

ESSEX AND SUFFOLK GLIDING CLUB LTD

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 25th November 2015
In the Clubhouse commencing at 19.00 hrs.

Present

Alan Bilby (AB) Site Officer
Dave Wallis (DW) Secretary
Jonathan Abbess (JA) Chief Flying Instructor
Mike Haynes (MH) Technical Officer
Ken Ward (KW) Treasurer
Paul Robinson (PR) Publicity Officer
Robert Godden (RG) Chairman
Martin Lawson (ML) Winch Master
Eddie Leach (EL) Safety Officer

Also present Trevor Smith (TS) Dave Bolsden (DB)

Apologies for Absence.

Steve Jones (SJ) Membership Secretary

Approval of Previously approved Minutes for meeting held on 21st October 2015

Those present agreed the minutes unanimously.

Matters arising from those minutes

1. Trevor Smith and Dave Bolsden were both welcomed to the committee as joint safety officers.

Eddie Leach the out going safety officer will brief them regarding the post, and Dave and Trevor will work together with their ideas to improve the safety at the club.

2. We discussed the need for a small increase in subscriptions and glider hire, the sub committee will look at the figures and report back with suggestions.

Membership Secretary's Report SJ

The only item of business that I have is to welcome new members:
Vee Harrington as a Winter Member and Henry Kandemir as a Junior Member.

Secretary's Report DW

Nothing to report which is not covered elsewhere in the minutes

Technical Officers Report MH

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Launch-point Batteries

Further problems have been reported with the launch vehicle batteries and despite the short days it now starts to look likely that these will have to be replaced in the immediate future.

As we have now seen two sets of the Varta batteries fail in much less than the quoted number of cycles the replacements will be Lucas LSLC85-12s. At our depth of discharge this is also quoted to be good for in excess of 600 cycles so 3-4 years of operation but only time will tell. The Lucas Batteries are identical in size but have different terminations, meaning the exchange should not take more than an hour.

I continue to be concerned that we are damaging the batteries by leaving them discharged especially during the winter months where because its dark its all to easy for those locking up to forget to connect the launch point to the mains. As previously I am working on a remote monitor which should be installed in the next 3-4 weeks.

Log System

Changes to the launch point program carried forward:-

- i) Add active field on members, gliders so that we can reduce what is displayed to the information which is relevant.
- ii) Fix Voucher number always visible. Voucher number should only show on the first day a member flies.
- iii) Remove the ability to create/edit members in anything other than temporary/temporary reciprocal classes.

Not having a single charges document agreed by the committee as an input to configuring all of the charging in the log system has lead to a number of minor charging issues over the last couple of years. To help avoid this going into 2016 a draft document has been produced for discussion at this meeting.

Computers and IT

John Wells and Norbert Eschie completed the first integration between the website and the log system in record time. I was expecting this task to complete over the winter but we already have a working web based flight viewer. The viewer allows members to view their flights or all flights between selected dates for any or selected gliders.

The next phase of this project is to allow members to update their own personal data e.g. phone numbers, email address etc and also to add back the gliding qualifications, certificates lost when the website was re-built some 3 years ago.

The first architectural discussions have also occurred towards replacing the paper Record Cards with an electronic system.

Briefing Room PC

The projector installation has been completed and the TV disconnected from the PC for several weeks. Nobody has come to me asking for the TV back so as of today it looks like the projector only option is suitable for both large and small briefings.

IP Webcams

Nothing to report

Club Website

Work continues on the online booking and calendar but with no specific progress to report this month

Glider Trailer Refurbishment

Rust damage to the front frame of the k21 trailer ongoing.
Work on the K21 Tow Out gear continues (slowly)

Grob:-

Both of the tip dollies are now complete and look very good.
We should replace the hinge on the right hand wing root clamp as per the left hand side and improve the fuselage restraint

Sf27:-

Work has commenced to refurbish the wooden front panel and the rear door/ramp.

Astirs:-

New hinge/dolly guides have been fabricated for the rear ramp, this now just requires the wooden ramp to be attached.

Gliders

K21

Carried forward:-

Harnesses need to be serviced/webbing replaced..

The winch hook needs to be replaced in the near future as it is at the end of its service life.

Rear screen on "S-Nav" is not working

Grob Acro

Carried Forward:-

Aero Tow hook is faulty and needs to be replaced/serviced.

The rubber seals around both of the Canopies have been replaced.

SF27

Carried Forward:-

Repair to fibreglass nose cone carried forward.

ASTIR HKM

John Gilbert has spent a couple of weeks working on HKMs various minor defects:-

Most of the gashes and scratches have been repaired or polished out.

The cracks at the airbrake boxes have been repaired

The wheel brake has been fixed

New Turbulator tape has been fitted.

The glider is now back at the club and ready to fly.

As reported last month somebody broken the new battery box, I have discussed this with Seven Valley sailplanes and it appears the box supplied was missing a cut-out to make the retaining leaves a little more flexible. This lead to over-stressing of the sides and the eventual brake at the corner.

Seven Valley are fabricating a new box but this has not been received to date. In the mean time HKM has no viable battery restraint and should only be flown without a battery installed. As a consequence this aircraft will be non-radio for a couple of weeks..

ASTIR KEE

KEE has been de-rigged ready for John Gilbert to undertake a similar program of cosmetic surgery to that performed on HKM.

During the weekend of the 31st October KEE suffered a canopy open in flight event. Fortunately the pilot was able to grab the canopy and re-lock after which the flight continued without further event.

On Examination it looks like the Canopy hinges have been strained slightly resulting in a miss-alignment of the bolt. I've a cople of theories as to how this might have occurred:-

Blown open/back in a strong wind

Forced closed with the retraining strap caught in the gap

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This defect will be investigated by John while he has the glider.

Pending for ARC time

ii) Provide ballast weight option.

DOA

Continuing the subject of canopies DOA's canopy has been broken, with a crack extending upwards from the rear DV panel aperture. No member has owned up to this damage but the suspicion is it occurred due to reaching through to pull the release

Never Never Never reach through the DV opening to pull the release when towing on the ground.

It should be possible to repair this crack but we do not want subject the canopy to aerodynamic loads which could cause it to grow – please do not fly!

I have some enquiries out at present to find a maintenance organisation willing/capable of repairing this damage so hopefully we can avoid the £3000 cost of a new bubble.

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DVB

Carried Forward:-

Aero-tow hook is faulty

Volume control on Vario is faulty

We will need to re-ARC DVB during the late Autumn/Winter as mid summer is not a very convenient time to perform maintenance.

MH also reported that Mike Burcher had been unable so far to secure a second quote for the refurbishment of the launch point windows which are still leaking. The quote we had from the commercial arm of Autoglass was considered to be a bit excessive and other car glass company's were reluctant to quote. ML suggested that his contact in the tractor world may be able to suggest a contractor.

Chairmans Report RG

- TMG – No confirmation yet but hoped that our application will be heard at the 17th December planning council meeting. So far there have been only three additional postings from objectors since the confirmatory information items following the meeting with planners - i.e. 8 flights max and 1 hour between take offs – were put onto the council planning website. Also, C'ttee members will have seen my E mail today in response to the chairman of Mt Bures PC who would like some addl info.
- Gas Plant – As has been mentioned we may be able to negotiate to lease and additional strip along the south side of the 27/09 concrete track. At the moment the understanding is that we will get the same acreage we lease on the south side of the runway but in linear form this being a 12 metre wide strip alongside the concrete track. The idea is that we look to obtain an extension towards the runway intersection, roughly where the gas pipe will join the main. This would mean additional rent but, operationally, would mean greater flexibility in winter when the rwy is declared u/s as we could level the ground and enable all aircraft including the TMG to take off from the track.

Site Officers Report AB

Workshop is complete and meter has now been moved into the main workshop and an additional light has been fitted in the machine room. First week is free in any 1 month period there after 25 GBP per week.

The gas pipeline will not be laid before January 2016 and distance in from the peri track has not yet been determined.

The T hanger has now been relocated by Chris Price and co and an invoice has been raised to Fairfield Farms for the costs involved.

Have obtained a second quote to resurface the bad section of the peri track at the east end and the cost is 5500 GBP plus Vat, more or less the same as the first quote. I am now looking at providing a new metre wide strip down the runway side for the length of the bad section to run the gliders over.

I have an offer from one of the junior members father who is a carpenter to hang new doors on the shower block so I will keep you posted on progress.

We discussed the 1 meter wide strip and was generally considered not to be the answer as the winch and other vehicles were also being damaged over the broken concrete at the east end of the peri track. It needs to be resurfaced over the whole width and it is hoped that we can secure an agreement with the farmer for a 50% contribution. Alan will look into the possibility and price of a 50 mm concrete layer as opposed to Tarmac.

MH had noticed that the ploughed field at the end of the wide part of the east end runway had effectively got a ditch between the field and runway due to the way it had been ploughed. It will need to be filled in before seeding otherwise any glider overrunning into the field could be severely damaged.

The gas plant and pipeline will not now be started until at least January and could possibly be scrapped altogether if the government subsidies are withdrawn.

Winch Master's Report ML

.The rough running engine and high oil consumption on the English winch has finally been solved! With the help of the Skylaunch engineer the problem was found to be a leaking inlet manifold which was not only letting air in but it had failed to the crankcase area as well so oil was being sucked into the inlets.

An automatic, diesel, 4 wheel drive KIA Sorrento has been purchased as a replacement for the Jeep. To date we have fitted a tow bar and within the next month work will start to transfer the tow out unit. The aim is to have the vehicle ready for the Spring when it will be needed again.

With the winter now upon us we must ensure that if the winch parachutes are heavily fouled or just wet they must be hung up in the MT shed to dry (please).

Safety Officers Report – EL

As reported elsewhere EL has handed over the post jointly to DB and TS but did make a very valid safety point regarding the tow out vehicle during winter flying.

Following discussion it was decided that if the tow out vehicle is on its way towing the cable to the launch point and he hears that a glider is on the downwind leg it should NOT stop halfway down the peri track, but keep going and if the incoming glider has to over fly it the tow out vehicle Should stop at the point it is over flown. This will remove the possibility of the tow out vehicle being parked halfway down the peri track and the incoming glider not being able to stop in time.

He also reported that the parachutes had been repaired and suggested that the ramp to the new workshop should have an anti slip surface added to it.

JA suggested that TS and DB should go through the latest BGA safety check list to see where we stand with that at the moment

CFI's Report JA

Nothing to report

Treasurer's Report KW

In recent months and in particular at the recent 5 Year Planning Meeting there has been extensive discussion with regard to the Club Fleet, it's maintenance and possible expansion.

It has been recognised that we cannot stand still on this issue, that we must be prepared for every eventuality. It is important that we demonstrate to the Membership that we are being both prudent and forward thinking.

To this end it has been agreed that we immediately 'ring fence' a sum of £40,000 toward the future of the fleet. This fund to be added to, where possible, once the year end accounts have been finalised and any profit for the year determined.

This is clearly a priority if we are to meet our Members aspirations however we cannot ignore the fact that our general expenses must rise if we are to maintain, better still improve, our operation ground side.

Our current finances look sound but we cannot under estimate the effort that has gone into that success and the effort that will be required to maintain the situation.

Ken mentioned the fact that the funds we have on deposit are only getting an insignificant amount of interest but there was not a product available to improve this as we would need quick access if an appropriate K13 replacement came on the market. However he would look into the possibility of investing in premium bonds but we were not sure if this could be done as a club.

Publicity Officers Report PR

No new items to report

Any Other Business

1 Further discussion on fleet replacement centred on our outline strategy of replacing one K13 with a suitable glass 2 seater. It was recognised that a K21 is the most likely type to be on the market because of the number of them around but JA commented that a DG505 Orion would be a good training choice. It is agreed that we will keep watch for suitable gliders for sale and react if and when a favourable type / price comes along but for the present not set any time objectives for accomplishing this part of our strategy.

2 PR reported that Active Essex had grants available for local sporting organisations and there was a meeting to be held on January 19th 2016. PR , KW and RG will attend and report back.

3 DB said his company was running an auction of promises and proposed that we should donate a trial lesson and a short introduction to gliding. This was agreed.

4 The bookkeeper reported that the club had not made any money from the Aerotows this year as the charges we made to members was the same as we paid for the tug. It was probably a launch

point error and in future £5 would be added for the club. Futhermore it was thought that Den and Richard had now sold the Cub and a new source for a tug may have to be found.

There being no other business to discuss the meeting closed at 20.30 hrs.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is on 6th January 2016 COMMENCING AT 19.00 hrs. in the clubhouse.