

# Why Should My Club Affiliate to the Regional and County Associations?

I was asked this question by the secretary of a Yorkshire club earlier in 2014. I was then asked to supply the same information to a Lancashire club and subsequently the NCAS Committee suggested that the response be made available to everyone in Northern Counties. The following has therefore been edited to cover any county in the Region so:

**Region = Northern Counties Archery Society.**

**County = the county your own club resides in, Cheshire, Cumbria, Durham and Northumberland, Isle of Man, Lancashire, Yorkshire.**

Up until a few years ago clubs paid their GNAS/Archery GB(AGB), Region and County fees as one single payment which was posted off to their County Treasurer/Secretary. The County's fees were deducted at that point and the remainder sent to the Regional Treasurer. The Region's fees were then deducted and what was left was sent to the GNAS/AGB. While this system was in place it was reasonably clear in the Laws of the GNAS/AGB that the natural line of things went: Club – County – Region – GNAS/AGB.

A few years ago the system of collecting fees changed and at the same time the GNAS/AGB Laws regarding membership of Counties and Regions became rather vague to say the least which resulted in quite a few clubs assuming that membership of their County and Region had become optional.

In all honesty a club can actually opt out of membership of their County and Region but they will find that instead of their Senior members paying £40 (new fee as of 1st Oct 2014) per head to GNAS/AGB they will be asked to pay £48 per head and instead of being affiliated as Club Members they will all become Direct Members of GNAS/AGB. The same would apply to Junior members but instead of their fees being £25 per head they would rise to £46 as Junior Direct Members. I think (although you may wish to check this with the GNAS/AGB) that it would also be impossible to have a Junior Club with the very economical en bloc fee if you do not affiliate to the County and Region.

Depending what you pay to your particular County, and whether or not you have many juniors, the difference in fees alone may be one reason for continuing to affiliate to the County and Region.

Apart from the financial side of affiliation the question 'Why should we affiliate to County and Region' is an interesting one which is often asked and is always tricky to answer. The reason for this is that it will depend on how involved a club and its members want to be in archery.

Your county and region put on tournaments/championships for their members. Your county will send a county team to some Regional shoots etc. To be eligible for local awards or County team places your members would need to be affiliated to the County and Region.

Both the Coaching and the Judging set ups are run in conjunction with the National schemes and anyone wanting to be involved in these activities will start at County level with certain administrative and practical elements being overseen and provided at Regional level. Coaching should be available to your members from your County's coaches. Judges are required at all Record Status events and are provided via County and Regional liaison officers.

Your County will hold its own meetings and if your members are affiliated you will be able to have a say in how things are run etc. (You will need to check how this works in your own county as I can only base my County knowledge on the Cheshire system which expects one rep from each club to attend meetings as part of its committee). Various posts are open for election both at County and Regional level to those who may be willing to offer their services.

The County and Regional secretaries are very active in answering various queries in their own areas. These can be from people who just want to take up archery, in which case your club would be on a contact list and potential new members could be guided to your club this way. If you don't affiliate you would not be recognised by the county or region and would not be recommended to anyone looking for a club in your area.

There are various very knowledgeable people within each separate County and within Northern Counties with regard to all aspects of archery and it is possible to contact these people when you need their advice or support. If your club is not affiliated to the County and Region these people would have no obligation to do anything at all for you.

The National system works in conjunction with the counties and regions, in very basic terms - think layers of government on a smaller scale and you have the idea; club, county, region, national.

It would be easy to say we are not interested in any of the above so why should we pay? Do you use your public library, do you have children at school, is your house on fire? If you answered no to any or all of these questions you may wonder why you need to pay your council tax for any of these services. We all pay because that's how the world works and I'm afraid archery is no different. Everything is interlinked and you cannot simply remove one layer and expect everything to carry on working as it should.

You will probably have a small group of members who are competitive and who will use, and benefit directly from, the services provided by the county and region. Then there will be those who will not venture out from the club and not be interested in any of this. Obviously from where I am sitting I would say that people have to be given the opportunity to get involved in the bigger picture, but then I would wouldn't I?

It is as well to note at this point that everything at County and Regional level is done on a voluntary basis so it shouldn't always be considered that other people will be doing things for you. It is always appreciated when new volunteers come along and want to be involved. The Counties and Regions should not be thought of as something alien to the club archer as it is club archers who make up their committees and who are working on behalf of their fellow club archers.

I hope this has gone some way towards answering your query. If you don't want to pay for your club to be affiliated to the County and Region your members could of course pay the higher rate fee to be direct members of GNAS/AGB\*.

You do still have this choice but it should be weighed against the fact that the club would be cut off from two tiers of administration which basically helps support the whole national system.

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*Hon. Secretary*  
*Northern Counties Archery Society*  
*June 2014*

\* Please note: Whichever option you choose it must apply to all your members, you cannot have some who do affiliate and some who don't.

**As an interesting (or not!) historical note.**

NCAS is slightly older than the GNAS and was first set up as The North of England Archery Society in 1852. The establishment date of the GNAS is 1861. Not that this should make us feel in any way superior you understand but it might come as a surprise to those who think the Regional Society is some sort of modern, fly by night invention just set up to fleece its members of £2.50 each. The County associations vary in age with Yorkshire being by far the oldest, started in 1789 according to their website. Cheshire and Lancashire are both only 60 years old, and Cumbria seems to be around a similar age. Not sure about Durham or the Isle of Man but if someone from those associations is reading this they will probably let me know! *Ann.*