

Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee

Headcorn Aerodrome
Kent TN27 9HX

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Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee Tuesday 12th October 2021 Wings Bar & Restaurant Headcorn Aerodrome

Present: James Freeman – Chairman
Brian Bristow – Vice Chairman + PC Smarden
David Parker – Headcorn Parachute Club
Lester Gosbee – Frittenden Parish Council
Keith Perkins – Aero Legends
Martin Round – Maidstone Borough Council
John Perry – Maidstone Borough Council/Staplehurst Parish Council
James Thomas – Chair, Headcorn Parish Council
Linda Thorogood – Vice Chair, Headcorn Parish Council
Chris Yates – Headcorn Special Events Ltd
Jane Hopkins – Skydive Headcorn Ltd
Gerald Hodges – Thurston Helicopters arrived later.
Sue Line - Secretary

1 Apologies for Absence

Richard Pickin
Ken Mulholland
Terry Hodges
Dave Evans

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Were read and signed. These would be placed on the website.

3 Matters arising from the Minutes

KP asked for Minutes to be sent out within 2 days. This would be helpful. The secretary confirmed that she would not be able to do this as she had other Company commitments, but she understood the request and would make every effort to produce them as soon as possible. Jamie Freeman explained that there was supposed to be a Secretariat but MBC had not sent

their representative for many years now and that the current Secretary continued alone.

4 **Planning & Events**

Keith Perkins said that the Battle of Britain event went down very well with no issues. He felt 2022 would be even more popular. The local community benefitted hugely from this event, supermarkets, shops etc. He will produce a list of events for 2022. Brian Bristow agreed that in 2021 the Battle of Britain Saturday was very good. The issue with the lack of flying on the Sunday due to weather was discussed and Aero Legends would actively be contacting people who purchased Sunday tickets to discuss options. Following an enquiry from Lester Gosbee it was confirmed that if flights could not display then the promoter would not normally be required to pay. Keith Perkins also mentioned discussions concerning RAF assets and security. Chris Yates and he would liaise.

Generally it was felt that other aerodrome events had ticked along; Combined Ops was planned for 2022 as was the Model Show. It was anticipated that the Fire Engine show would be together with a Police Fire and Ambulance show, currently referred to as the Blue Light Services Show.

Chris Yates had received one enquiry about a non-alcoholic music event. (possibly with no alcohol actually on sale) called **ROCK SOBER** which would potentially take place at the end of May 2022. Martin Round said that Glastonbury had a special auditorium which was alcohol free.

Jamie Freeman was planning for a Tractor Run in May 2022 and there would be a Hobbs Parker Collective sale of Farm Equipment, also in May. Then there would be the Battle of Britain Show on 24th, 25th and 26th June and it was noted that the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations would be a long weekend from 2nd to 5th June.

Martin Round said that he had applied for a Royal Visit for the Battle of Britain for the past 2 years. He had been given a very favourable reception to his enquiry but in the end it did not materialize. He had not given up but 2022 would be the Jubilee Year.

5 **Correspondence**

No correspondence had been received.

6 **Complaints**

Jamie Freeman ran through the list of complaints recorded since the last meeting;

2nd July 2021. Spitfire Noises, Bethersden

13th July 2021 Waterman Quarter

22nd July 2021 Waterman Quarter. Video evidence.

22nd July 2021 Grafty Green. Person living immediately next door to a farm strip. Not Headcorn Aerodrome issue.
28th July 2021 Bletchenden Lane
14th August. Frittenden
25th August Bletchenden. Offensive caller.
7th September. House name given, no location.
11th September. Complaint. No details given.
24th September. Bletchenden
9th October. Spitfire over house.

Keith Perkins said Aero Legends were not the only company flying Spitfires and referred the Committee to the Biggin Hill company.

Jamie Freeman had offered to sit with a complainant at Bletchenden (names are noted by the Committee where applicable but not printed here), and to make notes of aircraft actually flying overhead. This would be with other residents of Bletchenden and the Vice Chairman of Headcorn Parish Council, Linda Thorogood.

Linda Thorogood indicated that two residents of Bletchenden had complained about the weekend generally. Jamie said they have had all the info from Sunday's flying which I have sent to them and the Saturday flying was busy. Jamie did feel that it might be easier for the aerodrome to deal with parishioners direct. He had been to Bletchenden recently and no aircraft had gone over the top. Asking for traces was time consuming, complainants will need to pay for the traces going forward. None of them had made any sense; they had not matched the nature of the complaints.

David Parker asked a question about residents reporting. Jamie Freeman explained that when a complainant advised the time ATC then approached the pilot and requested a download from GPS if available. The GPS information is provided after the event and Keith Perkins confirmed both to David Parker and to Chris Thomas that this was an historical record and not a pre-arranged action. There was a discussion about the positioning of aircraft.

James Thomas asked who answered the phone when people called in. The response was that usually it would be the person on the air ground Radio, but this depended how busy the phones were and particularly how busy the aerodrome was. Jamie Freeman was mindful of the fact that last Saturday, 9th October, a resident had called in and assumed they were speaking to him, and had also raised a complaining email mentioning him by name. In fact it was David Evans, an ex Civil Aviation Authority Aerodrome Inspector, who was working on that day. Jamie Freeman said that he (David Evans) would have replied to the complainant factually and accurately. He had asked David Evans to reply to him and to explain exactly what was said concerning that email and he confirmed to the Committee that some of the phraseology which was used in the email was reported by the complainant inaccurately. Jamie Freeman confirmed to the Committee that the Spitfire did not fly over her

house low (below regulation height). It was difficult when people bought houses during lockdown when the aerodrome was on a reduced number of flights, and then subsequently found that the area was not as quiet as they had been led to believe. Keith Perkins also reminded the Committee that this was a Voluntary Noise Abatement Zone offered by the aerodrome and the complainant lived in the middle of it. James Thomas said he felt that the complainant at Waterman Quarter was being impolite in the way she was making her complaint. It does not suit her to listen to what was said. It was repeated that this was a Voluntary Noise Abatement Zone and James Thomas felt that some people did not want to hear any noise. Keith Perkins felt that people were getting emotional on the subject of any aircraft noise after lockdown. Jamie Freeman felt that they needed to gear up to the noise levels as in the past. Chris Yates felt there were not that many complaints, bearing in mind the number of flights that were flown. Linda Thorogood would be meeting with complainants next week using the Wings facility at the aerodrome and then continuing with a meeting at Aero Legends. Confirming the SERA rules clearly to complainants was discussed.

7 Any other business

The Community Asset issue was raised briefly. An inventory would be required to establish the asset value. Chris Yates would liaise with Martin Round to discuss such an inventory and then there would have to be a responsible body to take charge. HACC could be the ultimate responsible body, but in practice this would probably fall to Headcorn Parish Council first and foremost. Jamie recognized that this was a Council led initiative to preserve the aerodrome as a community asset.

8 Date of next meeting

March 2022 Tuesday 29th at 2.30
Meeting closed 12 mins past 3.