

# **The Sportsman's Association**

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



**Quarterly Newsletter 30/09/2021**

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## Hello Everyone,

My sincere apologies for the lateness of the newsletter and the decline in service. I can only describe the last couple of months as a series of unfortunate events, except for the South Yorkshire Shooting Show, and the last couple of weeks I have had many unscheduled medical appointments.

I assure you I am not about to drop dead, but I am having to take things a tiny bit easier for a while. I will continue to process memberships and insurances as quickly as possible.

There have been some delays in membership cards being sent out, as the card printer needed to go back to the manufacturer for some TLC, and I am out of stock of cards and printer ribbon until more stocks arrive in the UK. I have been promised by November.

## AGM

The AGM is going ahead this Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October at the ATSC Clubhouse. 7pm for 7.30pm in the dining room. There is currently no bar in the clubhouse but I have asked for tea and coffee to be available.

Due to the lateness of this confirmation, and the lack of a trade fair, I do not expect many of you to be able to attend, but if you can that will be marvelous.

For those that can not attend, in brief the Association is financially healthy with accounts up to date. Membership has increased, even over the last two years. Insurance costs have gone up this year and we will need to look at whether membership fees need to reflect this. However, the running costs of the Association have reduced significantly since I took over, so hopefully that will offset the insurance increase for a while.

I have a lovely file of mugshots, and apart from the printer needing some TLC, the new membership cards seem to be working well.

A new website is still a work in progress.

Savvas has continued to represent us at the BSSC, who have continued working throughout the pandemic with zoomed meetings, and he is always available to advise me when I do not have the knowledge to answer a member's inquiry.

We have just donated £5000 to the BSSC fighting fund, specifically for the campaign to save as much lead ammunition as possible for all disciplines of shooting.

Finally, it is our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, so let's raise a glass to those who set up the Association to defend our freedom to pursue our lawful shooting interests.

## **Firearms Burglaries and Appropriate Security**

An Association member who lives in the South Yorkshire licensing area has been in touch recently with concerns over what level of security he should have, and what will be asked of him when his licence is due for renewal.

He became concerned as friends of his have received a letter from the Licensing Department with regard to re-assessing the security they have in place. By good fortune I happened to have a lovely chat with an FEO from S. Yorkshire at the South Yorkshire Shooting Show.

A recent burglary of a local RFD sparked a look at the number of burglaries in the licensing area over the last five years, and whether these burglaries were targeted.

The increase in firearms burglaries was of sufficient concern to warrant a closer look at the security of licence holders in the area. Which led to 300 of the 9000 licence holders being written to with a view to re-assessing their level of security.

As a general guide S. Yorkshire are adopting:

Less than 6 firearms – Level 1 Security

Between 6 and 12 firearms – Level 2 Security

12 or more firearms – Level 3 Security

In this review consideration has been given to alarms and cameras etc., and to having Discreet security which does not advertise that you have anything of interest to a burglar. For example, the door bells with cameras which alert you on your phone when someone is at your front door have proved to be more of an invitation than a deterrent. So perhaps instead, a camera directed at your gun safes, which will alert you on your phone if someone approaches your safes, and then you can call 999 if being burgled.

## **Shootings in Plymouth**

On August 12, Jake Davison shot and killed five people and injured two others before fatally shooting himself in Plymouth, Devon. It was the first fatal mass shooting in the UK since the Cumbria shootings of 2010.

Davison used a licensed shotgun. His gun and certificate had been taken from him by Devon and Cornwall Police in 2020 following alleged involvement in an assault, but returned to him shortly before the shootings, after attending an anger management course.

It is said that Davison had a history of mental health problems, as demonstrated in the misogynistic messages he placed on social media shortly before the shootings.

MPs, Jonathan Djanogly and Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown wrote in the Times that this highlights the need for statutory guidance for GPs to place medical markers on the notes of firearms owners, and should a health condition arise during the lifetime of the certificate, that brings into question the safe ownership of firearms, the police should be notified.

*“It cannot benefit public safety that there are legal obligations on the applicant for a certificate and the police force that process the application but none on the doctor. The placement of a marker on the medical notes of a firearms owner should be obligatory and part of a GP’s duties. Only then can we guarantee the continuous monitoring of the mental and physical health of those who own firearms in the interests of public safety.”*

Wiltshire and Essex have successfully trialed this process, but the BMA discontinued their support.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct, IOPC, are investigating whether police and staff shared information appropriately between departments that handled Davison’s firearms licence and his alleged assault. Disciplinary notices have been issued to two staff involved advising them they are subject to investigation.

The IOPC hope to have concluded their investigations by December.

The following well written article on the Plymouth shootings appeared in The Scotsman:

[Plymouth shooting: Firearms controls are fit for purpose if police enforce them with mass shootings like Dunblane in mind – Tom Wood](#)

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/plymouth-shooting-firearms-controls-are-fit-for-purpose-if-police-enforce-them-with-mass-shootings-like-dunblane-in-mind-tom-wood-3361977>

## **Have Your Say on Potential Changes to Firearms Licensing**

The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners have invited the public to have their say on potential changes to the licensing of firearms and shotguns in England and Wales, following the shootings in Plymouth.

From the APCC website:

*“The Home Office is currently reviewing arrangements for the licensing of guns and will shortly be introducing new statutory guidance to be followed by all police forces. Police and Crime Commissioners are elected to be the public’s voice in policing and so we want to hear what the public thinks about these issues, so we can feed those views to the Home Office.*

*The survey asks for the public’s view on things like the amount of scrutiny of medical records and social media posts that police should undertake when granting or renewing a license; and whether or not an applicant should pay the full costs of having their request processed.*

*“We want to hear all from sides including people who are, or have previously been, a registered firearms licence or shotgun certificate holder. The public may be surprised to hear that there are more than half a million licence holders in England and Wales, who legally own nearly 2million firearms. We know the overwhelming majority do so safely and responsibly.*

*So, while it is absolutely right that we have a discussion on licensing, we should be careful to ensure any changes to guidance or legislation are proportionate, reflect the public’s views, and above all are effective at keeping people safe.”*

The survey, which can be [completed online](#), takes just a few minutes and will remain open for responses until **WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER**.

[https://www.apccs.police.uk/latest-news/have-your-say-on-potential-changes-to-firearms-licensing/?utm\\_source=Facebook&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=Orlo](https://www.apccs.police.uk/latest-news/have-your-say-on-potential-changes-to-firearms-licensing/?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Orlo)

This consultation has been quickly put together and as such has flaws. There is no means of verifying the person answering the consultation, leaving it open to abuse by people who may respond multiple times to skew the results and the questions too are simplistic with no opportunity to give more than a tick box reply.

### **UK REACH – restriction proposals 001 – Questions for the Call for Evidence for the Lead Shot Ammunition** (HSE grammar, not mine!)

The initial call for evidence on **ALL** Lead ammunition opened in July and closes on 22/10/21.

Do not be fooled by the title above. It covers all types of outdoor ranges/land and all uses of lead, for all types of shooting.

The BSSC have asked member organisations for evidence for their submission.

You can take a look at the questions on the following link:

<https://consultations.hse.gov.uk/crd-reach/restriction-proposals-001/>

### **The Firearms (Amendment) Rules 2021**

From 7/5/21 police forces will issue newly laid out firearm and shotgun certificates. The new layout will allow for the recording of the “unique identifying mark” on the firearm or shotgun, or its component parts. There is also greater clarity on the obligation to inform the chief officer of police of the theft, loss or destruction in Great Britain of a firearm or shotgun certificate, or of any firearm or shotgun or ammunition to which the certificate relates.

Licences issued prior to 7/5/21 are still valid, police do not have to re-issue existing licences in the new layout, and existing certificate holders do not have to apply for a new certificate until the renewal date on their current certificate.

Please use the following links to take a peek at the new certificates:

[The Firearms \(Amendment\) Rules 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

and Home Office Circular 002/2021 explaining the changes in more detail are attached:

[Circular 002/2021 The Firearms \(Amendment\) Rules 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

### **Antique Firearms (Amendment) Regulations**

Kit Malthouse, Minister of State for Crime and Policing sent a letter out in August advising of draft regulations to be laid before Parliament on the 14/9/21, to correct errors in the Antiques Firearms Regulations 2021.

Despite the initial regulations, passed in January, being checked by both officials and external experts a category of cartridges was inadvertently missed off the list. Specifically, vintage rifles, punt guns and shotguns with bores greater than 10.

It is thought that there are 200 – 300 of these firearms in circulation, mostly owned by collectors. Or, possibly displayed on a pub wall!

*“Unless we correct this error, owners of the omitted firearms would have to licence them before the transition period for the 2021 Regulations ends on 22 September 2021, incurring unnecessary inconvenience and expense. I shall therefore be laying the draft Antique Firearms (Amendment) Regulations on 14 September to add this category of cartridges to the list in the Schedule to the 2021 Regulations, as was always intended.*

*The draft Regulations are subject to the affirmative process and will therefore have to be debated by both Houses. This means that, subject to their approval by Parliament, they cannot be brought into effect before the transition period ends on 22 September. To bridge this gap and ensure that owners can retain lawful possession of their firearms, I have made Regulations to extend the transition period until 22 January 2022 in respect of the specific firearms affected (the Policing and Crime Act 2017 (Commencement No.11 and Transitional Provisions) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 refer).”*

Owners of these firearms will not require a firearms certificate to possess them once the amendment has been passed into law. However, they do need to apply for a firearm certificate before 22/1/22 to avoid committing a technical, historic offence of unlawful possession. The Home Office is advising police forces to hold onto these firearms applications until the Amendment Regulations come into effect, and then to cancel all such firearms applications. Therefore no fees to you, and minimal work for the police.

Any other corrections needed in the descriptions of cartridges, or typing errors will be put right at the same time.



## **Gun Trader Data Breach Made Public**

Hackers have released, online, the personal contact details of over 100,000 customers who have used Gun Trader, an online gun sales platform. Personal data of hunts and hunt supporters have also been released by the hackers.

Any former Gun Trader users should:

1. Ensure that all members of their household are aware of the issue.
2. Remain vigilant in their firearm security, making sure any applicable alarms are activated.
3. Be alert to people calling at your address and loitering nearby.
4. Be alert to any unexpected phone calls. Do not confirm or divulge any information, or be drawn into conversation. Record the time of the call and phone number if available.
5. If you receive any threats or suspicious contact that you suspect is linked to this, please contact your local police force immediately, explaining the situation and quoting the Wiltshire Police Intelligence Report Reference Number: 54210083596

Gun Trader, Countryside Alliance and Wiltshire Police are working together to resolve security issues and ultimately stop those responsible for the breach.

## **An Unexpected Tip for Cleaning your Decanters**

I found a beautiful bell bottom crystal decanter in a local charity shop and thought perfect, son is turning 18, this will be something he can use for the rest of his life. He already has plenty of guns. It needed a little cleaning, so time to check in with Mum and her book of Tips & Wrinkles. The hint surprised me, and made me smile lots, given the poor press given to lead shot these days.

- To clean decanters, or other small-mouthed glass containers, use half warm water, half vinegar and half a cup of sand. Shake hard and leave to stand. (Lead shot, when obtainable, can be used instead of sand with excellent results.)

Regards to you all,

May the end of the year be better than the start, and lets look forward to a year ahead with no interruptions to our favourite activities, although there is a lot of work to be done to protect lead ammunition.

Rachel Westlake.