

18 February 2020

**Angling Direct plc**

("Angling Direct" the "Group" or the "Company")

**Pre-Close Trading Update**

**Angling Direct plc** (AIM: ANG.L), the largest specialist fishing tackle and equipment retailer in the UK, announces the following pre-close trading update ahead of the publication of its financial results for the 12 months ended 31 January 2020.

The Company expects to report revenue for the financial period of £53.1 million, an increase of 26.5% compared with the same period the previous year (2019: £42.0 million). The Company continued to grow sales both in-store and online. In-store sales were £27.9 million, an increase of 41.3% on the prior year period and up 12.0% on a like-for-like basis. Angling Direct added 10 new stores during the period, including two acquisitions, taking the total number of stores to 34. The Company is pleased with the performance of the new stores, although the legacy stock that came with the acquired stores did contribute to margins being lower than the levels to which the Board aspires. This stock has been mainly cleared and other actions have been taken to ensure that the Company returns to expected margin levels in the new financial year and beyond.

Online sales grew to £25.2 million, an increase of 13.3% on the prior year period, through continued development of the Company's e-commerce platform. In recent months, the Company has focused on international territories that deliver both strong sales growth and the necessary level of profitability. Angling Direct's German, French and Netherlands websites, which make up the Group's core European markets, increased sales by 24.6%, 70.9% and 86.7% respectively, with these three territories now representing 42% of total international sales (2019: 31%). Total international sales increased by 7.6% to £5.0 million, accounting for 19.9% of total online sales during the year (2019: 20.9%).

Notwithstanding the strong growth the Company has delivered this year, a disappointing trading period, post-Christmas, influenced by exceptional winter flooding, has impacted profits. The lower levels of fishing activity meant that the higher margin, consumable products, were hit disproportionately. In addition, a more prudent approach has been taken to some legacy costs, which, taken together, lead the Company to believe that it will deliver a pre-IFRS 16, EBITDA loss of no more than £0.5 million. The Company continues to have a strong balance sheet and held cash of £5.9 million at the 31 January 2020.

The Company opened its first store of the January 2021 financial year in Warrington on 13 February and the Company is pleased to note that this resulted in a record sales and attendance for a store opening day.

The Company intends to publish its financial results for the 12 months ended 31 January 2020 on 13 May 2020.

*This announcement contains inside information.*

**For further information:**

**Angling Direct PLC** +44 (0) 1603 258658

Martyn Page, Executive Chairman  
Andy Torrance, Chief Executive Officer  
Steven Crowe, Chief Financial Officer

**Cenkos Securities – NOMAD and Broker**

Stephen Keys/Cameron MacRitchie (Corporate Finance) +44 (0) 207 3978926  
Russell Kerr (Sales)

**Yellow Jersey PR – Financial PR** +44 (0)20 3004 9512

Charles Goodwin

Georgia Colkin  
Annabel Atkins

+44 (0)7825 916 715

## **Notes for editors**

### **About Angling Direct plc**

Angling Direct is the largest specialist fishing tackle retailer in the UK. The Company sells fishing tackle products and related equipment through its network of retail stores, located throughout the UK, as well as through its own website ([www.anglingdirect.co.uk](http://www.anglingdirect.co.uk)) and other third-party websites.

The Company currently sells over 21,500 fishing tackle products, including capital items, consumables, luggage and clothing. The Company also owns and sells fishing tackle products under its own brand 'Advanta', which was formally launched in March 2016.

From 1986 to 2003 the Company's Founders acquired interests in a number of small independent fishing tackle shops in Norfolk and, in 2003, they acquired a significant premise in Norwich, which was branded Angling Direct. Since 2003, the Company has continued to acquire or open new stores, taking the total number up to 35 retail stores. In 2015 the Company opened a 30,000 sq. ft central distribution centre in Rackheath, Norfolk, where the Company's head office is also located.

Angling Direct's shares are traded on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol ANG.L.

For further information, please visit [www.anglingdirect.co.uk](http://www.anglingdirect.co.uk)