

NFAS Club Handbook

Reviewers

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Preface

This guide has been designed to help guide members through the process of setting up a club, provide examples of documentation and risk assessments and to give guidance on how to lay a course and conduct activities. Please note that when in doubt, the latest edition of the NFAS Shooting Handbook (rulebook) takes precedence.

Setting up a club

When setting up a club, there are certain things that **MUST** happen:

- 🌐 Read the NFAS Constitution and rules in the NFAS Shooting Handbook (rulebook). Compliance with the appropriate rules for safe shooting is mandatory. These are subject to change and may be revised at an AGM or by standing order if a specific safety issue needs to be controlled.
- 🌐 The name of the club must be with the agreement of the NFAS general committee via the Membership Secretary. This should not be the same or similar to any already in use, nor should it cause offence. The Membership Secretary's decision is final.
- 🌐 The NFAS constitution must be adopted for the club and there is a sample constitution included in the club pack. A copy of the constitution should be sent to the Membership Secretary for logging. Provision will need to be made to notify the Membership Secretary of any updates or changes as and when they occur. The Membership Secretary's decision is final.
- 🌐 Supply the names and contact details of three of the club members signing the constitution. Provision will need to be made to notify the Membership Secretary of any updates and changes. These are needed in order for the NFAS to communicate with the club.

Once prepared, send to the Membership Secretary and include:

1. Club name
2. A copy of the constitution
3. Contact details for 3 members of the club

Clubs that fall outside of the registration requirements (less than 3 members or no valid constitution) will be removed from the club register.

Officers' responsibilities

There are responsibilities as a club official, such as:

- 🌐 Ensuring the club abides by all the rules of the NFAS
- 🌐 Any open shoots are run in accordance with the NFAS rules with up-to-date risk assessments
- 🌐 The club has a duty of care to archers and the public when attending shoot grounds
- 🌐 The NFAS Child Protection and Safeguarding Adults policy is adhered to

Failure to ensure the club carries out its business within the rules may cause individuals to be personally liable for any claim made following an incident.

Insurance

Insurance cover is provided as part of the NFAS membership fee. The insurance covers individuals: there is no club insurance provided by NFAS. If an individual's membership lapses, so does the insurance. For more details see the insurance portal in the Member's section of the NFAS website.

Safety policy

The NFAS has adopted the Policy Statement below:

“The National Field Archery Society (NFAS) exists to foster and promote Field Archery in all its forms. The General Committee of the NFAS will carry out the affairs of the Society with due respect for the environment and the health, safety and welfare of its Members and others who may be affected. The NFAS is committed to the promotion of best practice amongst its membership and as such will take steps to communicate this and ensure that all Members may draw from the experience of others. The NFAS will devise and maintain systems and procedures to achieve its aims and comply with the law. Where appropriate the NFAS will consult and involve the Membership. All members have a responsibility for safety and the Society depends on the compliance of individuals to ensure these safety standards are met.”

It is important that all clubs observe these aims, from making sure that everyone returns home safely after a good day shooting, to minimising the impact on the environment.

The rulebook contains rules for safe shooting and shooting styles and also suggested etiquette, fair play and examples of rounds that are sometimes used. All rules for safe shooting and shooting styles are mandatory.

Children and vulnerable adults

The NFAS has a duty of care to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults involved in NFAS activities from harm. All children have a right to protection and the needs of less-abled children and adults who may be particularly vulnerable, must be considered. The NFAS will ensure the safety and protection of all children and vulnerable persons involved in NFAS activities through adherence to the child protection and vulnerable adult guidelines adopted by the NFAS.

Targets

There are many kinds of targets in use within the NFAS. Some are purchased from suppliers; clubs and individuals may make others.

All targets must meet one criterion which is targets must be capable of stopping any arrow that will be shot at it, during its intended use. Targets should be tested using appropriate combinations of equipment. If they fail to stop an arrow passing through, they should not be used. It is important to note that whilst a dry target or a new target may stop an arrow, when wet or had frequent use stopping performance deteriorates.

Examples of some of the more common targets are:



1. Square or rectangular boss with a picture face attached.
2. Cut out – a boss cut to the shape of the picture on the front.
3. 2D – similar to a cut out but covered in a material such as Hessian with a painted face.
4. 3D – a realistic model made from rubber, or another suitable material.



Some examples of construction methods are set out below:

Cardboard – usually layered together and either glued to form a laminate or tied together with string or tape. Advantages include the cost; disadvantages include reduced stopping power in the wet and the added weight when moving when wet.



Straw – can be coiled or baled. Advantages include the low price. Disadvantages include fast wearing of kill areas and arrows can be hard to withdraw.

Plastic/Rubber – sheets layered together, as with cardboard. Advantages include stopping power and resistance to the weather. Disadvantages include possible melting of rubber onto arrows.

Course Laying

Each ground is unique and offers a challenge to course layers and archers alike. It is the responsibility of course layers to lay a course that is both safe and challenging to those shooting it. Please see the Course Laying Guide in the downloads section of the website.

Risk assessments

A risk assessment is a method of identifying hazards (things that can cause harm), looking at what risk these hazards pose (the harm that can be caused) by assessing the likelihood and the severity and then determining safe methods that can be put into place to reduce the risk of that harm occurring.

Everyone carries out risk assessments in everyday life such as when crossing a road or lifting something up. A risk assessment for a club just needs a little more attention and needs to be recorded.

There are three main benefits to carrying out a risk assessment:

1. **Moral:** The club has a duty of care to avoid injuring people
2. **Financial:** 'Hidden' costs such as the solicitor fees for both sides and the insurance company may recoup the cost in higher premiums
3. **Legal:** The laws of the land and Health & Safety regulations are comprehensive and if 'reasonable' care has not been taken, individuals could end up in court

Please see the Club Pack and risk assessment examples in the download section of the NFAS website. The Safety Officer or General Secretary will be able to help and the website www.hse.gov.uk is a good source of information. All risk assessments must be reviewed regularly, particularly after any changes. The following risk assessments are available to help:

- 🌐 D008 Risk assessment guide
- 🌐 RA001 Risk assessment – blank form
- 🌐 RA003 Risk assessment – shooting in woodlands using NFAS approved equipment
- 🌐 RA002 Risk assessment – before and after shoot starts
- 🌐 RA004 Risk Assessment - Using machinery and maintaining field courses

Emergency preparedness and response

When setting a course, it is essential to consider what to do in the event of an emergency. The emergency could be someone being injured, a fire in the wood, public walking in the woods etc. Producing a written plan means that options are considered. This plan is great for guidance on the day as well as a good training tool for others. It will also help gain permission from the landowner for a shoot.

Things to consider in the plan

- How to stop the shoot and locate the incident
- An accurate map of the shoot area
- First aid – who, what and location
- Having the location of the shoot available for the emergency services
- Signal availability to contact the emergency services
- Location and roles of marshals to guide the emergency services to the incident
- How to control the public
- How to manage participants during a delay or cancellation of the event

These are a few examples and not an exhaustive list.

Best Practices

- Register the club and shoot ground with the emergency services, provide a map, a grid reference or GPS location, or What3Words reference and a brief explanation of the area layout and terrain
- Test the 'STOP' method with club members to ensure it can be heard in all areas of the shoot course
- Display a map with a grid reference or GPS location, address and emergency phone numbers at the admin station

Near Hits/Miss

A near hit is something with the 'potential to cause harm'. Clubs should be receptive to the reporting of a near hit and not take offence by a reported concern for safety, instead use it as an opportunity to investigate the concern and resolve any problems. It will only improve the course. It is important though, that those reporting the near hit should do so in a polite and constructive manner. The near hit should be reported as soon as possible to a club official and the process for this should be covered in the initial address.

Incidents

Any incident should be reported without delay to a club official. This allows the club to make the area safe and contain the incident, deal with any injured party, and investigate what happened to avoid it happening again. The process for this should be covered in the initial address.

In the event there is an incident it is important to be prepared (see plan above). Advisable action should be:

1. **Stop the shoot** until it has been determined what happened and that it is safe to continue
2. **Deal with the injured party** if applicable
3. **Request potential witnesses to wait** as they are a vital ingredient to the investigation and what happened

4. **Prevent other archers entering the area** which would cause congestion and possible embarrassment if there is an injured party. It may also cause further injuries if the area has not been made safe (landslide, trees falling etc)
5. **If possible, take photographs** or at least sketch the area
6. **Talk to witnesses** individually as talking to a group may cause influence. Note as much detail as possible: name, address, NFAS number, phone number, who and what was seen. Make sure subjective information is noted separately. Ask for a signature to what has been written down but be prepared for refusal
7. **Write a report on the incident** post incident. Note what the club did and what has happened since. Use the NFAS incident reporting and investigation form, located on the website, where possible
8. **Notify the NFAS** – the Safety Advisor and General Secretary as soon as possible

It is best to stay on the side of caution and notify the NFAS even if a minor incident.

First Aid

The club has a duty of care to look after those who may be harmed from club activity. Having a first aid kit on site is part of this duty of care. It should be an adequate kit and if at all possible, an appropriate number of first aiders could be in place to use it. The NFAS realises that not all clubs have first aiders, but it is advisable.

Personal Responsibility

Field archery, by the nature of the sport and the environment in which it is practiced, does have hazards. When taking part in shooting activities it is important that everyone remembers that everyone has a duty of care to others. It is recommended to:

1. Listen to shoot organisers and take note of any warnings and instructions
2. Carry an appropriate first aid kit and know how to use it
3. Carry water, or another suitable drink, to avoid dehydration

Coach Training

The club should have in place a process for accepting and training new starters this should include:

1. A robust system for training newcomers to archery. The club should have an NFAS approved Coach who has attended and passed a NFAS coaching course and will be responsible for:
 - a) Creating a structured coaching course that will take novice archers to a point where they can be released onto an archery course without putting other archers at risk
 - b) Ensuring that new starters know and understand the rules associated with shooting in the NFAS
 - c) What to do if attending the woods to practice alone
2. A robust assessment process for new members who state that they are experienced archers i.e., archers from other societies AGB, EFAA, IFAA, ITFAS, NFAA, WFAA etc. This should be determined by the Club's approved NFAS Coach, responsible for checking that all newcomers are capable and competent to shoot a bow, ensuring that they fully understand all the rules associated with shooting within the NFAS and they are unlikely to endanger or damage to:
 - Themselves
 - Other archers
 - General public
 - Club property
 - Third party property

3. All NFAS Coaches must be DBS checked and this can be arranged via the NFAS DBS Coordinator.
4. It is recommended that all club coaches create and agree a procedure that prevents any individual coach from being left alone with a child or vulnerable adult at any time. Most clubs have adopted a policy that they will only coach children and vulnerable adults if the child or vulnerable adult is accompanied by an adult who takes full responsibility for them.









The club coach is responsible for ensuring that all training equipment is in good condition and well maintained. The equipment should be inspected on a regular basis to ensure that it is in good condition and not likely to fail, hurting the user or others nearby.

In clubs where there is no NFAS Coach, a club official (who must be registered with NFAS Membership Secretary and be a full current NFAS member) can apply to be a Sign Off Authority (SOA) for the period of one year, or until they gain coach status, to sign off provisional members when they believe they are safe to attend an open shoot. The SOA, or another member of the club, will be expected to complete the coach training programme as soon as possible to replace the SOA.

The SOA is responsible for checking that all provisional members are capable and competent to shoot a bow, ensuring that they fully understand the rules associated with shooting within the NFAS and they are unlikely to endanger or damage:

- Themselves
- Other archers
- General public
- Club property
- Third party property

In addition to the documents listed on page 6, the following documents are also available in the Downloads section of the NFAS website:

-  [Marshalling rule](#)
-  [Incident Notification and Investigation Form](#)
-  [Parental Consent form](#)
-  [NFAS Child Protection policy](#)
-  [D003 Example Club constitution](#)
-  [D009 Woods Practice Area Guide](#)
-  [D002 Course Laying guide](#)
-  [Course/shoot checklist](#)

Suggested training schedule

Session 1		
Objectives: Archers will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the safety requirements • Understand the need for warming up • Understand 'dominant eye' • Use bracer and tab • Stand correctly • Nock, draw and loose an arrow safely • Understand the use of a reference point • Repeat draw position • Safely withdraw arrows from target and ground 		
0000	Introductions Assess students' physical ability and appropriate draw weight Check for dominant eye and issue bracers and tabs	
0015	Basic safety rules including problems with jewelry and glasses/shooting line/ brief outline of NFAS safety rules/meaning of 'FAST' and that some still use this term	
	Warm up	
	Draw position muscle memory (no bow)	
	Explain correct arrow length while students practice drawing	
0030	Demonstrate: Mocking and drawing (3 fingers under) Issue 1 arrow each Nocking, drawing, and loosing into target at 5 yards Correct way to withdraw arrow from bow and from the ground (safety note: beware walking onto arrows) Coming down from full draw (safety note: use of command 'fast' and some still use this term) Repeat: No one shoots until told to. No one crosses shooting line until told to. Answer any questions	
0045	Demonstrate a standard shot with bow vertical (complete cycle) emphasize finger, thumb and elbow position Discuss muscle memory	
	All students to try 3 arrows using vertical bow position from 15 yards Establish bow down after shooting. Command to move forward and withdraw	
	Demonstrate correct method of withdrawing arrows Students withdraw own arrows	
0050	Demonstrate correct stance. Repeat safety rules referring to shooting line	
	Students to stand at the shooting line and align shoulders with target with both arms outstretched (adjust foot position to align bow hand with target)	
	Students to shoot 6 arrows noting stance from 15 yards Instructor to note safe withdrawal of shafts	
0100	Demonstrate draw using simultaneous push pull Students shoot 6 arrows from 15 yards and withdraw Check thumbs, check bow arm for string clearance Review safety rules using question and answer	
0110	Demonstrate a reference point (remind students to practice in front of mirror) Review reference point usage	

	Students shoot 6 arrows from 15 yards focusing on the reference point	
0120	Break	
0130	Review learning so far; dominant eye; arrow/draw length; bracer use; tab use; stance; push pull draw, reference point	
0135	Students shoot 6 arrows and withdraw	
0140	Discuss parts of a recurve bow and arrow (hand-outs)	
0145	Demonstrate 'T' draw. Discuss advantages/disadvantages	
0150	Allow students to shoot up to 12 arrows. Circulate and give individual instruction	
0155	Final recap on learning Demonstrate use of stringer and step through	
0200	Half hour practice for those who wish to stay on	

Session 2		
Objectives		
Archers will be able to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review understanding of the safety rules • Recap the draw types • Understand the complexities of the loose in general • Understand the 'paradox' • Understand arrow grouping • Understand the differences between types of arrows 		
0000	Introduce the session as covering the reference (anchor) point and loose	
0005	Issue equipment. Oversee use of stringers	
0010	Review safety rules	
0015	Recap last week's learning: stance/push pull draw/bent arm/thumbs/3 fingers under/reference point	
0020	Warm up	
0025	Students to shoot 6 arrows at 15 yards	
0030	Introduce target pins as focus targets (watch for arrow grouping) Students shoot 6 arrows 5 times at 15 yards Circulate and advise	
0100	Break	
0115	Discuss distance/cast/trajectory/power and the reference point/the paradox	
0125	Students to shoot 6 arrows. Circulate and lay emphasis on: bow arm; good stance; repeatable reference point	
0130	Students to shoot for 10 mins	
0140	Show various types of arrows. Briefly discuss merits of aluminum, carbon and wood and use in competitions. Describe the archer's paradox	
0045	Students shoot 6 arrows x 2	
0150	Review student's perception of shooting so far and suggest what exercises could be used during the week to improve performance	
	Half hour practice for those who can stay	

Session 3		
Objectives		
Archers will be able to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice the linking of all actions in the shoot routine together • Understand the difference between the dynamic loose and the dead loose • Understand the principals of gap shooting • Use the Mediterranean loose • Apply a dynamic loose • Understand differences between types of bows and arrows 		
0000	Recap last week's learning	
0010	Issue equipment	
0015	Warm up	
0020	Archers shoot 6 arrows focusing on Mediterranean loose and reference point	
0025	Demonstrate the dynamic loose	
0030	Archers shoot 6 arrows at 15 yards using a dead loose	
0035	Archers shoot 6 arrows at 15 yards using a dynamic loose	
0045	Demonstrate the whole procedure again; standing/nocking/T drawing/arm bent/thumbs down/dynamic loose Students to shoot 6 arrows at 15 yards concentrating on smoothness, linking actions together and focusing on loosing the arrow	
0050	Introduce gap shooting (including an explanation of aiming). Ask students to shoot at 30 yards and observe gap between pile and target. Each student to place markers (target pins) on ground or target to use as gap positioner. Remove markers and shoot again as follows:	
0055	Shoot 6 arrows at 15 yards	
0100	Shoot 6 arrows at 30 yards	
0105	Shoot 6 arrows at 15 yards	
0110	Break Input from Committee member about club, membership and expectations	
0125	Shoot for 10 mins from three different distances (moving forward each time (possibly use focus targets see below) Introduce shooting from a height using a platform, if available and safe to do so	
0135	Introduction to the course	
0155	Brief review. Next week shooting the course	
Change the targets used this week to introduce archers to the idea of constantly shooting different targets. Some suggestions could be:		
Paper plates	Balloons	3Ds
'Focus' targets such as target pins or playing cards could be used		
During this session try to introduce the idea of focusing on a small part of the target		
Ask archers to shoot at a standard face, then place a bright marker (target pin?) on the target and ask them to shoot again and note the difference		

Session 4

Objectives

Archers will be able to;

- Experience the course and understand the additional difficulties here
- Understand competition and NFAS rules

0000	Recap last week's learning	
0005	Issue equipment	
0010	Shoot for 5 mins on the range	
0015	Opportunity to shoot from 'wide stance' and from shooting platform	
0020	Question and answer session on safety, safety on the course equipment names and terminology in general Introduction to competition rules and etiquette (use of double scoring)	
0025	Shoot for 5 mins at 40 yards	
0030	Split into groups and shoot some of the course	
0145	Review problems and ask students to assess any difficulties	
0155	Advise students of bow shops Issue certificates Reminder of club rules; course availability; not shooting alone Issue evaluation sheets	