



**National
Trust**

Briefing paper – Angling on Malham Tarn

Background

We have not been able to accommodate angling on the Tarn in 2021 and committed to running a consultation on the future of angling this year. There are two main topics that we are going to consult on:

- Biosecurity
- Day-to-day running of angling

At the beginning of 2021 we were concerned about biosecurity. Having consulted other organisations we have found a way forwards with this. Our main challenge now is how angling would be managed on a day-to-day basis.

We made the decision to carry out the consultation process online due to the global pandemic and the predicted rise in cases as we head into autumn. It also means we can record feedback more fairly and make sure everyone has a chance to have their say. This includes those who live a long way from Malham and would be unable to attend meetings in person. We are using survey monkey to carry out the consultation and there is space for additional comments and feedback.

We understand that there are passionate views around angling and we welcome constructive comments submitted via the survey monkey portal. Any abusive or rude responses through the survey or direct contact to National Trust staff will be disregarded.

The consultation will run from 1-31 October. Results will be shared by email (if you have given us your contact details) in mid-November. Our website will also be updated with the outcomes (the whole National Trust website is being updated in November and December so we're unable to confirm at this stage when we will be able to publish the outcomes online).

Who is being invited to the consultation

Anyone is welcome to submit their feedback through the consultation. As well as anglers and those with an interest in angling, we will be asking other groups including local site users, those with an interest in freshwater and nature conservation and some organisations such as Natural England and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

Biosecurity

In 2019 a piece of work was carried out by the University of Leeds in partnership with the Yorkshire Dales Biosecurity and Invasive Non-Native Species Steering Group. This highlighted activities that pose a high-risk in terms of introducing invasive non-native species and diseases. We were unable to implement the recommendations in 2020 and are now looking at how we can manage the biosecurity risk of all these activities. These include wild swimming, dogs accessing the tarn, educational groups, work by National Trust staff and volunteers, contractors and visitors accessing the Tarn. We are taking other measures in relation to these to reduce the risk these pose.

Angling potentially poses a high risk to the biosecurity of the site. We are making recommendations on how we could run angling to reduce the biosecurity risk, based on discussions with third parties including Natural England. We will be asking anglers whether they would agree to these recommendations and whether they have any additional comments. Existing protocols including boat fishing only and catch and release remain in place and are not being consulted upon.

Recommendations to improve biosecurity

- Create a clean down area
- Use of National Trust catch nets
- Use of National Trust outboard motors only
- Clean-check-dry will be implemented when anglers arrive, if kit does not meet requirements anglers will be unable to fish

We will not be buying any other equipment for anglers to use as we know everyone has their own equipment they prefer.

Day to day running of angling

In 2020 angling on Malham Tarn was unable to take place because of the global pandemic. The pandemic had a number of impacts including redundancies and changes to the way both the National Trust and Field Studies Council (FSC) operate at Malham.

For many years the FSC has been running the day-to-day operations of angling at the Tarn. This system worked well as they always had staff available in the office to sign anglers in, check permits and take payment. Like many organisations the FSC and National Trust had to make staff redundant because of the pandemic. The FSC are unable to continue with the previous system and so if angling is to continue alternative arrangements must be found. The National Trust did not run the angling operation before and with staff changes do not have the capacity to take this on.

Key challenges

- We would be able to take bookings, however, it is the presence of someone on site to meet anglers, take details and organise equipment that is not within our capacity.
- Our office is usually staffed from Monday to Friday and we now have more staff working from home regularly after the pandemic, so a presence in the office is not guaranteed. There is no cover in the office at weekends.
- Office hours during the week are 9am-5pm, so no early morning or evening cover

To operate angling efficiently and with biosecurity protocols in place we would need a member of staff on site to:

- Meet anglers on site to check them in, check rod licences and then check equipment in line with biosecurity protocols and help with cleaning down if necessary.
- Give out the relevant equipment i.e. outboard motors, oars etc
- Check equipment back in at the end of the day

Potential Options

We considered 4 options for the future of angling at Malham Tarn

1. Run in house by National Trust

There is no staff capacity to run the operation which we estimate would need at least 2.5 hours (including morning and end of day) every day that fishing is running. There is also additional administration time, weekly boat checks and cleaning required. We would have to recruit a member of staff to deliver this, and the cost would have to be passed on to anglers. We know that recruiting staff for part-time irregular hours is incredibly difficult because of Malham's location and we would still have to cover any holiday or other time off. We cannot justify the business need for this based on the number of boats and seasonal nature of angling.

We have therefore discounted being able to run fishing in house.

2. Run by volunteers

There are strict rules about volunteering so that we do not inadvertently create a contract of employment with a volunteer. If a role was paid previously, if we are depending on the volunteer to deliver security or to maintain business and if we are relying on volunteers to deliver a service then this can create a contract of employment.

We have therefore discounted being able to run fishing with volunteers.

NOTE: some other sites do run a system with volunteer bailiffs patrolling banks, they can arrive at any time and if they don't attend then it does not impact the ability of people to fish. This therefore does not create a contract of employment.

3. Investigate a partnership with a third party

We would look to work with a third party who could operate fishing for us on the Tarn. We have not yet investigated this and therefore any details such as opening hours, number of days, booking procedure would still need to be decided. There may be a decrease in number of fishing days available and an increase in costs to anglers.

This does not mean we would commit to a third-party operating angling. We would be exploring how this might work and set it up if it is a viable option.

4. Cessation of fishing

Participants will be asked to choose their preferred option of 3 or 4.