

Chairman's Statement

I am pleased to say that the NRA has weathered many challenges resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Many other charities have not been so fortunate, and I want to start by thanking all of those who supported the NRA through this challenging time.

Our Annual Report for 2021 has been published and outlines our financial position. It demonstrates that we have been able to recover from the financial challenges of 2020, although in part by delaying much-needed capital expenditure. The Treasurer will address that in more detail in his presentation.

I am pleased to report that despite these challenging times our membership continues to grow; it rose from 9,587 at the end of 2020 to 9,876 at the start of 2022 – a net increase of 289 members. This level of membership applications is the result of a lot of hard work from many people, and is essential to the growth of target shooting in this country. Welcoming new members also means more training for probationary members. 875 members completed a probationary training course in 2021. That's an increase from 2020, and a useful confirmation of the continued interest in target shooting.

I would like to pay tribute to the Membership Team, led by Georgina Thatcher, and the Training Team, led by David Camp, for successfully managing that growth especially given the reduced staffing levels brought about by our decision to use the Government's furlough scheme in 2020.

Range use at Bisley continues to grow, and we are experiencing high demand during 2022 as people continue to catch up on all the lost shooting opportunities from 2020 and early 2021. Meeting this demand is an important challenge for the National Shooting Centre, which operates the ranges. Electronic targets continue to be popular and you will see more of these as NSC brings more targets into use. Better co-ordination of range usage, including single-distance shooting and stricter cancellation policies all contribute to making sure that we enable as many people as possible to use the range and that ranges are allocated fairly. Again, I want to thank the professional staff for the way they have managed this increasing demand and balanced the competing priorities between all those who use Bisley Ranges.

The NSC was able to operate sporting clay shooting at Council Club and Cottesloe Heath for 9 months in 2021. Sporting clays provides a useful source of additional income for NSC and that income helps fund rifle range improvements and helps the NRA pursue its charitable objectives. The operational flexibility of having this land under the management of the NSC will help ensure that the use of our ranges is maximised, again contributing to our charitable objectives.

The social and political backdrop for shooting remains challenging. Shooting will not be part of the 2022 Commonwealth Games. The Government consultation on the use of lead in ammunition will raise challenges for everyone in the shooting community. The NRA is working with other bodies to help inform Members of Parliament on the various ways that NSC and other range operators successfully manage lead on shooting ranges.

There is more work to be done on improving facilities at Bisley and completing long-running projects. Most capital expenditure was suspended in 2021. So far in 2022 we have upgraded the ballistic walls at Melville, Zero and Winans ranges, commenced the development of a new range office in the Pavilion and upgraded the areas around the Clock Tower. During the rest of this year, there will be investments in regional ranges, an online booking system and new ablutions blocks for the Clock Tower and Caravan Site 7. As at today, we are cash positive, but this is a particularly high point in the seasonal fluctuations in our cashflow. We must continue to rebuild the financial reserves of the charity to ensure its resilience to future

economic shocks. In particular, we want to restore a minimum cash balance of £250,000 and maintain a 1x acid test ratio even during the low points of our cash cycle. This process will take a number of years.

I would like to conclude by thanking my fellow Trustees and Andrew Mercer and his staff for all their energy, enthusiasm and hard work over the past 18 months. I would also like to thank the members of General Council for their contribution throughout 2021.