



NMC Guide for Fish-in Organisers.

Thank you for either volunteering or expressing an interest in organising a fish-in for the club. Quite simply, without the very generous offer of hosting the fish-ins by like minded individuals such as yourself, they probably would cease to exist or be severely curtailed.

Please remember, you are not alone and that the fish-in coordinator is there to help and offer advice towards getting your event up and running.

This guide likewise has been put together simply to help you, the intention being to have a document you can refer to, and allow for a degree of uniformity across the fish-in programme without taking away the unique and personalised qualities that the individual fish-in organisers bring.

Apologies in advance for the sucking of eggs and stating of the blindingly obvious on occasions.

Material required for Grey Ghost:

Geographical Location and Date of the fish-in. Nearest City, town, or village to the fish-in area and county, such as Folkestone, Kent. Plus the date of the fish-in in the format of dd-month-yyyy

Contact Details: Name of fish-in organiser(s)

Telephone number(s) - especially important is the mobile number that members can contact you on the day of the fish-in.

E-mail - not essential but extremely useful.

Time and Place of meeting (both before the start of fishing, and at the end of the day).

- You should try to include details of places to park cars and cost, with a little detail of landmarks / directions to aid location. Remember to include post codes of locations as they help Sat-Nav users, and those using such things as Google maps to orientate themselves prior to the event.

Suggestions as to any added incentives for member being there, such as giving a quick chat about specific swims, tactics, the handing out of the venue map(s) and so on.

Time and duration of fishing - Clear indication of the start and finishing times.

Local Tides - Both LW and HW, time and height.

Fishing location descriptions - try to make it brief but informative, giving members an idea of the species of mullet to be encountered, typical methods available or preferred style of fishing (including any specialist tackle and whether members require drop-nets or landing-net), the terrain and ease of access for mobility, requirements of footwear such as boots, wellies, or waders. Parking details if different from the place of meeting should be included here as well.

Other points of interest - These may include such things as availability of public toilets, local supermarkets (bread and lunch snacks being often high on the shopping list of many members), and tackle shops. You may also wish to make brief reference to local accommodation opportunities or locations in terms of budget hotels, guest houses, and camp sites.

Please note: The suggested date for your fish-in needs to be with the coordinator by mid-December so the fish-in programme can be agreed by the Committee meeting at the start of the New Year, and published in the January newsletter. Details of your fish-in as outlined above will need to be in the Spring edition of Grey Ghost, and as such should be with the coordinator at the start of March.

The Fish-in:

Things to consider and possibly prepare for:

When should the fish-in be? That is a question only you can answer in terms of such things as your availability, specific tide requirements, time of year for fishing productivity, and so on. Normally most fish-ins are a day in duration (typically a Saturday to accommodate for members travelling, recovery for work on a Monday, social and family commitments and the like), with some being extended over both the Saturday and Sunday. The coordinator will normally try to stagger the fish-ins over the season and try and avoid back to back events (consecutive weekends) where possible, so it may be wise to have a preferred date and an alternative in case you are asked prior to the dates being fixed in the club calendar.

How many people should I expect? Difficult question to answer, but as a rule of thumb, most fish-ins tend to attract around 5 to 10% of membership – so typically 7 to 15 people.

Why do people come to the fish-ins? For a variety of reasons, from purely social, to a desire to swap ideas or observe specific tactics, tackle, and techniques, explore new venues, trying to catch a specific species of mullet, through to the competitive element of the fish-in trophies. Perhaps the real question you need to ask is how many of those boxes can you help or give members the opportunity to tick, and in ways that they realise are on offer.

Will you be giving a short talk at the start about such things as swims or areas in the venue that people should be seriously considering paying a visit to, along with points of interest. Where are you going to conduct that talk and will members be able to see and hear you? Are there specific rigs or set-ups that you use that have brought you consistent success –are you going to impart that information, and if so, how? Will you have a rod already strung or a separate display item for members to examine and ask questions about?

Venue Map – This really is a must to help members, especially those new to the area. It serves not only as an aid to the day of the fish-in, but should also offer the opportunity to members to dabble in their own time at a later stage.

The style and size of which is of your choosing, although typically most being A4 photocopies. We can help with the cost of photocopying if you wish, but do please liaise with your coordinator first to confirm your estimate is not excessive, and secondly retain ALL receipts for reimbursement and auditing.

The map can be computer generated or hand drawn, black & white or colour – depending upon available resources. If you are having difficulty then please speak with the coordinator. You may wish to produce a large clear version so that members can simply take a picture with their phone cameras, but do please make sure you can accommodate for those without such facilities at their disposal.

Things to include on said map would be: specific swims or areas for consideration for fishing (remember the swims you offer up are of your choosing, and no one would suggest you have to give your secret 'golden' swim away if you are not inclined to do so), boundary limits, points of interest such as parking, toilets, local shops or supermarkets, tackle shops, end of day social meeting point, and anything else you feel is relevant.

Will you be able to fish or walk the venue prior to the fish-in day, in order to give some up to date information about suitable swims, fish number / stamp and so on – this is really for your own confidence as

much as members – and many organisers walk their venues (where practical) prior to the meeting slot on the morning of the fish-in for those very reasons.

Do you have a pre-prepared form ready to fill out to register members' attendance and record their catch – remember they may do that either through being at the meeting point at the allotted time, or by contacting you via phone or text. The coordinator will provide a generic form to help you - do please feel free to modify the layout or make your own if required. The generic form also contains a reminder of the code of conduct for fish-ins, and as part of the Angling Trust, the fish-in would be covered by full public liability insurance.

You may want to have a camera handy and take some scenic and social snaps – along with fishy ones – to offer up to the person doing the write-up.

How are you going to conduct yourself during the fish-in period – most organisers tend to fish and keep in touch with members throughout the day, either by periodically physically visiting swims or through phone or text communication. Some will act as ghillie and guide to new members or members new to the area, whilst others will pair those members with willing 'old-hands'.

There is no hard and fast rule as it obviously depends upon the location, venue size, members' prior familiarity with the venue etc. However do please remember people will want to communicate and relay information about the day's events as they occur – and you will be that conduit.

Do you have any specific locations, venues, or swims available in case of poor weather?

Think seriously about using the forums to keep people posted about the area or venue prior to the fish-in to help build interest in the event.

Real life sometimes gets in the way of the best made plans – if things change or difficulties arise, please contact the coordinator (or committee members) as early as you can so we can help where we are able.

Post Fishing: An end of fishing meeting point held in a local pub, typically lasting an hour or so. This allows for members to socialise and catch-up on the day's events, and offers an opportunity for you as organiser to finish collecting and collating the details of fish captures you may have been unaware of.

It is probably also worth noting that members may not be able to attend the end of fishing meeting for a variety of reasons, typically revolving around travel, family commitments, length of the day fishing, or indeed weather conditions. This should in no way be taken as a reflection upon you as organiser, but it does mean you will need to stress to members when they register their attendance, the need to inform you of their departure and catch success so the results can be collated at the proper time.

You will need to identify the person with the responsibility for doing the fish-in write-up, which traditionally is the person with the heaviest single fish (as a proportion of the club record). If that person is unwilling or unable to do so, then a suitable volunteer (or yourself) will need to be found.

You should furnish whoever is doing the write-up with a copy of the register of attendance and catch results, and help them to sort out copies of photos, members they may wish to speak with to get a fuller picture, and so on.

The fish-in write up should be sent to the fish-in coordinator. Please make the winner aware of this.

The fish-in coordinator will then collate the reports for the autumn edition of Grey Ghost.

You must retain a copy of the original results as you will be required to also forward these to the coordinator as soon as possible.

The selection of meeting venue is your choice, but do please consider the fact that it will need to be able to accommodate those members able to attend, should not be too noisy so as people can chat in a reasonable manner, and preferably close to the main fishing area. A couple of other obvious considerations would be parking potential in very close proximity and availability of food or snacks at that time. Do please

also remember that many pubs change their character and clientele in the evening, and may well be worth a visit prior to the fish-in just to make sure it's not going to clash with 'karaoke night'!

Above all, please try to enjoy the day, after all that is what the fish-ins are for, and even if the fish don't behave, the membership will always appreciate your efforts.

Remember this is a generic guide and that for any specific questions please contact the coordinator or one of the committee members so we can help you.

Copies of both the fish-in guide for organisers, and the register/catch record form are available for access on the NMC website should you need them, or contact the coordinator.