

## Safety Afloat

Although the variables involved are perhaps infinite, ensure that your boat is suitable for the water being fished, preferably has internal buoyancy chambers, is well maintained, and never exceed the maximum practical number of occupants. When fishing, the least number of people in the boat the better and safer.

- Only hire a boat from a reputable dealer and thoroughly check that it is in good order before use
- Many accidents happen during a boat's launch and subsequent recovery. Wherever possible don't launch or recover your boat alone. Always continue to wear your life jacket even though you're not actually in the boat, and always be aware of where the slip ends - as there is often a drop off
- A tidy boat is a safe boat: do not leave anchor ropes or other kit lying around, and designate and keep clear an area specifically for unhooking and handling your catch
- Always appropriately match engine power to both boat size and water fished
- Always wear a life preserver – at the very least a life-jacket, and, especially in the depths of winter, consider a flotation suit. Ensure that whatever you wear is well maintained
- When fishing weir pools, always exercise great caution as currents can change unexpectedly and are notoriously treacherous
- Keep a fully-charged mobile phone in a dry bag on the boat, and always tell someone where you are going and an estimated time of return
- If afloat after dark, ensure that your boat has navigation and spot lights
- At all times keep a sharp lookout for other waterway users and floating debris. Also monitor echo-sounders for potential underwater obstructions, such as sharp rocks
- Always carry a First Aid kit, basic tool kit and spares. Never abuse alcohol or drugs and drive your boat
- Always check the weather before going afloat and respond accordingly

## Angling Afloat and the Law

- Ensure that your boat is insured for at least third party liability
- Ensure that you hold the appropriate boat licence for the water being fished, and of course, the usual rod licence (this only applies in England and Wales)
- In non-tidal waters, permission to fish afloat is a legal requirement, as it is from the bank. Ensure that you have the appropriate permit for wherever you fish (this only applies in England and Wales)
- Before fishing weirs, check Environment Agency local byelaws regarding the distances angling is permitted both above and below them. This can vary between five – fifteen metres above, and fifteen – forty-five metres below
- Keep within the waterway's speed limits
- Always observe local boating rules, such as 'no go' areas
- Only troll when waterway byelaws and rules permit

## Etiquette Afloat

- Always be considerate to other anglers fishing from boat or bank
- Always respect other waterway users and comply with all reasonable requests
- If challenged and asked for a permit or licence, always respond politely and compliantly
- When trolling, always remain aware of and be considerate to bank anglers; this particularly applies to river fishing. Always ensure an unrestricted view of the bank and water ahead

## Combatting Non-Native Invasive Species

The ecology of UK waterways is currently under great threat from invasive non-native species such as Killer Shrimp, Floating Pennywort and Zebra Mussels. It is essential that all boat users take precautions to ensure they do not help spread these pests. The key thing to remember is **'Check, Clean, Dry'**

- Always check, clean and dry the hull of your boat before moving it to another water
- Empty any water that has collected in the hull of your boat or cooling system of your engine, before leaving the water you have been fishing
- Ensure that all nets, waders, drogues and clothing are checked, cleaned and dried before fishing another venue

**Ratified by PAC and the LAS, endorsed by Angling Trust and British Waterways.**

