



BMFA South West Area

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held by Zoom Thursday 29th May 2025.

1. Welcome: The meeting opened at 7:35pm with a welcome from the Chairman.

2. Apologies:

Riviera Thermal Slope Soaring Club
Plymouth Model Flying Club

3. Confirmation of Club Delegates present.

Truro & District Model Flying Club / Treasurer
Exeter & District RC Club
Newton Abbott Heli Club
Plasterdown Flying Association
Davidstow Model Flying Club
RC Cornwall Flyers
Okehampton MFC/Secretary

Officers present:

Chairman
BMFA Southern Area ASC/ACE
ASC

4. Minutes from previous meeting.

The provisional minutes having been circulated were taken as read. There were no corrections or amendments.

Proposed for adoption: Truro & District MFC. Seconded: Plasterdown Flying Association.
Vote: 6 for and 1 abstention due to absence.

5. Actions from previous meeting.

- (i) Examiner Claim forms. The Treasurer confirmed they are available and he had supplied them to the ACE.
- (ii) Bids for Area Activities: This is covered in the Treasurer's report.

(iii) St. Agnes Slope Soaring Site: RC Cornwall Flyers delegate reported he has been in contact with the BMFA CEO. There is no further information regarding the extension of a flying season there. There were no reported issues from the last flying season. The reported reason for limiting flying was the concern over the breeding of Peregrine Falcons. Since summer slope soaring was banned the Peregrine Falcons had not bred there. If they do not breed there this year it will be the third year that this has happened.

6. Reports from Area Officers.

Chairman: The following vacancies on the Area Committee have still not been filled.

Area Delegate

Webmaster/PRO

Vice Chairman.

He appealed to delegates/members who are willing to fill these roles to come forward.

Secretary: Had contact from members asking about progress on St. Agnes Head and the new bye-laws for Dartmoor.

The situation on St. Agnes is covered above.

The Supreme Court appeal against the Dartmoor Parks Authority (DPA) regarding wild camping has been lost and the DPA had indicated that once the case was over they would be moving forward with the implementation of the new bye-laws. They had indicated previously they would accept input from the BMFA regarding the wording regarding gliding on the moor and would revert back to the previous position but we await confirmation of this.

Treasurer:

As at the end of the 2024/25 financial year our bank balance was £3,436, less a later payment of the CVA grant of £175 for their winter season of indoor flying, giving an effective end of year balance of £3,261.

The payment of our BMFA grant for this year, 2025/26, has been delayed by two months and has only just been paid. Because of this delay, we have only just been advised of our total award and this has again been severely curtailed.

This year, we have received only £2,000 in total, against our submitted BMFA activity bids of £2,150 (plus an expected £600 Area admin fee). Including both categories, we should have received £2,750. This leaves us with an £850 shortfall of BMFA funding for this year to be met from our historic funds, just to meet our total bids and expenses this year.

Since the consolidation of our Area our bidding profile has followed a standard format, with very few changes. When we formulate our 2026/27 bids later this year we will need to consider whether to prune the scope of our bids.

I have been advised by the BMFA treasurer that we are unlikely to receive any more than £2,000 per annum until such time as our end of year bank balance falls below £1,000. I suggest we discuss the profile of our future bids when we compile our bid programme later this year.

The Secretary suggested that given the current situation and the likelihood that membership would continue to fall that the Area should look to institute grants in respect of events and cap this to a maximum of £100/event. The organisers would then have to look to raising any shortfall through fees for events.

The Secretary also noted that Lloyds Bank is now charging a monthly administration fee of £4.25 . There was some discussion and it was suggested that the Treasurer investigate local Building Society savings accounts who could provide suitable free banking and also ask the BMFA Treasurer if they would be prepared to issue cheques in payment of annual grants so the Area could go to cash only transactions and keep funds in cash.

ASC: The ASC and ACE continue to do testing. The ASC had met up with members in the Cambourne and Redruth area. Being a veteran himself, he has been in contact with the charity Not Forgotten with a view to getting veterans involved in model flying. The AS Weekend is being planned for the 6/7th September. He is looking for a club to volunteer to host the event. He is planning to invite examiners to this event. A previous ACE has made contact to return to the role and he is currently assessing the person.

7. Progress on Training events:

As stated above an AS Weekend is planned for 6/7th September 2025.

8. Reports & Matters arising from Club Delegates:

Truro & District MFC: Held a well attended swap meet. AS training is going well and very much appreciated.

Plasterdown Flying Association: Very active and have new members. He was also involved in the organisation of a round of the SW Thermal Gliding competition at the Catstor MFC site.

RC Cornwall Flyers: They were approached by Cornwall College to help them with the British Youth rocketry competition. They were able to locate a site and help get the clearance for the flight. The event was very successful and everyone had an enjoyable day. It was good exposure for our hobby.

Okehampton MFC: The club also hosted a round of the SW Thermal Gliding competition and had held 2 club fun flies.

Newton Abbott Heli Club: There is a bit of split in interests at the club at the moment. Members have built a large scale Vulcan bomber and were in the process of arranging a test flight. He is also involved in arranging an open day event at the Kingsbridge site.

9. AOB:

Plasterdown Flying Association delegate enquired about getting a NOTAM for the Catstor site for gliding competitions as they had experienced a number of full size aircraft flying nearby at the last competition. The Chairman commented on the process as he regularly does them for aero-tow events. There was discussion on the merits of NOTAMS in general.

He also asked for advice on members who had obtained “A” AS Certificates but who were now flying in ways that are not commensurate with the certificate. He asked if the “A” Certificate could be revoked. His club requires members to have an “A” AS Certificate to fly solo at their site. However a number are buying models that he feels they are not competent to fly and as a result they are crashing on a regular basis and seem unperturbed

by this. It was pointed out that the AS Certificate is not a “licence” but rather a personal achievement for each person. If members are flying beyond their own personal ability then it is incumbent on the club officers to engage with them on a safety basis and if necessary invoke disciplinary procedures in line with the club site rules and constitution.

Exeter & District RC Club delegate requested a Chief Instructor assessment advice from the ASC. The ASC would follow up on this with the club.

10. Date and venue for next meeting: Thursday 24th July 2025 at 7:30pm by Zoom

11. Meeting Closed at 9:38pm

Actions:

- 1) Dartmoor/St. Agnes access
- 2) Banking – Local Building Society / cash - Treasurer
- 3) AS Weekend - ASC