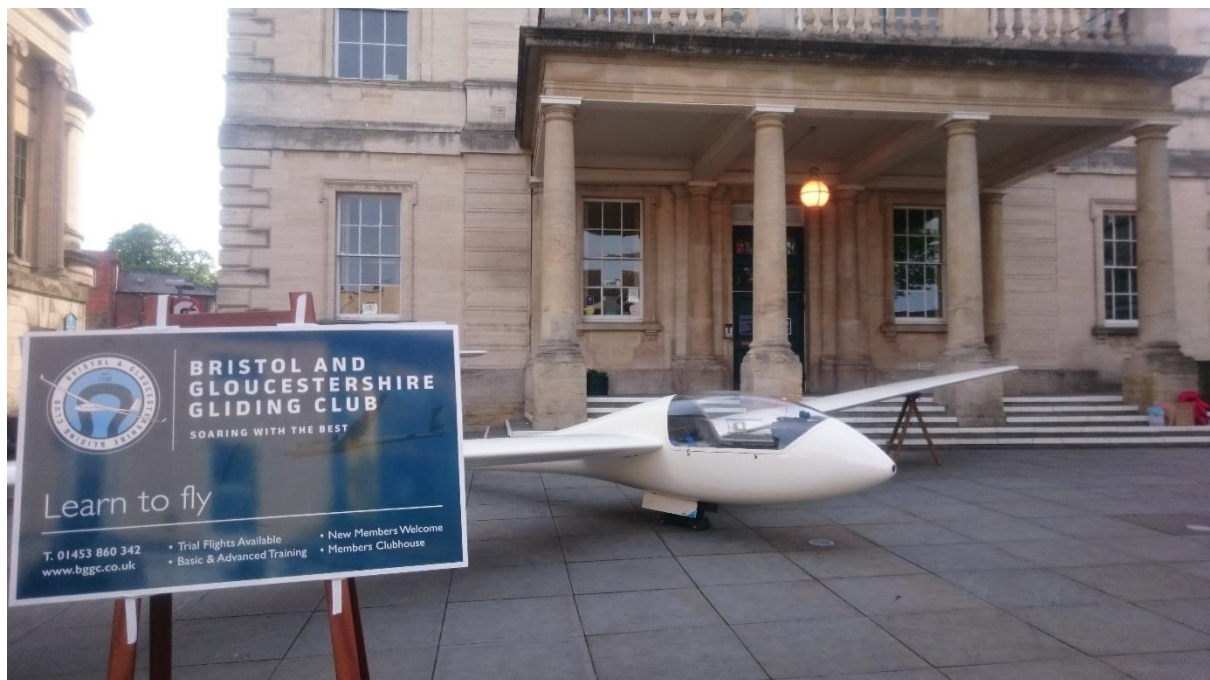


Bristol & Gloucestershire Gliding Club

Chairman's Newsletter June 2017

Dan Welch (Chairman) & BGGC 2017 Committee



Welcome!

Welcome to another Chairman's newsletter! I would dearly like to be writing one of these every week to keep you all in the loop because there is so much exciting stuff going on at the club however BECAUSE there is so much stuff going on I barely get time, let's hope I don't get called off standby before its done.

The purpose of the newsletters are to keep everyone updated with how the club is being managed, share new ideas, give special thanks and hopefully dispel a few myths that float round from time to time.

The committee is a very enthusiastic bunch and many of us like nattering in the bar about new ideas. It's an important process because it allows those ideas to develop with inputs from the membership. We are trying to cultivate an open and transparent approach to club governance. Communication is key to teamwork and teamwork is key to success. The problem comes when things get taken out of context, rumours begin, Chinese whispers distort the facts, add drama and suddenly everyone thinks we are selling all the gliders and making it a PPL school!

My point is this... for success we need everyone pulling in the same direction. Rumour and misunderstandings are harmful to teamwork. If you have any concerns please either use the management structure to determine the correct person to approach or failing that come and see me.

I have included a copy of the new management structure at the end of this newsletter for your reference.

So far the committee have been very task and team focussed in an effort to set up the café and get off to a great start and we have lots more ideas in the pipeline. I am keen however not to forget our members as individuals. We all have different needs, drives and ideas. For us to succeed as a team these individual needs also require fulfilment. Please can I ask that if you have concerns about any aspect of the club, be it something which you think needs changing to make it safer or more efficient or concerns over the changes the committee are making then please come and see me.

What's been going on this month?

As we head into the soaring season it is a good time to reflect on what we have achieved and set in motion already this year. For the sake of the committee's gliding currency and sanity it is time to turn down the burner and enjoy the thermals and BBQs.

BGGC survives because people give their time to club tasks and I am very driven to recognise these efforts. In the past I have been reluctant to mention names directly for fear of missing someone out. However, this edition I have decided take a brave pill because these fantastic people are working with new initiatives to make our club more profitable and a better place. If I have forgotten anyone then my apologies. Be aware of what your friends are doing around the club and sing their praises by letting me know.

Steve N - Amongst his usual activities of overseeing airfield equipment and the fleet Steve has been heavily involved in researching new flight logging and management software for the office. There are packages other clubs use and we are keen to update and streamline the way we operate. The aim of this is to reduce office workload and make it easier for members to access their accounts and fill them with money. We don't have a timescale on this yet but will keep you updated.

We are also looking at a way to make it easier to access your accounts, possibly a computer in the foyer linked to the network giving you access 24-7 to interrogate your flying records and account info.

Steve has also had a survey done of the clubhouse computer network and come up with a plan to improve internet speeds and reliability in a three pronged attack. Firstly the old cabling gets taken out and replaced with new and the wifi routers/hubs get changed. This should alone improve data transfer rates from one end of the building to the other and solve the connection issues we are having. Secondly, the office shall have a dedicated phone line supplying internet. This will provide slower but secure and reliable internet to the business side of the club. Thirdly, a 4G dongle mounted somewhere on the clubhouse will suck up high speed internet wirelessly from down the hill to service club members and visitors. Steve is still researching wireless contracts to get a good deal so we are not quite sure what the data allowance and cost will be yet but the overall result should be solid internet for everyone to get notams, weather and amazon to buy presents for the committee.

Rupert/Joey - Rupert, who we have been joking recently owns a café with a side line in making propellers, and Joey have been doing a fantastic job setting up “The Old Flying Club Café” and managing the early days. There has been a colossal amount of work done with many late night candles burnt. We have lost a couple of the early staff members but I am told we have already recruited another couple so don't be surprised if you see a few new eager faces. I know you will make them feel very welcome.

I must say I am delighted to see so many members using the facility and even quite a few non - members providing return custom already! Please remember it's OUR café and all profits go towards improving OUR club. Charity begins at home!

Julian - Julian has been researching new office management software with Steve N. The pair travelled all the way to Camp Hill Gliding club to see how they have implemented it and pinch a few good ideas. Things in the pipeline, watch this space.

Julian has also completed our new website! It is online now at the usual address www.bggc.co.uk. This is an important step towards updating our image and making BGGC a more attractive place to visit. To put this project in perspective, when asked he says this has taken around **200 hours** of work to complete! This is a huge amount of work but massively important as our website is our shop front. Thank you Julian!

Ken Pyle - The more observant of you will have noticed the new door on the workshop! It's not technically new but is a significant improvement on the old one with the peeling veneer. Ken assisted with the fitting and did an excellent job attaching the new handle and lock. I wonder if he could do the rest of the doors in the clubhouse!?

Talking of which - Danielle suggested fitting a keypad lock to the members dining area door? Perhaps a member could offer to action this?

Ken has also been spending a huge amount of time clearing out all the old records in the office. This has been an important action for clearing the decks, finding and organising records we should be keeping, culling those we don't and getting to know the paperwork requirements of our gliding club.

- If anyone requires a receipt for a glider tyre bought in the seventies then Ken is your man ☺

Graham Morris - Gift Aid ... This means Free Money for your Club - Please participate!

All you need to do is email Graham and he will tell you how you can make money for the club. This means better facilities, better fleet and lower membership fees.

Graham has managed to claim a huge **£3500 already!**

Dougie - Our winch master has been hard at work organising a very comprehensive winch training and personnel currency scheme. Unfortunately, gone are the days we can get away with a quick briefing and “off you go” attitude to winching. To be compliant with modern Health and Safety we must have processes in place to protect our winch drivers and train them to a high standard. Alan Price, our HSE officer, has fully endorsed Dougie’s efforts and it would be great to see this level of attention to detail carried across all departments in the club. Well done Dougie. - Not bad for the youngest winch master in the country! He has also been working to refurbish an old car to provide trial lesson transport up and down the field.

I really don't want to see trial lesson mums clutching handbags clinging on to the back of golf buggies anymore! - Seriously though. Trial lesson instructors, you are our ambassadors for BGGC and our sport. Please think about how we are being perceived by the public. We must portray a professional and safe environment.

Richard Starling - As usual, Richard is doing a fab job of looking after our field. If there is anything you can do to help please contact him directly and he will point you in the right direction! I have been told that he has saved us around £1000 by fixing our old topper instead of buying a new one.

This is a fantastic example of thinking outside the box and genuinely considering the “business” side to the club. The more money we can save the more money we will have for facility improvement. Thank you Richard!

Anna Noujaim - For some weeks now you may have noticed the stunning flower barrels outside the café and clubhouse entrance. Anna has done a great job rejuvenating the old half barrels and filling them up. Please do water them, especially during all this hot weather!!

Mark Scott - Again, as part of improving the look and feel of the club, the front entrance has been thoroughly cleaned and redecorated. Mark Scott spent a day painting and it looks fantastic.

As a next step we hope to build a “flying club” style signing in desk against the wall left of the office. New notice boards will go up and all the documents which currently litter the office desk will be organised. If anyone has anything to donate with shelves and a top that is suitable or adaptable please send me a picture. This would also be the ideal place for computer terminal access to everyone’s flying accounts.

Alan Price - As mentioned, Alan has been organising our HSE side. This is a vitally important part of the club structure and he needs everyone’s cooperation, particularly everyone who has responsibility for part of the club operation. It is Alan’s job to maintain an overview of the requirements and make recommendations but he cannot go around putting the systems in place. If he makes contact with you to request your input please support him in his role.

One of Alan’s recent recommendations has resulted in a new fire extinguisher storage box by the fuel pumps. We had been previously locking all the extinguishers away in the fuel shed!

“Oh no, the tugs on fire!... where’s the key gone?”



Danielle Welch and Team - Just before the cafe opening Danielle, Duggie, Seb, Emily and Will took HXM down to Stroud and rigged outside the Sub Rooms for a day or PR. This was very effective and we have already had trial lessons phoning up to book as a result. This kind of interaction with the public is hugely effective and important for boosting trial lesson trade and hopefully membership numbers. We will be looking for people to run similar events in the future so please do volunteer your time to support them.

New Members

I would like to offer a special welcome to all of our recent new members! If I have not yet met any of you please feel free to come and introduce yourselves to me.

Bryn Clarke - Student Flying
Daniel Collins - Associate
Joseph Collins - Associate
Adam Jones - Associate
Jessica Jones - Associate
Georgina Kloos - Student Flying
Alexander Ruther - Junior Flying
Christopher Shaw - Retired Flying
Richard King - Retired Flying
Patricia King - Associate

Richard and Patricia King Join us from Cotswold Aero Club at Staverton. They have been so impressed with the beauty of the site and friendliness in the club they have not only joined but have taken on one of our overgrown slots in the caravan park. Some of you may have noticed the clearing and drain laying recently for their new accommodation. Richard also has generated many skills and contacts through his working life and has already come up with some fantastic possible improvements to Nympsfield... Watch this space.

To everyone new at Nympsfield, a very warm welcome!

Café Update

So the café has opened and all early indications show that it is doing well and I'd go as far as saying better than expected! Any new business will take time to generate a customer base but we are already seeing return custom from members of the public which is great. I am also delighted to see how much support it has received from our membership.

In May alone (bearing in mind we opened on 20th) the cafe brought in over £2.5K selling 63 bacon baps, 93 pieces of cake and a whopping 195 coffees.

We are attracting a great variety of clientele from cyclists, walkers, local families and what's better is they are coming back for more.

Reviews on the likes of trip advisor and Facebook have stated things like: 'something for everyone on the menu'; 'very considerate service' and 'We'll be back!'

Due to the departure of the former manager, it has fallen to club members to step in and ensure the cafe has the support it needs. Both Karri and Charlie are doing a fantastic job of keeping the cafe running and bringing back customers with their excellent rapport skills and delicious food. They also achieved top marks from the Council who did a full health and safety inspection less than two weeks after we opened.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes Rupert and Joey are busy managing the accounts, payroll, staff contracts and publicity. Both Anna and Joey have also undertaken shifts to help over the busy weekends and are getting quite good at smiley cappuccinos!

In order to let the girls get on with the fantastic job they are doing and due to health, safety and insurance reasons please can members refrain from stepping behind the counter and into the kitchen. We even had a member the other day transiting through to the carpark!!

We are also finding that people are using the café as a route through to the toilets from the garden. I would like to discourage this also! Especially when it is busy this leads to congestion and is less comfortable for the café customers.

This has been a huge success so far so thank you for everyone's support. It is also opening many exciting doors for the future, more to follow.

Well done café team!

Weekday Flying

I would like to say a huge thank you to all our weekday instructors for stepping in in the absence of a staff instructor this year. Names I have heard instructing in the week have been Dave Ascroft, Sid Alan Montague and David Jesty - Thanks to you and everyone else who has helped for keeping us operating in the week.

On the subject of staff instructors, we are still looking to fill the position because we understand how important a consistent week day operation is. Thinking ahead we are also beginning the process of recruiting for next year to maximise the chance of finding someone great. We are also looking into the possibility of finding an operations manager to take some of the organisational load. The plan is

that a suitable candidate would significantly improve operational reliability and provide a hub from which projects and maintenance could be coordinated.

Field Crossing Rule

As I have explained a recent email correspondence, we have had a number of near misses between aircraft and people/vehicles crossing the field. The important thing to note is that the field is always active during the day, not just when gliders are launching.

The committee have decided to implement (or “revive” if you are senior enough to remember this rule the last time - Sid!) a policy of not crossing the field between the two humps during the hours of daylight. I would like to ask for everyone’s cooperation on this one.

P70 - Update

As you are all probably aware by now P70 suffered some damage to the nose wheel last month due to a suspected heavy landing. As I mentioned last newsletter it is a huge shame someone didn’t feel able to come forward and report the damage at the time it occurred. We have an open reporting culture in aviation which means we do not attribute blame for mistakes. The result of this should be that people feel comfortable holding their hands up to damage so we can get it fixed before someone else hurts themselves. The reporting process is also key to spotting dangerous trends so that operations can be adjusted to prevent accidents happening.

An additional and unexpected negative to no one coming forward was that it has significantly delayed the insurance claim process. To process a claim the insurance company needed to know who was involved and when no one owned up it caused a problem.

As a result, repair work has only just begun therefore keeping one of our main assets out of action for an unnecessarily long time. I hope I have made my position on this clear!

The good news is that she is being repaired, the insurance is paying out and we will hopefully have her back soon.

Winter Time Club Maintenance

In order to improve the operational reliability of the club equipment and ensure that essential work gets done at a time when the kit is least used, the committee would like to propose a break in flying for approximately 6 weeks post January 1st next year.

During this time we should aim to annual all aircraft and thoroughly service all equipment utilising member involvement and professional assistance.

This would not just be all work and no play! It would also be an ideal opportunity to run plenty of social events and lectures and if the weather provided a day or two of good ridge conditions flying days could be announced.

I know there will be plenty of opinions on the matter and I encourage you to let us know what they are. I would much prefer a face to face conversation rather than email (I get way too many of those)

and if you feel it is not the right course of action can I please ask that you think of and present an alternative!

Next time...

That's it for now. Over the coming months we will be releasing some ideas for future projects and events.

Happy Soaring
Dan

BGGC Chairman

BGGC Management Structure

| Chairman - Dan Welch | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Vice Chairman Steve Noujaim | Secretary Alan Montague | Treasurer Jake Brattle | Marketing Julian Rees | Estates Rupert Wasey |
| Engineering Support Martin Talbot | Legal Alan Montague | Assistant Treasurer Nalin Parmar | Trial Lesson Marketing Steve Trowmans | Clubhouse and Grounds Brian Jenkinson |
| Safety Officers Jake Brattle (Flying Ops) Alan Price (Non Flying Ops) | Governance and Policies Ken Pile | Stats Budget and Planning Nalin Parmar | Promotion and Events (Volunteer Needed!) | Airfield Richard Starling Steve Kohnstamm |
| Tug Master Martin Talbot | Staff Management (Volunteer Needed!) | IT Infrastructure Christophe Murtricy Seb Smaka | Press Relations Nick Wall | Bar Carol Smith Elaine Townsend |
| Winch Master Douggie Vance | | Gift Aid Graham Morris | Social Media Seb Smaka | Entertainment Danielle Welch |
| Glider Captains EKF – Nick Baldock MY – Andy Turner P70 - Sid Smith CMN – Scott Barrett (More Volunteers Needed!) | | Fund Raising (Volunteer Needed!) | | Hangars and Workshops Andy Davis |
| Vehicle Captains Scott Barrett (More Volunteers Needed!) | | | | Trailer and Caravan Parks Richard Starling |

