

Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee
Tuesday 7th June 2016

Present: Jamie Freeman – Chairman
Brian Bristow – Smarden PC
David Parker – Headcorn Parachute Club
Lyn Selby - Headcorn PC
Martin Round – Maidstone Borough Council
Gerald Hodges – Thurston Helicopters
James Tuke – Thurston Helicopters
John Perry – Staplehurst PC
Lester Gosbee – Frittenden PC
Sue Line – Secretary

1. Apologies for Absence

Eliot Styles – Aero legends
Ben Perkins – Aero Legends
Alan Marsh – Ashford Borough Council

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read accepted and signed.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Planning and Events

Jamie Freeman said that the aerodrome would be holding an event this coming weekend with the British Motorcycle Federation. There would be a Funfair, various stands, Laguna racing would have a presence, some vintage motorcycles. It was planned to hold a spoof speed run with a Spitfire and a Vincent Black Shadow motorcycle.

5. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

6. Complaints

There had been a complaint from a resident north of the village about low level flying in a bi-plane and also noise in general. The pilot had turned out to be a neighbour and they had spoken to each other. Jamie Freeman had had an email exchange with the resident and explained about noise mitigation procedures and David Sames report, and especially

parachuting and the fact that NATs would not allow the parachute plane to be vectored away from the field. They had only permitted a 1.5 nautical mile 'tube'. The aerodrome had reinforced circuit traffic north of the village. At that time the Islander was more in use than the Cessna 208.

There had been a complaint about Chinooks flying at night. It was felt that these complaints should be passed back to the RAF. Jamie Freeman confirmed that the RAF do request to come to the aerodrome at night for a crew change, and he felt that being on the aerodrome was a safety issue. The aerodrome recently had a RAF helicopter land and report a faulty component which was replaced the following day. Brian Bristow asked how often the RAF came to the aerodrome. Jamie Freeman said that they spread their visits throughout the country. He had requested that they only fly up to 10.30pm if possible, but sometimes they did come later, and confirmed that the aerodrome would continue to support them.

There had been a complaint about a bi-wing flying near Rye. It was a Pitts S1 which was not allowed to carry to undertake aerobatics at the aerodrome – a point which was agreed a long time ago. Anne Widdicombe (then an MP) and Christopher Freeman had gone through this. Jamie Freeman had explained the 500ft rule but had however suggested that the pilot (who is not based on the field) flew further into the marsh where it was less populated.

There had been a complaint about what is known as a 'box drop'. This was carried out by Headcorn Parachute Club whereby there were a number of low level passes over the aerodrome and boxes were dropped. These are tests for the dropping of humanitarian aid, where the boxes have to be dropped at low level and at speeds of 120mph to deploy the articles. This has been done before the aerodrome but only occasionally.

Martin Round felt that emergency training for the Forces and for humanitarian aid deserved support.

7. Any Other Business

Following the incident at Shoreham there were still issues with the Civil Aviation Authority. The aerodrome had no particular activity booked this weekend other than regular aircraft flying. The De Havilland Dove was finally on the Weald Air Operator's Certificate and could carry passengers up to 50 nautical miles using our A to A. Flights over London were being mooted as well as the White Cliffs.

Brian Bristow checked that any reference to IMPS and Combined Ops were the same event. He asked about a flypast on that weekend. Jamie Freeman confirmed that as the rules had changed that he would only be using the RAF to do a fly-past. He explained that pilots with DAs (Display Authorisations) now had to go through a rigorous test and that the regulation was only brought out last week. They were required to take further checks and this was a knock-on effect from the Shoreham incident. The aerodrome did not know where it stood at this point. James Tuke said that he understood that more often

than not the Red Arrows were performing over the sea. The Committee expressed concern. Lyn Selby said that people liked watching the Red Arrows. Brian Bristow asked which day of the week would the fly past happen. Jamie Freeman said that this would not be know until much nearer the time. Tickets could be bought on line or on the gate.

Lester Gosbee asked about the Farnborough Airshow. Jamie Freeman thought that the Government would step in and might overrule the CAA. He felt that if they stopped Farnborough then they have basically stopped everything. The dreadful incident at Shoreham was pilot error, nothing to do with anything else, and he felt the CAA should deal with that. Any other rules were not relevant. CAA are supposed to be Safety Regulation Group. It was reported that Christine Dier of MBC was currently linking in with Aero Legends and Jamie Freeman thought that she had been invited to the aerodrome for next Aero Legends event, possibly in July.

Lyn Selby asked about the de Havilland Dove owned by Aero Legends. Jamie Freeman said that the AOC was flown under Weald and used Weald pilots. Weald Air Services had always held an AOC and were familiar with the paperwork and regulations. Next year Weald was hoping to improve the AOC by going A to B. Engineering for the Dove was via liaison with Prop Shop Limited and Weald Air Services. It was quite a quick aircraft, capable of flying at 160/170 knots. It might be possible to hire it for specific events and travel to places and make a charge. It could carry 9 passengers.

Lyn Selby was attending the HACC on this day but confirmed to the Committee that Councillor John Mather was due to take her place. She will attend next time to introduce him.

Date of Next Meeting

**25th October at 2.30 in the Briefing Rooms.
Meeting ended 3pm.**

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