

PIKE ANGLERS' CLUB

Recommended code of conduct



1: Before starting to fish **THINK**. Are you too close to another angler? Are you likely to interfere with their sport? When bank fishing try not to fish any nearer to an angler than is necessary, unless by invitation. Leave them plenty of room if you can. When boat fishing try not to encroach on another boat angler's fishing area and give bank anglers at least 100 yards clearance if possible.

2: Rods should never be left unattended in any circumstances. If you decide to leave your swim for any reason, **REEL IN**, it only takes a few seconds for a pike to swallow a set of hooks. It is unfair to ask or expect another angler to attend your rods whilst you are away. He has his own tackle to deal with and whilst looking after yours could have his own unattended baits gorged by a pike.

3: **ALWAYS** ensure that you have the correct tackle necessary, especially a large micromesh landing net, unhooking mat, forceps, strong wire cutters, small bolt croppers, wire traces, scales and weigh sling.

4: The use of semi-barbless or crushed barbed hooks in sizes 6 to 10 is preferable to barbed - you will not lose fish. Semi-barbless hooks are not an excuse for allowing a pike to swallow the bait.

5: It is important to correctly place the hooks in the bait in order to minimise the chances of deep hooking. For most live-baiting the top one in the dorsal and the other behind the pectoral. For legered dead-baits the top one in the tail root and the other no further forward than the dorsal fin.

6: **NEVER** wait for a second run. Strike as soon as you are sure that the pike has the bait in its jaws. Although conditions may differ, always assume that the pike is of reasonable size and strike sooner than later. A pike missed is preferable to a deep hooked one. Remember, deeply hooked pike not only suffer damage from the hooks but also from the extra time it takes to get them returned to the water. **MINIMUM HANDLING = MAXIMUM CONSERVATION**

7: Handle all Pike with the utmost care. On landing lay it on a unhooking mat, **NEVER** on uncovered hard ground. When boat fishing always take carpet underlay, foam rubber sheet or an unhooking mat to cover the bottom boards. **NEVER** ever use a Pike gag when unhooking. Use the forceps and hand technique. Laying the pike on its back and firmly holding its lower jaw (through the gill cover, avoiding the gill rakes) with one hand and removing the hooks with the other. Always be especially careful when you find it necessary to insert the forceps behind the gill covers. At all times make sure the fish is held firmly.

8: Weighing should be carried out using a weighing sling or soft knotless sling. **NOT** with the balance hook under the chin. Boga Grips **SHOULD NEVER** be used to assist in holding or unhooking pike!

9: If you have to, retain pike in a specially designed pike tube or retention sack, but only for the minimum period of time necessary for photographs, etc. Always sink the tube or sack well and leave alone once in position. **DO** not tow fish around in tubes or sacks, it is dangerous to do this or transport Pike long distances in boats. In warm weather in particular, pike can easily die from this mistreatment. All Pike should be returned to the water as soon as possible and in all circumstances, **DON'T** retain them just for the sake of it.

10: When live-baiting the use of bait no longer than 8" (20 cm) is recommended. The transportation and subsequent translocation of live-bait from one water to another is an offence throughout the British Isles and should NOT be practiced. The continuation of this Practice will lead to prosecutions, acrimony and the eventual banning of live-baiting altogether, use only fish captured at the venue. It is essential to ensure that live-baiting is an acceptable method on the water you are fishing. Always bear in mind that as well as presenting hooking problems the use of large baits is more likely to incur the wrath of pleasure and match anglers. Be tactful at all times when live-baiting.

11: Always respect the property of others and as such poaching is not condoned. Always obtain permission to fish wherever necessary and comply with any rules the water owner imposes. Make sure that you have a Environment Agency rod licence.

12: Do not damage crops, fences or trees and don't leave any litter or tackle behind and never light fires. Should you discover anything left behind by any other anglers - take it home. Always respect the environment and its wildlife, discarded litter or tackle give all anglers a bad name. Amongst some groups of anglers it has become fashionable to act in such a manner as to cause annoyance to others. Pike anglers should not be seen to be party to such behaviour.

13: The good name of the PAC and the esteem in which it is held has taken many years to build up, yet irresponsible actions by one or more members could destroy in minutes all that hard work. The name of the PAC is entrusted to each and every member and all members are PAC representatives. YOU are the PAC and by adhering as closely as possible to the recommendations listed above you will not let it down.

14: If you see anyone abusing pike try to persuade, educate and convince them that there is no reason to mistreat pike. Never lose your temper, if they will not listen, leave and report the incident to the fishery owner and your Regional Organiser.

15: Incidents of poaching should be reported to the Police through the National non-emergency number of 101 or through the Environment Agency report line of 0800 807060. Use this number also to report any pollution issue.