

West Midlands State of the Environment

Angling, navigation and recreation

Many people already enjoy the water environment and facilities for recreation. Water and the surrounding land can provide opportunities for fishing, sport, walking or quiet reflection.

Pastimes in these places are often affordable and an accessible way for people to increase their physical health and wellbeing. Physical inactivity and mental health cost the UK £85 billion a year therefore opportunities to enjoy the outdoors provides benefit to people, communities and the environment. Environmental improvements can increase biodiversity, resilience to flooding and climate change, make the area more attractive and provide more opportunities for recreation. Recreational activity can also benefit local businesses and the economy.

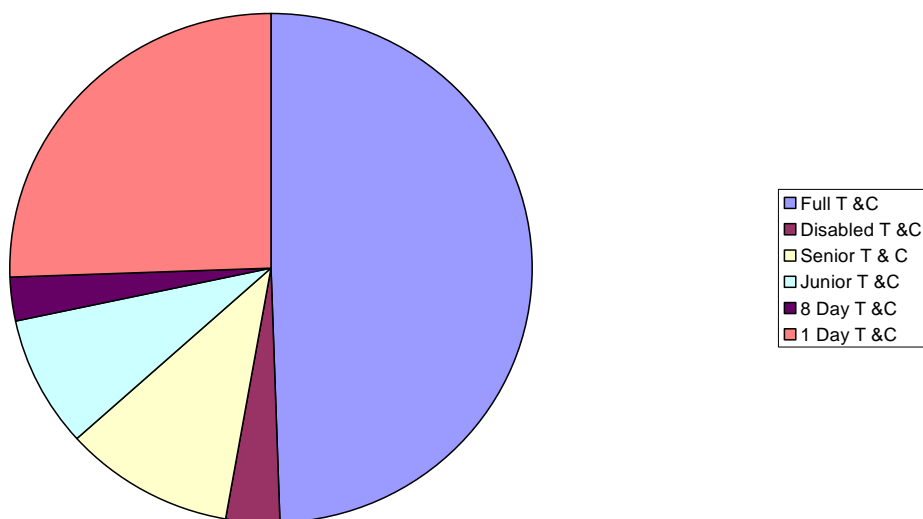
At a glance

- We sold almost 175,000 rod licences for the 2008 season in the West Midlands including 14,000 junior licences, 18,000 senior, and almost 6,000 disabled concessionary licences.
- A junior licence for 12-16 year olds costs only £5, a full licence for trout and course fish costs £27 annually with concessions for senior and disabled anglers.
- We manage 11 recreation sites in the West Midlands alongside other operational duties such as flood risk management.
- We are the navigation authority for 185 kilometres of the non-tidal section of the Rivers Wye and Lugg, upstream of Bigsweir Bridge (http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/wye_waterway_e_1546076.pdf).
- The public right of navigation on the River Severn gives everyone the right to navigate from Pool Quay, near Welshpool, to Stourport. From Stourport to Gloucester a licence is required, British Waterways is the navigation authority (http://www.severnway.com/Docs/canoeistguide_845523.pdf).
- Linking Wales and England, the 337km (210 miles) waymarked Severn Way is the longest river walk in Britain, tracing the route of the Severn, from its source at Plynlimon to Severn Beach.
- There are almost 800 km of canals in the West Midlands Region. Many walks are located alongside rivers and canals (<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/info/paths>).
- Two National Indicators (NIs) relate to recreation, NI 8 adult participation in sport and NI 110 young people's participation in positive activities. Ten local authorities have adopted NI 8 and eight have adopted NI 110 as one of their 35 priority indicators.

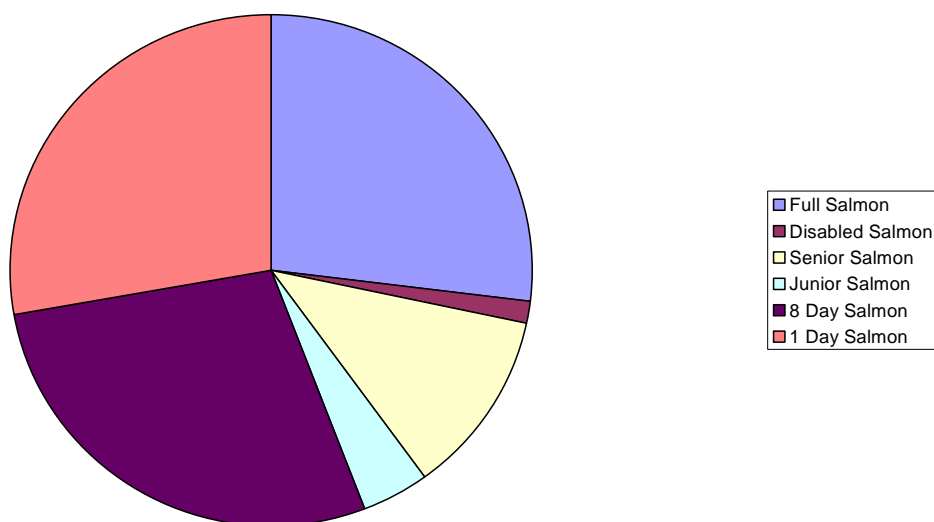
Data and trends

The charts below show that most of the coarse fish licences (Trout and coarse fish, (T&C)) are full annual and over 20 per cent are concessionary. However, restricted period licences are more popular for salmon licences.

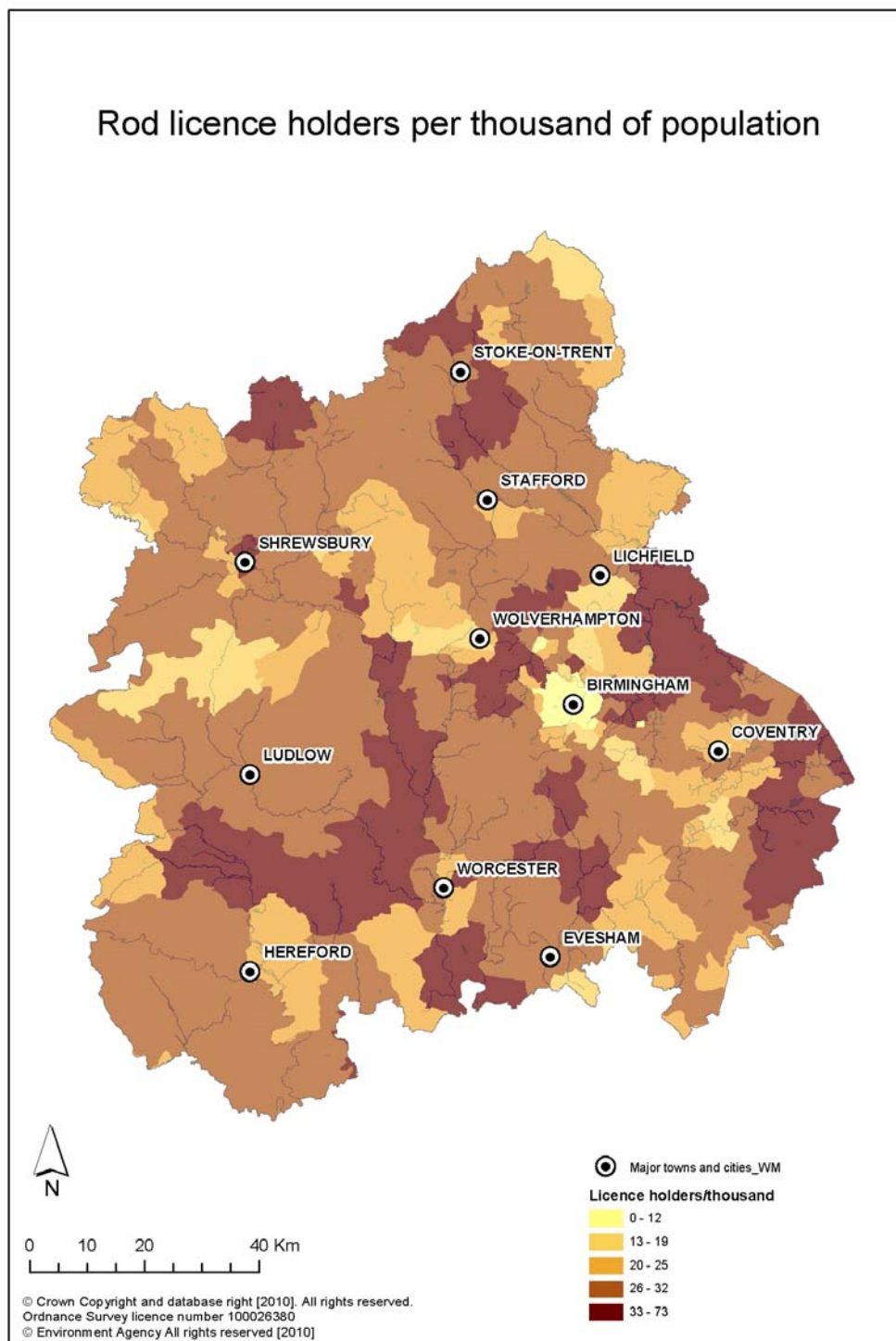
West Midlands Non-migratory Rod Licence Holders 2008



West Midlands Migratory Rod Licence Holders 2008



The number of rod licence holders and the number of disabled anglers in every thousand of population are mapped below



customer service line

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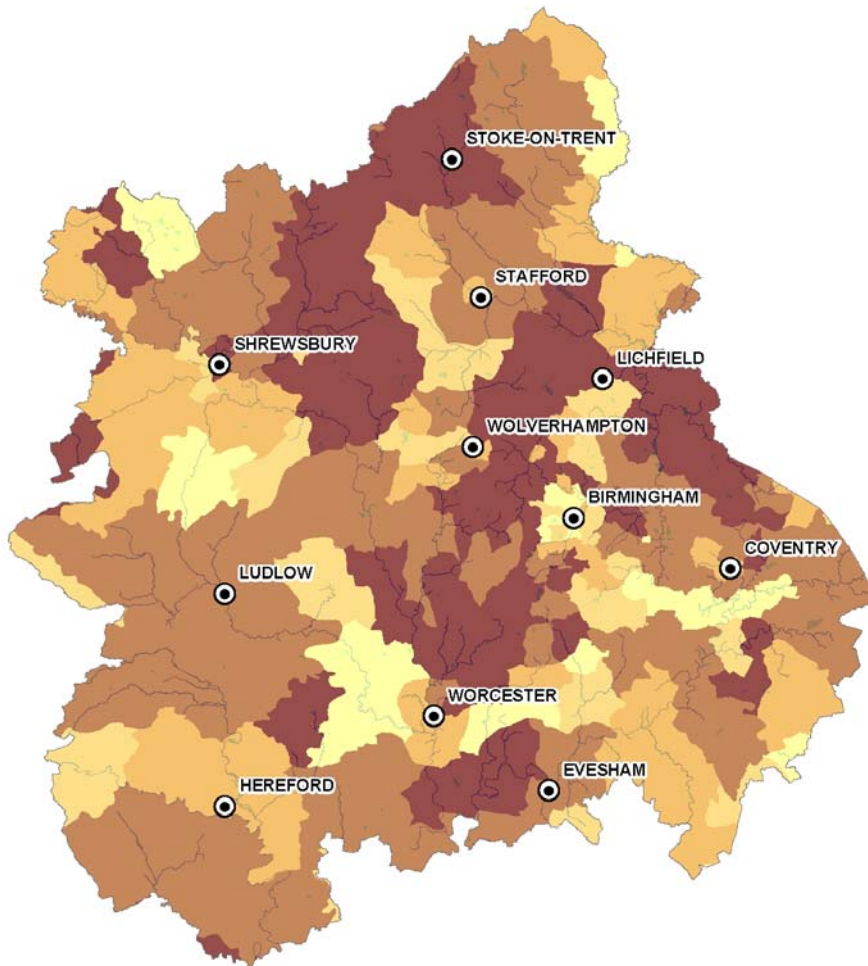
incident hotline

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floodline

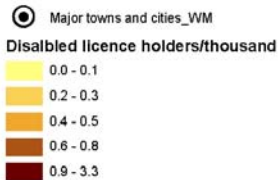
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Disabled licence holders per thousand of population



0 10 20 40 Km

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Our role

The Environment Agency is a regulator, operator and influential adviser on the environment in England and Wales. We are the lead government agency for freshwater and migratory fisheries and work closely with landowners and anglers.

- We work to enhance both the economic and social value of fishing as a widely available and healthy form of recreation.
- We work to increase the number of people participating in angling, create more opportunities for them to fish, to enhance both the economic and social value of fishing as a widely available and healthy form of recreation.
- We are the navigation authority on the Rivers Wye and Lugg where we manage and provide services for boaters and other users.
- We work with others to promote other inland waterways, developing new and improved opportunities for the public to enjoy, including local authorities, regional bodies, Natural England, the Countryside Council for Wales, Sport England, users' representative bodies and other navigation authorities.
- We also work with partners to open up opportunities to make more land available for recreation, for example, locally with farmers and local authorities and nationally with the Forestry Commission, National Trust and English Heritage.

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