

Tees Valley Target Sports Club – Meeting – 11 July 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Attendance

Richard Frankland (Chair) - RF Pete Costello (Treasurer) - PC Ken Hart (Secretary) - KH Ron Benson (President) - RB Mark Grimwood - MG Phil Hughes – PH, Barry King – BK, Tony Curry – TC, Les Cook – LC, David Pengilly – DP, Julian Sorrell - JS Peter Nicol (Note taker)

2. Apologies

Barry Grimwood

3. Minutes of the Meeting of 6th June 2023

3.1 Previous meeting minutes moved as accurate and correct by PH, seconded by BK and signed off as a true record.

4. Matters arising (not on the agenda)

4.1 The probationers FBR shoot became a Full Members event. One probationer had an SSC issued by another club and queried whether it was acceptable.

Agreed that the probationer is still required to undertake Club training to secure a TVTSC issued SSC for Club shoots.

4.2 There was not an RCO for the scheduled June FBR shoot. JS to draft the text of an email to all Club RCO's to remind those funded by the Club to secure qualification, that they should offer their services. The email should invite the RCO's to state the dates they can offer for scheduled 2023 FBR shoots.

Agreed KH to check list of Club RCO's. JS to draft and KH to issue the email. JS and KH

4.3 A discussion was held about Guest Days for miniature rifles and generally. An estimate of how many guests would be likely to attend was necessary.

Agreed that the Club should canvas its own members via WhatsApp and email to establish if members favour Guest Days. PC

It was noted that the Club has a permit to run a miniature rifle club and accordingly the Club can issue corporate invitations subject to guests signing a Section 21 declaration.

Agreed KH to work on an invitation to Club members for arranging Open Days at Catterick, Moorsholm and Lawson Way. KH

Thought could be given to inviting the Mayor to a miniature rifle Open Day as an introduction to the club and our community benefit offer.

RF

4.4 RF had had a meeting with Barclays Bank regarding a community account. PC had received a letter from Barclays seeking more details. PC to respond. PC

4.5 PC to update the Club website to give details as to how to contact the Club Secretary. PC

4.6 PC to establish if existing RCO's would be interested in doing a course to become muzzle loader qualified. PC

5. Secretary's report

5.1 KH has established that Clare Pinnegar is willing to represent Sports Club members at Committee. Clare could be co-opted for as such as a specific task as envisaged by the constitution. It was unanimously agreed that Clare be invited to be a co-opted Committee member. KH to write to Clare. KH

5.2 A discussion was held about the storing of firearms at Lawson Way. **Agreed** that KH should establish the formal police view on any proposal to store firearms at Lawson Way. KH As part of the consultation, KH to explore the possibility of a mixed economy with some Club members storing Club firearms at their homes rather than at club premises.

Agreed KH to lead on all discussions with the police. KH

5.3 KH circulated a list of firearms and moderators owned by the Club and a discussion was held over future usage and requirement. A review of the list should be undertaken taking into account usage. DP asked if the new club FAC had been issued to KH which was confirmed. DP advised that he would deliver the club firearms currently in his possession and the club cabinet, to Lawson Way the following evening for transfer to KH. RF agreed to take the club .303. **Noted.**

Agreed. With the assistance of other Committee members, KH is to build up a picture of Club firearms usage and report back for further discussion. KH and All.

5.5 KH reported that the police (Cleveland and North Riding) are now contacting him regarding new membership applications.

5.6 The Home Office range license has now been received.

5.7 The Rating/Valuation form for Lawson Way has been submitted. **5.8** The Club Bring & Buy sale on 23/07/23 is currently being promoted.

Correspondence

1. KH read out a summary from Peter Metcalfe (PM) of Gift Aid claims he has made. From the Club returns received by PM for Catterick (3 shoots) and Lawson Way (2 months) he expects a tax

refund of £601. There was disagreement between PM and BK regarding the possession of the 2022 Attendance Records file which had not been resolved and until it is a complete application for gift aid cannot be submitted

Agreed. That it was important to locate the missing information. All.

2. Roger Johnson had provided KH with a list of members attendances compiled from the electronic member's record system. The list was circulated. **Noted.**
3. Regarding the Firearms Licensing consultation, Andy Cook had drafted a suggested Club response. All committee members were invited to comment on the draft and PC agreed to take editorial control of the response on behalf of the club and KH to submit a revised version taking into account PC's comments/revisions/corrections. The final Club response needs to be submitted by 23/08/23. PC and KH

6. Chair's report

6.1 Long standing member Peter Hutchinson had passed away recently and RF had sent a condolence card on behalf of the Club to his brother David. **Noted.**

6.2 RF had carried out a review of the membership application process with BK. RF confirmed that all processes were working well. RF concluded that BK was doing excellent work and RF thanked BK for being such an excellent ambassador for the Club. **Noted.**

6.2 RF reported that at the AGM he had been informed of an 'incident' at another unnamed club, where someone had been injured. Effectively RF had been given what amounted to a Section 3 of the Health & Safety at Work Act warning that the Club may be operating potentially unsafe practices at clay pigeon shoots at Moorsholm. The 'incident' involved a shoot without a safety cage and using driven birds. There had been some reluctance on the part of the informant to divulge the detail of the incident due to the constraints of confidentiality but eventually clearance had been given and an anonymised description of the incident supplied.

The Chair reported (including photographs not reproduced for the minutes) as follows -

'Our shotgun shoots are led by experienced shooters and two of our qualified instructors regularly attend and undertake supervisory duties. There is clear evidence of their intervening if concerns become apparent regarding the behaviour and practice of any of those attending and we have operated for many years with a clean safety record. However, there is no room for complacency where safety is concerned and so I have

followed up the above disclosure and now have an anonymised description of events which is sufficient for the committee to discuss the matter.

Details of the incident/accident

It seems that at a club shoot which appears to have been a similar event to our own shotgun shoot at Cow Close Wood, Moorsholm, the following facts were established.

All individuals involved were experienced shooters and certificate holders.

- A clay stand was set up consisting of a driven bird with an auto trap and shot.
- No cage was used to limit the arc or travel of the swung shotgun.
- As a bird came over a shooter swung, overbalanced and discharged the shotgun to his rear.
- The discharged shot struck an individual in the shoulder.

Our informant advises that:

This has resulted in the individuals concerned having their certificates suspended and are still waiting the conclusion of the Police investigation after 9 months. The concerns being that

criminal or civil proceedings will fall out from this process with the possible loss of certificates preventing participation in shooting sports. The Club involved is also concerned as to what action may be taken against themselves for failing to ensure the activities were correctly managed.

Consideration

The Committee Lead and I have discussed this issue in relation to our own arrangements and taken into consideration the Clay Pidgeon Shooters' Association safety manual which is attached for committee members to consider. (Not reproduced for the minutes). I refer particularly to section **ii) Firing Points (Sporting)**.

This section endeavours to provide practical advice regarding the usage and placements of stands. The seven paragraphs attempt to deal with a wide range of circumstances, and I have tried to distil some basic principles to aid our discussion. Others with a greater knowledge of the discipline and the specifics of our practice than me should contribute here.

1. Established practice which has served well over a period of time is a reasonable basis for confidence that it is safe in all the circumstances of the case.

Our practice which has been tried and tested over many years consists of going away birds, crossers and our 'line' shoot (where five shooters take it in turn to shoot two crossers, show clear and then move to the next position). We do not deploy pop up enclosures. The shoot takes place in an extensive field (see map attached) (not reproduced for the minutes)>giving good open views.

2. In the event of a problem being envisaged with the attributes of the shooters taking part (fast/slow/left-handers etc), or minimum safety distances, driven or right or left birds, 'open' shooting enclosures should be considered.

The propensities of the individuals taking part on the day are generally known to the committee members (including our NRA qualified instructors) who manage the shoot and then supervise accordingly. Guests or newcomers are given special attention and one to one supervision if considered necessary. Driven birds and extreme right and left targets are not practiced by us. Our practices are akin to skeet where enclosures are not deployed.

3. The firing points for the less formal types of shooting [*like ours*] should be about 1 metre square, reasonably firm and flat. Should clearly designate where the shooter should stand and never be so close to the traps so that the trapper is placed in danger.

Our shoot takes place once a month in a farmer's field which he uses as pasture for livestock. So, no permanent installations are possible. The firing point is indicated by the presence of a bucket for empty cartridges and is overseen by supervisors and the trapper. We have never encountered any significant concerns with this arrangement.

4. Public footpaths, bridleways etc have no place on clay clubs' grounds. Rights of public access must be checked and should never be within the 275-metre safety area.

Looking at the ordnance survey extract map attached, it is clear that there are two footpaths where Cow Close Lane terminates more or less at right angles to that lane. The left-hand path leading down to a ford and the right-hand path going to Gerrick. Accordingly, if I am reading the map correctly, before it bifurcates the path skirts the field boundary behind the firing points with the left-hand path taking walkers further away behind the firing points, but the right had path takes them to the left of and adjacent to the firing points at an angle of five degrees.

Walkers from Gerrick will walk up to the firing points at an angle of five degrees up a bank so will not have sight of the shoot until they breast the rise.

A site visit was undertaken on the 26th June and photographs taken. The site visit revealed that the footpath to the ford continues along Cow Close Lane and does not in fact skirt the clay shoot field. Accordingly, it does not present any safety issues with walkers. However, the footpath (which is a bridleway) to Gerrick does traverse the clay shoot field behind where the traps are placed and descends to a wood more or less directly behind the trap placed furthest from the field gate. It descends quite steeply to a gate and then continues to descend to a bridge at a gentle angle away from the clay shooting field. A walker or rider coming from Gerrick as they cross the bridge will be about 75m from the field boundary but well beneath it. A stockproof wire fence prevents a walker or loose dog accessing the field except by the bridleway route. A series of photographs are attached to assist discussion.

On shoot days a sign should be placed on the bridleway gate warning users that a clay shoot is in operation and consideration should be given to a lookout with radio communication with the RO being present. If clays are launched with a trajectory aimed towards the centre of the clay shoot field, then no shot should reach any part of the bridleway but this should be checked by a practical demonstration.

Whilst we have never had any incident or accident in relation to walkers using this path, we should review what safety arrangements we should have in place as discussed above and satisfy ourselves that we are able to manage the situation safely.

Recommendations

That Committee members give consideration to the issues and decide on the proper course of action for the Club:

1. Generally.
2. Whether 'pop up' enclosures are required for the temporary stands.
3. What arrangements are required to ensure the safety of walkers/riders using the bridleway that traverses/impinges on the shoot.

6.3 RF explained that he had carried out a comprehensive site inspection of the field used at Moorholm and its environs on 26/06/23. RF had walked the section of the public footpath near the field used by the Club and had walked a portion of the bridleway from Cow Close Lane to Gerrick.

6.4 RF's comprehensive report that had previously been circulated to Committee members included maps and photographs. RF asked

Committee members for their views and advice. A detailed discussion took place on the points raised and committee members were satisfied that our practices were tried and trusted and carefully controlled by very experienced and qualified supervisors and safe. Driven birds were no longer practiced but there had never been a safety issue when they were. Following his discussion with the Chair LC had reviewed the arrangements at the next following clay shoot and with PC had tweaked some of the practice. Regarding the issue of walkers/riders approaching the shoot from the direction of Gerrick it was considered prudent to affix a warning notice to the gate at the foot of the ravine. Whilst the committee was satisfied that on the present configuration of the traps there was no danger of shot falling on bridleway users as they approach the shoot/gate DP volunteered to verify this at the next clay shoot.

Agreed that as currently practiced the club's 'pop up' clay shoot was safe but that a warning sign be affixed to the gate on the Gerrick bridleway and that the fall of shot would be corroborated at the next clay shoot. DP

7. Membership Secretary's Report

7.1 Various membership applications for Sports, Full and Firearm membership was circulated by BK. All those circulated had been approved by Cleveland Police.

8. Treasurer's Report

8.1 PC provided documentary evidence of the following data: Account status and income:

Account status and income: No. 2 account £5,985.97 General reserve £23,606.68

Previous month £1,524.01

£25,069.63

Land & Buildings Subs holding a/c Total

Door Tags £895

£34,000 £164.33

£63,756.98

£32,037.95 £8,170.77

£66,802.36

£2,200 £372 £1,819.09 £129.79 £109.98

£22 £29

£190 £63

£40

8.2 Expenditure

Lawson Way redecorations FAC/Club renewal Electricity

Face masks

Glyphosate

Water Rates

M'bro Council Tax Brickwork

RCO (Benson)

Postal Service

9 Lawson Way Range Report

9.1 TC reported that furniture at the backstop on 'B' Range was unsafe due to the materials used creating a high risk of 'bounce backs', accordingly TC removed the benches.

TC has supplied his contact details to the air-rifle shooters in an endeavour to resolve his safety concerns.

TC reported that no competitions could be run with the unsafe benches. There also needs to be a hessian screen in front of the steel backstops to prevent 'bounce backs'.

9.2 It was concluded that the Saturday morning air-rifle shooters on 'B' Range' had made a genuine attempt to comply with safety requirements by incorporating hardwood in the benches.

It was agreed that KH accompanied by TC would attend Lawson Way on Saturday morning the 22nd July and agree with the sports members there present what can be installed. In the meantime, TC is to remove any benches TC considered to be unsafe. KH and TC

9.3 Agreed that there was a need for the Saturday morning air rifle shooting to be supervised by suitably trained RCOs. PC/DP to advise the Saturday morning air rifle shooters that some of their number need to receive RCO training and this was on offer each Tuesday and Friday evening in B Range from TC/SN. It was considered that two or three training sessions should suffice. PC/DP

10 Moorsholm Range Report

10.1 LC reported that at last Sundays (09/07/23) clay pigeon shoot, Mr Liddle, the farmer and our landlord had complained vehemently that a shooter had parked his car in such a manner that blocked the lane, thus preventing the movement of hay bales. The situation arose despite the Club instructing members not to park in the lane. The individual causing the problem is a new member and had not seen the Club's instruction.

10.4 LC reported that there was clear evidence of .38 slugs being used at Moorsholm. This is specifically prohibited.

PC to include a reminder in the next WhatsApp bulletin. PC

11. Any other Business

11.1 A one day First Aid course – “First Aid at Work” is fixed for 02/09/23.

11.2 RB requested a new kettle for the kitchen. RB to purchase and PC will reimburse the cost. RB **11.3** PC drew attention to the untidy state of the office following the movement of furniture as part of the redecoration. This will be addressed at the next end of month tidy-up on Saturday 29 July.

Date of next Meeting

Tuesday 1st August 2023.