low (fewer than 30 free licences issued in Wales in the Summer), but numbers should increase as awareness is raised.

National Fishing Month will run again in 2025 from 26th July to 31st August 2025 See: [National Fishing Month - Events](#).

Annual Coarse/trout and Migratory salmonid rod licence sales, 2004-2023 (final 2024/25 figures will be included in the next WFF update)



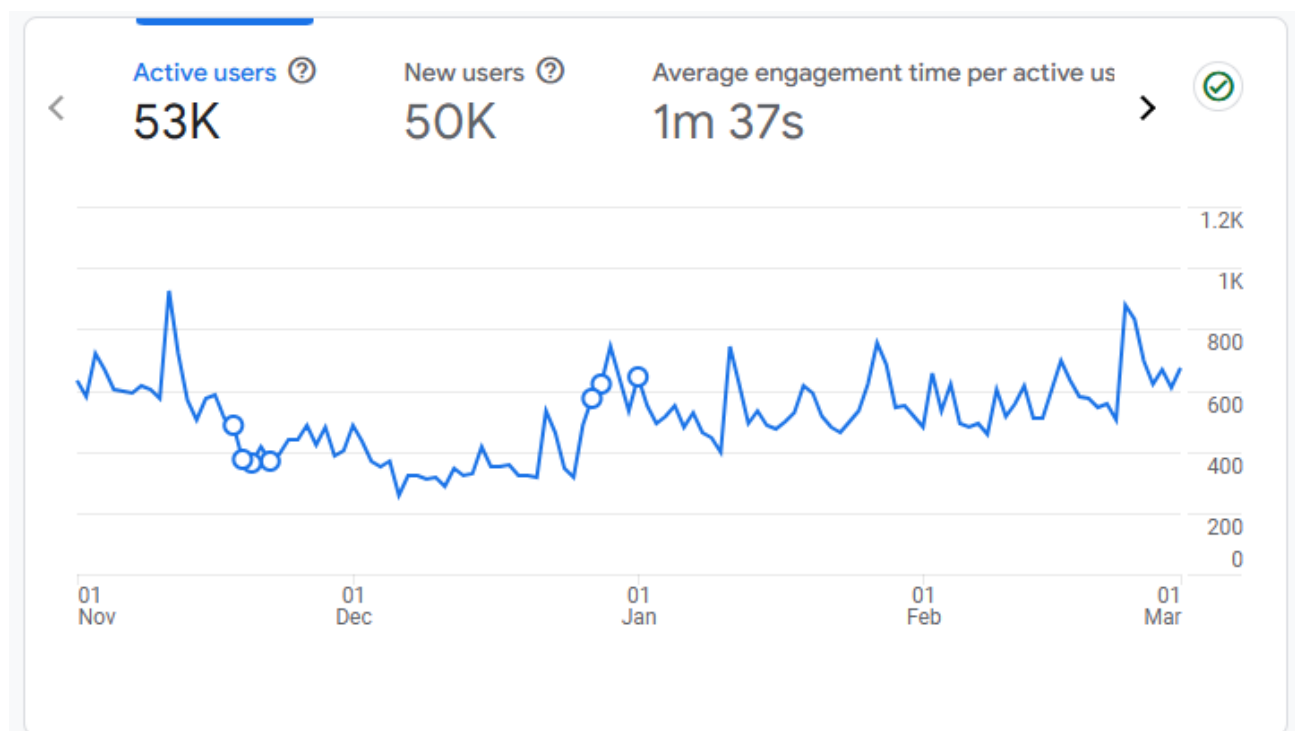
Fishing in Wales” update 1st November 2024 to 1st March 2025

Website

Over the past 4 months we recorded 53,294 site users on the Fishing In Wales website. We also saw 150,000 page views during this time. This was almost identical to the same months last year.

Winter is always less busy on the site, with a marked slowdown from November to Christmas. Just after Christmas to New Year we saw a big spike in interest for a few days - presumably from people researching for fishing trips next year. Site traffic then rose steadily as we progressed towards March, as shown on the graph below.

Data range: 1st November to 1st March 2025



Below: UK Demographic details. Site users by city (top 25) - 1st November 2024 to 1st March 2025

This demonstrates what a wide geographic reach we are having across the whole of the country.

Plot rows			Search...			
	City			Active users	New users	Engaged sessions
	Total			52,502 100% of total	49,882 100% of total	47,428 100% of total
	1	London		14,926	13,313	13,189
	2	(not set)		6,759	5,667	5,644
	3	Cardiff		2,730	2,174	2,599
	4	Birmingham		1,624	1,237	1,262
	5	Wolverhampton		856	537	684
	6	Norwich		811	490	635
	7	Milton Keynes		774	478	610
	8	Neath		675	558	675
	9	Manchester		656	570	540
	10	Edinburgh		645	441	501
	11	Llanelli		640	528	597
	12	Liverpool		630	519	485
	13	Newport		625	539	619
	14	Bristol		615	526	523
	15	Newcastle upon Tyne		607	371	459
	16	Bridgend		536	469	534
	17	Swindon		528	329	422
	18	Belfast		475	260	344
	19	Croydon		405	355	359
	20	Plymouth		394	324	269
	21	Luton		386	250	303
	22	Cwmbran		354	317	321
	23	Aberdare		316	270	305
	24	Pontypridd		316	258	321
	25	Caerphilly		296	246	278

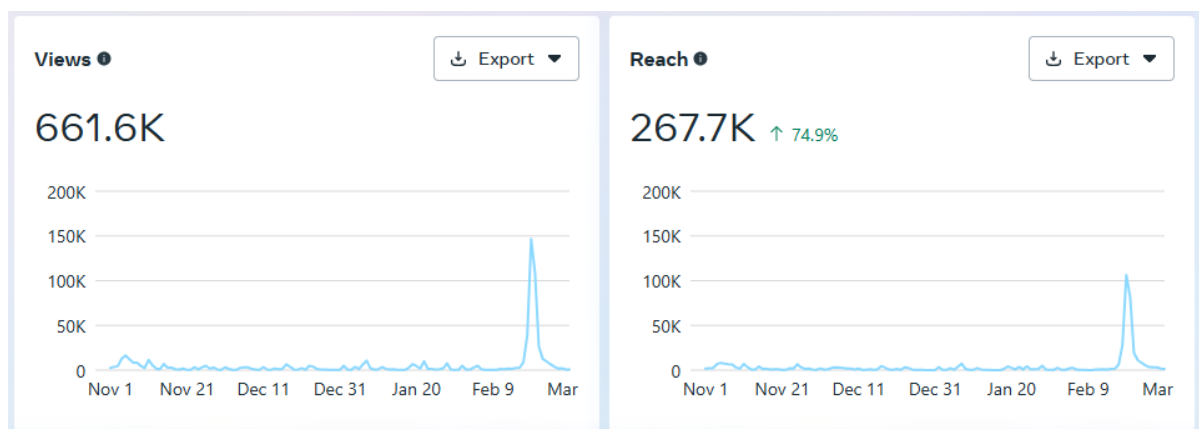
Top 20 visited pages - 1st November 2024 to 1st March 2025

☐	Page title and screen class ▾	+	↓ Views -----	Active users -----	Views per active user -----
☐	Total		149,586 100% of total	52,502 100% of total	2.85 Avg 0%
☐	1 Find Fishing in Wales - Fishing in Wales		5,343	3,260	1.64
☐	2 Fishing In Wales The official website for Welsh angling		4,746	2,919	1.63
☐	3 Book Fishing - Fishing in Wales		4,688	3,387	1.38
	4 (not set)		2,783	91	30.58
☐	5 Sea Fishing in Wales - Fishing in Wales		1,980	1,204	1.64
☐	6 Game Fishing In Wales - Fishing in Wales		1,830	1,109	1.65
☐	7 Fishing Facilities - Fishing in Wales		1,778	1,482	1.20
☐	8 Sea Fishing Catch Reports - Fishing in Wales		1,638	1,118	1.47
☐	9 Coarse Fishing in Wales - Fishing in Wales		1,635	1,043	1.57
☐	10 A Beginner's Guide to Feeder Fishing - Fishing in Wales		1,514	1,226	1.23
☐	11 Small Stillwater trout fisheries in Wales - Fishing in Wales		1,339	939	1.43
☐	12 Fishing Seasons in Wales - Fishing in Wales		1,302	985	1.32
☐	13 Pike Fishing in Wales - Fishing in Wales		1,255	883	1.42
☐	14 Lower Lliw Reservoir - South Wales Fishing Society - Fishing in Wales		1,151	626	1.84
☐	15 Species Archive - Fishing in Wales		1,145	765	1.50
☐	16 Brown trout - Fishing in Wales		1,144	929	1.23
☐	17 Carp - Fishing in Wales		1,131	945	1.20
☐	18 Welsh Angling Club Directory - Fishing in Wales		1,103	521	2.12
☐	19 HOW FISHING WORKS IN WALES - Fishing in Wales		1,093	862	1.27
☐	20 Fishing in Wales Blog - Fishing in Wales		1,057	570	1.85

Social Media

The various social media channels continue to show significant reach and engagement. All channels are growing and are we regularly share our content to a wide audience base. We usually create around 30 social media posts per month across all channels, including paid campaigns to raise awareness of Welsh angling opportunities and signposting to rod licence marketing and information.

Below: Facebook page views and reach: 1st November 2024 to 1st March 2025



YouTube

Since launch the channel has now registered 615,000 video views. Subscribers (4700) and overall watch time are increasing steadily. Compared to the same time period last year, the channel had 18,500 more views.

YouTube channel views: 1st November 2024 to 1st March 2025

In the selected period, your channel got 64,745 views



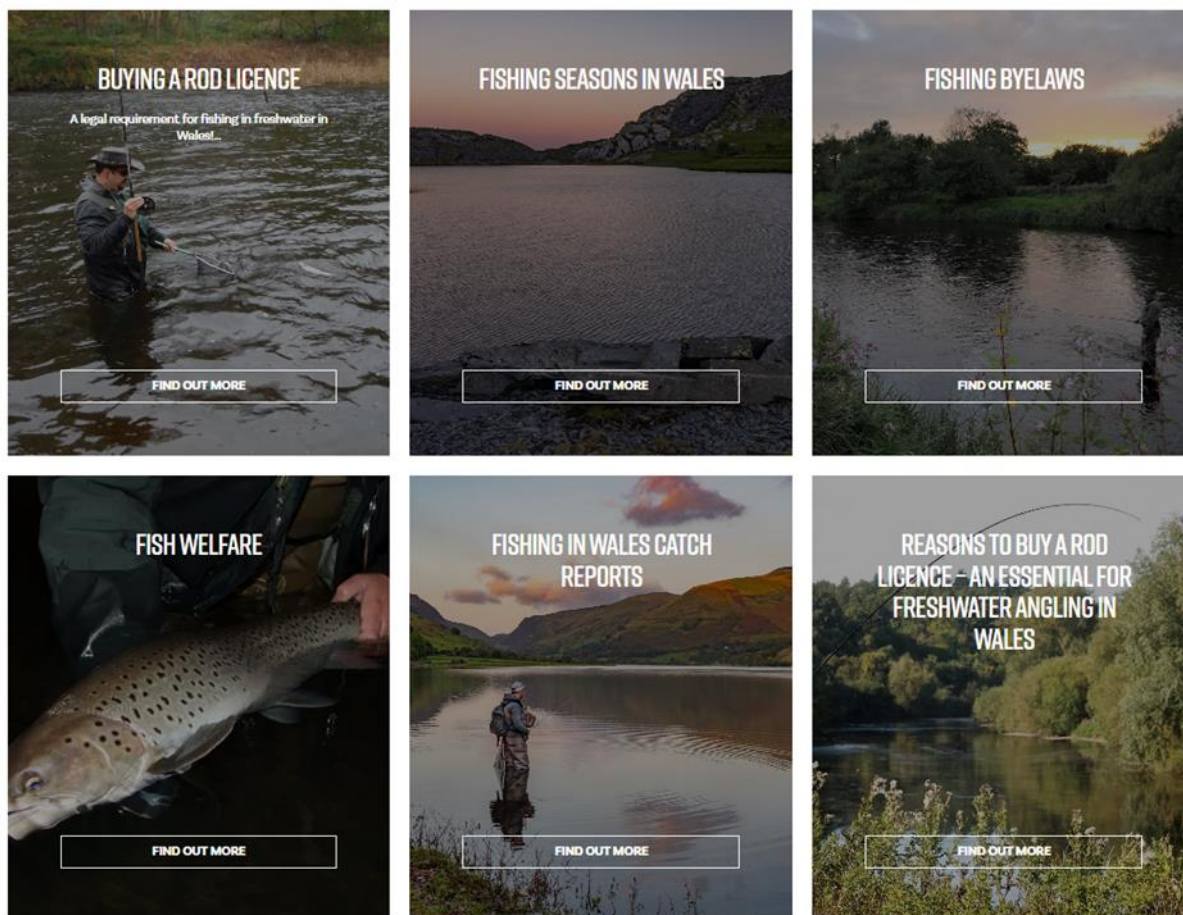
We also have X (Twitter) and a FiW TikTok account and Instagram, which have over 5000 followers between them.

Fishing In Wales website content

We have released 18 items on the blog from 1st November 2024 to 1st March 2025. This included a mix of news posts, videos and articles, covering game, coarse and sea angling. These can be viewed [here](#).

In addition we have issued several fishing reports covering all three disciplines, and have

helped support a number of angling events on our [dedicated pages](#) and social media.



Updating the website

We continue to expand and improve the website. Welsh clubs, fisheries, guides and angling retailers contact us regularly with updated information for the site, or to request a listing. Existing information is kept up-to-date, either directly through our network of contacts or via social media and search engine research.

Newsletters

Fishing in Wales newsletters help to promote the content released on the FiW website. We currently have a growing list of nearly 6000 email contacts. We aim to send out a newsletter with a roundup of content on a monthly basis.

Newsletter links: 1st November 2024 to 1st March 2025

<https://mailchi.mp/a5eafc8f4292/fishing-in-wales-february-10142664>

<https://mailchi.mp/25b4dda9f181/fishing-in-wales-january-2025>

<https://mailchi.mp/3199bbc2ee27/fishing-in-wales-christmas2024>

<https://mailchi.mp/0708b9f05ad9/fishing-in-wales-november2024-10141028>

Activity & Plans - 2025

The 'Take a Friend fishing' initiative was promoted for Christmas and will be again in April 2025, for the Easter Holidays. We also promoted other events such as casting clinics and angling club open days.

Key information such as how to spot and avoid salmon reds when grayling or coarse fishing was promoted, along with the new all Wales code of conduct for bait collection. Other written content included beginners' guides, the wellbeing benefits of fishing and winter tackle preparation for sea and game, including a check list with rod licence reminders.

We released videos on winter predator fishing on two different venues, lure fishing for bass, multi method winter trout fishing, and a wild trout lake video in a prelude to the new season. We have also just released an addition to our 'fishing clubs of Wales' video series with Taff Bargoed Anglers.

In spring and early summer of 2025, we have several other angling clubs interested in taking part in our content, plus a trip to Anglesey planned to cover two clubs and a coarse venue. We are also planning to work with Hywel Morgan and Steffan Jones, on the upper Severn and at a multi discipline West Wales fishery respectively. Dave Lewis has also expressed interest in taking part in sea fishing video content for 2025.

We attended the British Fly Fair International Show in February. It was very busy, and the stand was occupied pretty much constantly both days, with people asking for advice on locations to fish, as well as offering positive praise for the site and its content. Based on the feedback, we do seem to be effectively motivating people go fishing in Wales, with many anglers sharing their plans to visit Wales for a fishing holiday in 2025.

Situated in Stafford, lots of English anglers were in attendance of course, but plenty of Welsh residents also came to the show, as did a good number of Welsh clubs, professional fly tyers and businesses with their own stands.



After the success of promoting the rod licence through the 'Get back to your happy place' campaign we plan to assist in running the campaign again in 2025, in conjunction with NRW, with a refreshed look.

If you would like to get involved with the content we produce, or would like to provide feedback and suggestions, please contact: Ceri Thomas
ceri.thomas@anglingtrust.net

Sustainable Fisheries Programme Update

The total allocation of SFP funding for 24/25 was **£255.5k** with **£157.5k** GIA revenue funding and **£98k** from Rod Licence sales. This overall allocation was then divided between the 6 operational areas of Wales and the EPP directorate. Work programmes were developed by the fisheries technical leads and approved for delivery at the start of the financial year.

Typically, the rod licence derived revenue is used to support angling infrastructure development and also angling participation events, along with central marketing via the 'Fishing in Wales' initiative: 'Fishing in Wales' is going from strength to strength with an increasing on-line presence



2,700 KM

Of sea fishing coastline



Over 500 wild lakes & reservoirs

2,258 KM

Of trout river

170

Coarse fisheries



48 Species to wet a line for

In **South West** area we have delivered a number a significant angling infrastructure developments including platform construction at Morolwg pond in the Millenium Coastal park, Carmarthenshire. We are also supporting developments at Pluck lake in Swansea and at Gelli Hir coarse fishery on Gower.



Angling platform constructed at Morolwg Pond, Carmarthenshire

In **South East & South Central** we are focusing heavily on multiple angling infrastructure developments as we are aware of the social benefits this type of intervention can delivery in areas of high population density:

- Semtex Pond, Brynmawr Habitat improvements and solar aeration (Caerphilly & District Angling Association)
- Festival pond, Ebbw Vale angling platform improvements and aeration. (Festival Pond, Ebbw Vale)
- Cwmcelyn Pond infrastructure improvements (Cwmcelyn Angling Club)
- Dow Corning Ponds, Barry – Habitat works (Glamorgan Anglers)
- Wilderness Lake, Porthcawl – Habitat improvement (Porthcawl Angling Association)
- Taff Bargoed Lakes, Trelewis - angling participation (Taff Bargoed Angling Association)
- Bute East Dock infrastructure improvements



Angler platforms improving access at Cwm Bran Lake(L) and Liswerry pond (R)

In **North & Mid** we are mainly delivering a combination of habitat improvements and fish passage improvements:





Fish passage improvements planned at Brecon weir, Usk.

As part of our commitment to transparency, we publish an annual regulation report, offering a comprehensive overview of our regulatory and enforcement activities.

Our 2023 report (our seventh) reflects our statutory regulatory duties and summarises our:

- incident response
- permitting and licensing
- compliance
- crime and enforcement and sanctioning actions

This is based on data from our key incident, permitting, compliance and enforcement systems, and covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2023 (unless specified). In addition, we have used qualitative information from our subject matter experts and relevant projects.

Annual regulation report 2023

2023 in numbers

Water quality and water resources

We are committed to protecting and enhancing water quality and managing resources in Wales. Our efforts include monitoring water bodies for environmental standards, controlling pollution, and responding to quality incidents.

We regulate water abstraction to balance the needs of people, industry, and ecosystems, particularly during droughts.

Our goal is to maintain healthy rivers, lakes, and coastal waters, protect aquatic ecosystems, and ensure sustainable water resources for future generations.

- 39% (3,318) of all incidents report to us related to water
- 1,220, water incidents attended by us
- 1,242 active full abstraction licences were in force
- 99 water resources licence conditions were assessed, with 56% found to be non-compliant
- 37% increase in the number of water discharge permits we assessed
- 439 breaches were recorded for 338 non-compliant discharge permits
- 41 enforcement charges related to water
- 23% of all enforcement cases (831) related to water (190)

Land, biodiversity and fisheries

We protect land, biodiversity, and fisheries. Our management ensures ecosystem health and tackles land degradation.

We monitor biodiversity and safeguard threatened species and habitats. In fisheries, we regulate practices and manage fish populations in Welsh waters. Through habitat restoration and species conservation, we enhance natural landscapes and biodiversity in Wales.

- 520 recorded incidents related to agriculture
- 524 recorded incidents related to forestry
- 34 recorded incidents related to biodiversity
- 1,892 species licenses issued
- 519 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) consents and 441 SSSI assents issued
- 263 agriculture enforcement charges
- 216 statutory plant health notices issued
- 180 forestry licence and notice inspections
- 2,008 rod licence checks (evasion rate of 4%)
- 250 related incidents
- 78 fish kill incidents
- 94 fisheries enforcement charges

Incident response and enforcement

Our enforcement efforts can sometimes stretch across multiple reporting periods. This is especially true when our officers are engaged in intricate investigations, particularly those

that connect with other agencies like the Police and Local Authorities. There may be a longer gap between the initial incident and the final resolution of the enforcement response.

- 8,505 incidents reported to us
- 29% of all incidents attended (2,448)
- 75% of total incidents reported came from water and waste
- 831 new enforcement cases
- 1,267 separate enforcement charges
- 799 offenders
- 85 prosecution cases comprising 126 charges
- Four custodial sentences
- £648,320 of fines imposed
- 400+ warning letters or notices sent to secure improvements and aid compliance

Download the full report

[Download the full annual regulation report for 2023](#) including:

- how we categorise incidents
- our enforcement and sanctions approach
- enforcement case studies
- permitting our own activities
- prosecution outcomes

LIFE Dee River

Erbistock weir removal

The Dee LIFE River restoration project has achieved a significant milestone over the summer with the removal of Erbistock weir, the largest weir removal ever carried out in Wales, allowing unhindered fish passage at this point for the first time in around 200 years. The 70-metre wide, 3-metre-high weir was a partial barrier to salmon and a very significant barrier to river and sea lamprey. There was an old baulk fish pass on the weir, but this only allowed more powerful swimming species to pass and had a low attraction efficiency. The weir had also created a 600-metre-long impounded section upstream of the structure that affected sediment movement and natural riverine processes, creating a slow flowing, unnatural section of river.



Historical radio tracking demonstrated that between 7-9% of the annual run of salmon that reached Erbistock did not pass the structure. This could represent hundreds of salmon that are lost to the system annually. Over the 200 years or so that the current weir has been in place this would have had a massive cumulative impact.

Now, with the weir removed, all fish species will be able to freely pass the area to reach their spawning grounds. We know from historical records that sea lamprey for example used to spawn further upstream but had been unable to reach these areas since the weir was constructed. The previously impounded area, upstream of the weir, has started to re-naturalise, creating spawning areas and a wider variety of habitats for all life stages of all fish species.

The work was carried out under the LIFEDeeRiver River Restoration Framework by S. E. Metcalfe a'l Gwmni Cyf and was completed 4 weeks ahead of schedule with a saving of over 30% of the original estimated cost.

NRW worked closely with Heneb archaeologists during the design and delivery of the weir removal work.

Alwen Culvert

As presented at the last WFF, Alwen Culvert was completed over winter 2023. We were hopeful that once work had been completed, there would be some late running salmon that would migrate to the area upstream and spawn there, and we would find some fry upstream of the culvert.



The team carried out electric fishing surveys during summer 2023 and found salmon fry at several sites above the culvert, indicating that the fish pass had been a complete success, and adult fish were now able to utilise the area. We expect to see more fish in the area in the future and will continue to monitor for salmon.

This scheme was an additional project the team took on under the LIFE project, opening access to approximately 900 metres of recently improved spawning grounds.

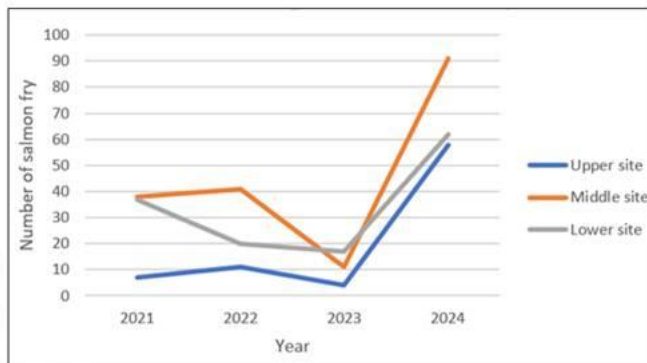
We have presented this project at a number various conferences since completing it, and there has been significant interest in the design. We are working with JBA to produce a document detailing the design parameters and how this can be used elsewhere.

Electric fishing results

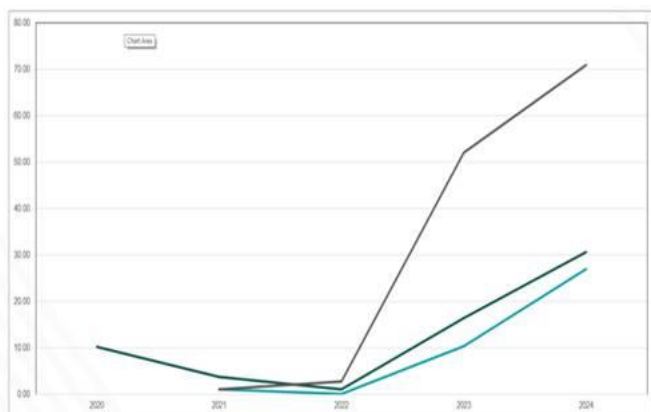
Electric fishing results across a range of intervention sites have shown very promising numbers.



The graphs below show numbers of fry on the Ceiriog at 3 sites following fencing, revetment work, tree planting and boulder placement,



The graph below shows salmon fry densities at sites on the Afon Tryweryn at 3 sites following spawning material introduction. The salmon parr in the photo was measured at over 220mm long:



Rich Cove has recently left NRW and moved over to New Zealand. Rich has worked on the Welsh Dee for over 30 years, working for the Dee Stock Assessment Programme (DSAP) and more recently the LIFEDeeRiver project as the Senior Monitoring Officer. Rich was also the Chair of the Grayling Research Trust until recently. Rich has provided some fascinating data around salmon and lamprey movements within the Dee, particularly around the impact of structures. We all wish him the best of luck in New Zealand, and thanks for all his hard work and knowledge imparted over many years.

More information can be found out about the project at [Natural Resources Wales / LIFE Dee River](https://www.naturalresources.wales/life-dee-river)

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Sign up to our quarterly [newsletter](#)

Read our news and blogs

Young fish survival rates boosted by River Dee improvement works

LIFE Dee River project captures rare footage of 'pre-historic' lamprey as spawning season starts on the River Dee

NRW launches £6.8 million LIFE Dee River project

First major weir removal for LIFE Dee River project

LIFE Dee River Virtual Fish Hatchery

Wildlife photographer captures incredible images of salmon during their spawning season

Case Study: Acoustic Fish Tracking in Action

Case Study: Llangollen weirs, Dam Removal Europe

Making a Weir Good for Conservation and Safer for Recreation

Celebrating World Fish Migration Day on the Dee

River Dee barrier removal encourages salmon migration

Pupils at Ysgol Bro Tryweryn Host a Trout Hatchery in their classroom

Pupils from Ysgol O M Edwards, Llanuwchllyn to oversee a trout hatchery in the school

Watch our videos

Chester Weir: Juvenile fish passing through notch after improvement works

Brook lamprey spawning on the upper Dee

What is the LIFE Dee River Project?

LIFE Dee River project launch

Afon Tryweryn weir removal

Project showreel

Salmon in the Dee

River lamprey spawning

World Rivers Day

Timelapse of Penaran bridge build

Fish trying to pass Erbistock weir

Sea lamprey spawning on the Dee

Listen to our stories

Poem: Taith Afon Dyfrdwy

Eryri Podcast: Afon Dyfrdwy

Contact us

For more information, or to contact a member of the team, please email lifedeeriver@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

Four Rivers for LIFE

Four Rivers for LIFE is an ambitious, large-scale river restoration project to improve the condition of four major rivers in Wales: Teifi, Cleddau, Tywi and Usk.

These four rivers are classed as **Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)** which means they are of international importance for their wildlife and plants such as Atlantic salmon, lamprey, shad, otter and water crowfoot.

All four rivers are currently in an unfavourable condition as a result of multiple pressures.

A total of 776km of river will be improved in mid and south Wales over the next four years. The project will aim to restore the rivers to a better condition.

The rivers support several habitats and species from bogs and floodplains to fish, otter, freshwater pearl mussel and floating water plantain. These habitats and species are all threatened, and some are at risk of disappearing in Wales.

The project will use long term nature-based solutions to improve the ecological quality of the four rivers such as, improving accessibility for migratory fish, improving habitat structure and function, and improving water quality.

The BIGGER picture: **The European Union has committed to restore 25,000km of rivers by 2030**, in total this project will improve 776km of river, thereby contributing 2% of this total.

Working with partner organisations, farmers, landowners, local communities and contractors we aim to:

- Improve conditions for salmon, lamprey, shad, bullhead and other fish populations that have declined drastically in recent years.
- Remove constraints to fish migration – improve fish passage at 12 sites, addressing in-river barriers such as weirs and other structures.
- Re-naturalise rivers and restore natural processes – boulder, woody material and gravel re-introduction. Re-meandering, and floodplain reconnection along 5km of river and restoration of freshwater and wetland habitats on 136 hectares of floodplain.



- Planting 50,000 native trees (supplied by the Woodland Trust) along river banks to create habitat, increase shading and establish buffer strips with 100km of fencing, with associated water quality and bank stability benefits.
- Reduce the impact of invasive non-native species such as Himalayan balsam, American skunk cabbage, Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed. Trialling Rust Fungus on 8 sites to reduce Himalayan balsam, and working with contractors and volunteers to significantly reduce coverage in 15 sub-catchments.
- Improve land management practices – reducing nutrients and sediment inputs from agricultural land by working with farmers and landowners to promote best practice farming techniques with the aim of engaging 350 farms.
- Habitat improvement over 15km for the critically endangered Freshwater Pearl Mussel.



Why are rivers important?

For wildlife

Freshwater habitats account for some of the richest biodiversity in the world, and rivers are a vital, vibrant ecosystem for many species.

Rivers are home to an abundance of species that depend on permanently running water such as salmon and other fish that need clean gravels to spawn on, insects like stoneflies and mayflies that depend on constant high oxygen levels and cool water, river mosses, birds and in some of the best rivers the Freshwater Pearl Mussel.

But in the UK, our rivers are facing multiple threats – putting increasing pressure on the diverse wildlife that call our beautiful rivers home.

For environment

Healthy rivers can also help in the fight against flood risk and climate change, and act as a nature-based solution to pressures from extreme weather conditions.

Slowing down the flow and re-meandering some sections of rivers as well as connecting the rivers to areas of floodplain, can reduce the risk of flooding further downstream.

Planting trees next to rivers can help make our rivers more climate resilient by providing shade and cooling water temperatures for important wildlife.

Nature-based solutions aim to enhance river structures, and work with natural habitats and features to provide a range of benefits for people and the environment.

For people

Our communities in Wales depend on rivers for their way of life and livelihoods. From fishing to agriculture, drinking water and outdoor pursuits, the way we manage our rivers has a direct impact on people's lives.

Fresh, clean water is essential for people to survive. Rivers are precious sources of fresh drinking water for people, so when rivers are in an unhealthy condition or negatively impacted by poor water management practices, there can be negative health impacts.

What are the pressures facing rivers?

Climate change

The overall projection for Wales is for warmer and drier summers, and warmer and wetter winters. There is much uncertainty, however key issues are emerging such as increases in surface water temperature and its effects on salmon.

Salmon have been described as one of the most vulnerable species to climate change, they are fundamentally a cold-water species, and this governs their geographical distribution.

Habitat degradation

Historic land management practices have led to an increase in nutrient levels within the rivers, suffocating some of the less tolerant species within. In combination with a range of other factors, this increase in pollution can have devastating impacts – particularly on fish species.

Migration barriers

Migration between river and sea is a key part of the life cycle for salmon, shad and river and sea lamprey, but it is a journey made even more challenging by the many barriers such as weirs, dams, or culverts that block or impede their path.

Even with fish passes and easements in place to help them move around these barriers, there are often migratory delays that cause risk of failed migration to important areas of habitat.

Water quality

For the environment, poor water quality is a recognised cause of decline in freshwater species, affecting them both directly (through exposure to chemicals and acidified waters) and indirectly (through runoff) causing an entire river or parts of it to become overwhelmed with minerals and nutrients.

Improvements in river water quality will mean that water companies can use fewer chemicals and less energy to produce clean and healthy drinking water, good news for water customers and for the environment.

Invasive species

There is much evidence of the negative effects of invasive species on freshwater species and habitats, with general worldwide increases in the introduction and spread of non-native and invasive plants and animals (e.g. Signal Crayfish and Japanese knotweed). This pressure might become even more important in the future through climate change, increasing competition, predation and disease.



Our work with communities

The communities living along the four rivers will be at the heart of the project. We will work closely with local people to ensure they understand the ecological, environmental, social and economic value of the habitats and species, the river and the SAC in terms of their historic and present-day importance.

We will also encourage and support farmers and land managers to use their knowledge and experience to find solutions that benefit our rivers, whilst improving farm efficiency and profitability.

Our hope is that they will feel a greater sense of community ownership and responsibility for the four rivers and ensure the project's legacy continues for years to come.

We will be encouraging people to get involved as much as possible by holding over 40 events during the project's lifetime including river walks and talks, and attendance at large established events close to the rivers.

We will also work with stakeholders who have helped shape the project, we will engage with river trusts, agriculture and local wildlife groups, water companies, angling clubs and local history groups to name but a few.

If you would like us to be involved in your local community by giving a talk or presentation, please email 4RiversforLIFE@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

Partnership volunteering opportunity

Our new partnership project with West Wales Rivers Trust (WWRT) is calling for volunteers to help protect important rivers from the threats of invasive non-native species in West Wales. The work will help control the impact of invasive non-native species (INNS) on the rivers Teifi, Tywi and Cleddau. For more information visit: [Balsam Eradication Project | West Wales Rivers Trust](#) or email Joe

Wilkins: joe@westwalesriverstrust.org to register your interest.

Learn more about our project

Follow us on social media

Search @4AfonLIFE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

Newsletters

[Sign up to our bi-annual newsletter](#)

Contact us

For more information, or to contact a member of the team 4RiversforLIFE@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

Fish Eating Bird Update

The NRW FEB action plan continues to be delivered. The resources associated with this delivery have now been extended to September 2025 to enable full delivery of findings from the process review, which is currently ongoing. We have again supported the WUF and UFA in establishing the Usk pilot project for the second year, with the licence being issued in mid-February of 2025. We continue to use the evidence derived from this catchment-based pilot to highlight the constraints relating to how we currently licence the control of FEB's on rivers. One area we are particularly focused on is our current reliance on the applicant to provide locally derived survey information. We have evidence to suggest that this is a significant constraint in moving towards a catchment-based approach and presents the applicant with an almost impossible task in terms of both resources and coordination. We have evidence also that suggests that the need to provide survey data results in delayed applications leading to very short control periods and compromised efficacy of control.

For these reasons we are considering an alternative approach. At this stage the associated proposal remains subject to an internal governance decision, but essentially the approach uses population estimates and modelled outputs to determine licence allocations, taking the onus off the applicant and shifting seasonal timescales to allow for proper determination periods and extended periods of control (4 months). It is proposed that the emphasis on riverine applicants is to be shifted away from the need to supply survey data and more towards thinking about how the FEB control is to be carried out in a strategic manner that responds to pinch points identified in the critical periods prior to smolt migration.

It is clear that Salmon numbers in Wales are in a perilous state and increasingly we are moving away from fisheries management and into the conservation space. We are responding to this in the way we view FEB control on rivers. While FEB's may not be the fundamental cause of the decline in salmon numbers, we are concerned that they may impact on any population recovery that may occur and for this reason we are trying to ensure that our licencing process enables applicants rather than inhibits them. In addition, we are also working with our digital teams to make the on-line process both SMART and simple for the applicant, again we have evidence that suggests the current application templates are busy, confusing and in dire need of being rationalised.

The timescales of this work are being determined by the need to get new processes in-place for 25/26 applications, so essentially September 2025 is the deadline for both the process review and any implementation required.

We will continue to provide support directly to applicants and via our FEB virtual forum which is now held on a quarterly basis. If there are any prospective applicants that might benefit from attending the virtual forum then please contact Dave Charlesworth Dave.Charlesworth@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk (Freshwater Fisheries Lead Specialist).

NRW publishes Annual Regulation Report

Regulation must keep pace with current and emerging industries and be agile to the challenges driven by the climate, nature and pollution emergencies, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) said today (02 December 2024) as it published its annual regulation report.

NRW oversees the regulation of businesses and industries across a wide range of sectors in Wales, from water companies to waste management sites. We are also at the forefront of responding to the growing number of incidents driven by climate change, nature's decline and pollution.

Published annually, the Regulation Report provides a comprehensive review of our regulatory and enforcement activities across this remit for the 2023 calendar year, covering incident response, permitting and licensing, compliance, crime and our enforcement and sanctioning actions.

The main findings of the report covering the 2023 calendar year are:

- We were notified of 8,505 incidents - up 17% from 2022.

- 1,290 incidents were 'high level' requiring an immediate response

- We attended 29% of all incidents in 2023 – comparable to previous years, despite dealing with over 1,000 more incidents.

- 39% of all reported incidents (3,318) were water-related (pollution, reservoirs, abstraction, blockage or alteration to a watercourse) – up 8% from 2022.

- Water discharge compliance checks increased to 649 – up 37% from 2022

- There was a 48% increase in the number of intensive farming compliance checks in 2023

- There were 831 new enforcement cases in 2023, comprising 799 offenders, with 1,267 separate enforcement charges

- The number of waste and installations compliance visits has fallen in 2023, by 10% and 5% respectively, compared to 2022.

Figures included in the report demonstrate that tackling those who pollute our natural environment, and organisations and individuals who seek to profit from illegal activity continues to be a priority for NRW.

Some 46% of the 831 enforcement cases opened in 2023 were generated from our incident response activity, with 45% generated from our compliance efforts. The remaining 9% were generated from fisheries incidents.

During 2023 we concluded 442 enforcement cases, with a further 389 still ongoing. Our enforcement work also resulted in 85 successful prosecutions, comprising 126 charges, and resulting in fines totalling £648,320.

Water-related incidents topped the table of reported incidents over this reporting period (3,318), followed by 3,051 reports of waste-related incidents – an increase from the 2,454 reported in 2022.

We are constantly striving to improve how we work with businesses and sectors to control and minimise pollution and waste using our statutory powers and duties.

Last year, we published our corporate plan to 2030 which sets out how we will prioritise action so that nature and people will be protected from the impacts of pollution.

Nadia De Longhi, Head of Regulation and Permitting at NRW said:

From the significant increase in the number of water and agricultural compliance inspections, to dealing with an increasing number of reported incidents, this report shows not only where our regulatory efforts are making a difference, but where the challenges facing regulators like NRW are accelerating.

Public expectation to protect our environment has never been higher, but we are also committed to regulating to high standards. This is why we have put minimising pollution at the heart of our corporate plan, highlighting what we can do ourselves, but also where we will need to work with others to ensure nature and people are protected from the risks and impacts of pollution and environmental incidents now, and in the future.”

The regulation report highlights how, in a rapidly changing world, we will need to rise to the challenge of regulating both existing and emerging industries driven by the march towards net zero. A growing population, the climate and nature emergencies are also presenting their own challenges, highlighting the need for more flexible regulatory approaches to accommodate this rapid environmental change.

Nadia De Longhi added:

Effective regulation is not about eradicating all risks; it's about managing and reducing them to minimise harm to both people and the environment.

As regulators we will continue to drive the improvements we can make with the resources we have. But, like many public bodies, we will also need to be innovative in how and where we focus our resources and our efforts. It also means ensuring we prioritise the actions we do take so that they have the best outcomes for people and for nature, and that they deliver the improvements to our environment that we all want to see.

Natural Resources Wales / Annual regulation report 2023

We have updated our buyer beware information we have updated our leaflet which we will use in our spring 2025 enforcement campaign with pubs, restaurants and retailers





Protecting our wild salmon and sea trout

Wild salmon and sea trout are at risk. To boost their numbers and safeguard net fishing and angling, only farmed salmon and sea trout, along with wild sea trout caught in legal net and trap fisheries, can be bought and sold in Wales and England.

Did you know?

- It is against the law to buy and sell fish caught illegally.
- No wild salmon should be killed or sold in Wales.
- It is against the law to sell or offer to sell sea trout caught by rod and line.

Remember

If you are found guilty, under the Salmon Act 1986, you could face imprisonment, a fine or both.



If you have any concerns about the illegal selling, or attempted illegal selling of fish, please ring our Incident Hotline

0300 065 3000

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Calls welcomed in Welsh or English

For more information you can telephone: **0300 065 3000**
(Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm)

Email: enquiries@naturalresources.wales

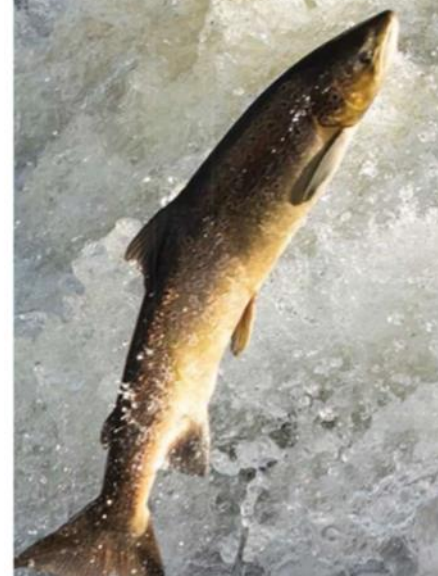
Or visit our website:
naturalresources.wales



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg



Buying and selling wild salmon and sea trout



naturalresources.wales



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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Welsh Government



Buyers beware

If you buy or sell wild sea trout, remember it is against the law to:

- Sell, offer to sell or barter in salmon or sea trout caught by rod and line
- Handle salmon or sea trout which you suspect have been caught illegally
- Handle salmon or sea trout you suspect have been taken during the close season. No wild salmon should be sold in Wales.
- Handle salmon or sea trout at any time of year that is 'unclean'

Wales and England have different close seasons, net fisheries on the rivers Tywi, Taf, Teifi, Nevers and Dyfi Open from 1 April - 31 July. Sea trout fisheries on the rivers Cleddau, Mawddach, Dysynni and Conwy are Open from 1 June - 31 July.

These offences apply to whole fish and portions of fish. None of these offences apply to farmed salmon and sea trout.

Staying within the law

If you deal with salmon or sea trout that have been caught or sold illegally, you may face a significant fine. Fortunately, it is straightforward to identify fish caught by licensed net fisheries, which can be legally bought and sold.

All sea trout caught legally must have a Natural Resources Wales or Environment Agency carcass tag through the mouth and gills, which must remain attached until processed. Rod-caught or illegally caught fish won't have this tag.

Also, illegally caught fish might have:

- Spear or gaff wounds (puncture wounds)
- Snare marks (dark ring around the base of the tail)
- Gill net marks (distinctive dark lines around or across the body of the fish)

You can trade farmed and imported net-caught fish, but they won't have a carcass tag. For proof of origin, especially for imports, ask for a signed receipt from the seller

Your receipt should have:

- The seller's name and address
- How many fish were sold, and their tag identification numbers
- How the fish were caught
- Name and licence number of the person that caught the fish



What are 'unclean' fish?

An 'unclean' fish refers to one that is either about to spawn, currently spawning, or has recently spawned and hasn't fully recovered yet.

These fish might appear darker, with red spots on their gill covers, and their fins could be slightly ragged. You may even notice some eggs or milt, a white milky substance, coming from the vent. Unclean fish are not good to eat.

You are breaking the law if you buy or sell unclean fish.

Protect your trade

If you are offered wild salmon or sea trout you suspect have been rod caught, illegally caught or are unclean, please let us know by calling our **Incident Hotline on 0300 065 3000**. We will treat all information in strict confidence.

on our website

[Natural Resources Wales / Buying and selling salmon and sea trout in Wales: staying within the law](#)

- It is against the law to buy, sell, offer to sell or barter:
 - any wild salmon
 - sea trout caught by rod and line
 - unclean sea trout
 - sea trout taken during the close season
- These offences apply to whole fish and portions of fish.
- None of these offences apply to farmed salmon or farmed sea trout.

Identify legally caught sea trout

- It is easy to identify legally caught (net caught) sea trout.
- Legally net caught sea trout in Wales will always have a Natural Resources Wales carcass tag attached through its mouth and gills. In England, it will have an Environment Agency carcass tag.



- Illegally caught sea trout will not have a carcass tag attached to it and may have:
 - spear or gaff wounds (puncture wounds)
 - snare marks (dark ring around the base of the tail)
 - gill net marks (distinctive dark lines around or across the body of the fish)

Identify unclean fish

- An 'unclean' fish is one that is about to spawn, is spawning, or has recently spawned and has not yet recovered.
- These fish can be a dark colour with red spots on their gill covers. Their fins may be ragged, and eggs or milt (a white milky substance) may run from the vent. Unclean fish are not good to eat.
- You will be breaking the law if you buy or sell unclean fish.

Close seasons

- Different parts of Wales and England have different close seasons.

- [Check the freshwater rod fishing rules \(byelaws\) for Wales.](#)
- [Check the freshwater rod fishing rules \(byelaws\) for England.](#)
- Net fishers may only take sea trout (between May and July in Wales).
- All salmon caught in net and rod fisheries in Wales must be returned alive and unharmed as quickly as possible.

Buying and selling salmon and sea trout

- If you buy and sell imported farmed and net caught salmon or sea trout, it will not have a Natural Resources Wales (or Environment Agency) carcass tag. No wild salmon from England, Wales or Scotland can be sold.
- Wild sea trout are still landed in England and Wales and will have a carcass tag.
- For proof of where these fish have come from, ask the seller for a signed receipt that shows:
 - seller's name and address
 - how many fish were sold, and their tag identification numbers
 - how the fish were caught
 - name and licence number of the person that caught the fish

Report concerns

[Contact our incident hotline](#) if you are offered salmon or sea trout you suspect have been caught illegally or are unclean.

Recent News Items

[Natural Resources Wales / Fencing will improve river quality in the Cothi Valley](#)



Work in the Tywi River SAC catchment will help prevent riverbank erosion, boost river water quality, and improve livestock management and farm productivity.

Jim Thomas has farmed at Dyffryn Isaf Farm near Llanfynydd with this family for 50 years. His 400-acre sheep farm runs along the Cothi River - a tributary of the River Tywi SAC (Special Area of Conservation).

Jim has recently installed 2.5km (1.5 miles) of riparian fencing on his land as part of Natural Resources Wales's (NRW) Four Rivers for LIFE project.

Riparian strips have been identified as a nature based solution that provide multiple benefits. They can absorb excess nutrients and provide a physical barrier to soil and nutrient runoff from entering rivers, helping to improve water quality downstream.

The fencing will also help Jim shepherd his 500-strong flock of sheep more effectively.

Jim Thomas explains: “In the past our sheep were getting into the gorse along the edges of some fields making routine checks difficult, we also have some wet land which can contribute to fluke and issues with the sheep’s feet.”

“The project had already approached us to install fencing with the purpose of creating riparian strips on the farm, and so we asked them to extend the fencing to create wider buffer strips to cordon off these problem areas.”

“I’m delighted to say the project agreed and we’re now able to save time and labour on daily tasks, improve animal health and increase the biodiversity and shelter on the farm at the same time.”

“Another bonus of doing the fencing is that it helps us to maintain farm and field boundaries. At first I was a bit sceptical about the project but the work has actually made our lives easier and improved the farm business for the future, I’m really pleased with the work and results.”

The fencing work is delivered by Natural Resources Wales’s Four Rivers for LIFE Project and Contractors and is fully funded by the project.

The project aims to work with farmers and land owners to reduce soil, sediment and nutrient runoff from entering rivers. Helping to keep our rivers healthier and improve water quality.

To date, 27 farms have worked with the project with approximately 25km (15 miles) of fencing completed with farms along the SAC Rivers; Teifi, Tywi, Cleddau and Usk.

Research shows that fencing and creating riparian strips more than 15 metres wide can reduce the impact of nutrients getting into our rivers by 85%.

Likewise, riparian strips more than six metres wide can reduce sediment getting into our rivers by up to 95%, therefore resulting in better water quality.

Chris Thomas, Four Rivers for LIFE Senior Land Management Officer said: “Reducing soil erosion, filtering nutrients from land, and providing habitat for wildlife, are just a handful of the benefits of riparian strips.

“We are grateful to Jim and his family for working with us and for seeing the advantages to the wider farm business.”

“As a result of Jim’s recommendation to neighbouring farms, we are now working with several farms along the Cothi River and Tywi valley. This is wonderful news for our project and will help us improve the condition of the River Tywi for important fish like Atlantic salmon and lamprey.”

Watch our video showing some of the fencing work we have done along the Teifi River SAC [**Four Rivers for LIFE - How does fencing help our rivers?**](#)

The Four Rivers for LIFE Project is funded by the EU LIFE Programme with support from Welsh Government and Welsh Water.

If you manage land along the Teifi, Tywi, Cleddau and Usk SAC Rivers and want to learn more, please email [**4RiversforLIFE@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk**](mailto:4RiversforLIFE@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)



Urgent and collective action is needed now if Wales is to redress the balance between the degradation and protection of our natural resources given the nature, climate, and pollution emergencies we now face.

This is the call from experts at Natural Resources Wales (NRW) following the publication of the [interim State of Natural Resources Report \(SoNaRR 2025\)](#), marking a crucial step towards understanding and protecting the vital components of nature that underpin our everyday lives.

As one of the requirements of the Environment Act, NRW publishes the SoNaRR report every five years, assessing the pressures Wales's ecosystems face, their quality and their contributions to our well-being. It covers the quality of our waters, the air that we breathe, the value and benefits we gain from our land, seas, urban and green spaces, and the richness of our plants, animals and insects.

The full SoNaRR 2025 report will be published at the end of the year and will provide an updated comprehensive and unified evidence base for use by Welsh Government, public bodies, and other groups to inform the sustainable management of natural resources in

Wales. NRW will be working with stakeholders across Wales and beyond to build this evidence base over the coming year.

Ahead of the publication of the full report, the interim report illustrates how we will present this evidence and some of the key challenges, priorities and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources now and in the future.

It presents the latest evidence on the most pressing challenges currently facing the environment, while also highlighting emerging evidence and milestones reached since the publication of [the last full report in 2020](#).

The accelerating loss of nature and the intensifying effects of climate change and pollution are cited as the most urgent challenges, threatening not only the environment but also the health and economic stability of communities across Wales.

The report highlights where progress has been made across areas such as Wales' ambitions to reach net zero, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing recycling rates. It also reflects on UK and Wales' commitments to support nature's recovery by 2030 via the Leaders' Pledge for Nature (2020), and through Wales' ambitions to deliver on those recommendations via the Welsh Government's Biodiversity Deep Dive.

Yet the evidence documenting nature's continuing decline is undeniable, with the report highlighting the consequential impacts that can have on people, their well-being and the prosperity of the nation.

Considering the evidence gathered to date, NRW is calling on Wales to do things differently and take collective action now as we look to shift social, economic and ecological systems towards a more sustainable direction.

As Wales heads towards an election year in 2026, the report categorically underlines the importance of people working across governments, business, institutions and all parts of society to harness their own capacity and embed pro-nature thinking, decision-making and delivery to support the sustainability of Wales' natural resources.

Sir David Henshaw, Chair of Natural Resources Wales said:

"Natural resources are the lifeblood of Wales, underpinning everything from the air we breathe and the food we eat, to the industries that fuel our economy. But, as this evidence report underlines, these resources are coming under increasing strain.

"The publication of this interim report has to signal a pivotal moment in Wales' journey toward a more sustainable future for these natural resources. While the challenges we face are well documented and undeniable, there is also a great opportunity for action.

“As we look towards the publication of the full report at the end of the year, and a Senedd election in 2026, the evidence outlined in this interim report provides a clear roadmap for what can be done to reverse the damage and build a healthier, more prosperous future for Wales.

“Taking preventative action will be crucial if we are to achieve that goal. But by coming together—government, business, and society— and by putting the right strategies, policies, and investments in place, there is significant potential to improve the state of Wales’ natural resources and ensure their benefits continue for generations to come.”

The SoNaRR2025 report will be the product of years of expert analysis, drawing on the most up-to-date and robust data available. Prepared by experts at NRW with contributions from specialists and stakeholders from Wales and considering research published around the world, it offers a vital evidence base to guide decision-making.

Derek Walker, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales said:

“We all want those we care about to have access to clean air, water and soil, and we all want healthy, accessible and affordable food for current and future generations. Yet this important report warns nature loss, climate change, pollution and waste and their impacts are getting worse.

“Most of the solutions for saving nature already exist and I’m urging Welsh Government and public bodies to use this essential route marker, published in the 10th year of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, to collectively act now with urgency.

“Cymru can do so much more now to restore nature and wildlife for the sake of our health, economy and culture, including by investing in community-owned nature schemes that reduce inequality and create tangible benefits for people today and tomorrow.”

The full State of Natural Resources Report 2025 will be published by the end of 2025 and will provide further insights and recommendations for action.

[Natural Resources Wales / New net fishing rules proposed to protect salmon and sea trout on the River Dee](#)



Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is proposing new net fishing regulations to protect salmon and sea trout stocks on the River Dee and Dee Estuary.

The current Net Limitation Order (NLO), which has governed the net fishery for these species for the past decade, is due for renewal in June 2025. No net licences have been issued under the NLO since 2009, meaning that net fishing has not occurred on the River Dee for 15 years.

The 12-week consultation will run from **18 December 2024 to 12 March 2025**. It focuses on the Welsh section of the River Dee, and responses should be submitted to NRW. A separate consultation for the English portion of the river will be conducted by the Environment Agency.

Unfortunately, despite the absence of net fishing, numbers of salmon and sea trout returning to the river have continued to decline over the past decade. These fish populations are smaller and less resilient, making them more vulnerable to environmental pressures and human activities.

To address this, NRW is proposing to replace the NLO with new byelaws that would close the net fishery on the River Dee entirely. This approach prioritises the long-term protection of these iconic species, ensuring that future generations can enjoy their ecological and cultural significance.

Richard Pierce, Senior Fisheries Officer for NRW, said:

“Protecting salmon and sea trout is essential for the health of the River Dee and for maintaining the connection between our communities and nature.

“We are inviting everyone to share their views on these important proposals. Public input is vital to ensure a balanced decision that reflects ecological needs and community interests.”

For more information about the proposals and how to respond, visit NRW’s consultation page at: <https://ymgynggori.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/evidence-policy-and-permitting-tystiolaeth-polisi-a-thrwyddedu/proposals-for-new-net-fishing-controls-to-protect>.

[Natural Resources Wales / River Usk fish pass restoration plans highlighted at community drop-in session](#)



People living in Brecon town and the surrounding areas are invited to a public drop-in event to find out more about plans to improve fish passage at Brecon Weir on the River Usk.

The scheme delivered by Natural Resources Wales's (NRW) Four Rivers for LIFE Project will see a new fish pass for smolts installed on the weir in the summer of 2025.

The new smolt pass will help salmon (and other fish species) to move freely down past the weir out to sea, helping them on their downstream migration journey.

The project team will hold a drop-in session between 2pm-4pm on the proposals at Y Gaer on, Glamorgan Street in Brecon on Thursday 5 December.

Smolt is the name given to the stage in a young salmon's life when it migrates to sea.

The new fish pass will complement an existing Larinier fish pass on the weir to ensure that fish are able to pass the structure on both their upstream and downstream migrations.

Presently Brecon Weir is recognised as a significant obstruction to migrating fish swimming downstream. Recent studies have recorded shoals of smolts trapped above the weir, especially in low flows. This delays their migration making them vulnerable to disease and predation.

Susie Kinghan, Four Rivers for LIFE Project Manager said: "Smolts migrate downstream to the sea in spring, and in years when spring flows are low they have experienced difficulty passing over Brecon weir."

She adds: "Salmon and other fish in the river are now struggling and are at risk of becoming extinct in Wales. This new smolt fish pass will ensure that young fish are able to travel downstream during important stages of their life cycle."

Members of the community are invited to attend the drop-in event on Thursday 5 December between 2pm-4pm at Y Gaer, Glamorgan Street, Brecon, LD3 7DW.

For further information you can email the team directly on 4RiversforLIFE@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

[Natural Resources Wales / Ystrad Mynach man fined for fishing without a rod licence at Penallta Pond](#)

A man from Ystrad Mynach has been ordered to pay a total of £435.30 after being caught fishing on at Penallta Ponds without valid rod licence.

Tyrone Selby, of Nelson Road, Ystrad Mynach, was seen fishing by enforcement officers from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) at Penallta Pond on 17 July 2024 during a patrol.

When questioned by officers, Mr Selby confirmed he did not hold a current Rod Licence.

On the 30 October, Mr Selby was found guilty via the Single Justice Procedure for using an unlicensed fishing instrument, Mr Selby was fined £220, ordered to pay a cost of £127.30 and a £88 victim surcharge.

Chris Burge, Waste Regulation Officer for NRW said:

We take any activity that threatens Welsh fish stocks extremely seriously and this is especially true of illegal fishing.

We urge anglers to make use of our beautiful countryside in Wales, but to do so responsibly and to ensure that they have licences to fish, to avoid risking prosecution. Remember you must have a rod fishing licence for England and Wales if you're fishing for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel with a rod and line. You could be fined up to up to £2,500 and your fishing equipment could be seized if you're fishing and cannot show a valid rod fishing licence.

Anyone who sees or suspects illegal fishing activity can report it to the NRW 24 hour incident hotline on 0300 065 3000 or on the NRW website: [Natural Resources Wales / Report an incident](#)

Rod licences can be purchased online at: <https://naturalresources.wales/permits-and-permissions/buy-a-fishing-rod-licence/?lang=en#>

[Natural Resources Wales / Using nature-based solutions to support water quality improvements in Pembrokeshire](#)

A Natural Resources Wales (NRW) project on the Western Cleddau river in Pembrokeshire is harnessing the power of trees to reduce nutrient pollution and improve water quality.

Approximately 6,500 trees have been planted along the banks of the river near it's confluence with the Eastern Cleddau, to soak up excess nutrients from agricultural land run off.

The corridors of trees, averaging 14metres in width, act as buffer strips between farmland and the river and have been planted on non-productive land. They have been introduced

with the full support of the landowner, who was eager to introduce positive environmental change.

As well as providing benefits to the Special Area of Conservation river, the new trees will provide connection with existing natural woodland on the land, benefiting a range of plant and wildlife species.

The trees were planted by contractors Coed Porffor/Purple Trees and the planting operation took five planters five full days to complete.

Separately, the project has also seen over 1000m of new fencing installed to prevent livestock accessing the river.

Andrew Lewis, from NRW's Marine Projects team said:

"The Western Cleddau and Milford Haven estuary are incredibly special places, designated for a range of rare and threatened species and habitats including lamprey, otter, mudflats and marshes.

"We're grateful for the support of the landowner, who allowed us to undertake such large-scale tree planting on the land. We worked closely with the landowner to develop this project and identify suitable areas of land which were least productive.

"In years to come, these trees will act as an important filter, reducing the amount of excess nutrients reaching the Western Cleddau, that are impacting the Special Area of Conservation river and estuary."

The Western and Eastern Cleddau rivers converge at Picton Point to form the Daugleddau estuary at Milford Haven. The estuary is designated as a Marine Special Area of Conservation, while significant stretches of its coastline are also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The Western Cleddau faces significant water quality challenges, predominantly due to nitrate, phosphate and sediment pollution. These pollutants contribute significantly to water quality failures in the catchment under the Water Framework Directive (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.

The project has been funded by the Welsh Government's Water Capital Programme, which supports a number of environmental priorities including river restoration, metal mine remediation, fisheries and water quality.

It supports similar initiatives being undertaken in the area to improve the Western Cleddau, including river restoration efforts undertaken by the Pembrokeshire River Restoration Project.



Work to restore a river in the upper Conwy catchment is helping reduce flood risk downstream and boosting nature.

As part of Prosiect Uwch Conwy, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has carried out flood plain restoration work on the Afon Machno - a major tributary of the Afon Conwy - at National Trust Cymru's Carrog farm.

Part of the work involved removing man-made embankments and lowering the riverbank, which allows water to once again access the floodplain. This slows the river's flow during high water levels and helps to reduce flood risk lower down in the catchment.

Scrapes and channels have also been dug on the floodplain to restore historic flow patterns, enabling further water storage.

Work was funded through the Welsh Government's Water Capital Programme, which supports environmental priorities including river restoration, metal mine remediation, fisheries and water quality and is delivered in partnership by NRW and the National Trust Cymru.

Sarah Aubrey, senior officer in NRW's Conwy Environment Team, said:

"We are pleased to have worked in partnership with National Trust Cymru on this project.

"Reducing the riverbank allows water to more easily access the floodplain in periods of heavy rainfall or storms. This lowers the amount and velocity of water flowing into the Afon Conwy, helping reduce flood risk downstream.

"This is part of our wider work to improve the resilience of communities in Wales to climate change and help protect nature. Working closely with locally based contractors who understand the environment of Uwch Conwy, ensures that we achieve the best outcomes both for nature and the local economy."

Dewi Davies, Prosiect Uwch Conwy manager with National Trust Cymru, said:

"It's great to see how partnership working within Prosiect Uwch Conwy is continuing to help deliver great results for the benefit of people and nature.

"At Carrog, boulders have also been placed in the river channel to create in-river habitat for fish and invertebrates, bringing this part of the river to life once again.

"Over time, parts of the floodplain will be transformed into wetland habitats benefiting birds including sandpiper, dipper, kingfisher as well as frogs, newts, bats, otters, and water voles."

Prosiect Uwch Conwy, aims to provide benefits to the communities and wildlife of the Upper Conwy catchment by creating a cleaner and healthier environment, bringing people and nature closer together.