

# **The Sportsman's Association**

*Of Great Britain & Northern Ireland*  
**FIGHTING FOR FAIR AND EFFECTIVE FIREARMS LEGISLATION**



**Quarterly Newsletter 30/6/2024**

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Hi Everyone,

We are only a few days away from having a new government. The make up of which is very hard to predict, and therefore what we, the shooting community, will be facing is completely unknown.

Some of the things which were in the pipeline with the Conservatives were:

1. Statutory Instrument to implement the Firearms Act 2023 - wording of the guidance had almost been agreed.
2. De-licensing of moderators – was expected to happen in July.
3. Intended proposals on prohibition of lead in ammunition, after the assessment of the consultations, were to be announced in the autumn.
4. Hunting trophy ban – we are likely to see more on this, despite the requests of the countries where the hunting is managed.
5. We did have an agreement in principle for the introduction of a 10-year licence now that medical markers are in place – will this be honoured?
6. New licensing fees – many are asking for full cost recovery, but how do you assess that when one licensing office takes up to 2 years and another up to 2 months to process an application.

They Work for You is a website that I use to alert me to some of the firearm's bills going through parliament. Using the link below you can find out more about your MP, what debates they have taken part in, what committees they sit on and how they have voted. It is a fairly simple site to use, in order to get a better picture of what your MP has been doing on your behalf, and whether you will be supporting them again at the general election.

As a result of boundary changes, I am now in a different constituency, so have looked up the last incumbent, a conservative, who is standing for re-election. Having looked at his entire voting history he has never voted in a firearm related debate, clearly has absolutely no interest in our sport or conservation efforts, so not a candidate for me. Of the six candidates standing in my constituency only two have declared any support for shooting.

[TheyWorkForYou: Hansard and Official Reports for the UK Parliament, Scottish Parliament, and Northern Ireland Assembly - done right](#)

You may also find useful help on the BASC website - [Contact your parliamentary candidates - BASC](#)

Here are links to some of the party manifestos:

Conservative: [Conservative Manifesto 2024 \(conservatives.com\)](#)

Labour: [Change Labour Party Manifesto 2024](#)

Liberal Democrat: [For a Fair Deal - Liberal Democrats Manifesto 2024 - Liberal Democrats \(libdems.org.uk\)](#)

Green Party: [Our 2024 General Election Manifesto - Green Party](#) click on their LONG version

Reform Party: [Our contract with you: Reform UK Manifesto 2024 - Deryn Manifesto](#)

Having had a quick read of the manifestos, there is very little included to do with our sporting and conservation interests. Here is the gist:

**Conservative** – still committed to the banning of imported hunting trophies. No change to Hunting Act. A little bit more on the creation, and conservation of existing green spaces/parks, restoration of river water quality, all to be funded by fines for water companies when they pollute the rivers.

**Labour** – committed to banning trail hunting, snare traps and the importing of hunting trophies. They too talk of cleaning up our coastal and inland waterways, and of improving access to nature, protection for our wildlife and improved biodiversity. This will be done in part by the introduction of a land-use framework and making environment management schemes that work for farmers and nature. All this to be funded in part by a one-time windfall tax on oil and gas companies, and borrowing. There are planned initiatives to stop young people being drawn into crime, a sum of £20 million is to be set aside to pay for this, from firearms licensing fees!

**Liberal Democrat** – a promise to double nature by 2050. To be achieved by the planting of 60 million trees and the designation of more national parks, protected sites, important wildlife habitats and again an increase in biodiversity. Also plan to ban the routine burning of heather on peatlands.

**Green Party** – committed to banning the importation of hunting trophies, all blood sports including trail hunting and the commercial shooting of game birds, snare traps. A ban on lead ammunition, and the prohibition of firearms and lethal weapons except on registered premises. Increasing access to green spaces and improving the quality of our coastal and inland waterways.

**Reform Party** – committed to protecting country sports, recognising the increase in investment to help the conservation of our environment which boosts rural jobs, communities and local economies. Plans to increase the farming budget, to keep farmers farming, and farms as farms, and improve food security.

Many constituencies will have candidates from much smaller, not well-known political parties, or independent candidates. It is worth scouring the internet and local papers to see what they have to say too.

In a week's time we will know the result of the general election. All party parliamentary groups with interests in the welfare and conservation of our natural environment, in our sport, and the policing and controls of firearms will be re-established. That is when the shooting associations will start the work of building communication with new members of parliament, and preparing how best to represent our interests for the protection of our sport and industry.

Have your say and cast your vote, and the BSSC and its member associations will do their best to influence whatever policies the next parliament puts forward.

## Change of UN Classification of Pyrodex

Quite a while ago we informed you of the change of UN classification of Hogdon Triple 7 Powder & Pellets.

***“Hodgdon Triple powder and pellets have the explosive UN numbers of 0499 or 0501 – these numbers are not listed as exempt from having an explosive certificate under schedule 2 of the Explosive Regulations 2014. This means that to sell this product you need to have an explosives acquire and keep (A/K) certificate with 0499 & 0501 listed, and to purchase this product, a customer needs a valid explosives acquire and keep (A/K) certificate with UN 0499 and 0501 listed.”***

Exactly the same applies to Pyrodex. Since it's reclassification in order to possess or acquire Pyrodex an individual must hold an explosives licence which lists either UN0499 or UN0501. To do so otherwise would be in breach of the law.

If you currently possess a quantity of Pyrodex and do not hold an explosives licence that includes either of these classifications the MLAGB strongly recommend lodging the supply with someone that does, and, applying for the codes to be added to your explosives licence, or applying for a licence if necessary.

For reference: [The Explosives Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Hodgdon Powder Co. safety sheet: [2023-pyrodex-sds-us-012423-1.pdf](https://www.hodgdon.com/2023-pyrodex-sds-us-012423-1.pdf)

Please also refer to MLAGB: [Pyrodex reclassified as an Explosive – Wedgcock Rifle and Pistol Club](#)

Henry Krank: [Ordering Powder, What Licences You Need and Why | Henry Krank](#)

## Call for Evidence Launched on how to Future-Proof Classic Cars

This is a consultation for the re-enactors with vehicles, not just classic car enthusiasts. Have your say on potential changes to registering historic, classic, rebuilt, and electrically converted vehicles. But hurry, the consultation **ends on July 4<sup>th</sup>**.

The government launched a call for evidence on 18/5/24 to gather views on how classic and historic cars can be preserved for future generations and boost jobs in the £18 billion classic car sector. The call for evidence from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) asks drivers, classic car enthusiasts and the industry to share their proposals to help historic vehicles into the 21st century, while prioritising road safety and retaining accurate vehicle records.

You can respond to this call for evidence using DVLA's [SNAP Survey Ltd tool](#). Alternatively, you can respond by emailing us at [cfe.vehicles@dvla.gov.uk](mailto:cfe.vehicles@dvla.gov.uk) Or you can post your response to: Vehicle Registration Policy, Call for Evidence, C2 East, DVLA, Swansea, SA6 7JL

[Registering historic, classic, rebuilt vehicles and vehicles converted to electric - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

## **Olympic Games Paris 2024**

The Paris Olympics is due to start on 26/7/24 till 11/8/24, followed by the Paralympic Games 28/8/24 till 8/9/24. British Shooting announced our athletes for this amazing event on 28/6/24.

“British Shooting is thrilled to announce the athletes selected to represent Team GB and ParalympicsGB at the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

GBR will be fielding a team of six Olympians, and four Paralympians, including previous medal winners, alongside a selection of those competing at this level for the first time. All those selected have proven their potential through exceptional performances in the build-up to the Games.”

### **The Olympic Team:**

#### **Rifle:**

Rifle Men - 10m Air Rifle, 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team, 50m Rifle 3 Positions: [Michael Bargeron](#)

Rifle Wmn – 10m Air Rifle, 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team, 50m Rifle 3 Positions: [Seonaid McIntosh](#)

#### **Shotgun:**

Skeet Women: [Amber Rutter](#)

Trap Men: [Matt Coward-Holley](#) [Nathan Hales](#)

Trap Women: [Lucy Hall](#)

### **The Paralympic Team:**

#### **Rifle:**

R3/R6: [Matt Skelhon](#)

R4/R5/R9: [Ryan Cockbill](#) [Tim Jeffery](#)

#### **Pistol:**

P3: [Issy Bailey](#)

Some useful links to follow the events: [British Shooting](#)

[Explained: Olympic Shooting | Team GB](#)

[Olympic Schedule | Paris 2024](#)

[Paris 2024 announces Paralympic Games event calendar](#)

We wish them every success.

## A Little History of Olympic Shooting

Shooting was one of the original nine Olympic sports, there were only 39 competitors, all men, representing seven different nations in five events at Athens 1896. Two of whom were British. The events were, Free Pistol, Free Rifle, Military Revolver, Military Rifle, and Rapid Fire Pistol.

Although very different to today's event, Rapid Fire Pistol is the only event to still be shot in the current Olympic programme, except for 1904 and 1928 when there were no shooting events, and 1908. Women were able to enter the event between 1968 and 1980.

I can't definitively confirm this, but the course of fire was 5 series of 6 shots, 30 shots overall, timings unknown, with a .45 muzzle loading revolver at 27yds. Scoring was complicated, the maximum score on a target was 6, the number of hits on a target was multiplied by the number of points scored, giving a maximum score per relay of 216, and 1080 for the match. (i.e. 6 hits times 6 scores of 6, per relay)

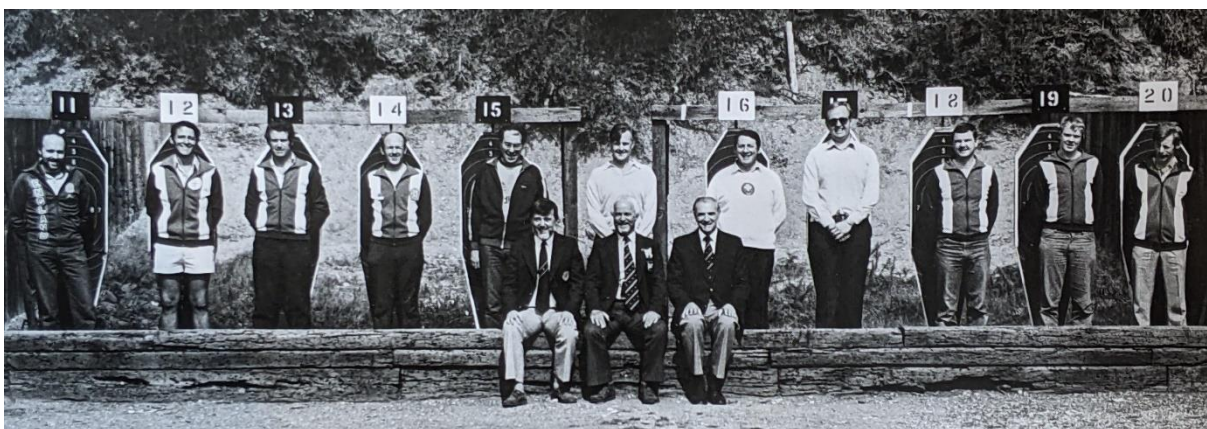
Yet on the IOC website the 1896 Rapid Fire Event was won with a score of 23.

The course of fire was more or less standardized by 1924, in the intervening years the number of shots fired, the distance shot, the timings used, the target used and the scoring used all varied from event to event. But all these events combined have led to what we now refer to as 25m Rapid Fire Men, and the Rapid Fire stage or the 25m Pistol Women events.

25m Rapid Fire Men - .22lr, 60 shots in two stages, each stage 6 series of 5 shots, 1 shot per target, in 8, 6 and then 4 second series on 5 targets.

25m Pistol Women – Rapid Fire Stage – .22lr, 30 shots, 6 series of 5 shots, 1 shot per exposure of 3 seconds, 7 seconds apart.

Now, I am old enough to remember when these were shot on coffin shaped targets, instead of the big black circle we have now, and when we called it duelling, not rapid fire.



Alan Westlake in his National Squad Jacket on the far right.

I am not however old enough to remember when they actually duelled, with wax bullets, in the 1906 and 1908 Olympics. Pistol duelling was shot at the 1906 Intercalated Games, no longer recognised by the IOC, but considered an Olympics back then. Men fired duelling pistols at plaster dummies at a distance of 20m and 30m. The pistols were only primed, no powder was used in order to reduce the velocity of the wax bullet. Two British athletes entered, Sidney and Gerald Merlin.



At the 1908 London Olympics, Duelling was an exhibition non-medal shoot, and 11 competitors from America, France, Russia and Sweden shot at each other at a distance of 60ft, with wax bullets. They wore heavy canvas clothing, metal masks with goggles and the pistols were modified with a hand guard.



**WAX FOR LEAD; BLOODLESS DUELLING AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES.**

*Photo: Topical.*

Despite the precautions, injuries did happen, especially at closer quarters. Walter Winans, a shooting champion and duellist of the day is quoted as saying “spectators might lose their eye by a stray or ricochet bullet,” and thought only experts should compete. Officials and Winan are reported to have been worried that wax and lead bullets might be mixed up, as they were hard to distinguish between. The wax bullets were typically made of paraffin wax and polyethylene, but were still quite hard.

A Frenchman, Paul Devillers, made the first wax bullets and got the firm Piot-LePage to manufacture a gun to fire them. No gunpowder could be used as the bullets would disintegrate, and the bullets and pistols had to be kept on ice so as not to melt the bullets which were inserted into a steel adapter in the chamber.

Devillers formed the Société L’Assaut au Pistolet in France in 1904 of which Walter Winans was a member. It is through their efforts that dueling was included in the 1906 and 1908 games.

Here are some examples of .44cal duelling pistols, their wax bullets and hand guards.



Wax bullets are still used today, mostly in the Cowboy Fast Draw competitions, not sure the IOC will allow this discipline to be part of the Olympic programme.

Regards, Rachel Westlake.