

Community club of the year – Our nomination for 2017 Gloucestershire Media Awards

Why do we deserve to win the award?

Firstly, the question is a little unfair as we are sure that there are hopefully many other clubs in Gloucestershire that also deserve to win this award so our nomination is more about consideration for the award, we have done our best and enjoyed great success and satisfaction!

We have submitted entries for this category over the past few years for this most important of accolades, highlighting that we have a continuing track record of operating at the heart of our community, not just locally but across our county engaging diverse sectors of our society with all levels of abilities.

As a Community Amateur 'not for profit' Sports Club, we again achieved ClubMark re-accreditation in August this year, we also hold all 3 Archery GB Specialisms of Performance, Young People and Community, run entirely by volunteers, we are a registered Environmental Body with a clear Mission of developing the whole person not just the archer and our passion is making a contribution to our community both local and across the county.

Our commitment to the community is not just limited to our passion for sport, we continue to be busy landscaping our own land which we purchased through our own fundraising. Even working with our nearest neighbours who run a recycling plant to reduce noise, dust etc, yes when we say we are a community club we mean it in every sense of the word!

Last year our efforts were recognised by our Governing Body as we were announced as the Archery GB Ontarget Club of the Year. This year we have become our Governing Bodies Performance Club of the year in recognition of the outstanding performances of both individual members and our teams, at local, National and International Levels. This award also recognises the outstanding contribution of our coaches and the club to supporting their development!

So why do we feel that it is so important to make a submission for this Community Club of the Year Award, well it is because Gloucestershire is our local community and there is no better recognition than from those around you!

That is not the only reason, in writing this submission we have been constantly inspired by all our members' dedication to developing their own archery and at the same time taking the opportunity to help others, these achievements should be shared and other clubs and individuals inspired and a bonus hopefully our members being recognised!

How have we performed over the past year?

We achieved ClubMark re-accreditation (3rd time) and the quality of our submission has been recognised by Sport England as they have arranged to send a camera crew to our club in October to produce a promotion video! As the ClubMark is the gold standard it is a good indicator, however earlier this year we were invited to speak on local radio about our safeguarding practices as parents had called in to compliment them. We have a Welfare Officer, 4 Safeguarding Officers, 2 Safety Officers (all with job descriptions), all coaches hold current DBS's, just secured funding to run a further Safeguarding Course and have secured funding to increase our qualified 1st Aiders by a further 12 (already have 15). All our venues and activities have been registered and meet the new Archery GB requirements launched 6 months ago.

We have been awarded the Ontarget Performance Club of the Year in recognition of our outstanding work in developing performance athletes (5 shooting for GB, including 2 in the Paralympic Squads and 2 juniors representing the Senior team, 1 becoming European Champion and 3 selected for the World Junior Championships in Argentina, 2 for the World Senior Championships in Mexico and 1 for the World Para Championships in Beijing). Also 2 members have achieved World Records! Whilst overseas competing for GB. The award also recognises our outstanding work in coach development, where with the support of our Community Sport Partnership we completed delivering 2 further L1 Coaching Courses, mentoring many from other clubs and increasing our coaching staff to over 30, which is more than 30% of the entire county population.

Working with Xperience Archery and Active Gloucestershire we delivered an outstanding School Games Programme at both Primary and Secondary School Games level, recording the highest ever levels of participation (more than 100 Primary Schools alone!). Reference Tom Hall – Active Gloucestershire School Games Manager.

In recognition of our role in the community and our continuing contribution we were awarded a capital grant by Tewkesbury Borough Council to 50% fund a £22K purchase of a compact Tractor and equipment to improve our playing surface and increase the volume of community activities we deliver. We have outperformed all the measures set, with increased levels of open community attendances and the highest level of club memberships (230+) and satellite club memberships (100+).

Our members with disabilities has increased to over 10% and thanks to Sport England funding and some volunteer creativity we have been able to develop a more flexible range to support a wider range of abilities. Our work with disabled archers has again been supported (including financially) by the Worshipful Company of Fletchers and we are a ;lead club for Archery GB in the development of archery as an inclusive sport.

We have added a new indoor venue at Kingshill School Cirencester and now have weekday winter indoor venues in Cheltenham, Gloucester and Cirencester as well as running after-school clubs across the county including Stroud. We also run an all year round weekly programme at GL1 the Gloucester Leisure Centre and support the annual NHS Big Health Day, there are many more examples if required.

Our practice sessions are incredibly well attended, all sessions are supported by coaches and the learning, supportive and creative environment continues to successfully integrate, performance with recreational archers, 7 year olds with 70 year olds, non shooting volunteers with performance coaches. A remarkable achievement recognised by all our visitors. Reference: Niall Judge – ClubMark assessor Active Gloucestershire.

What do we do to promote our sport to the wider community?

Firstly by making it accessible: Very cheap to join and shoot, lowest beginners course costs in the county, loan equipment free, plenty of skilled coaching support. Integrated junior and senior programmes and take members from 7+ years old. Family reductions for membership costs and wide geographic range of indoor venues. Flexible outdoor range to accommodate recreational and performance, young and not so young etc.

Probably the best and most inclusive school games programme in the UK (Reference Active Gloucestershire and Archery GB Arran Coggan) promoting our sport across the county.

Run open community sessions, run sessions in special schools, support fetes, local council events etc.

Support specialist groups eg. Allsorts and train coaches for them. Just starting a project with Age UK.

Our outdoor ground is adjacent to the Gloucestershire-way and we strive to make the ground as attractive as we can, so it promotes the club and its qualities!

Run Corporate events at our ground to promote sport, gain finance but now have some business sponsors.

This year we have run a number of high level tournaments including our first 2 World record Status events, which has gained good publicity.

We have given presentations to our local Parish Council and District Councils and work in local schools, also running school holiday summer camps which are well attended.

We do need to say that we are running at near capacity and encourage other local clubs to take on new members, we have coped with the high demand from the younger population through growing school clubs, however club capacity will become an important issue as the demand continues to grow!

These type of achievements can only be stimulated in the most supportive of environments, so the management of the club is critical to be supportive, relevant, creative, organised and inclusive and importantly sustainable!