



Essex County Small Bore Rifle and Pistol Association Honorary Secretary's Report for the Year 2023 - 2024

Committee

During the past year there have been four formal meetings of the Essex Committee; two face to face and two via Zoom, all but one with full attendance. I must take this early opportunity to thank Chris Ingram for the hours that he gave to the County as Secretary. Reading through previous minutes of meetings one appreciates the sheer volume of work that your officers and committee members undertake voluntarily and too often without thanks. Shooting in Essex does not come via the hands of shooting fairies but from time and effort of Club and County officials. This County must be especially grateful to Sevena Fearn for keeping our finances in the black, to Martyn Payne for managing our County Teams so successfully in his first year in post, to Annabelle Davies for managing our County Competitions so efficiently, and Joe Smith for taking over the Air completions from Mike Greenslade. He has big boots to fill but now has his feet firmly under the table. I must also thank our various clubs for supporting him after we threw him in at the deep end.

I have delivered two training sessions to qualify our members as NSRA Class C Scorers. This is the first step on the scoring ladder enabling them to score local competitions accurately and with confidence. Essex is now has a more than adequate number of qualified scorers.

Competitions

The Intra County competitions and County Championships were successfully delivered during 2023/4. Annabelle Davies will be commenting on the Intra County competitions shortly. The 2023 County Championships were held at Colchester RC in May last year. The 2024 competition will be held at Basildon RC on 12th May this year. All Essex shooters are encouraged to attend. It has always been an enjoyable day and novices will receive all the support that they seek. We must thank Annabelle Davies for creating the entry form. This task is not as easy as it appears.

Bisley

The 2023 Rifle Meeting went well for Essex, despite the smaller tent. The Dinner, arranged by Sevena Fearn, went very well.

Shooters bringing their trolleys into the (smaller) tent during rain caused a particular problem. In future we hope to be able to provide a gazebo as a trolley shelter leaving the tent for shooters and their kit.

The 2024 Meeting will take place between 10th August and 18th August. Details of costs and the entry forms are not yet available. The cost of the tent is likely to increase and we may well need to ask (again) for donations by users to help cover some of the cost.

We are considering offering tent space to shooters from neighbouring counties who do not have access to a county tent. In addition to the refreshments donation, we will seek a donation towards the tent cost.

NSRA

I have attended two of the three NSRA Shooting Council meetings held during the past year. I could not make the first but Essex were represented by Chris Stevens. I enjoyed these meetings finding that most counties face the same challenges as ourselves and finding myself in a position to try and have a positive effect on our sport. It has not been possible to share all the minutes of these meetings as some included 'off the record' remarks relating to the

potential lead ban which were both illuminating and, to an extent, reassuring. Thank you to those who responded to the Lead Consultation. To date I have heard no more and can report nothing further.

At my first Shooting Council meeting Essex's treatment in the previous year's Queen Alex competition was raised by Yvette Edwards (Herts.). I did not join the discussion but it was agreed that the handling had been poor and that the competition rules would be re-examined and publicised accordingly. This has now taken place and our loss of a score should not happen again.

I have approached representatives from other counties seeking their support for a review of County Qualification as the NSRA seems to be out of step with most other sporting bodies. I have received some strong support and limited negative comment. Once I have heard back from some more counties I will submit the proposal for discussion at a Shooting Council Meeting.

At my suggestion the NSRA A4 promotional poster created for Essex was passed to all counties.

The NSRA remain understaffed so that service and responses from them fall significantly below what they would like to provide. Competitions have taken on an additional (part-time volunteer) member of staff to work through the back log of results and prizes. This is slowly bearing fruit. The shop at LRC has now closed and moved to Aldersley. I am not at all sure how this will benefit shooters. Whilst it can be frustrating dealing with the NSRA the staff there individually are doing their very best. Please bear this in mind should you not get the response you need in a timely manner.

Eastern Region

Essex are part of Eastern Region in the NSRA National Structure. The main consequence of this is our participation in the Six Counties Competition. Although in the past counties have hosted this competition in rotation it has now found a permanent home at Norman Cross although counties will manage the competition in turn.

At the prompting of Sevena Fearn there will no longer be an entry fee for this competition; instead, each 'managing' county will supply cards, labels etc.

At the 2023 AGM I was elected to the Eastern Region Committee.

The competition this year will be held on 21st April and Martyn Payne is already putting the team together.

HCCC

There have been no formal meetings of the Home Counties Co-ordinating Committee this year as Mike Chapman has been ill. The key decision needed was the date of the Marks & Invicta Shields competitions. This was decided via correspondence by county representatives. This year the competition will be held at Worplesden on 19th May.

Southend Trophies

With falling support, the Southend Rifle League was wound up last year. They very generously donated four of their trophies, and cash to cover some engraving, to the County. These trophies will be awarded to the shooter with the best improved average /score year on year in the Greville, National Service and Summer Leagues and the County Championship. The County is particularly grateful to Southend for this generous act.