

Minutes of Avon HGPG Club 2020 AGM

October 22nd 2020

This was held via Zoom and 23 members attended.

Agenda

- Chairman's report – Peggy Williams
- Treasurer's report – Graham Richards
- Low Airtime Officer's report – Sean Simmons
- Election of the Club Committee for 20/21

Chairman's Report – Peggy Williams

After an exceptionally wet winter with many of us getting very little or no flying, we were all looking forward to the spring and getting plenty of flying. Unfortunately, Covid-19 changed all that and, on the evening of probably the first good XC day of the year, people were travelling home to hear that the country was going into lockdown that very evening. Following BHPA guidance, Avon along with all other UK clubs officially closed their sites, opening again on 15 May during the middle of a six-week long heatwave. A long layoff combined with perhaps a lack of currency too meant there were several incidents during those first weeks and sadly, by the end of it we had lost Wayne Seeley, one of the country's best pilots and a dear friend to many of us. The XC season was severely curtailed by Covid, but there was still plenty of flying to be had with many of us staying around the hill or having some enjoyable coastal soaring days.

The winter is a good time for CP pilots to think about getting their Pilot rating and Avon have plenty of coaches to help and encourage pilots, and get tasks signed off in readiness for the exam. By popular demand we held a Coach Course back in December, kindly organised by Sean Simmons with Sheryl Simmons preparing and supplying the exceptional buffet on both days. More about that in Sean's report.

During February we held our annual repack which was attended by 34 pilots and raised £500 for the Air Ambulance. A few issues were picked up along with some out-of-date parachutes too. Thank you to our club packers Tim Bishop and Greg Emms along with Rod Taylor our trainee packer, and Nick Roberts from SWWC. Thank you to Tim Bishop for organising the repack and to all the packers for giving up their day.

With a lot more pilots able to fly weekdays this year, many low airtime pilots took advantage of some active coaching at Westbury courtesy of Chief Coach Tim Carr and Low Airtime Coach Sean Simmons, with Sean finishing the summer by organising the Avon Cup at Westbury over the August Bank Holiday weekend. With the BCC not happening this year, everyone was keen to take part. Again, more about that in Sean's report later. In September the postponed North South Cup graced our sites with an XC task from Frocester to Reading on Saturday and a spot landing competition on Sunday with the South regaining possession of the cup.

Nothing to report on the sites this year other than a few pilots are still landing on the slope along the west ridge at Westbury. Please read the site guide and if you're not sure, ask.

On the social side, in November we had Steven (Tosh) Mackintosh, talking about his solo vol-biv in Nepal, a taster for his Himalayan traverse the following February, Sacha Dench entertained us at our awards dinner with her adventures with the swans, flying from Russia back to Gloucestershire on a paramotor and in March we invited an XC panel of Viv Fouracre, Ali Andrews, Rich Harding and Tim Pentreath for a Q&A evening to start the XC season. For all you X-Alps fans, we were also lucky enough to get a visit to Bristol by Crigel Maurer in January. Since the club meetings were no longer possible, the club paid for a Zoom subscription and we have enjoyed several evening's entertainment from the likes of Wes, Sean, Tim Carr and Alex Coltman.

Rich Harding also gave a talk on the annual club trip to Snowdonia that he organises every May but this year postponed until September. A very enjoyable week was had by all with flying on four consecutive days. This consisted of three pilots twice completing the Snowdonia horseshoe route, a day having fun on the dunes at Deganwy and the low airtime pilots getting some useful airtime too.

Before we move on to the financial report from our Treasurer Graham Richards, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the committee members for their hard work and support throughout this year, as well as the active club coaches, remembering that we all do it voluntarily. It has been a very difficult time for all of us with next year looking much the same, so here's hoping for better times ahead with blue skies and white fluffy clouds 😊

Treasurer's Report – Graham Richards

For accounts ending 30th September 2020.



Avon Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club

Accounts for Financial Year Ending
30 September 2020

Prepared for the Zoom AGM on 22nd October 2020 by:

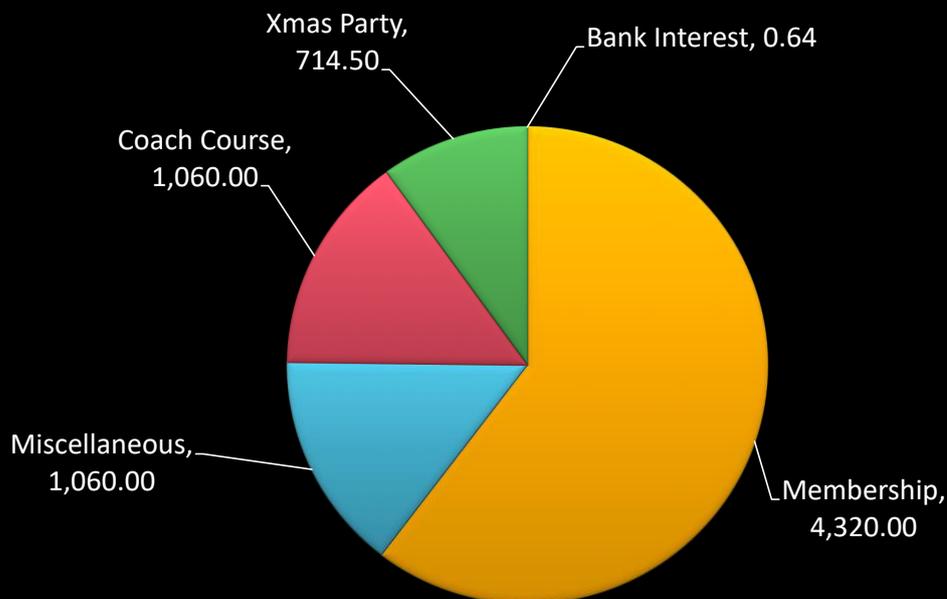
Graham Richards
Treasurer and Membership Secretary

Avon HGPG Club Accounts

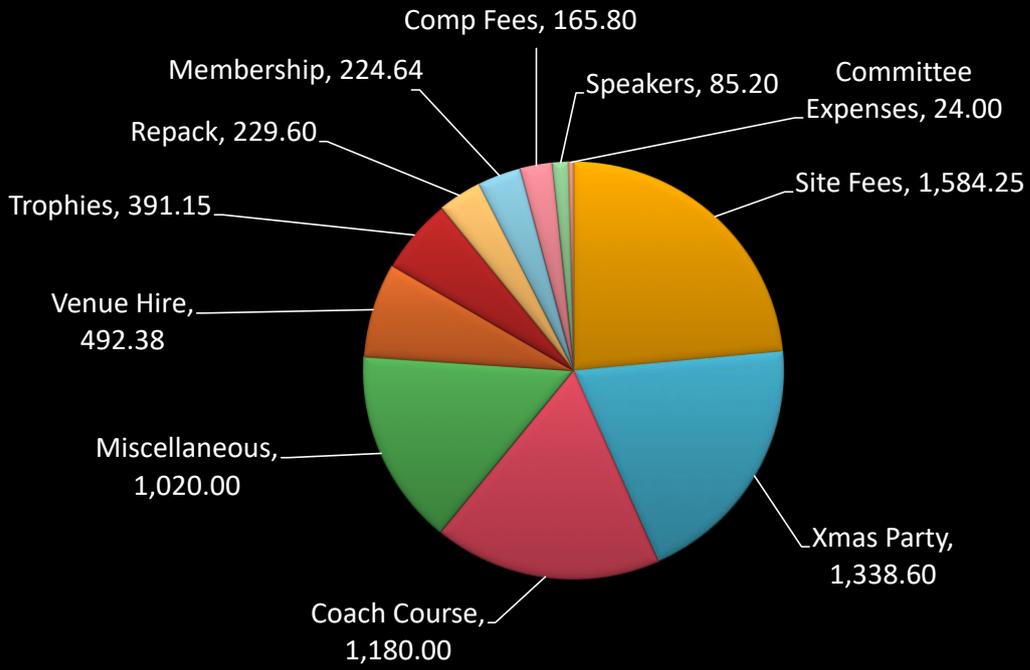
2020 Headlines...

- Full membership costs remain at £25 with Discount for prompt renewal.
- The Club's total funds increased by £419.52 to £16,183.52
- No Mere Bash to account for
- The accounts were audited on 9th Oct 20 by Harry Handscomb.
- Membership has decreased by 3 to 231 (as at end Sep 20).

Breakdown of Income FY19/20 (Total = £7,155.14)



Breakdown of Expenditure FY19/20
(Total = £6,735.62)

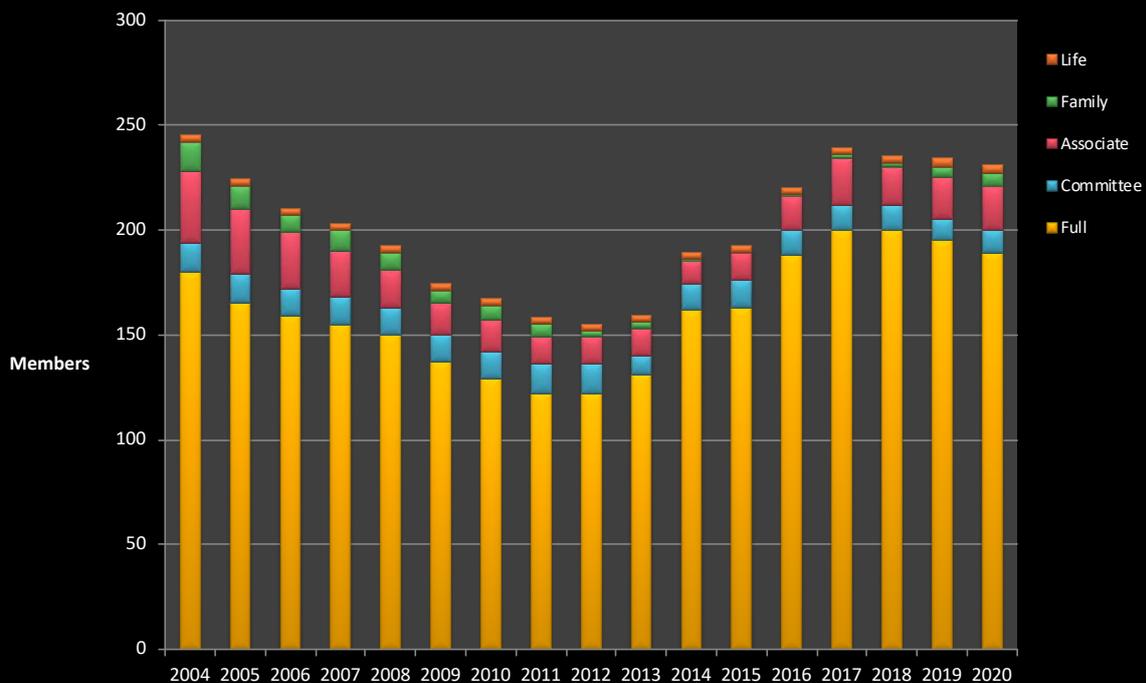


Auditor's Notes

Auditor – Harry Handscomb

1. The Accounts were Audited on the 9th Oct 2020;
2. The Accounts were clearly presented;
3. All the high value expenditures were queried;
4. Invoices, Receipts and Emails were shown and found acceptable as evidence;
5. Harry confirmed that the accounts reconciled in all respects.

Annual Membership Numbers (as at end of Financial Year)



Avon HGPG Low Airtime Report 2020

Sean Simmons

New LAT's.



Our usual throughput of new LATs has not seen a significant drop despite the pandemic. We have had many new members join/become active members of the Avon LAT group this year including the following (apologies if I have missed anyone):

- Paul Robinson
- Dougie Wilkie
- Mark Edmunds
- Neil Usher
- Maggie Dear
- Bryan Stickler
- Su Pakh
- James Bamber
- Simon Cole
- Alan Styan
- Alex Springer
- Ryan Budding (Rejoining after a short break from flying).
- David Morgan
- Dale Burrows
- Lucy Ma
- Marco Zenti
- Ian Garforth

I have been working with our new cohort to help them progress through the PDS. Despite the pandemic restrictions, the BHPA granted me permission to run pilot exams over zoom. Steve Barton was the 'guinea pig' for the new system and despite a couple of technical issues, he only got 1 question wrong so congratulations to him. Mark Simpson progressed on to his first XC and took part on the Avon Cup achieving an excellent flight from Westbury down to Cley Hill (I won't mention where he thought he was). Dougie Wilkie completed his CP and transitioned to the Club with some excellent flying in challenging conditions.

Pilot Development Course

As part of the continued support to our club coaches, I delivered a successful Club Coach course which was run in Dec 2019 with the following passing the course and gaining their club coach endorsement (some were returning to renew their endorsement):

Sean Simmons
Tim Carr
Peggy Williams
Darren Odell
Richard Miller
Tim Bishop
Jonathan Tew
Chris Lovell
Agnieszka Zaborowska
Alex Harper
Rod Taylor
Russell Lockyer Whyte
Phillip Josiah Cook
George Allen
Trevor Capon
Richard Gill
Phil Smith
Paul Guilfoyle
Laurence Lawson
Dave Warren
Oliver Clothier
Richard Gibbs

Thanks to Sheryl Simmons and Jackie Lockyer for preparing all the food.

LAT Membership Engagement through Zoom

As we entered into lock-down, I was contacted by many of our LAT cohort who wanted to continue talking about paragliding despite not actually being able to fly. In direct response to this, I asked the

committee to support a temporary move to running a number of sessions over the Zoom application. The club agreed to pay for an annual subscription and I have organized the following sessions:

- Return to Flying – This session was designed to provide an opportunity for the membership to talk openly about their concerns with a longer than usual ‘lay off’ from flying. We talked about how to ensure pilots could remain safe whilst returning to the hill after a long winter ‘lay off’ attached to the pandemic lock-down. We also covered some of the issues associated with our primary sites and how to avoid the pitfalls.
 - Sean Simmons
 - Tim Pentreath
 - Wez Murch
 - Tim Bishop

- First XC’s – Wez Murch contacted me and asked if he could deliver a session on XC flying which I was delighted to support and we had a big attendance. Thanks to Wez for an excellent session to which many questions and discussions followed.
 - Wez Murch
 - Sean Simmons

- Better XC’s Part 1 and Part 2 – After years of asking, Alex Coltman agreed to run 2 sessions on XC flying from Avon sites. The response was outstanding and I seem to remember seeing over 50 people in attendance at one point. A great series of talks by Alex providing some good pointers for our LAT’s and more experienced pilots alike. Thanks to Alex for all his work on preparing for these sessions.
 - Alex Coltman

These sessions are still on Zoom/DropBox for individuals to watch at a later date.

Despite the restrictions, we have continued to venture further afield to visit our neighboring club sites with some of our LAT cohort experiencing the support provided by our Wessex, SE Wales and Devon and Somerset Condors Clubs. If you are considering visiting one of these clubs (or any site you haven’t flown before), please ensure you contact a local coach and get a full site brief before committing to flying. Many clubs have new restrictions as a result of the pandemic so please read the site guide.

Avon Cup

In direct response to requests from our LAT’s wishing to progress to XC flying, I decided to organize a weekend XC event in the form of a challenge cup. Although initially aimed at LAT’s very quickly, the event ballooned into a wider event involving all. Essentially the weekend was broken into 2 classes (less than 10 hours (LAT) 10-50 hours (Intermediate) and greater than 50 hours (Open)). The LAT’s remained on site concentrating on ridge duration and height related tasks. The remainder of the group led by Wez Murch planned an XC to Dorchester which although seemingly a tall order, 2 pilots managed to get to goal with one flying on further to land on the beach in Weymouth. Results for the weekend are as follow:

Open Task (Joint Winners) - Laurence Lawson and Doug Redpath who both made goal in Dorchester with Laurence continuing on to Weymouth.

Intermediate Task - Lou Walker achieving his UK personal best landing just short of his goal at Mere.

LAT Task – Jeremy Maers won the LAT tasks with the longest flight and highest flight of the weekend.

Thanks to Tim Bishop for keeping us all safe and Dan Simmons for running around collecting scores and sorting registration.



Thanks to our supporters.

Development of our LAT community is only possible through support from our existing members and club coaches. A big thanks to you all for helping support the development of our LAT cohort. Without your help and support, their progression would be so much more difficult.

I would also like to add the importance of ensuring your coaching skills are kept up-to-date by talking to other coaches, reading the BHPA coaching material and refreshing your coaching course at one of the annual BHPA Club Coach courses. In addition, many of our longer standing members should consider becoming a coach to help pass on the valuable knowledge and experience they have gained. The BHPA run club coaching courses throughout the winter period to which I encourage you all to consider upskilling with a view to supporting others through the pilot development scheme. Many of you will have knowledge and skills that will be of use to our LAT cohort. I along with the committee would be extremely grateful if you would consider attending and supporting the future pilot development scheme by attending a Club Coach course and becoming an Avon HGPG Club Coach.

Committee Posts 2020/2021

The only changes from the previous year were that Chris Lovell stood down as 'PG Comps Officer' and Rich Gill took over the role. Peggy Williams on behalf of the Club, thanked Chris for his work on the committee.

The committee were elected unanimously.

The Committee posts for 20/21 are as follows:

Chairman	Peggy Williams
Treasurer	Graham Richards
Secretary	Rob Kingston
Social Secretary	Rich Harding
Sites (Overall)	Wes Murch
Safety	Tim Bishop
PG Comps Officer	Rich Gill
HG Comps Officer	Gregg Emms
PG Low Airtime Officer	Sean Simmons
HG Chief Coach	NOT FILLED
PG Chief Coach	Tim Carr
Webmaster	Rich Harding
Librarian	Rod Taylor

Rob Kingston
Club Secretary