

Newsletters are sent to current permit holders for information only. If you do not wish to receive newsletters please let us know. (apology: slightly longer newsletter this time)

To all permit holders: At last ! The answer to the question you have all been asking: *when will the general access to the airfield be available again ?* I am pleased to say that we now have it! The Forestry's contractors worked on the site this week, and following an inspection have now opened the gate on the Lymington road to general access. The schedule had been to do the work by the end of May, but we have been able to get it brought forward to this week.

The contractors have raked the track to clear potholes, graded the surface level, and rolled it with a heavy vibrating roller. Their work was started in other places in the Forest after Easter, but held up because of the high water table and wet conditions until recently. It is hoped that the recent dry weather and the usage of the heavy roller will give a better result than was achieved in the previous renovation last September. This time some 23 access tracks are being renovated and ours was due about half way through the list, partly because we have had the benefit of the alternative entrance, which has enabled at least some of us to keep flying despite the closure.

The Alternative Entry System. The Committee, on your behalf, negotiated the use of the alternative entry gate during the closure period to enable at least some flyers to keep flying. On selected days when the weather was suitable, and a committee member was available, entry was organised using our own combination padlock to temporarily replace the forestry's keyed padlock on a normally closed gate. This has been a big concession we have not had before from the Forestry, for which we should be grateful. And also a vote of thanks is due to the committee members Ian and Mark, who put themselves out to make this happen - so thanks to them ! And thanks to all of you for your patience, and your support of the committee who have the unenviable task of answering all the awkward questions while trying to get something happening.

A few points to remember: Just before we all get enthusiastic and rush to get as many planes as possible in the air at the same time, can I just say a few words of caution:

- **Regulations.** All the normal regulations still apply: stand in the pilot box, fly beyond the flight-line (never behind), take turns where possible, don't hog the flight line, be aware of others flying at the same time, and respect the limitations on hours of use (8am - 8pm), as well as all the rest of course.
- **Behaviour.** Please take care and use common sense (as I know most do). It will help to drive slowly on the access track, although we are not the only users of the heath we can try to set a good example. If you see others behaving in an unsuitable way then report it (to me in the first instance). So far this year I have had to intervene, often successfully, in several interactions with motor cyclists, dog-walkers, horse riders and so on. Do not get into arguments or confrontations, although of course you have a duty to point out the Bye-laws we are all subject to, flyers and non-flyers alike.
- **Signs.** We have renovated some old signs, and are commissioning some new, more informative, signs which will us keep our interactions with the public a bit safer. Our main problem is dog-walkers and tourists using the grass strips on either side of the runway as a path (which it isn't), and thus potentially coming into conflict with planes either landing or taking off. It has become clear to me that the public simply does not understand the danger walkers are putting themselves into, and it is our responsibility to explain this to them. I hope the new signs will help. If you are a frequent user of the airfield and would be prepared to have a sign, and put it out when you are there, then please contact me.
- **Drones.** As you know, the airfield is the only place in the Forest where it is permissible to fly model aircraft. The Forestry also deprecate the use of drones anywhere within the forest. Consequently they

Nice sight – gate about to open in May



The heavy roller being unloaded in the



Old signs renovated and new ones coming



are requiring us to manage the use of drones as model aircraft. Drones used for other purposes (commercial, FPV, racing, surveillance and so on) is not permitted. If you fly a drone at Beaulieu it must be recognisable as *model aircraft flying* where you are in control, and the not an automated activity driven from a computer. You may take pictures and video, but you must not spy on people or places. Do use the designated drone place (at the next runway crossing point to the west) and fly safely.

- **Non-Drone Flyers.** I know some of you don't like drones, but the BMFA considers them a legitimate part of the sport, the CAA regulates them, and the Forestry is directing them to us. We have to be reasonable and make the use of drones work without unduly affecting our traditional activities.
- **Aircraft separation.** We now have three main types of activity on the airfield: *Fixed wing* flying, *Drones*, and *Free-flight*. All these must take place inside the perimeter track area, within line of sight, in its own designated location, and with respect to other users. Helicopter (hovering only) is best treated as drones (although there is very little of this) but normal Heli flying (quite a few) can be treated as fixed wing flying. Each activity has its designated place and separating them is the way to avoid conflicts.

Flying, at last: I made a comment in the last newsletter about standing in the pilot box, if you can't remember what it was then please go back and check ! All newsletters will be on the website in due course.

As you know, I am keen to get more of you, and especially our new permit holders, to work towards getting at least an A-certificate. Increasing our general skill level will help everyone have a safer, more enjoyable experience. And those who want, or need, a B-certificate can be accommodated easily now, too. Just send me a message when you want to do it and we can arrange to meet up. Or contact me when we are at the field in person, I'm there 2 or 3 times a week from now on. I will arrange some "Certificate Days" now that we are in normal operation.

As a start, here is something which we can all think about. I'll be putting a series of "helpful comments" in this and following newsletters on the subject of SWEETS, SMART, the "pilot's question" and why they are important. Most of you will know the first two, but the latter seems to be unfamiliar to some, so here it is:

The Pilot's Question: you are at the flight-line, the plane is ready to go, you are about to call "take-off", but there is still one vital question to ask yourself: ***Am I fit to fly this plane in these conditions ?***

- ***am I fit*** ---- check your tiredness, concentration, how you feel,
- ***to fly this plane*** ---- are you confident you can take off and land,
- ***in these conditions*** ---- is the wind direction and strength ok, visibility good, runway clear,

because if the answer to any of these is "no", "unsure", or "don't know", then you should stop now ! Be prepared to delay or abandon a flight if things are not right - there's no shame in that, but there is if it ends in disaster!

EASA. As you know the BMFA is being very active in the formulation of the new Air regulations for unmanned vehicles which will probably become law at the end of next year. There is full information on the BMFA website. Recent proposed changes seem to be in favour of defending traditional flying but some might affect us, in particular the proposed height limitation. We seem to be getting more light aircraft overflying us these days so this is very important. For the moment the best advice is to avoid flying too high and keep a good lookout.

Privacy. You will all know about GDPR (the data protection legislation about to come into force). This is not intended to affect organisations like model clubs, but we have to be aware of its provisions and act sensibly. The BMFC will follow the excellent lead of the BMFA and has set out its privacy policy on our website as a start. Basically, we protect your data which is only used for contacting you. Please take a look and feel free to comment.

(apologies for a slightly longer than normal newsletter. If you find this interesting and useful do feel free to contribute your comments, pictures, tips and ideas)

Best wishes, Richard.

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Tucano and Zlin Z50 have an outing



Some helis waiting for pilot



2018 Diary Dates

Aug 26	Pony Drift – site closed
Aug 31	Pony Drift – Beaulieu Rd
Sept 23	Pony Drift – E.Boldre
Oct 14	Pony Drift -Furzey
Nov 8	BMFC AGM
Dec 31	2018 permits expire