



NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION

National Rifle Association

Strategic & Development Review 2018 to 2020

Background

The NRA is a registered charity with a Royal Charter, the National Governing Body for Full Bore Shooting and operator of the world famous Bisley range complex. Bisley is considered the home range for around 16,000 full bore shooters; another 20,000 full bore shooters practice their sport on some 300 privately operated and 24 MoD ranges.

Shooting is a major sport in the UK; there are some 200,000 firearm certificates and 650,000 shotgun certificates on issue. The NRA, directly and through its affiliated organisations, account for around 52,000 target shooters.

To those full bore shooters that never shoot at Bisley the NRA can appear remote and irrelevant providing little other than insurance. Target shooting takes place in small groups that are often isolated; even the NRA's greatest critics recognise the need for a vigorous national governing body to promote and defend their sport, act as an advocate and provide relevant technical advice and guidance.

Defining the "NRA offer" to those full bore shooters that never visit Bisley will take time and persistence; however a vibrant and successful Bisley will underpin and finance our work in the regions.

The NRA has developed a robust financial base which has funded over £1.8m of capital expenditure from 2014 to 2016. Membership continues to increase steadily as does demand for our ranges; however significant challenges to the future of target shooting remain.

Bisley camp is established as the showcase of the NRA's commitment to the promotion of target shooting. Shooting is what Bisley does best and busy ranges offering excellent facilities to growing numbers of shooters will be the continuing focus of our investments.

There is no lack of demand or enthusiasm for target shooting in the UK; however the route to welcoming clubs with vacancies for new members and ready access to ranges is often confused or uncertain.

The NRA needs to allocate more resources away from Bisley to counter the real risk of target shooting becoming too centred on our corner of Surrey. We are blessed with a large number of dynamic and enthusiastic regional affiliated organisations; however they rely upon uncertain access to ranges and often depend upon a small handful of committed volunteers. Increasing legislation and scrutiny from the authorities places growing burdens on clubs; the NRA should commit greater resources to protect and promote target shooting in line with its charitable objectives.



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Target shooting has a great story to tell; our recent social media campaigns have reached hundreds of thousands and we need to continue our careful, consistent and professional promotion of marksmanship.

Overriding Principles

- Promote and protect target shooting across the UK
- Develop Bisley as a first-class shooting venue for a full range of target shooting activities
- Deliver consistently good value and invest cash surpluses for the benefit of current and future generations of shooters

Key Objectives 2018 to 2020

Improve the perception of target shooting

Invest to improve access to regional ranges

Expand Training Courses and Improve Competency Certification

Increase Bisley range utilisation

Maintain a residual cash balance of £250k after average annual spend of at least £400k on maintenance and £500k on capital expenditure

Improve Bisley Camp

Improve service to members and increase NRA membership

Make Bisley more welcoming to new and prospective shooters to promote target shooting

Improve the perception of target shooting

The NRA has made progress in developing influence with government, the Home Office and police licensing authorities. Our efforts have focused on promoting and informing; it has been too easy to criticise those who seek to implement unwelcome changes rather than invest time, effort and resources in rational argument and education.

Target shooting has a great story to promote with able bodied competing with disabled, young with old, male with female - all without advantage. The ages of Imperial competitors ranging from 13 to 94 is one small example of the inclusive nature of our sport. Furthermore the high quality of our training programmes is rightly recognised as is our exemplary safety record.



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Celebrating marksmanship as sporting prowess, emphasising the inclusive nature of shooting, and highlighting the exemplary safety record are key messages to promote. There will be opportunities to promote target shooting alongside the increasing investment in regional ranges; we need to recruit professional representatives to maximise the advantages gained.

Recent NRA promotional and communication efforts have centred upon web and social media channels. We need to expand our efforts to improve the visibility of the work of the NRA in more traditional media including specialist shooting magazines.

Objectives Deliver new website

Deliver target shooting workshops to Home Office, police firearms licensing staff and government personnel

Improve coverage of target shooting in national media and specialist shooting press

Recruit 3 professional NRA representatives by end 2019

Invest to improve access to regional ranges

Although Bisley accounts for over half of all full bore target shooting in the UK there are over 300 privately operated and 24 ranges operated by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

The MoD ranges tend to provide access to long range shooting; privately operated ranges are typically 25m to 100m no-danger-area ranges.

Civilian shooting will always be a low priority on MoD ranges; we need to continue developing good relationships with the MoD, Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Landmarc and regional personnel to maximise access for NRA-affiliated clubs. There are opportunities for the NRA to book MoD ranges centrally and offer targets to NRA members and affiliated organisations.

Privately operated ranges are subject to increasing scrutiny; the NRA needs to develop and implement robust self-certification systems to allow operators to manage and improve safety on their ranges.

We have successfully trialled investing in regional ranges; typically the NRA invests £15-20k in exchange for range access for NRA members, competition and training programmes.

We continue to explore opportunities to acquire regional ranges by purchase, lease or licence.



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Objectives Finalise and implement range safety self-certification scheme by end 2018

Design and deliver new regional training course for range operators

Invest a minimum 15% of annual Capital Expenditure Budget to improve regional range facilities

Acquire one new range for the NRA by purchase, lease or licence by end 2020

Explore opportunities for centralised NRA booking of MoD ranges to improve access for civilian shooting and increase income for the MoD.

Expand Training Courses and Improve Competency Certification

Demand for NRA Training continues to increase and we routinely have 150 or more active probationers working their way through the intensive 5 day course; this has prompted the Training team's move to new facilities in the Pavilion. With demand continuing to grow we need to develop more regional training programmes and promote training activities by Clubs to supplement those offered by the NRA.

Busier ranges at Bisley demand greater confidence in the NRA Shooter Certification Card (SCC) scheme. We have found examples where the issuing of SCCs by affiliated clubs has been problematic; we intend to issue all SCCs annually from the NRA offices with competency tests conducted by NRA affiliated clubs as at present.

We are delivering successful courses for basic marksmanship and safety; we need to apply the same core skills and resources to develop discipline based competency and skill to give new shooters the confidence to enter competitions. As one example we intend to trial new courses for Target Rifle in 2018 to arrest and reverse the decline in Imperial TR entries.

Objectives Deliver 3 new regional training courses per annum

NRA to issue all NRA SCC annually from 2019 onwards

Appoint Head TR Instructor to lead delivery of NRA courses in 2018

Increasing Bisley range utilisation

The last three years has seen significant investment in range infrastructure at Bisley; electronic targets, roads and car parking, target frames and turners have been improved and major refurbishments of Melville, Cheylesmore and Winans ranges delivered. Further improvements that will increase range capacity at Bisley will require innovative planning and significant investment in areas of the estate currently unused or making modest contributions to full bore shooting.



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The nature of shooting at Bisley is changing; this is a reflection of changes in the relative support for our various disciplines as indicated in the table below. It should be noted that the analysis accounts for only 8,500 NRA full members; the analysis for the 22,000 affiliated members would be expected to show Gallery Rifle and Pistol as the most popular type of target shooting.

| Primary Discipline | % of M'ship 2008 | % of M'ship 2012 | % of M'ship 2014 | % of M'ship 2015 | % of M'ship 2016 | Number of Members 2016 | % of M'ship 2017 | Number of Members 2017 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Target Rifle | 54 | 48.5 | 46.3 | 47.4 | 45.6 | 3,655 | 46.1 | 3,935 |
| Sporting Rifle | 11.5 | 14 | 13.6 | 13.9 | 13.6 | 1,090 | 13.2 | 1,126 |
| F Class | 4.5 | 7 | 7.4 | 8.1 | 9.3 | 745 | 9.3 | 789 |
| Gallery Rifle & Pistol | 9 | 9.5 | 8.7 | 9.5 | 10.3 | 826 | 10.7 | 911 |
| Match Rifle | 3 | 3 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 264 | 3.5 | 295 |
| Civ / Service Rifle | 3.5 | 4 | 4.6 | 4.1 | 5.6 | 449 | 5.6 | 479 |
| Practical Rifle | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 2.3 | 184 | 2.0 | 173 |
| Muzzle Loading | 5 | 4.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 281 | 3.4 | 290 |
| Classic Rifle & Pistol | 5 | 4 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 3.4 | 273 | 2.8 | 237 |
| 300 metre | 1 | 1 | 4.4 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 64 | 0.9 | 75 |
| Target Shotgun | 0 | 1 | 1.2 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 184 | 2.5 | 216 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Total NRA Membership | 5,882 | 6,891 | 7,575 | 7,902 | | 8,015 | | 8,526 |

Corporate shooting and training continues to provide a vital source of income and welcome midweek range use. We should seek to secure the firearms training for the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and other police services for the long term by improving facilities for their instructors and students.

Developing a wider range of NRA corporate shooting events will complement the new facilities in the Pavilion and also increase midweek range utilisation.

Improving IT and systems that control range bookings is essential; our aspiration must be to allow online booking and payment for targets.

Clay target shooting is an important element to shooting at Bisley generating welcome revenues and footfall for the NRA, the National Shooting Centre and Bisley tenants.

Objectives *Finalise and publish 3 year range development master plan in 2018*

Secure long term police training use of Bisley ranges

Develop and promote NRA / NSC corporate shooting business

Deliver new online range booking system by end 2018.

Further develop clay target operations by end 2019



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Maintain a residual cash balance of £250k after average annual spend of at least £400k on maintenance and £500k on capital expenditure

We plan to retain a minimum cash reserve of £250k and invest surpluses on capital / development projects.

In common with 2014 to 2017 we will again commit to limiting price increases for member services by no more than RPI for 2018 to 2020.

The NRA is therefore committing to no real-terms price increase for services to members for the three years across 2018 - 2020 inclusive.

Objectives Maintain minimum cash balance of £250k

RPI limited price increases for member services

Average annual spend of at least £400k on maintenance and £500k on capital expenditure

Improve Bisley Camp

A programme of investment has seen steady improvements to the fabric of Bisley Camp. Greater effort is required to bring up the tenanted building stock to an acceptable standard; in the past repair covenants have not been fully complied with leading to significant schedules of repair / dilapidations when leases come to an end.

At present the tenanted estate includes over 100 different properties; the majority are leased on fully repairing and insuring terms with a small number automatically entitled to new leases. The published Real Estate policy is fit for purpose but needs to be consistently applied to be effective.

There has been much debate about the future for clubs that lease clubhouses at Bisley although the vast majority of NRA-affiliated organisations operate with considerable success without a tenancy of a clubhouse at Bisley.

The NRA welcomes clubs as tenants but those clubs must meet their obligations as tenants and be encouraged to develop their welcome to the many shooters visiting Bisley who operate from their own cars adjacent to the firing points.

When considering tender offers for a new lease Trustees will favour bids that offer the best value to the NRA in terms of rent, frequency of occupation, likely quantity of resulting range bookings, services to NRA members and affiliated organisations and encouragement of new and young shooters as part of promoting the charitable objectives of the NRA.



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Improvements to the Camp will be considered with due regard to architectural merit and heritage.

Accommodation is an important resource at Bisley and the recent addition of 19 en-suite rooms in the Pavilion has significantly improved the NRA stock.

We need to expand the connection of services to caravans of a suitable standard; and commission the next development of serviced caravan pitches.

Road repairs have progressed well over the past four years and should continue to ensure key routes are maintained to a good standard.

Objectives Consistent application of the NRA Real Estate Policy

Triennial inspections of all tenanted buildings; routine service of repairs notices

Annual target of 20 new electric / mains water connections to caravans

Annual target of £50k minimum spend on road improvement as part of our maintenance budget

Improve service to members and increase membership

The NRA's "offer" to those shooters who never visit Bisley needs to be clearly defined and effectively promoted. Whilst insurance will always be a key element the value of the NRA's work in promoting, protecting and supporting target shooting needs to be clearly defined and effectively promoted.

NRA membership continues to increase; we are averaging 80 new member applications per month and total membership will exceed 8,500 members by the end of 2017. If the current trend continues we will exceed 10,000 NRA members in 3 to 4 years.

Such sustained growth in membership will demand a review of how we prioritise access to Bisley Camp facilities for full NRA members. As the number of weekend bookings refused increases greater range priority is likely to be given to full NRA members. We also need to explore variable pricing policies for NRA full members and members / guests of affiliated organisations. The Pavilion offers comfortable facilities to all members throughout the year; the improved range office will be adjacent to the retail area and new café.

Improving support for NRA affiliated organisations is critical; at present we have too great a "one size fits all" attitude and need to develop a more sophisticated scheme that more fairly recognizes the differing contributions to target shooting. The value of the NRA to affiliated organisations – and affiliated organisations' value to the whole NRA membership – needs to be clearly asserted.



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Opportunities exist for the NRA to assist affiliated organisations with the ever-growing burden of administration; guidance notes, templates of routine documentation and targeted bulletins should be developed to assist hard-pressed club officers. We need to maximise the opportunities to encourage support of affiliated organisations through creative engagement of such resources as the new Pavilion and NRA Shooting Club.

The challenges facing younger shooters are well-known; new graduates burdened by debt present particular challenges. We have increased the degree of financial support significantly with the annual cost now exceeding £100,000 for 40% discounts on training and entry fees and free membership for Under 21s. We will need to improve our partnership working with organisations such as the Council for Cadet Rifle Shooting, schools, universities etc. to maximise the potential outcomes from these investments.

Objectives Define and promote the NRA membership offer to members of affiliated organisations

Develop targeted communications and assistance to ease administrative burden of affiliated clubs

Increase NRA membership by 4% each year

Review and publish policy for allocation / pricing of range bookings to NRA members and members of affiliated clubs

Review and publish policy and affiliation packages for affiliated organisations

Make Bisley more welcoming to new and prospective shooters

The new Pavilion offers modern, clean and attractive facilities to all visitors to Bisley. Booking a target for the first time can however be a daunting prospect and we currently offer limited “try before you buy” opportunities mainly in the form of guest days.

New Home Office guidance allows Home Office Approved (HOA) Clubs to offer day membership to members of other HOA Clubs and FAC holders. We will trial inviting FAC holders to shoot on restricted range supervised by a NRA RCO on an hourly basis as NRA day members. Deer / vermin stalkers wanting to check their rifles present an obvious opportunity; there are 155k FAC holders in England and Wales and many would welcome the opportunity to shoot at Bisley. Competency and safety on the firing point will be overseen by the RCO; we are likely to insist initially on a recognised marksmanship standard such as DSC1 (if they do not possess a NRA SCC).

Objectives Complete the refurbishment of the Pavilion

Organise 6 one-day membership “midweek teasers” in 2018

Andrew Mercer
December 2017