

BOOKLET 3 – HOW TO FORM A CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING CLUB

CLAY SHOOTING CLUBS

The Clay Pigeon Shooting Association Ltd (the CPSA) is the National Governing Body (NGB) of competitive clay target shooting in England. The CPSA provides NGB guidelines for the safe and legal operation of clubs engaged in the sport of clay target shooting.

If local conditions are right, the actual formation of a Clay Shooting Club should not be difficult. In every case it is advisable first of all for a few keen sportsmen to get together to ensure that there is sufficient interest to make the club practical. See your friends first and when you are certain of their support, you will have something on which to work and can then go ahead with more detailed plans.

MEMBERS

The success of the club will depend to a great extent upon the number and keenness of the members. Some successful clubs have memberships of twenty and under, whilst others are over the hundred mark. Somewhere about the average, say fifty, is a good target to aim for, but do not hesitate to fix a starting number even if for a time you have to have a waiting list. It all makes for keenness if entrance is not too easy.

Make up your mind from the start which disciplines you intend to set up and shoot., Although there are many disciplines, they can be categorised into Trap, Skeet or Sporting and with enough land under your control you may wish to make plans to shoot any combination of these or all three. The support of local clay shooters can probably be counted upon, but see the local game shots as well. Try to interest them in the possibilities of clay shooting as practice for game shooting after or before the close of the season. Many game and rough shooters are only too pleased to shoot sporting clays for practice. Try to arrange a demonstration using three simple sporting stands with a CPSA coach as the instructor.

If you are in a district of business or professional people, talk to them about the advantages of clay shooting as a recreation outside office hours, and the use of the club's facilities for corporate entertainment. Hotels, schools and leisure centres may also be interested in using or promoting the clubs facilities.

Do not forget, too, that both sexes and all ages can take part and enjoy the shooting and some members of your club will often help with catering and entertainment.

GROUND

If, when you start to form a club, you already have a suitable ground available, so much the better. You could even hold a small preliminary shoot if you have the necessary equipment and this would certainly promote interest. If no ground is available, this will be one of the essentials to be decided upon, either before you call the first meeting or at the meeting itself.

CHOOSING A SITE*

Unless your club intends only to shoot sporting clays, in general you will require a flat open field, if possible with a clear background, preferably without trees and always as far away from dwellings as possible.

Interference from the sun can be minimised if the traps are set so that shooting takes place mainly towards the North or North East. Safety is of prime importance and 275m (300yds) is considered a minimum requirement in every direction in which shooting is likely to take place.

Ensure that shot and clay fall out does not trespass on other private property or public footpaths or bridleways. No shooting is recommended within 15m (50ft) of a public highway.

PLANNING YOUR LAYOUT

The size shape and topography of the proposed piece of land to be used, along with the number of disciplines to be shot, will naturally determine the clubs offerings.

Care should be taken at the onset to determine what expansion the club may undergo over, say, a ten or fifteen year period. Plan from the very start to put in layouts as part of this master plan.

For example, if it is intended eventually to install four DTL layouts but funds or other limitations restrict the immediate installation to only one such layout, build this single layout in the position that will fit in with your final overall master plan. It will save you the trouble of demolishing the layout in the future.

Clubs vary as to their requirements and the planning of Skeet or Olympic Trap or DTL. etc. layouts is beyond the scope of this booklet. (see rear cover for booklet list). The CPSA has available suitable plans for use by clubs. Enquire at the CPSA office.

Remember permanent installation requires local planning permission.

LOCAL GUN DEALERS

Approach your local gun shop or ammunition dealer and secure their support. They will probably have customers whom they will be willing to approach as to the likelihood of their joining a club. In due course you will require cartridges, clays and traps and the dealer's advice and practical knowledge will be of great assistance to you. On their part, they should be pleased to get the business that a flourishing club will bring. A request for a Section 11(6) permit from the local firearms authority should be looked into to allow non-certificated shooters to shoot on this ground.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY

The local press in your district should not be forgotten. They will generally welcome the organisation of a gun club as they can look forward to some good copy and photographs when the club is running. Get them to make a preliminary announcement of the formation of the club with some details of its aim and objectives and the date of the first public meeting. Some general notes about the sport itself will help your club and the sport as a whole. In this way you will reach and interest a number of possible shooters whom you would not otherwise have reached.

Publicity brings new members and new members bring life to any club. When your club is running, invite a local reporter to visit it and have a few free shots so that he or she understands what it is all about. Few writers on sporting events have great experience of the various forms of shooting and, in any case, they have got to convince their news editors that the sport has real interest for the reading public. Make it plain that all shooters are welcome to attend and new members will soon be coming along.

If space permits, encourage the local press to publish your fixture list and short notes of the actual shoots, with a good action photograph.

Remember, also, to send copies of these to the Editors of the shooting press. They will publish as much as they can to help your club. These journals are of interest to all clay shooters. Your club should take them and you should encourage members to become subscribers. Their addresses are: -

“PULL!”	B.P.G. (Bourne) Ltd, Roebuck House, 23 Broad Street, Stamford, Lincs PE9 1RB
“Clay Shooting”	Brunton Business Publications, Thrupton Down House, Thrupton Down, Andover, Hants. SP11 8PR.
“Shooting Times”	Kings Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS
“Sporting Gun”	Kings Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS
“Gun Mart”	Castle House, 97 High Street, Colchester, Essex CO1 1TH.
“Sporting Shooter”	Jubilee House, 2 Jubilee Place, London SW3 3TQ

LEGAL STATUS

A club may exist in a number of ways:

An individual may run a club as a business; a **Sole Trader**. A sole trader has unlimited personal liability for the activities of the club. The profits or losses of the club belong to the sole trader.

Two or more persons may form a **Partnership** to run a club, which may have a partnership agreement or default to the Partnership Act 1907. Partners have joint and several liabilities unless defined otherwise in a partnership agreement. The profits or losses of the club belong to partners.

The club may be a **Limited Liability Company**. The club is owned by the shareholders who may be the directors and officers, and / or the members of the club or public. Profits belong to the shareholders, while liability is limited to the reserves of the company. A limited company must have at least one director and a secretary, and its articles of association are registered with Companies House.

A Member's club. All members have joint and several liabilities for the activities of the club, and the profits or losses of the club belong to the members unless the rules and constitution state otherwise.

This booklet deals with the setting up of a members' club. For any other legal status, specialist advice should be sought.

FIRST MEETING

When you have made sure of some support it is time to call a meeting to consider prospects and details. Choose an evening when the greatest number of possible

members can attend. Have a notice of the meeting published in the local press and also send a card of invitation or a letter to anyone whose support you hope to enlist. Select a place for this meeting, which will be acceptable to everyone.

When the meeting has assembled, elect a keen and lively temporary chairman. Let someone with first-hand knowledge of clay shooting give a short talk on the various aspects of the sport. Apply to the CPSA for the address of your Regional or County Secretary who will be a knowledgeable speaker. Encourage others present to give their views and let everyone express their opinions. Then take a vote of the meeting as to whether there is real support for the project and, if there is, take a list of those who say they will join and of the friends they hope to persuade to do so.

A complete organisation cannot be attempted at the first meeting – which should not be too long. Send your prospective members away in a state of enthusiasm for the scheme and make them promise to attend the next meeting and bring a friend.

If possible, have a date and place acceptable to the majority already fixed for the next meeting. Let the press know what has been done so far and ask them to publish an account of the proceedings, the date of the next meeting and a further invitation to all sportsmen to attend.

Whilst many details must necessarily be left over until the second meeting, the following ground can be covered at the first meeting: -

ENTRANCE FEES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS: These should be as reasonable as possible, but should provide sufficient funds to get the club started cover the initial cost of equipment and allow for some maintenance during the first season.

PRELIMINARY ORGANISATION: The meeting should elect a provisional Committee to draw up draft rules of the club, and if no ground is available, to look up likely sites. The report of this Committee should be ready before a second meeting is called.

SECOND MEETING

Appoint the same temporary chairman, who, before dealing with any reports, should add to the original list of prospective members any new persons who then wish to join. All those on the completed list should be eligible to discuss the recommendation made by the provisional committee and to vote in the formal elections of officers for the ensuing year.

SUGGESTED RULES

The following rules and regulations, though formidable in length, will facilitate the running of the club. They provide in themselves for special byelaws, applicable only to a particular club, which must be left to the club officials to formulate.

RULES

1. The title of the club shall be
2. The headquarters of the club shall be

.....

3. The objects and aims of the club shall be to foster and encourage the support of clay shooting, to arrange and organise practice shoots, to arrange matches and competitions, both among members and affiliated clubs, and to improve the standard of shooting among members.

4. The management committee of the club shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Club Coach, Safety Officer and ideally a Club Coach and Shoot Organiser as well as five committee members, all of whom shall have full voting powers, five of whom shall form a quorum, who shall be elected by the club members at each Annual General Meeting and the retiring members of the management committee shall be eligible for re-election. The committee shall have power to add to the number of vice-presidents for the current year, such posts being honorary, without voting powers.

5. The committee shall have power to fill any vacancies during the current year, and shall have power to form sub-committees as may be required for special purposes.

6. All monies received on behalf of the club shall forthwith be paid into the account of the club at the Bank. The Hon. Treasurer shall alone have power to draw on such account, and no cheques shall be drawn by him unless previously sanctioned by a resolution of the committee. No prizes or other articles shall be purchased or debts or liabilities incurred on behalf of the club by a person without the previous sanction of a resolution of the committee, or of a General Meeting of the club.

7. The accounts of the club shall be audited every year by auditors to be appointed at a General meeting of the club. A copy of the accounts so audited shall be sent to every member of the club at least seven clear days before the Annual General Meeting of the club.

8. The annual subscription of the club shall be per annum, with an entrance fee of (the total sum from entrance fees should be sufficient to cover the initial cost of equipment, etc.) for the first year. The financial year of the club shall be from to the following year. Members joining after shall pay one half of the annual subscription.

9. The club shall be affiliated to the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association and the members shall adopt any rules or recommendations proposed by the CPSA as rules or byelaws.

10. The Annual General Meeting of the club shall be held in of each year, and fourteen days notice shall be given to all members. Resolutions to be proposed at the meetings shall be given in writing to the Hon. Secretary seven clear days before the date of the meeting.

11. On a petition, signed by at least two-thirds of the members of the club, being presented in writing to the Hon. Secretary, a Special General Meeting shall be called within fourteen days of the date of the presentation of the petition to consider the matter contained therein only.

12. The committee shall have power to form such bye-laws as they consider will be conducive to the good of the club and to the encouragement of the sport.

13. A candidate for election shall be proposed and seconded by members of the club, who shall submit his/her name and address and other required information to the committee. The committee shall vote thereon at the first committee meeting subsequent to the one at which his/her application for membership was submitted, unless the committee unanimously resolve to vote thereon at the committee meeting at which such application was received by them.

14. Any member whose subscription is unpaid on shall not be allowed any of the privileges of membership. The committee may strike out names of members whose subscriptions are more than two months in arrear.

15. Members shall, subject to the concurrence of all members present, have the right of introducing visitors to practice or to shoot in open sweepstakes, provided that any member so introducing a visitor shall be liable for all debts incurred by him to the club, and no visitor shall be invited to practice or shoot more than three times in the same season. No member may introduce more than two visitors at the same time.

16. The committee shall be empowered to request the resignation of any member if it be proved to their satisfaction that his conduct warrants it; and in the event of his failing to resign, the committee may remove such member's name without further notice. The resolution calling upon a member to resign or remove his name from the list shall be carried by votes of the majority of the members present and voting, notwithstanding anything herein contained to the contrary as regards a quorum or otherwise.

17. No betting will be allowed under pain of expulsion from the club.

18. Members must use such clay targets and cartridges as may be decided upon by the club and pay for them before use.

19. A range officer must be appointed at each club meeting.

20. It is a condition of membership that the club will not be held responsible for any accident and/or injury incurred by members or visitors.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The suggested rules should be amended and added to, to suit the needs and requirements of any particular club's activities. The CPSA makes no representation that anything contained within this booklet or any other may necessarily suit the needs of any particular situation. Always seek legal advice when creating or modifying the constitution or rules of any association.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: It may be that there is a prominent member of the community in your district who would be prepared to add his name and standing to the club. If so, he can be asked to become President.

CHAIRPERSON: The Chairperson is responsible for meetings of the members of the club called as required and should officiate at all regular business meetings, and generally supervise the affairs of the club. In his or her absence, these duties will be carried out by the Vice-Chair or other official duly appointed by the club.

HONORARY SECRETARY: The hardest work of the club will undoubtedly fall upon the Hon. Secretary, and the selection of this official calls for the greatest care, for it is on his or her enthusiasm and ability that the success of the club will depend. Sometimes the duties of Treasurer and Secretary are combined, but it is easier to find someone to fill the former post and generally the Secretary will have his or her hands full with their own duties.

The Honorary Secretary is responsible for keeping accurately all scores and records of the club in suitable books, the clerical work incident to the running of the club and the staging of all shoots and tournaments. He or she should ensure an adequate supply of score cards or pads and have enough bulletin sheets available for the scoreboard.

Affiliated clubs can obtain score pads and cards for Sporting, Down The Line, Skeet, and universal 4x25 cards, at a nominal charge on application to the CPSA, Edmonton House, Bisley Camp, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey GU24 ONP. The type of cards required should be clearly stated, i.e. for 5 or 6 man squad or for Sporting. ESP mastercards are also available, and most are available in waterproof format as well as card.

HONORARY TREASURER: The Honorary Treasurer is responsible for collecting all subscriptions, fees and other monies from the members of the club. The treasurer shall keep proper records of all club funds, and pay only such accounts as may be approved by the committee.

Note: It is advisable to have at least two signatories to the club's cheque account.

THE SHOOT ORGANISER: The Shoot Organiser is responsible for the care of ground property, maintenance of the traps and the conduct of practice and tournament shooting.

He or she should ensure a sufficient stock of targets at each trap before shooting begins. Replenishment should only be done during an official break, i.e. between stages.

Before any shooting starts, the Shoot Organiser should check targets to see that they are being thrown in accordance with the regulations.

He or she should see that the scoreboard is placed in such a position that both competitors and spectators can see it.

Referees and trappers should be arranged for before each fixture and given proper instructions as to the work they have to do.

The person selected as Shoot Organiser can also carry out the duties of team captain in the inter-club events.

SAFETY OFFICER: Each affiliated club must register the name of their appointed Safety Officer with the CPSA. The safety officer must be qualified through the CPSA's Club Safety Officer course and be a current member of the association.

Courses for Safety Officers are published in PULL! Magazine and other Shooting Press from time to time.

CLUB COACH: This office should be filled as soon as possible. A list of CPSA qualified coaches is available from CPSA HQ as are details of the qualifying courses.

WHY SHOOTING CLUBS FAIL

Clubs close down for three main reasons: -
NOISE, POOR ORGANISATION, POOR MANAGEMENT.

Avoid: -

1. Too much shooting, i.e. too many shoots and too many targets shot at by those who cannot afford to do so.
2. Too many competitions.
3. Monopolising of the offices, year after year, by the same few members.
4. Lack of interest by club officials
5. Poor handicapping in trophy contests, whereby the same shooters win practically all the prizes.
6. Poor selection of trophies (value for money), and/or prizes/prize money.
7. Lack of real effort to attract new members.
8. Failure to recruit new shooters and encourage them by coaching and the provision of easier targets.
9. Non-adherence to rules as laid down in the official Rule books.
10. Disturbing influence of factions.
11. Bad Targets.
12. Noise problems. Better shooting once a fortnight than not at all.

INSURANCE

Remember, too, to look into the question of insurance. If you have any cups or trophies presented to your club, cover them with an "All Risks" policy. As regards accidents you must take out a suitable policy to protect you against accidents to property and members of the public and shooters, third party civil liability insurance.

Ensure that your insurance schedule adequately covers all aspects of the club's operation. If you intend to provide coaching services, corporate entertainment, or other activities like archery, these should all be mentioned in the schedule of cover.

Special risks like high towers should be mentioned in the proposal to ensure that the operation is comprehensively covered.

Law requires employers liability insurance, if any persons are engaged in productive work by the club. This will be needed if the tasks of trapping, scoring, ground maintenance, and other tasks are delegated by the club (whether paid or not).

The CPSA will be glad to put club secretaries in touch with the Hon. Insurance Adviser who is an expert in advising on and providing cover for this type of insurance. Contact CPSA HQ for details.

SHOTGUN CERTIFICATES

Clubs should be aware without a Section 11(6) Exemption Permit they may be liable to prosecution for breach of the Fire Arms Act 1964 by allowing non-certificate holders to be in possession of a shotgun on their premises. Contact your local Firearms Officer for details.

FIRST AID

Always keep a suitable first-aid kit available on the ground. Any good chemist can supply this to you quite reasonably. Remember that wasps can sting, dirt or grit can enter an eye, a nail can be encountered in most unexpected places and simple remedies will keep your team in the field and your spectators free from anxiety.

HEALTH and SAFETY

The CPSA provides comprehensive information on compliance with the many regulations and legislations a club may have to consider. Assistance with risk assessment, safety policy statements, first aid assessments, COSSH, PAT testing, PUWER regulations and Child Protection Policy are all available to affiliated clubs from HQ.

Disclaimer:

The advice and information provided in this and other documentation distributed by the CPSA, and/or any other report provided, is supplied for assistance only, and is given without the intention of creating any legal liability on the part of the CPSA.

The CPSA does not take any legal responsibility for the advice given; always consult your own independent advisor.