



British Gliding Association Annual Report 2024

BGA Annual Report for 2024

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Chair Report

As is traditional, I'll start with a comment on the weather. In 2024, it wasn't very good was it – or maybe it was just that it didn't often do what the forecast said. Lots of gliding was done anyway! Over 100 newly qualified pilots, over 100 new BIs & instructors, over 1000 badges and certificates (and SPL licences) in a pilot population of about 6000, and the National Ladder busy as usual. It's not how 'good' the weather is that counts so much as our motivation to make the most of it!

The world around us continues to change, sometimes in ways we don't welcome and can't resist or even influence. Where we can influence, we must; where we can't, we adapt.

BGA advocacy to government and regulator was continuous through 2024 on many subjects, in concert with other GA organisations. To mention but two: -

- BGA successfully influenced the pilot licencing and medical requirements, and now we need to implement (by 30th September 2025...everyone!).
- We are influencing inspector licencing and, whatever the result, we will need to adapt to greater use of the pilot owner maintenance freedoms which we already have.

Development and participation activities continued, including the recruitment of more Women's ambassadors, the first National Women's Go Gliding Weekend, and the initiation of more general web-site refreshes and social media awareness and marketing programmes. Clubs are gearing up to welcome more newcomers as well as working on retention of existing members. All these things contribute to the aim of ensuring UK gliding is sustainable long term.

Junior Gliding goes from strength to strength. It's run by juniors for juniors and led by recent past juniors. Not only does it welcome young pilots into a country-wide community of like minds and help them to develop their gliding skills, but it also fosters development of new top-flight pilots, young instructors, and leaders, who are already contributing to clubs around the country. They are vital to the future of gliding.

Thanks & acknowledgements. I'm encouraged by the flexibility, ingenuity, and commitment shown in the operation and management of clubs and the willingness of clubs to help one-another and thank all those who contribute so much to their continued success.

I thank, also, all the volunteers leading or participating in the work of the BGA: - its subcommittees and working groups, the Executive Committee, and our dedicated team of professional staff. They are all here to ensure we fulfil our mission, which is to help provide the environment in which clubs and pilots can flourish. Thanks go to Rebecca Bryan who is standing down having completed two 3-year terms as elected Executive Committee member, to Lucy Wootton who has agreed to 'renew' for a second term, and to Sam Lazenby, who took over the role of Treasurer in March 2024.

I wish you all a safe and fulfilling year of gliding in 2025.

George Metcalfe - Chair

Treasurer Report

I'm pleased to present my first Treasurer's Report since I joined the BGA as treasurer back in April (and Company Secretary in November). I'd like to start by thanking Tony Smith for his hard work over his long tenure in both roles, and I'm acutely aware I've got big shoes to fill!

The financial result for the year ended 30 September 2024 shows a pre-tax deficit of (£54k), compared to a surplus of £8k (before prior year adjustment) in the comparative period for 2023. This is based on a slightly increased turnover of £751k compared to £741k in the 2023 financial year.

You will notice that alongside this deficit there has been a transfer from the competitions reserve of £48k partially offsetting this. This is attributable to the timing of the international competitions cycle, with the more expensive world competitions undertaken in 2024 in Uvalde, Texas. This forms part of a competition location cycle which tends to naturally fluctuate as the world competitions move around the globe, giving rise to changing costs, and is the reason for the competitions reserve existing.

The remaining deficit position for the year is attributable to several key factors impacting the underlying trading of the BGA, notably an increase in costs because of inflationary headwinds, and a slight reduction in activity when comparing on a like for like basis.

It is typical within an organisation such as the BGA to see fluctuations between years, including switches between surplus and deficit positions. As has previously remained the case, the overall 'long term' financial objective of the BGA is to sustain a broadly break-even position whilst maintaining a strong balance sheet. The results for 2024, and budget for 2025 (and beyond) maintain this ethos and we expect to see fluctuations such as this continue.

You will hopefully be aware that the deadline for SPL conversion is September 2025. As such, this has provided certainty in terms of the end date to a long-term project of converting several thousand glider pilots to being SPL holders. You will notice within the financial statements a 'prior period adjustment'. This results from a lot of the 'unknowns' relating to the licence conversion now becoming 'known', resulting in an adjustment to the comparative year within the accounts.

The cash and working capital balances of the BGA remain strong, and the team have taken steps to ensure that in the face of rising interest rates and a period of high inflation, the cash balances are invested in a way which means that the value is not diminished through inflation but does not create additional risk.

Finally, I'd like to express my thanks to Peter Bishop, Pete Stratten, Liz Pike and the rest of the BGA team for the hard work that goes into keeping the finances of the BGA running behind the scenes, and their guidance as I get to grips with the role.

Sam Lazenby – Honorary Treasurer and Company Secretary

CEO Report

This annual report provides a summary of another busy year for everyone and provides insight into some of the great work carried out on behalf of the membership. We hope you find it interesting.

You will have read the financial year 2024 headlines in the Treasurer report. The BGA is feeling rising costs as much as any other organisation. We continue to carefully monitor overheads and adjust where we can, while ensuring we maintain high standards and represent good value in the services we provide to clubs and their members.

The BGA continues to be pro-active in its advocacy role. The 2024 CAA review of sailplane pilot licensing was an example of effective collaborative working towards a proportionate regulatory outcome. A group of CAA and BGA subject matter experts worked together resulting in widely published CAA-proposed updates to sailplane pilot licensing and training legislation that they expect to be progressed as part of a legislative process during spring 2025.

A key aspect of the requirement for a pilot in command of a Part-21 sailplane (other than a student pilot) to hold an SPL from 30th September 2025 is of course the medical standard. Current legislation, that helpfully allows use of a Pilot Medical Declaration (PMD) for SPL holders but illogically does not provide the same opportunity for student pilots flying solo, needs updating. Thanks to everyone who responded to the CAA's PMD consultation, the regulator is aware that it urgently needs to address this inconsistency.

Working with others is a common theme. For example during 2024; the Go Gliding initiative, supported by a DfT programme to generate interest in aviation careers, successfully reached out to many young people across the UK and made great use of STEM resources and club expertise; our PR team worked with other organisations to make best use of air display opportunities; and working relationships have been established or strengthened with several organisations, including Aerobility, the disability flying charity, whose superb contribution to the BGA's myth-busting event in November has boosted the journey towards greater awareness and opportunity. The first National Women's Go Gliding Weekend held on a less than spring-like weekend last year has encouraged a (hopefully drier!) repeat in April 2025. Please get involved.

Instructing training has evolved in recent years and includes a mix of club-based and BGA delivered training by suitably qualified coaches using the standard course programme with final assessment by examiners. It is encouraging that more instructors qualified in 2024 than in any other year in the past decade.

Continuing airworthiness and maintenance are core BGA activities. Our inspectors, our processes and supporting team, and our audit programme coupled with related CAA oversight continue to support our work to facilitate ongoing safe, accessible, transparent, and affordable maintenance and repair. However, the existing disproportionate Part-66L requirements coupled with natural turnover will result in a reduction in qualified people, and in the years ahead it will become ever more difficult to complete compliant maintenance - with obvious implications. The

BGA is continuing to encourage the CAA to work with us to address this regulatory handbrake. Meanwhile, you will be able to read more about our pro-active approach to Part-66L in the Technical Committee report. Potentially of concern, late in 2024 the DfT announced that they are stepping back from engagement with General Aviation due to resource issues. An unfortunate inevitability will be the need for direct contact with MPs on matters that have previously been sensibly resolved by other means.

Recognising the challenges of an ageing demographic in recreational aviation as well as the evolving perceptions and expectations in the wider world, we've invested in a raising awareness of gliding initiative that was launched in late 2024, preparing the ground ahead of a big push in spring 2025. An immediate result has been a massive increase in our social media reach. Our contractors will continue to deliver this initiative throughout the coming year, including signposting towards club's websites and social media presence as well as advising clubs on their marketing.

BGA supplied services are as busy as ever, with safety management, instructor and inspector support, glider owner support, club development, licences, publications, certificates and badges, competition entries, seminars, courses, PR events, and conferences all professionally supported by the BGA's small team of expert volunteers, staff, and contractors. Thank you all. The final push towards everyone who can applying for and receiving their SPLs by 30th September 2025 will further stretch our office team. Please help them to help you by completing your application as soon as possible – ideally before the summer – and by double checking that your application is accurate and complete before submitting it to the BGA office.

During 2024, twenty-seven individuals from BGA clubs, mostly nominated by their peers, proudly received BGA or Royal Aero Club awards. The skill, effort and long-term dedication described in citations leading to awards is always remarkable and frequently inspiring. The presentation of BGA awards is of course one element of the BGA sporting conference that this year is taking place at the Loughborough University campus on the 22nd of February. I look forward to seeing you there.

Finally, before the gliding season really gets going, please take the time to refresh yourself on the inherent risks in flying and how we mitigate them. The guidance and support are out there.

Have fun during 2025.

Pete Stratten - CEO

Airspace Committee Report

The BGA's airspace work has continued at pace during 2024. As a member of the CAA's NATMAC, the BGA is consulted on any airspace change. In return, there is a need to consider the detail and respond accordingly. In addition to many airspace change proposals (ACPs), there have been several other airspace related consultations from the CAA and from NATS (National Air traffic Services, which is an international corporation 49% owned by the Government with the staff, airports and airlines owning the remainder).

As previously reported, the UK's disparately managed airspace does not help when it comes to developing fit for purpose airspace. At the end of 2024, the BGA responded to a consultation describing a UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS) that in the first instance would deliver all ACPs relating to the proposed redevelopment of the London TMA (LTMA) upper and lower airspace. The consultation noted how a second stage for UKADS could be to deliver all ACPs in the UK. The only organisation in the UK that could take on the role described in the consultation is NATS. Whilst supporting the principle and potential benefits of a strategic, joined up and expert approach to airspace development, BGA has highlighted that there are of course significant risks which will need addressing, including balancing fairness and equitable access to airspace with corporate responsibility to shareholders. Whatever form airspace change takes going forward there will be issues, including political interventions such as with Doncaster airspace as well as re-emerging legacy CAP725 ACPs. Being engaged, vigilant and joined up is as important as ever.

There cannot be many glider pilots who have not noticed the big news about the growth of uncrewed air systems (drones). The industry has wealthy backers and political support, and the operators are now an airspace stakeholder. There is activity underway to develop appropriate rules for drones and the operators are impatient for change, despite detect and avoid (DAA) level 3 (collision avoidance) technology not yet being available. The result is a proliferation of segregated Temporary Danger Areas (TDAs) and projects to trial 'electronic conspicuity' mandatory zones (TMZs) which given affordable and effective for all EC equipage could facilitate integration. Inevitably, some are jumping the DAA gun towards widespread 'integrated' airspace including of course how that will be monetised. The BGA continues to engage with this big topic including with other recreational aviation organisations primarily via the General Aviation Alliance (GAA). We need to remain open-minded and engage effectively while defending our access to shared airspace. Working together is important, as is accurately challenging unreasonable assumptions and proposals. We are pleased that the GAA has taken on the services of an ACP response programme manager.

The BGA Airspace Committee includes a broad range expertise and experience with controllers as well as commercial/air transport pilots in the team. Everyone's contributions and guidance are valued. If you are interested in getting involved, please do get in touch.

Finally, thank you as glider pilots for helping to maintain safe shared airspace by staying aware and using effective threat and error management every time you fly.

Pete Stratten – Acting Chair

Competition & Awards Committee Report

2024 has been significant for our gliding community, marked by a series of successful competitions and notable achievements at international levels, alongside vital organisational developments. The year saw the British Gliding Team competing strongly in several prestigious events, reflecting the skill and dedication of our pilots – you can read more in their report.

Domestically, our competitions continued to thrive, thanks to the clubs that have consistently supported these events. This year saw some incredible achievements within the UK Nationals. Matt Davis claimed his first 18-metre UK Nationals title at Lasham, with his father, Andy Davis, winning the Open Class earlier in the season. This remarkable achievement marked the first time a father and son duo had both won national titles in the same year. In Club Class, John Roberts secured his second Nationals win, while Jez Hood and Leigh Wells triumphed in the Standard and 15-metre Nationals, respectively. Steve Jones also had a standout year, taking the win in the 20-metre Nationals. These accomplishments highlight the exceptional talent within our community and the continued growth of competitive gliding at the national level.

However, it is becoming increasingly challenging to find clubs willing to host competitions, and we are deeply grateful to those that continue to step forward. We encourage any clubs considering hosting in the future to reach out to us—we are here to provide support and make these events successful for all involved. We welcomed two new directors: Alistair Emson for the Junior Nationals and Claudia Hill for the Dunstable Regionals. Both have already made valuable contributions to our events and will play pivotal roles in the future.

Despite some challenges in the 2024 Interclub League, including Essex GC being unable to form a team at the last minute, we remain optimistic. The Gliding Centre stepped up as the sole team in the final, and we appreciate their participation. Looking ahead, we're excited to improve the competition and ensure a more successful and engaging ICL in 2025, with more clubs coming together for a great event.

2024 also saw key changes within the committee as we bid farewell to Ben Hughes, who stepped down from the committee to focus on his career as an airline pilot. Ben has been a crucial member of the team for many years, and we thank him for his dedication and hard work behind the scenes. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

The 2024 year also saw a change within our committee leadership. Jim White stepped into the role of Chair of the Competitions Committee, a position he initially approached with some hesitation. However, throughout the year, Jim has proven to be an invaluable asset, dedicating his time and energy to the role and navigating the challenges that came with it. We are grateful for his commitment and the steady leadership he has provided.

A special mention must go to Werner Stroud, whose support throughout the year has been nothing short of exceptional. As Team Manager, Werner has consistently gone above and beyond, providing invaluable assistance to our pilots and teams. His dedication to the role was evident as he attended numerous events, where he took on the additional responsibility of being the team captain. Werner's leadership and unwavering commitment to ensuring our teams were well-prepared and supported have made a significant impact. We are deeply appreciative of his

efforts, and his contributions have played a pivotal role in the success of our teams throughout the year.

Looking ahead, the consultation period for the new competition rules for 2025 is nearing completion, with final comments under consideration. We are also seeking new members to join the committee, and we encourage anyone with a passion for the sport and a desire to contribute to the future of cross-country competition in gliding to apply. The incentives are strong, and fresh perspectives are always welcome as we continue to navigate the challenges and opportunities of the coming years.

There have been some fractious and high emotions surrounding certain rule changes, and we recognise that these discussions can sometimes be challenging. We want to emphasise that our approach is not to rush these changes but to allow for open, thoughtful dialogue. Our goal is to ensure that any new rules are carefully considered and reflect the needs of both pilots and competition directors alike. We are committed to working through these discussions with ease and patience, understanding that we must balance the perspectives of all parties involved. The process may take time, but we remain focused on ensuring that the final outcomes serve the best interests of the gliding community.

The British Gliding Team for the 2025 World and European Championships has been announced, and we're excited to see our talented pilots represent us on the international stage.

At the 39th FAI World Championship (Tabor, Czech Republic, 7-21 June), the team will include 15M Class: Leigh Wells & Tom Arscott; Club Class: John Roberts & Tim Fletcher; Standard Class: Jez Hood & Howard Jones; Captain: Clement Allen

At the 7th FAI Junior European Championship (Prievidza, Slovakia, 5-20 July), the team will feature; Club Class: George Downing & Jordan Johnson; Standard Class: Oscar Butlin & Oliver Ramsay

At the 13th FAI Women's World Championship (Zbraslavice, Czech Republic, 26 July-9 August), the team will include 18M Class: Liz Sparrow & Ayala Truelove; Standard Class: Fran Roberts & Jan McCoshim; Club Class: Jane Nash & Anne Soltow; Captain: Alan Baker

At the 23rd FAI European Championship (Bekescsaba, Hungary, 26 July-9 August), the team will include 18M Class: Matt Davis & Gary Stingemore; Open Class: Andy Davis & Tim Jenkinson; 20M Class: Steve Jones & Garry Coppin; Captain: Werner Stroud

We wish our teams the best of luck in their preparations for these prestigious events.

Overall, 2024 has been a year of growth and achievement. Our pilots, organisers, and volunteers have shown incredible resilience, and we are excited to continue building on this success in 2025. With new leadership, updated rules, and continued community support, we look forward to what the future holds for competitive gliding. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this year so successful, and we can't wait to see what's next.

Francesca Roberts - BGA Competitions and Awards Committee

Development Committee Report

The Development Committee continues to focus on supporting clubs in many diverse aspects including site security (including planning), club management, child protection, good practice, and rates advice. We also organise and deliver the annual club development conference and the regular online Monday evening calls. The delivery of all of this would not be possible without the amazing contributions of the Development Officer, Alison Randle, committee members, our panel of experts and the support of the BGA Executive and the BGA Office. So, a big thank you too all.

This year's club development conference (135 attendees from 46 clubs) had a strong focus on participation and saw the launch of the Participation Project led by BGA Exec member Craig Lowrie. This project aims to raise the awareness of the sport of gliding, through social media, to lead more people to take up our wonderful, if not well understood, sport. To ensure good coordination with other committee activities Craig has also become a Development Committee member. A welcome addition.

Last year saw the first National Women's Go Gliding Weekend which was very successful. We will be doing this again (26/27 April 2025), and better in 2025. Yvonne Elliot has created a network of women's ambassadors in 41 of our clubs and 12 clubs have also been endorsed using the Women in Gliding standard. Yvonne also continues to review clubs recognised as Junior Gliding Centres (currently 38 clubs, 10 audits, 2 applications in 2024). She has now also started work to help clubs support those with disabilities with help from Aerobility.

We also welcomed Marilyn Hood and Suzanne Robertson to the Development Committee. They run the successful Expanding Horizons program which is a legacy from the 2022 Women's World Championships held at the Gliding Centre. This program helps clubs look at how they are perceived within their local communities. Six clubs went through the process last year and this has resulted in better visual impact for prospective members, more vibrant websites and social media and successful grant applications. The highlight was £20,000 towards a new EuroFox. The program will continue in 2025 with 14 clubs already signed up.

Our rates group (David Howse and Diana King) were also busy in 2024. Initial negotiations with Valuation Office Agency (VOA) were concluded for the structure and basis of 2026 business rates revaluation for gliding clubs. David secured an agreement to participate in pre assessment of 2026 valuations for all member clubs in England and Wales. The objective is to work with VOA to identify and fix anomalous revaluations before they are released to clubs, without clubs forfeiting the ultimate right to subsequent challenge and appeal. Joint assessment with VOA aviation specialists of draft revaluations for 2026 business rates is expected from March/April 2025. There will be coordination with clubs where significant impact is identified or where additional detail is required to complete.

We have been rolling out the 'Great Club' Governance tool which looks at aspects including policies, club constitution and club management. It uses Sport England governance standards that they expect from any sport club applying for a grant.

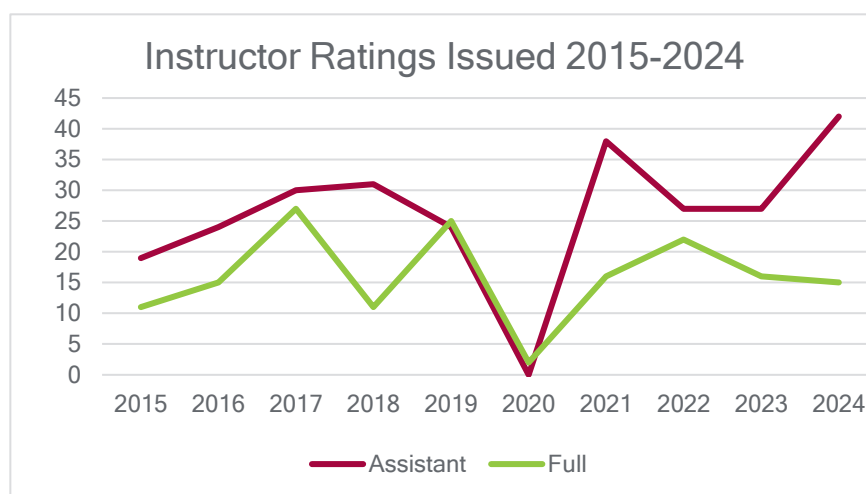
As expected with the change in Government we are already seeing a resurgence in energy infrastructure development including National Grid pylons, wind, and solar farms. At the time of writing, we have two clubs potentially impacted by pylons, three by planned solar farms and one by a proposed new wind farm. We are supporting affected clubs directly as well as reviewing our wind farm policy and developing a new policy for solar farms. In this area we are also closely with other organisations including the General Aviation Awareness Council (Roger Wilson, BGA Representative), the Combined Aerodrome Safeguarding Team (CAST), BGA Representative Dave Latimer and the Airfield Operators Group (BGA Representative, Pete Stratten). We also responded to the consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. As ever, Louis Chicot, our planning expert provided guidance on this as well as on specific planning issues for individual clubs.

Dave Latimer - Chair

Instructing & Examining Committee Report

The Instructing and Examining Committee has been working hard through a challenging year, as the BGA prepares for notable change with the introduction of part SFCL on 30th September 25.

Initiatives to encourage participation in gliding as an instructor are seeing positive results and this is reflected in the 10-year trend with the highest annual number of rated instructors achieved since the introduction of the modular training system in 2015; however, this must be tempered with the relatively high age demographic in the gliding population seeing the numbers naturally retiring from the sport remaining of significant concern for clubs sustaining training and supervision of operations.



This year has seen particularly positive engagement from new FIC's and initiatives to encourage this further will continue in 2025. The BGA has continued to offer instructor courses at locations throughout the UK and uptake has remained high with the courses surging at the start and end of the soaring season. The BGA led course programme for 2025 has been published with good uptake. The BGA team are currently committed to 8 courses but have capacity to increase should demand require. It is notable that some clubs are now delivering this training internally with success, particularly Part 1, and the engagement with clubs and local FIC's is key to this.

The detailed work to complete the necessary DTO training programmes for part SFCL is now at an advanced stage and the outcome of the proposed changes to legislation are awaited prior to final publication in the summer. It is hoped that the changes (including the retention of Basic Instructor) will be agreed and accordingly it has been suggested to Basic Instructors to defer their application for an SPL until this outcome is clarified. The BGA's Student Pilot Manual continues to be a success with students and instructors strongly recommended to own a copy. The Instructor Manual has proved to be a larger package of work than envisaged but is now in its final stages of draft. Edition 5 release is a priority for 2025.

The Bronze exams are in their final year prior to becoming the SPL exams later in the year. Andrew Watson is making the necessary changes for them to be rolled out as SPL exams for Q4. The committee extend thanks to him for this significant package of work which has been a key

part of the BGA retaining the capability in the future. To meet licencing needs post 30th September, there are two key focus areas ongoing with several Examiner seminars arranged by Andy Miller in January and February; this will allow the associated flying assessments to be carried out in the spring. Additionally, to meet the requirements of rolling recency, FI(S) Refresher Seminars will be offered at a rate of 2 seminars per month.

Rose Johnson – Chair

Stu Naylor – Training Standards Manager

Safety Committee Report

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

Analysis. Our accident database and report archive, which contains almost all accident and incident reports from the last 50 years, continues to provide a rich evidence base for safety analysis and development, supported by a positive no-blame reporting culture that is actively promoted by our network of dedicated Club Safety Officers (CSOs). Three Club Safety Officer seminars are planned across England in early 2025, and we intend to hold at least one further seminar in Scotland shortly after. We continue to provide support to AAIB accident investigations and engage regularly with colleagues from other countries through the European Gliding Union Safety Working Group.

Communication. CFIs and instructors continue to remain a key line of communication as well as an invaluable source of practical advice and considered wisdom. In addition, the BGA provides direct communications to pilots. We continue to work closely with other Sub-Committees to engage, learn and inform about safety aspects and key messages, and develop the advice collected in Managing Flying Risk – a live document that has further evolved during 2024.

The topical 'Straighten Up & Fly Right' articles for S&G seem to be well-received, and have included advice about unplanned low turns, partial engine failures, mid-air collisions and flying from another site.

Accidents. We were disappointed to record 2 fatalities this year and await AAIB investigation reports for details of their causes. A summary of this year's accidents and incidents will be published in the 2024 Accident Review.

I would again 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. I would also like to thank the members of the Safety Committee, BGA accident investigators and the Instructing and Examining Committee for continued help and wisdom. Nick Bowers provides painstaking support of our database and its analysis, Edward Lockhart writes succinct and readable accident/incident summaries for S&G, and John Hull ensures that we maintain contact with CSOs throughout the year.

Safe flying in 2025!

Tim Freegarde - Chair

Technical Committee Report

The shaping of the BGA's role in delivering an airworthiness process for UK gliding continues to be discussed with the CAA. The regulator has limited resources in respect Sport Aviation (not just gliding) and through the Chief Executive and our CTO we have been encouraged by the CAA regulator's preparedness to delegate responsibility and autonomy to us. Thus, we are working with them to evolve our established processes to meet their requirements.

That is not to say that this will be achieved without a proactive response at grass roots level. The BGA remains keen to preserve our reputation of pragmatic, direct involvement in airworthiness and maintenance, right down to grass roots, operational levels.

For some years now, Gordon MacDonald, our CTO has run highly successful courses in 'Pilot Owner Maintenance', taking advantage of opportunities in extant regulation to enable self-regulated activities to enhance operational convenience and safety. These have been highly successful in raising the awareness of owner and pilots as to their opportunities, capabilities and responsibilities in ensuring their equipment is safe for flight. Many attendees have been encouraged by the range of tasks that can be undertaken by a responsible pilot/owner and the help that is locally available from qualified BGA engineers/inspectors. The airworthiness and proper maintenance of the BGA fleet has historically been underpinned by our own technical community offering major operating cost savings to both clubs and private owners. We foresee further opportunities to take advantage of this renewed confidence, but this is contingent of clubs establishing appropriate environments for the use of their members. We ask club officials to consider their support and facilities and encourage more hands-on involvement of members.

All extant BGA inspectors are now accredited with the new Part66L engineer's licence. Note also the BGA inspector national accreditation will be retained as a baseline, and to support nationally registered (Annex 1) types, now mostly vintage and homebuilt airframes. While our population of BGA Inspectors remains steady, we remain concerned as to the geographic and age distribution of this support network.

As was the case for Pilot Licencing (SFCL) we are now fully engaged in defining the future process for qualifying new candidate sailplane engineers to Part66L. In recognition of a shortage of sailplane expertise, the CAA is considering our proposal to scope our own autonomous qualification training process, the details of which are currently in work. We believe that success in this, combined with the greater awareness of maintenance issues at club and individual level will successfully evolve the present situation.

During 2024 our CTO Gordon MacDonald led numerous full day seminars for ARC signatories, inspectors, club technical officers and pilot/owner maintainers. The breadth of these seminar may well be broader in the coming years in response to our airworthiness role development.

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's programme of Quality Audits, on behalf of CAA, led by Keith Morgan and Andy Brind. We also thank the BGA Head Office who have maintained a timely airworthiness process.

Howard Torode - Chair

Junior Gliding Report

2024 saw another busy year for UK Junior Gliding. The Winter Series has evolved into a self-propelling entity which shows the eagerness of junior pilots and instructors alike to fly and socialize in the wintertime. We had a stunning total of 145 pilots joining us at Denbigh in February and we finally brought Nympsfield back on the UK Junior Gliding scene with 95 attendees. Finally, in October, about 90 Juniors came along to fly at the Long Mynd.

Going to Denbigh for the Winter Series each February is becoming mandatory due to its popularity. This one turned out as one of the busiest Winter Series events we have ever seen. With 145 attendees over the weekend, we managed 96 flights totalling just under 100 hours of flight time in ridge, wave and thermals, which was not expected given the forecast.

Also in February, the UK Junior Gliding team attended the British Gliding Association Sporting Conference, alongside the Junior British Gliding Team. Toby Freeland gave us some insights into “Junior Team Developments and Successes” and George Downing inspired us with a presentation on “A Young Pilot’s Journey to Comps & Instructing”.

The return to Nympsfield as a Winter Series location turned out quite popular as well. In 125 flights, 95 pilots were lucky to see the rare Nympsfield wave alongside ridge and thermal lift which allowed for flights into Wales, cross-country flights and Seb Van Der Stichele completing a 250km Out and Return in his Std. Cirrus. Meanwhile, Nympsfield welcomed the publicity and proof of how efficiently launches can proceed at the site.

The British Gliding Team Junior Development Squad got busy in July, heading to Issoudun for a Development Week and 47e International Issoudun competition where the British pilots dominated both classes.

Later in July, the Junior British Team competed in the 13th FAI Junior World Gliding Championships at Aeroklub Ostrowski in Poland. George White and George Downing competed in their ASW20s in the club class, where George White pulled off a couple of day podium places: one day win and one 2nd place. Henry Inigo-Jones and Oliver Ramsay represented GB in the standard class in LS8s. Henry managed to grab a couple of day podium places as well: a day win and a 3rd place, placing 6th overall. Meanwhile, Henry Inigo-Jones got a fantastic 5th place competing with his teammate, Paul Fritche, in the Standard Class at the European Championships in Tabor, Czech Republic. Former Junior pilot, Toby Freeland, flew a great competition with his teammate James Ewence in the Club Class.

Our former Junior pilot Ali Emson directed the Junior Nationals at Husbands Bosworth. After a fierce competition, Jordan Johnson emerged as the new Junior Champion, followed by George White and George Downing in 2nd and 3rd respectively.

In October, the Long Mynd Winter Series kicked off the thirteenth round of the events in the ‘winter’ of 2024-25 who kindly hosted 90 of us. With the efficiency of the retrieve winch and a tug, we managed 134 total launches over the weekend experiencing some thermals, wave and

ridge lift. Sadly, we had to say goodbye to Helen who catered for ninety of us for one last evening before retiring. She will be dearly missed after 12 years of looking after us. We wish her a happy retirement. This Winter Series, the 13th by now, has also kicked off the Winter Series being sponsored by Navboys.

As always, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all those individuals, syndicates, and clubs who help run UK Junior Gliding events, bring their gliders, and instruct. Without you, Junior Gliding would not work!

Lucy, Jono, Ben & Anne
UK Junior Gliding Development Team

British Gliding Team Report

13th FAI Junior World Gliding Championship, Ostrow, Poland 14 Jul – 26 Jul.

Team: Club class – George White & George Downing. Standard class – Henry Inigo-Jones & Oliver Ramsay. No medals, but the competition was fierce and there was little to no regret from the team at the end of the competition. Multiple day wins on flights over 500km demonstrates that there was quality within the team. The team had a good competition with heads held high, despite inevitable frustration with desires for better results.

22nd FAI European Gliding Championships, Tabor, Czech Republic 3 Aug – 17 Aug.

Team: Club class - Toby Freeland & James Ewence. Standard class - Henry Inigo-Jones & Paul Fritche. 15M class - Neil McLaughlin & Owen McCormack. It is fair to say that this was an inexperienced team at this level that performed well throughout the competition. It should be noted that 5 out of the 6 were representing Team GB for the first time with two of them advancing from the Junior team. The competition consisted of 11 competition days, with tasks of distances up to 400km. Highlights from competition days were 6 podium finishes varying across all classes. In the team cup, the Team finished 5th out of 18 scoring countries.

38th FAI World Gliding Championship, Uvalde, Texas 18 Aug – 31 Aug.

Team: 18m class – Peter Harvey & Ian MacArthur. 20m class – Steve Jones & Garry Coppin. Open class – Russell Cheetham & Tim Jenkinson. The Worlds in Uvalde were preceded by a lot of planning in ensuring that the gliders arrived on time and within budget. There is a reason why Uvalde is referred to locally as the Soaring Centre of USA; you could more or less set your clock for the daily routine of 12:00 hrs to grid with a first launch at 12:30. Weather conditions throughout the competition were good, mainly predictably, and the Competition Director certainly went out of his way to set long and challenging tasks for the pilots. The 28th of August will be a day to be remembered in that only one aircraft from all three classes, got around the task! In addition, one of the actual land outs (there were many) was in a lake, but thankfully pilot and glider were both OK. In the Open class, there were 12 task days. The EB29R reigned supreme throughout, dominating 5 of the 6 places at the top of the leaderboard. It was interesting to see the debut of the new JS5 and they did give the EBs a run for their money on a few of the days. A well-deserved win for Team USA in the 20m class with a consistent scoring profile over their 11 task days.

The most competitive class was the 18m with 32 entries. It became clear early on that the German pairing of Langer and Schroder were going to be the ones to beat and so it proved as they rose to the top of the leaderboard after 4 tasks and stayed there. Sad to be coming home without any medals this time. but in a super competitive environment such as this, it is not overly surprising. A good time was had by all with some incredible speeds and distances which will stand all pilots in good stead for 2025.

Werner Stroud – Team Manager

2024 in numbers

34

instructor and
inspector seminars

73

gliding clubs

69

new basic
instructors

348

total number of
inspectors

1100

new badges,
certificates, and
licences

840

total number of
assistant and full
instructors

490

total number of
BIs and IFPs

2116

aircraft supported

3

International competitions

42

new assistant instructors