

Government Response to E-petition re: Pistol Shooting 2012

Small calibre - e - petition response

We received a petition asking:

“We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to re-enact the Firearms Act 1997 No.1 (small calibre pistol exemption).”

Details of Petition:

“In the first version of the 97 act, the small calibre pistol exemption was designed as a balance, to allow ISSF, UIT, Commonwealth and Olympic shooting disciplines to continue to be developed at grass roots, club level across the U.K. The second version of the act struck out this exemption and thus outlawed any club level development of these sports. Switzerland is now the home of British pistol shooting, at the British Alpine Rifle Club, the patron is H.R.H the Duke of Edinburgh. Britain should be the home of British pistol shooting. Statute approval, by the Home Office, for U.K. clubs, now means that U.K. target shooting can fully comply with, and accomplish the required provisions of the 1st version of the Firearms Act 1997 (small calibre pistol exemption). This being in close partnership with the Government, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the British Shooting Sports Council.”

- [Read the petition](#)
- [Petitions homepage](#)

Read the Government's response

Thank you for signing the e-petition about small calibre pistol shooting. The Government has no plans to repeal the ban on small calibre pistols. The ban, which was part of the 1997 handgun ban, was intended to ensure, as far as possible, that the events of 13 March 1996 at Dunblane Primary School, when a legally held pistol was used to shoot dead sixteen children and a teacher, would not be allowed to happen again.

Parliament was aware at the time that the ban would prevent people from target shooting with pistols in this country. However, the Government made a commitment to consider favourably the question of allowing pistol shooting at any major, multi-disciplinary sporting events held in this country. The Home Secretary has powers which allow this and which were exercised when the Commonwealth Games were held in Manchester in 2002 and which will be used again for the 2012 Olympics in London. She has also agreed to exercise her powers to allow a small squad of elite pistol shooters to train here in advance of the 2012 Games. **An agreement has been reached in principle on the use of Ministry of Defence ranges, which provide a secure and controlled environment for this. These arrangements are exceptional and the Government will look to return to the present position once the 2012 Games are over.**