

Shipley Bowmen

Chairman's Report 2015/16

The year 2015/2016 proved to be an interesting one. First, Shipley Bowmen lost its Winter-Wednesday evening 'slot' at Dial Post Village Hall, because of a late-discovered prior claim, though the Club was able to find an alternative – the Andrew Hall, Shipley, which proved to be satisfactory. On Sunday evenings, shooting continued indoors at Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre (BBHLC).

During the Spring and Summer months of 2015, the Wednesday evening open-air sessions at Knepp Castle were generally well-attended, once the wet weather in April had passed. There were 366 people shooting, on 49 days. On some days, attendance was very good indeed, it being a substantial proportion of the then membership: on two days, 14 archers attended; on one 13; on two others, 12; on four occasions 11 attended.

Reaching agreement with Knepp Castle Estate on a Licence fee for use of its ground in 2016 proved problematic. The principle of there being a review of the fee in the future had been agreed when the Club was set up in 2012 and the fee had remained unchanged since the Club's inception – until this year when, whilst the fee itself is not particularly expensive, it was increased substantially.

Under the auspices of the Martlets' Guild (the Guild of West Sussex Archery Coaches) Shipley Bowmen organised two Workshops for Shipley Bowmen, Worthing, and Arundown Archery Clubs to develop the skills of interested Members so that they could assist with the teaching of beginners to the sport. These "Workshops" were run on two Sunday evenings in September and October 2015: Part 1 covered "Teaching Beginners Point of Aim" and Part 2 "Teaching Beginners Free Style". Two West Sussex Archery Coaches, both Members of the Martlets' Guild, were kind enough to share their expertise with about a dozen archers from the Clubs, as a result of which Shipley Bowmen has five Members certificated to assist with the introduction of beginners to the sport.

Shipley Bowmen reached agreement with Worthing Archery Club and Arundown Archery Club on reciprocal arrangements for its archers to shoot with them at their venues, and for their archers to shoot with us at ours, for equivalent 'green-fees'.

A significant number of enquiries from people wishing to experience archery and even to join a Club, led the Committee to establish beginners' "Try Archery" sessions that now run at Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre on the first Sunday of every month, from 4.00 pm until 5.00 pm. These sessions are run over one calendar month, the first two being free, so that participants can assess whether or not they wish to take archery further. After that calendar month, we ask that beginners (who, by then, are no longer beginners) join the club if they wish to continue shooting. These sessions have been regularly well-attended.

An opportunity was offered at very short notice for Shipley Bowmen to be filmed and interviewed by the BBC's "South To-day" programme on 6th January at Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre, to talk to the BBC about the expected effect of Horsham District Council's plans to redevelop the Centre. The Club was able to 'field' six archers, at short notice, for a half-hour slot. A single cameraman arrived at about 1.15 pm, took a couple of shots of one archer (our best, actually) shooting – and then left. The programme was broadcast at 6.30 pm and a significant number of people saw it, reportedly.

Shipleigh Bowmen remains active, with other sports clubs and the Horsham "50+" groups who use the Leisure Centre, in seeking to influence its redevelopment so that the facilities provided are at least as good as the facilities there now.

The Club's finances have been healthy throughout the year. Having received a quotation for insurance of its shed and contents that the Committee regarded as too expensive, the Committee decided to set aside funds, and to do so annually, to "self-insure" so that the Club would be in a position to replace those things should it prove to be necessary.

The Club's Constitution has remained as recommended by Archery GB and the day-to-day administration is undertaken by an Executive Committee of five. (Details can be found on the Club's website).

The Club's Annual Dinner was held on Friday 12th February at the Countryman Inn, Shipley. Fourteen Members attended. The Committee decided to try to organise a Summer Bar-B-Q as well so that those Junior Members who would like to, can participate (and we hope that that will happen in 2017).

No Chairman's Report would be complete without recognition of the Members – both those who shoot regularly, for whatever reason and those who shoot in competitions. Although archers generally shoot as individuals, it is not uncommon for Clubs to have several Members shooting in one competition. This year, Shipley Bowmen were again well-represented at a number of events and achieved some commendable results. In October, at Arundown Archery Club, the Club's Head Coach achieved a First in the Men's Compound; and lady member, a member for barely one year at the time, achieved a personal best score of 516/600 in the Record Status "Portsmouth" Ladies Senior "Recurve" – her first competition – and was awarded a Bronze Medal. Our congratulations go to them and are well-deserved.

Nor would a Chairman's report be complete without recognition of those Members who serve on the Executive Committee, and others who largely remain unsung, but who, in addition, consistently and regularly assist with setting up and taking down equipment, acting as Field Captains and as Coach's Assistants – and who undertake the numerous jobs that need to be done to keep the club running smoothly and successfully. Thanks are due to all.

Phil Baxter
Chairman
August 2016