



An Update on the Five-Year Transition Towards Sustainable Ammunition

As the five-year transition towards sustainable ammunition continues, it is to be welcomed that large parts of the shooting community have recognised the need for change.

Despite the uncertainty caused by Covid-19, a significant number of people have embraced technological developments in ammunition and, as far as the shooting season allowed, used new cartridges to great effect on all species of live quarry. The arrival of these new, effective, field-tested products in the marketplace is to be celebrated and lays the foundation for a continued transition away from single-use plastic and lead shot.

The UK Government has also shown support for shooting's voluntary five-year transition away from the use of lead ammunition in game shooting, indicating that this sort of self-regulation and progression should prevent more punitive legislation in the future.

Indeed, a proposed amendment to the Environment Bill to ban lead shot within two years was rejected by Parliament this year, with Defra saying: "The new clause falls short of what shooting organisations are calling for. Organisations... are calling for an end within five years to both lead and single use plastics. They are talking about it seriously."

The year ahead will see further research, education and training to ensure the shooting community has the tools and evidence to make informed choices. Further patterning and penetration studies are underway to build our knowledge base and aid the transition.

The pandemic has inevitably slowed progress, but the organisations believe the developments in ammunition, evidence collected in trials and the willingness of our community to learn about effective alternatives continues to keep us on a steady path to transition.

We also welcome the work undertaken by cartridge manufacturers to help secure a successful transition.

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“ Shooting Star are pleased to be associated with the market leaders for sustainable shooting. We import BioAmmo of Spain and Jocker of France offering new solutions in environmentally friendly ammunition, such as a biodegradable wad and case, and a paper shot cup. Both brands can be loaded with steel or 'Alternative Shot' which is made from bismuth, aluminium, nickel and zinc. The reviews from the press and the shooters alike have all been positive and this coming clay season we will be promoting both products so that shooters can get a feel for the quality and performance before they try them on live quarries. ”

Shooting Star, importers of BioAmmo and Jocker



“ As leading manufacturers of shotgun cartridges, we are continually striving to improve our products and reduce our impact on the natural world. Over the last few years we have each invested heavily in ensuring we can move away from lead shot and embrace emerging alternatives to plastic. This will not be an easy transition. Technology exists to produce such cartridges on a small scale, but there remain technological and logistical challenges ahead to ensure that we can produce the volume of cartridges required to achieve the ambitious proposal put forward by shooting and rural organisations. For example, it takes considerably longer to make a bio wad, than it does a traditional one. There are big challenges to meet all of these ambitions, but our investment in research and development continues. ”

Gamebore and Hull Cartridge Company

“ Over the last few years, we have invested significantly in new technologies that will make our cartridges more sustainable. Moving away from lead shot and adopting certified bio-degradable wadding, within a five year time frame, will be a significant challenge, but it is a transition that we have already started and one we will continue working towards. ”

Eley Hawk

“ Major stockists of game are increasingly asking about the availability of lead-free game and it is only a matter of time before these questions turn to commitments. We expect some retailers to insist on lead-free this coming season. The strides the shooting community is making towards the adoption of lead-free ammunition will stand us in good stead to meet that demand. ”

British Game Alliance