

Headcorn Aerodrome
Kent TN27 9HX
01622 890 226

Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee
Tuesday 28th June 2022 at 2.30 pm
Headcorn Aerodrome Dispersal Hut
Headcorn Aerodrome

Present James Freeman – Headcorn Aerodrome. Chairman
Brian Bristow - Vice Chairman and Smarden Parish Council
Ken Mulholland – Ashford Borough Council
Terry Hodges – Insurance and Aerodrome Museum
Martin Round – Maidstone Borough Council
Ziggy Trzebinski – Maidstone Borough Council
Linda Thorogood – Vice Chair Headcorn Parish Council
Chris Yates – Headcorn Special Events
Ben Perkins - Aero Legends Ltd
Gerald Hodges – Thurston Helicopters Ltd
Border Force Representatives
Sue Line - Secretary

1 Apologies for Absence:

David Parker – Headcorn Parachute Club/Skydive Headcorn

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting were signed and to be posted to the website.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

Cllr Linda Thorogood acknowledged that the exchanges at the last meeting were an ongoing item.

4 Planning & Events

Brian Bristow felt that the Battle of Britain event had been thoroughly successful and the Committee agreed. Chris Yates said that approximately 20,000 people had attended over the weekend and we had fewer than 12 complaints. Ziggy Trzebinski said there had been many compliments. Brian Bristow said that there was lot of support over social media. It was also felt that the aerodrome did well and that it was an asset. It was

agreed that all the local hotels were fully booked. The show itself required the purchase of over £3,500 of diesel.

We had stopped offering camping for the show which meant other campsites further out such as Tenterden and Goudhurst benefitted. There was a brief discussion about dates.

It was also pointed out that half of the aircraft on display were operational based aircraft and this showed that the airfield is diverse.

It was generally felt that this aerodrome was regarded as one of the top ones in the country.

Martin Round was supportive of the fact that many of the pilots were local and that familiarity with the aerodrome and the aircraft in general made things much safer. Ziggy Trzebinski asked about ticket demand and any contingency plans for next year, but it was explained that the aerodrome is limited to 10,000 per day and this means a ticket cap which cannot be exceeded. Chris Yates said that if you had a bigger number the roads would be stressed, and Ben Perkins agreed that this could happen if you were selling tickets at the gate. Now it was presale only. Martin Round indicated that he did not feel the roads were too bad and mentioned Duxford and Goodwood at busy times. Chris Yates raised the question of the programme and he had the Red Arrows opening on the Friday, but ~~that other days would depend on their other missions/commitments.~~ Jamie Freeman said they had the field clear by 6pm and Chris Yates indicated that young families with children did tend to drift off earlier than some.

5 Correspondence

Nothing to report

6 Complaints

The complaints which had been listed in the Air Traffic Office were read out and had mainly been noted and dealt with at the time. Any items referring to aircraft flown by Aero Legends Ltd had also been passed on to them to deal with.

Ben Perkins spoke on the subject of Bletchenden. He had on a number of occasions produced GPS co-ordinates which categorically proved that the complainants had not been over-flown. He had sent these out and there had been no replies. It was clear that 'seeing' aircraft was confused with them flying overhead. He said it took time to prepare all the information and when it was sent out there were no responses. They are about 200m from the centre of the runway. There is not much room for error. It happens that we are holding this meeting in the Dispersal Hut and are as close to the runway now as they are from the extended centre line.

Jamie Freeman said that occasionally people will overfly, as he had mentioned before. Gerald Hodges said that the radio instructions were clearer now, to go to the church and then turn.

Ben Perkins said he had visited other airfields, as had many pilots on this Committee and on the site, and he felt that more is done here than any other airfield. Gerald Hodges felt that taking more notice bring more complaints. We are trying to be reasonable and as a result are getting more complaints. LindaThorogood agreed.

Chris Yates felt that locally neighbours were having parties and enjoying the show. Ken Holland asked if Ben Perkins could provide a standard response articulating what he had just said, and Ben Perkins agreed to do this.

Martin Round was taken aback about people complaining about Spitfires, bearing in mind their history.

Two emails had been received in the Flying School concerning the flying for the Battle of Britain and these were read out by Jamie Freeman to the Committee and given to Ben Perkins who said he would respond. Ben Perkins explained to the Committee that there were very specific rules relating to holding events such as the Battle of Britain. Officials required to attend such an event would include those from the Civil Aviation Authority auditing what was happening throughout the weekend, and that event days are not normal days as they required the attendance of an experienced Flight Director. He also explained that there was a Flying Display Director, and a Flying Control Committee, and pilots and crew on the ground to ensure that aircraft were in the approved area and at the right height. There were very experienced RAF display pilots on that Flight Control Committee and that both the Flight Director and the Civil Aviation Authority were happy with procedures during that weekend. Pilots were fully briefed as to where they were permitted to fly and Ben Perkins confirmed the heights at which they were allowed to display were as per their Display Authority or 500ft away from the airfield. None of the officials watching saw a Spitfire overhead the village. It was felt that, being a display, aircraft were in varying and different positions than they might otherwise be, and the changes were just the nature of the day.

Chris Yates also confirmed that many village residents were out watching the air display. Linda Thorogood and the Committee agreed.

Chris Yates would respond to the complaint made by someone concerning the use of the Public Right of Way. It was agreed that you were not allowed to walk under a display and that people have to be moved back 250 meters from the flight line while the display is going on. The complainant was seeking to be sent copies of closure notices. It was agreed that more signs would go up. Jamie Freeman was aware that

people were standing on the Public Right of Way, which is also not to be encouraged (it is against the law).
However since the complainant indicated that he did not know there was an air show on Chris Yates said they would consider putting up more signs.

7 Any other business


Border Force: If you should notice anything untoward please notify us.

8 Date of next meeting

4th October 2022 2.30pm start.

Wings Bar and Restaurant.

Meeting finished at 2.50pm

 1437 4th Oct 2022

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