



Dear GTA Member

A recent announcement by Bedfordshire Cambridgeshire & Hertfordshire (BCH) Firearms Licensing that it would be prioritising renewals over grants has led the GTA to intervene directly on behalf of its members in the region.

On 15 June, a meeting was held in Cambridgeshire between the GTA and the leadership team of BCH Firearms Licensing. A representative from the College of Policing was also present. BCH remains by far the country's worst performing firearms licensing authority.

This meeting had been called at GTA's insistence to discuss the financial impact of current firearms licensing performance on RFD businesses in the BCH area and seek solutions. We presented evidence during the 90-minute meeting from businesses across the region where a drop in trade, lengthy delay in grants and renewals, soaring demand for gun storage, confusion around the issuance of temporary permits were all hitting the bottom line hard. Critically, we also raised the significant business cost of the police prioritising renewals over grants and were assured this was no longer a policy.

An apology was offered by the police and assurances given that new management was now in place and things were beginning to change, albeit slowly.

We agreed the following joint actions:

- To publish a dedicated feature in the GTA's in-house journal Gun Trade Insider
- To co-host an open dealers' meeting at BCH HQ in the autumn
- To issue a joint BCH/GTA plan of action following publication of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies report on firearms licensing (publication expected in August)
- To co-opt GTA onto the BCH Independent Advisory Group

After the meeting, we received a formal written response from Chief Superintendent Jon Roche who leads BCH Firearms Licensing detailing his department's progress and setting out his unit's future agenda.

We are now working constructively with BCH to support the implementation of this agenda. A number of the issues we raised at the meeting will require further attention but members in the BCH region can be assured that the door is now firmly open.

I would like to express my gratitude to GTA members in the BCH region for sharing their experiences with us and providing real-life evidence for this meeting.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Jolly', with a stylized, flowing script.

Stephen Jolly, Chief Executive
The Gun Trade Association

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