

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to cover three issues this afternoon.

I really want to talk you through the basis of the current master plan that we are working through, touch on range developments, and finish off on a quick review of the Spencer Site development that caused considerable debates over the last 12 months or so.

The Bisley Master Plan: the rationale behind this has been really driven by a concern expressed by me and the Trustees that in our headlong rush to develop and improve Bisley - to develop Bisley into the engine room of the NRA that funds both activities here and further abroad - we are at risk of losing the very essence of Bisley that is so special to us all.

So what we have done is taken a step back from the projects of upgrading roads and all the other projects that you are starting to see before you, to look carefully at what we have at the moment, and what contributes to the magical essence that is Bisley.

We've engaged with two sets of professionals – heritage architects and landscape architects – to capture that essence. There is a report that they have produced, a gazetteer detailing all the buildings and we are shortly to start corresponding and communicating that and sharing that with you and the rest of the membership for comments before we move on to a three year development plan.

It will be a three year development plan – it is not some high faluting 20 year vision – that we will execute as we work our way through years 2016, 2017 and 2018, and I expect, and am under pressure, to deliver that and to start executing it towards the end of this year.

For me, what has been really interesting is the early reaction from our professionals. I've had several meetings with them on site. How they've captured Bisley, how they have described Bisley, is really interesting. They describe Bisley as an attractive but uncomfortable combination of old colonial and Martha's Vineyard with a soupcon of Butlins thrown in (*laughter*) which I think is a rather nice way of describing this rather confused estate that we have.

There is going to be particular focus on a whole range of issues; roads, accommodation - a very big issue for us -, trees and range developments as well. But what I am really keen to do is to make sure that the considerable sums that will be invested over the next three years, both in terms of revenue projects, as well as the capital projects, are carefully prioritised and targeted and we are able to share with you, the membership, the rationale behind the priorities that we have.

Bisley is getting busier. Our membership is growing and that pressure we are starting to feel. We are struggling at times to actually find sufficient range space and it's important that we continue to make our ranges as effective as possible. So growing capacity within Bisley is one of the important issues that we are trying to address.

This year has seen our membership and range hire growing by around 12% annualised. The Chairman's already reported the substantial growth in our membership and we are starting to see that impact on range availability, particularly at the busy weekends. We need to grow capacity by accelerating the development of such initiatives as the electronic targets that the Chairman has alluded to.

There has also been a series of programmes to make what we have more usable. We've spent quite a great deal of effort and not an inconsiderable amount of money making some of the Gallery ranges more weatherproof by putting in all-weather surfaces, improving drainage, improving car parking and trying to make Bisley ranges nicer places to visit and to shoot, and that work will accelerate as we go through this year.

One of the other big issues we are wrestling with is accommodation. Accommodation is a major challenge for us. The average utilisation of our accommodation is very poor. The quality of our accommodation ranges from barely acceptable to appalling. Last year we sold 5009 bedroom nights of accommodation. I reckon that equates to 8000-9000 days' worth of shooting. It is a very important contributor to shooting activity on the ranges. And in terms of how I prioritise the work that we do, I always preface every single decision with a question 'will it make the ranges busier', because if the ranges are busier then effectively, all the other activities are going to be positively benefited. In terms of accommodation, I think it is important that we deliver affordable, good quality and a range of accommodation to suit all budgets.

Spencer Site has been a very interesting example, and a very interesting initiative. We broke ground in September last year and I am pleased to report as at today, out of the 26 units that we have available, 24 have been sold, 1 has had a marker put on it this very day, and I've got one left to go to achieve one of my key ambitions - to secure my £5 bet before Queen's Final day that all 26 vans will be sold.

There has been some considerable debate – chatter - on the internet about how this has been a great drain on the NRA's resources. I am able to report to you that the total capital cost, the gross cost, is £334K, paid for by NRA funds, and the expected gross receipts by the time we have sold all 26 is going to be in the region of £188K. The net investment therefore is one less t'other, about £146k. That generates a rent roll of £50,850 a year that is index linked and will increase by RPI every year. The total value of the caravan sales when we finish the project is somewhere in the region of £1.14M. All of that achieved within 12 months.

So those who took great delight in telling us that they would never sell, I'd like to say actually that we are very pleased to have proved you wrong. That's not to say we're smug, that's not to say we got it right, that's not to say we could not have done it better, that's not to say that's how we are going to deliver all the accommodation going forward.

I think that 26 unit development pretty much takes up the full current demand for caravans of that price and development; we need to ratchet back and the next suite of serviced developments will be on a much more affordable level. We've realised what we like doing, we've realised what we are good at and we've found some areas we are not good at that we don't like doing as well. And that's all part of this learning process.

I hope that you and the people that are starting to visit Bisley regularly are starting to notice some improvements. Bisley is a bit of a super tanker and it does take some turning round. But I think there are visible signs of improvements starting to become obvious to all but the hardest of those who perhaps don't want to see.

A lot of what we do generates fierce debates, and fiercer criticism. I've yet to do any project, deliver any improvement that has not drawn vociferous criticism and that's part of the environment that we work in.

We do care passionately - and when I say we, I mean me *and* my staff - we do care passionately about Bisley and the NRA, and a lot of our effort now is to try and get Bisley set fair on a good course so we can start diverting our efforts to the all-important regional ranges; because there are 22 odd thousand affiliated members who shoot full-bore who are not members of the NRA and who are shooting on ranges other than Bisley, and our service to them is nowhere near good enough.

Nic Couldrey, our Regional Ranges Manager, starts on 1st July. He will be the first of a number of regional ranges managers and we need to get a grip of what is happening out in the regions because our grasp of the reality, our grasp of the priorities, is very poor.

So I see in summary, actually a bright future for Bisley. I see a great deal of uncertainty for full-bore shooting away from Bisley and we need to address that very quickly.

There is a great deal to do and I hope you've noticed and will continue to notice steady improvement and with that I'll sit down and leave you to the Chairman.