

File: SH9

SHOOTING AND ACCESS

Introduction

William Heal, Regional Director for The British Association for Shooting & Conservation (BASC) responsible for London and the six counties of East Anglia: Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex.

Role to promote shooting and its place in the countryside.

B.A.S.C.

The largest of the country sports organisations.

A membership organisation with 130,000 members nationally.

Membership in Hertfordshire – 2,500.

The voice of shooting and the national representative body for sporting shooting.

A focus for advice and assistance on all shooting matters.

Shooting

Shooting consists of live quarry shooting and target shooting. Both take place throughout the year.

The main live quarry season is in the winter from September – January inclusive, for duck, partridge and pheasant etc. However, be aware that pigeon and rabbit shooting and pest control, for example take place throughout the year, and the stalking of deer takes place mainly from August through to April, although Muntjac deer are controlled all year round.

Most live quarry, that is shot, ends up in the food chain and BASC promotes game as food.

Shooting and conservation go hand in hand. Thus, throughout the year and not just during the shooting season, the shooting community is out and about on the ground, and their conservation work benefits all wildlife.

In the UK:

480,000 people shoot live quarry.

Shooting is worth £1.6 billion to the economy, which benefits the less well off rural areas.

People involved in shoots manage two thirds of rural land areas.

2 million hectares are actively managed for conservation as a result of shooting.

Shooting and Access

As already mentioned, shooting is involved in the management of two thirds of rural land area. Thus, inevitably access, be it public or permissive, private or trespassing could involve contact with shooting. Shooters want to work with the general public, are aware of the law and are safe shots.

Shooting is a very safe sport and there are few accidents.

Be aware of the problem of disturbance to wildlife and the biggest single concern is dogs.

Occasionally there are problems between a shoot and a member of the general public with one side and sometimes both perceiving the other to be at fault, e.g. shooting too close to a footpath/horses or disturbing wildlife.

(It is not against the law to shoot within 50 feet of the centre of a highway unless it endangers, interrupts or injures somebody.)

How can BASC help?

Representing shooters' interests, such as during a consultation eg coastal access.

Producing codes of practice as guidelines to the shooting community and information to the general public.

Giving advice on the law regarding shooting.

Seeking to settle disputes between differing points of view.

In summary

The shooting community, and BASC in particular, is keen to work with the general public, so that the latter have a better idea of what shooting is all about and the part that it plays in the countryside. We welcome interaction with any group which is prepared to listen and we wish everybody to enjoy the benefits of the countryside with consideration for and understanding of others.

Please feel free to seek advice from BASC at any time.