

Views of a Club Rep.

I was asked to write a short piece on the Hawk Board from the perspective of a club representative.

I became our rep about four years ago. Having recently retired, I felt it was a good opportunity to give something back to the sport that had given me so many good times. Having agreed, I then became somewhat overawed by the prospect of being with so many knowledgeable and well known falconers. There was no need of my worry, as I have always been treated with kindness and generosity. Indeed, involvement is a personal decision; the only obligatory requirement is to give your name and who you represent.

I spend most of my time listening and learning from the interesting and varied discussions which take place on many subjects. That they are varied is no surprise, as the very strength of the Hawk Board is its diversity. From Eagles, Falcons, Goshawks and lowly Harris hawkers like me, all are represented and that is only the falconers. There are those who keep, breed and rehabilitate all types of birds of prey, both in this country and internationally. Conservation in all parts of the world is a specific interest of some.

Due to its variety of members and connections with other organisations, the Hawk Board is able to monitor current and potentially future legislation, both for our parliament and internationally. Particular attention is needed for the flood tide generated by the EU, which might affect our sport. We are very fortunate in this country to be able to practice our sport with minimal restrictions. Other countries have very restrictive rules and in some falconery is banned.

So if your club is not affiliated, then please join the Hawk Board as soon as possible. If you are members, then please try to send a rep as often as is possible, it's an interesting and enjoyable experience, we don't bite and the more we all stand together, the better our chances of continuing to practice the sport we love and keep our birds.

Graham Bennett
South East Raptors Association