

MIDDLESBROUGH ANGLING CLUB

SAFETY ADVICE / RISK ASSESSMENT FOR MIDDLESBROUGH ANGLING CLUB MEMBERS AND VISITORS.

Club members and all visitors are asked to read carefully the following safety information and advice. Please apply all advice when walking round or fishing rivers, streams, ponds, reservoirs and lakes.

The aim of this advice is to raise angler's awareness of the possible hazards that may be encountered when fishing. Whilst the sport of angling inevitably carries with it some element of risk to those taking part, by making sure that you adhere to common sense, simple precautions as outlined below, you can minimise the risk and reduce the potential for injury / ill health to yourself and others who may be affected by your actions.

If you have children who go out on the Club's waters, we would ask that you ensure they are properly supervised and/or understand the content and importance of this information and advice. Please note that the Club's rules require all junior members under the age of 12 years to be accompanied by an adult.

All members and visiting anglers should remain vigilant and take common sense precautions when out fishing and should bear in mind that access to the water, bank stability and the riverbed itself is subject to constant change, for example following flooding and periods of inclement weather.

Activity	Possible Hazard & Potential Effect	Information, advice and precautions to reduce risk
Walking to the riverbank or waters edge	Overgrown, high and eroded riverbanks or waters edge which could result in slips, trips and falls.	Take care and use obvious paths where available. Be constantly aware that the riverbank or waters edge can change significantly following flooding and frost leading to undercuts and unstable banks. Do not take it for granted the riverbank, waters edge will be the same as on your last visit. Fences may also have been washed away, watch out for loose barbed wire fencing, tree branches and boulders that may have been deposited on the bank. Be aware that some banks are high and may have a sheer drop. These may not necessarily be at the water's edge. On some stretches the riverbank or waters edge has been fenced off to prevent access and erosion by cattle, take your time, concentrate and watch your footing when accessing overgrown areas. Rabbit holes are also prevalent on some banks. Much of the Club's water is remote from habitation. Always tell someone where you are going and an estimated time of return, carry a mobile phone (although it may not work in all areas)
Walking to the riverbank or waters edge or fishing	Danger from farm animals and other wildlife with potential to cause impact injury or bite.	Some access fields may contain bulls, cows and calves. Approach with caution and plan your route to avoid them if possible or give wide birth. Please note that dogs are not allowed to accompany anglers. Be aware that other wildlife and farm animals, including farm dogs can cause injury. Snakes (adders) though rarely encountered may be present and can cause a poisonous bite, avoid contact . Do not insert any part of the body into any burrow, hole in stone walls or waterside banking, avoid potential situations that may lead to conflict with wildlife. Be vigilant at all times.
Walking to the riverbank or waters edge	Use of stiles & footbridges. Potential for slips, falls and drowning.	Stiles and Footbridges can become damaged and unstable due to age and floods. Please take care when using stiles and footbridges especially when on slippery / uneven ground or with low guard rails. If you find a damaged stile or footbridge do not attempt to use it and please report it to the Club Committee.
Wading	Wet weather conditions and danger of flash floods	Club river stretches may be spate rivers and the level can rise very quickly with little or no warning, equally flow rates will be affected. Always be aware of weather conditions in the area and up river, be aware of changes in flow speed and leave the river as soon as levels start to rise. If the river starts to rise, large volumes of hazardous debris can be washed down. Do not enter the water if flows are high. Refer to the Environment Agency's river level monitor before you go out fishing to check river levels, this is available on the Environment Agency's web site.

Activity	Possible	
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	Hazard & Potential Effect	Information, advice and precautions to reduce risk
General walking or fishing	Extreme weather conditions and potential for:	<p><u>Sunburn</u> Wear sun protection or sunblock, even in cloudy conditions and wear a hat, wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from glare.</p> <p><u>Lightening Strike</u> Be aware that if it is thundering and lightening, your rod (if carbon fibre /graphite/ metal based) is an ideal lightening conductor and you are ideally earthed when in water. <i>Do not fish or walk with a fishing rod during electrical storms.</i></p> <p><u>High winds resulting in falling branches</u> Avoid fishing directly under trees in very windy weather to reduce possible risk from falling branches.</p> <p><u>Icy/Snowy conditions</u> It is not uncommon for large slabs of ice to be present in the river flow or ponds during extremely cold weather, these can be dangerous if encountered during wading and it is not advisable to wade during such conditions. Take care when walking and accessing the river as the ground can be extremely slippery. <i>Never walk over frozen ponds or rivers</i></p> <p>On every outdoor activity always take appropriate warm outdoor clothing and waterproofs. Take spare clothes, extra food and water, first aid kit and mobile phone. Always tell someone where you are and what time you will be back.</p>
General walking or fishing	Falling into the water resulting in possible injury /drowning	Plan your route, watch footing and wear adequate footwear with ankle support. Be very careful when walking close to the waters edge and when wading in the river or pond, there may be steep drop-offs and stones can be slippery. Bank side, riverbanks can be eroded, unstable or undercut. A buoyancy aid is strongly advised.
General fishing or working from boat	Fishing, working, slipping from boats can result in drowning, injury, getting wet and cold.	Take care when embarking, disembarking, working or fishing from a boat. Be aware of slippery, uneven or unstable pontoons, platforms or surfaces. A life preserver must be worn at all times when fishing or working from a boat.
Fishing / casting	Contact with hooks / line which can result in puncture wounds and cuts to self or others	Be vigilant and take care when back casting to avoid coming into contact with other anglers / the public at the waters edge. Some waters will also be public footpaths. It is recommended that protective glasses are worn when fishing to protect your eyes from hooks, the wearing of a hat is also recommended. Weighted flies can be particularly unpredictable when casting. The use of barbless or de-barbed hooks is strongly encouraged and recommended. Hooks and line cuts can cause deep cuts and puncture wounds and allow infectious diseases into the body. Take care when tying, removing hooks and when casting, do not use rusty hooks, barbless / de-barbed hooks are strongly recommended. In the event of injury from hooks or line cuts, disinfect the area as soon as possible and cover with a clean waterproof plaster. It is recommended that a basic first aid kit is carried on fishing trips or kept in your car.
Driving on Tracks	Accidents and injury to the public .	Where the Club has vehicular access, please be aware that these tracks may also be public rights of way. Drive slowly and be vigilant for pedestrians and animals. Make sure road, track or lane is safe for vehicle to drive along.
Activity	Possible Hazard & Potential Effect	Information, advice and precautions to reduce risk

General fishing	Accidental hooking of a bat whilst fishing at dusk when bats are active.	A small proportion of Daubenton's bats in the UK carry a rabies like virus which can cause illness in those bitten. This can be fatal if not treated at an early stage. If a bat is inadvertently hooked the angler is advised to attempt to land the bat on the riverbank where it may be able to free itself. The bat should not be handled directly without appropriate protection to avoid being bitten. If bitten or scratched wash the wound with clean water (not river water) as soon as possible and seek medical advice.
General walking / fishing	Dermatitis / poisoning from contact with poisonous plants & fungi	Do not touch or eat unidentified berries, fungi or unidentified plants. Do not touch any part of Giant Hogweed as the sap can cause severe skin blistering and burns. It can also cause serious damage to the eyes. During long periods of hot, dry weather it is possible for algal scum to develop on water (eg. Blue Green Algae), avoid any contact, particularly if blue-green algae. Wash off immediately if contact occurs. Do not drink the water.
General walking / fishing	Medical conditions	You have a DUTY of CARE to advise those around you of any medical condition that may harm you or others if they have to come to your aid. Advise of condition and what to do if incident occurs.
General walking / fishing	Falling into water. Drowning, injury slipping, getting cold and wet.	Be careful and watch your footing at waters edge, while in the water, on fishing platforms or bank pegs on the banks of rivers, lakes, streams, ponds and reservoirs. Beware of undercut banks and steep drop offs. Always inspect banks, fishing pegs and platforms for safety before you step on them. Do not enter water if flows are high. Be aware of slippery rocks and hazards particularly in poor weather conditions. Be aware of flash flooding in rivers. Wear suitable waterproof clothing and A LIFE PRESERVER IS ALWAYS RECOMMENDED.
Walking to the riverbank waters edge / fishing	Insects with Potential to Cause impact injury, stings or bites	Keep well clear of wasps, hornets nests and beehives. Wear insect repellent to deter biting/stinging insects or bugs. Wear suitable protective clothing especially if susceptible to allergic reaction. MAKE PEOPLE AROUND YOU AWARE IF YOU HAVE ALLERGIC REACTIONS TO STINGS OR BITES AND ALWAYS CARRY MEDICATION.
General fishing	Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis) and other infectious disease	Weil's disease is a bacterial infection transmitted in rats urine. Wash your hands after fishing and before eating, drinking or smoking. Disinfect any cuts / wounds received whilst on the riverbank as soon as possible and cover with a waterproof plaster. There may also be a risk on some water from treated / partially treated sewage effluent. Report all instances of unexplained illness or fever to your doctor.
General walking / fishing	Lyme's Disease from ticks	Ticks will be present in fields, at the waterside and on the riverbank. These may attach themselves to exposed areas of skin and can cause serious illness. Check for ticks and if found remove the tick and disinfect the affected area. Report any unexplained fever or rash at the bite site to your doctor as soon as possible.
General walking / fishing	Contact with sharp and abrasive type tools and equipment. Potential for injury / infection	Care and attention is required when using tools and equipment. Always use the appropriate tool for the task and ensure you are capable of completing the task competently and safely.
General walking / fishing	Physical, verbal abuse. Potential injury	If subject to physical or verbal abuse do not engage the perpetrator. Move to a safe area and contact police. Inform the Committee as soon as possible.

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General fishing	Falling, tripping, slipping over	Endeavour to keep fishing area clean and tidy and free from obstructions at all times. Do not block or obstruct pathways.

	fishing tackle around fishing area. Potential injury.	
Fishing / casting	Contact with overhead power lines which can result in electrocution or electric shock or severe burns.	Overhead power lines may be present on some waters. The electricity supplier generally raises awareness of these via signs on the riverbank but these can become difficult to read due to sun damage, overgrown vegetation and vandalism and can be washed away in floods. Danger of death notices are normally displayed on electric poles. Rods or Poles made of metal, carbon fibre / graphite or similar materials will conduct electricity, other materials such as nylon line will allow electricity to flow along it when wet. Tackle does not need to come into contact with power line as electric can arc. Anglers should maintain an adequate safety distance from overhead lines. Advice from the electricity supplier is that there should be no fishing within 50m (150 ft) of overhead power lines.
General fishing	Emergency evacuation	Before you start to tackle up or fish you must establish the location of all exits from the fishing area in case of an emergency situation.

Any dangers or dangerous occurrences observed or sustained by members or visiting anglers on Middlesbrough Angling Club's waters should be reported to the Committee.