



BMFA South West Area

Guidelines for Flying Model Aircraft at St Agnes Head

Introduction

The National Trust along with Natural England has given permission for model flying at St Agnes Head to take place outside of the Bird Breeding Season. Presently, this period extends from 1 September 2024 to 31 January 2025. The National Trust has not yet prepared a formal license document for signature however the Head Ranger has confirmed that flying can re-commence pending preparation of a final agreement. This activity remains very much on probation and whether or not we will be able to continue in following years, let alone extend the period for which permission has been granted, depends completely on whether or not our activities are seen to be acceptable in the coming months. Accordingly, I have set out a few guidelines that should be observed. These are derived mainly from the previous agreement established by the Cornwall Slope Soaring Association with the National Trust. They will change as discussion with the National Trust continues. I will distribute updates when possible. Please observe them.

Guidelines

1. The **only locations** where permission has been granted to fly within the entire **St Agnes to Godrevy** National Trust area are our traditional sites at St Agnes Head. These comprise: the Northerly area, the Westerly area by the coastguard hut and the WSW area just beyond the point at which the surfaced roadway ends.

2. **Birds of prey** are known to be present on the cliffs. These birds are a protected species. It is illegal to disturb them, either directly or through upsetting their natural habitat. If you see a bird of prey, please fly a wide circuit away from it and land immediately. Enjoy the moment, it is rare to see them. Once the bird has left the area you may relaunch. Generally, the bird will have

a good look around and then fly away from the slope. Modellers are asked to keep a minimum distance of 200m between a model and any bird of prey. Observing this guideline is extremely important. Interference with Birds of Prey is the single thing most likely to bring model flying at St Agnes to a halt – again – this guideline needs to be strictly observed.

3. Flying **multi copters or drones is strictly prohibited** at all times on the headland. They must not be flown at St Agnes at any time.

4. Flying of **powered models is strictly prohibited** at all times. They must not be flown at St Agnes at any time. This prohibition applies to gliders with motor assist. The motor must not be used. If a model has a propeller on the front (or anywhere else) it should be removed. If a passerby sees a propeller they will assume it is going to be used, it may well be reported and the consequences are likely to be very negative.

5. The rules within **BMFA's Article 16 Agreement** must be observed at all times, especially with regard to maintaining a safe distance from people and property. St Agnes Head is a public site. Members of the public can appear on coast paths below and behind a pilot without warning. Pay special attention to flying well away from any members of the public. Please examine the site before flying to determine where the footpaths are. They are some distance below the flying area on all slopes. If possible, one or more members of a group of flyers should be nominated to keep a lookout for people as well as birds of prey and given the authority to bring proceedings to a halt should appearance of either give cause for concern.

6. Do not make landing approaches over car parks or over parked cars. The minimum safe distance is 50m from car parks, the coastguard hut, and any members of the public at all times.

7. We now need to share the clifftops with paragliders which have been banned from flying at Chapel Porth. Allow paragliders time to launch. Keep well out of their way during the launch phase and of course, once airborne, at all times.

8. Do not leave any litter on the site, take it home. If you find any other modelling related litter, please take it home as well.

9. BMFA or equivalent insurance should be carried by all modellers along with proof of their current Operator's Registration. All models should carry their Operator's ID number.

10. If you come across an “out of Area” modeller seeking to fly, please ensure they are acquainted with these guidelines.

11. Flying should take place as far as possible over the sea. Do not fly persistently low and close to the clifftops. Not only will this present a danger to possibly unseen members of the public but will also be observed as a potential threat to nesting birds.

12. In general, landings should be performed to the right-hand (facing out to sea) side of the hump on the Northern slope, to the right-hand side between the coastguard hut and the car park away from any parked car on the Westerly slope, and over the heather to the left-hand side on the WSW slope. Do not land if any people are in the vicinity.

13. Finally, we should all remember that we only fly by the generosity of others, that is, we need permission of considerate third parties to use their land. The National Trust owns St Agnes Head. Because St Agnes Head (and indeed the coast so far as Godrevy) is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, the National Trust in turn must observe the requirements of Natural England. It may be that this situation will change, but for time being we have to operate within the framework of those institutions and the applicable laws.

Consequently, if you are approached by a National Trust Ranger, or a Natural England Official, you must not challenge or harangue them. Explain what you are doing and why you think you can do it. Show a copy of this note, if necessary, then do what you are asked to do (in all reasonableness of course!). The same applies if you are approached by a member of the public or a paraglider pilot concerned about your activities. Explain what you are doing and why you have permission to fly but do not get into an altercation. If problems arise let me know and I will take it up with the appropriate authority on your behalf.

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