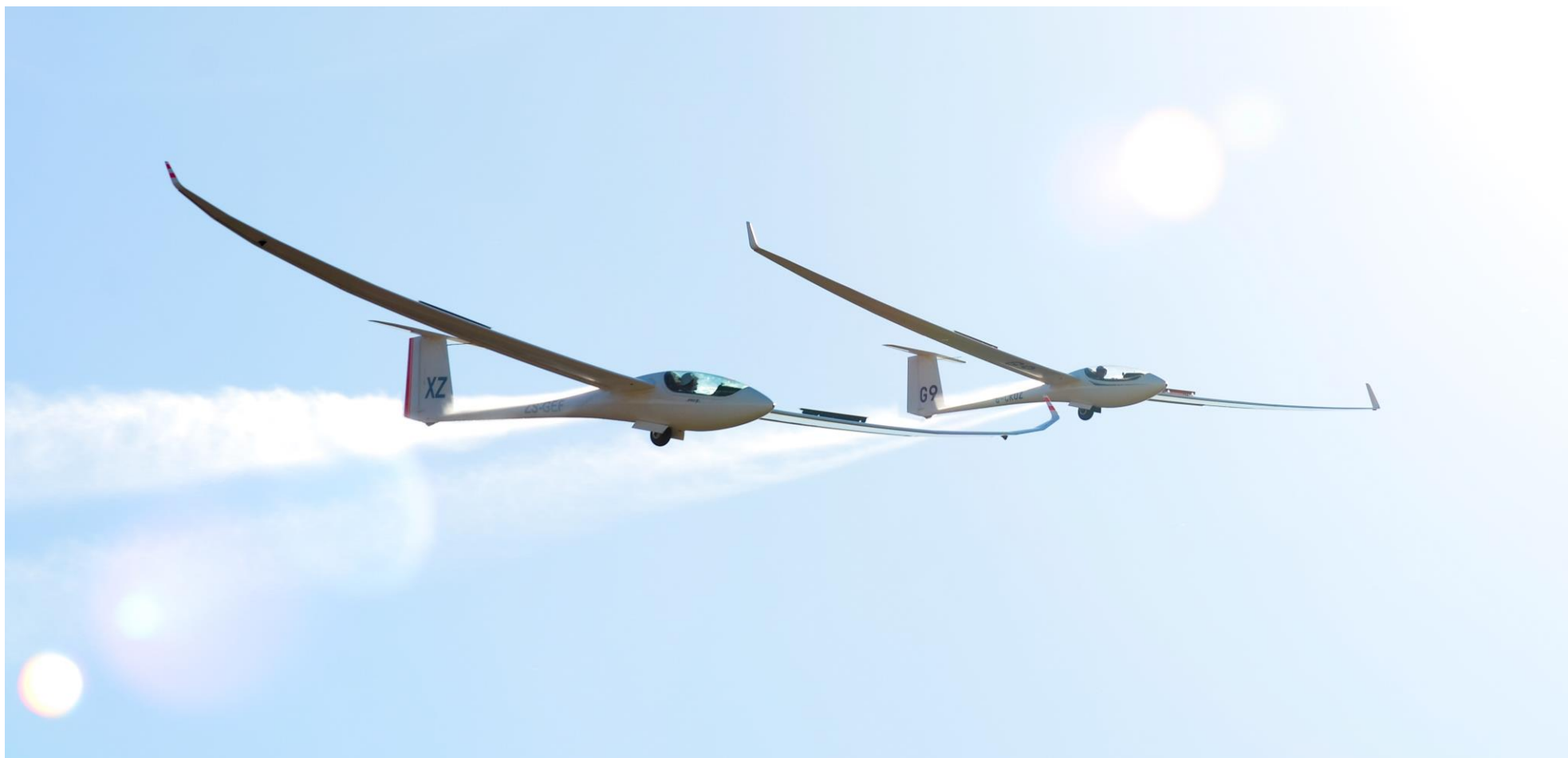


# British Gliding Association Annual Report 2021



**The BGA is the governing body of sport gliding in the UK and a member organisation that exists to support the clubs and their members and glider owners. The annual report provides some insight into the excellent work carried out by the sub-committees and others on behalf of us all.**

## **Chairmans Report**

Energy and renewed drive are apparent across gliding clubs with lots of activity and a desire to get all club members and the local community involved in club activities. This is a huge positive for gliding. The last 12 months have continued to be hard for clubs and their individual members. I hope that gliding continues to support the well-being and enjoyment of everyone involved.

The past year showed some great achievements, with many clubs investing in equipment and systems to increase accessibility and engagement. The BGA ladder showed intense activity when gliding was possible, and most chairmen reported a real buzz and activity across the sport. In my opinion, this is key to success in the future.

Looking ahead, ensuring we remain 'Fit for the future' is a core focus for all member clubs. We are hugely fortunate to have dedicated volunteers across our sport. My thanks to all who give their free time to assist our sport. Without this support our sport would not be anywhere near as rich in knowledge or structure.

2022 is a crucial year for our sport and bringing together the local community as well as existing members will shape the future. Use of our facilities by other activities and embracing opportunities and new technologies / sustainable alternatives will help ensure a strong future for gliding.

The Women's World Gliding Championship in August 2022 is going to be a great event. The opportunity to link STEM and sustainability with commercial and general aviation is unique. We hope to capitalise on opportunities to highlight to wider society what we in gliding do. Bringing the best from across the World together at Husbands Bosworth will allow us to showcase the best our sport offers and in part define and bolster the foundations to ensure strength as we head towards our centenary.

Finally, a huge thank you to the support from Chairmen, BGA directors and our staff for their dedication during very challenging times. My thanks to Pete Bennett and Tony Smith, who are stepping down as elected Executive Committee members at the 2022 AGM.

Andy Perkins  
Chairman

## CEOs Report

I reported last year that the Covid pandemic arrived just at the point our clubs had the highest number of newly qualified pilots we'd seen for a long time preparing for the soaring year ahead, and that club committees have been working very hard to ensure that their businesses survive to emerge on the other side ready to go. Covid mitigation developments in 2021 have allowed clubs to ease their operations into action again and to regroup and rebuild their active membership after the significant challenges and burdens throughout 2020 and early 2021. It's been a huge pleasure to witness so much gliding activity and success re-emerging from summer 2021.

Throughout the year, the BGA Executive Committee and the various sub-committees have continued to work hard on behalf of the membership. The Development Committee has again been very active in direct support of clubs. The use of online platforms to facilitate meetings, socials, talks, briefings, and training has been extremely helpful and seems to have resulted in a permanent shift in the way we do business and opened the door to involvement by those who live in the remoter parts of the UK. Our 'Fit for the Future' initiative, which is the delivery arm of the agreed BGA strategy, is increasingly guiding central BGA activity in developing BGA services and support as well as in responding to challenges and opportunities. Learning about our use of online ads, social media and other e-tools to promote gliding will inform a new group-led approach in 2022 that we'll be inviting clubs to engage with this spring. With the female 50% of our population represented by consistent 7% of our club's membership, it's fantastic to see emerging WWGC22 plans led by Liz Sparrow that will raise awareness and encourage involvement both leading up to and following the event. A separate and further important need for awareness and focus are the gaps in national coverage of accessible gliding for those who need the support of an adapted glider.

Regulation continues to occupy more effort than we would like. We continue to seek every opportunity to remove unnecessary regulatory barriers on the ground and in the air, as well as reduce complexity and cost. We must remain diligent as modified or new requirements can be proposed and developed with minimal engagement or consultation resulting in unintended outcomes. On-going mutual understanding, positive engagement, and effective communication with the CAA and the DfT remain essential, particularly as they evolve to deal with new challenges. We were pleased to host the CAA GA Unit lead during 2021, who with colleagues visited our Leicester office and The Gliding Centre at Husbands Bosworth. After two years of Government support, the CAA is reviewing its financial model. The BGA regularly reminds the CAA that simple and proportionate rules, clear and consistent guidance on implementation, and delegation to competent air sport organisations will reduce the need for CAA to be involved with recreational aviation, which in turn will benefit all including the CAA.

You can read more about the BGA's financial performance in the Treasurers report. The 2021 annual accounts provide an indication of the main impact of Covid on BGA finances during two difficult years. Good financial controls are vitally important, and I am grateful to our Hon. Treasurer, our accounts manager and the auditors for their diligence. I would like to express my thanks for the outstanding support from all our working group and sub-committee members, Executive Committee, Vice-Presidents, staff and contractors. We are very fortunate to have such high calibre, expert and motivated people representing our interests and supporting our clubs and their members.

Pete Stratten  
CEO

## Treasurers Report

The financial results for the year to 30 September 2021 show a pre-tax deficit of £31k (2020 - £55k surplus). The deficit is largely attributable to the three-month exceptional discount given for full flying members during the period of the first lockdown. Our balance sheet position (Net Asset Value) is £965K, which includes £67k relating to international competitions reserve. I am pleased to advise the BGA to continue to maintain a very healthy balance sheet. There is a corporation tax liability this year of £3k. This may seem slightly unusual as the BGA is showing a deficit in the year, however, it is important to note there is only a small amount of BGA activity that is subject to corporation tax. As with last year, the corporation tax liability largely relates to the recognition of unredeemed trial lesson voucher income which has not been offset by the expenses incurred in the sale of new vouchers.

The reduction in both income and expenditure in the year has been as a direct result of the consequences of the pandemic – this has been managed carefully to ensure that support continues to be provided to clubs. Whilst the BGA have had periods of remote working in line with Government guidance, we have continued to provide the same level of service and support to clubs, and I would like to thank the team for the diligent manner in which they have achieved this. Whilst we hope there will be less disruption in the future, the BGA will be in a position to respond to whatever challenges we may face in the event of there being further disruption as a result of the pandemic.

In preparing the budget for 2022 -2023, we have carefully considered the current rate of inflation and the uncertainty surrounding the future rate of inflation. After lengthy discussion, we have decided to increase membership fees by a small amount, which is a little below the current rate of inflation. Whilst there is much speculation, it is impossible to predict with any degree of certainty what inflation rates will be in, say, one year's time, and we will naturally monitor this very closely.

As with previous years, the objective of the budget is to achieve a break-even position whilst maintaining a healthy balance sheet position. We include costs we can predict with a reasonable degree of accuracy, whilst recognising that there will be some uncertainty. Any costs that are incurred but not foreseen will be discussed with the board at the appropriate time. Likewise, the budget is not a target and if there are budgeted costs which do not materialise, the money will not be spent. The broader financial strategy is to support the BGA in achieving its strategic objectives, and we will continue to exercise good financial discipline which forms part of the wider 'Fit for the Future' strategy.

I would like to thank Peter Bishop and Liz Pike as well as the wider office team for their support throughout this challenging period.

Finally, I am required to stand down as a director at the forthcoming AGM by rotation. I will, however, continue to serve the BGA as Company Secretary and Treasurer.

Tony Smith  
Treasurer

## Airspace Committee Report

2021 has been another interesting year for the BGA airspace committee.

The global pandemic resulted in commercial passenger air transport grinding to a halt in the UK, with many airports reporting little or no activity with a resulting drop in income. As a result of the uncertainty, the flow of airspace change proposal consultations slowed down. As the impact of the pandemic has eased, holiday flights are picking up again, airport confidence is returning, and many airspace change proposals have resumed or started.

Why are we seeing so many airspace changes? The UK's airspace is outdated and almost unfit for purpose. Upper airspace design and how the airlines use it results in stacking, delays, and excessive track miles. The lower airspace has evolved rather than been designed. The airports that control and effectively own the lower controlled airspace are in competition with each other resulting in sub-optimal airspace designs and excessive track miles as well as low climb and descent rates. And the military is hanging onto large volumes of under-utilised historically acquired airspace just in case it needs to utilise it for training. Drones are seen as a significant economic opportunity. Recognising the risk to UK PLC, the Government has decided that the UK's airspace needs to be modernised. Somewhere in among the commercial priorities sits reasonable access to airspace by everyone else.

The CAA has previously published an Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS). That first version had important elements missing and as a result, a refreshed AMS is currently being consulted on. Success in part hinges on the development of technologies, tools and policies that will allow true modernisation rather than the alternative of newly designed procedures and even greater volumes of controlled airspace that deliver partly modernised airspace. That alternative will result in an even worse situation for most aviators.

There are two large projects underway that aim to modernise how most UK airports manage their traffic and link it to modernised upper airspace. The efforts of these individual (and often competing) airports are being co-ordinated within a 'masterplan' by an independent organisation titled 'ACOG'. Despite being a national infrastructure project, the AMS is not Government funded. However, as airports have pleaded Covid poverty, Government has now made funding available for the airports to develop their ACPs.

Meanwhile, the drone industry is in its wild west phase of development. Partly because of government innovation funding and partly in support of NHS support needs, drone testing and real beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operations are taking place at sites across the UK. The CAA currently requires BVLOS activity to take place in segregated airspace. As a result, there is a significant rash of Temporary Danger Area's and we must work to avoid these becoming permanent Danger Areas. Military drone activity planned at Waddington and Fairford are two current examples. And if that wasn't enough, we're also dealing with difficult GNSS approaches in class G. GNSS approaches are a great safety aid but shouldn't be designed to endanger or push other airspace users aside.

As a result, there is an increasing number of ACPs.

But there are positives! NATS is actively seeking to understand gliding needs and we've experienced helpful results. The CAA has engaged well in redeveloping the AMS, which has the potential to be helpful. Steeper climbs and descents into airports, flexible use airspace, a high transition level, reduced class A airspace and EC developments have the potential to increase the available airspace for gliding. The challenge will be in delivering those changes that bring modernising benefits. Recognising that GA is impacted and can contribute to airspace modernisation, a charity, the Airspace4All Trust has formed. Seeded with a Government grant, this charity in part aims to support GA's needs within the development of the AMS. We continue to provide advice and support to the APPG GA airspace group.

Other airspace committee activities include supporting clubs in their local engagements with air traffic units, representing the BGA on various CAA airspace and safety related forums, and advising or listening to others within gliding who are working on behalf of the membership.

As the acting chair of the airspace committee, I am extremely grateful for the expertise, insight, and contributions of the entire committee, which includes former military and civilian professional pilots as well as air traffic controllers. All those involved have a deep understanding of why gliding needs airspace.

The committee is very grateful to all glider pilots who operate diligently, fly with a moving map with current software, and talk to air traffic control if close by. Glider infringements are rare, but every one of them seriously damages recreational aviation and our freedoms to fly. Please take care again during 2022.

You can learn more at <https://members.glliding.co.uk/airspace/>

Pete Stratten  
Acting Chair

## Competitions and Awards Committee Report

The UK entered its third lockdown in January and things were again looking gloomy for competitions in 2021. However, it soon began to look as if competitions might be possible in the summer and clubs carried on with their planning. In June, a week before the first competitions at Bidford and Lasham, the expected end of restrictions was delayed to July. With careful Covid countermeasures and the determination of their organisers, those competitions went ahead and by mid-July, restrictions had lifted enough to let the season get into full swing, resulting in a nearly full programme of Regionals and Nationals.

Covid uncertainty had a greater impact on Interclub, but in August, a September final at Tibenham was announced. Response was mixed but, in the end, seven clubs sent teams to enjoy the opportunity to compete in the ICL. John Roche-Kelly was Competition Director and was a great host, with Jim White taking on the role of scorer using the very popular Distanced Handicapped Tasks (DHTs). With only one scoring day over the weekend, Wormingford took the 2021 ICL cup, with BGGC (Nympsfield) and The Gliding Centre(Hus Bos) coming joint second. Prizes were kindly donated by Forbes Aviation.

International competitions were subject to major disruption from the pandemic which impacted Europe more than the UK. The World Championships in the Open, 18m and 20m Two-seater classes, which were to be held at Stendal in Germany, were cancelled entirely.

The 15m, Standard and Club class World Championships went ahead in Montluçon in August, albeit under severe covid restrictions. Despite uncertainty around quarantines and travel restrictions, the UK was able to send competitors for Standard and Club. In the Club Class, Tom Arscott managed an excellent fourth place and Jake Brattle a very creditable 7th place in a strong field. In the Standard Class, Jez Hood managed fourth place and Howard Jones fourteenth position.

The first Junior Europeans for many years was held at Pociunai in Lithuania. We sent a team of four pilots, two in the Club Class and Two in the Standard Class, fresh from a fantastic result at the Pre-Worlds in the Czech Republic. In the Club Class, Finn Sleigh took gold in his ASW20 with Toby Freeland getting seventh place. In the Standard Class Tom Pavis came away with a silver medal in his first international competition. Henry Inigo-Jones took the bronze medal. Overall, a fantastic result which meant that the Team Cup was also a gold! Our Juniors are continuing strongly in the wake of many previous Junior medals, what a great omen for the future with former Junior pilots now coaching the Teams and squads.

British team funding continues to suffer from reducing income and increasing costs, especially in travel and shipping and funding policies have been reviewed. From 2022 funding for European Championships will be reduced and a spending cap placed on shipping costs for upcoming World Championships outside Europe. We are also looking at ways in which available funds can be better targeted. In the long term, however, if the UK is to continue to punch above its weight in international gliding, additional income sources will be required.

The FAI tribunal on the WWGC19 Lake Keepit Tracking Data scandal finally delivered its verdict in December, finding in the UK and Germany's favour. Australia, however, has rejected the tribunal's report and has referred the matter to the court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). The UK and Germany have both chosen not to participate in the arbitration and we await the outcome.

As signalled in last year's report, the project to develop a simpler set of competition rules has progressed well. The objective was to provide rules that are easier to understand and fun to fly, while still being rigorous enough for rated competitions. It is hoped that the new format will encourage more pilots to enter competitions and make it easier for clubs to run them. We hope to start rolling out this new format for trial in the 2022 season.

I note that we still have not been able to attract any women onto the committee. I was dismayed to have it pointed out to me recently that women have no representation on the committee but that one of the reasons they don't apply is because it is male dominated. It would be good to break that circle.

I would like to end by thanking all of the members of the Committee for their hard work during the year.

Alan Langlands  
Chair



## Development Committee Report

With COVID19 still making its presence felt much development work took place in the virtual world. Whilst we miss the energy that derives from face to face meetings, we have found remote meetings do provide other advantages in term of reduced travel and more frequent meeting. The annual Club Development Conference was shorter, but we have been encouraging more follow-up of ideas and actions with regular Monday evening development meetings online. We really want to help clubs share good practice; it is such a shame when one realizes hard pressed volunteers are working to solve problems others have already found a good solution for. This is an evolving approach, and we encourage clubs to get more involved. We also see clubs working together which is great.

We engaged with several other agencies including Sport England, Natural England and the CAA's new department the Airfield Advisory Team. The latter have provided useful support in a couple of planning battles. Using a Department for Transport Airfield Grant we commissioned Mott Macdonald to research into the appropriateness of the CAA guidelines regarding Non-Official Aerodrome Safeguarding, Obstacle Limitation Surfaces and Public Safety Zones. The latter do not really apply to gliding but have been referenced by consultants acting for developers to justify building on the extended centre line of runways. In a recent planning case, it was successfully argued that any building on the extended centre line of a runway represented a threat to life in the case of an engine or launch failure. We will now be seeking to get this useful precedent into an official CAA document. In the meantime, a good Unofficial Aerodrome Safeguarding Plan remains the essential first level of defense against property developments that may impact your club.

The rates team continued to support clubs with both valuation issues and support for COVID Grant applications. Their impact on the finances of clubs continues to be significant. There has been the normal flow of queries to respond to on CASC, junior safeguarding, policies, governance, environment and wellbeing. Another great improvement has been the conversion of the annual return process to an on-line digital system. The IT was set up by Luke in the BGA Office.

Inevitably the impact of the pandemic on membership was substantial with many of our more vulnerable members choosing to keep away. Annual returns indicated a total reduction of around 1000 members of our clubs, ie 15%. That said many clubs are now reporting good recruitment with several now having waiting lists to manage the balance between demand and instructor capacity. We are also seeing lots of initiatives to improve retention. Sadly, we saw the closure of the Eden Soaring club which represents a loss of an excellent site that provided ready access to Cross Fell and the Lake District. There was a real risk that we would lose gliding at Sherington. It was fantastic to see a group of dedicated volunteers rally round and put so much effort into the birth of the Edgehill Gliding Centre.

Looking forward, we are setting a priority on improving equality and diversity. The gender balance in gliding has been stubbornly stuck at 7% females for many years. The BGA Strategic objective is to converge the gender balance in gliding as close as we can to that of the UK adult population. It is noteworthy that a survey of introductory flights indicated 17% female and it appears the female proportion among the junior is 20% plus. We will be supporting efforts to improvement as part of the legacy on the Women's World Gliding Championship in 2022.

As ever I would like to thank my committee members for all their hard work and dedication. Much of the time we are operating quietly in the background. This year I would particularly like to record my thanks to Dick Poole. Dick has played a pivotal role supporting University Gliding Clubs.

He was also instrumental in getting the annual Inter-University Ladder off the ground. Dick will be stepping back from these duties, but his efforts are not forgotten.

Dave Latimer  
Chair

## Instructing and Examining Committee Report

The public health situation continued to present us all with challenges throughout the year in the way we work and impacted upon all our flying activities.

BGA Instructor courses resumed in May 2021 following the loss of the most courses the previous year. Club pilot and instructor currency/recency as we emerged from lockdown had to be managed in a controlled manner by clubs, with most reporting an increase in enthusiasm and activity which was very encouraging. To ensure the continuity of instructor's privileges, various alleviations for the revalidation requirements of ratings were put in place.

The Instructing and Examining Committee have continued to meet online during evenings throughout the year resulting in a more flexible and efficient use of time as well as saving on travel, giving us the opportunity to meet on a more regular basis. Four meetings took place last year providing a much more focused level of discussion and decision making on specific topics. The committee continues to consist of all Senior Regional Examiners, the BGA Lead SFCL examiner, the BGA Standards Manager and other invited experts. The continuing inclusion of Tim Freearde, the Safety Committee chair, and Hugh Browning Safety committee member on the I&E committee has led to an improved joined up cross committee way of working, including identifying any trends and how best to deal with the causal effects.

The committee members continue to support their regional clubs needs for training and coaching through their teams of examiners and coaches. Various locally delivered courses and seminars were run post lockdown including the development of club-based coaches.

Several trial instructor courses were held last year to explore a more flexible approach to delivering new instructors for clubs through club-based Flight Instructor Coaches as well as the more familiar BGA Approved coaches facilitating the instructor courses. Timescale and cost barriers to encouraging pilots to become instructors should be reduced by pilots being able to train as an instructor at their own club for example or 'mix and match' between club-based training or BGA facilitated training.

The CAA decision to delay further the licensing requirements to December 2023 as they are reviewing recreational GA pilot licensing came as a total surprise as we were gearing up for the move to SPLs in December 2021. This has however resulted in more time to roll out the appointment of SFCL Flight Examiners and to consider and to write more courses for CAA approval. We will also continue to support when required those pilots and instructors who have already transitioned with a series of approved seminars and training for SPL additional privileges.

Some tasks and work instigated during the year continues to be developed within the committee. The Instructor Manual for example had accumulated several suggested changes and amendments which needed incorporating. The decision to rewrite the manual to bring it more into line with SFCL was taken, and a number of contributors led by Graham Morris and Mike Fox have this in hand.

Some critical areas of concern in both the Safety Committee and the I&E committee are also in the process of being addressed. Late take over control by instructors continues to cause substantial damage accidents and a detailed analysis of causes and remedies is progressing. The safe winch launching initiative is also being considered in ways in which the vital messages can be further communicated in an innovative way.

Finally, I'd like to thank all those involved in furthering pilot and instructor training in maintaining the high quality and standards throughout the Association.

Colin Sword  
Chair

## Junior Gliding Report

2021 was a productive year as we tried to make up for the cancellations of 2020. We continued with our online engagement at the beginning of the year, and with the country still in lockdown, we held our third instalment of the e-Winter Series league on Condor. This saw pilots, juniors and older, from across the country and across the world joining up for racing in the flat lands of England and the mountains of Europe.

As the country slowly moved out of lockdowns and bigger events become possible, we held the Junior National Championships at Aston Down airfield alongside the Cotswold Regionals. Juniors who were 26 years old were also invited to compete so they didn't miss out on their last Junior Nationals. At the end of a busy and great week of flying, we crowned a new Junior National Champion. A successful Inter-University Task Week was hosted by UWE Gliding Club at Aston Down in July, with university students from across the country taking part in the progression, soaring and cross-country competitions.

October saw the Winter Series return to the Midland Gliding Club at the Long Mynd, where some 80 juniors got together for three days of ridge, wave and thermal soaring. On the Saturday, we flew a launch every four minutes for 7 hours! Many thanks to MGC and all the 2-seater owners and instructors who helped us achieve so much flying.

With the BGA Club Development Conference moving online again this year, the UKJG team supported the evening development sessions to offer support to clubs looking to enhance their offering to younger members. We were joined by a panel of experts from clubs around the country, who shared their knowledge on supporting and encouraging Juniors at their clubs.

During the air show season, we were invited back by the Shuttleworth Collection to have our Junior Gliding stand at the air shows where we promoted gliding to the public. This got a lot of interest from the public who enjoyed talking with us about gliding and sitting in the gliders we brought along.

At the recent UKJG Development Team meeting we invited some new faces to the team, to lead the new work streams supported by UK Junior Gliding. Emma Burns will be heading up UKJG's support for university gliding clubs, and Yvonne Elliot, BGA Junior Gliding Centre Officer, joins us to represent the Junior Gliding Centre scheme within the team.

We always welcome interest from Juniors (or recently ex-Juniors) who would like to get involved with junior development at a national level. If you would like to help, please contact the team at [ukjuniorgliding@gmail.com](mailto:ukjuniorgliding@gmail.com).

Junior Gliding Development Team

## Safety Committee Report

The Safety Committee continues to analyse accidents, produce and disseminate safety advice and training material, and support the Instructors and Examiners Committee's development of the training syllabus.

Analysis. Our extensive accident database and report archive 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. Analyses this year include quantification of the collision risks from overflight of winch sites, supporting BGA work to address this problem; and a collation of tug vulnerabilities, comparing traditional aircraft with microlights and modern engines with older powerplants – an advice note will appear shortly. Revised booklets on Safe Winch Launching and 'Is Your Glider Fit For Flight' are in press.

When requested, we are happy to provide clubs with individual advice, and to support SREs in regional CFI meetings. Club Safety Officers are a crucial part of the safety network and, although COVID 19 again restricted face-to-face meetings, we ran CSO Seminars at Lasham and Milfield, and plan further seminars in 2022.

Communication. CFIs and instructors remain a key line of communication as well as an invaluable source of practical advice and considered wisdom. We continue to work closely with the Instructors and Examiners Committee to engage, learn and inform about safety aspects, training implications and key messages, and develop the advice collected in Managing Flying Risk. For more direct communication, we have continued our topical 'Straighten Up & Fly Right' articles for S&G and contribute to GASCo-run safety evenings for gliding clubs. A range of safety resources is available from the BGA website: please make use of it. We are strengthening contacts with our gliding safety colleagues in other countries, both directly and via the EGU, and contributed to a fascinating day-long safety seminar run for glider pilots in Gelnhausen, Germany.

Accidents. Statistically, this was another unremarkable year for gliding accidents: there were no fatalities, but 5 serious injuries in accidents that could easily have turned out worse. Details will shortly be published in the 2021 Accident Review. Fifteen years since the start of the Safe Winch Launch initiative, it appears that its advice is still not universally followed, so we plan to reinvigorate it in 2022. Wing-drop accidents continue to be a concern, and the ability to signal 'stop' instantly and reliably to the winch driver is crucial: club volunteers have designed an excellent DIY signalling system that we hope to roll out in 2022, and Skylaunch now offers a commercial version.

Thanks. 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. Particular thanks are due to Hugh Browning and Nick Bowers, who work endless hours recording and analysing accidents; Ed Lockhart, for compiling the excellent accident summaries for S&G; our tenacious BGA accident investigators; and, of course, fellow members of the Safety Committee.

Safe flying in 2022!

Tim Freearde  
Chair

## Technical Committee Report

Summary – continuing uncertainty regarding airworthiness processes.

There is continuing uncertainty as to the full impact of Brexit measures regarding our sport in which the vast majority of the airframes that we operate are from within the EU with EASA Type Certificates and airworthiness governance. While the basic processes, including Type Certificates, continue to be valid through ICAO (the global airworthiness standards body), further change and adaptation to the details of UK political interpretations and practices will continue on several fronts through 2022.

UK national procedures post Brexit. 'Part M Light' maintenance and airworthiness transition is complete. This represents a rationalisation of the current airworthiness process operated by the BGA. Nevertheless, there remains a significant void in the policy to be applied to various maintenance issues such as: provenance of spare parts and services, and status of organisations, particularly continental ones, empowered to enact maintenance and/or modification action. The BGA position is that we stand ready, and we believe able, to expand our role in many such areas, and we are actively investigating with CAA, and DfT as appropriate, to establish what new opportunities the BGA might negotiated on. Across all these diverse certification channels we seek a single unified approach at the working level. Currently the major issue of concern is the continuity of supply of newly qualified staff to underpin the airworthiness processes for our airframes (below).

Personal licensing of BGA Inspectors as Part 66L engineers. The new Part-66L licences for maintenance engineers has been delivered in UK, and all eligible BGA inspectors have been issued with this qualification at no cost to them. The future value of Part-66L in UK under the BGA's new Airworthiness accreditation (CAO) remains a matter of discussion. On a positive note, it has been confirmed that this will enable BGA inspectors with a Part-66L licence within the BGA to issue Export C of A's. Non-Part 21 gliders, now mostly vintage and homebuilt, continue to be supported by BGA inspectors without the need for a Part-66L licence.

The current live issue is that there exists NO prospective UK process for qualifying new maintenance personnel against the regulations raised by EASA (in fairness the situation in Europe is no better). So far, both CAA UK and European national authorities, have failed to provide any workable route whereby the gliding community can assist in its own interests. Specifically, national authorities have demanded ownership rights to all training and assessment material placing it under protected status whereby it cannot be shared, and therefore the burden spread across the gliding community. In the present impasse we continue to operate with a closed community of maintenance/airworthiness engineers with no means of replenishment or promoting newer or younger candidates.

ASK-13 airworthiness. During 2020 various concerns were raised in Europe regarding the airworthiness of Schleicher wooden legacy airframes including the ASK-13 which, all will be aware, still continues to underpin training in many clubs. It might be added that these concerns reflected the actions the BGA took on these types as long ago as 2004. While UK involvement in EASA deliberations is now limited, we were heartened to find that their deliberations resulted in measures which, to date, have mirrored the activities undertaken under our own management system. For the time being additional inspections and repairs align with BGA practices, but we nevertheless continue a watching brief on future developments.

BGA Airworthiness activities in the field. During 2020 Gordon MacDonald our CTO has completed the training and validation of a number of new inspectors, adding to our ranks before this option closed out. Further Gordon's 'webinars', continue to be well viewed and received. 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 continues its programme of Quality Audits largely on behalf of CAA, led by Keith Morgan and Andy Brind. We thank all these for their assistance including those at BGA Head Office who have maintained a timely airworthiness process through challenging times.

Howard A Torode  
Chair



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