



Dunster 2022 and Beyond

Dear Archers,

Following the issues we had at this year's event on 30th July I had a productive meeting with the National Trust (NT) who are happy for us to hold the week as usual in 2022. Their Nature Conservation Advisor inspected the site on 28th July. He noted that the cutting regime employed this year had resulted in a higher abundance of indicator species and flowering plants over previous years for those areas between the shooting lines and felt that continuing with this next year strikes a good balance between enabling Dunster Week to take place and improving the parkland sward.

Of significant concern to the NT was the cutting of the ground between the Ladies and Gents shooting line to allow the clout to take place. They have asked that we do not hold the clout in 2022. I have agreed to this and will be looking to run an alternative event on the Thursday, possibly a team round.

I will be leaving the other rounds the same as this year which leaves more room behind the shooting line to allow for social distancing as I am sure COVID will still be with us. Shooting the shorter distances should also mean less "greens" and searching for arrows in the longer grass.

Clearly the cut we had this year, and which we will have next year, is not ideal for us as archers. To allow us to return to the field being cut as in previous years and the NT to continue the improvement of the parkland it has been decided to move Dunster Week into July from 2023 onwards. There was not enough notice to move to July in 2022 as I know many of you book accommodation from year to year, hence going with a bit of a compromise for next year with the minimal cut and no clout.

Dunster Week 2023 will run from 16th to 23rd July, the clout will be reinstated as the ground will revert to our usual cut and the rounds will go back to the longer distances. Going forward the week will follow a similar pattern to the June dates, incorporating the third Thursday in the month which should ensure we avoid the start of the school holidays.

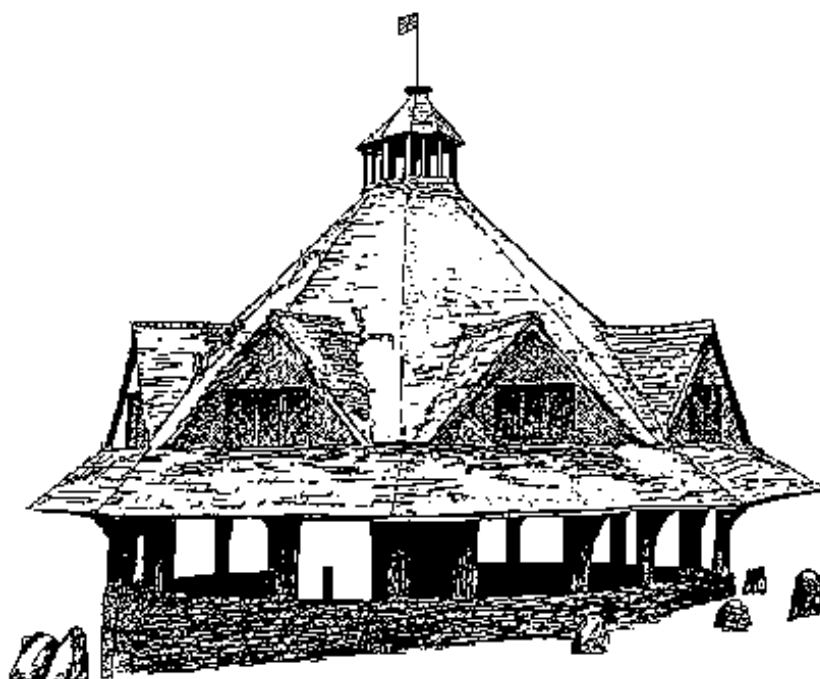
I know many of you will be under the impression that the Luttrell family had an agreement with the NT stating that Dunster Week could take place on the parkland each year and that the ground would be cut for our purposes. Despite the best efforts of the family and others we have been unable to find any evidence of this. If there was an agreement, it seems that it was only a verbal “gentleman’s agreement” which unfortunately leaves GWAS with little leverage when it comes to negotiations.

I hope you will all continue to support Dunster Week both next year, when I will be working with the NT to minimise the effect of the cut on our shooting using lessons learned from this year’s event and when we move into July. Fingers crossed the move to July might mean better weather!!

If you have any questions around this or any comments, please feel free to get in touch.

In the meantime, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and good shooting in 2022.

Vikki



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