



LIFE BEYOND THE MILITARY –
OUTDOORS

LAND BASED SECTOR GUIDE



GAME KEEPING & COUNTRY SPORTS

www.highground-uk.org



THE VARIETY OF JOBS
AVAILABLE REALLY DOES
MAKE THE RACING
INDUSTRY ONE THAT HAS
A JOB FOR EVERYONE.

CONSIDERING A CAREER IN THE SHOOTING WORLD?

Shooting sports are alive and well in the UK and currently employ 75,000 people in a huge range of career streams. From the pure outdoors role of Game Keeper to the technical responsibilities of gunsmiths, there is something for every service leaver.

There are 560,000 firearms certificate holders in the UK and an estimated 4 million airgun owners. They participate in a wide range of sporting, recreational and professional shooting activities.

GAME SHOOTING

The use of shotguns to harvest delicious, healthy food in the great outdoors. Pheasants, partridge, grouse are found wild or bred to support this traditional sport. The shoots are organised either in small syndicates or on bigger estates. The breeding programmes add biodiversity to the land and retain traditional land use. Together with the hospitality involved, shooting provides great support to countryside jobs and local economies. The conservation work is guided by the experts at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust.

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

Clay shooting is the popular and growing sport of shooting flying clay targets with a shotgun. It's a safe, exciting, challenging and fun sport. Hitting the target requires skill, timing and hand-eye coordination, but there's nothing quite like that feeling when you pull the trigger and see the target explode into a million pieces! Clay shooting takes place at any level, from local club shoots all the way through to national and international competitions and the Olympics.

Jobs supported by shooting FTE

Number of supplier jobs supported	16,000
Number of jobs supported in downstream business	740
Number of supply chain jobs supported (includes expenditure multiplier effects)	22,000
Total number of indirect jobs supported	39,000
Beaters and pickers-up	14,000
Shoot managers, gamekeepers, others	21,000
Total number of direct jobs supported	35,000
Total number of paid jobs supported	47,000

TARGET SHOOTING

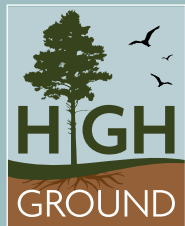
Target shooting contains a wide variety of different disciplines from long range rifle shooting to practical shotgun. Run on safe ranges at distances from 25 yards to over a mile, it is a test of self-discipline, accuracy and equipment. The guns used have ammunition suitable for each competition from .22inch all the way up to high muzzle energy, long range calibres.

POTTERING

Usually working with gundogs, the potterers work alone or in small groups to harvest game, rabbits or pigeons 'for-the-pot'.

AIRGUNNING

From the back garden to intricate competition events, airguns are the entry level for most young people getting into shooting. Under parental guidance or through clubs, airgunners become expert with these small calibre low power systems to achieve amazing accuracy. Airguns are used in competitions and small scale hunting and pest control.



PEST CONTROL

Across the farming community and beyond, both amateur and professional pest control protects human health and food production.

DEER MANAGEMENT

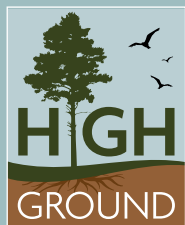
A large effort is conducted across all areas of the UK protecting the rural environment from deer damage. Crops of food and forestry need constant protection from deer damage. As well as professional control, many others get involved helping the countryside and harvesting venison.

HISTORIC ARMS

The UK has a great history in the development of firearms and ammunition for both sporting and military use. Many collectors are still testing their historic arms and themselves in exciting target competitions.

All these users need guns and ammunition for their activities and places to go to shoot safely.





ROLES IN GAMEKEEPING & COUNTRY SPORTS EXPLAINED



GAME MANAGEMENT

Game keepers across the country maintain the environment to maximise its productivity for game and other species. Working alone or in teams, on the moor or in woodland, they nurture and protect game birds by legally controlling predators and developing habitats. Find out more from the National Gamekeepers Organisation.

PEST CONTROL SERVICES

Both in the urban and rural environments, pest controllers deal with unwanted and hazardous species. From wasp infestations to deer management, there is a fascinating role for those interested in working in small teams and individually to deal with pest issues using a wide variety of techniques from controlled chemicals to firearms.

SHOOTING SCHOOL

Shooting schools employ a wide variety of operators from land managers to shooting instructors. Spread across the country, these popular venues are always looking for new talent.

SALES AND MARKETING

The Gun Trade covers a wide variety of manufacturers, wholesalers, media companies and retail shops. All have marketing and sales operations, some in-house, some contracted in. Whether you have digital skills or like to deal with customers face to face, there is a role for you in the Trade.

ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD

Shoots across the country provide customers to local hotels and restaurants. Those venues like to exploit their customers' interests in shooting and game cookery. Management, operations and chef opportunities abound.

MEMBERSHIP AND INSURANCE

With so many shooting disciplines, there is a constant demand for staff in shooting organisations and support industries. Those that understand the way the countryside operates will have a distinct advantage.

GAME FARM

Farming Game is a vital support industry to the shooting world. Spread across the country, game farms employ those with talents for breeding and caring for game.

MEDIA AND MAGAZINES

The shooting media plays an important part of stimulating the desire for shooting sports and providing information to shooters. Magazines still play an important part of that mix but there are many successful video outlets employing those with media and production skills.

FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

Service leavers are at a distinct advantage in the world of firearms and ammunition from their fundamental training in the forces. Gunsmiths, sales reps and instructor positions are likely to draw those with skills and experience knowing how to operate safely with guns.

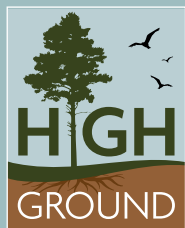
PROOF HOUSES

Testing guns and ammunition for safety. The proof houses in London and Birmingham provide the testing of firearms and ammunition to ensure customer safety. They both operate small teams of skilled staff in the process.

VETS

Vets and their staff play a vital role across the land environment. For shooting, the care of game birds and our dogs deserve particular mention.





DOGS (INCL. TRAIN AND KENNEL)

If you love dogs or have experience as a dog handler, you will find the shooting world suits you. We couldn't operate without trained dogs to support game keepers and shoot supporters. Breeding, training and operating dogs in the field all offer opening for those who love 'man's best friends'.

ART AND CRAFT

If your skills lie in the artistic or creative world there is huge consumer demand for items that remind folk of their shooting interests. From paintings to leatherwork, there are many outlets for products across the country.

TAXIDERMISTRY

After the shoot, many want to remember their days in the field by preserving the quarry through taxidermy. Requiring specialist skills and talent to recreate a life like looking piece, taxidermy remains a hugely popular place in the shooting community.



CASE STUDY

THE APPRENTICE GUNSMITH

Suffolk Long-established gunsmith Trulock & Harris is based in a small town in Suffolk. The highly specialised business deals in gun sales and gun repairs – which provide the majority of the firm's annual turnover in equal proportions.

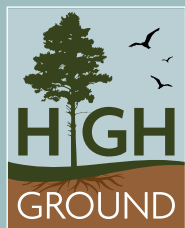
A large range of accessories, clothing and ammunition is also sold. The majority of business is done 'over the counter', says owner Jason Harris. This helps him get to know his customers and provide a personal and professional service and is one reason the business doesn't offer an online or mail-order service. Approximately 90% of the custom is local but a good number of customers travel from London.

The business employs six local people, either on a full- or part-time basis. The company recently decided to place one of the employees, "a young lad", on an apprenticeship scheme. This was not only to improve the skills available within the company but also to give a young person who had come to get some work experience "a chance". There was also a need to replace the skills, in time, of a very experienced employee who had passed retirement age. This was the first time the business had gone down the apprenticeship route with a young person.

The training combines attendance at college with on-the-job training – working with experienced staff in the workshop. The apprenticeship lasts five years, with the two-year part-time college attendance being part of a Government scheme. On completion this leads to a recognised qualification.

The scheme also provides the apprentice with a clear career path, linked to improved remuneration, responsibilities and prospects. This also increases the chances of retaining the apprentice, which will enhance the company's skills base and ensure the quality of its work. For both the business and the 'young lad' the scheme has been a big success and Jason Harris says: "The experience of having an apprentice has benefited us so far and we would certainly do it again."





CASE STUDY

AN EXMOOR SHOOT

This small syndicate shoot is made up of about 20 farmers and friends. It's a "friendly and informal shoot" of some 40-years standing that covers 2,000 acres of mixed habitat – pasture, forestry and arable – where the land is jointly owned by local farmers and the Forestry Commission.

The steep-sided valleys within the shoot provide excellent pheasant shooting for 20 days a year. The members shoot about 30 birds per day on average which are all taken home to be eaten. In the rare event that there's a surplus it's given away to family and friends.

Everyone mucks in and helps with the day-to-day running of the shoot. Each member has their own particular skills

but they all pool resources when required. There is also regular cooperation with neighbouring shoots – with predator control, for instance.

The experience and integration of the syndicate members provide important social benefits to allow skills, ideas and practices to be shared and exchanged. One member said they all "enjoy the way of life" and the joint activities – especially the "after-shoot suppers". The syndicate often enlists the help of volunteers, usually family or friends of members – and there are strong links with local social and community groups. For instance, the shoot donates a day's shooting to the local churches which, when auctioned, can add up to £300 to their funds.



USEFUL READING

WEBSITES

[The British Association for Shooting and Conservation](#)

[Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust](#)

[The National Gamekeepers Association](#)

[Clay Pigeon Shooting Association – CPSA](#)

[NRA » The National Rifle Association of the United Kingdom](#)

[National Small-bore Rifle Association](#)

[Airgun Sports Trust - Airgun, Sports, Safety](#)

[The British Deer Society](#)

[Historical Breechloading Smallarms Association](#)



BOOKS

The Air-gunners Companion
The Lightning Thread
Matching the Hatch
The Keen Shot's Miscellany
Will's Pigeon Shooting



MAGAZINES

The Countryman's Weekly
The Field
Shooting Times
Sporting Gun



TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

BASC
Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust
British Deer Society
Anglers Trust



For more information about HighGround's services please contact Tim Lever.

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