

Introduction

It has been rather a long time since my last newsletter. At the Open Meeting in November we gave a presentation of the 2016 results, the outlook and the TAG ACP. So for the benefit of those who missed it, here is a flavour of what was said – in words and pictures.

ATC replaced by 2EE

This time last year we had to deal with our long-standing tenants ATC going into receivership. We signed a lot of papers on Christmas Eve for 2EE to take over the facility. They have settled in well and the number of jets parked there now indicates how well the business is going.



Management sometimes has to commute from Sywell, nice company transport.

Members' Maintenance Facility

This has been well used out of season.



Last winter all 3 bays were full for most of 6 months, with 41 gliders passing through. The Lasham Trust has provided tools, trestles, a compressor, lights etc and the majority of members who use the facility think it is a great improvement over the Brown Elephant. If recovering or spraying needs to be done, members can use the new maintenance facility under supervision when there is the time and space for it.

Wally Kahn Hangar



We spent £30,000 this year to finish it off by having the floor sealed. Keeping the dust down stops water soaking through though, and when we have excessive rain blown in it can be slippery. We have now got big squeegees to push the water away, but please be careful in there when there are puddles.

Competitions 2016

We now have 20,000 litres of water for competitions (and for the club grid when we have worked out where to park it).



The regionals in May had awful weather with only one day flown. LashamGlide had better luck with 7 days. 17 overseas pilots competed against 48 locals.

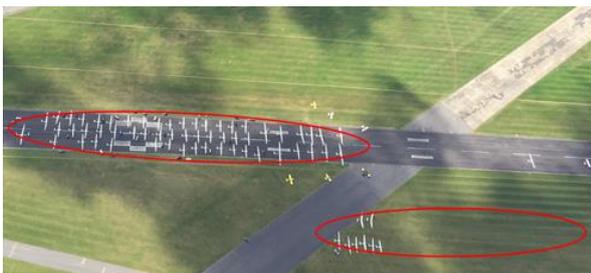
To provide Wi-Fi for competitors and crews on the south side, we signed an agreement for Redraw to put a mast on the Black Hangar.



Part of the deal also provides high speed internet for the office, and we are now working to push the internet connection through the mains electricity to the caravans and cabins on the south side.



The plan we have introduced for competitions is to use the south side of the airfield for gliders, trailers, camping, launching and landing, leaving the north side free for club members flying. All the competition trailers were parked on 34, with the camping facilities next to them.

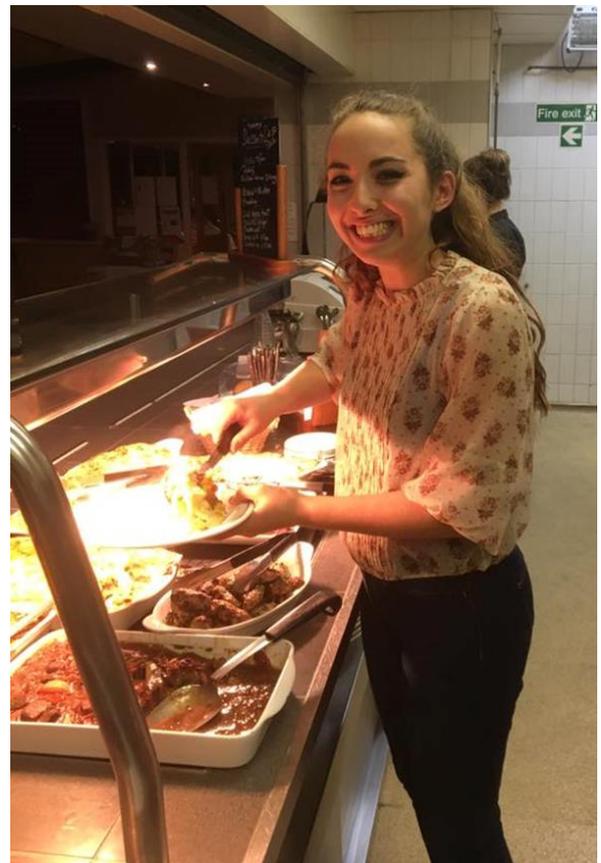


Competitors grid on the main runway only. The club grid is then able to use the north side grass. In this picture the club grid is down to 8 gliders - 80 gliders had already been launched ahead of the competition being sent off.

Big thanks to Andy Davis, CD, Joan Bickers and the Lasham competition team, and Colin Watt for organising the launching so successfully. No winching during the competition, but, as members could get a 1500ft aerotow for the price of a winch launch, there were no complaints.

New Caterers

Matt and Dan left us in the autumn; we wish them well with their golf club contract. Golden Glider (the team behind the Golden Pot) took over in October. With the new manager Alice it was service with a smile from Day 1.



The Christmas Dinner will be on 10th December. No cabaret this year as the chief culprits are sadly unavailable...

Another New ASK21

Mostly paid for in advance before Brexit pushed up the cost of new gliders. Here in the workshop waiting for the CAA to reassure us that it was safe to fly....

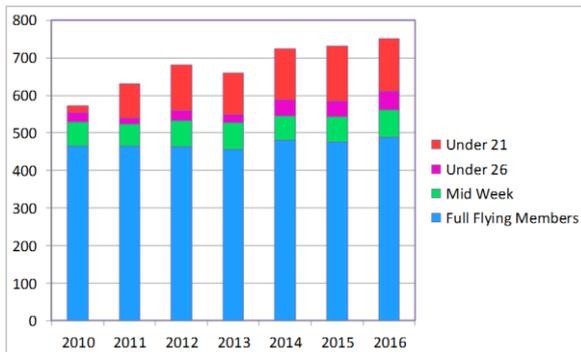


And after its first day's work.



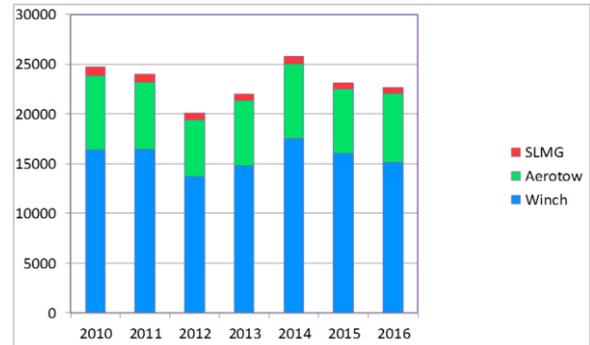
2016 Statistics

Membership up.



Flying members up from 717 in 2015 to 728 in 2016. A small increase, but the chart shows we are holding our own and even gaining slightly.

Launches down.



We have the winches, we have the tugs, but we don't control the weather. The early season was good, a lot of training and cross countries in March. It went downhill in the spring with a run of bad weeks, then settled down again in the summer.

Private gliders on site (that we know about) increased from 215 to 222.

2016 Finances

The draft figures from Joan and John are good. The simplest measure is cash, and after buying the ASK21 and spending a lot on legal fees fighting the Farnborough ACP we still increased the year-end cash by £81,000 to £950,000. The CoM has put major capex projects such as replacing the Brown Elephant on hold to ensure we have a solid reserve to protect us against any non-gliding problems. In particular, the potential need for further large legal expenditure relating to TAG's ACP

TAG Farnborough ACP

Colin Jackson made a very comprehensive presentation at the open meeting that was well received. Those who were there got a detailed insight into all that has happened this year, and it's a lot.

Selecting some of the key events - FASVIG produced a report recommending withdrawing the ACP, the CAA involved TAG, FASVIG, LGS, the BGA and the GAA in trying to find solutions with a series of meetings taking place, TAG had to carry out an additional consultation after we showed (and they probably realised) their

Option 34 could not work (they are now on Option 36), the LGS team has been updating our MP and local authorities and Colin has appeared on TV again.

Looking forward, we are expecting the CAA to un-pause the ACP process very soon. Lasham and its GA partners have submitted an alternative proposal to the CAA in December. TAG will be issuing its third feedback report after the latest consultation probably also in December. The CAA may then finally make its decision and publish it in January. Once that happens, we will have a short window in which to analyse its effect on Lasham and decide what action to take, up to and including a Judicial Review. Lasham will need to be prepared to act fast, as there will only be a three months window for legal action.

Huge thanks to Colin, Peter Reading, Julian Richardson and the large group of our members supporting the ACP team for all the time, effort and professionalism they have devoted to fighting this on our behalf. The battle continues.

Looking Forward to 2017

The big news is no news – no increase in fees or subscriptions for the fifth year in a row. In fact we have made a few minor reductions for some of the fees (such as true SLMGs, but not TMGs). The full schedule of fees will appear on the Lasham web site shortly.

The two big events for 2017 are likely to be the next stage of the TAG Farnborough ACP fight and the European Gliding Championships. Colin Jackson has commented on the first, so I will say something about EGC 2017.

19th European Gliding Championships



Lasham started work on EGC2017 in 2013. It will be the first senior international competition held in the UK since the world championships at South Cerney in 1965. Lasham was also involved back then. *"The Lasham Gliding Association was kind enough to offer their excellent facilities to all those arriving from abroad for the Championships".* (1965 U.S. Gliding Team).

We are hosting the three flapped classes – 15m, 18m and Open Class. With a practice week followed by two weeks of competition, the visitors will be flying with us for up to three weeks in August.

A great deal of negotiation with the BGA and FAI has gone into making sure the club can operate effectively while the competition is taking place. The Nationals last year and LashamGlide this year demonstrated how we can do that safely. There will be some additional constraints in 2017, but these will be fully briefed at the time and will not stop us flying. Only the weather can do that.

AGM 2016

This will be on **25th March 2017** (not the date I said at the Open Meeting).

And Finally

The airfield in late autumn is sometimes a magical place, even when freezing cold and lacking in thermals (of the parcels of warm air variety, plenty of the other sort). The normally green linear hangar changed to gold before my eyes at dusk yesterday.



Mike Clarke
Chairman
