

Chairman's Report March 2022

First of all congratulations to all Archers and Clubs with Shropshire. We have made it through a difficult year relatively unscathed.

Unfortunately, Cleobury has had to close, due to the pandemic and issues with their ground which were out of their control.

Positives:-

The Heritage shoots were able to progress, albeit with restricted numbers and hopefully this year we will see a return to the traditional Heritage shoots, with more archers shooting and of course the tea afterwards!! Please do encourage your archers to get out and about especially those who are newcomers to the sport to go and enjoy a relaxed afternoons competition shooting.

The Country Championships (Junior and Senior) were held as usual at Long Mynd and congratulations to all those who came away with medals and personal bests.

The Wenlock Olympian was held in July and for me personally the highlight of my archery year getting to meet the President of the Wenlock Olympian Society – Jonathan Edwards (Triple Jump World Record Holder) – who spent time chatting with archers both young and old – which was great to see.

Shropshire retaining the Junior Inter-counties trophy and winning the Senior Inter-counties trophy – again very many congratulations to those who shot for the County. We are of course looking to retain both trophies this coming year as well as sending a team to National Counties Event in late September.

With regards to individual successes, Shropshire Archers have had an excellent year – from Olympians and members of the GB Squad at the World Championships to National Tour and Indoor National success at Senior and Junior levels – very many congratulations to all.

The Future:

A number of Beginners Courses were run last year with good conversion rates bringing new people into the sport. This year I believe already we are continuing to see that in enquiries resulting in Courses being filled up quickly and more courses / taster sessions being put into diaries.

We do need to recognise that in order to progress the sport, we cannot rely on just word of mouth and coverage in the national press / media (which is minimal).

Therefore, clubs need to be more focussed on the community in which they sit. We need to be looking to be more diverse in being able to offer archery to wider groups of people who might have been under-represented in archery in the past, and may need a more bespoke approach to get them involved. Looking at innovative ways to support these people in a

potential archery career. Not every club will need to work with the same groups of people, but different clubs will be able to reach out to different groups of the community, depending on where they are based, and their local links.

The financial benefits of creating a welcoming, and inclusive club culture and membership are that the projects and clubs would hopefully be able to attract greater funding support - there are certainly many funding opportunities available at present, and funders want to give money away to inclusive projects - rather than maintaining existing activities/equipment/facilities.

However, the real benefit is a thriving, welcoming, fair, empowering, long-lasting, and sustainable club which will keep on growing and evolving in the future.

I believe the future is bright for our sport and we just have to go out there and promote it!!

Talking of promoting Archery given this is the 10th year of Start Archery, good to know that Clubs are already starting to get involved in events. Please keep an eye on the County and ArcheryGB Websites for more information.

Finally, I would like to thank the Committee for keeping me on the straight and narrow in my first year. I would also like to thank my wife Lyn for her support not only personally but for taking on the Records Officer role from Brian Eades (who I hope is much better), sorting out the new County Team and Archers of Shropshire shirts, as well as carrying on the success with the Junior County Team.

David Anderson