



## From the Acting Chairman

**As I write this** I am sitting by my window looking out at blue, almost cloudless skies with the sun shining and a temperature reaching 14 degrees C already by midday. Not bad for the middle of February. We have escaped, so far, the worst of the winter weather on the Mynd, and this shows in the greatly increased flying activity for February over last year. I have personally achieved ten launches and 15 hours flying time since Christmas, albeit not at our club and I'm glad to note that many others are taking the opportunity of the better conditions to get their flying season off to an early start. The winter can mean a long lay off for some and it's important to get back in check and currency as soon as possible. We enjoy ridge and thermal soaring at the Mynd but we also get some good wave and a number of members coming out of hibernation early this year have benefitted from using it.

**The thrust of this newsletter** is to look ahead to the coming year but I can't miss this opportunity to thank Neal Clements for his sterling work as Chairman over the last three years, and another year in 2014 when he stood in for me when my wife was terminally ill. When Neal's health forced him to retire early at the end of last year, the least I could do was to agree to be Acting Chairman until the club AGM (23rd March) when I will be standing for election for the coming year. Neal built on the work of previous committees in getting the club finances into better shape, rebuilding the fleet to better meet the current demands on it and making sure that the airfield and buildings are in the best condition we can manage with limited resources. Under his guidance and with the help of a skilled and dedicated committee we have maintained membership, undertaken a demanding programme of development projects and consolidated the club's financial position. I also need to thank the Officers and Committee for the incredible amount of time and effort that they all put in to make these things happen, much of which goes unnoticed

by most of us, most of the time. The committee has not been at full strength for some time and several of the current members are not standing for re-election this year. It is vital that we have a strong and purposeful committee to continue making the club a better place to fly. This year we are looking to replace John O'Reilly and Guy Hartland and we currently have several committee places unfilled. This makes the role of being on the committee harder than it needs to be. Sarah Platt has done a remarkable job of being our Marketing guru but the demands of her growing business will restrict her to managing only our presence on the online social media platforms. If I am elected at the AGM, I will be looking for someone to be our Press and Media liaison as well as someone to manage our airfield maintenance. This doesn't mean they have to be on committee. They could simply lead a small team of volunteers and report to a committee member every so often. This arrangement is already functioning well with



the IT team, comprising Geoff Minshul, Mark Sanders and occasionally others, led by Paul Shuttleworth.

**The next twelve months** will see some heralded changes to the fleet being implemented. The Discus has been sold



to a club member and replaced with an SZD Junior which should be in service by the time you read this. This means we will have a K8, a Junior and a K23 to augment the two seater fleet. I am working on implementing the committee's strategy of replacing the Grob Twin with another K21 and the Falke motor glider is already in service providing navigation and field selection exercises for those aspiring to cross country status. A number of our instructors are training to instruct in the motor glider and we trust it will become a regularly used and valuable asset. It may look like an expensive option at £72 an hour but consider what twelve five minute circuits would cost you in launch fees.

**We also now have a fully functional simulator** which has many and various advantages. It is perfectly possible to train initial handling and stick and rudder exercises with it, saving many frustrating 5 minute circuits in the early days. But it is also a valuable tool for training thermaling, for navigation exercises and, for the more experienced pilots, for trying out new types, sites and areas before actually flying there. I recommend to all to use the simulator during the winter months to keep your head 'current' when you might otherwise have long periods without any flying at all.



**We are currently replacing all the aircraft radios** with new 8.33kHz versions and plan to sell the old ones as there is a strong market in Australia and the United States, neither of which has plans to change anytime soon.

There will be some changes in the provision of catering as Fay Hanks has decided to concentrate her efforts on their new house. Fay has maintained the very high standards of catering that we have come to expect at the Mynd and we thank her for keeping us well fed and watered. From the beginning of March Helen Johnson takes over and though we may see a few operational changes I fully expect the catering to be just as good as ever. Helen will be giving up her cleaning role around the club but don't worry, we are looking for someone new to keep us presentable.

Residential Courses are a major earner for the club and this year we decided to have a big push on selling them early in the year. A special offer campaign and a concentrated social media advertising effort, alongside magazine advertising, has resulted in us selling half the available places within seven

weeks of the start of the year, a remarkable result. We are so confident that we will fill the remaining places that we are seriously considering putting on extra weeks. This means we may need some additional instructors so if you fancy helping out by running a course week, speak to the CFI or Martin in the office.

### **You should by now be aware of the Club Calendar**

available in the members' section of the website [www.midlandgliding.club/club-duty-rota](http://www.midlandgliding.club/club-duty-rota). This calendar looks ahead at the courses and events coming up as well as weekend duty rotas and room bookings. Right now it shows the following key dates:

2 and 3 March	Bronze Progression Course
16 to 22 March	Cambridge University Expedition
23 March	MGC AGM
23 to 31 March	Llanbedr Expedition
30 March	British Junior Team XC Workshops
6 and 7 April	Bronze Progression Course
8 to 12 April	Residential Course No 1
12 to 15 April	The Gliding Centre, Hus Bos Expedition
13 to 22 April	CFI's Get Checked Week
27 and 28 April	Rockpolishers Round One, Nympsfield
29 April to 3 May	Residential Course No 2
7 to 12 May	Cross Country Development Week
13 to 17 May	Residential Course No 3
17 May to 9 June	Jaca Expedition, Spanish Pyrenees
18 and 19 May	Bronze Progression Course
28 to 31 May	Residential Course No 4
8 and 9 June	Rockpolishers Round Two, Long Mynd
10 to 14 June	Residential Course No 5
24 to 28 June	Residential Course No 6
1 to 5 July	Shrewsbury School Summer Camp
8 to 12 July	Residential Course No 7
13 and 14 July	Rockpolishers Round Three, Talgarth
13 to 21 July	Mynd Wood Week
22 to 26 July	Residential Course No 8
3 to 9 August	Simon's Soaring Course
12 to 16 August	Residential Course No 9
17 to 25 August	Mynd Task Week
27 to 30 August	Residential Course No 10
9 to 13 September	Residential Course No 11
23 to 27 September	Residential Course No 12



So you can see we have a very busy year ahead. Such a busy calendar requires a lot of organisation and commitment from staff and volunteers so if you can help at any of these, please let the organisers know.

**Of course most members contribute to the running of the club** in many ways; by instructing, driving winches, acting as ground crew, organising lectures, parties and other events, decorating, doing maintenance, keeping the IT working, providing webcams, managing the website and email functions and many, many other things. But occasionally one member does something which is extraordinarily generous such as donating an 'Air Pol' parachute to the club, worth in the region of £2000. I won't name names here, this member knows who he is and I want to thank him on behalf of us all.



## From the CFI

**Well here we are 1st March already** following horrible weather through November, December and January. By way of contrast February didn't turn out so bad, we have flown at least one day on each of the last 3 weekends and some days during the week with ridge, wave and thermal soaring all happening at different times. To those who have taken advantage of these conditions; well done. It has been great to see people flying again. To those who have yet to sally forth from their winter hibernation where were you? You've missed some interesting flying and we've missed seeing you around.

### Are you: - In Check? Current? Recent? Don't know?

A couple of weeks ago one of the BGA Senior Regional Examiners circulated some analysis work on the 11 accidents which have occurred since November. In at least 7 of these accidents the pilot was not current or recent which leads us to question are we really prepared to fly after a lay off? For instance: - Would you cope if you had a launch failure on your 1st launch after your lay off (however long it has been)? So, just to clarify what the terms mean:

**In Check** You are within the validity period of your last Annual Check and the currency/recency requirements of your MGC Stage.

**Current** You have flown a minimum of 3 take offs and 3 landings as PI in the last 90 days

**Recent** You have flown **THIS GLIDER**, on **THIS LAUNCH RUN** in the last 28 days.

Therefore it's easy to see how you could be "In Check" and "Current" but not "Recent". At this time of year it is particularly important to stay "RECENT". We have a challenging flying field and some challenging conditions; make sure you are SAFE to fly so that you can enjoy it and go on enjoying it.

### Fleet Development

At the last Members Meeting in November you re-affirmed that you would like us to improve the availability of early solo single seat aircraft. We told those present that we were in the process of selling the much under-utilised Discus and purchasing an SZD Junior to augment the K8 and the K23. Happily, after a couple of aborted attempts due to poor weather, the Junior is now on site and hopefully by the time you read this it should be ready to fly.



So if you're a K8 or K23 qualified pilot talk to an instructor about the Type Conversion process and how to move on to the Junior. The content of the Type Conversion Form is shown below:

### Type Technical Knowledge Card

Pilot Aircraft Registration.

### Placard Limitations

#### Speeds

Vne  
Va  
Max Rough Air  
Max Aerotow  
Max Winch  
Max Flap Extension  
Max Gear Down  
Max Airbrake Opening

### Weight & Balance

Units (lbs or Kgs)  
Max Dry Weight  
Max Take Off Weight  
Empty Weight  
Max Cockpit Load: Normal Category, Utility Category  
Min Solo Weight  
Max Solo Weight  
Your Weight  
Ballast Required  
NB : 1st 6 flights on type to be at 30 lbs above minimum  
Additional Ballast Required



**Cockpit Ergonomics**

What seat position do you need to easily get full control deflection of all the controls and reach the cable release?  
 What Rudder position do you need?  
 Where are the ballast weights fitted? Where is the cable release?  
 Where is the trim control?  
 Where is the airbrake control?  
 Where is the wheelbrake control?  
 What is the canopy jettison procedure?  
 Where is the undercarriage operating lever?  
 Pull Back or Push Forward to lower the undercarriage?  
 Where is the flap operating lever?  
 Where is the water jettison control?

**Operating Data**

What are the flap settings for:  
 Aerotow  
 Winch Launch  
 Landing  
 Do the Flaps interact with the airbrakes?  
 If so, what happens to the flaps if you close the airbrakes during an approach?  
 What is best L/D? @ what speed?  
 What is L/D @ 50 Knots?  
 What is L/D @ 60 Knots?  
 What is L/D @ 70 Knots?  
 What is Minimum Round Out Speed?  
 What are the recommended spin recovery actions?  
 What is the max allowable water ballast?  
 What is max allowable water ballast at your weight?  
 What is max landing weight?  
 What is max allowable landing water ballast at your weight?

**Glider Rigging**

Where/How do the main pins fit? How do they lock?  
 Where/How do the drag pins fit? How do they lock?  
 How is the Tailplane secured?  
 What is the locking mechanism?  
 How do the controls connect?

Instructor's Signature      Date

The purpose of this form is to try to avert a repeat of the Oly 463 Airbrake open bungee incident of a couple of years ago. It requires you to read the flight manual to discover for yourself the limiting speeds and C of G considerations and other operating data. Then sit in the cockpit to familiarise yourself with the layout and essential ergonomics before you fly the aircraft.

*Note: You still need to get a Type Conversion Briefing from an Instructor before attempting to fly any type new to you!*

Enjoy the Junior, it is similar to the K23 in some ways and different in others.

Happy Landings

**Gripe Time**

I have in the past urged everyone to report any "Incidents" you are involved in or may witness. This is a vital part of us continually updating our safety measures and instructional practices to try to prevent repetitions. Incident reporting can also alert us to potential structural problems with our aircraft. A prime example has come to light in the last few weeks. During its ARC Roger removed the rudder of our

K23 LUV to find that part of the fin base reinforcing structure had delaminated. This damage has occurred since the glider arrived on site here. We are not certain how the damage occurred but it is likely to be the result of a significant ground loop. Not just touching a wing at the end of the landing roll out but a significant event. Certainly the pilot would have known all about it and anyone observing would have noticed it as "unusual". Yet no such events have been reported. This is not about "telling tales". It is about all of us looking after each other as an essential part of our safety culture.

**As an aside, we have effectively completed the single seat fleet update** in line with the fleet strategy we published a couple of years ago, now we have to work on the more expensive job of sorting out the 2 seat fleet. Each time we damage a glider, like the K23 incident, we have to spend money from the fleet fund that could otherwise have gone towards the two seat fleet upgrade. So it's up to you; the more we damage our existing fleet the longer it will take to complete the two seat upgrade. Look after our gliders. You know it makes sense.

**Finally**

As a club we are accustomed to flying in comparatively strong winds; it almost goes hand in hand with being a hill-top site. However two of our most recent and serious accidents have happened in strong winds. This was discussed at an instructor meeting some time ago and wind speed limits agreed for different classes of gliders. It seems that not everyone has been aware of these limits so I have arranged for notices to be displayed in the clubhouse so that they are easily visible for reference. I have also included them below so that they are clear to everyone.

**Midland Gliding Club Flying Conditions Weather Limitations****Minimum Cloudbase****Whichever is the greater of:**

full winch launch height or sufficient height to fly a normal circuit. With the exception that low level launch failure training may take place, provided that there is no possibility of the glider entering cloud at any time.

**Maximum Windspeeds****Wind gust speed above 30 Knots:**

Wooden gliders or lightweight/low wing loading glass single seaters (including the K23 and Junior) should not be flown

**Wind gust speed above 40 knots:**

No flying should take place.



# From the Treasurer

**This is a busy time of the year** finalising last year's accounts and getting ready for the summer season ahead.

In the next few weeks we will issue the report and financial statement for the financial year to 30th of September 2018. I can report, from the draft accounts, which may change, that the Club's turnover was slightly up on the previous year at £228,231, with an operating surplus of £25,900. We also invested £36,667 in replacing and upgrading our facilities. This is good news, there is still much to do, but we will cover that in the annual report.

## Subscription, Flying and Other Fees

When setting fees, we consider the money the club has to make so that we can cover our costs and re-invest for the future. This year we have also looked at the prices charged by other clubs around the country. The headlines are:

- Reduced the full membership fees from £510 to £498
- Introduced the option to pay by direct debit every month
- The launch fee remains unchanged at £11.00
- Associate social membership now includes up to 3 flights, excluding launch fees.

Let's go into some of the detail. For simplicity, the fee table is shown below.

Annual Membership Subscription	Annual	Monthly
Full member	£498.00	£41.50
Full member - country or second club	£285.00	£23.75
Full member - overseas	£246.00	£20.50
Associate junior - under 26	£246.00	£20.50
Associate junior - under 21	£126.00	£10.50
Associate social - 3 flights	£72.00	£6.00

## Annual Flying Subscription

Full member	£375.00	£31.25
Full member - country or second club	£375.00	£31.25
Full member - overseas	£276.00	£23.00
Full member – private owner / instructor	£276.00	£23.00
Associated - junior	£186.00	£15.50
Full member - first glider trailer hitch	included	included
Full member - second glider trailer hitch	£240.00	£20.00

## Launch & Motor Glider

	unit
Launch full member	£11.00
Launch associate junior	£5.50
Simulated cable break – land ahead	£5.50
Motor Glider – instruction clock hours (h/m)	£72.00 £1.20
Motor Glider – Approved pilots and instructor's under training charged per tacho hour (h/m)	£72.00 £1.20



We are also modernising our payment options to reflect how people budget and pay their bills. Today people expect to pay in different ways, annually or monthly. So we are introducing the option to pay your annual subscriptions (membership and flying) over twelve months using direct debit. For example, the full member's monthly direct debit is £72.75. Equally, if you want to pay your fees in one go, that is great too. The subscription fees are payable in advance.

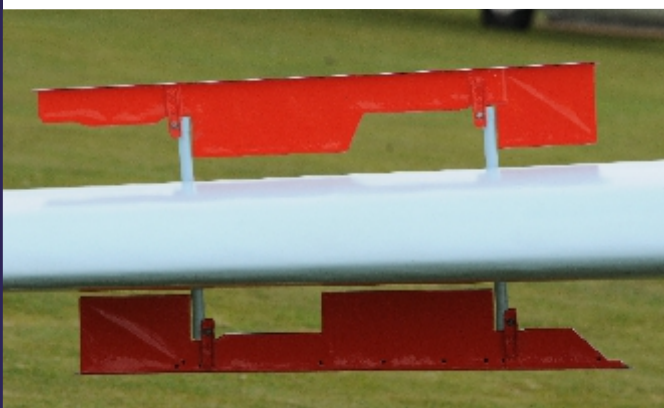
**If you would like to pay by direct debit** starting in April, we need to get that set up by the middle of March. So please talk with Martin in the office to complete the paperwork.

Just a reminder, launch and other ancillary fees should be paid by the 14th day in the month after they were incurred. This is what bean counter's call 14 day's net monthly. To make this easy, we will email to you a statement of your flying account just after the first Monday of every month.

While our Club is unique, which is demonstrated by the many of our members who passing other clubs on their way to the Mynd, taken together, we believe our prices are competitive.

## Courses

Courses are very important to the Club. They create long-term relationships, with many new members, including me, joining from courses; they also create





considerable pull through income from accommodation, the bar, and, catering. The Club we have today because of the income and investment that comes as a result of the holiday courses we offer.

During the summer season, our weekday operation is split into courses, members' and event weeks. This year, during the summer when club is open seven days a week for thirty three weeks, we are planning to run courses during twelve weeks.

This year we are actively promoting our courses using digital marketing and offers to encourage people to book. We now have considerably more bookings than we had this time last year.

If you are looking for that concentrated time with one of our instructors, whatever your stage, to make rapid progress, please consider booking on a course. As a member, you automatically receive a 50% discounts. If you book and pay in full before the end of March, you will also receive a complementary Midland Gliding Club branded jacket.

As courses are so important to the Club, to discourage people turning up during a course week expecting a check flight, we have introduced a check flight charge of £20.00 plus the cost of the launch. There is also a limit on the number of such check flights available during courses.



## Post Script

*The Midland Gliding Club is one of the oldest gliding clubs in the UK and has operated on its present site since 1934. In those 85 years it has seen many challenges including a World War, two outbreaks of Foot and Mouth, many recessions and a slow and general decline in people wanting to get involved in general aviation. But we are still here, still giving people the opportunity to learn to fly fixed wing aircraft at an affordable cost. We own all the land from which we operate, all the buildings and all the fleet. We have a superb winch launch system, a practical and serviceable fleet, some of the best catering and accommodation of any gliding club in the country and an entirely unique site with one of the best playgrounds for glider pilots anywhere in the UK. Despite a worldwide fall in the number of glider pilots we have over recent decades improved our cashflow, no longer need an overdraft in the winter, continue to sell courses and trial lessons, have added the motor glider to the fleet and have even managed to build a £100k new workshop facility. We have achieved this because*

*we value our club and the opportunities it gives us and we recognise the need to give freely of our time and energies to help each other and keep our club at the forefront of the British gliding movement. But we also need to recruit new members and retain the ones we have. These people are the life blood of the club, the very people for whom we exist and who, quite frankly, pay the bills. So I urge every one reading this to do four simple things this year. Renew your membership as soon as you can at the beginning of April, pay by direct debit as it simplifies the club accounting and saves us money, fly more than last year as it is activity that pays the bills and see if you can each get one new member to join during the year.*

*This is the first of what I hope will become a regular series of newsletters. Please send any and all contributions; articles, information, pictures, ideas to [chairman@midlandgliding.club](mailto:chairman@midlandgliding.club). Happy Landings!*

