

Ladies and Gentlemen

It's been a great pleasure to see how the NRA's opportunities and challenges have moved on during my first year as Treasurer.

As the Chairman has said, for the first time since 2009, the NRA has reported an annual surplus. This was £331k in 2013, by comparison with a budget for surplus of £150k. Where I saw 2012 representing transition from the exceptional circumstances of preceding years, I now see 2013 as a first taste of where both the operations and the finances of the NRA can be heading. The budget for 2014 seeks a surplus of £450k, which remains modest by any commercial standard for an operation with revenue of £5.1m in 2013 and which is budgeted for £5.2m this year.

The NRA's financial flexibility has seen a turnaround which corresponds to our return to surplus. Net current assets closed 2013 at £142k, whereas we had started the year with net current liabilities of £247k. This, together with the net cash balance, imposed significant constraints on how we could operate late in 2012 and early in 2013. The improvement during the year demonstrates how healthier finances can free up the time and attention of management and Trustees to concentrate more on our operations and longer term future. We should keep it that way.

As we see our financial position improve, we cannot let that be at the expense of investment in the ranges and camp and there is no intention to do so. The strategic review from last autumn outlined significant expenditure on maintenance and improvement, intending to total £1m over 3 years. Spending on capital projects and development is to be undertaken provided it leaves us confident of at least £200k in forecast cash balances. In 2013, £123k was spent on improvements and maintenance of the ranges. Between January 2013 and March this year, over £400k has been spent on the remainder of Bisley camp, in particular to roads, accommodation, signage, training & visitor facilities and towards establishment of a Wi-Fi network.

Our Association is welcoming a broader spread of shooting interest than ever before. For the first time I can recall, no single discipline represents an overall majority of our membership. This greater diversification brings with it some challenges in the provision of shooting services and coordination of range use. As it brings increasing membership to the NRA, it also offers the opportunity for increased membership and business to Bisley's clubs. Club officials are being encouraged to explore these opportunities by approaching the Membership Department. Members of the Bisley clubs can ask their own officials how they are getting on.

With a wider spread of disciplines and increasing numbers in our membership, members should bear in mind that the NRA is made up of many different constituencies. There need to be equitable balances struck between different interests as we deliver the public benefits of marksmanship both within the association and beyond. In particular, we can only plough cash surpluses back into the NRA's facilities if we achieve a surplus on both commercial and members' activities – and that is a surplus that is decent with regard to both those members who are on a given shoot and those who are not. Other work over the last year has been the bringing to light, and increasingly into equitable order, of some inconsistencies between similar types of engagement with the NRA. Examples include rents for different clubhouses, prices for different caravan pitches, patterns of payment & collection and differences between the interests of those members who use Bisley frequently and those who largely do not. Opinions on this will vary, and it is understandable when that is in line with a member's exposure to any given situation.

It is greatly to the credit of the Support Services team, under Ray Hutchings, that the communication and understanding of our finances have been available on an accurate and timely basis throughout

the last 12 months and more. These are critical contributions to both management and the Trustees and put us in a position to communicate to members, both via your representatives on General Council and directly. Indeed, I hope that our financial progress is not news but rather something that members have been picking up on for several months now, via the publication of my report to General Council in December; most importantly the very prompt publication of our audited results in March; and in a Journal article arriving around now.

The Trustees are very mindful of the patience which is being asked of us all with regard to the type and scheduling of works being done around Bisley and the pricing of various services that we are each asking our collective endeavour – our Association - to provide. A key balance which your Trustees and management seek is between the shooting interests of the present & near future on the one hand and those of the medium & longer term future on the other. An obvious tension in this is between surpluses & investment: one of them raises and saves money, while the other spends it. Sourcing profitable use of the ranges and camp from external clients is a vital component in the NRA's continuing financial health, but it is not a silver bullet for members' financial pressures at Bisley. It also requires a compromise in the availability of range space and other facilities. Success is needed on all these fronts together, and the Trustees are grateful to the whole staff for their effective and hard work in delivering this. Please be supportive of them.

I hope that you share the encouragement I feel from the financial performance in 2013, which continues into this year.