

News Update October 2026

Shotgun licensing is changing understand the new checks, fees and reporting duties and what future reforms could mean for responsible owners across Great Britain.

Shotgun licence rules in Great Britain are becoming stricter. Current changes include more checks, higher fees and new duties to report medical conditions. Other changes have been suggested, but they are not yet law.

1. Current Rules

- **Health changes:** From 29 September 2026, licence holders must quickly tell the police if a *relevant* medical *condition* is diagnosed, treated or gets worse.
- **Treatment elsewhere:** Licence holders must also report treatment for a relevant condition from a clinician outside their usual GP practice and give the police that clinician's details.
- These rules apply in England, Wales and Scotland.

2. Application Checks and Fees

- New applications and renewals need two referees. This rule began on 5 August 2025 and was kept when replacement rules took effect on 23 March 2026.
- Police may carry out wider checks. When appropriate, they may contact people who live with the applicant.

From 4 June 2026, a new shotgun licence costs £200, renewal costs £130 and replacing a lost or destroyed licence costs £9. Fees also increased for people applying for or renewing shotgun and firearm certificates together.

3. Possible Future Reforms

In August 2026, the police inspectorate HMICFRS said the licensing system in England and Wales was not fit for purpose. It made 23 recommendations, including one national licensing body, medical checks, skills tests and digital certificates. These ideas are not yet law.

4. Why It Matters

- The aim is to improve public safety, make decisions more consistent and reduce certificate fraud.

Shotgun owners may face more checks, forms and delays. However, any further changes will need government action and new laws.

Search terms: clay pigeon shooting, shotgun safety, shotgun licence changes, firearms licensing, shooting in Kent, shooting in Sussex, responsible shooting, countryside sport

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