

Club Development Plan 2021



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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Draft	Change	Date
01	Original document created	Oct 2020
02	Minor wording improvements. Section 3.1, Club Facilities, Recommendations, expanded. Section 3.1, Short Term goals for new land added. Section 3.1, Medium Term goals for new land added. Section 3.1, Long Term future development of new land including ambitions for twin indoor shooting ranges and covered outdoor shooting line added. Section 3.5, Coaching and coach development added. Section 4, 5 Year Plan, Outdoor Range added.	Nov 2020 - May 2021
03	Section 2.4 Equality & Diversity added. Section 2.5 Safeguarding added.	Jun 2021
04	Section 2.3, Inclusivity, two new lines added Section 3.1, line 6, the word 'premises' added	Jun 2021

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

Name	Draft	Distributed by	Date
All Committee	2021 v01	Email by AT	Oct 2020
10 Members of Committee	2021 v01	Confluence by GP	Feb 2021
All Committee	2021 v02	Email by AT	May 2021
All Committee	2021 v02	Email by GP	Jun 2021
All Committee	2021 v03	Email by AT	Jun 2021
All Members	2021 v04	Email by GP	Jun 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Rochdale Company of Archers Limited (RCA) club development plan is to answer four key questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- What do we have to do in order to get there?
- How will we know when we have achieved our objectives?

This plan addresses these questions in three ways:

SECTION 2 An **executive summary**.

SECTION 3 An **analysis** of the club's current situation with **recommendations**.

SECTION 4 A **five year plan** detailing the actions the club needs to take to achieve its object, aims and vision.

The most important part of this process is to regularly examine the progress of the club against the timescale of the plan. This process is invaluable for making sure that the club keeps on track and continues to move forward. This is best summarised by the cycle: Plan, Do, Review.



It is intended that the development plan will be monitored by the club's committee and by the membership at All Members' Meetings.

The club would like to express its gratitude to all members who have contributed to this plan.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of having a development plan is to ensure that Rochdale Company of Archers continues to move forward in terms of the development of the club and the sport of archery.

There are a number of audiences for the plan, including but not limited to:

- RCA Members
- Potential RCA Members
- Key Partners
- Potential Funders

2.2 Rochdale Company of Archers - The Club

Rochdale Company of Archers (RCA) was established in 1954 and has provided facilities for people of all abilities to learn and practice archery for over 60 years.

The club's motto 'Straight and True' is an accurate representation of the essence of Rochdale Company of Archers.

Members, past and present, have built a vibrant and well supported club and today RCA is one of the most successful archery clubs in Northwest England.

Membership is open to all archers who successfully complete an AGB Beginner Course and to experienced archers who wish to join from any other AGB club subject to them passing an assessment of competence.

Membership is open to all archers who are registered with Archery GB (AGB), the trading name of the Grand National Archery Society (GNAS) the national governing body for archery in the UK. All members carry personal liability insurance arranged by AGB.

All visiting archers who wish to shoot at RCA are required to be registered members of the AGB.

The club benefits from an excellent dedicated indoor shooting range and shares access to fields where outdoor shooting can take place.

The club caters for all bow styles except crossbow and currently members compete in a range of disciplines:

- 'Olympic' Recurve Target Archery
- Recurve Barebow
- Longbow
- Compound (Unlimited)

Currently, most archers at Rochdale Company of Archers shoot recurve bows and practice target archery.

RCA encourages participation in archery and runs successful beginner courses every year for participants from eight to eighty years of age. In addition to this the club runs taster sessions for individuals who may be interested in taking up the sport and for group organisations such as the Scouts and Guides.

The club organises competitions all year round (indoor in the winter and outdoor in summer months) which are open to all members regardless of bow style. A

managed handicap system enables equal competition between experienced and beginning archers.

RCA runs a successful junior club with over 30 members which meets weekly on Friday evenings for juniors from eight to eighteen years of age plus returning youths in further education up to the age of 25.

The club operates as an integrated club with competitions managed to be age appropriate so that juniors can take part alongside senior members.

RCA is registered with HMRC as a Community Amateur Sports Club, registration number GB-CASC-92d649e0.

RCA became a private company limited by guarantee in 2011, company registration number 07495597, and is regulated by its Articles of Association.

2.3 Inclusivity

Archery is one of the sports recognised by Sport England and is included in the Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth games.

Archery is a sport that is open to all from the age of eight and above and is easily adapted and accessible to disabled people who can compete on an equal basis with non-disabled people.

Age is not a barrier to participation in archery and archers from the age of 8 years and upwards can shoot together with archers in their seventies and eighties. Archery is a family sport, and many parents shoot with their children.

Archery is an inclusive sport able to cater for all age groups, abilities, disabilities, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, faith, and culture.

Most competitions in the sport are open to all qualified archers and it is common for inexperienced archers to shoot at competitively on the same target as elite archers.

2.4 Equality & Diversity

RCA promotes dignity and respect for all and fully embraces the Archery GB Equality & Diversity Policy.

To achieve this, RCA promotes equality and creates an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of everyone are recognised and valued.

The club makes opportunities for training, development, and progression available to all members.

2.5 Safeguarding

Safeguarding is our priority. All RCA archery coaches are qualified to at least Archery GB Session Coach (Level 1) and are DBS checked.

All club officials - the directors, committee, coaches - are guided by the latest Archery GB safeguarding policies and are regularly updated.

2.6 Object

As stated in the Articles of Association, the object of the club is:

'to provide facilities for and promote the amateur sport of archery in Rochdale, Lancashire and community participation in the same.'

2.7 Aims

These aims are designed to support the objective.

- Ensure that the club's policies and procedures are fit for purpose.
- Ensure that members can enjoy archery in safety.
- Generate sufficient income to enable the club to achieve its object.
- Ensure that members enjoy excellent facilities with which to practice the sport of archery.
- Ensure that members and people seeking to enter the sport can access high quality training and development.
- Ensure that there is an active events programme at the club.
- Develop the local profile and reputation of Rochdale Company of Archers.
- Develop close and effective relationships with key partners at local, regional, and national level for the benefit of archery.

2.8 Vision

RCA has a long and proud history. Its members believe that the practice of archery has many social and health benefits and is an integral part of the nation's history and traditions. The members are keen to ensure that the club continues to offer to all parts of our community the opportunity to take part in a great sport and to experience the valuable social benefits that it can offer.

RCA is clear that if we are to protect our valuable heritage and ensure the long-term survival of the club for the benefit of current and future generations of archers we have to embrace and plan for change.

These principles underpin the vision for Rochdale Company of Archers:

'Rochdale Company of Archers will become and be recognised at regional and national level as a Centre of Excellence for the development of archers and promotion of the sport of archery.'

The actions identified in the five-year plan are designed to fulfil the object, aims and vision of the club.

3. ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning technique used to help an organisation or club and assumes that strengths and weaknesses are predominantly internally related while opportunities and threats are associated with external environment.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RCA has an established and respected reputation for excellence. 2. RCA is structured as a private company limited by guarantee. 3. RCA is structured as Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC). 4. RCA is professionally managed by experienced people. 5. RCA members have a broad range of skills that can help reduce costs. 6. RCA benefits from first class indoor shooting facilities. 7. RCA has a strong ratio of AGB qualified coaches to archers. 8. RCA has strong links with county and national coaches and judges. 9. RCA has a thriving, integrated and active junior specialism. 10. RCA has a strong membership with stable income from membership fees. 11. RCA has reserve cash savings. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RCA has a short lease on its facilities and does not have guaranteed access to outdoor shooting. 2. The Club Rules have evolved along with the Members Handbook, but the Members do not have easy access. 3. The RCA membership reduced in 2020 due to COVID-19. 4. Accreditations to Ontarget, Link4Life, and Club Mark have lapsed. 5. RCA will require significant funds for future development and the current role of 'Media & Fund Raising' has become too onerous. 6. The RCA website does not fulfil the expectation of its members in terms of access to up-to-date information. 7. RCA does not fully utilise social media such as Facebook.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plots of land occasionally become available to purchase in the borough. 2. RCA aspires to build a bespoke indoor archery range capable of being Lancashire's Centre of Excellence. 3. RCA will have the support of the LAA President, CCO, Junior Manager, and Junior Coach. 4. With new improved indoor and outdoor facilities this will attract increased membership. 5. New AGB resources will enable the coaches to improve the Beginners Course. 6. RCA has members who wish to become Level 1, 2 & 3 Coaches and the resources to facilitate this. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The club's access to both indoor and outdoor archery facilities will cease during 2025. 2. The RCA membership significantly declined in 2020. 3. Changes to sports funding policies as part of spending cuts could reduce the levels of available funds. 4. The club depends on a few individuals running the club; loss of key people would have a negative impact. 5. Climate change will increase energy costs.

3.1 Club Facilities

The club's archery facilities are leased from our landowner, Rochdale Rugby Union Football Club (RRUFC), a successful amateur rugby club.

For many years RCA has enjoyed the security of occupying a purpose built indoor range. We have 24-hour, 7-day access to excellent indoor shooting facilities for regular shooting at 20 yards and occasional shooting up to 30m.

As well as providing all year round indoor shooting in secure premises, the clubhouse also provides a well-insulated, heated, quality meeting environment with an excellent kitchen, bow store, workshop and boss store.

The RCA indoor range is recognised as being one of the best in the county.

Conversely, access to an outdoor range (field) is extremely limited. The rugby club will not provide RCA with continuous access to any of their five pitches and we are permitted only to shoot on the least favourable field 250m distance from the indoor facilities and with no vehicle access. This field may be used for archery only when the rugby coaches chose not to use it. We are permitted to use the nearest field only by prearrangement by our two committees for specific one-off events.

Our lease expires in 2025 and the rugby club committee have formally notified RCA that they do not intend to extend the lease. RCA must leave.

RRUFC are a successful amateur sports club which needs to increase their indoor training facilities and intend to convert the building we currently occupy into to a gym and better changing facilities for ladies and junior teams. RCA recognise the rugby club's need to expand, and we wish RRUFC every success.

The current RCA facilities are the only archery facilities in the Borough of Rochdale. The nearest alternative facilities are 30 minutes' drive from Rochdale.

Unless RCA can find new grounds, RCA is facing the very real risk that its members will disperse to other clubs in neighbouring boroughs to continue archery, or members could be lost from the sport altogether.

The Committee has been actively engaged in searches for land to purchase, but the necessary criteria are:

- Must be relatively flat.
- Must not be available for purchase by property developers.
- Should ideally be located in the Borough of Rochdale.

Recommendation

LAND

RCA must find and secure land for the sole use of RCA for the purposes of archery. This is the club's most pressing need.

Ideally the land should be in the Borough of Rochdale, but this should not preclude the club from securing land if the only available land is outside the borough.

SHORT TERM

Outdoor Shooting

Once land has been secured, RCA can quickly establish an outdoor shooting range for 50 yards / 50m shooting. This should be relatively simple to achieve and should be done quickly.

The target stands, bosses, and faces can be stored in temporary containers, and this would quickly allow RCA members guaranteed 24/7 access to outdoor shooting for the first time in the history of the club.

Indoor Shooting

In the short term, until 2025, RCA can continue to use our excellent indoor facilities at RRUFC.

MEDIUM TERM

RCA can develop the land to ensure that all outdoor shooting up to 100 yards / 90m, is fully compliant with the latest AGB Rules of Shooting which included tighter controls for the overshoot.

During this period, RCA will develop plans for a new clubhouse and new 20m x 10m indoor shooting range to be constructed on the new land equal to, as a minimum, the indoor facilities currently enjoyed at RRUFC.

LONG TERM

Over and above the immediate need to replace the indoor range like-for-like, RCA are in a strong position to vision a much greater goal - we aspire to build indoor facilities far more than our current range.

The Committee has approached the membership to enquire what we aspire of our new archery facilities. The members' suggestions include:

- Parking for 30 cars.
- Covered veranda to allow shooting outdoors in the dry.
- Clubhouse with increased facilities & storage:
 - Kitchen & Restroom.
 - Toilets - disabled, gents & ladies.
 - Clubhouse Store - for tables, chairs, vacs, etc.
 - Members' Workroom - for bow and arrow tuning maintenance.
 - Boss Store - accessible from the field.
 - Equipment Officer's Workshop - Paul's shed.
 - Bow Store for beginner bows & accessories.
 - Coaches Store - secure storage for coaching equipment.
 - Training & Meeting Room.
 - Office - administration.
- A 2nd Indoor Shooting Range for 50m x 25m.

The above long-term goals would bring significant advantages, e.g., a smaller indoor range could be used for coaching and junior shoots whilst a second, larger range could be used at the same time for senior and competition shoots.

The club has the experience and the drive to achieve these ambitious goals.

The long term vision would be for Rochdale Company of Archers to become Lancashire's Centre of Excellence.

3.2 Membership & Beginners Courses

Archery, like all sports in the UK and globally, had a significant setback in 2020 due to COVID-19.

Membership of RCA, like many other amateur sports clubs, reduced significantly in the renewal year 2020-21. Additionally, all Beginners Courses were stopped. This will affect RCA in several ways:

- Reduced income due to fewer renewing members.
- Reduced income due to fewer Beginners Courses.
- Reduced income due to fewer new members after Beginners Courses.
- Fewer experienced members able to give their time as volunteers.

Introducing new controls into the Beginners Course to combat the risks associated with COVID-19 will inevitably significantly change the current course but should be embraced as an opportunity to incorporate the latest tools from AGB.

Recommendation

The Committee should consult with the club coaches to adapt our coaching methods and to develop a new Beginners Course. The new format may include:

- Reduce the number of people in the indoor range.
- Introduce use of video training aids, such as Zoom, for the essential preliminary health & safety training.
- Prepare beginners bows as kits ready for the beginners to use.
- Introduce AGB short Drills & Skills videos.
- Practice more non-contact coaching.
- Supply beginners with exercise bands to encourage the practice of the Skills & Drills at home.

3.3 Fund Raising

The intent to secure land for the sole use of the club and subsequently to build a new bespoke clubhouse and indoor range will require significant funds.

RCA is fortunate in having built a cash reserve to kick start the process, but the saved funds will not be sufficient to fulfil the club's long term visions.

RCA will need to make numerous applications to various grant providers and the sums involved will be significant.

All clubs rely on their volunteer members to take on active roles to run them.

RCA used to have a single role for 'Media & Fund Raising'. Because the club did not previously have a great need for fund raising, this role gradually reduced to simply the 'Media Rep'.

Now, as our lease termination date is approaching, our need for fund raising has substantially increased.

Recently the task of applying for grants has fallen on the Chairman, but this is not sustainable.

The importance of completing this essential task should not be underestimated. When applications are submitted, each should be considered as a 'one-shot' opportunity.

This task will need careful planning, preparation, and execution and will demand a significant time commitment from the individual responsible for the task.

RCA does not have a dedicated person for 'Fund Raising' but the role ideally needs someone who has specialist knowledge of creating and managing grant applications.

Recommendation

The Committee should review its need for a dedicated Fund Raising role and invite members with specialist knowledge in this field to volunteer.

If this role cannot be filled satisfactorily from the club membership, then the Committee should consider outsourcing this as a professional service.

3.4 Member Communications

In recent years, available tools for communication have increased substantially. Clubs now have many new platforms of communication that simply were not present just a few years ago. The public have a higher expectation of instant access to up-to-date information.

The club needs a reliable website for its members to have instant access to:

- Up-to-date calendar of events.
- Essential club documents.

It has been recognised for some time that the current club website does not fulfil the expectation its members.

To meet the members expectations, the club has in previous years recruited member volunteers to carry out the tasks of:

- Design & management of the club website.
- Upload new content to the club website.
- Management of the club Facebook page.

Unfortunately, although the volunteer members' intentions were honourable, the progress was regarded as successful which has highlighted that this cannot be accomplished by a single, individual volunteer. The complexity of the tasks demands different disciplines and skills.

This has resulted in the members becoming increasingly disappointed.

Recommendation

The Committee should separate the above distinct roles to:

- Web Designer - a volunteer who is also a professional web designer to carry out the necessary design changes to the club website.
- Web Manager - a volunteer with responsibility of coordinating the improvements and testing of the club website with the Web Designer.
- Media Rep. - a volunteer to carry out the function of regular updates to the club social media on Facebook.

If the development of the website cannot be accomplished through club volunteers, then RCA should consider if this essential task should be contracted-out as a paid service.

3.5 Coaching

In recent years, the frequency and quality of coaching on junior club nights has progressively grown with regular attendance by the club's coaches and volunteers who are able to offer a wide range of guidance.

The coaching provided to the juniors and youth is recognised within RCA and by other clubs as excellent.

There is a need to improve the coaching to the senior members.

RCA has a strong coaching team comprising of Session Coaches and Development Coaches. The coaches all regularly provide their time freely for Taster Sessions and Beginners Courses.

The coaching development goals are to:

1. Reduce club attrition of new members from 30% to 10% over the next 3 years.
2. Increase the average scores through the Postal League teams by 15%.
3. Increase the number of archers in the club at Bowman and Master Bowman level.
4. Get 4 archers into the county squad.
5. Get 2 archers into the top 25 in AGB Rankings for both male and female.
6. Retain experienced and developing archers by making the club an enjoyable place to shoot and compete.

To achieve these goals, we plan to focus on key themes:

1. Beginners - getting new people into archery.
2. Induction - getting new members into the club and shooting.
3. Boost - assisting newly qualified beginners to improve their archery.
4. Performance - creating performance archers at county and above.
5. Coach Development - more coaches, progressing to higher levels, AND coaching archers at the right level.

To make this work we need a coach to be responsible for each of the themes and to report to the coaching group.

The coaching team development goals are to:

1. Encourage and support Development Coaches to become County Coaches.
2. Encourage and support Session Coaches to become Development Coaches.
3. Encourage and support helpers to become Session Coaches (the minimum must be to replace those coaches who have progressed to the next level).

Recommendation

The club action plan includes, but is not limited to:

1. Plan Induction and Boost courses to follow on from Beginners Course.
2. Encourage post Boost course coaching.
3. Plan for regular coaching sessions for existing archers.
4. Encourage Development Coaches to progress to County Coaches.
5. Encourage Sessions Coaches to progress to Development Coaches.
6. Encourage more senior archers to become Session Coaches.

4. FIVE YEAR PLAN

The Committee has observed, debated and analysed the weaknesses of the club and has produced this Club Development Plan to provide solutions. The targets set out below are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed.

The Committee recommend (in order of completion date) the following recommendations:

Recommendations

2021 The following should be completed by the end of 2021.

1. **Members Handbook** The club should create a Members Handbook which should be made available to all members.
2. **Club Rules** The Club Rules should be reviewed and updated, and should be included in the Members Handbook.
3. **Articles of Association** The club should update the Articles of Association as a priority. After a professional review by solicitors for compliance with the Companies Act 2006, these should be communicated to all members.
4. **Social Media** The club should split the old role of Media Rep. into separate roles for Web design and for Media Rep., and the role of Media Rep. should be filled by a member who has an active social media presence.
5. **Beginners Course** The coaches should redesign the Beginners Course to include the AGB recommended resources.
6. **Recruitment** Post COVID-19, the club should re-start the process of recruitment of new members.
7. **Website** The club should develop a new website to improve members' access to calendar, news, information, documents, and forms.
8. **Fund Raising** The club should create a new role dedicated to the function of Fund Raising.
9. **Accreditations** The club should apply (in some cases re-apply) for accreditations such as Ontarget, Link4Life, etc.

2022 The following should be completed by the end of 2022.

10. **Land** The club should find and secure a plot of land for the sole use of Rochdale Company of Archers.
11. **Outdoor Range.** The club should establish an outdoor shooting range as soon as possible to enable member archers to shoot outdoors 24 hours 7 days.
12. **Level 1 & 2 Coaches** The club should support members who wish to become qualified archery coaches at Session Coach (Level 1) and Development Coach (Level 2).

2023 The following should be completed by the end of 2023.

13. **Level 3 Coaches** The club should support members who wish to become qualified archery coaches at County Coach (Level 3)

2024 The following should be completed by the end of 2024.

14. **Indoor Range & Clubhouse** The club should design and build a new clubhouse and indoor shooting range equal, as a minimum, with the current indoor range.

2025 The following should be completed by the end of 2025.

15. **Indoor Range** The club should continue fund raising and extend the indoor shooting range to 50m.

END