

# END OF YEAR REPORT

2018 /2019



**BRITISH**  
**GAME**  
**ALLIANCE**  
FOR THE FUTURE OF GAME

## COMMERCIAL UPDATE

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Matt Tough, Commercial Director

### 2018 OVERVIEW

I joined the BGA in July 2018 with a clear objective of driving game sales and raising awareness in the marketplace with 30 years' experience in Hospitality and Food Services as a Sales Director. It became clear that our produce was often misunderstood, awareness was low and that, generally speaking, the route to market was fragmented and inconsistent. To enable us to develop new markets we need to secure new stockists, raise the profile of game, innovate and add value and start to promote the benefits of stocking game.

Building a team of sales people and taking on this challenge has been a lengthy process. Early meetings were promising but feedback confirmed that the market was looking for support and innovation and the larger potential client's menus were already signed off for the season ahead, similarly the retailers shelf space assigned.

The Together Agency helped us build our consumer-facing campaign, Eat Wild which we needed to give the larger stockists/retailers confidence that the BGA will be stimulating demand and awareness from the British public.

We retained the services of Nigel Haworth, winner and Judge of the Great British Menu and Michelin star holder to gain credibility with the community of Chefs.

Armed with this we then secured appointments with key potential stockists in a broad range of markets to get them to work with the BGA and sign up to only stock assured game. Many stockists are totally new to game and those that are not are very keen to develop and extend their game ranges to drive volume with our help.

### PROGRESS AND CONFIRMED KEY STOCKISTS

In our first year we have been successful in securing new stockists of BGA assured game. In addition we approached purchasing consortia organisations who have influence and control over multiple hotel groups and high street brands as an effective route to market.

To date some of the significant stockists wins are:

- Consortia:
  - PSL: access to 600 sites which includes over 40 Hotel Groups
  - Equinox: access to 400 sites in the restaurant sector
  - GoKart: access to 140 sites in the pubs and bars sector
- Restaurants:
  - D&D: 23 High quality London based restaurants
  - IRC (Individual Restaurant Company): 36 high quality restaurants nationally based
  - Ottolenghi: 6 High Quality London based restaurants
  - Nobu - London based sushi restaurant
  - Gladwin Brothers - 3 London based restaurants

- Wholesalers:
  - Carnivore Meats, Catering Butchers: owned by Reynolds who are the UK's largest greengrocer and have over 3,000 clients
  - Birtwhistle Catering Butchers: second largest UK catering butcher with over 1,000 clients
  - Billfields, Catering Butchers: London based and supply over 300 of London's best hotels and restaurants
  - Wright Brothers Wholesale: London based seafood merchant and supply 250 of London's best restaurants
  - Hook and Line Seafoods: London based seafood merchant and supply 50 of London's best restaurants
  - HG Walters: London based premium butchers
  - United Fresh Consortium: new stockist that has 17 regional stockists and national coverage with over 500 clients
  - My Fish Company Independent North West: supplying 200 Hotels
  
- Hotels
  - Marriott: 56 UK based four and five star hotels
  - Macdonald Hotels: 45 UK based Four Star Hotels and Resorts
  - Millennium and Copthorne Hotels: 23 National Four Star Hotels
  - Soho House The Ned: 5 Star luxury hotel and private members club
  
- Retailers
  - Selfridges: stockists in the food Hall
  - Harrods
  
- Pubs and Bars
  - Splendid Management services: operate five emerging brands and eleven outlets in London
  - Duke of Cumberland Arms
  - The Punchbowl
  
- Food Ingredient Supplier
  - Field and Flower: provider of groceries direct to the consumer
  
- Caterers
  - The Mobile Lunch Company: supplier of shoot meals

We have a great pipeline of potential new stockists that we are actively promoting game and our assurance scheme to. Feedback from our new stockists has been both positive and supportive.

*"At Harrods, we are very excited about building up our relationship direct with our producers and as such see BGA as a benchmark in the food industry for helping forge those links. Looking forward to getting great British game on our counter and menus."* -

**James Fisher, Fish and Meat Buyer at Harrods Ltd.**

*"Macdonald Hotels is proud to support the BGA as we strongly believe in the traceability and accreditation it offers to the industry. Macdonald Hotels will be working closely with the BGA to promote and increase sales of game on our menus as a healthy and sustainable choice for our customers in all our Hotels"*

**Ruaridh Macdonald, Deputy Chief Executive**

## **PLAN FOR 2019**

### **RETAIL**

We are in discussions with all the major retailers and have meetings lined up with the majority of them over the coming weeks. We have met with Sainsburys, Waitrose, Co-op, Harrods, Selfridges. All meetings have been positive, with a particular interest into our assurance scheme as well as new product development to move away from the traditional offering of oven ready birds.

We are working with some of the UK's largest food manufacturers and brands, creating game products for food service and retail. This is something we are very excited about. The focus will be around healthy, accessible and quick products to ensure we meet consumer demand.

### **NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT/FOOD SERVICE**

A key area that requires focus is the innovation of game products, whilst making game more accessible, contemporary and in tune with the modern consumer's needs. The BGA has been working closely with Nigel Haworth and Bingham & Jones (renowned development chefs) who are experts in this field, developing new recipes and subsequent products which have been launched on our Eat Wild website and promoted to our new stockists. Feedback has been very positive and is helping us break the mould of "Roast Pheasant" which will ensure we drive sales and increase public awareness.

So far, we have developed 8 key game products that will be targeting food service such as JD Wetherspoons, Greene King, Compass and Baxter Story, meeting on trend demands and competitive price points. We have meetings lined up with the major players.

### **EXPORT**

The BGA has started to develop new markets for Game overseas, not Europe due to its current saturation. We have spent time working with DEFRA, FSA and exporters to understand the supply chain and opportunities available to us.

We are working with the Department for International Trade to identify and open up markets utilising their resources, connections and potential funding, which is proving promising.

Tom Adams and I will be visiting Hong Kong and Japan during the first week of April to meet with key retailers and wholesalers that can promote and sell BGA game in these exciting new Markets.

In addition, we have also recruited a Head of Sales for Export in January who joins us with 14 years' experience of promoting the Red Tractor assurance scheme and sales for other meat sectors. He will be spearheading our campaign in these new and exciting markets.

We will be attending Gulfood, at Dubai World Trade Centre from 17 - 21 February 2019 and has many exciting meetings lined up.

We are in discussion with a large retail operator in Turkey as well as large distributors/agents in Africa and Australia.

## **INDUSTRY AMBASSADORS**

To assist the BGA and its credibility in the marketplace we have been seeking influential industry ambassadors that will support our cause and have Lord Mark Price, Mark Samworth and Nigel Haworth to name a few.

*"I'm very pleased to join the BGA as an Ambassador and look forward to working with the BGA, helping to ensure the game sector has a sustainable and prosperous future."*

**Lord Mark Price, Former Managing Director of Waitrose and Minister of State for Trade and Investment**

## **STAFFING AND RESOURCE**

As of January 2019, we now have a full team. The hard work is well underway to secure and sign up new stockists and, as importantly, manage the existing clients we have already secured, driving up significant volume across the board through new product development, accessibility and consumer awareness.

We have a big task ahead of us but now, with the team below, we are confident that we will make a big impact on sales of game across the board.

The New Business team now consists of:

- Matt Tough, Commercial Director
- Leon Davies, Head of Sales UK (joined Jan 2019)
- Simon Brookes, Head of Sales Export (joined Jan 2019)
- Kevin Troy, Consultant - Restaurants and Hotels (joined Jan 2019)

## **SUMMARY FOR 2019**

- Driving sales through major retailers by getting prepared and convenient products that are in touch with consumer demands on the shelves.
- Working with major food manufacturers to sell game in the food service sector with scalable products that appeal to a bigger audience and meet price points.
- Making game "mainstream" so it can be sold out of season in prepared products such as Pies/burger/sausages.
- Promoting Game to non-European export markets through import agents, wholesalers, retailers & DIT.
- Working closely with processors to ensure the BGA innovates and improves yields/reduces costs so game can be competitive in the protein sector.
- Leveraging the Eat Wild campaign and opening new markets such as home delivery markets & fitness markets.
- Driving volume through the large existing wholesalers and procurement companies we currently have on board.
- Utilising celebrity chefs and key influencers that to change the public opinion on game.

# **SHOOT UPDATE**

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Sam Adams, Shoot Account Manager

## **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2018 – 2019**

### **SHOOTS**

- The BGA now has over four hundred member shoots across the UK.
- End of season targets have been exceeded, with an average of 40 shoots joining per month. We will beat our initial target of 500 members by end of April 2019.
- We aim to incorporate membership benefits for the 2019/20 season, offering our members discounts on tangible products and services such as dog feed and bird seed/feed.
- Our members are made up of all size operations, from small family to large commercial shoots, implicating a united voice across the whole shooting community.
- 30% of our members are small shoots.

### **CHALLENGES**

It has been an interesting 2018/19 season, with many trials and tribulations that face any new and unknown initiative. Although the uptake and response from the shooting community on a whole has been overwhelmingly positive, there have of course been challenges to overcome.

Common feedback is “Why should I pay for other people's issues”. This of course is understandable, however, it is vital that we are proving to the wider public, the opposition and government that we are indeed setting a benchmark for best practice across the board. This is achieved through our pioneering assurance scheme, which ensures that the BGA standards are upheld on every point.

There have been concerns and questions about whether the BGA is just “another organisation?”

Many of our members also support other organisations such as GWCT and The Countryside Alliance, and we feel it is very important for the community to know that we have agreed our lines of responsibility and are working very closely with these organisations to work towards a common cause and that the BGA is not competing with them. We are a marketing board for game and a regulatory body for the shooting community.

### **SHOOT AMBASSADORS**

The BGA has obtained fantastic support from many members of the community from many walks of life, who believe in a sustainable future for shooting and for game.

We have asked a select group of these individuals to help represent the BGA and be a vocal support in spreading the word. A few of these ambassadors include:

- Ian Coghill
- Edd Morrison

- David Johnstone
- Alastair Margadale
- Tom Payne
- Marcus Janssen
- Brian Mitchell
- George Stephenson
- Euan Webster
- Dylan Williams
- Mungo Ingleby

**Ian Coghill, Ex-Chairman of the GWCT and BGA Ambassador,** *“To be successful the BGA must attract support from across the full spectrum of game shooting. There is a misconception that the problems are only related to big shoots. Sadly, this is not the case.*

*Size doesn't matter. Large or small, any badly run shoot can get us all a bad name and the more shoots that join BGA the more powerful the message. Sensibly they have tailored the subscription levels to the size of the shoot and there is no financial reason for not enrolling.”*

## **SHOOT TALKS**

The BGA has lined up many positive meetings and talks for 2019, where we will have the opportunity to engage with many more members of the shooting community about the work that we are doing and our plan of action moving into the future.

A few of these include:

- The Game Fair
- The British Shooting Show
- The Bath and West Show
- GWCT Shoot Owner Conference (Game 19)
- St Davids Vets Shoot Owner Talks
- Land Agents Talks

## **SERVICES TO SHOOTS**

This season has very much been an eye opener into the issues we are faced with. The lack of demand in the market and the subsequent crash in value, has resulted in a few of our members being left with no outlet for their birds mid-season.

We felt it was our responsibility to help these members deal with this issue to avoid leaving them in a position where they would have to stop their days going ahead.

After finding outlets for their game, we swiftly hired refrigerated vans and drivers to collect their game and distribute it accordingly, therefore ensuring that all birds entered the food chain.

We have helped many of our members to understand the laws and legislations that surround the use of shot game to help them avoid any issues in the future.

We continue to put time and effort into finding more financially feasible options for shoots on products and services. An example of this is the purchasing of refrigerated units

to help shoots comply with our services, where we have agreed reduced rates for our members with a supplier. For example, a unit that can hang 150 game birds at a cost of £1,500 Inc VAT. Please call the office if you would like to discuss this at any point.

### **Quote from Richard Street at Hardicott Shoot, Devon**

*"I joined the BGA in light of the pressing issues that we all face. Unfortunately, midway through this season, I along with many others, was let down by my dealer due to the market being saturated. I got in touch with the BGA team, and within a week they had organised a refrigerated vehicle and a driver to come and collect our game and re-distribute it accordingly for the rest of the season.*

*This fantastic service was above and beyond and not only allowed me to carry on with my days shooting, but was also a stark reminder that these issues are indeed playing out in front of us, which reinforces the urgent need for the BGA to succeed in its objectives."*

### **MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT- REFER A FRIEND**

Moving forward, the BGA will offer existing members a 20% discount for every introduction to a friend or neighbour who then joins the cause from that introduction.

Many shoots have been extremely helpful in this matter and it is a great way of implementing the ethos that we are all in this together.

### **LOOKING FORWARD**

I am thoroughly excited for the year ahead, working with shoots and their critical feedback we can pave a really positive way forward for all and I look forward to the incorporation of tangible shoot owner benefits to offer our supportive members.

## MARKETING – In House and External

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Amy Lowe, Head of Marketing

**2018**

### IN HOUSE – SHOOTING INDUSTRY

In creating the **BGA logo** and brand we wanted to portray a professional and trustworthy organisation that would best represent the industry. Subsequently, our website [www.britishgamealliance.co.uk](http://www.britishgamealliance.co.uk) was launched in May 2018. Traffic to the site has been especially encouraging with a fantastic spike of interest at the beginning, over 15,000 unique visitors since launch and the peak in daily visitors on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 showing that momentum is growing.

- We have launched the following campaigns to raise awareness within the industry and aid shoot recruitment:
  - The **BGA Explained** and a **FAQs** documents set out our mission and strategy. These have been very well received by the shooting community as they are easy to digest, understand and have assisted with our fantastic sign up figures.
  - Our industry targeted **PR** campaign in May 2018 with a focused drive since November 2018. We have secured features within a wide number of press, inclusive of and not limited to; Shooting Times, Country Life, Shooting Gazette, The Field and The Times reaching more than 1.3 million readers across the UK.
  - @britishgamealliance **social media** pages went live and currently have over 7,500 followers collectively. Initiatives include:
    - Great British Game Week recipe competition to win a 7-course tasting menu at BGA stockist and Michelin starred restaurant Nobu.
    - Game Meat Monday; we were so impressed by the winning recipe that we asked the winner, Ben Gilbert to become our Game Meat Monday Weekly Blogger, creating a new game recipe every week.
    - We also champion our shoots and stockists by posting weekly to publicise them.

Our stakeholders are key to us reaching our objectives and we want to evolve the organisation to best reflect their grassroots experience. We launched a **survey** to gather feedback from the shooting community at the end of the first season. We have seen a fantastic take up and, on writing this report, we have had over 100 responses. We are currently collating and reviewing and will ensure findings and constructive feedback are implemented and shared.

## EXTERNAL AGENCY - CONSUMER FACING

October 2018 saw the launch of our consumer facing campaign, '**Eat Wild**'. The campaign was created to further stimulate people's awareness and interest in game. We have orchestrated this in conjunction with and to compliment other industry bodies game initiatives such as BASC's 'Taste of Game' and the Countryside Alliance's 'Game to Eat'. Our fantastic launch party held at Sama, London Bridge was attended by many notable chefs including **Rick Stein**, **Brian Turner** and **Shaun Rankin**. The launch resulted in press coverage in a number of food magazines, online sites and blogger posts. Post the event we have launched further activations including:

- Website [www.eatwild.co](http://www.eatwild.co) The most visited pages are the recipe and stockists page's, showing that we are creating a demand to make and source game based meals.
- Our **social media** pages @letseatwild; since launch last September we have had over 1.5m impressions, over 120k video views, over 11k engagements and over 2.5k followers on our social media channels.
- Our team hit the streets of London to encourage consumers on the benefits of eating game meat while handing out over **20,000 recipe cards**. This interaction with the consumer helped us to understand concerns or misconceptions around game, which will aid us in evolving our campaigns. As a result, we have had 574 entries to the competition and in the 2 weeks post this we have seen over a 1,000 new people follow us, a 50% increase.
- The '**Field to Fitness**' campaign went live with the aim to educate consumers on the rearing of game, nutritional benefits and ease of cooking. We enlisted the help of fitness and rural influencers Matt Peacock and Roxy Winstanley who both have a loyal following of 73.6k target market consumers; time poor, health conscious millennials. The campaign features 2 short videos, currently 37,000 people have watched the first video.
- **A Point of Sale kit** will be supplied to 1,000 retailers, such as independent butchers and farm shops. The kit includes recipe leaflets, counter stickers, posters and shelf talkers championing British Game.

### Ambassadors

We were thrilled when Nigel Haworth agreed to become our celebrity chef ambassador. He has been promoting Eat Wild and BGA assured game throughout the season. During Great British Game Week he carried out multiple radio interviews dispelling myths and imparting his wisdom on the best ways to cook it.

*"I'm truly excited to be working with the British Game Alliance. I've always loved working with game and feel the nation are missing out. I think their nationwide campaign will deliver what is needed in order to make game more mainstream. I can't wait to be part of it."*

**Nigel Haworth, BGA Chef Ambassador.**

We have also recruited a further **20 ambassadors** from across the game supply chain to represent us on the ground and continue the growth of our community. From game feed dealers, to game keepers, retailers and food bloggers.

We were especially pleased when our MD, Tom Adams, was approached to speak on **national television** news, as a spokesperson for the community regarding an industry event of national interest. This shows how the organisation is fast becoming a well-respected and recognised body in the ever-changing shooting landscape.

## PLANS FOR 2019

### IN HOUSE – SHOOTING INDUSTRY

- Exhibit at and attend more **industry events**, so we can engage with existing stakeholders and recruit others to our community. Confirmed events include; The British Shooting Show, The Game Fair and local game keeping and veterinary events.
- This spring will also see the launch of our **Brand partnerships program** where we will engage with businesses to create a network of suppliers who can offer our members added benefits as well as showing their financial support for our organisation.
- The **BGA website** will continue to evolve and improve now that we have come to understand our users' needs. We hope to make it easier to navigate and simplify usability for our members.

### CONSUMER

- Grow the number of Eat Wild followers and the levels of engagement, with a thoroughly targeted and immersive campaign to take **Eat Wild** to the next level.
- One minute **cookery videos** featuring game; Grouse, Partridge and Pheasant. Showing a diverse range of easy and quick recipes
- We will be working strategically with our **commercial team** to add value to their offering when approaching both retailers and producers.
- **Consumer facing events** will be a key to building engagement as seen during the London leaflet drop. We already have plans in place with The Game Fair on their food stage and we're investigating how we can be involved with more food festivals to further widen the reach of Eat Wild.
- Celebrity chefs and fitness figure heads such as rugby players are being targeted and approached to be ambassadors, to further grow celebrity endorsement of Game. This work will increase media impressions and exposure leading to early adopters championing the product and infiltrating interest throughout friends, family and their wider community.
- Plus many more nationwide campaigns encouraging the public to think differently about game.

# OPERATIONS

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## ASSURANCE SCHEME UPDATE

### ASSURANCE SCHEME AND STANDARDS

We have successfully launched the scheme off the ground and now have eight auditors trained to complete the assessments that are geographically based throughout the UK. This was achieved with the help of GWCT at Loddington where we held two training sessions. We have also completed a training course with the MA & GWCT in Scotland for Grouse Moors.

Some of the highlights:

- We are over halfway through the audits and are aiming to finish these by the end of February.
- The next allocation of audits for the 2019/20 season will be around 250-300 which is 50% of the shoots that are signed up to our standards.
- We have investigated and concluded two credible complaints where no major non-compliances were found but a number of minors which have since been rectified. A further and more recent complaint is going through our disciplinary process where necessary action will be taken, and our members notified of the outcome.
- The most common non-conformances from audits are - shoots not registered with local authority, medication records not up to date, hygiene levels in chillers and chiller temperature records not recorded.
- As our auditing partners have been hugely encouraged by the general level of standards on the shoots audited this far, with many shoots learning from the experience.
- We have done a survey, sent to all shoots that have been assessed for their feedback, noting that the scheme will develop with their input and as time moves on. It is after all a pioneering scheme in its field.
- We have 17 leading game processors on board all with different levels of accreditation (FSA, SALSA, BRC). Communications and understanding has improved, and we look forward to working with them going forward.
- SALSA Accreditation for Game Processors
  - We have organised a briefing session in London for all game processors that have no accreditation aside from FSA. Bonnie Joplin from SALSA will be giving the group an overview of the standard on 11th April and the BGA will be helping its processors pass the audit. The aim is to give these processors more access to new markets as many of the larger wholesalers etc demand a minimum level of SALSA whilst also raising the standard in the processing world.

## **GAME FARM AUDITS**

The BGA is scoping out an annual audit process for the game farms with popular demand from shoots and game farms alike under the BGA banner. This will follow and be assessed against the DEFRA/GFA code for game farming but will go further with blood testing for disease such as mycoplasma and antibiotic usage whilst also giving shoots assurance on the source of egg or bird.

This is another great step forward in not only offering full chain assurance for the food world but also in giving shoots assurance on the birds they are buying. We believe this will raise standards across the board.

## **GAME SPECIFICATION & BRAND STANDARDS**

We have developed a draft specification for dressed and portioned game to ensure we have continuity of the quality of birds on sale to the public that carry the BGA stamp. This covers bruising, number of entry points, time since being shot, size and so on.

We will be sharing this draft specification with game processors to ensure they have the opportunity to comment. On agreement this will become the minimum quality spec to ensure there is a BGA benchmark out there that stockists can be proud to be a part of, ensuring peoples experience with game is a good one.

Work will start shortly with regard to how the BGA kite-mark is used and possibly licensed for future use. The objective clearly is to protect the brand and ensure that the consumer has trust in the BGA.

## **DEFRA**

Main contact has been with the export department, understanding the rules of engagement with 3rd parties and raising of UK export certificates. We have strong support within the body as high up as the Minister who is fully behind the BGA and its objectives.

## **WILD GAME GUIDE**

A shortened version for shoots has been created to determine if they need to be registered with their local authority and which legislation they need to comply with, when dealing with game. We have published this on our website.

**Jonathan Whitehead - Head of British Game Assurance Scheme**, sums up the first season:

*“It is not an understatement to say it has been a challenging first year.*

*For many shoots it was the first time they had been audited for anything, which some feared would be a rather daunting process, but feedback suggests these fears proved to be unfounded.*

*What has been seen at all levels is the tremendous work that has been put in to improving the environment, as well as the impressive welfare for game and other wildlife.*

*The challenges have been in the area of raising awareness that as well as sport, this is also food production, and that all involved must demonstrate due diligence in the safe production of food.*

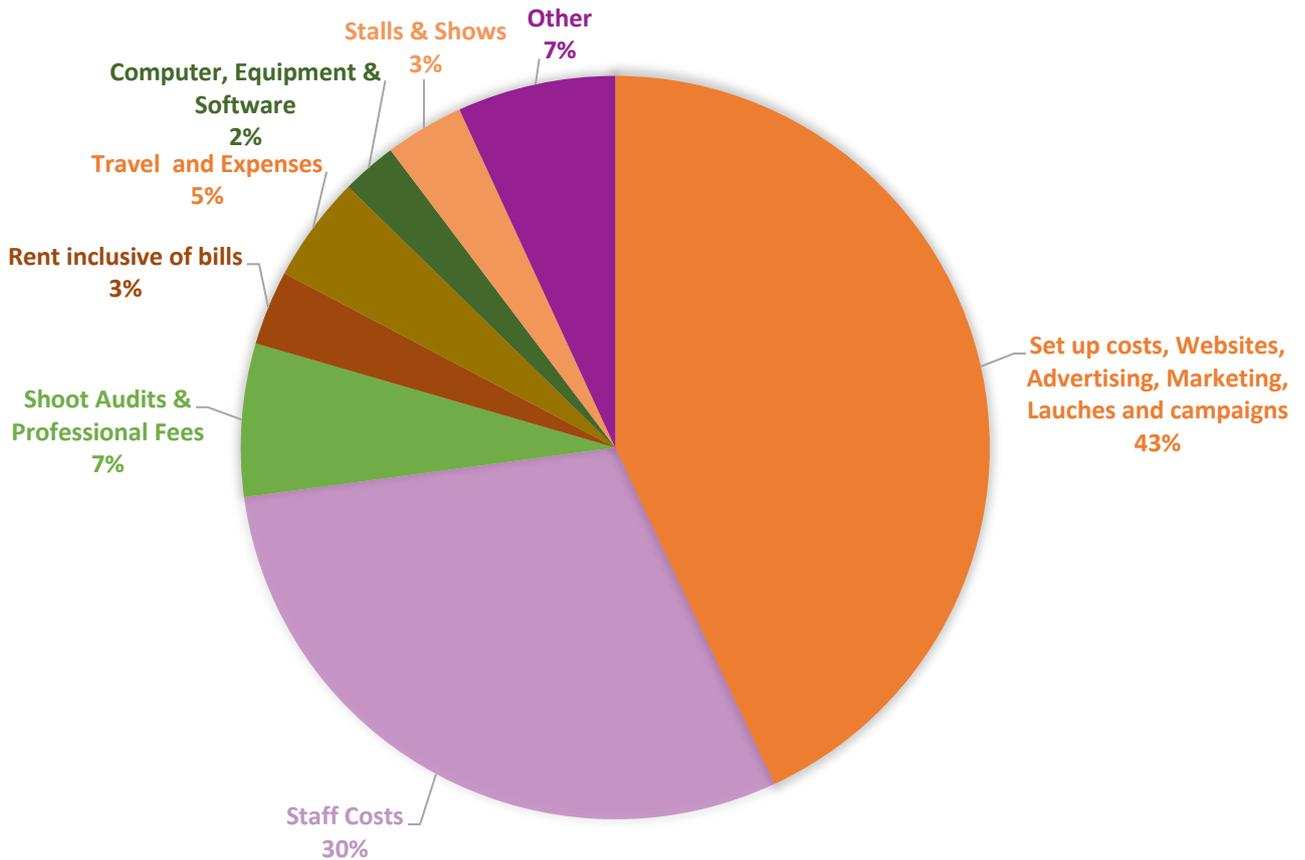
*We at Acoura look forward to the year ahead with great enthusiasm, helping shoots raise standards where necessary."*

# FINANCE

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## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

A preliminary, unaudited, breakdown of our first-year expenses is shown in the chart below:



In January this year the Board approved our annual budget for the coming year. However, in order to achieve our objectives the priority is to build a sustainable revenue base. This can only be achieved by successful take up of the voluntary gun levy of 50 pence per bird. To that end, we are in the process of writing to all our member shoots to explain how the levy can best be collected through the invoicing process together with examples. If you need to know more about the options to collect the levy please contact Sam, Shoot Account Manager, [sam@britishgamealliance.co.uk](mailto:sam@britishgamealliance.co.uk).

## MUTUALISATION

After a successful 2018, primarily focused on establishing the company, the Board of the British Game Alliance has considered the optimal ownership and legal construct for the BGA, taking into account what it does, how it does it and how it may develop in the future.

The characteristics of the business are such that it is not for profit, exists to promote game across all sectors as the official marketing board for game meat, runs the 'British Game' assurance scheme for participating shoots whilst allowing its' shoot members to boast best practice and access new markets.

Given such, the Board believes that the business lends itself to an ownership model that is more closely linked to its customer base. This is particularly so, given that all of the BGA's revenues are derived from the game shooting community that it serves, either through subscriptions, voluntary gun levy or donations, and these revenues are used to provide the services noted above to that community; the two key characteristic of a mutual organization.

The company is, therefore, in the process of amending its constitutional documents to allow it to adopt mutual status.

This means that it will be owned solely by its members and exist purely for their benefit. Member satisfaction is paramount; maximising profit is not. Since there are no external shareholders to consider, once established, any surplus trading profits will be used to enhance the BGA's services and the value of its offering.

As a mutual, the day to day operations of the company will remain as is, as will the existing governance structure (Board of Directors, Advisory Committee, etc.). However, the shoot membership will have the right to nominate, approve and remove directors, and hence control the company at the highest level in the governance structure.

The BGA's legal structure will remain as a company limited by guarantee and like all companies, our incorporated trading entity, The Game Alliance Limited, operates and will continue to operate under the Companies Acts.

Further details on this topic, together with a copy of the company's revised constitutional documents will be available in due course on the BGA's website.