

Grove Small Arms Club

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday 21st April 2023 at 7:00pm

The Chairman opened the meeting held at Shropham Village Hall and welcomed the members attending.

The acceptance of the minutes of the last AGM meeting, as published on the web site, was proposed by John Bishop, and seconded by Andy Housego. Approved.

The Secretary's report was presented to the meeting by Paul Budd and is attached as Appendix A. Acceptance was proposed by Paul Geelmuyden and seconded by Lee Martin. Approved.

The Treasure's report was presented to the meeting by Roy Jones. He confirmed that income is in line with last year. Expenditure shows a slight increase in NRA affiliation costs and larger increases against Range Hire and Miscellaneous. The range hire costs appear significantly higher than last year because Landmarc are now invoicing promptly. Last years accounts did not include invoices for January, February and March, which arrived after the AGM. Therefore, last year's accounts showed range hire costs for 9 months, while these accounts show range hire costs for 15 months. In cash terms the missing invoices from last year total £2115.04. Adjusting both years by this amount shows a similar level of expenditure. Miscellaneous expenses are higher this year because of two £300 donations to members selected for a National Team and the £396 cost of a First Aid course for range officers. For the year 2022-23 the Club showed a surplus of £1,455.96. In view of this Roy recommended that membership and range fees remain unchanged. Acceptance of the report was proposed by Lee Martin and seconded by Austin Walker. Approved.

The Range Liaison Officer's report was read out by Paul Budd, Ceri Jones being unable to attend the meeting. The report is attached as Appendix B. Acceptance of the report was proposed by Roy Jones and seconded by Paul Geelmuyden. Approved.

The Practical Shotgun Captain's report was presented by John Bishop. He reported that the practical shotgun shoots are well attended, and no issues have occurred this year. He holds £144.00 petty cash.

The Rifle Captain's report was presented by Paul Geelmuyden. He proposed that the target store at Thetford CGR was reconfigured to make better use of the space available. He submitted a plan of the proposed layout, attached as appendix C. He proposed that at the end of the Thetford CGR shoot on the 6th May that the reconfiguring of the target should be undertaken. Secretary to arrange with Kings Lynn to have someone from Kings Lynn to unlock their targets. He has arranged with the Wardens at Thetford to run a work party to repair the frames on Monday 8th May, several members confirmed their attendance. He presented a reported on the survey he had undertaken on the members wish to attend shoots at Bisley. Attached as appendix D. The details were discussed, and it was agreed that shoots at Bisley should be organised for the members even if the numbers were low. Acceptance of the report was proposed by Rob Fowles and seconded by Paul Knights. Approved.

All the committee members were willing to continue in their roles. A block vote for all committee members was proposed by Geoff Hurrell, seconded by Austin Walker. Approved.

Paul Budd expanded on the current problems regarding training probationary members and processing full members who need a Shooter Certification Card. It was agreed that some expenditure needs to be made to hire space for the classroom parts for the SCC/probationary course to continue. The Secretary to organise. Further discussions on training were made and Chris Ashton volunteered to undertake the NRA trainer's

course. Secretary to organise. Andy Housego offered to assist at any local training events. Proposed by Roy Jones and seconded by Andrew Tooke. Approved.

Any Other Business. Issues with the radios at Thetford were discussed. It was agreed that two sets of 5 radios of the same type as are currently used at Barton Road would be acquired. The understanding that the NRA may introduce a requirement for hand loaded ammunition was discussed. It was agreed that as no official announcement had been made by the NRA no action would be undertaken at this time. It was proposed that additional RCO's should be sponsored by the club. This will require any member to undertake the Range Safety Officers course before taking the Range Conduction Officers course. Rob Fowles offered to take the courses; it was proposed that this would be offered to other regular members attending DIO ranges. Secretary to organise. It was proposed that another First Aid course be organised for the remaining RCO's who didn't attend the last course and for it to be open to other members of the club. Secretary to organise.

The meeting was closed at 9:00pm. 20 members attending, apologies received from 12 members.

Appendix A

GROVE SMALLARMS CLUB **SECRETARYS REPORT 2022-23**

With the increase in use by the military and the increasing numbers of clubs booking ranges our access to ranges has been limited.

The license for the East Anglian ranges has been renewed. Arrangements for access to DIO ranges are booked 6 months in advance; we are required to attend Thetford each month to confirm the bookings and provide a Range Safety Document (RSD) for each booking. Currently we do not need to attend Barton Road each month, we provide a RSD for each booking. Cancellations and additional bookings will be notified by e-mail, range dates for the month will be on the answer phone as before.

Access to the range on the Euston Estate has again been approved for this year but we are again restricted to Saturdays February, March and April and then the second Wednesday May, June, July and August. This is due to other weekend events on the estate May to August. We have guest days at Euston April to August. Club members can bring their friends and family to these shoots to see what we do and to have a shoot themselves if they wish.

Shooter certification cards have been issued to those members who require/are eligible for them. To confirm Shooter Certification Cards (SCC) are required by all shooter who wish to shoot on DIO ranges. They are not required to shoot at Euston.

The club is affiliated to the Muzzle Loaders Association of Great Britain.

We have currently 346 members, down from 356 last year, with more applications coming in all the time. It is important that if you renew your membership by BACS that your name/membership number is recorded on the transaction. We are having problems with the number of potential probationary members wishing to join the club.

The club has a Marlin lever action rifle, a Ruger 10/22's, a muzzle loading rifle, a muzzle loading pistol and a muzzle loading revolver. We also have a .223 rifle, a .303 rifle and a 7.62 rifle. All are available for member's use at club shoots. I continue to keep stocks of ammunition for purchase by club members. We have a range finder for use on the battle area, a chronograph, a spotting scope and three sets of radios.

I am regularly receiving communications from the Police concerning the status of members' renewals and attendances. This year a number of members have had difficulties with the Police regarding attendance. If you attend a shoot organised by another club I will not have a record of your attendance unless you complete and return to me a range record sheet. Sheets are available on the web site and can be downloaded from there.

Paul Budd
31/03/2023

Appendix B

MOD Range Liaison Officer Report Grove AGM 21 April

In my absence from the AGM due to a funeral I submit the following report relating to the club's ongoing access to MOD ranges and any associated risks.

It should be noted increased military training, including that of overseas forces, across the MOD estate may see reduced capacity for civilian usage and a greater likelihood of short notice cancellations of civilian bookings

Thetford Gallery Range (CGR) including Thetford ETR complex

The club continues to seek to provide members with a CGR date for each month of the year. Across 2022 and 2023 so far there have been a small number of months where this has not been possible due to a lack of range capacity.

Where CGR availability has been restricted we have sought to utilise the ETR as an alternative.

Barton Road Gallery Range

As referenced at the 2022 AGM, Barton Road is now only open for civilian club usage two weekends each month. At the same time there is a relatively high number of civilian clubs attempting to make bookings for this range. The combination of these factors has resulted in Landmarc, who administer the ranges on the MOD's behalf, having to attempt to fairly share availability equally across these clubs. The result is we are not necessarily able to secure a Barton Road date for each month.

There are a number of considerations which should be noted:

- The NRA has confirmed the MOD is entitled to limit civilian access to two weekends each month, and this happens at other ranges across the country. This restriction is intended to provide weekend availability for military/ security services users and range maintenance
- Civilian clubs are not currently able to book this range for weekday use. This position may change in the future
- The calendar in the Range Wardens' office is not necessarily a full and accurate picture of range availability. Landmarc utilise a computerised booking system which provides a single complete version of the truth representing range availability. It is this which is used to determine whether a booking can be accepted.

STANTA (Field Firing Ranges)

In summary it is highly unlikely we will ever again be able to access STANTA ranges, excepting Curlew, in their current layout. No civilian club has been given permission to shoot on STANTA ranges other than Curlew for a number of years.

Curlew was built, and recognised in official documents as a "constructed" range. That is to say a range which has designated firing points and targets laid out in lane type format with individual lane markers. The remaining ranges are designated as Field Firing Areas (FFAs) which do not necessarily have fixed firing points, and/or lane makers which designate targets within a safe arc of fire for each firing point.

The NRA RCO qualification is recognised by MOD Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) only for constructed ranges, and therefore no civilians are qualified to run FFAs. The current NRA RCO manual makes this point explicitly. Essentially civilians should not have been able to shoot on FFAs based on the safety governance framework in place for the last considerable number of years. It came to light when a detailed review was undertaken by the DIO National Training Safety Officer a few years ago. As a result all civilian access to FFAs was withdrawn.

The NRA has been in discussion with DIO for a number years over this issue.

Across the last two years the NRA working with the Fifty Calibre Shooters Association have been looking to persuade DIO to undertake a pilot exercise at Warcop to safely allow civilian access to a FFA. The pilot involves:

1. Ensuring any selected range does not have any characteristics which make it unsuitable, such as an access road which goes through an impact area where unexploded ordnance may lie. Such a risk is considered intolerable for civilian use.
2. Reviewing the Range Template to designate a number of fixed firing points and fixed targets which can be safely engaged from each fixed firing point
3. Physically marking these firing points and ensuring they reference the targets which may be engaged from each firing point
4. Adding left and right hand arc of fire marker posts to each designated firing point
5. Producing drawings to capture the above and updating the Range Standing Orders and related JSPs to reflect the firing points and targets forming a "constructed" range which can be overseen by civilian RCOs

All of the above work is being funded by the NRA

A review of the pilot will be undertaken by the NRA and DIO. If the outcome is considered by DIO to have successfully addressed the risks DIO will agree to the process being repeated in a number of FFAs in other parts of the country. This is a long drawn out process and is not high on DIO's list of priorities.

Managing expectation, even if a STANTA range is selected it would be at least a couple of years before we may see access.

Risks Impacting Civilian Use of MOD ranges

1. Use of lead based ammunition

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) is currently considering responses to a recent consultation on restricting the use of lead in ammunition. It is expected HSE will release by June 2023 proposals for draft legislation. See <https://press.hse.gov.uk/2023/01/05/hse-extends-lead-in-ammunition-restriction-process-by-six-months/>

The military will be exempt from any restrictions. It is unclear as to whether civilian users will be given a derogation when using MOD ranges. The NRA has responded to the consultation and is engaged in ongoing conversation with the MOD.

The consultation received 2759 responses. A very low number given how many people in the UK are involved in shooting sports. If individual club members rely on others to respond to such consultations there is a risk our collective voice may not be heard.

Take time to respond to future consultations on firearms related legislation.

2. Adherence to MOD Range Standing Orders

Make sure you comply with the standing orders of the MOD range you are shooting on. The RCO will brief you on the key points before you shoot. It is your responsibility to comply.

Failure to do so could ultimately lead to the club losing its licence to use said MOD ranges. This sanction has been applied to at least one Home Office approved club in recent years.

Ceri Jones

Appendix C

THETFORD GAR BAT STORE PROPOSED TARGET ARRANGEMENT 17 APRIL 2023

HEIGHT REQUIRED = 1.84m(6')
 HEIGHT AVAILABLE BELOW ROOF RST = 2.150M

LIGHT SWITCH

COUNTER WEIGHTS

5 X FIG 11 TARGETS
 FIND AVAILABLE SPACE SO AS
 NOT TO OBSTRUCT DEPICTED
 USERS

W.S.R.C. x 9

POSSIBLE LOCATION W.S.R.C. CORREX
 BY MOVING ALL TARGETS TO LEFT

ONE
METRE
CLEAR!!

INCREASED FOOTPRINT TO ALLOW
FOR 'LEAN'

SEESA CORREX IN FRONT
AND UNDERNEATH

GROVE CORREX IN FRONT
AND UNDERNEATH

SEESA x 12
2.44 x 1.22

GROVE x 11
2.44 x 1.22

OWNER
UNKNOWN x 8
2.44 x 1.22

WIND FLAPS AS
EXISTING
OOOOO
OOOOO
OOOOO

ISOLATION
BOX

HEIGHT REQUIRED = 2.440M
 HEIGHT AVAILABLE
 BELOW ROOF RST = 2.800M

SCALE 1:20 A4

Appendix D

Results of Poll taken in March, 2023, to determine interest in Grove Smallarms Club arranging events at Bisley

Respondent numbers: 12

The returns are summarised below:

1/ How many times a year would you like to shoot with the Grove at Bisley?

1 or 2	3 or 4	5 or 6	7 or more
1	6	3	1

2/ Would you like to shoot mornings only, afternoons only or all day

Mornings only	Afternoons only	All day
1	2	8

3/ Presupposing that we shoot for 2 hours at each distance on electronically marked targets, how long would you normally need to shoot your rounds at this distance?

30 minutes	40 minutes	45 minutes	60 minutes
2	5	3	1

4/ Lanes may be booked for a session (i.e. the whole morning or the whole afternoon) or by the hour. Would you prefer to shoot two distances (i.e. falling back mid-session) or just one distance for the entire session?

Two distances morning only	One distance morning and one distance afternoon	One distance morning and two distance afternoon	Two distances morning and two distances afternoon	Two distances afternoon only
1	1	2	2	2

No comment from 3 respondents

5/ Which days of the week would you like to shoot on? There is no shooting on Mondays

Wednesdays	6
Fridays	6
Tuesdays	5
Thursdays	5
Saturdays	4
Sundays	4

6/ Which days of the week would you NOT wish or be able to shoot on?

Saturdays	3
Sundays	3
Fridays	2
Tuesdays	2
Thursdays	2
Wednesdays	1

7/ In which months of the year would you NOT wish to shoot with the Grove at Bisley?

November	3
December	3
January	3
February	3
March	2
April	1
May	1
September	1
October	1
June	0
July	0
August	0

8/ Which distances would you like to shoot?

1000 y Stickledown	6
600 y Century	5
300 y Century	4
900 y Stickledown	4
800 y Stickledown	3
1200 y Stickledown	3
1100 y Stickledown	2
100 y Century	1
200 y Century	1
400 y Century	1
500 y Century	0
600 y Century with dedicated disabled access to Target 37	0

9/ Which method of marking would you prefer?

Responses were either electronic or ambivalent

The best that I can make of this would be a single lane with a later start, at say 1030 at 300x, 1130 at 600x, followed by the full afternoon at two of 800, 900, 1000 or 1200x. Of course, this presupposes that all those who responded can make the same day, which would be Tuesdays to Fridays, probably avoiding Friday (traffic) and opting for the favoured Wednesday.

These results are with our secretary for comment on viability, etc. As mentioned to Paul B., it is possible that some have not yet responded, whilst others may express an interest, when a date and course of fire are advertised, but that all hinges on the green light being given. Further update follows.

ATB, Paul