

# British Gliding Association Annual Report 2019



The BGA is the governing body of sport gliding in the UK and a member organisation that exists to support the clubs and their members and glider owners. This 2019 annual report provides a snapshot of another very busy year for everyone and provides some insight into the excellent work carried out by the sub-committees and others on behalf of us all.

## Chairmans Report

As we move into 2020, we celebrate our 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. This milestone only made possible by the dedication and devotion of hundreds of volunteers that work tirelessly to ensure our sport occurs up and down the country. Congratulations and thank you to everyone that continues to give their time to ensure we have an active and dynamic sport.

Although it is appropriate to celebrate what we have achieved to date, challenges remain. As an association we continue to work together with clubs and fellow aviators to ensure the freedoms of the skies are maintained. Airfields, Airspace and participation are still core challenges that we face but through dialogue, and in some instances just hard graft, we continue to ensure that our voice is heard. We continue to engage the regulator, government and educational establishments to address these core issues. 2020 will be a big year with the transition to EASA training and licencing rules. Now there is some clarity regarding the political direction of government, we hope there will be some clear direction from the regulator to assist our preparations and ensure that we have a seamless transition into the new framework. We will continue to strive for appropriate regulation where required and self-regulation where achievable.

Positioning ourselves to be an integral part of the communities in which clubs are based is crucial. Enhancing these links being vital to our longevity. Being a central part of sporting and recreational opportunities for people of all ages will give us local support and revenue to support our core desires of gliding as much as possible. The way we use our facilities also allows opportunity. Involving other clubs, activities and sports to use gliding club facilities can help the bottom line as well as providing an opportunity for us to grow our membership. We remain at around 7000 active glider pilots across 79 member clubs. The Juniors (under 26) make up at least 15% of our membership and the vibrant scene is something I hope we can replicate for those re-joining or starting in our sport later in their lives.

In the world of competitive gliding, it has been a remarkable year for the UK with huge successes across our international teams. The year started with Garry and Steve achieving Silver in the European 20m class, Tom and G walking away with Gold and Silver in the European Club Class, Jake and Finn taking the Junior Worlds Club Class titles of Gold and Silver. These are amazing achievements and testament to the huge commitment and dedication of our elite competition pilots. Our women's team headed into the women's world championship in Australia having had a long summer preparation – and produced a superb result with a Bronze in the Standard class and Silver in the Team Cup. As a nation we have the honour of hosting the women's world championship in 2021 through the team at The Gliding Centre. This is a huge opportunity to showcase gliding to everyone in the UK. Gliding can offer such a wide range of skills and enjoyment and together I hope we use this event as a springboard to increase participation and encourage involvement in our sport particularly to those that want an aviation career. By encouraging those that have aviation in their blood to get involved we can build the community aspect and assist membership growth towards our centenary.

Whilst this report does focus on some of the challenges ahead, it also highlights how we have fantastic people working hard to protect, support and deliver great gliding. We have such a diverse and eclectic mix of people across our sport, please do continue to engage and encourage others so that more can enjoy our wonderful sport. Have fun and safe flying during 2020.

Andy Perkins  
Chairman

## CEOs Report

Be it individuals who have achieved personal bests or taken another step forward in our endlessly absorbing sport, or a club that has completed an important project, or dedication and effort being rewarded with medals in international gliding competitions, 2019 was another year of successes across the Association. A special shout-out goes to the Junior team (see front cover) and the Women's team who demonstrated so clearly during two World Gliding Championships how skill, good preparation, teamwork and opportunity can come together to produce great results.

As in all aspects of flying, forward planning is important. The BGA has a live strategy that helps the Executive Committee and sub-committees to keep things moving in the agreed direction. This strategy was launched in 2016 following significant engagement with the wider Association and aims to identify the organization and infrastructure changes required to support the evolution of UK gliding for the next 10 to 20 years. Many thanks to vice-chairman George Metcalfe for his guidance in developing and maintaining this important process that will continue to evolve.

Significant numbers of people taking first flights as well as a healthy number of new solos throughout the year demonstrate that gliding remains very attractive to newcomers. However, there's an elephant lurking at the launch point. Only around half of those who fly solo continue with their training to reach 'licence standard', ie achieve the Bronze and Cross-Country Endorsements. Maintaining interest can be a challenge at that critical stage where a significant (solo) achievement should be followed by encouragement as well as clearly signposted and delivered further training and assessment. The full syllabus and other resources are available, but we need to do more to encourage new pilots to go the extra mile and become fully qualified. As we ease our way into a regulated 'declared' training environment ahead of April 2021, we're working with our training experts around the Association to provide the necessary support to clubs. As we do so, we should all reflect and act on how we can better meet student pilot and instructor needs. That includes providing our new pilots with the knowledge and skills needed for safe and successful soaring and cross-country flying in a changing environment. Keeping our training and coaching activity straightforward to understand and relevant is as important as its ever been.

Airspace will be a hot topic for some time to come, with some huge issues playing out. They include national airspace modernisation, the emergence of commercial drones, the paradox of the airline industry growth expectations v the government's policy of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and the need to reduce jet noise. Commercial aircraft can fly higher and should fly higher. We contributed to the Lord Kirkhope inquiry into lower airspace and welcome the resulting government interest in resolving the many problems that exist in an airspace system that doesn't work well for many users and particularly disadvantages GA, in some cases to the point of irreparable damage.

However future airspace develops, there's little doubt sporting and recreational aviation will need to be rationally engaged and willing to evolve (which is very different from being pushed aside) to ensure we can continue to share the air with everyone else. Increasing use of conspicuity zones means

that specific electronic conspicuity (EC) equipage will, for many, become necessary. There are complications around widespread equipage of transponders and ADS-B, the CAA's EC technology of choice, including frequency congestion and of course cost. Ensuring the UK doesn't end up with EC's equivalent of Betamax is important. As a result, the way forward is not yet clear. Meanwhile, equipping with any EC is better than none, with FLARM the obvious choice for gliding operations as it helps to mitigate our primary mid-air conflict risk. Radio is also a helpful situational awareness tool. Developments this year that aim to make the pilot radio licence more relevant to the type of user should make obtaining a radio licence more attractive to glider pilots than has previously been the case. You can read more about airspace matters below.

Over the past few years, the BGA has been working with the European Gliding Union to ensure that EASA operations, training and licensing rules applicable to gliding are safe, simple and proportionate. EASA has been supportive. That work finished at the end of 2019 with the conclusion of the Sailplane Flight Crew Licensing (SFCL) rules, which sit alongside Declared Training Organisation (DTO) and Sailplane Air Operations (SAO) rules. The EASA 'Gliding Rulebook' should result in simpler more proportionate rules and processes that require minimum change and, in some cases, create greater opportunities than currently exist. If UK-national self-declaration alleviations to EASA medical rules we've proposed to the DfT can be accomplished, transition to EASA licensing will be straightforward and undamaging.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Patrick Naegeli and Andy Miller for their significant contributions to the 'Sailplane Rulebook' work, and to also thank the CAA GA Unit for their positive approach in recognising the BGA's capabilities and delegating responsibility throughout the rulemaking development. Over time, we intend to make greater use of delegated responsibilities under qualified entity status. Of course, Brexit may ultimately result in a plan B. Or C. As is often the case, staying flexible will be key to success!

One of the BGA's key roles in addition to governance is in supporting glider owners with safe, efficient and affordable continuing airworthiness services. Our continuing airworthiness and maintenance organisation also faces externally driven changes during 2020, which Howard Torode has highlighted below. Our intention, again, is to ensure minimum impact on the end users, ie owners and maintainers. CTO Gordon MacDonald and our volunteer regional technical officers continue to provide excellent support to our volunteer and professional inspectors, who are so critically important to the safe enjoyment of our sport.

Financial controls are a pillar of good governance. You can read more about our audited financial performance elsewhere in this report. Peter Bishop, our part-time professional accounts manager, and Tony Smith, our volunteer Treasurer are an experienced and talented team. I'd like to thank them for their continued careful financial management, oversight and guidance, supported by the small professional office team led by Debbie Carr.

At the BGA Conference in early 2020, we again get to recognise some of the enormous contributions made by glider pilots and supporters across the Association. The AGM will see us welcoming three new members of the BGA Executive Committee and thanking those who are moving on having each served on the committee for the 6-year maximum period allowed by the Articles of Association. In closing my report, I would like to express my thanks for the outstanding support from all our volunteers and staff. We are very fortunate to have such high calibre and motivated people representing our interests and ensuring the continued success of gliding.

Pete Stratten  
CEO



## Treasurers Report

The financial results for the year to 30 September 2019 show a pre-tax deficit of £10k compare to a pre-tax surplus of £10k for the previous year. There is no tax liability this year. The BGA has a corporation tax liability on its cash deposits, which is offset by tax losses on its core activity. We would generally expect there to be a neutral tax position. Last year we were able to recover some previously paid corporation tax.

The BGA aims to broadly achieve a break-even position each year whilst maintaining a strong balance sheet. This enables us to hold sufficient reserves to deal with the challenges and opportunities the future will bring. Invariably, some years there will be a surplus and some a deficit. Our total reserve this year is £947k, 2018 £957k, 2017 £945k. The reserve figure is the excess of total assets over total liabilities. Our total cash balances this year are £801k, 2018 £778k, 2017 £815k.

Within our total reserve figure, there is a balance of £51k, which relates to competition reserve. As with previous years, income and expenditure relating to competitions is 'ring fenced' after the contribution from membership fees is taken into account. This year there is a small deficit in relation to competition activity of £2k. This is reflected in the reduction in the competition reserve on the balance sheet. As discussed in previous years, the cycle of competitions does not take place on an annual basis; it is therefore to be expected that there will be fluctuations.

We have prepared a budget for the financial year 2020 – 2021, which has a modest increase in membership fees broadly in line with inflation. The purpose of this is to ensure we can maintain our balance sheet and continue to provide gliding with the support it needs to deal with future challenges. Our policy when preparing the budget continues to only include expenditure which can be predicted with some degree of certainty. Where this cannot be achieved, it will not be included in the budget. The board will always consider subsequent expenditure requests that are not included in the budget; subject them to robust discussion and scrutiny and respond appropriately.

Three of the key strategic challenges the BGA membership faces in the future are participation, security of tenure on airfields and, of course, airspace. We will continue to support and address these challenges in a variety of different ways, including collaboratively with other members of the GA community.

Introductory flight and mini course activity through the website continue to be strong, bringing marketing and associated benefits to individual clubs. We will be looking at new and innovative marketing opportunities in the future with the aim of promoting gliding as an inclusive sport that can be enjoyed by everyone. Finally, I would like to thank Peter Bishop and all the team for the diligent financial control at the BGA.

Tony Smith  
Treasurer

## Airspace Committee Report

2019 has been a year during which our frustrations and concerns associated with lower airspace regulation have been very much front of mind. It's also been a year during which we've learned that the CAA's airspace change process (ACP) decision making can't be challenged.

Whether flying or working on airspace matters, the price of our freedom to fly in open airspace is constant vigilance. A big issue for 2020 is how we address the anticipated significant increase in ACP response activity. It's a hot topic and during the year we will be working with the GA Alliance and others so that we are able to respond. It's still too early to say whether CAP1616, the new airspace change process, will be more effective than the discredited CAP725 process. At least two of the legacy CAP725 ACPs currently in the system, ie Brize Norton and Oxford airport, are worrying. Neither is justified. Both have the potential to cause huge problems for GA and are being taken forward under a known flawed process. Odd as it seems, CAP725 only requires proposers to consider activity inside their proposed airspace. This parochial approach is a key flaw of the system.

The CAA's airspace modernisation strategy (AMS) has been launched and some of the related strategy enablers are under development. NATS and others are pushing through airspace changes including those relating to FASI North and South (see the BGA members website for details). The challenge with the current situation for everyone other than air transport is that airspace is being 'modernised' and potentially refrozen in place without modernised policies and tools (eg electronic conspicuity, separation standards, flexibly used airspace, etc) being available that will limit the size and increase the flexibility of controlled airspace. The net result is currently expected to be more permanent controlled and temporary restricted airspace.

Electronic conspicuity (EC) is a key enabler for lower airspace modernisation including reduced segregation. ADS-B is the CAA's EC of choice, although we note that NATS (the UK's biggest provider of air traffic services) currently have no plans to deploy ADS-B overland. ADS-B output is either certified (expensive) or not certified (more sensibly priced). We understand from the technology experts that equipping all GA aircraft that currently have no transponder with Mode S transponders would result in detrimental congestion of the 1090MHz spectrum and that ADS-B transceivers would seem to be the preferred option where EC is required. However, if Mode-S and certified ADS-B are about the same price, and Mode-S gives improved airspace access and is more widely recognized internationally, its likely GA pilots will be tempted to fit it but then be obliged to turn it off at times to prevent spectrum congestion. Interesting. Meanwhile, equipping with any EC is better than none, with FLARM the obvious choice for gliding operations as it helps to mitigate our primary mid-air conflict risk.

But there are positives. DfT, CAA and NATS are talking to us, there should be an active and objective oversight group (the 'ACOG') in place during 2020 critiquing AMS development, and under current DfT management the CAA airspace department is subjected to some healthy scrutiny as well as gaining helpful resources. In due course, there may even be several useful changes to law. Partnership is important. We work closely with the GA Alliance and increasingly engage with Airspace4All (A4A) to understand how airspace can facilitate our activity while meeting air transport needs. We of course remain engaged with our EGU colleagues on airspace matters as there's no doubt we can all learn from international experiences and good practice.

The emergence of regional groupings of clubs engaging around local ACPs with central support where requested is a hugely useful development and we're grateful to the pathfinders (they know who they are) and the excellent work on past and present ACPs up and down the country. We intend to build on that approach over the coming year as well as explore ways of externally funding effective and efficient ACP consultation responses. That

can only be helpful to all concerned. Thanks to all those who have joined the wider BGA airspace team including club airspace officers and the newest members of the airspace committee for their experience, insight and commitment. There's a lot of work ahead we will need to develop innovative and even greater collaborative ways of working if we are to be successful.

The aim of all this work is of course to ensure we and the next generation of glider pilots can enjoy our fantastic sport. We all have a part to play. Please prepare carefully before flight, be vigilant when flying and please lend your support where requested to protect our freedoms to fly. Thanks.

Pete Stratten  
Acting Chair

## Competitions and Awards Committee Report

Our annual satisfaction survey covering UK competitions was, on the whole, encouraging, with high levels of satisfaction with most aspects of competition organisation across all competitions being reported. This suggests that our efforts to share best practice through Directors Seminars and other initiatives may be having an effect. That is not to say, though, that there isn't still plenty of room for improvement. The results of the survey will be fed back to the individual clubs and will also be used to inform the work of the committee in the coming year.

This year we organised a trial of direct-submission NOTAMs to improve situational awareness for other airspace users. Directors were able to create and publish a NOTAM each morning, detailing the task area in a format easily accessible to GA pilots on their navigation devices. Feedback from both organisers and air traffic services was very positive and it is expected that this system will be used again in 2020.

Another project this year was to review the handicap list and to document the methodology and procedures for deciding and reviewing handicaps. In the past the process has been less than transparent. A new Handicaps Sub-Committee has been formed to carry out this work.

On the domestic competition scene, with reasonably kind weather, most competitions managed a respectable number of task days. Entries in the Nationals classes were 7% down on the average of the last four years, while Regionals entries were around 1% up. It would be good to see these numbers increase.

The Inter Club League final held at Cambridge Gliding Club proved to be a very closely-fought meeting. Seven regions were represented. Three clubs, Norfolk, Bristol & Gloucester and The Gliding Centre tied on points, but honours went to Norfolk on a tie-break.

This year the National Ladder began to differentiate between flights done by gliders with or without a means of propulsion. Linked to this, two new ladder trophies have been created; The Navboys Albatross Trophy and the Flight Deck Wingman Pure Soar Trophy (many thanks to the sponsors). These trophies will be awarded to the pilot who achieves the best scores in a glider without means of propulsion in the Weekend and Open Ladders.

2019 was very successful for the British Gliding Team. The season began in May with the 18m, Open, and 20m European Championships in Turbia, Poland. Steve Jones and Garry Coppin, flying an Arcus T took Silver. Pete Harvey and Phil Jones in the 18m Class finished in 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> and Russell Cheetham and Tim Jenkinson finished 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> in the Open Class. The Team took the Bronze Team Medal.

The 15m, Standard and Club Class European Championships were held in Prievidza, Slovakia in July. Tom Arscott and G Dale took Gold and Silver in Club Class. In the Standard Class Paul Fritche managed 15<sup>th</sup> place and Howard Jones was 17<sup>th</sup>. In the 15m Class, Tim Scott was 13<sup>th</sup> position.

The Junior Worlds in Szeged in Hungary in July was the cherry on top. The team had spent months planning, training and fund-raising. The results were a credit to the whole squad many of whom attended the competition as crew. Jake Brattle and Finn Sleigh took Gold and Silver in the Club Class. Peter Carter and Simon Brown finished halfway down the field in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> places and the team took the Silver Team Medal.



As well as thanking all the committee members who just get on with the many tasks that need to be done every year, I'd also like to thank Liz Sparrow, who stepped down as chair of the committee this year. Liz has other fish to fry, competing in the Women's World Gliding Championships in Australia in January 2020 and preparing to direct the next WWGC which come to the UK in 2021. We wish her well with both ventures.

Thanks too, go to other members of the committee who have decided it's time to move on and a big welcome also goes to three new members who joined the committee at the start of the 2019/2020 winter session. I can't close this paragraph, however, without noting that we were unable to persuade any women to join the committee this year, so we are, once again, an all-male group. We are still in need of new members, so perhaps that will change this year?

Alan Langlands  
Chair

## Development Committee Report

The decline in overall club membership was slightly less from the 2017/18 club returns than the previous year. The positive in all of this remains the juniors who now represent 18% of the UK gliding population. Sadly, we are not able to report on any expansion of the female gliding population from these returns.

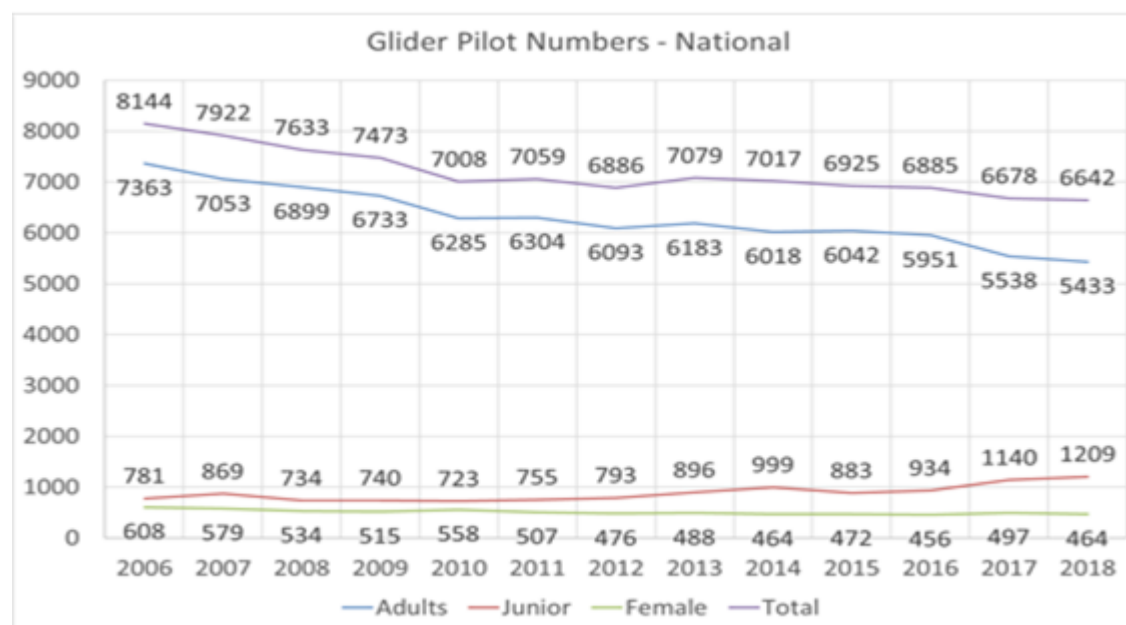
As ever there was also positive news at certain clubs where we saw 30 growing and a further 14 holding their own. So more than half the clubs are doing OK. As has been previously reported the more successful clubs seem to be more active in terms of understanding members' needs and fulfilling them. Members' surveys are now a common tool to aid this.

The Club Management Conference continues to be a key event with this year's attracting 175 delegates from 45 clubs. It enables us to provide club officials with excellent information and for them to network and share good practices and avoid pitfalls. This always seems very valuable as we have small groups of volunteers all trying to solve similar problems and issues – it's always better to avoid re-inventing the wheel. We also resurrected the BGA Good Practice Award which was deservedly won by Herefordshire GC for their various initiatives to grow the club in recent years.

The general job of responding to club questions and issues continued as ever. We embarked on several training events on club management (6 sessions, 16 clubs and 31 participant). We dealt with queries on project planning & funding, the Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) scheme, volunteering, GDPR, governance and site security.

On this latter front I am particularly pleased to report that we have fought off several planning applications for developments adjacent to clubs that could have seriously impacted the club's operations. A great deal of credit should be given to members of the Development Committee, the BGA and most of all to local club volunteers' time and application. We are also currently advising two clubs on potential site purchases and one trying to obtain a proper, long term lease.

In an attempt to provide better site security for clubs we have been working with Sport England to increase the number of club sites designated as a Significant Area for Sport (SASPs). This has been a rather drawn out process, but we expect good news in early 2020. Sites that are designated



SASPs have some additional protection from local developments. We are also keen where possible to have local authorities acknowledge in their local plans the importance of gliding clubs as sports clubs that contribute to the community.

The work by the rates group continues although the pace has been slow primarily due to slow response from the Valuation Office Agency.

As ever I would like to thank all those involved in the Development Committee for their support and for the time they devote to our sport. Though often not very visible but without the efforts of an amazing group of volunteers and paid resources our sport would not be what it is today.

Dave Latimer

Chair

## Flight Operations Committee Report

The BGA have been heavily involved with airspace issues throughout 2019. The modernisation plans for airspace in the UK are considerable and will require a large amount of work by BGA volunteers throughout 2020 to achieve a workable solution. The Flight Operations committee are involved with several of the CAAs committees ensure our voice is heard

The number of airspace incursions has remained constant. The CAA are aware that infringements by glider pilots are very low but there is no need for complacency. The reasons pilots infringe are numerous but high on the list is flying too close to airspace and then being distracted. Flying on the wrong pressure setting is another issue, there are still pilots who insist on flying around on their airfield QFE.

The BGA is represented on the CAA's Airspace Incursion Working Group (AIWG). The AIWG have been promoting Local Airspace Incursion Teams (LAIT) which have been established at some of the airfields which are infringement hotspots. Many gliding clubs are involved in local airfield user groups, the LAIT's are specifically tasked to deal with airspace issues and they are getting the message across to those pilots and organisations that are involved.

An issue for some clubs is aircraft flying over the site during a winch launch. The danger to all is obvious. Most gliding sites are in open airspace and whilst flying through the area is not illegal it isn't safe. Some LAIT's have been very pro-active in getting the message across to the GA pilots. If there is an incident at your club, please report it. If you don't, nothing will get done.

The BGA will be encouraging clubs to improve the way they make other airspace users aware of the extent and times of club operations. A quick phone call to the local airfields is not that difficult. We are represented on the Airprox board and demonstrate that we do take our responsibilities seriously. Gliders might be slow moving, but our pilots lookout standards are good.

8.33 radios are with us. In the future there will be an increase in radio mandatory zones and we will need to improve the way we use our radios. An issue for gliding is that there are few basic two seaters with radios. Where they are available, they are rarely use in the standard air traffic way. As a result, our students either don't learn at all during training or if they do, it may not be standardised. We will need to improve the way we train and use our radios. You can read more about helpful radio training and radio licence developments in the airspace committee report.

80% of airspace infringements over a 12-month period occurred to aircraft that were not using a GPS moving map. GPS for in flight navigation is available to all. Clubs must encourage their pilots to be capable of using these devices safely, especially at high workload times.

As stated on previous occasions the challenge for clubs is to ensure that all pilots from the pre-solo to experienced cross country are provided with or are capable of resourcing, understanding and implementing the airmanship skills that will avoid airspace issues.

Peter Moorehead  
Chair

## Instructing and Examining Committee Report

This year, as part of the BGA review of committee terms of reference, the Instructors committee was renamed as the Instructing and Examining Committee, reflecting some small changes to the terms of reference and emerging changes in responsibilities. The committee consists of all the senior regional examiners (SREs) and invited experts and continues to meet twice yearly.

Andy Miller was appointed as the BGA Lead FCL examiner in May to facilitate sailplane examiner support, and progress with FCL(S) examiner renewals going forward. At the beginning of 2019, Andy began the process by renewing the BGA group of EASA Part FCL Senior examiners (sailplanes) with a seminar followed by Assessments of Competence around the country. This was key to maintain the BGA support for instructors and examiners that had transitioned across to EASA FCL. Andy has also developed a plan ahead of April 2021 to renew EASA Flight Instructor Examiners and EASA Flight Examiners over the winter period and into 2020. This will place the BGA in a strong position with the approaching Sailplane Flight Crew Licencing rules.

2019 saw the EASA FI seminars being opened up to include any BGA Instructor for the first day which focuses mainly on new developments in teaching, recent safety reviews and instructor refreshers which can be used as part of their BGA 5-year revalidation requirement. These have proved very popular and further seminar providers are in the process of being appointed to support and standardise instructors going forward.

The regional examining and coaching teams led by the SRE's continue to support local CFI's and their clubs and instructors, undertaking BI Courses, instructor renewals, full rating tests etc. and supporting local Club Safety Officers. Their expertise and advice are invaluable.

Mike Fox and his team of BGA Instructor coaches have continued to provide instructor courses around the country, remaining flexible to club needs whenever possible regarding modules and courses. Feedback from examiners carrying out final assessments has been very favourable, with the standard of teaching by new instructors being reported as being very good. Further development of these instructor courses is a continuous process with the latest being the production of training videos which can be used for home study with the main aim of reducing the number of days away for instructor candidates whilst maintaining the high standards of the course content. This will be trialled on a course in 2020.

The Instructors committee made a recommendation to the executive in Dec 2018 to move the Canopy closed, locked and resists upward pressure to the end of the recommended pre-flight check list. As a result, CBSIFTCBE was changed to CBSIFTBEC. This change followed an analysis of incidents and accidents related to inadequate pre-flight preparation and recognise the widespread practice (normalised deviance) of closing and locking the canopy just before launching, eg. In warm weather and during the winter where there is a risk of canopy misting ahead of launching. When more data is available, it will be interesting to see if this has had any impact upon the number of canopy related incidents/accidents.

Recent concerns regarding the growing number of aerotow tug upsets are high on the agenda for attention in early 2020. Working closely with the BGA safety committee, who with the efforts of Hugh Browning have produced a comprehensive analysis of tug upsets, the intention is to consider and develop further advice for clubs in order to safeguard our volunteer tug pilots.



Finally, I would like to thank all the examiners, coaches, CFI's and instructors around the country for their continued efforts and support to this wonderful sport of ours.

Colin Sword  
Chair

## Junior Gliding Report

### Winter Series

The first part of 2019 saw us continue series 7 of our winter expeditions. We flew three events in total over the 18/19 winter series. We had a mixed bag of weather but still had some great flying. We had a good turnout of juniors (around 60+ at each event) and some really great support from both the hosting clubs and visiting instructors and two-seater owners. Our first event was at Sutton Bank in October 2018. Our second event was Denbigh in February. Our third and pre-season event was at Nympsfield in April. In October we began the 8<sup>th</sup> Series of our winter expeditions with Portmoak. We had a large turnout of juniors and two seaters and a lot of great flying.

### Summer Series

We continued our instructing weekends aimed at post solo development for juniors. The first was held at Rattlesden in May. The second at Aston Down in August. We had several Bronze and Cross-Country endorsement completions as well as other successes during these events.

### Media Team – Public Relations

We took our place with the Shuttleworth discovery team for all the monthly air shows again. These have proved very popular both with the public and with the juniors running them. We ran the simulator alongside the IET at RIAT. We were invited to the Air League Youth in Aviation afternoon at the house of lords and the Air League Communications and social media networking event at Whitehall.

### Club management Conference

We held the juniors conference alongside the main club management conference. We talked through the framework for supporting and developing juniors that was last years focus. This year's focus was future of clubs, juniors and gliding with the juniors. We will write up and present our findings soon.

### Junior Nationals and Junior Team

The Junior Nationals was held at Nympsfield this year and was another great competition for both new and experienced juniors to compete for the illustrious trophy. This year's winner was Jake Brattle taking the trophy for his third win. The only junior to have won the National trophy three times. Our junior team had great success this year. Team training was at the Hahnweide Regionals in Germany and Issoudun Overseas Nationals in France. Our team went on to take Gold and Silver medals in the club class and Silver medal for the team.

### Junior Development Team

With the increasing number of juniors events and initiatives each year we have brought in new people to the team to help keep things developing and stop people from being overwhelmed. We have small groups or individuals running each part and then a small group of overseers reviewing it all.

### Thanks

We would like to thank all the people and clubs that make each event possible. Without the 2-seater owners, helpers from the gliding clubs and instructors from all over the country, we wouldn't be able to run the events that we do. We would like to thank the people who have helped with running the stand, collecting the Simulator and lending gliders for the promotional team at Shuttleworth and RIAT.

A big thank you to the supporters, sponsors and team management for keeping the British Junior Gliding Team at the top of the world podium.

### 2020 Events and outlook

2020 will see us continuing series 8 of the winter series. We will be at the long Mynd in February and Sherington in April. The summer Series will be run again with dates and locations to be confirmed. The Junior Nationals will be going back to Aston Down. 2019 saw a large group of juniors flying their last junior nationals before they were too old to continue. 2020 will see a new wave of hotshots compete for the coveted trophy.

We will continue our work with Shuttleworth and be expanding on this with some STEM events in the summer.

If you would like to find out more about the events taking place, how to take part or if you want any information on running your own juniors events, please contact us either via email, through the BGA office or on our Facebook page.

Peter Hibberd  
Junior Gliding Development Team

## Safety Committee Report

The Safety Committee continues to analyse accidents, produce and disseminate safety advice and training material, and support the Instructors Committee's development of the training syllabus.

### Analysis

Our extensive accident database and report archive provide a priceless evidence base for safety analysis and development, and we are pleased that a positive, no-blame reporting culture, actively pursued by our network of dedicated Club Safety Officers, seems widely established. We aim to support CSOs directly, both on individual concerns and through regional seminars (held in 2019 at Aston Down and Seighford), and through the regional teams led by Senior Regional Examiners. We are also pleased to offer advice directly to clubs by drawing upon our database to provide a historical or national context and help clubs' own development of safe practice and a good safety culture.

Our safety data allow quantitative support for wider BGA campaigns, including a recent analysis of trends in insurance liabilities and the formal adoption by EASA of BGA gliding accident categorization. This allows us to ensure an evidence-based approach where we would otherwise be vulnerable to partisan subjectivity.

### Communication

CFIs and instructors remain a key line of communication. We continue to work closely with the Instructors Committee and, at annual Sporting and Club Management conferences, individual CFIs, to engage, learn and inform about safety aspects, training implications and key messages, and develop the advice collected in Managing Flying Risk.

For more direct communication, we have revised the Safe Winch Launch booklet and poster, produced a First Flight poster aimed at both novices and their instructors or Introductory Flight Pilots, and established regular 'Straighten Up & Fly Right' pages in S&G. While reaching pilots is one challenge, potential information overload remains another, and we attempt to restrict major articles and initiatives to selected, seasonal topics. The Post-Accident Guide has also undergone substantial revision and reformatting. Many of these safety resources are available from the BGA website: please make use of them.

### Accidents

Statistically, this was an unremarkable year for gliding accidents and typical since the introduction of FLARM and the Safe Winch Launch initiative: it is crucial that we maintain these safe winch launch practices.

There was no obvious pattern to the year's serious injury accidents: incomplete rigging, flight into terrain, a bounced landing and – a rare event nowadays – structural failure. However, there has been an alarming rise in tug upsets, and only through luck supported latterly by an education campaign have we so far avoided grave consequences. Our accident investigators dug into the causes of several accidents, and the human factors of distraction, complacency, and late take-over during instruction emerged as common themes. In adventurous situations, these led to some expensive

accidents that received media coverage, though thankfully none of the pilots was injured. Several other accidents and incidents could easily have proved more serious. As ever, the reported incidents and accidents provide important data that informs developments in safety performance.

### Supervision

Although its causes may prove unrelated, a serious accident revealed shortcomings in the supervision of young pilots, whose experience and ambition can exceed what is sensible or consistent with their licence status. BGA advice has been revised and incorporated into 'Managing Flying Risk'. We have again highlighted the need for a risk-averse approach to trial lessons and air experience, which we have newly badged 'First Flights': a focus at the Club Management Conference, supported by an S&G article and poster.

Technological developments occasionally offer new enhancements, and Skylaunch has commercialized a rapid, robust signalling system, based upon systems at Stratford and Kent GCs, to allow winch launches to be stopped promptly if a pilot cannot keep the wings clear of the ground.

### Thanks

I'd like to thank CSOs and regional teams for relentlessly promoting safety at club level; and numerous individual pilots and instructors for personally adopting and promoting a positive safety culture, diligent reporting and safety-related suggestions. Hugh Browning merits particular acknowledgement for endless hours of work on all fronts, as do Ed Lockhart, for compiling the excellent accident summaries for S&G, the Safety Committee, and our tenacious BGA accident investigators.

Safe flying in 2020!

Tim Freegarde  
Chair



## Technical Committee Report

### The BGA Airworthiness Process

Over the past year the 'Self-Declared Maintenance Programme' (SDMP) documentation has been fully developed. All future ARC applications now require this procedure, which is greatly assisted by use of the latest version of the BGA Glider Logbook. In addition, via the BGA website, access is offered to a library of proforma maintenance programmes, customised to type, for the convenience of inspectors and ARC engineers. This process emphasises the legal responsibility on owners' (individuals or clubs) to ensure the airworthiness of those airframes in their care and has enabled BGA to restore many of the privileges that we had previously available to the gliding movement.

### Personal licensing of BGA Inspectors as Part 66L engineers.

New rules for personal engineer licensing have recently been enacted but their implementation in UK remains unclear.

The two-year, national implementation process has started and is running late, although it appears accepted that currently approved BGA inspectors will be automatically empowered under the new code. As to the qualification of new engineers after October 2020, there appears to be a serious shortage of both advice on the planned procedure and material by which to educate and examine future candidates. We are currently discussing potential future options with CAA UK.

### Other regulatory developments

NOTE: In evolving political times, the BGA is maintaining close contact with the CAA GA Unit on these, and other matters which may develop more national autonomy in coming years.

CAA UK is in the process of adopting the provisions of the new European 'Basic Regulation', which includes raising the weight thresholds above which European regulation is required. Below these thresholds the alternative of national regulation can now be accepted. It is hoped that this might help to re-energise future UK light aviation initiatives including gliding. While it is too early to judge, there appears to be some emerging interest to new lightweight glider projects in UK, which will be assisted by this deregulation along with new conditions for experimentation, and wholly deregulated microlight gliders under SSDR.

Also 'Part M Light' passed into law in August 2019 and entered the implementations on 24 March 2020. This represents a relaxation and rationalisation of the current airworthiness process operated by the BGA. For example, our previous practice of unified annual inspection and ARC renewal is recommended.

### BGA Airworthiness activities in the field

The BGA's education programme for inspectors, as managed by Gordon MacDonald our CTO, now covers refresher training and club maintainer courses to ensure that maintenance standards are sustained 'on the field'. Our regional Technical Officers (RTO's) continue to provide valued

technical advice at the membership level over wide aspects of the technical side of gliding. The BGA continues its programme of Quality Auditors to meet our CAMO quality targets. This team is led by Keith Morgan and includes new auditor Andy Brind. We thank all for their assistance including those at BGA Head Office who admirably defend our reputation with CAA UK.

Howard A Torode  
Chair

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Cover picture – British Gliding Team, World Junior Gliding Championships 2019