

October 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to The Gloster Strut Newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading it. Please send any contributions, letters and comments to editor@glosterstrut.co.uk directly.

Photo of the Month

Stits Playboy – © Tim Badham



The Stits SA-3A Playboy (sometimes called the Stitts SA-3A Playboy) is a single seat, strut-braced low-wing monoplane that was designed by Ray Stits for amateur construction. The aircraft was designed and the prototype was completed in a three-month period during 1952. The design went on to become one of the most influential in the post-war boom in aircraft homebuilding.

Chairmans Chat

With the Summer over, we are now back into our Winter programme at The Victory Club. Jeremy Liber is now in charge of our speaker programme and doing a fine job lining up our list of speakers for the coming months, lots to look forward to! Please contact him if you have suggestions for guest speakers in the future as we want to keep the programme flowing. The October event will have a small celebration to mark the 80th year of the PFA / LAA, wine a cake to consume!

An update on the Pietenpol which is making steady progress, in the last couple of weeks the fuel tank has been installed, fuel lines connected through to the engine compartment and on/off valve working. The centre section positioned, all lined up and true, which is quite a fiddly job requiring a second pair of hands to get the cabane struts in position and tensioned up with the cables, I'm happy to say square and vertical ready to receive the wings in the near future! The engine will be mounted this week and all the lines connected up (they have all been attached previously, so not a big job left to refit again). Mags on, fuel up and fire it up, so a big milestone to celebrate!

At our last committee meeting we discussed ways and means to attract more members to the Strut, a few adverts placed around aviation contacts in our area, spreading the word for the activities of the Gloster Strut to the aviators in the area. We have just over 100 members to date, but it's a positive move to be looking for new members, especially from a younger age group. Bring your friends along to our meetings, always nice to meet new faces.

Fly safe

Mike.

The last meeting

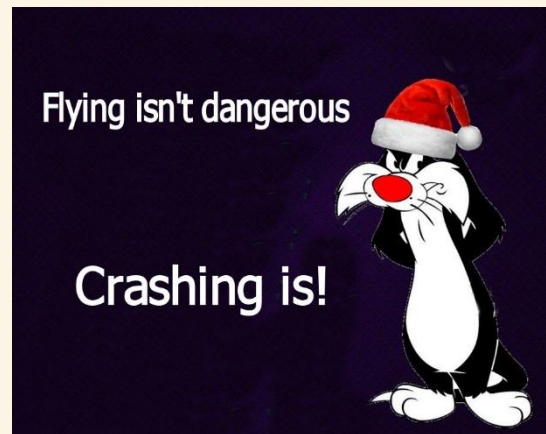
The meeting began with a surprise presentation to the Strut, by Chris Brewster, Cheltenham District Scouts' Manager, of a citation (***Ed: See below for the citation transcript***) and a plaque to commemorate the association between our 2 organisations over several years of Scouts' Air Camps at Croft Farm. Luckily, John Bean, who ran the air side of many of these camps, was present to receive them on our behalf.

Our main speaker, David Fry, grew up beneath the flight path used by airliners. Whether it was this, or the model aircraft his father made for him which seeded in him the desire to be a pilot, or whether it was a combination of the two, we are unsure, but it took hold of him. Having joined the RAF and trained on the Jet Provost, the Hawk and the Jet Stream, he found himself firstly in the co-pilot's seat of a Hercules, followed by a move across the cockpit to the captain's seat. Having first served in the Hercules's everyday role of hauling freight and paratroopers, he was selected to join the fleets special duties squadron, assisting the SAS and Special Boat Service in their exciting and dangerous clandestine work, following which he was given an exchange posting to fly the USAF's C1421 heavy lifter. For reasons never explained to him, he was also chosen to do some flying in the even bigger Boeing C-17. Next came a change to the civilian airline business, flying one of Virgin Airline's Boeing 747s and later their Airbus A340s. In retirement he has found great enjoyment flying the, to him, diminutive but delightful Chipmunk. In short, he is still enjoying a charmed life in aviation, triggered by his early exposure to the sight and sound of aeroplanes.

The Wit & Wisdom of Aviation

Quote of the Month

Landing on the ship during the daytime is like sex, it's either good or it's great. Landing on the ship at night is like a trip to the dentist, you may get away with no pain, but you just don't feel comfortable. LCDR Thomas Quinn, USN



Kenya, Africa 2000. Part 2 – By Chris Harrison

During this period, an Australian captain employed by Ansett Leasing for another contract needed to be line checked on the 767 on which he had recently completed the simulator phase. I was rostered to carry out his first line flying flight of about six sectors and then the final check together with a co-pilot as a standby. All the flying was normal, and he had little trouble handling the plane as a very experienced captain on other Airbus airliners. So, after a night stop in Amsterdam, the crew arrived back at the airport for an early evening departure. The three of us went for a thorough route and NOTAM briefings in the airport's flight ops departure mini-terminal and received our computer flight plan, which enabled us to calculate our required fuel load. At that moment, a police officer made himself known and courteously informed us that a deportee would be on the flight, accompanied by three police escorts, who would be seated at the rear of the aircraft. I thanked him and gave the matter no further thought. We completed our pre-flight checks and advised the agent that we were ready for passenger boarding. The deportee had been boarded first, ahead of the other passengers, and the flight quickly filled to near capacity. Everyone appeared eager to get underway, except one person: the deportee. The purser came into the cockpit and advised us of a fracas going on in the rear of the plane. Apparently, the deportee was shouting his head off and kicking the seats in front of him, making the passengers sitting there leave their seats and stand in the aisles. Not a pretty sight. What could I do? I left the other two pilots in the cockpit and walked to the rear of the aeroplane to see for myself what this was all about. I could see immediately this was a situation that we did not need before we took to the air, and how much worse this could become. The only satisfactory solution I could see was to offload the deportee for another, less full, flight.

I talked to one of the police escorts and told him about my decision to which he replied, "I'm sorry, Captain, but you can't do that."

I then tried to explain to him that the safety of passengers was my responsibility, and if his detainee was to carry on like this, I would have a riot on my hands. "I'm sorry, but he will have to be offloaded," I said.

“You will need to talk to my superior officer. I will contact him on my phone to come to the aeroplane to talk to you,” he said imperiously.

“Okay, tell him I will meet him by the rear stairs.” As I walked outside, a small Fiat pulled up at the bottom of the stairs, and a man dressed in a military-type uniform, for all the world looking like he was going to a military wedding, got out. He looked up at me and saluted. I returned the salute and went down to meet him. He introduced himself as head of airport police and customs and, with a stern expression on his face, stated, “I’m sorry, Captain, but you have to take the deportee on your flight.” ‘Am I hearing correctly?’ I thought. Here was an airport official dictating how my flight was to be conducted. “My prime consideration is the safety and well-being of my passengers, and the deportee is doing his best to do anything that might jeopardise that.”

“I have to tell you, Captain, if you refuse to take the deportee, I will have you locked up under the authority I have within this airport.” I couldn’t believe what I was hearing – did he really have the authority to do that? Maybe he was just trying to intimidate me to take the deportee. Okay, let’s put it to the test. I said, “I will instruct the passengers to return to the departure lounge, and you can take the deportee off whilst we sort this out.” I made an announcement to the passengers, explaining that we were dealing with a minor diplomatic incident and suggesting they would be more comfortable in the lounge, where they could enjoy refreshments and move about while we resolved the situation. Once the passengers and the deportee had left, two additional police officers instructed me to accompany them. To ensure that both the company and the passengers would be aware of how events unfolded, should matters turn badly for me, I requested that the other captain come along. I asked the co-pilot to remain on the aircraft to monitor security and oversee safety. We were ushered down the rear stairs to a waiting police van, bundled in, and driven off to the police headquarters at the airport. I was treated with some dignity as I was directed to a cell with bars on the front, and the door shut behind me. My colleague sat outside on a bench next to a desk where a policewoman was making a phone call. What she didn’t know was that I could speak some Dutch from my previous contracts and language school in Holland. She was making arrangements for the following day for the deportee to be put on a KLM 747 going to Brazzaville, which was closer to the deportee’s final destination.

“Captain,” said the policewoman in English, “I am going for coffee. I may be a little while. Will you be alright?”

“Yes, I will be fine,” I replied.

As she left, my colleague looked at me and said in a lowered voice, “Chris, I don’t think they locked the cell door.”

I stood up, walked to the door, and pushed it, and to my amazement, it opened. Okay, here was an opportunity. “Come on, Brian, let’s get out of here,” I whispered, just in case anyone could hear us. From previous contracts, I knew my way around the airside at Schiphol, through passageways and alleys, so moving about in uniform with the other captain would appear perfectly normal. I just hoped the policewoman was lingering

over her coffee break. We arrived at the aircraft parking gate and climbed the stairs to the thankfully unlocked door leading to the aeroplane's passageway. I informed the co-pilot of the situation and instructed him, along with the other captain, to prepare the aircraft for departure while I returned to the departure lounge. So far all was going okay, but would the police realise I had escaped from the cell and come looking for me? Again, it was a gamble, but one I had to try.

I entered the departure lounge and made an announcement to the patiently waiting passengers to the effect that we had solved the diplomatic incident. We would be departing without the deportee. I addressed the assembled passengers, explaining that we had been given an exceptionally tight departure slot and that everyone needed to return to their seats promptly, or we risked an even longer delay. I had never seen passengers board so quickly; the announcement had worked remarkably well. With the pushback tug still in place, I asked the co-pilot to obtain clearance and begin pushback. At this late hour, there were no issues, and we could depart as soon as we were ready. It seemed that air traffic control hadn't been informed of what was going on. We weren't stopped and taxied to the runway and took off for a normal flight back to Nairobi. Interestingly, I wondered whether I would be apprehended on subsequent flights to Amsterdam, but I never did hear anything more again. I think the whole affair by the police official had become a face-saving exercise on his part. That was the second time I had been locked up in a foreign jail – what fun flying can be!

Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton visit – By Mick Peakman



I had wanted to visit Yeovilton for some time, so when the Cotswold Aero Club (CAC) offered to organise a trip, I jumped at it, as did many others, so many that there were in fact, four trips in total.

By air, it's closer than I thought, just 35 minutes according to Sky Demon. In fact, it was slightly longer due to the fact that they were using runway 04 on the day I visited

which was actually the far side of the airport.

Contacting Yeovilton as I passed over Frome with around 20 miles to run, as is the recommendation, I was given a vector and an altitude to keep (2,000 feet). As I continued, I was given further vectors to bring me around to Final on 04. It was the first time I'd been vectored to a runway and felt like a commercial pilot as they gave turning instructions to line me up onto the runway. In the event, on final approach I was told to break and go around as an aircraft had got in ahead of me.

No problem, back to circuit height and re-establish on downwind. A circuit and back to final. Once again, there was an aircraft ahead of me but I was told to continue. I decided

it would be best to try and slow down, otherwise I was in danger of touching down with the other aircraft still on the runway. As any pilot will tell you, there's a limit to how much you can slow, but I managed to knock 20knots off my speed and timed it right to land as the other aircraft had vacated.

One thing I noticed about Yeovilton is the number of different frequencies required. There is the Approach, then the Tower, then the Director and finally the Ground. I would probably need a few visits to get used to it, as normally there are two at most (Approach and Tower).

Yeovilton is huge! Given instructions to vacate onto 08, I initially thought I had turned the wrong way, but was fine. I did need to call the ground director again for taxi instructions as the aircraft that had landed ahead of me was just about to taxi across the threshold of 08 in front of me.

Eventually I came to the parking area and was guided in by the ground crew to parking. They were super helpful and I was soon out putting the cover on the plane - it was a warm day and Europas are like greenhouses in the sun.



There is a free mini bus service to the museum itself, which is sensible as it is a live airfield and the museum is some distance away.

Soon there, I paid the entry fee (£24) and headed straight for the cafe for a coffee and bun. I felt I deserved it.

The museum itself has four huge halls, all of which are jam packed with aircraft, be they fabric and wood planes, many different types of helicopters - who knew the rotors spin at just 200rpm? Not me!

There is a hall devoted to fast jets from the Cold War era, and there is even Concorde 002 which is open for viewing inside.



All around the walls and on upper levels, there is a comprehensive history of the various military forces and Britains role in many world conflicts.

Including lunch, I was in the museum for around three hours which was about right for me. I began to get information overload, but if you are the sort of person that can absorb that type of thing all day, then it would be easily

possible to spend five or six hours there.

To get back to the plane, I again needed the mini bus service which took around five minutes. I'd booked back into Gloucester quite late, so called them up and rearranged for about 45 minutes. I figured that would be enough time as I fully expected to leave directly out of the MATZ and more or less due North home. Engine started, it soon warmed up and I was given taxi clearance immediately to the threshold of 04. Power checks done, I was 'ready for departure'. I was given another frequency to contact for the actual departure.

Rather amusingly, they asked if I needed a back track - there was around 1,000m of runway ahead of my entry point. 'Negative' I replied and I was cleared for take-off. No sooner had I lifted off than I was requested to contact the Approach frequency. Rather urgent I thought as take-off is the second busiest time in the cockpit, but never mind, I dialled in the new frequency and called them.

Once clear of the MATZ, I stayed with the Approach frequency until Frome, then switched to Brize Radar and finally Gloucester with about 15 miles to run. Left base onto runway 26 and a nice landing, I taxied back to the pumps and then to parking.

A very nice day out, one I would recommend and a great experience to get into your flying logbook.

Dates for your diary

03/10/2026 Flying Finale

Duxford IWM Flying finale air show. PPR required.

04/10/2026 Shuttleworth Raceday

Shuttleworth Raceday airshow. PPR required

10/10/2026 Talk by A380, Concorde and Red Arrows pilots

At the Cheltenham Playhouse. Tickets here: cheltplayhouse.org.uk

13/10/2026 Gloster Strut Meeting

At the Victory Club, Cheltenham.

The speaker will be John Beattie on the subject of Flying the Sea Fury (ex-head of Royal Navy Historic Flight).

Jet Age Museum

As usual during half-term week, the Jet Age Museum will have an extra Wednesday opening on Wed 28 October. 10:00-16:00, free admission as always.

Jodel - (c) Tim Badham



A nice citation received from Ron Shell regarding the relationship between the Strut and the Scouts



For close to twenty years — with the sole exception of the Covid interruption — the Gloster Strut branch of the Light Aircraft Association has been an unwavering partner with Gloucestershire Scouts in an aviation weekend activity camp at Croft Farm, Worcestershire.

Since first being approached to help fly youngsters, this amazing band of pilots have never let us down. Their generosity with time, skill, and knowledge has inspired more than one generation of aviators.

They have imparted skills for life, opened doors to the world of aviation, and given young people experiences that will stay with them forever. Their commitment has become a cornerstone of the camp's success and a legacy that continues to grow both within and alongside Scouting.

The Aviation Camps of which the 2004 was the forerunner are taking place worldwide now.

Notable Aviation Events from history

October 1 1969: The Concorde supersonic transport plane exceeds the speed of sound - more than MACH 1 for the first time.

October 1, 1959: English Electric test pilot Johnny Squier became the first UK pilot to eject above the speed of sound when his English Electric Lightning prototype suffered a structural failure at Mach 1.7.

October 4, 1957: The launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union ushered in the space age and transformed global aerospace trajectories.

October 5, 1905: Wilbur Wright flew the Wright Flyer II for more than half an hour in Ohio, setting an early endurance milestone.

October 14, 1969: The Concorde supersonic transport exceeded Mach 1 in level flight for the first time.

October 14 1947: Capt. Charles "Chuck" Yeager becomes the first person to fly faster than sound. Yeager "breaks the sound barrier" in his Bell X-1 airplane, "Glamorous Glennis," named after his wife. He was able to reach 670-mph or Mach 1.015 at Muroc Dry Lake, California.

October 16 1908: Samuel Cody becomes the first man to fly in Britain. Flying the British Army Aeroplane N°1, Cody flies for 1,391 feet before crashing.

October 22 1955: First flight of the Republic F-105 Thunderchief.

October 24 1912: Harry Hawker wins the British Empire Michelin Cup for endurance. He flies for over 8 hours in a Burgess-Wright airplane. Harry Hawker went on to co-found Hawker Aircraft, the firm that would later be responsible for a long series of successful military aircraft, including the Fury, Sea Fury, Hurricane, Hunter and Harrier. Hawker Aircraft is now part of Raytheon Inc. along with Beachcraft aircraft.



October 26 1931: First flight of the de Havilland Tiger Moth prototype G-ABRC.

Videos worth watching

If you've got a bit of spare time, these videos are well worth watching.

[This one](#) is entitled 'The best of Oshkosh 2026'

Hummel Aircraft Introduces Twin-Engine Part 103 [Ultralight](#). The plane does not actually take off in the video but the accompanying text makes an interesting read.

Much closer to home, the airfield will be instantly recognisable by some members! A first [flexwing solo](#) flight! Listen out for the comment as the pilot passes the windsock!

Downloads from the CAA and others

CHIRP

Click [here](#) to view General Aviation Feedback edition 109.

CHIRP Drone/UAS FEEDBACK Edition 17

This edition of FEEDBACK examines reports on the increasing use of the State Flight regime by First Responders. While rapid drone deployment, BVLOS operations, and “Drone in a Box” technology offer significant benefits, some airspace users have raised safety concerns. These reports highlight important Just Culture and Human Factors considerations and provide valuable insight into reporters’ perspectives.

Read [Drone/UAS FEEDBACK Edition 17](#) - Deconflicting lower airspace

CAA Stuff

NWTC Effectiveness Review Published

The CAA has published its [report](#) reviewing the effectiveness of the North West Transit Corridor (NWTC), introduced on 20 February 2025 to replace the Manchester Low-Level Route (MLLR).

The report evaluates the change against its original objectives, including safety, accessibility, airspace simplification, airspace infringement reduction and compliance with airspace policy. A 28-day feedback period is now open to allow stakeholders additional time during the school holiday period. Responses should be submitted by to Airspace.Regulation@caa.co.uk by 21 September 2026.

New edition of the National Private Pilot's Licence requirements (CAP3181)

A new edition of CAP3181 has been published. It sets out the requirements for obtaining a National Private Pilot's Licence (Aeroplanes), including credits that can be transferred from other licences. It also includes information on additional ratings, including the Instrument Meteorological Conditions Rating.

For full details, see [National Private Pilot's Licence requirements \(CAP3181\)](#).

Use of Frequency Monitoring Code (FMC) near Cumbernauld Airport

From 3 September 2026, pilots flying outside controlled airspace near Cumbernauld ATZ or the Cumbernauld runway 25 Instrument Approach Procedure (IAP) are strongly encouraged to establish two-way communication with Cumbernauld Radio.

Pilots flying outside the Cumbernauld area but within the Glasgow or Edinburgh Frequency Monitoring Code (FMC) area should tune and monitor the appropriate frequency/channel before selecting the corresponding transponder code.

Pilots should tune the correct frequency/channel prior to selecting the corresponding transponder code.

Information on FMC areas is published in the UK AIP ENR 6-80. Pilots must refer to AIP supplements and check NOTAMs before each flight.

Further details on FMC areas can be found [here](#).

Refresher training flight guidance for single engine class rating revalidations by experience.

The CAA has now published a [short instructor guide](#) to address the 1-hour refresher training flight for the revalidation of single-engine class ratings by experience.

Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) Support Fund Call for Proposals now open!

We are pleased to announce the opening of another Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) Support Fund call for proposals. Applications will be accepted from Monday 14 September 2026 until 23:59 on Monday 12 October 2026. This is an open call, and we welcome proposals that support airspace modernisation objectives. Check [here](#) for more information on the priority themes and eligibility requirements.

Consultation on Guidance for Determining the Need for Air Traffic Services Provision

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is seeking views on draft guidance that provides aerodrome operators with a process to assist them in determining whether air traffic services (ATS) are required at their aerodromes.

CAP3300a details the proposed amendments to current publications and the rationale behind the proposal.

CAP3300 incorporates the proposed changes and seeks to provide guidance to aerodrome operators in determining whether there is a need for air traffic services provision at their aerodrome.

Your thoughts on both documents are welcomed in this [consultation](#). We invite stakeholders to give us your views responses are requested by 15 November 2026.

Webinar - National Private Pilot's Licence (NPPL) - Requirements and guidance

The CAA will be holding a webinar on Thursday 15 October 2026 from 19:00 - 20:00 to discuss the National Private Pilot's Licence and highlight the publication of [CAP3181 – NPPL Licensing](#), associated ratings and the IMC Rating. The webinar is aimed at student pilots, current licence holders and training organisations or flying schools.

There will be a chance to ask questions at the end of the presentation. We welcome any questions ahead of the session; [Email Here](#). The session will be recorded and made available online should you be unable to attend.

Register for the webinar on our website: [Webinar](#) - National Private Pilot's Licence (NPPL) - Requirements and guidance.

LAA Stuff

We have been fortunate enough to receive a few new LAA course dates from our Tutors for the upcoming training season.

Air to Ground Radio Operators course

Venue is Popham Airfield

Dates are 24 & 25 October 2026

Cost is £320pp for members with an additional fee of £50pp to the CAA for the ROCC certificate. Any further information can be found [here](#).

Aircraft Fabric Covering course

This popular, fun and interactive course is now being held at Henstridge Airfield over 2 days as opposed to the previous 1 day course.

Dates are 21 & 22 October 2026

Cost is £406pp for members, including a light lunch and all materials. Further information can be found [here](#).

Rotax Fuel Injected 912iS/915iS Installation and Operation course

To be held at Turweston Aerodrome.

Date is Saturday 24 October 2026.

Cost is £224pp for members. Further information can be found [here](#).

Aircraft Carpentry course

We are happy to announce two dates for this course, to be held at Turweston Aerodrome:

Tuesday 13th October OR Tuesday 10 November 2026

The cost is £213pp for members. More information can be found [here](#).

Our popular Electrics courses are now open to booking!

Permit Aircraft Electrics Basic course

Held at Turweston Aerodrome.

Date is Saturday 5 December 2026 and the cost for members is £224pp. Further information [here](#).

Permit Aircraft Electrics Advanced course

Held at Turweston Aerodrome.

Date is Sunday 6 December 2026 and the cost for members is £224 pp. Further information [here](#).

More information can be found [here](#)

Please let Cheryl Routledge know if you wish to book, on 01280 846786 or [Cheryl](#).

First come first served!

2027 dates will be sent out in due course.

Gloucestershire airport

Good afternoon

I wanted to provide everyone with a general update on a number of things at the airport. So in no particular order:

Airport Sale

The process is progressing as planned. The airport is hosting a number of visits from prospective bidders. The airport has been updating information in support of this process which is being made available via a data room for consideration. I am seeking to confirm potential timescales from the Shareholders asap and will look to update everyone as soon as possible.

The process continues we are presently hosting several potential bidders who are receiving a brief on the airfield as well as a vehicular tour. It is expected this will pick up with what is expected a council target date of the end of September 26 for bids. Whilst I note that a target date of April 2027 has been published for sale completion, I am expecting the desire will be for this to be some weeks earlier. I will look to update you further as soon as possible.

Landside Operations / Briefing

As most will be aware the team in Landside Operations / Briefing are often the first point of contact for people at or visiting the airfield. As the vast majority will be aware the airport stipulates that they will not accept 'inappropriate behaviour' (physical or verbal) to members of that team or indeed any airport employee. This is shown on posters within the Terminal and detailed fully within a Code of Conduct as part of the Terms and Conditions of the Airport. I am of course aware that 99.9% people at this airfield always abide by this and for that I am extremely grateful. However, a recent incident crossed this line and has required investigation / action. Whilst I will not go into further detail in regards this particular situation can I please ask that this taken into consideration at all times with your communication with airport staff to avoid actions being taken that could restrict or stop the ability of that party to use this airfield.

Gloucestershire Airport ATC Award

On a more positive note - ATC have been awarded the Presidents Award by the Guild of Air Traffic Control Officers (GATCO). It recognises the efforts made in the last three years in turning around significant regulatory and operational issues. GATCO said the President's Award recognised the team's "outstanding efforts" in meeting the significant challenges it had faced.

So huge congratulations to the whole team. Well deserved.

Many thanks

Brian Rawlings

AVGAS Pumps

Good afternoon,

Please be advised that the Avgas pumps will be temporarily unavailable from Wednesday 30 September until Friday 2 October while upgrade works are carried out. To ensure there is no loss of Avgas availability during this period, a static bowser will be positioned on the west side of Apron Alpha. This will be manned by Airside Operations and will be available for operators requiring Avgas. As part of the upgrade, new fuel fobs will be required. Existing fobs can be exchanged through Airside Operations at the Fire Station. Please note that a replacement fob will only be issued once the existing/old fob has been returned. It is important to note that all existing fobs will cease to function once the upgrade has been completed, so please ensure your current fob is exchanged.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding while these works are undertaken and will endeavour to minimise any disruption. We aim to have the permanent Avgas pumps back in service as soon as possible following completion of the upgrade.

Should you have any questions regarding the temporary arrangements, please contact Airside Operations.

Kind regards,

Scott Litchfield

Head of Operations (Interim)

The following details the operating hours of the airfield over Xmas and New Year 2026/2027.

All times local:

Thursday 24/12/26 08.30 – 14.00 hrs

Friday 25/12/26 Closed

Saturday 26/12/26 Closed

Sunday 27/12/26 09.00 – 18.00hrs

Monday 28/12/26 09.00 - 18.00hrs (Substitute Bank Holiday)

Tuesday 29/12/26 09.00 - 18.00hrs

Wednesday 30/12/26 09.00 - 18.00hrs

Thursday 31/12/26 08.30 – 14.00 hrs

Friday 01/01/27 Closed

Other News

The Civil Aviation (Consumer Protection and Regulatory Reform) Bill

The following was sent to AOPA members. Worth a read.

A Bill is progressing through Parliament which could have important consequences for UK General Aviation (GA). AOPA is asking members to write to their MP now. You should too.

AOPA supports sensible modernisation of aviation regulation, but we have concerns about three areas of the Bill: airspace change and modernisation; charging for air traffic and air navigation services which will affect you if left without the right safeguards and the CAA's increased responsibility for safety rule-making.

Rules described as “technical” can have significant practical and financial consequences for pilots, flying schools, aerodromes and aircraft owners. They can affect medical certification, licensing, equipment, maintenance and operating requirements. Such decisions must not escape appropriate democratic scrutiny simply because they are delegated to the regulator.

We are asking MPs to support three principles:

Proportionality: Significant regulatory changes affecting GA should be supported by published evidence, proper impact and cost-benefit assessments, and consideration of their effect on participation.

Accountability: Significant changes should remain subject to effective ministerial and Parliamentary scrutiny, rather than being treated solely as technical regulatory matters.

Fairness: The costs and airspace consequences of integrating drones and other new commercial airspace users should not be disproportionately transferred to existing GA users.

The Bill also broadens the framework governing who may be charged for air traffic and air navigation services. Although Ministers have indicated there is currently no intention to impose new charges on GA, AOPA believes stronger safeguards are required against future unintended cost-shifting.

With Committee consideration imminent (20th September for 2 days only) and no opportunity for AOPA or individual pilots to give oral evidence, take these three steps today:

1. Find your MP: Visit the UK Parliament website, enter your postcode and identify your constituency MP.
2. Send a clear message: Email your MP today, explain that you are a GA pilot, aircraft owner, flying-school member or aviation professional, and ask them to support proportionality, accountability and fairness in the Bill.

3. Request action: Ask your MP to raise these concerns during Committee consideration and seek amendments or firm ministerial assurances protecting General Aviation.

During the commons debate last Monday it was clear that the government is looking at charging new entrants fees for using airspace and navigation services which has the potential to apply to GA as well.

The Government is after money to pay for UKADS etc. Once the law is written there will be no chance to amend it.

Tail piece

G-POOH is a UK-registered Piper J-3C-65 Cub vintage aircraft that often carries a small Winnie-the-Pooh toy in the cockpit. We were delighted to see it at one of our recent BBQ evenings. If you look closely, you can just about see Winnie in the front seat.

The next meeting

The October Strut meeting will be held on Tuesday 13th October at the Victory Club in Cheltenham. The speaker will be John Beattie, giving a lecture entitled 'Flying the Sea Fury' (he is the ex-head of Royal Navy Historic Flight)

Piper J-3C-65 Cub - (c) Tim Badham



The LAA at 80 Celebration – bring cash

In October 1946, that is more than a year after the end of WWII, private flying was still banned. A group of light aviation enthusiasts met in a London flat to discuss a campaign to persuade the bureaucrats to end this unnecessary ban. They formed a group with the title The Ultralight Aircraft Association, which subsequently morphed, via The Popular Flying Association, into the LAA. Those of us lucky enough to fly light aircraft today owe it to this pioneer group for the freedoms we now enjoy.

It was on 26th of that month that the ULAA was formed so we will be commemorating the founders during this month's meeting by raising a glass to them and sharing a piece of symbolic birthday cake. For the modest sum of three pounds (less than a cup of brewed coffee) you will be given a slice of cake and 1 glass of sparkling wine (soft drinks will also be available). An additional glass, if stocks allow, would be an extra two pounds. Please bring exact money if possible.

Previous 2026 Newsletters

For all previous Newsletters dating back to November 2023, go to the [Archive Page](#)