



ECAA Development

2nd November 2022

Development should be a strategy, a pathway mapped out to aid the transition from CoVID lockdown to a sustainable series of opportunities to grow grass routes archery within the Essex cohort and naturally creating a series of stepping stones to greater participation.

As the County body for archery there has to be insight gained to understand the membership, what drives them and more importantly ways to harness that engagement for the future?

As an open question and following some simple questions to new members of the Essex archery community what does ECAA mean to you.

If someone is searching for a route into archery is ECAA delivering the correct results in search engines

“is there a discussion to be had”...

in considering these key steps we must be honest and have a clear series of guiding statements s that frame the strategy moving forwards.

CLUB LEVEL

Membership

1. Do we really know and understand the membership?
2. How long have they been shooting?
3. What made them take up archery?
4. What is archery to them – Hobby, Sport, Competition, Something to do etc.
- 5.

We need to understand individual members to begin to create a framework for how to develop those individuals

Motivation

1. What drives you in archery?
2. Do you have any goals in archery?
3. Where do you need help to progress?
4. What stops you participating outside of your club?
5. Is there enough support from within your club?
6. How did you find the transition from the beginners' course to club membership – were there gaps in knowledge, guidance and support?

if we embrace the diverse reasons and motivations of individual archers, we can identify the gaps in what clubs and ECAA offer those individuals

COUNTY LEVEL

Understanding

1. Where are the gaps in supporting new members?
2. Does ECCA recognise the different reasons for people to do archery
3. Are we set up to guide people from one motivational driver to others?

4. Do clubs have the infrastructure, support and manpower to be able to support their membership in the right way?
5. Do clubs really understand how ECAA can help – a clearly defined support charter?
6. Is there a support structure below ECAA that harnesses and draws experience from larger clubs to aid with the development of the smaller clubs – should there be one?

ECAA cannot assume that what has been done before will continue to work; we need to be bold, be proactive and find ways of communicating that fit not only with the existing membership, but with potential members and more importantly the new connected world of information and communication

CoVID and the Impact

1. Membership – have clubs lost members?
2. What is the impact of lower membership figures – do smaller clubs need support
3. Can ECCA work to level out the resource and support across clubs
4. Where are the people that started 'back garden' archery during lockdown, how can we draw those people into club level archery – remember any issues with any archer club based or not will impact archery as a whole
5. What challenges do clubs face – finance, resource; compliance with the new world – how can ECAA support this

Only by understanding the issues faced at a club level can we begin to marry the individuals' feedback with the needs at a county level.

The baseline questionnaire is complete and requires assistance to convert it to a Web Based document to be sent to Committees and Members

Club Size, Resource and Coaching

1. We need to recognise that there is a broad range of clubs within the ECCA remit and some clubs are far stronger than others
2. As a county body we need to assess this and explore ways of sharing resource to aid smaller clubs' development and growth
3. If we aid the development of clubs, we naturally grow the development of the archers within those clubs
4. This goal is fundamental to ECAA demonstrating a core proposition for the growth of both the Clubs and grass roots archery
5. This disparity of resource is also reflected in the coaching ability in some clubs and the need for support and a boost to be given by those clubs that are 'wealthy' in resources

We need to understand

Club size

Coaching availability

Coaching level

Club focus – balance of competitive archer's vs club archers

Club goals –beginners' courses, larger club vs archer development **THESE ARE DIFFERENT**

A Trial

In line with earlier presentations of how to enhance the coaching and development of archers WEST ESSEX BOPWMEN and Deb Horn have been trialling the mentoring system.

Whilst in now way perfect it is proving to be invaluable in taking novice archers through the journey as they become club members

1. Experienced archers are selected by the coaching team and designated a 'mentor'
2. As a mentor they are given archers to work with, this falls across to key threads
3. Being a constant source of guidance and information
4. Working with the archer on targeted things identified by the coach
- 5.

WEST ESSEX BOWMEN have also started to work on a buddy system where new archers are encouraged to shoot with more established archers – this is to understand how rounds are shot and begin to create a more cohesive club structure.

This need to develop and work on a cohesive/inclusive club structure and feel is a direct result of CoVID and the slow pathway out of it – to many clubs and too many archers got very used to shooting in isolation; this is an important thing to address carefully moving forward

Mentoring

It has worked very successfully withing the WEST ESSEX environment

- It requires greater input from coaches – that is the control
- Mentors should be a floating resource where possible
- Mentors should form a link between the coach and the archers when the coaches are spread too thin
- Mentors should be identified at a county level and controlled at a club level
- We cannot have 'rogue' archers wanting to help but not necessarily being the right sort of person or experience
- Mentors should also be part of a program for development
- This role also requires volunteers to be drawn from different cohorts within ECAA. We don't want one sort of archer we want archers that represent the diverse reasons that people do archery
 - Competitive
 - Club
 - Sport
 - Hobby

The next stage of the Mentoring program would be for a selected group of coaches to work together to define the role and identify ways of recruitment

There is a mentoring booklet in development that is in essence a coaching control document, it identifies:

- The coach – might be a shared resource across multiple clubs
- The mentor
- The club – a mentor might be from another club
- The archer
- The goals for the archer – identified by the coach
- Notes for the mentor and archer to complete

This is a live document and becomes the working handbook for the development of the archer. Allowing a broader team to understand where the starting point is, how they are developing and how the growth of the archer is affecting their goals for the sport

If we can begin to understand how we grow an archer without the reliance on a small number of coaches – sharing the load – giving a more immediate response: we can certainly create a more robust platform for the future

Thinking

A lot of discussion has been undertaken about how we engage and what is the barrier; we need to remove pressure and focus on enjoyment. More than that it is about allowing everybody to engage in the sport for its purity whilst they get to grips with the sport

In discussion the overarching comment has been – 'I don't like doing that because I miss all the time and it's too difficult!' this is nothing to do with the skill of the archer it is to do with the expectation of what the expected round is for age – this is particularly important when looking at junior/novice archers

If only there was a way to identify what an archer can comfortably manage to shoot that would build confidence and allow them to grow whilst achieving something?

We make the 252 scheme a County scheme – County collate the scores

1. With a simple spreadsheet we now know
2. What distance every archer is comfortable shooting at
3. How often the archer is shooting – the speed of their progress
4. Its beyond handicapping! – we are creating a fun environment for development shoots

Development shoots – some thoughts

- Multiple Venues throughout the year
- Growing in challenges
- Informal novice shoots – getting started
- Multiple distances – getting experience
- Timing systems – getting ready
- Simulations

Because everyone – adults and Juniors are ranked on distance achieved we have an automatically generated target list that allows anybody to shoot with anyone else if they are in the 252 bracket they have achieved

We have an open friendly format that will grow with the archer

- It's removed from general competition it is focused on development and enjoyment
- It would allow clubs to share resources and encourage clubs to mingle at skill level not purely who is at the competition
- Clubs that don't normally run competitions can offer to host – building experience

This 252 based scheme potentially creates a format not only for archers to develop and shoot alongside people that they would not normally shoot with it creates the first key block in changing the way ECCA builds archery and supports the clubs

We are now longer taking a leap of faith into competition, we are being mentored into shooting at a distance we are comfortable with – regardless of age, gender, or ability. We have the ability to enhance this as we see fit – we could be seeing the beginning of a 252 league opening up simple competitive shooting to a much wider audience.

Actions

Questionnaire – out to clubs and archers

- Help required to action this as a WEB based format

Data mining – this should be tackled with key metrics to be identified

- Shared action to isolate trends themes and actions

Mentoring – agree the premise

- Identify the mentoring team
- Begin to define criteria
- Discuss with likeminded members across county
- Extend trial - where easy to manage before rolling out

252 County Pathway

- Discuss – understand who and how
- Ask records officers if they are happy to supply scores
- Publicise it in the right way!
- Deliver the vision
- Plan year1 year2 and think what year3 could be

There is a great deal more that can be tackled but having worked around the areas discussed and recognised the challenges on proles time and ability to feedback; we need to build bite sized tasks that can be delivered by a group of volunteers not a program of work that would be a full-time job

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