

Bristol & Gloucestershire Gliding Club

Chairman's Newsletter 2018

Dan Welch (Chairman) & BGGC 2018 Committee



Happy New Year!

A very happy New Year to everyone from me and a huge thanks to our continuing and new committee members. Your 2018 committee is as follows...

Chairman	Dan Welch
Vice Chairman	Andrew Ward
Secretary	Alan Montague
Treasurer	Nalin Parmar
Estates	Neil Spicer
Operations	Dougie Vance

As you all know in 2017 we put a lot of effort into tying up loose ends, ensuring the club's legal compliance and putting together a financial plan for the future amongst many other things. 2018 should be an interesting year as we start to see the benefits of last year's groundwork and move on to some more physical changes to the club.

These physical changes will all be focussed on modernising our facility and making it a nicer, more user friendly place with the aim of encouraging member usage and attracting new members to BGGC. More members means more memberships, rentals and more cash in the bank for fleet and facility improvements.

Please do get involved with working parties when they are announced. Everyone will ultimately benefit from the projects we have planned, some directly and others indirectly. Member support will greatly reduce the cost of projects and help keep life in the place on days when the weather is less suitable for flying. Watch this space!

Daphne's Retirement

This year's big news is that Daphne, our long suffering office jockey, will be retiring in April.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to Daphne for her 18 years of service to the club and wish her the very best for a long and enjoyable retirement.

We shall be advertising for Daphne's replacement as soon as possible, if there is anyone who may be interested in some time working in the club office please make contact with the committee at committee@bggc.co.uk

Midweek Winch Driver

I'm sure the grapevine has been buzzing recently and therefore many of you will be aware that Tommy, our midweek winch driver, has finished his employment at BGGC. I would like to thank him very much for his service to the club and his excellent winch launching and wish him all the very best in the future.

Tommy's farewell message...

*Hi guys! Tommy here, just like to thank everyone in my 3 and a bit years for all off the help and support, Really couldn't have done it without all of you. I'm moving on to pastures new. We had some cracking days and some great nights. Keep flying!
Tommy x*



EKF Damage

Right... this is where the tone changes a little. I was very disappointed to learn that one of our single-seaters suffered completely needless damage late in 2017. One of the south hangar doors had been precariously replaced and the door blew in, landing on EKF's wing and puncturing it in two places.

This is just one of many examples I have observed of members taking no responsibility for our kit and facility and walking away thinking "someone else will fix it". This is NOT acceptable. It must have been quite clear that the door

was not suitably restrained for some time and common sense would say this incident was likely to happen. The cost of repairing this damage will be £2000 and the glider will be out of action until March.

If you discover something is not working properly or is damaged YOU must report it so it can get fixed.

If you damage something yourself then YOU must report it.

In aviation we operate a "just culture". A just culture does not punish people for making mistakes it relies on people's honesty to report incidents so that they can be fixed and learned from to everyone's benefit.

Huge efforts are being made to save money and raise the standards at BGGC, please help and do not undo our good work. Neil Spicer will be organising working parties to make repairs to the south hangar doors. If you are a user of the kit over there then please do give some time to help - we know who you are!!

Moan over.

2018 Staff Instructor and Operations Manager

Good news! We have secured both a staff instructor and operations manager for the 2018 season!

Both will be starting work in mid-March and continuing until mid-October. The staff instructor will be providing a glider instructing service to members and trial lessons during the week. He will also be involved in running courses throughout the year... details to follow.

The operations manager's primary role will be to ensure a launch is always available for members throughout the week but secondary to that he will also be keeping a watchful eye on the club ensuring that kit and facilities are maintained to a good standard and always ready for use.

NOTE! This does NOT absolve club members of responsibility to maintain and look after the kit! The operations manager is there to coordinate effort and organise it not to do it all himself.

We are planning a welcoming party for our new staff members in March to give them a chance to meet everyone and vice-versa (plus it's a good excuse for a start of season pissup).

Until the ops manager starts work in mid-March we will not have a dedicated weekday winch driver on site. We are looking for extra members to train to drive the winch so that launches will be available during the week. Please contact the Winch Master or the Committee and help your club.

Clubhouse Refurbishment

There was a meeting the other day between our Estates Manager Neil Spicer, Brian Jenkinson, our clubhouse red box and myself to discuss a possible way forward to improving our member's area in the old building.

We discussed what we are missing, what we are not fully utilising and what could be significantly improved and these are our findings:

We need:

- A professional, well set up area to brief and hold meetings.

Our current briefing room is not suitable for what we require, especially as we are planning to grow the club and improve the trial lesson product. It is small, smelly and tatty.

- A comfortable, welcoming and tidy area for members to socialise and relax in the club building in addition to the bar.

Although we have the dining area in the old club building, it is not particularly comfortable or well organised. The dining table is in the middle of the thoroughfare and there is no space to relax on a sofa. A nice log burner would go very well in there.

- A kitchen area that is clean, well organised and well stocked.

The kitchen facility is tired and is in desperate need of some attention.

What are we not fully utilising?

- The corridor leading the “old” instructor’s flat entrance.

We have fitted a door to the outside wall of the instructors flat to improve access and escape in case of a fire. It also helps to section off the flat from the rest of the club room for privacy. With the old access door blocked up, more space has been made available for the kitchen units.

- Our bunk rooms are underutilised.

They do take up a huge amount of space and provide very little return for the club. It is believed that at least the space rooms 8 and 9 occupy would be better used in another way.

- The area behind the parachute loft.

I am lead to believe that this was originally planned to be a briefing room. This is however highly impractical due to the steps and being so far out of the way no one uses it. The space would be better used for something else.

What’s the plan?

Well... plans to follow 😊

Instructor’s Flat Refurbishment

Seen as we have a professional instructor on the way this year we had better get his accommodation sorted! So far the flat has been stripped out, floor taken up, shower replaced, kitchenette fitted and is ready for an enthusiastic working party to prepare and paint the walls.

First working party this Saturday (27th) to make a start. A big dinner will be cooked in the evening and there is beer in the bar. PLEASE PLEASE HELP!!

Gift Aid and Cash Back

Graham continues his fantastic work this year with Gift Aid so please do contact him. Remember, every time you visit the club on club business (Instructing/maintenance/meetings/winch driving etc...) the club can get 20% of your costs straight back from the government! This can also be claimed retrospectively. All you have to do is submit your journeys in the spreadsheet Graham has already produced. Contact gift_aid@bggc.co.uk

- Gift Aid has been running since the end of April (last).
- After the next claim that will be made before the end of January '18, it will have recovered over £13,500 from HMRC.
- Lots of members have as yet to take part, please do so.
- There is no such thing as too small or infrequent a claim to make, it's all about lots of us making many small claims.

Cash Back is another way we can make money for the club. You will have seen the posters around the club which explain this very simple process of making more money for the club.

- The club has registered with a free to use cash back website called 'easyfundraising'.
- If you do your online shopping through it, the club gets a small commission
- If we all do it, the club will get a useful sum of money.
- It's dead easy to use and costs you nothing.

Both Cash Back & Gift Aid will shortly have their own pages in the Members Area of the club website.

Café

The café is understandably quiet at the moment with the poor weather and lack of flying. It is a fantastic facility so please do support it through these difficult winter months.

Karri has now a superb chef who cooks Sunday Roast dinners until 3pm every Sunday. They really are excellent so please do attend and spread the word!

Nympsfield Flyin

I would like to announce that we are planning a Nympsfield Flyin this year. Events of this nature will provide a much needed financial boost for the club and increase awareness of our sport in the power flying world. Richard King has been putting out some feelers on the Flyer forum and support is growing. The exact details are yet to be confirmed but we will be planning it so that it has minimal impact on gliding activities just in case it coincides with a fantastic cross country day.

Details will be released later in the year but please do come along and help out.

Field and Equipment

Those of you who believe in magic will know that the field is flattened and grass cut each year by a fleet of tiny fairies each equipped with a small rolling pin and pair of scissors. The rest of us know that it is achieved with many hours of painstaking labour and a big tractor.

So to those of you who believe it is acceptable to drive on the field when it is wet and muddy and tear great big groves into it please think next time about the poor sod who has to roll it flat again and repair your damage.

To facilitate all this rolling and cutting Richard King has very kindly used his powers of persuasion to get the large Ford tractor refurbished for an extremely reasonable price so it is ready for the season. It is now steam cleaned, shiny and no drip trays required! He has also now taken away the smaller Layland tractor and is giving it a similar stern talking to.

From all of us who benefit from a flat cut field, we thank you.

That's all from me for now, plenty more to come.

Dan
BGGC Chairman