

ARUNDOWN MEMBERSHIP:

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE CLUB

We're sure you've already noticed that the Club is not a commercial organisation, it's very much a co-operative group, and all income from subscriptions and other sources goes towards paying for hiring the ranges and buying equipment. We get by and keep our subscriptions at an affordable level by working together to keep equipment costs low and by occasionally giving up some of our shooting time to help with fund-raising activities. A whole range of tasks and jobs needs to be dealt with round the year, requiring different levels of skill and effort, and everybody can make a useful contribution. So we hope that all members are willing to help, and that they positively use their initiative to spot ways to share the effort so that the load doesn't always fall on the same few people.

The following gives some idea of the 'housework' that has to be dealt with, and how you can help keep things running smoothly.

Whenever on the Shooting Ranges

Some tasks are actually obligatory - the Rules of Shooting require everybody to be responsible for Range Safety. All members must therefore.

- Check that the Field Layout and the interaction with other users of the field is safe before starting to shoot - in particular, check that the targets are at least 50 yards / 46 metres from the boundaries, check that there is a clear shooting line, and check that nobody is likely to move within 20 yards / 18 metres of the side of any target while shooting is taking place.
- Make sure that warning flags and / or signs are sensibly positioned to minimise risk
- Make sure that the Field Gate or any other security barriers are kept closed or locked as and when required by the landlords - which generally means that the last person off the field should lock the gate, but sometimes it will be necessary to do additional things as instructed.

If you see that any aspect of the Field Layout is not correct and safe, then you must bring it to the attention of the others using the Range, and together you must put it right or stop shooting. Everybody must feel responsible for Range Safety, and be motivated to take action to correct any shortcomings.

Setting up and moving equipment can be hard work, particularly to the older and smaller members, so it's expected that everyone will assist as much as they are able and do their fair share of the work. If you know what you're doing, it is perfectly possible for one person to erect targets and take them down safely, particularly when using foam bosses on four-legged stands with the help of the trolley, but it's much better to operate in pairs or threes. Consult experienced members to get instruction on safe ways to lift and move equipment.

Indoors, always check that the safety stop net is erected, and is leaning forward on the props clear of the back wall and windows so that any arrows that miss the target are stopped by the net before they damage the wall, windows or curtains. Check that the target bosses are fixed to the stands using the bungys.

Dealing with Intruders

The security fence erected around the school perimeter has made a huge improvement to the problem of intrusion, but people do still walk across or near our ranges from time to time. Frequently these are pupils of the school taking a short cut home (they usually climb the fence in the far corner).

So how far away is safe? And what should be done about it?

The recommended safety distances are fifty yards behind the targets and twenty yards to each side, so if the intruders keep outside these areas all is considered safe, however if the intruder passes behind the targets, even if more than 50 yards beyond, shooting should cease until they are clear. If the intruders seem generally aware of what's going on, and generally try to keep outside the danger area, then really nothing needs to be said unless it happens over and over again, in which case it seems justified to ask them civilly to take a larger detour around. If on the other hand the intruder is of a bolshy frame of mind and deliberately and slowly walks into the danger area, then they should be told that they have no right to be there and must leave immediately. There could be risks involved depending on the individual involved, and the school sometimes has to call the police under these circumstances, so it's probably worth getting to know how other more experienced members deal with this problem (which seems fairly rare nowadays), but it sometimes helps to remind intruders of the un-repealed mediaeval laws exempting from prosecution archers who kill passers-by during practice!

Dealing with Ground Staff and Management

From time to time the caretakers, or even the Site Manager, will require us to keep away from some areas, or will tell us about future conflicts with other uses, or even to complain about accidental damage that's been discovered.

Be polite and civil and co-operative with them - they are usually very helpful and supportive, but anyone can have a bad day and just occasionally they've been given a roasting themselves because of some damage that's been discovered, and want to find out how it happened. Be sure you know what we are entitled to in terms of times and areas of use of the field in case you are doing something that's only permitted at other times and in other places.

Helping with Equipment maintenance Field Equipment

Every Session :

Check that Stands and Bosses are in good shape and not starting to come apart.

Check, and if necessary adjust, the compression straps of the foam bosses, and adjust / correct any tendency to 'bow' into a curve.

Special maintenance sessions, once or twice a year:

Help service the field equipment, usually near the beginning of the Indoor Season

Dismantle the foam bosses, remove badly worn foam, re-pack the strips and add new foam as needed, tighten compression straps Repair target stands and make fit for safe use.

Some years the work includes cutting large foam sheets into strips

Some members occasionally drive a vehicle to collect the foam on pallets, or collect readymade target bosses from the supplier.

Beginner Equipment

Every Session :

Arrow maintenance - fletching, straightening, replacing nocks Intermittently :

Bow maintenance - String repair, string making, replacing arrow rests, maintaining / replacing the pin sights

Occasionally making tabs and / or bracers and bowslings

Helping with Home Matches

When we host Home Matches there are some extra things to do. Some help is required to paint-mark the field, which probably takes an hour or so, preferably on the day before if we can get access (sometimes the field is being used), otherwise early before the match. And we will be expected to provide a reasonable tea for everyone after the shoot, so all the members should try to bring a contribution - sandwiches, cakes, etc - for the tea table.

Helping with Tournaments

We have a good reputation for putting on well-organised Indoor Tournaments twice a year, in November and February, which doesn't require a massive amount of prior preparation or support on the day, but all the same it is important that as many members as possible make themselves available to do at least a share of the work. These tournaments are the Club's biggest source of income, and without them we would have to pay double the annual subscription charge. If the entrants go home happy they'll be keen to come back next year, and be happy to pay a reasonable sum to get in, so everything needs to be done well and on time. And from our point of view, it's usually quite a nice way to spend the day and meet a few old friends and regular entrants.

The gear has to be serviced and put into good shape a week or so beforehand; then, probably the most pressured part, the Sports Hall has to be set up quickly early on the Sunday morning; and through the day the busiest helpers are those dealing with refreshments, but a few people are needed to change target faces and so on in the Hall; then in the evening more hands are required to return the gear to the store and clear up.

Helping with Have-a-Go events

Most years we lay-on one or more 'Have-A-Go' events, usually at School Fetes or Charity events, and we either make money for the club in return for the use of the equipment, or sometimes do it in return for a good barbecue and some clay 'pigeon' shooting. We try to make sure these don't conflict with our archery days, and we just bung a load of beginners equipment into the back of a car and onto roof racks and head off to the venue. We'll have done a safety assessment beforehand, and we have to comply with a Code of Practice for this type of event which asks us to try to provide one instructor for every shooting position - so we'd like to have four to six members turn out for these events. Again, it can be a pleasant day out.