

BMFA WALES

Unadopted Minutes of the

General Meeting

held on Thursday 13th February 2025

via the internet platform 'ZOOM'

The meeting commenced at 7pm

PRESENT:

Mike Tiley (Chairman)	Cardiff MAC
Allan Belcher (Area Delegate)	Swansea MFC*
John Taylor (Secretary)	Cardiff MAC**
Keith Barnes (Treasurer)	Eglwysilan MFC
Andy Green (Achievement Scheme Coordinator)	South Wales Soaring Assocn.*
Henry Fray (Vice-Chairman)	Eglwysilan MFC *
Phil Charlesworth (Education & Outreach Officer)	Fins over Gwent*
Gareth Llewellyn (Country Members Rep)	Country Member Rep *
Matt Stubbs (British Drone Flyers Rep)	Valley Flyers MFC*League *
Alan Williams	Lleyn MFC *
Albert Gay	Haverford West MFCC *
Richard Badham	Rhyl & District MFC *
Steve Holland	
Duncan McClure	BMFA

* Indicates a voting representative.

Voting representatives of 9 Area Clubs, with approximately 4 other BMFA members also in attendance.

AGENDA

1 To verify the voting strength of the Meeting and accept apologies

There being 10 delegated voting members from Area clubs present, the meeting was confirmed as quorate.

Apologies were received from Dennis Pritchard

2 Approval of Agenda and items for Any Other Business

The Agenda was agreed with the addition of Support for Indoor Flying in Any Other Business.

3 To approve the minutes of the General Meeting held on the 28th November 2024

Proposed by Phil Charlesworth, seconded by Andy Green, the minutes were unanimously approved.

4 Matters arising from the Minutes:

7.2.1 - Cardiff MAC procurement of radio equipment. Secretary John Taylor reported that the equipment had been purchased under budget. There was an initial problem with updating the software which had been referred to the supplier (main UK support), who was unable to help with the issue. The Secretary investigated and was able to resolve the matter, but the incident did somewhat undermine the rationale behind paying a premium and 'buying locally'.

Problems resolved, the equipment was now working well with the wireless buddy box setup. As an example of the usefulness of the package, during a January flying session a family approached the group asking about the models and we were able instantly to give both children

trial flights.

Item 7.4 – Duncan McClure informed the group that national and Area funding was not to be used to fund club activities unless it either promoted the sport, e.g. was used to provide trial and training flights or for publicity materials.

No amendments were noted and the minutes approved.

The Officers meeting minutes held on the 21st January 2025 were noted.

5 Council Matters (Area Delegate to report)

Allan Belcher reported that he was unable to attend the directors meeting. so could not update the group on the formation of the Radio Group.

5.1 Radio Expert Group

Duncan McClure, who had attended the directors meeting, informed the group that the Radio Expert Group proposal had been discussed but the board was not interested.

A discussion regarding range testing then took place noting that models should be tested in a range of orientations.

6 Area Council Matters (Area Delegate to report)

Allan Belcher had nothing to add to the report in item 4 above.

7 Area Chief Examiners (ACE)

Duncan McClure reminded the meeting of the requirements and processes for appointing Club and Area Chief Examiners. These were available on line in the BMFA's document library.

In summary:

- To become a Club Examiner a candidate must have had a "B" certificate for six months and be nominated by the club. All clubs should have two examiners.
- Re- ratification has to be done every year by the Club.
- Club examiners can conduct any discipline "A" test but "B" tests had to be performed by an examiner qualified in that discipline.
- ACE candidates had to be a club examiner for two years. There was no requirement to retake the "B" test.
- The Area appoints candidates by vote at an Area meeting after which a form is completed and sent to Duncan. The form is processed after which the candidates become ACE.
- Re- ratification has to be done every year by the Area.

Six candidate names were then put forward for election as ACE:

- Albert Gay
- Andrew Grimes
- Mark Barnes
- Mike Tiley
- Richard Badham
- Steve Holland

Proposed by Andy Green, seconded by Henry Fray, all were approved by the group.

Duncan confirmed he would process ratifications on receipt of the appropriate paperwork.

8 To review progress against the Area's stated aims

The Chairman ran through the aims as follows

Aim 1: Establishment of a working relationship with Sports Wales. No progress.

Aim 2: Establishment of a working relationship with Local Authorities. No progress.

Aim 3: Provision of training equipment.

Cardiff MFC had been funded to purchase radio equipment for trail and training flights.

Other funding was provided for facilities at open events.

It was noted that a new national director of finance had been appointed. Our area budget for 2025-26 needed to be finalised and sent to him as soon as possible.

Aim 4: Publication our activity in Wales.

Gareth Llewellyn reported on his visit to Cosford, RAF Air Cadets Regional Activity Day, see Appendix A.

Aim 5: Identification of other sources of funding and engage with those organisations. No progress

Aim 6: Publicise our sport at national air shows. No progress.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 Business Case for funding

No formal business cases had been put forward.

Alan Williams, Lleyrn MFC, asked if Club site advertising sail flags were an appropriate use of funding. The group decided that this would be an appropriate use as it would encourage the public to enquire about the sport and get involved. It was agreed that this would be accepted for funding. A formal business case would be provided at the next meeting.

10 Date, Time and Venue of next meeting

Next General Meeting will be held on the Thursday, 8th May 2025 followed by meetings on Thursday, 4th September 2025 and (immediately following the next AGM) Thursday, 27th November 2025.

All meetings will start at 7pm via zoom.

Zoom meeting will be opened 30min before the start of the meeting to allow participants time to resolve any connection issues.

The Meeting Closed at 8:40pm

Appendix A - RAF Air Cadets (RAFAC) of the West & Wales Region (i.e. the English Midlands and all of Wales) Regional Activity Day Report

Background

As a member of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association – Wales Region (RFCA Wales) I've been introducing our hobby to the air cadet fraternity as you know. As such, I was invited to present our hobby to the RAF Air Cadets (RAFAC) of the West & Wales Region (i.e. the English Midlands and all of Wales) at their Regional Activity Day (RAD) held at RAF Cosford yesterday.

I'd put together a team of 7 flyers to do this. When the LMA members learned that space at the event had been reduced, they declined to attend, understandably. So, it was Chris Bradbury and myself who presented; I hadn't realised until the day that this is the chap who is the editor of BMFA News.

We supported each other well – and he looked after the people across the border, and I chatted with Wales attendees in some detail. Chris is also the BMFA Drone Support Officer, and he was able to dwell on that a lot as he earns his living in the commercial drone marketplace – inc film and TV work.

I have to say, for many adults and cadets this was their 1st exposure to the hobby – I only met one who knew of the BMFA (lapsed member) that said, a number knew of local model flying clubs but had not realised they come under a form of regulation.

More background

The adults who volunteer their time to train air cadets are collectively known as Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAV); these inc adults who remain as civilians (Civilian Instructors) (CI) and members who don uniform, both as senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) or commissioned officers.

(There are a very few who are full-time at Regional level). Additionally, there are a few admin people (civil service) at Wing HQ and Regional HQ – these seem to be reducing in number. There are 3 Wings in Wales, and the Regional HQ is at Cosford. Not to be forgotten, as you may come across them, are the civilian committees. Most squadrons try to have a cmte – they are responsible for fund raising, accounts, welfare, and occasional support – but tend not to be CI's.

All CFAV are unpaid volunteers who give a great deal of their own time, in addition to their civ jobs, to deliver a plethora of support as mandated by the RAF, via MoD rules and regulations and very stringent child safeguarding laws, on a very tight budget. Most local squadrons vary in size hugely, in both terms of cadets and/or adults, most need assistance.

The cadets are mainly school pupils who are air minded (but not always). Occasionally, you may come across university students or apprentices who are till cadets.

The day

The cadets were organised into small groups who went around stands undertaking various activity training and tests from drill to first aid and including leadership. Chris and I were in with the Drone stand and we introduced our hobby via my simulator and our collection of models after they had undertaken a knowledge competition and flown a virtual drone test.

My experience and observations Those adults and cadets we did see were almost universally enthusiastic. Word spread, and some cadets/adults not slated for the Drone Stand came looking for us. Some adults hung around for as long as they could. Informally, the feedback given was that the hierarchy had been told that our hobby presentation had been very well received – and they want to undertake this exercise again, on a bigger scale in the future – Why?

The positives – the simulator led the way; all but a few cadets enjoyed the sim and some adults came back for more. In conversation with the adults, the thoughts were progressive:

- ◆ Identify a lead adult(s)
- ◆ Buy a sim set-up; thought to be achievable by most; and considered a good purchase for its own sake as it could fulfil a purpose as a stand-alone on sqn premises
- ◆ The Sim – the adults valued the training modules; the stage approach – beginner / intermediate / experienced / plus all the other menu options to make use meaningful.
- ◆ The other pulls being ...

- ◆ STEM trg – a must for cadets, model matls and build Options, inc adhesives
- ◆ Types of model, f/w, r/w, glider, jet, drones etc, rocketry
- ◆ Power options and trg in them
- ◆ Btty charging – types and trg
- ◆ Tx / rx set-up
- ◆ Flying – phased flying trg – such as buddy box and SAFE type tech also appealed, also providing phased trg aka the sim = graduated trg syllabus
- ◆ Achievement scheme – the fact that the BMFA test options can contribute to DofE Awards was of much interest * Insurance – there was some debate over what existing arrangements cover, up to and inc attendance at a club site; Chris advised that a lead adult could join the BMFA with up to 6 youth membership rates; it was noted these youths do not have to be named and that the 6 could change; thus 6 cadets could complete an agreed course and then a different set of 6 could do the same, under the existing cost.
- ◆ Future Employment – many of the adults recognised that cadets may benefit from future employment in the drone/UAV environment, be it mil or civ, and more likely than being a F35 pilot!

The Way Forward?

PSA the info sheet I prepared was taken by adults who said they would follow-up. Although some contact may be made by RAFAC quickly, I think physical progress will take longer. Given the time of year, progress will be governed by Christmas/NY, GCSE and A Level mocks and exams, plus the RAFAC internal exam process. That said, all local arrangements are likely to be unique. I suspect it may be a set of steps as below:

1. Adults may contact us randomly by geography
2. Sims will be bought, and if that goes down well,
3. Contact will be made for visits to clubs for model flying experience sessions
4. An arrangement may be made for a course of model flying training – mainly using club trg resources. And if that goes well,
5. Sqns may purchase their own model flying set-ups – adults are aware of the possibility of grantaid for sensible applications,

And interspersed with all this will be STEM and DofE trg, as this can be integrated into the cadet life, with or without, flyers interaction.

I hope this helps?

Gareth