

Low Water Rules – Est Aug 2026

The Ross on Wye Angling Club constitution aims to encourage our anglers to support the conservation of fish populations and the protection and conservation of their angling environment and its ecology. It also promotes the safe handling and return of all fish caught to reduce stress and suffering, ensuring good fish welfare and enabling high quality angling for our members now and for years to come.

Extreme summer river conditions (i.e. high temperatures, low dissolved oxygen, extremely low water levels) are becoming more frequent and as such we must adapt to balance anglers' needs, fish welfare and protection of our river environment. In addition, the River Wye is currently suffering pollution issues, and the effects on our fish populations and their key habitats are worsened by more frequent extreme weather events. We encourage our members to be mindful of these issues when deciding when to fish our waters.

These rules are to be introduced to allow limited angling access during periods when water temperature and dissolved oxygen levels are acceptable, but the river remains exceptionally low:

1. Fishing should be carried out at river level* or while wading only (where fish can be landed in at least a foot - 12 inches - of water) and all fish should be brought to hand and unhooked in the water or netted and not removed from the water during unhooking. All fish to be returned immediately. No weighing of fish and no photography of fish.
2. Barbless hooks to be used at all times to facilitate immediate release.
3. No keep nets to be used at any time.
4. No fishing on Town Waters including: All swims on the Ross Town side of the river, and all swims from opposite the Rowing Club to Wilton Bridge on the Members side. (This rule automatically prohibits Day Ticket anglers from fishing the waters due to the unsuitability of the swims available at very low water levels).
5. One rod only.
6. If fish are obviously stressed and do not recover quickly having been rested in the water before they swim off you should cease fishing immediately and report the incident to the Secretary at secretary.rossac@gmail.com.

*Fishing at river level means NOT fishing from pegs or platforms high above the water. Anglers should be wading (safely) or their feet should be close to water level on the bank when fishing, so that they can unhook fish in the water and release them without removing them from the river. Only in circumstances where unhooking is unavoidably problematic should fish be put on a wet mat and unhooked, before being returned immediately. The use of barbless hooks should mean that this is a very rare occurrence. Tired fish should be gently supported in the river facing into the stream to allow them to recover before release.

The success of these rules will be closely monitored by the Club Committee and the Club retains the right to revert to suspending fishing without notice if they believe that fish welfare is being compromised.