



[What is a Firearm](#)

"Firearm", within the definition of the Firearms Acts, means a lethal barrelled weapon of any description, from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged. It includes any prohibited weapon, whether it is such a lethal weapon as aforesaid or not, and any component part of such a weapon, and any accessory to such weapon designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by the firing of the weapon.

Firearm, within the terms of what you are allowed to hold on a firearm certificate, would obviously not include any prohibited weapons. Neither would it include "shotguns", as they are held on a shotgun certificate. Except, that is, for Section 1 shotguns, which can only be held on a firearm certificate.

[What is a Section 1 shotgun?](#)

A Section 1 shotgun differs from a conventional shotgun, by virtue of the fact it has a magazine capable of holding more than two cartridges. These are known as "pump-action" or "semi-automatic" shotguns, where cartridges from the magazine are loaded by hand "pumping" the action, or by the discharge of the previous round. These weapons are required to be held on a firearm certificate.

[What is a prohibited weapon?](#)

This is too large a subject to describe here. It has its own section, Prohibited Weapons, where greater detail is available.

[So, what can be held on a firearm certificate?](#)

Well, if you take away Section 2 shotguns, which are held on a shotgun certificate, and also eliminate prohibited weapons, you can have any other weapon you want. **Provided you can supply a "good reason."**

Most applicants require small or full bore rifles for target shooting as a member of a Home Office approved club. Others request muzzle-loading hand guns for the same reason. Others still, use rifles for vermin control or deer stalking. Provided good reason is satisfied, all these weapons can be legally held on a firearm certificate.

What is a Shotgun

A shotgun is a smooth bore gun (not being an air-weapon) which . . .

1 has a barrel not less than 60.96 cm (24 inches) in length and does not have any barrel with a bore that exceeds 5.08 cm (2 inches), in diameter **AND**

either has **no** magazine, or a non detachable magazine incapable of holding more than **two** cartridges

AND

is **not** a revolver gun.

Other smooth bore guns **may** require a firearms certificate or even be prohibited weapons.

There are weapons other than conventional shotguns which also require a shotgun certificate, e.g. smooth bore muskets used for re-enactments.

Genuine antique shotguns, with flintlock, matchlock and percussion cap firing mechanisms, which are not kept to be fired, will not normally require to be certificated. If in doubt please contact your Firearms Licensing Team for advice.

Firearm Safety

Land use

Shooters who use their firearms for hunting, deer stalking and vermin control, will find general guidance for safety in these pursuits in our Shotgun Safety and Air Weapon Safety pages.

In addition to that advice, firearm certificate holders in the above pursuits, must ensure that they are using their firearms within the authorisation limits of their firearm certificates.

Importantly, this includes where you are permitted to shoot. It is your responsibility to ensure the land you are shooting on is authorised on your firearm certificate, or deemed suitable by the Chief Officer of Police for that area.

Firearm Enquiry Officers have a duty to survey each portion of land for its suitability in relation to the calibre of weapon to be used upon it.

Remember, unlike a shotgun, you cannot just lend or borrow firearms. Normally you need to hold the authority for a particular weapon, on your firearm certificate, in order to have it in your possession.

Target shooting

Members of Home Office approved target shooting clubs are subject to the discipline codes, rules and regulations as laid down in their constitution.

Every responsible club will have safety as a top priority. Range marshals should always be present to see that all members adhere to the rules and regulations and ensure safety is not jeopardised.

Such rules and regulations are mostly common sense, or have come about because of a previous mishap.

Shotgun Safety

It is of paramount importance that shotguns are always stored and used in a safe manner.

Safety in the home

When not in use, **always** keep your shotgun safe and secure, preferably locked away in your gun cabinet. It is preferable to store your cartridges, locked and secure, in a separate cabinet or compartment.

Never put a loaded shotgun away in your cabinet.

Always prove that a shotgun is unloaded as soon as you handle it.

Always prove that a shotgun is empty before handing it to someone else, by offering it to them with the breech open.

Never load your shotgun indoors.

Never allow unauthorised persons access to your shotgun.

Never allow unsupervised or unsuitable persons, especially children, access to your shotgun.

Never leave a shotgun, even unloaded, unattended.

Never stand a shotgun in such a position that it can fall or be knocked over.

Transportation safety

Always keep your shotgun in its case or cover whilst transporting it.

Never transport a loaded shotgun.

If staying away from home overnight, your shotgun should be stored, preferably with a Registered Firearms Dealer or in a secure cabinet of another suitable certificate holder.

If it is absolutely necessary to leave your shotgun in a vehicle, it must be stored out of sight, preferably in the locked boot. Consider taking a small part of the weapon, such as the fore-end, with you and always ensure that you lock the vehicle securely.

If this is to be a regular habit, consider having a lockable metal storage case welded inside the vehicle's boot.

Remember, leaving your shotgun in the care of a hotel or guest house patron, even in their safe, may expose them to being in unlawful possession of a shotgun, unless they are also certificate



[Grant of a Firearm Certificate](#)

Firearm certificates are the means of control and licensing for those weapons which are neither prohibited, nor Section 2 shotguns.

A firearm certificate differs from a shotgun certificate on a number of points. Firstly, it will only allow you to possess those weapons which have been authorised by the police. Secondly, it will only allow you to use those weapons for a specific purpose, and on occasions, at a specific place.

Before issuing a firearm certificate, the Chief Officer of Police must be satisfied that the applicant can be permitted to have firearms and ammunition in his possession without danger to public safety or to the peace.

Applying for the grant of a firearm certificate

Applications for the grant of a firearm certificate **must** be made to the Chief Officer of Police, **for the area in which you reside**. They **must** be made on prescribed [Form 101](#), as shown above which should be obtainable from your local police station. In any difficulty you should contact your local Firearms Licensing Office - see "Contact your Team".

All of the questions in **Part A** of this form, which deal with personal details, are identical to those that appear on a [shotgun certificate application form](#), and guidance can be found under that category.

Part B refers to details of weapons and ammunition. In the case of a grant, questions 17 and 18 should normally be answered as "none".

Q19: Please be sure to complete all four columns in respect of **each** weapon requested, particularly as to "reason" in column 3, and "where you intend to use it" in column 4. "Reason" is probably the most misunderstood single item relating to firearms. Remember you **must** provide good reason for **each and every weapon** you request. For more information see our separate category on Good Reason.

Q20: Bear in mind the "overall total" of ammunition you are requesting. You must be able to safely store this amount separately from your firearms. Ensure you have requested ammunition for each of the calibre weapons requested, except those that are muzzle-loading. It is normal to request to be allowed to possess a slightly larger amount than you are allowed to purchase. This will then allow you to "top up" your ammunition before completely running out.

Q21: You should request the amount of ammunition, within reason, that you require to purchase or acquire at any one time. It should be noted that expanding ammunition will not normally be allowed for target shooting.

Part C Concerns the storage of your firearms and ammunition. In most circumstances this will be at the applicant's home address, but it is possible to store elsewhere, for instance at your club. Shared security issues may require restricted access, or the fitting of devices to prevent unauthorised use.

Part D refers to any other certificates which you currently hold, or have held in the past. All the questions are straightforward and help on Question 25b can be found in our section on Coterminal Shotgun Certificates



Renewal of a Firearm Certificate

Firearm certificates normally last for five years, and 8 weeks before its expiry date, you should receive a notice of renewal, complete with application form.

This of course depends on certain factors, but mainly that you have not moved house and forgotten to inform us! In such circumstances we cannot possibly get a reminder to you. **The onus of responsibility for renewal of your certificate rests with you.** The fact we did not, or were unable, to get a reminder to you, or that it got lost in the post, is not an acceptable as an excuse for failing to renew on time.

If you have not received your renewal notice within the four weeks prior to the expiry date of your current certificate, you should contact the Firearms Licensing Department.

Should your current certificate expire before you apply for a renewal, you may well be committing the serious offence of being in possession of unlicensed firearms. You may also have to apply for a grant, at extra cost, instead of a renewal. If you find yourself in this position you should contact The Firearms Licensing Department immediately for advice.

If all is well and you receive your renewal application, you will discover that it is the same [Form 101](#) as for a grant application. Advice on completing this form can be found under that section.

Please return your application for renewal as soon as possible, and certainly before the expiry date. Remember to include the correct fee and your four photographs, correctly endorsed by your referees.

It is at this time you can also consider applying for a variation to your firearm certificate. Variations dealt with at the same time as a renewal attract no extra fee.

Depending on circumstances, if you submit your application in good time, you should receive your home visit and security check in time to allow the issue of your new certificate before expiry of the old one. During the visit the Enquiry Officer will ask you questions relating to your use and storage and you will be able to ask them for any information you need.

Please be sure to include full details of all firearms you possess, including serial numbers. The details you supply should match the details held on our computer record, providing you have always informed us of the disposal and acquisition of each firearm.

If these records do not tally, then it is inevitable we will be making further enquiries. It is an important duty of the police to keep track of all licensed weapons, thus helping to ensure they do not fall into the wrong hands. Also ensure you clearly show your "good reason" for possessing **each and every individual firearm.**

Now is a good time to reassess the existing authorities which have **not** been taken up during the lifetime of the old certificate. Do you still need these weapons? Do you need to change any of the authorities? A little thought now could save you the cost of a future variation.

One of our Enquiry Officers will contact you to arrange an appointment to visit you. If he/she finds all is in order then your new certificate will be forwarded to you. Should there be a discrepancy either in your security or some other matter, then you will be notified, and usually given ample opportunity to put it right. When the problem is resolved, your new certificate will be issued. Your renewed certificate will show all the firearms you currently possess in Part 1(i) on the front; and including those you acquired during the lifetime of the old certificate (and still possess), which were entered in Table 1 on the back.

Variation of a Firearm Certificate

After a Firearm Certificate has been granted, variations, as to the firearms and ammunition currently authorised may, on the application of the holder, be made by the Chief Officer of Police of the area in which the holder resides.

The same blue Form 101 (shown above) as for the grant of a firearm certificate should be used. The certificate holder **must** submit his current firearm certificate, along with his completed Form 101, and where appropriate, the fee.

No new photographs are required, nor is it necessary to provide referees.

The appropriate fee is payable only when the variation application, results in an increase in the number of firearms authorised by the certificate. However there is no fee payable when such an application is made at the same time as a renewal.

One for one variations

It must be emphasised that a variation is always necessary if a certificate holder wishes to change one of his firearms, even if he seeks to purchase one identical to the one he is disposing of.

Applications for "one for one" variations, including the same and different calibre weapons, should be made by the certificate holder submitting his firearm certificate together with a completed Form 101, direct to his local Firearms Licensing Department and where practicable within 7 days of the sale or transfer.

Such applications will be processed free of charge, providing that the police are informed of the disposal transaction and the new request at the same time in accordance with the notes shown at Table 1 of the certificate. In the case of a change of authorisation which has not yet been taken up, this is not usually a problem. However, applicants sometimes request a free "one for one" variation for weapons they have disposed of some time ago. Such requests cannot be dealt with on a free "one for one" basis, as the weapon being replaced is no longer on the current certificate, thus resulting in an increase in the number of weapons **presently** held.

Further enquiries are not normally necessary for applications where good reason is unchanged or where agreed storage capacities are not exceeded.

However, if for example the application is for a change of use or for a full-bore firearm when the applicant's shooting club only has facilities for small-bore shooting, then the circumstances will have to be re-examined. Similarly if the agreed storage capacity is exceeded, due to an increase in the number of weapons held, then it will be necessary to re-inspect the security aspect.



Referees (Firearms)

The Firearms Acts require an applicant, for the grant or renewal of a firearm certificate, to supply the names and addresses of **two** people who have agreed to act as referees.

Referees are to firearms, what counter-signatories are to shotguns and most of the same criteria apply. The referee must be someone who is a resident of Great Britain and who has known the applicant **personally** for the last **two** years

The main difference is that you require **two** referees, each of which must complete a "reference form" called a Form 125, as shown below.

The reference form is the same colour blue as a firearm grant form (Form 101). Please ensure that you receive **two** reference forms with your grant application form.

When an applicant for the grant of a firearm certificate completes his application form (101), he should enter the details of his two referees in Part E.

Each of the referees should read the completed application form, then sign and date the declaration. The referees should then be given a copy of the Reference [Form 125](#), to be completed **in confidence**

It is essential that the referee completes **all** sections fully, particularly questions 15-18 in Part C. If any are left blank or not completed satisfactorily, the form will be returned to the referee resulting in a delay. Answering these questions with "no" or "none" or "n/a" is not acceptable and unhelpful in assisting the Enquiry Officer to assess the applicant. It may well result in the Enquiry Officer deciding that the referee does not know the applicant **personally**, as required.

The criteria for acceptability, is much the same as for shotgun counter signatures, except in the case of **renewal** of a firearm certificate for target shooting. In this situation one of the referees **must** be a club official of the approved club named in the conditions of use on the applicants firearms certificate.

In these circumstances it is not a requirement for the club official to have known the applicant personally for at least two years and, Registered Firearms Dealers may only act as referees, if they are acting as club official. The second referee **must not** be a member of **any** target shooting club.

When fully completed the referee must sign and date the declaration, then return the reference form **direct to the Cumbria Constabulary Firearms Licensing Department, Carleton Hall, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2AU** within 28 days. It must not be shown or re

If the referee knows of any matter or occurrence of which they think the Chief Officer of Police should be aware aware, they should include it on the form. They should also mention anything that gives rise to any concern they may have about the applicant's suitability to possess firearms. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence, but the referee may be interviewed by the police to clarify any statement on the form.



The Grant of a Shotgun Certificate

Shotgun certificates are the means of control and licensing for those smooth bore guns which fall into this category. A shotgun certificate differs from a firearms certificate in that it authorises the holder to have shotguns without the need for approval in respect of each individual gun. However, Section 3(2) of the Firearms Amendment Act 1988 amends Section 28 of the 1968 Act to require that the certificate must specify the description of the shotguns to which it relates, including serial numbers, if applicable.

You need a shotgun certificate to purchase or acquire shotguns and to be able to prove a need to acquire cartridges, however a shotgun certificate is not required to have cartridges in your possession.

Applying for the grant of a shotgun certificate

Applications for the grant of a shotgun certificate **must** be made to the Chief Officer of Police, **for the area in which you reside**. They **must** be made on the prescribed [Form 103](#), as shown above which should be obtainable from your local police station. In any difficulty you should contact the Firearms Licensing Department- see "How to contact Us".

Most of the questions on this form are straightforward, but a few have caused confusion with some applicants.

Part A includes questions 1-16 and relate to personal details

Q4: "Other names" - Married women should include their maiden name. If you have changed your name by deed poll, then you must include your previous name here also.

Q6: Always include your full post code and home telephone number. Please note that this must be your permanent place of residence; club, business, hotels or other temporary addresses cannot be accepted.

Q12: Always include a day time telephone number so we can contact you if there is a query. It could prevent a lengthy delay.

Q14: This question often raises problems and causes delay. Please read the notes on the back of the application form relating to this question. Remember you **must** declare **all** convictions, no matter how trivial or how long ago they occurred. This even includes traffic convictions and offences committed outside the UK and it is recommended that you declare 'cautions' and 'fixed penalty notices'.

Q16: Under the Firearms Rules 1998 it is now a requirement for applicants to give permission for the police to approach their G.P. for factual details of an applicant's medical history, should it be deemed necessary. You will be informed if such contact is made.

Part B refers to storage and weapons

Q17: Relates to where you intend to store your shotguns. Although normally at your home address, it is also possible to store your shotguns with another shotgun certificate holder. If this should be the case, remember that your shotguns **must** be included on the other certificate holder's shotgun certificate. Similarly, if you store shotguns for someone else, for longer than 72hrs, then the details of their shotguns, **must** be entered on your certificate at Table 2 as 'lent'. In all cases of shotguns being stored "elsewhere", other than at your home address, the police authority that issued both certificates must be informed.

Remember that when storing shotguns, whether just your own or other certificate holders' as well, you should not exceed the storage capacity agreed with your issuing authority.



Renewal of a Shotgun Certificate

Shotgun certificates normally last for five years, the exception being when the holder chooses to obtain a coterminous shotgun certificate at the time of renewal, to make the expiry date the same as their Firearm Certificate, if they hold one.

8 weeks before the expiry date of your Shotgun Certificate you should receive a notice of renewal, complete with application form.

This of course depends on certain factors, particularly if you have moved house and not informed us! In such circumstances we cannot possibly remind you. **The onus of responsibility for renewal of your certificate, rests with you.** The fact that we did not or were unable to get a reminder to you, or that it got lost in the post, is not an acceptable excuse for failing to renew on time.

If you have not received a renewal notice within the four weeks prior to your current certificate's expiry date, you must contact The Firearms Licensing Department, or obtain a renewal form from your local police station.

Should your current certificate expire before you apply for a renewal, you may well be committing the serious offence of being in possession of unlicensed weapons. You may also have to apply for a grant, at extra cost, instead of a renewal. If you find yourself in this position you should contact The Firearms Licensing Department immediately for advice.

If all is well and you receive your renewal application, you will discover it is the same Form 103 as for a grant application. Help on completing this form can be found under that section.

Please return your application for renewal as soon as possible, and certainly before the expiry date. Remember to include the fee and your four photographs correctly endorsed by your countersignature.

Depending on circumstances, if you submit your application in good time, you should receive your home visit and security check in time to allow the issue of your new certificate before expiry of the old one. During the visit the Enquiry Officer will ask you questions relating to your use and storage and you will be able to ask them for any information you need.

Please be sure to include full details of all the shotguns you possess, including serial numbers. The details that you supply us, should match the details held on our computer records, providing you have always informed us of the disposal and acquisition of each shotgun.

If these records do not tally, then it is inevitable that we will be making further enquiries. It is an important duty of the police to keep track of all licensed weapons thus helping to ensure that they do not fall into the wrong hands.

One of our Enquiry Officers will contact you to arrange an appointment to visit you. If he/she finds that all is in order then your new certificate will be forwarded to you. Should there be a discrepancy either in your security or some other matter, then you will be notified, and usually given ample opportunity to put it right. When the problem is resolved, your new certificate will be issued.

Your renewed certificate will show all the shotguns you currently own in Table 1 on the front; and include those you acquired during the lifetime of the old certificate (and still possess), which were entered in Table 2 on the back. Weapons on loan to you (whether for storage or other purpose) will require to be endorsed again as 'lent' by the owner at Table 2 of the new certificate.



Coterminous Shotgun Certificates

The idea of "coterminous" shotgun certificates is to allow the **holder of a firearm certificate** to have his shotgun certificate expire on the same day.

Where shotgun and firearm certificate grants are applied for at the same time, this will obviously be the case. However, many holders of one style of certificate often make an application for the other style of certificate during the life time of the original.

This means there would be two separate dates for renewal and two lots of fees to pay. By linking the expiry dates of both certificates the former problem is eliminated and the subsequent overall fee is reduced.

Please note the reduced fee only comes into effect **when both certificates are dealt with at the same time**. This arrangement obviously reduces police time and expense resulting in a saving being passed to the applicant.

If the holder of a firearm certificate applies for the grant of a shotgun certificate before his firearm certificate expires, he can request a coterminous shotgun certificate. This would mean his new shotgun certificate would not run its full life span (currently five years), but would expire on the same date as the firearms certificate. The cost of the new shotgun certificate would be the full price, but the subsequent renewal fee would be reduced

If the holder of a firearm certificate applies for the grant of a shotgun certificate at the same time as requesting renewal of his firearms certificate, then the reduced fee for the shotgun certificate comes into effect straight away, as both certificates are being dealt with together.

Please note it is only the expiry date of the shotgun certificate which can be brought forward, firearm certificate expiry dates cannot be altered to coincide with shotgun certificates.

However, if the holder of a shotgun certificate applies for the grant of a firearm certificate, he has three options:

Firstly, he can apply for the grant of the firearm certificate at the same time as renewing his shotgun certificate, thus taking advantage of the reduced fee for the latter.

Secondly, he can apply for the grant of the firearm certificate and wait and renew his shotgun certificate coterminously when it expires, paying the full fee on this occasion but a reduced fee on the next renewal.

Countersignatures (Shotguns)

Every application for the grant or renewal of a shotgun certificate must be endorsed by a counter-signatory.

The counter-signatory must be someone who is resident in Great Britain and who has known the applicant **personally** for at least **two** years.

They should be "of good standing" in the community and preferably hold a substantive position.

Those persons who are prohibited from acting as your counter-signatory are listed below:

Any member of the applicant's family, (this includes "in-laws", "step-relatives" and "common-law" spouses)

Serving police officers

Police civilian employees

Registered firearms dealers

People with serious criminal convictions

People with convictions for firearm offences

Please note that your counter-signatory must endorse your application **AFTER** you have completed and signed it yourself.

The counter-signatory is required to:

Verify that the information given by the applicant in answer to all the questions on the application form is true.

Declare that he/she knows of no reason why the applicant should not be permitted to possess a shotgun.

Certify that the photographs enclosed with the application bear a current true likeness to the applicant.

Endorse one photograph to this effect together with the date the likeness was compared.

The application form provides guidance on the criteria which the counter-signatory should be sure of when considering an applicant's fitness to be entrusted with the possession of shotguns. Please remember that a shotgun is just as lethal as a Section 1 firearm (rifle or handgun), and should not be dismissed as anything less serious.

The person who countersigns an application is required by the Firearms Rules 1998 to declare that he/she knows of no reason why the applicant should not be permitted to possess shotguns. The counter-signatory should therefore be aware that the Firearms Act 1968 requires a Chief Officer of Police to be satisfied that an applicant can be permitted to possess shotguns without danger to public safety or the peace and that the Act prohibits the grant of a certificate to any person whom the Chief Officer has reason to believe is prohibited from possessing a shotgun.

Counter-signatories should bear in mind the character, conduct, history and mental condition of the applicant, in so far as they are relevant to these matters.

If you are applying for both a shotgun and firearm certificate, then one of your referees for your firearm application may act as your shotgun counter-signatory, providing that they fulfil the requirements given above.

Photographs

It is a requirement that all applications for grants and renewals of shotgun and firearm certificates are accompanied by **four** identical photographs of the applicant, per application.

The photograph must have been taken recently and should show you full face and without a hat.

The image should be printed on normal thin photographic paper, be un-mounted and measure 45mm x 35mm.

The normal photographs which are supplied for passports, either from a photographic booth or studio, are quite acceptable.

It is important to point out at this stage that many applications are delayed due to a misunderstanding regarding the number of photographs required. An application for the grant or renewal of a Firearm Certificate requires 4 photographs and an application for the grant or renewal of a Shotgun Certificate requires a further 4 photographs. Regular renewals of a coterminous Shotgun Certificate with a Firearm Certificate should be accompanied by 8 photographs in total.

In the case of shotgun applications

One of the photographs should be signed in ink, on the back, with the applicant's usual signature.

One other photograph must be endorsed by your counter-signatory in ink, on the back, with the following words: "**I certify that this is a current true likeness of (insert name of applicant).**" He/she should then sign the declaration and insert the date the likeness was compared.

In the case of firearm applications

One of the photographs should be signed in ink, on the back, with the applicant's usual signature.

Two other photographs must be endorsed, **one each**, by each of the two referees, in ink, on the back, with the following words: "**I certify that this is a current true likeness of (insert name of applicant).**" He/she should then sign the declaration and insert the date the likeness was compared.

Fees and Charges New fees came into force on 1st January 2001

Existing certificates expiring on or after this date, and new applications received on or after this date, will be subject to the following charges:

Shotguns

Firearms

Grant of Certificate

£50.00 (Where no other current shotgun certificate already exists in the name of the applicant, and it is the only certificate being applied for.)

£50.00 (Where no other current firearm certificate already exists in the name of the applicant.)

Renewal of Certificate

£40.00 (Where the application is for the renewal of a current existing certificate in the holder's name and address. Please note that if your old certificate has already expired prior to your date of application for renewal, then you may be required to pay for a grant.)

£40.00 (Where the application is for the renewal of a current existing certificate in the holder's name and address.)

Replacement Certificate

£8.00 (Where a shotgun certificate is lost or stolen, it **must** be reported to your local police, before applying for a replacement.)

£9.00 (Where a firearm certificate is lost or stolen, it **must** be reported to your local police, before applying for a replacement.)

Coterminous Certificate

£10.00 (Where a shotgun certificate is granted or renewed at the same time as a firearm certificate, and they both expire on the same date. See Coterminous Certificates for more details.)

Not applicable

Variation of Certificate

Not applicable

£26.00 (Where an increase in the number of weapons held on the current certificate results. Note: "one for one" variations, where an **existing** weapon or authority on a certificate, is changed for a different weapon, do not attract a fee.)

General

Visitor's Permit

£12.00 (per applicant up to maximum of 5) **£60.00** (for a group of 6 up to a maximum of 20) (Where a resident in Great Britain sponsors an applicant or group of applicants from abroad.)

Registered Firearms Dealers

Grant of a certificate of registration as a firearms dealer in one Police area

£150.00

Renewal of a certificate of registration as a firearms dealer in same area

£150.00

Grant of a certificate of registration at additional place of business outside area where originally registered, including game fairs and exhibitions

£12.00

All fees should be paid at the time of application. If you hand in your application personally, at a police station, please ensure that you are given a receipt and the fee details are entered on your application form.

If paying at a police station you may pay by cash, cheque or postal-order. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to: "**Cumbria Police Authority**" and crossed. Cheques must be drawn on a branch of a UK Bank.

Applications by post should be paid by cheque or postal-order: do not send cash by post.

Security

When applying for the **grant** of a shotgun or firearm certificate it may be best to do nothing in relation to security until one of our Firearms Enquiry Officers has visited you.

He or she will contact you, after all the necessary enquiries have been completed, in order to make a mutually convenient appointment to visit you at your home address.

Part of the reason for the visit is to assess your domestic security and, maybe, give advice on what improvements will be necessary to allow you to keep weapons at home.

The Firearms Acts are not specific regarding security except to state that the weapons must be kept safe and secure at all times so as to prevent unauthorised access, as far as is reasonably practical.

However, before granting you a certificate, the Chief Officer of Police needs to be satisfied that you can store them safely. It therefore follows that the issuer of the certificate must set the standards to be met, within the limitations of the Acts.

We are helped in these matters by various sources. Firstly the Home Office guidance is that all shotguns and firearms should be kept in bona-fide gun cabinets. That is, cabinets which are purpose built for the keeping of shotguns and firearms. The cabinets must be located within the confines of the house and not stored in a garage or outbuilding. They should be rawl-bolted to a solid brick wall and out of sight of casual callers. Section 1 ammunition should be stored separately and securely from Section 1 weapons.

BS7558 is a British Standard for gun cabinets since 1992 which practically all cabinets, sold by reputable Registered Firearms Dealers, will meet.

Purchasing, Acquiring and Transferring of Firearms

When you first receive your Firearm Certificate, obviously there will be no weapons shown as possessed. However you will have the authorisations for the firearms you requested, and which were agreed by the police. Remember, these are the **only** weapons that you can legally hold on your certificate. You will also have authority to purchase the agreed quantity of ammunition for the calibre of the weapons shown. So you can now purchase the firearms authorised on your certificate, not only from a Registered Firearms Dealer, but also from other Firearm Certificate holders.

Remember the final handing over of the weapon **must** be in person, and the person transferring the firearm to you must enter the details on Table 1 of your Firearm Certificate. It is not you that enters the details, but the seller.

Remember the old maxim - **you only write on your own certificate when you sign it!**

Having acquired your firearm you must, within 7 days, inform the police authority that issued your certificate of the transaction. The person transferring the firearm, if a certificate holder, must also inform his issuing authority.

Section 33 (3) of The Firearms Amendment Act 1997 requires that such notification shall:

- a. contain a description of the firearm in question, (giving its identification number if any); and
- b. state the nature of the transaction and the name and address of the other party

If this procedure is carried out properly, firearms should never go astray and a complete record should exist of their present and previous owners.

Similarly, when the time comes for you to dispose of one of your firearms to another certificate holder, **you** must enter the details of the transaction on the back of the purchaser's certificate. If you dispose of a firearm to a Registered Firearms Dealer, he will enter the transaction in his register - on this occasion you do not have any writing to do, except, in **all** cases to inform the issuing authority of your certificate.

It is not necessary to send in your certificate for such notifications.

You may notify by letter, fax, e-mail or in person to our office at Police Headquarters, but not by telephone.



Purchasing, Acquiring and Transferring Shotguns

The matter of buying, selling or transferring shotguns to someone else is a very straightforward and easy procedure. Yet surprisingly, many certificate holders, unwittingly, fall foul of the law in this respect.

When you first acquire your shotgun certificate please **sign it immediately** in the appropriate space. Obviously, at this stage, there will be no shotguns shown on it, so how do you go about acquiring a shotgun?

There are various ways to acquire shotguns. These include buying one from another certificate holder or Registered Firearms Dealer or as a gift.

If you look on the back of your shotgun certificate, you will see "Table 2". It is this table that **must** be completed by **the person selling/transferring the gun** to you.

Similarly, if you sell or transfer one of your shotguns to another certificate holder, **you** must enter the details of that weapon in Table 2 on the back of the recipient's certificate. You **do not** enter details of the transfer on your own certificate. A good thing to remember is **the only time you write on your own certificate is when you sign it.**

If you acquire a shotgun from a Registered Firearms Dealer, he will enter the details of the weapon into Table 2, on the back of your certificate.

If you sell or dispose of a shotgun to a Registered Firearms Dealer, he will enter the transaction in his register. There is no writing for you to do, other than: **in all cases of acquiring or disposing of a shotgun, you must inform the police authority that issued your certificate.** The final handover of the weapon **must** be done **in person**. It is no longer legal to acquire shotguns by mail order.

As a shotgun certificate holder it is also possible for you to borrow another certificate holder's or dealer's shotgun. However, if the shotgun is to be in your possession for more than 72 hours, the person lending you the weapon must enter the details in Table 2, stating the appropriate reason in column B.

The Firearms (Amendment) Act 1997 requires you to notify the Chief Officer of Police who issued your certificate within seven days if you:

transfer a shotgun to any other person including selling it, hiring it out, lending it for more than 72 hours, or making a gift of it; **or**

purchase or acquire a shotgun; **or**

have a shotgun deactivated by a gunsmith; **or**

hand a shotgun to a Registered Firearms Dealer for destruction; **or**

lose a shotgun; or have one stolen.

Section 33 (3) of The Firearms Amendment Act 1997 requires that such notification shall:

- a. contain a description of the firearm in question, (giving its identification number if any); and
- b. state the nature of the transaction and the name and address of the other party;

These requirements apply even if the matter happened outside Great Britain. **It is an offence not to notify.**

It is not necessary to send in your certificate for such notifications.

Good Reason' - Firearms

Firearm certificates differ from shotgun certificates in that each individual weapon held on the former, needs to be authorised for its use. It is for this very reason that an applicant is required to satisfy the Chief Officer of Police of his reason for requiring that weapon, for that purpose.

The holder of a shotgun certificate can acquire as many shotguns as he can safely accommodate, without having to prove his reason for needing each individual weapon.

The holder of a firearm certificate has a far more limited flexibility when it comes to possessing firearms. It is a requirement of the Firearms Acts that such certificate holders specify their reason for **each and every** firearm they require.

What is more, the police must be satisfied that the weapons requested are suitable for the reasons stated. For instance, it would not be acceptable to request a .303 rifle for controlling rabbits!

Most firearm certificate applications fall into one of two categories and the first we will address here is target shooting.

An applicant for a firearm certificate needs to demonstrate "good reason" for the weapons requested. In the case of target shooting, "good reason" can only be satisfied by the applicant being a full and active member of a Home Office approved club (probationary membership is not acceptable), and the club must be approved for the use of the firearms requested in the application.

It is now a legal requirement that firearm certificates issued for target shooting show in the **range use** condition the name of the principal Home Office approved club to which the certificate holder belongs. This does not mean however that the firearms authorised can only be used at that location, since certificate holders may be members of more than one club, and may be involved in competition shooting at other venues.

When applying for a firearm certificate, applicants should bear in mind that they should only apply for:

the number of firearms that they can store securely

the authority to acquire the number of firearms which they intend to use, and are able to use, on a regular basis

Indeed it is now a requirement that Home Office approved clubs keep a record of members' attendance and the weapons that they use. Moreover clubs are required to notify the police of those members who have let their club membership lapse, or who have not attended in a twelve month period. Therefore, unless there are extenuating circumstances, this could mean that if a certificate holder were to fail to attend the shooting club regularly, or did not use all of his firearms regularly, good reason for all or some of the firearms held on his certificate could be called into question. This could perhaps ultimately lead to the full or partial revocation of the firearm certificate.

In respect of Section 1 ammunition it is usual only to allow possession of the same calibres as the firearms possessed or to be acquired, and it should be noted that ammunition must also be stored securely.

When good reason has been satisfied and all other enquiries have proved satisfactory a firearm certificate will be issued showing the weapons which you are authorised to purchase; the certificate will also bear conditions showing the purpose for which the firearms are authorised.

Air Weapons

Conventional air weapons do not fall within the remit of the Firearms Licensing Department, as they do not, except in certain circumstances, require certification. However many people are interested in this subject and have asked for information.

An air weapon differs from a conventional firearm by the fact that it, and the pellets discharged, do not contain any explosive substance.

When the trigger is pulled the pellets are forced from the barrel either by the release of a coiled spring, or the discharge of compressed gas from a cylinder.

Most air weapons are of such limited power that they do not require to be licensed, however there are exceptions to this rule.

The Firearms (Dangerous Air Weapons) Rules 1969 require that certain air weapons can only be held legally on a firearm certificate. It is possible to measure the velocity of pellets, discharged from an air weapon, by the use of an electronic chronograph. From these measurements the kinetic energy of the pellet at the muzzle can be calculated. Air weapons deemed specially dangerous have a muzzle energy in excess of:

In the case of an air pistol: **6 ft/lbs**. In the case of an air weapon other than an air pistol: **12 ft/lbs**

Such weapons are classified as Section 1 firearms and are required to be held on a firearm certificate. These weapons are subject to all the controls and regulations pertaining to Section 1 firearms, although the "ammunition" (pellets) are not.

These rules do not apply to an air weapon designed for use only when submerged in water, e.g. harpoon gun.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 has made changes to existing firearms legislation, which affects the following:

- (1) Possession of firearms in a public place.
- (2) Air weapons ages limits.
- (3) Prohibition of self-contained gas cartridge system air weapons.

Conventional air weapons, although not requiring to be held on certificate, are still subject to other legislation, particularly as to age restrictions as follows:

Under 18 years old

It is an offence to give an air weapon, or ammunition for it, to a person under 18 years of age. It is not an offence for that young person to receive it.

It is an offence for a person under 18 years old to be in possession of an air weapon, or ammunition for it, except:

- a. As a member of an approved club for target shooting.
- b. Whilst at a shooting gallery where only air weapons or miniature rifles not exceeding .23 calibre are used.
- c. Whilst under the supervision of a person aged 21 years or over, or whilst shooting, on private premises, including land, provided the missile is not fired beyond those premises.
- d. From the age of 14 years old, whilst on private premises with the consent of the owner. No supervision is required.



It is an offence for a person under 18 years of age to be in possession of an air pistol in any public place except as at (a) and (b) above. A public place means any highway or place or premises to which, at the material time, the public have or are permitted to have access, whether on payment or otherwise. You may not have an airgun in a public place without proper reason. An airgun is deemed as loaded if there is a pellet, dart or *anything else* in the gun or magazine, whether cocked or not.

You should be aware that it is unlawful to trespass on any land (including on water), or in any building whilst in possession of a firearm, including an airgun.

Simply going onto private land without permission is trespass. If you are in possession of an airgun at the time, it is trespassing whilst in possession of a firearm, a serious criminal offence which is punishable by up to six months imprisonment and/or a fine of £1000.

It is also an offence to discharge a firearm, including an airgun, within 50 feet of the centre of any highway. This includes roads, bridle-paths or public footpaths. The offence is complete if a member of the public is injured, endangered or even just alarmed by the incident.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

It is commonly thought that all birds considered as vermin can be shot at any time and by anyone. This is not strictly true. All birds and animals are protected by law and only "authorised" persons who have proper permission can lawfully do so.

Always ensure that you shoot within the legal boundaries and with the proper authorisation. Only use a conventional air rifle on suitable quarry, where you know that a clean kill is likely. It is generally accepted in proper shooting circles that such quarry only includes the following:

Woodpigeon, feral pigeon, collared dove, magpie, jackdaw, jay, rook and crow. Also brown rat, grey squirrel and rabbit.

Clubs and Target Shooting

Unless you are a landowner, or have the permission from a landowner to shoot vermin or larger game with a Section 1 firearm, you will need to join a Home Office approved rifle and/or muzzle-loading pistol club.

This is necessary for you to establish good reason for the possession of such a gun.

Shooting clubs, like all other sports clubs, provide social and legal benefits connected to your sport or chosen discipline, but their main advantage is in the training and knowledge which you will gain during your probationary period. Through this training you will learn to handle guns confidently and be aware of the safety aspects surrounding the sport.

There are clubs of all types which cater for target shooters, muzzle-loaders, practical shotgun users, and re-enactment groups for every imaginable historical period. Not all of these activities require possession of a firearm certificate, but you will find that the legal complexities make it more favourable to do so. Membership of an approved club will open up all these possibilities to the novice shooter. You will meet many characters in the sport, including experts on not only the technical and historic aspects of firearms, but also uniforms and other associated militaria.

If you merely wish to shoot firearms without the added responsibility of guns being stored at your own premises, you can do so by joining a club which possesses a Club Firearm Certificate. This allows members to use club guns, held on that certificate, without the requirement for them to have a certificate in their own right. However, most people join a club with the intention of obtaining their own personal firearm, held on their own firearm certificate. You will be able to do this on completion of your probationary period as laid down by the club rules.

How do I join a club?

To have shown an interest in this sport you have probably already come into contact with shooters, and this is important. Shooting at the beginner's level is not a sport for the solitary individual. Whether this contact was personal or through sport publications or even the internet, we strongly advise that you join one of the recognised and reputable shooting organisations.

All approved clubs must meet certain criteria to obtain that approval. The matters that affect the new shooter are:

- 1 Anyone who applies for club membership must be sponsored by at least one club member.
- 2 Before becoming a full member, individuals must serve a probationary period of at least three months. Some clubs may require a longer period.
- 3 No application for full or probationary membership will be granted unless the applicant has informed the club of whether he/she has ever had an application for a firearm or shotgun certificate refused or revoked by the police.

Please be aware that all approved clubs maintain liaison with the police, and will notify the police if any member has not shot or attended the club within the last twelve months.

Explosives and Black Powder

There are two Explosive Officers within the Firearms Licensing Department. They deal with all matters relating to explosives and the policing of the legislation contained mainly in Control of Explosive Regulations 1991 (as amended) and Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations 2005. They also act and have powers of inspectors for the Health & Safety Executive.

Control of Explosive Regulations 1991 (COER)

These regulations:

1. Require a person who acquires or keeps explosives to hold an explosives certificate issued by the Chief Officer of Police.
2. Impose restrictions on persons involved in the transfer of explosives
3. Forbid a person who has committed certain offences or who has been sentenced to specific terms of imprisonment, custody or detention from acquiring, keeping, handling or controlling explosives.
4. Forbid an employer from knowingly employ a prohibited person in a position where he handles or has control of explosives
5. Requires up-to-date accurate records to be kept of acquisition and disposal of explosives.
6. Impose requirements for reporting loss of explosives to the police.

There are two COER Explosive licences:

Acquire only

This is issued to permit a person or company to obtain named explosives, which are to be used straight away and not kept overnight. Valid for up to one year.

Acquire and Keep

This is issued to allow a person or company to obtain named explosives and keep them in an approved storage place or manner. Valid for up to three years.

[Form Coer1a](#)

[Form Coer1b](#)

Firearms Application Forms

The following forms are downloadable as PDF files. These documents are in PDF format. Adobe Acrobat will be required to read PDF files.

Forms 101, 125 and 103 should be available at any police station. All forms are available from your local firearms licensing authority.

You should print the form/s required, then fill in by hand signing where necessary. Similarly, your firearms application referees should fill in the **Forms 125** and submit them separately.

All forms should be submitted to your local firearms licensing authority – see ‘How to Contact Us’.

Firearms:

[Form 101](#): Application for grant, renewal or variation of a firearm certificate.

[Form 125](#): Firearms referees (2 required for grant or renewal of a firearm cert)

Shotguns:

[Form 103](#): Application for grant or renewal of a shotgun certificate.

Visitors:

[Form 107](#): Application for visitor’s firearm or shotgun permit.

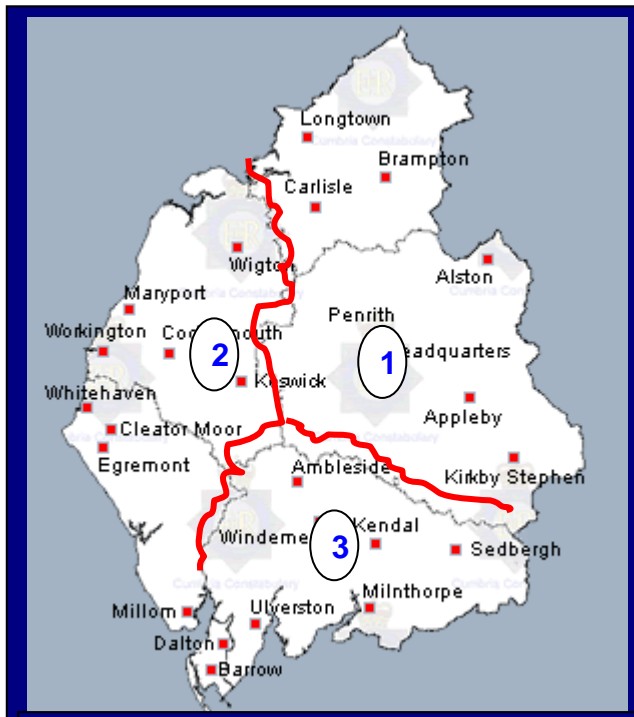
Contact Your Team

Team Leader - Alison Jackson

Tel: 08453 300 247 see below for direct dial and answer phone numbers

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Chief Officer of Police,
Firearms Licensing,
Carleton Hall,
Penrith,
Cumbria.
CA10 2AU



FIREARMS ENQUIRY OFFICERS

AREA 1	-	IAN MACKENZIE (07770647183)
AREA 2	-	PETER HEWITT (07971140560)
AREA 3	-	MICK TURNER (07967572135)

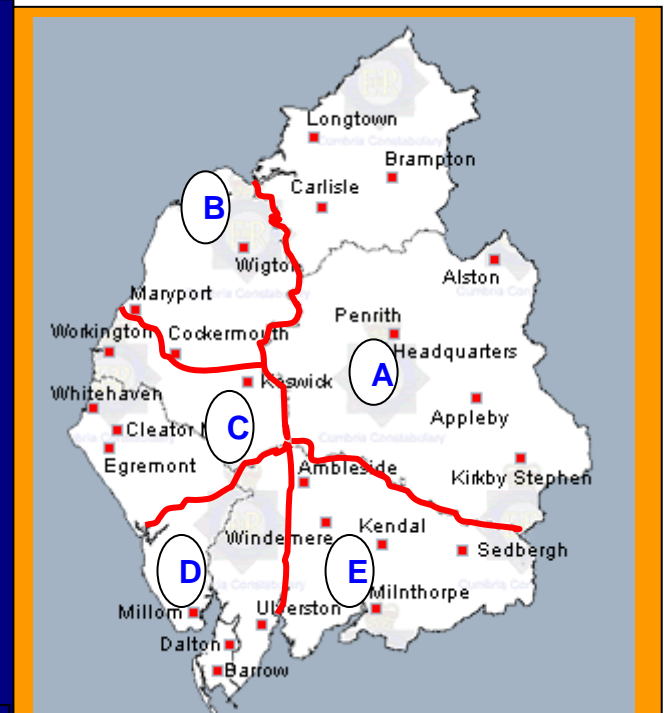
The Firearms Licensing Department is based at:
No. 12
The Green
Carleton Hall
Penrith CA10 2AU

Opening times are:

Monday to Thursday: 08:30am to 05:00pm
Friday: 0830am to 04:30pm

Personal visits are welcome.

Departmental telephone number: 01768217013
Fax number: 01768217017



SHOTGUN ENQUIRY OFFICERS

AREA A	-	IAN ROBERTSHAW (07980747308) ROBIN CAMERON (07967572108)
AREA B	-	COLIN MESSENGER (07980747314)
AREA C	-	DAVID LEE (07980747309)
AREA D	-	TOM MCCAFFERTY (07980747312)
AREA E	-	COLIN DICKINSON (07980747310)

Explosives and Black Powder Enquiries for the County of Cumbria:

Alison Jackson, Peter Hewitt and Mick Turner

Tel: 01768 217 013