Information

Welcome to the Companions of the Longbow….

We are a group of enthusiasts whose aims are to promote the skills and use of the medieval longbow in a fun and safe environment. Wherever possible we shoot outdoors, using traditional equipment and using traditional medieval shooting techniques.

Why?

Well, for some it's the challenge. A traditional longbow is notoriously hard to shoot, constant practice is needed to maintain speed, accuracy and intensity. They'll work to attain a keen eye and maintain an accurate shooting technique.

For some it's the history. They wish to attain the skills of the yeoman farmers who trained from childhood to *'bend their bowes'* during The Hundred Years War. They'll work towards the draw weight of the mighty 'war bow'; a bow with such power that it's steel tipped goose feathered cloth yard arrows could penetrate the plate armour of a mounted knight.

For some it's the craft. They enjoy producing and maintaining their own equipment. Be it arrow bags, bow bags, their shooting gloves or their bowstrings but perhaps none more so than for those who fletch their own arrows. For in archery there can be few things more satisfying than seeing your own hand made arrow fly true to hit the target.

For some it's the outdoors. They enjoy being able to shoot the long distances an open field can offer. Or the challenge and pleasure of shooting through a sun dappled wood or open glade.

For some, it is companionship. Sharing and learning from family and friends, in a fun and enjoyable way.

For most it's all of these.

Welcome, we're the *Companions of the Longbow*.

How To Apply

Step 1 Read the enclosed literature and make sure you're happy to abide by the club rules.

Step 2 Fill out the *Companions of the Longbow* Application Form.

Step 3 Fill out the *National Field Archery Society* (NFAS) Application Form.

Step 4 Return **both** forms to the person listed on *the Companions of the Longbow* Application Form along with a cheque for the full amount of the fees, made payable to "Companions of the Longbow". **Please note:** Your National Field Archery Society application will be processed by us and will be paid for out of your Companions fee.

Step 5 If you are already an NFAS member before joining *Companions of the Longbow*, simply record your membership number and details on the NFAS application form and mark it with the fact that you are already a member. Sorry, you'll still be required to pay the full *Companions of the Longbow* membership fee, as will any members applying on behalf of child under 16.

Step 6 Await delivery of your NFAS membership card. If you do not receive your card within a month please let the Club Treasurer know so that we can take appropriate action for you.

Step 7 Turn up and shoot! Note that you do not need to wait for delivery of your NFAS card to start attending club shoots.

Constitution

The aims of the club are to promote the skills and use of the medieval longbow in a fun and safe environment, with the eventual aim of buying or renting a suitable piece of land exclusively for the use of the club.

The Club known as the Companions of the Longbow (Swindon) is a non-profit making organisation and has a duly elected committee of 7 members of which 5 shall represent a quorum. One of the Committee members will be the chairman who will manage the processes required to run the committee. The committee members have the power to make decisions in behalf of and for the good of the club. The committee is dedicated to the aims expressed above.

The club also has a non-elected president, who provides advice for the running of the club and matters of medieval longbow history. The president is not a Committee Member and has no voting rights other than to provide a casting vote on hung decisions. The President is always invited to Committee meetings to assist with the promotion of the club.

The club is run for the benefit of its members, the use of the medieval longbow and associated history within the realms of health and safety for its members.

This is not a re-enactment club, although it will be the members who decide whether to participate in re-enactment activities if and when events are organised. As an all inclusive club, the committee is committed to having events / activities where all members will benefit directly or indirectly.

All funds, monies and equipment are the property of the Club, and in the event of the dissolution of they shall be sold off and proceeds donated to the National Trust and English Heritage in an equal split of 50%.

The members of the committee are annually re-elected at the general annual meeting.

The committee can be dissolved by a 2/3 vote of the full membership at an extra-ordinary meeting.

The committee will review the constitution when needed.

Constitution version 4.0

Dated 12th April 2008

Companions of the Longbow
Committee

The Companions of the Longbow Committee consists of the following members:

Bob Bannister – Club President. (president@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Andrew Smith GNAS – Chairman. (chairman@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Kirin Donaldson – Club Secretary. (secretary@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Jenni Gerrard – Treasurer. (treasurer@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Andy Torrens-Burton Safety Officer. (safety@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Jane Bannister – Publicity. (publicity@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Adriano Gentilcore – Social. (social@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Stewart Murray – Armourer. (armourer@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Richard Kearns – Suggestions. (suggestions@companionsofthelongbow.com)

Criteria

1. All members to be accepted by the committee vetting procedure.
2. Probationary period to be:
One month limited to shooting within the club mentored by another full club member. If the mentor is not present the probationer will not shoot. Three months further probation at the discretion of the committee.
3. Under-16s will only be permitted to attend and participate in shoots under the supervision of an appropriate adult, as recognised by the range captain.
3. Annual subscriptions to be paid with this fee non-returnable, with the exception of expulsions from the club when refunds will be at the discretion of the committee.
4. For insurance purposes, annual subscription fees will, in part, go towards additional membership of the National Field Archery Society.

Fees:

1. Annual membership fee £55 for individuals over 16 years of age.
2. Child membership fee £25. Children will be accepted by agreement of the committee. The age of a child is defined in line with the NFAS definition and one child per adult member can join.
3. Affiliate membership fee £35. Affiliate membership has to be requested by a full member of the club and the affiliated member will be restricted to 12 shoots per year.
4. Student membership fee £35. A student is defined as a person over the age of 16 who is in recognised full time education.
5. Non-shooting Associate Membership fee £15.
6. Shooting fees of £4 per shoot at regular club meetings that will go towards the day to day running costs.
7. For insurance purposes, part of the annual subscription fee (other than for non-shooting memberships) will go towards each member becoming additional members of the National Field Archery Society. Individual membership applications will be processed through the club secretary during annual renewals. **Members need not apply separately to the NFAS**.

Equipment (If in any doubt seek advice from our committee):

1. We are a club dedicated to archery from the medieval period. As such where practicable kit that emulates the equipment from this period is to be ideally used. Compound bows are not period and will not be allowed. We do allow composite recurve bows as these are considered suitable for the period i.e. Mongolian bows. However, please be aware that most forms of club shooting and training are geared towards the longbow.
2. Traditional arrows are usually made of ash, birch, willow or elm and are not footed. Port Orford Cedar is the preferred choice for outdoor shooting. For costs reasons some archers use pine dowel. For safety reasons 'jointed' pine dowel arrows are not to be used during club shoots. For club shoots at other ranges arrows made from pine dowel is strictly prohibited as most clubs ban archers if caught using them.
3. We only use field points bullet or mod bods for target shooting as all medieval and machine bodkin arrow heads will destroy bosses and can also cut boss strings.

Application Form/Renewal Form

Thank you for your interest in the *Companions of the Longbow*.

Please complete this application form and send with the completed NFAS form and your cheque to Jenni Gerrard, 17 Meares Drive, Shaw, Swindon, SN5 5RJ.
You should receive a 'welcome' email from the Chairman sometime after your application has been processed.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Postcode: _____

Date of birth (if under 16): _____

Home Telephone:_____

Work Telephone: _____

Mobile Telephone: _____

E-mail address(es): _____

Membership fee paid: _____

Please give details of any previous experience, courses or qualifications you have attained in archery: _____

I hereby agree to abide by the rules of the club which I have read and understood

Sign:_____**Date:** _____

Directions to Where We Shoot

Roves Farm,
Sevenhampton,
Nr Highworth,
Swindon,
Wilts
SN6 7QG

Roves Farm has brown signs from the A361 Highworth to Swindon Road at the Supermarine Roundabout

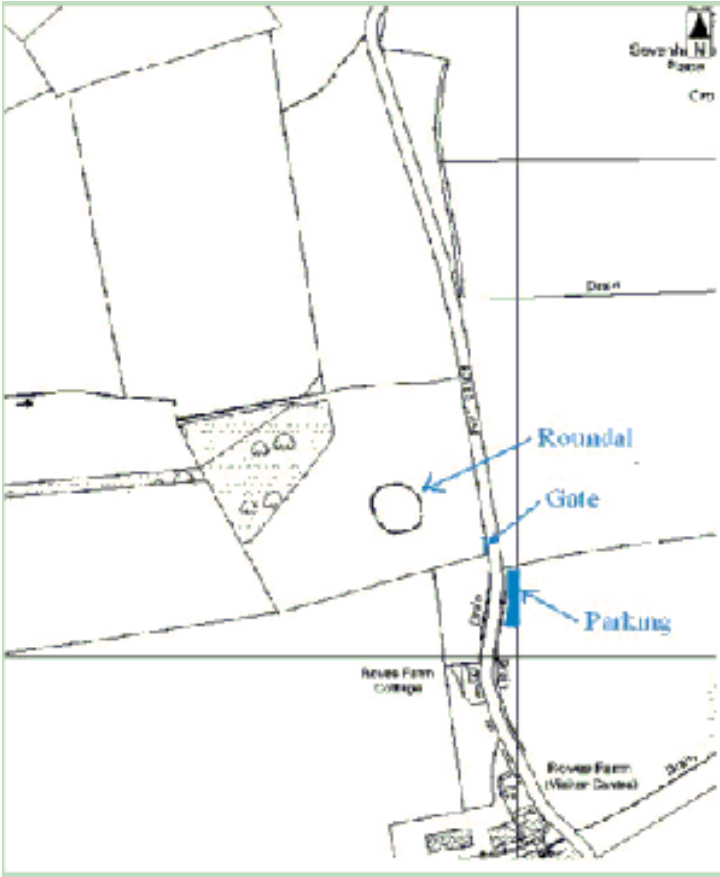
From Oxford: Take the A420 towards Swindon. Just after the roundabout for Shrivenham/Watchfield, take the B4508 to Highworth. At the T- junction with the B4000, turn right to Highworth. At the crossroads at the top of the hill, turn left for Sevenhampton. There is a green and cream sign at the bottom of the hill, on the small green, where you turn left. Roves Farm is at the end of the mile long gravel lane - it is exactly a mile, although sometimes it feels longer!

From Cirencester(M5) and the M4(junction 15): Take the Swindon turning off the A419 at the Honda Car plant and get onto the A361 towards Highworth, now follow the directions from Swindon.

From Swindon: Take the A361 out of Swindon towards Highworth. Go past the Honda Car Plant, over the Crematorium roundabout and then turn right at the Supermarine roundabout, sign-posted Sevenhampton. Turn left at the T-junction. Go half way through the village and as the road bares left to go up the hill, there is a green and cream sign at the bottom of the hill, on the small green, where you turn right. Roves Farm is at the end of the mile long gravel lane - it is exactly a mile, although sometimes it feels longer!

From Highworth and Lechlade: In Highworth at the roundabout by The Fox Inn, take the B4000 towards Shrivenham. Go past the Wrag Barn Golf course and at the crossroads, turn right to Sevenhampton. There is a green and cream sign at the bottom of the hill, on the small green, where you turn left. Roves Farm is at the end of the mile long gravel lane - it is exactly a mile, although sometimes it feels longer!

Car Parking



When entering Roves Farm drive past the paint ball turning, past the lower gate to our field and roundell, and about 10-15yards down on the left hand side is an area of scalping - we can park here.

Please do not block the main access road to the Vistor centre or any farm tracks as he runs tractor rides along these routes.

If in doubt about where to park or if there is no room at the new parking place please continue on up and park in the main Roves Farm visitors car park. It is a bit of a trek back to the roundell but as we are the new people we want to be as little trouble as possible.

For more information visit our website:

www.companionsofthelongbow.com

Club General & Shooting Rules

Our club rules of shooting are generally those of medieval field archery. We have a minimum of rules, as the aim of the club is to enable people to enjoy a day's archery using medieval equipment in good company, pleasant surroundings, and above all, in safety. Despite the amount of safety rules identified, most of them are just common sense ones, and none of them interfere with a day's fun.

1.0 Responsibilities

1.1 The club has determined the need to identify responsibilities of the club and key officers of the club. Ultimately the committee is responsible for all safety matters of the club and the rules that are to be applied to all shoots.

1.2 Captains are qualified and approved by the committee. Qualification is achieved by being trained by a qualified GNAS member who holds an appropriate training certificate.

1.3 The field captain is responsible for the safety of the shoot and will decide if a shoot should be cancelled due to weather or due to any safety risk within the environment. The field captain will have the authority of the club to exclude an individual from a shoot for any reason relating to safety matters. Such exclusion will be reported to the committee.

1.4 The range captain will be responsible for the shooting range. The captain will control all matters relating to the range and the archers on the range. The range captain will issue the appropriate commands to control the archers on the range.

1.5 Members are responsible for their safety and the safety of others at the shoot. All members will be advised of the Fast command and the use of that command to stop a shoot for any safety reason.

1.6 New members will be briefed on all safety matters. They will be advised of the responsibility of the captains and the authority they hold within the club. The shooting rules and safety rules will be given to these new members for their reference and adherence.

1.7 Members and guests must agree to follow all safety rules and to follow the directions of the range captain with regard to safety.

1.8 All safety rules will be followed.

1.9 Safety rules will be applied at all shoots organized by the club. For shoots on a location not directly controlled by the club, the location rules

will apply except where the club rules override the locations rules by virtue of their existence or their greater level of safety consideration.

1.10 Guests are the responsibility of the host member.

2.0 Equipment

2.1 We shoot with traditional long bows in woodlands, fields, and rough ground. This style of archery is extremely challenging and a lot of fun, relying only upon the techniques of longbow shooting developed by archers over the centuries.

2.2 The bows we use are traditional medieval bows that are predominantly English longbows. Other similar bows of the period are also welcomed. Takedown and compound bows are not to be shot within the club.

2.3 Members are responsible for the condition of their own archery equipment. Arrows in particular should be checked regularly for damage. Damaged arrows must be discarded immediately.

2.4 The condition of archery equipment owned by the club is the responsibility of the committee.

2.5 Club blunts must only be shot against appropriate targets.

2.5 No visual aids (such as binoculars, etc.) may be used.

2.6 No extras are allowed on bows (e.g. stabilizers, sights, etc.).

2.7 No marks are allowed on a bow that may be used as a range finder or a sight.

2.8 The use of compound bows and non-wooden arrows is strictly prohibited. It is dangerous to use such equipment on a course specifically designed for medieval equipment (The bosses, for example, are not designed to stop carbon arrows).

2.9 No release aids are allowed, apart from tabs or gloves for finger protection.

2.10 All arrows must be wooden with feather fletching.

2.11 Archers are not allowed to measure distances (either by pacing or using a measuring device) between targets and shooting pegs / line.

2.12 If wearing a back quiver be careful when leaning forward (for example, when drawing arrows from the boss) that your arrow nocks are not at eye level and a danger to archers near you.

3.0 Clothing

3.1 Suitable clothing must be worn during a shoot.

3.2 Suitable shoes must be worn during shoots. Note that we shoot in a field on uneven ground. Open toed shoes / sandals are not permitted.

3.3 Body piercing from the face and upper body must be removed. Large

earrings are particularly at risk.

3.4 Long hair should be tied back to avoid being hit by the bowstring.

3.5 Check to ensure that clothing does not get in the way of the bowstring.

4.0 Shooting

4.1 For safety reasons a shoot cannot take place without at least one Captain present.

4.2 Archers will only be permitted to shoot when it is safe to do so.

4.3 The field captain will have ultimate jurisdiction over the whole shoot.

4.4 The range captain will have jurisdiction over the shooting range.

4.5 Captains will be responsible for setting out shooting ranges.

4.6 When fast is called all archers will stop shooting immediately. Note that anyone can call fast if they see anything they consider unsafe.

4.7 For fast or come down the archers will not loose the arrow but will ease the load on the bow and bring the bow down safely.

4.8 Come down will be said to individuals in order to stop them shooting.

4.9 Arrows must not be knocked if the archer is not on the shooting line or if there is anyone between the shooting line and the target.

4.10 No one is allowed to join in the shoot after the range captain has started a shoot.
Children must be strictly monitored at all times by a parent or guardian. This person should also ensure that they are familiar with the safety rules.

4.11 The point of the arrow should not be drawn past the edge of the bow. ***This is very important!*** If you are unclear on this point ask a captain or another club member if a captain isn't around. If an arrow is drawn inside the bow it could cause serious injury.

4.12 When two or more archers are shooting they should stand side by side, not one ahead of the other.

4.13 When walking towards the target to collect the arrows, be careful of any in the grass, the rear end of which could stick in your leg. A nock can easily injure a foot or an ankle. **This is the most common form of injury.**

4.14 Don't stand behind anyone pulling arrows from the target; they can jerk out very suddenly and strike a person in the face chest. For the same reason, if pulling out arrows yourself, check there's no one directly behind you.

4.15 If searching for arrows around the target area, one person should stay by the target and keeps an eye out for other archers approaching to take a shot in order to prevent them doing so. Also, leave your bow leaning

against the target face so that other archers know that you are there.

4.16 **NEVER** shoot an arrow directly up into the air. It could land anywhere on its return.

4.17 **NEVER** cross in front of an archer taking a shot; he or she will be concentrating on the target and will not necessarily be aware of your presence.

4.18 **NOBODY** should ever be at the target end when shooting is taking place, regardless of how far off to one side they are.

4.19 **NEVER** double back on the course to look for lost arrows, etc. while the shoot is in progress. It is very dangerous to do this.

4.20 **ALWAYS** make sure everyone has finished shooting before walking towards the target. The range captain is responsible for allowing archers to move towards the target.

5.0 Field Shooting in the Roundel

5.1 The field shoot is under the supervision of the range captain.

5.2 The field captain is responsible for the field course to be in a safe condition for shooting.

5.3 All archers must be familiarized with the course before shooting.

5.4 Some of the targets are under range captain control. These will be identified to the archers before the shoot.

5.5 Archers will shoot in groups of no more than four persons.

5.6 When moving between targets, archers must keep to the designated paths.

5.7 The signal for fast will be three blasts of the range captain's whistle. On hearing the signal, all archers will stop shooting immediately.

5.8 Searching for lost arrows should be carried out after the shoot has finished. Archers must not wander into the undergrowth looking for arrows during the shoot.

6.0 General Behaviour

6.1 **NEVER** point a drawn bow at someone, even in fun. Bows are weapons, not toys, and the slightest slip could kill or seriously injure someone.

6.2 **NEVER** draw a bow in front of someone even if there is no arrow in the bow. If the bow broke it could cause serious injury to the person facing you.

6.3 **NEVER** draw and release a bow without an arrow in it, as this can break the bow and injure yourself or someone near you.

6.4 **ALWAYS** keep behind the person shooting if you are not shooting.

6.5 When moving around the range, bows should be carried upright.

6.6 The consumption of alcohol is forbidden during a shoot.

6.7 The field or range captain have the right to prevent an archer from shooting if they suspect that their ability to shoot safely is impaired in any way.

7.0 Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Shooting

7.1 Scheduled shooting times are decided by the committee.

7.2 Members may shoot outside scheduled shooting times so long as they apply for permission to do so, in writing, to a field captain. Copies to the club secretary and treasurer. A written confirmation will be given.

7.3 In order to obtain permission to run a non-scheduled shoot, the following information must be given to the field captain:

a. Date and time of the shoot.
b. Names of all the archers who will be shooting.
c. Name of the range captain.

7.4 Shooting fees must be paid in advance of a non-scheduled shoot.

7.5 A minimum number of two archers are allowed to attend a non-scheduled shoot, one of which must be a range captain.

7.6 All of the club shooting rules apply during a non-scheduled shoot.

7.7 No guests are allowed to attend a non-scheduled shoot.

Please obey the safety instructions of the captains and shooting party leaders.

The full list of approved Captains can be found in the Membership page of the main publicly accessible part of the website.

COTL Rules Version 3 – amended 16th May 2010