

April 2024



WAYPOINT

Newsletter of Priory Farm Aviators
www.flypfa.co.uk



Committee Members

David Brown (Chair), Bob Sage (Airfield owner), Mik Horne (Treasurer), Richard Flagg (Webmaster), Alan McNeal (WX station, R/T ops, Waypoint editor), Sean Simington (Social events booking), Julian Campbell (Facilities & maintenance), John Fielding, Nigel Hall, Maurice Edwards.

Editorial

Well, here we are in April. The weather's a bit better and some people have got in some flying which is a good thing! After a long period with the runway 'very wet' or worse still, the 'closed' sign hanging on the fence, the runway & parking areas are now usable again.



Yippee - here's to a new season of flying in all its forms. Last Saturday saw the airfield chock-a-block with flying aircraft and smiling owners, so come on you aviators, brush the cobwebs off yourselves & your aeroplanes, dig the birds nests out of the engine compartment, fire up the engine and go flying!

Events - Father's Day fly-in

As you already know, our annual Fly-in will happen again this year on Sunday 16th June. Last year it was a great success and we hope to repeat that this year. The format will be much the same as before with the addition of our balloon guys flying early in the morning and in the evening. This is when the winds are likely to be calm enough and to avoid any real or perceived conflicts with fixed wing & rotary aircraft movements. Garnham's Coffee Company will provide food & drink as last year. I will be on the radio as usual and the marshals will be radio equipped as well. Your help setting up and on the day will be nicely asked for so please put that weekend in your diaries and help as much as you can.

Priory Farm
Sunday, 16 June
FLY-IN
www.flypfa.co.uk

Down & Dusk Launches

Hot & Cold Drinks
Burgers, Baps & Cakes

N52° 27' 09.24" E 001° 07' 51.30" 186 ft AMSL
Radio Service: 'Priory Micro' 129.830
100LL (cash/cheque) R/W 01/19, 600 m grass
Remain clear of intensive gliding at Tibenham
Contact: Bob Sage 01379 677334 in advance
07799 695144 on the day
*First-time visitors MUST PPP

Other Events

On the topic of fly-ins, as you will see from the committee meeting minutes we have decided in principle to hold at least one, and maybe two extra fly-in days to our agenda. These will not be full blown events like the Father's Day fly-in. They will however, be publicised as 'open days' and promoted on social media to local airfields and we may invite clubs such as the Auster club (or others) to come and see us. There will be food & drink on tap, supplied by our own Tom & Sue Garnham, (subject to their availability) and there will be a radio service from me. Plans are being made right now, so you will be informed by David Brown on email of the dates and no doubt asked to come along & lend us a hand.

Next Dinner & Meeting

Wednesday 3rd April brings the last of our 'winter' monthly dinners and committee meetings. It will be at the Bird in Hand pub at Wreningham, 1900hrs for dinner, 1800hrs for the committee meeting. Check your email from Sean Simington for menu choices and let him know your choice.

Maintenance

The clubhouse needs its annual spray coating of anti-fungal chemical treatment. This will be done in the next month or so when the weather is dry enough.



The Paul Bennett viewing platform, with its tables & chairs all have a coating of green mould. This is worse than last year due no doubt to the excessive amount of rain this winter together with warmer than average temperatures. Alan McNeal plans to bring down his pressure washer in the next week or so to clear this and return everything back to its pristine condition for the forthcoming flying season.

Membership

According to our club rules and constitution, those who have not paid their subscriptions by 31st March cease to be members of the PFA. Now, we don't want to make an issue of this, but quite a few 2023 members have still not renewed their PFA memberships to date, so technically from April 1st you will no longer be members. So please - check if you have paid your subs and if not - do so by bank transfer or cash to Bob Sage without delay. We don't want to lose you and I'm sure you will want to remain a member of our happy little club!

Fly-outs



Club fly-outs are being planned - one of the first being to **Great Yarmouth**. This is scheduled for 14th April. David Brown is coordinating this event so if you want to go, contact Davis with your interest and to get the latest information on the event. There will be other fly-outs, so watch out for emails letting you know the details as our plans come to fruition.

Pylons

National Grid has said it will pay careful attention to the results of the public consultation process and the views of people like us who's safe flying could be affected by the proposed pylon line. Let's hope they mean it!

CAA Rule change for overseas trips

Those of you who indulge in such adventurous activities as 'going abroad', will be familiar with the need to file a GAR (General Aviation Report) form prior to your return to the UK. This is so Border Force get advanced warning of your arrival so they can arrive at your destination airfield in the UK to check you are who you say you are, whether you are carrying people who shouldn't be there, or contraband you shouldn't have!! All familiar stuff.

Well, this rule is changing on 6th April. It's too complex to go into here but I will attach the CAA Guidance Document to the Waypoint distribution email for you to have a read.

Committee Meeting Minutes

Held at the Crown, Burston, 6th March 2024

Chaired by Alan McNeal (in David Brown's absence).

Present: Alan McNeal, Bob Sage, Mik Horne, Sean Simington, Maurice Edwards,

Apologies from: David Brown, John Fielding, Julian Campbell, Nigel Hall.

1. Previous minutes: The meeting accepted the minutes from February 2024 as being accurate.

2. 2024 Flying calendar: The Father's Day fly-in date will be 16th June (Father's Day). The possibility of holding the event on Father's Day limiting those fathers who might be unable to attend was discussed. The general consensus was that although this might be true to some extent, there was no real evidence to support it and that selecting another day may conflict with other events that could affect visitor numbers to a greater extent, so the selection of 16th June was accepted as in many previous years.

ATC Squadrons: Sean suggested we make contact with a local Air Training Cadet squadron to ask if they would like an association with PF, with a view to providing airfield contact opportunities for them and possible help at events & open days. This was generally thought to be a good idea. Sean has a contact who is involved with the ATC locally, so will talk to him. Otherwise, local ATC squadrons will be contacted to discuss this with them.

Fly-in Flyer & Promotion: Paul Jackson has offered to produce a promotional flyer for Father's Day fly-in (as in past years), subject to his being provided with the relevant information & pictures, which should include ballooning pictures to cover the planned launches in the early morning and evening, which hopefully will attract people to watch. Any conflict between fixed wing & rotary aircraft and balloons was felt to be unlikely, but could be managed by the duty radio operator and ground staff using walkie-talkie radios. Alan said he had most of the pictures taken in 2024 and beforehand, so he would ensure Paul had what he needed.

Extra 'Open Days': The proposed idea of holding one or more 'open days' in spring and autumn was discussed and widely accepted as being a good one. (proposer D. Brown, seconder Alan McNeal). The key factor to make these days a success will be the provision of Tom Garnham's catering service to attract visitors beyond our normal ability to just offer tea & coffee. After general discussion it was agreed that a day in late April or early May could be selected. It was agreed that the rope barriers erected for the Father's Day event would not be necessary, except around the catering trailer for safety reasons.

If this proved a success, a second date later in the year could be added. As to visiting aircraft it was agreed that producing flyers similar to the Father's Day event was not necessary, but promotion on Facebook groups and possibly other aircraft clubs such as the Jodel club could be invited. Details of a plan for the initial day to be discussed via phone & email and at the next committee meeting as necessary. Bob Sage as airfield operator is on-board with this idea.

4. Facilities maintenance: Julian Campbell, (our new facilities committee member) reported that the exterior of the clubhouse and decking are showing signs of mould growth., AM said he had a pressure sprayer and pressure washer that could be used as required. The tables & chairs are also to be cleaned at that time. There is some chemical spray concentrate remaining from previous years. This quantity should be checked for sufficiency when the worst of the wet season is passed (if ever!).

Julian Campbell also reported that the smoke alarm was 'beeping' but this was rectified by removing & replacing the newly installed battery.

5. Pylons update: Nothing new to report except that some ground works along the proposed route seem to have started, so the general view was that this pylons line will be built regardless of consultations & objections. The situation will continue to be monitored by D. Brown.

6. Marham Drone Recovery airspace changes: A recent document summarising the latest and seemingly final plans has been received by David Brown. This will be distributed to all members by email. It was agreed that these plans should not adversely affect our pilots but they should be aware.

7. Membership: No recent changes. Mik Horne has produced a membership spreadsheet from Bob's written records, showing those who have paid their subs and who are still outstanding. Mik agreed to add contact information, groups membership and aircraft flown to the list for committee members only. Bob will follow up as required on overdue subscriptions.

8. New members: DB had suggested that new members could get a 'welcome' on our social media pages. No objections were recorded to this.

8a. Finances: The Treasurer produced the latest financial report which shows a healthy financial position similar to previous statements. This statement can be obtained by any committee member on request to Mik Horne.

9. Website updates: No information so item deferred.

10. Waypoint: Alan & David suggested articles featuring individual PFA members. All agreed this was a good idea. Alan suggested Bob Sage's aviation history would make a good start. Bob did not object! Alan has a short list of other members whose profiles would make interesting articles. Alan to follow up.

AOB: None.

Meeting closed at 19.20 hrs.

Alan McNeal.

That's about it for this month, but coming up is a multi-issue profile on the origins & history of Priory Farm Airfield, the Sage family and their enthusiasm for aircraft & aviation over many years, so I hope you will all look forward to that!

Ed.