

City of Norwich Archers return to shooting safely

Graham Harris, Chairman of City of Norwich Archers, negotiated with the school where the club usually shoots to allow them to return to the field. He recommends that clubs must be prepared to reassure the school that in returning to the site their actions will not pose unnecessary risks to children, parents or teachers – and that will involve some careful negotiation, including assurances that only a small number of people will be on the premises at the same time, that government guidelines will be adhered to, and that archers will not expect toilets to be available.

Graham said: “We were lucky that our school is part of a not-for-profit academy trust, with 11 schools within it. The trust has its own infrastructure that takes care of school security and any local groups hiring school facilities. Our school just needed the security team to lock up after us when we’d finished. We managed the setting up and packing away of equipment ourselves between a couple of us on the committee, and made sure all the Archery GB Return to Shooting guidelines were addressed.”



“To reassure the trust that we would act responsibly, our club modified a risk assessment used by Norfolk Bowmen and Wymondham Archers [*please see Archery GB’s risk assessment template in the support pack*]. We wanted to show them that we would not harm the reputation of the trust and school in any way, and I sent them photographs to show how we were running things. One thing the school did raise from our first proposal was that we needed a better contact system for members to report illness following a session, so we set up a WhatsApp group, enabling archers to send me a private message if they ever felt unwell. I can then notify everyone in the group. The school wanted to ensure that we had a robust Covid-19 tracing element in place.”

Graham has noticed how appreciative archers are of their time slot on the range. “We’re a small club but since the eased lockdown we now have all 20 members turning up every week. Everybody understands the situation and knows we’re doing our best under the circumstances, and whereas pre-lockdown some members might have occasionally been more blasé about coming to the range, now they’re committed and don’t want to miss out!”