Shalbourne Soaring Society

Annual General Meeting – 28th February 2014

Apologies

Bob Boyd, Pete Smith, Claire Willson, Jim Clarke, Julie Reid, Bert Gallagher, Liz Sparrow and Carol Pike

Approval Minutes of last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM on the 15th February 2013 were approved with no amendments. Proposed by James Hunneman, Seconded by Peter Ellison

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

Chairman's Report, Colin Baines

As I think is generally known I will be stepping down as Chairman this evening. A lot has happened in the last six years. It has sometimes been a rough ride, but we kept plugging on and generally ended up with the right result. Unfortunately, in recent years we have lacked both Equipment and Airfield Officers. This has not been for the lack of trying on my part, but we simply seem to lack members with the time and inclination to come forward, whilst others may feel that they have done their bit in the past.

Fortunately, there is a small group of members willing to step in whenever required to keep us on an even keel. We just seem to lack people willing to take on a bit of organisation and that's a shame, because without them we can only mark time and manage disasters.

The good news is that we have an excellent volunteer to take over the Chair. His success will rely entirely upon your support. So if you sit on your hands when there's work to be done, please remember that someone else will have to do your share.

Now with your permission I'll leave you with a few lines that I would like to dedicate to my committee colleagues and all those people who help manage any kind of club anywhere.

The easy roads are crowded
And the level roads are jammed;
The pleasant little rivers
With the drifting folks are crammed.

But off yonder where it's rocky,
Where you get a better view,
You will find the ranks are thinning
And the travellers are few.

Where the going's smooth and pleasant

You will always find the throng,
For the many, more's the pity,
Seem to like to drift along.

But the steeps that call for courage,
And the task that's hard to do
In the end result in glory
For **the never-wavering few**.

EAG

Treasurers Report – Steve Barber

As usual, I'm afraid the Statutory Accounts are not yet available despite me trying to have them ready earlier. As usual, I take the view that cash and cash-flow are more critical to solvency than the theoretical overall view provided by the Statutory Accounts. From that point of view, I can say that we had a satisfactory enough year, having come out almost exactly level on the regular ("revenue") business, on a turnover of £49k (better than last year, but still slightly down on our previous "normal" of over £50k).

However, we did in fact spend about £2500 more than our income. That was because we took the opportunity to purchase a spare engine for the winch, and the old crane (used for removing the winch drums) get too decrepit for safe use, so we replaced it. The sale of the old launchpoint bus more than paid for the launchpoint vehicle – again an opportunistic purchase, but it still needs implementing (which will need money of course) – anyone up for it?

We suffered loss of a Pajero and the standby generator in the theft in July. We didn't make an insurance claim as we replaced the Pajero with the Trooper for no purchase cost (although the subsequent work cost around £750, that might have happened with any replacement) and we didn't consider the generator worth replacing. Any insurance payout may have jeopardised next year's premium by more than the payout.

The cash position at year end was that we had over £30k in the bank, but that of course has to carry us through the lean times of winter until membership fees start coming in.

We only flew on 111 days in the year, compared with 125 or more previously, and did a few less club member's launches. This was partly because we didn't have course or task weeks – not financially a big factor, but disappointing from the point of view of our primary purpose of doing gliding. Membership numbers are holding just about steady though at around 50 on the books of whom about 35-40 are regular flyers.

Most income and expenditure was close to expectations – the higher-than-expected expenditure on aircraft and equipment was offset by an extremely good insurance premium.

Looking into the current year, we had intended to finish the re-covering of JPC a year or two ago, and we couldn't put it off any longer. The bill for the wings came to £3500, but that includes straightening the trailing edges, overhauling the control runs and correcting some glue failure; it also avoided the additional cost of a partial strip and re-cover (& hence more patches) for the 5-year

inspection which was due, and re-weighing. The usual annual bill for the fuselage inspection & ARC came to just about £1000, but that included the replacement hooks (which last about 3 years).

Also, seeing that we overspent last year, I think it would be wise to increase the amount we expect to spend on aircraft maintenance. Also, Colin has done a brilliant job as Equipment Officer (we have virtually never found ourselves unexpectedly in the position of neither winch starting, or not having a tow-out vehicle), but is now standing down and I expect we will need to spend more on professional support.

Last year's insurance quote was really good (£8k when we had peaked at over £13k), but we can't expect the same again unfortunately, partly because our broker had negotiated a special concession based on the fact that in the past we very rarely got both K13s out on the same day. This year sod's law had decreed that we did, so we'll probably have a bit of a back-premium to add as well as an increase on next year's.

I think it is worth mentioning again that although we are not a rich club, we are at least in the position of owning in full everything we need (except of course the airfield), and having money in the bank – this saves the significant burden of interest payments. But to keep it that way, and taking the above factors into account, I think it would be wise to raise fees a little, and with the committee's approval I wish to propose that the Full Membership fee should rise by £25 to £325, with a discount of £50 for age, unemployment or disability. (Junior fee to remain at £60, trailer fee at £165 and flying fees also unchanged). The last rise in the membership fee was in March 2010, so this is an average rise of 2% pa.

I hope that means we don't have to take any emergency action during the year, but I can't rule out unexpected events, such as a sudden hike in fuel prices, insurance premiums, or in the licence fee (rent). I would also like to bring to your attention another matter which could easily have a financial impact…

You are all aware that Gliding is being seriously affected by EU Regulation. You may not be aware that HMRC is also seeking to change the regulation regarding Community Amateur Sports Clubs, of which we are one. The main benefit we have from that status is the Local Authority (Wiltshire Council) has to allow a mandatory 80% relief on non-Domestic Rates. For us, this means we pay about £1000, which would be £5000 without the relief. HMRC want to make it a condition of being a CASC that it must be possible to take part in the sport for £10/week (£520 per year) including membership. I think we can do this, though of course anyone spending at this level is likely to fly enough to get to solo standard. But if we can't meet the requirement, we may finish up with an extra £4k bill, about 8% of our annual turnover. Discussions are ongoing, the BGA is working hard on it, but they do need information from the grass roots and I have spent hours on extracting information, doing "what-if" calculations etc to give them the information they need to try to convince HMRC of the impossibility of their proposal.

As usual I would like to finish with some thanks – this year especially to those who did make the TLEs happen with much less of a headache for me personally, and as always to:

- the instructors who give up their own flying to get others into the air
- those who keep the gliders flying - particularly Andy Brind, and the other inspectors and Alan Brind and Bill Cook on JPC

- those who keep the machinery working – particularly Colin, Paul B on cables & rings, Paul P on parachute packing etc, Ken on various oddments
- the Board and others who help with the administrative and managerial aspects of running the club (this is a time-consuming business)

I am pleased to say this list includes pretty well all club members. If you haven't done all that much, perhaps it's because you don't have time, or live too far from the club. You could always help with an extra donation.

Apologies to anyone I've missed – there's sure to be someone.

I'll end, as is traditional, by asking everyone to fly more and take care, in the air and on the ground, not to break anything – especially not yourselves, each other, or anyone else.

Questions and comments were invited

It was noted that the voucher sales were double the budgeted figure but there is no particular known reason. Christmas 2012 was our best ever for sales of these. In general around 70% of these are taken up.

CFI Report – Phil Morgan

Phil gave a PowerPoint presentation on "Safer Gliding" which had been cascaded from the regional CFI meetings.

There were no fatal accidents in 2013 but there were 8 that had the potential to be so. By comparison there had been 8 fatalities between 2006 and 2013 and 24 in the six years prior to that.

Key areas to be aware of:

- Wing Drop on winch launch which can lead to cartwheel with no chance of survival if the glider lands inverted. It is essential to release the cable before the wing hits the ground. Also the "wing tip runner" needs to be aware of the need to hold the wings level and to move with the glider as the launch commences, not just let go.
- Rigging errors – Do not interrupt or distract anyone rigging
- DI and pre-flight checks – Again should be carried out without interruption or distraction
- Be aware of the run of the cables – it is not good practice to point the glider at the winch if there is a large bow in the cable.
- To prevent an excessive bow in the cable it is preferable if they are towed up between the gliders rather than to when side.

Election of Officers

Position	**Member**	**Proposed**	**Seconded**
Chairman	Jon Garner	**Stephen Ottner**	**Ken Reid**
Treasurer	Steve Barber	**Richard Dann**	**Peter Ellison**
Airfield officer	Colin Baines	**Paul Bryant**	**Peter Ellison**

Aircraft Officer	Jim Clark	**Peter Ellison**	**Graham Tanner**
Publicity Officer	Stephen Ottner	**Colin Baines**	**Steve Barber**
Safety Officer	Pete Smith		
Equipment Officer	Vacant		
Secretary	Nigel Burt	**Phil Morgan**	**Paul Prentice**

It was decided that the Safety Officer is an appointed post rather than elected one, hence no proposer and seconder for this.

On the Equipment Officer, Colin highlighted that the role requires an organiser rather than someone to just do the work. We are good at DI'ing the cables but not so good at the "bits" at either end. Colin will produce a check list and a DI book for the launch equipment and suggested this is checked by the Duty Instructor.

Proposals

Steve Barber proposed increasing the membership fee by £25 to £325 annually while retaining the current £50 reduction on the fee for concessions. This latter part includes those who are unemployed or disabled. Junior membership to remain unchanged as would the flying fees.

Steve advised that the membership fee has not increased for the last four years.

The proposal was seconded by Colin Baines and carried by the majority, there being one abstention.

Peter Ellison proposed a vote of thanks to Colin Baines for his work while chairman and this was followed by a presentation to Colin from the club.

Any Other Business

Colin advised that now that we have the potential for a "new roundout" facility in the caravan found by Alan Holden, it does need a volunteer to organise the work needed to be done to this. At the least some work needs to be done soon to weather proof the front end. Following this the catering facility could be set up in one end with the conversion of the other to a launch control being deferred.

Thanks were expressed to James Hunneman for the work he has done. It is likely that some of the vehicle work will have to be done professionally and we would need a trailer to transport the vehicles to the garage. Peter Eillison offered the use of his trailer for this purpose.

Steve Barber reminded members that their membership forms need to be completed before they next fly.

Ken Reid sought clarification on whether trailer parking fees were increasing and whether there is any discount for multiple trailers. This was confirmed as a negative on both points.

Phil Morgan reminded the meeting that EASA Flight Crew Licensing comes into force in April 2015. The need to complete the paperwork required and submit this sooner rather than later cannot be emphasised enough. The process will take three to four weeks if all the paperwork is in order. He advised all solo non bronze pilots to press on and aim to complete their bronze and cross country

endorsement before next year as the cost will rise significantly. Phil will also be working with club members to attain a cloud flying endorsement.

Meeting closed at 2110hrs