

## Chairman's Progress Report

This is my first AGM and I hope to be able to make it as efficient and painless an experience as possible for all concerned!

It is an appropriate opportunity to bring the members up to date with our achievements so far and our plans for the future

The fleet of K13s was initially purchased and owned by groups of private individuals. The Club has now repaid those individuals and is therefore the proud owner of three sound and smart K13s. The K13s have been improved and smartened up as part of a planned programme of maintenance and improvement. The Club of course also owns the Astir and runs two other gliders.

Membership has continued to grow. The Club has begun to attract first rate competition pilots from other Clubs which seems to me may be taken as something as a vote of confidence.

Financially, the Club has performed well so that we have been able to accumulate a surplus fund for rainy days!

The committee in the first 18 months or so of the Club's existence concentrated huge efforts on making gliding happen and of course in running two highly successful competitions. The period since at least October 2005 has been a period of consolidation for the Club. A great deal of time and effort has been put into strengthening the Club's position in a number of areas:

- a) improving security of our occupation of the site;
- b) improving management and accounting procedures;
- c) improving safety of operations;
- d) planning for the future.

Very briefly, meetings have taken place between the relevant sub-group of the committee with Defence Estates. Defence Estates are obliged to manage the land holding to derive the maximum benefit for the tax payer which makes getting them to commit to any course of action for the future very difficult but we have secured their commitment to extend our occupation of the site until at least March 2009 for certain. They are now aware of our

ambition to purchase or at least secure a long lease of the site and how we envisage this might be achieved.

We have appointed accountants who as well as doing the necessary statutory work on the accounts (about which Tim Harrington will speak) are advising us on tax issues and generally as regards some of our internal procedures.

We were invited by the BGA to trial a new protocol for student pilots and this has been incorporated into the Flying Order Book. This will we hope make a significant contribution to safety. Gary Binnie will talk briefly about CFI type matters, including, no doubt, the requirement that all pilots intending to fly cross country must before launching complete the cross country book.

There remains a great deal to be done!

For the future, the Committee has set in place a number of initiatives to improve the position of the Club and most importantly to improve the extent to which the club meets the divers needs of the membership.

Firstly, we have set in place arrangements for a 7 day a week operation with effect from Easter 2006. A team has been engaged for the 2006 season to man the operation during weekdays. Weather permitting there is no reason why a launch should not be available on demand. The team bring with them a vast wealth of experience and enthusiasm. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have their input.

The arrangements for the season include full time manning of the office. Sue Kirschner will be in the office during week days and Claire who has been with us as a weekend office worker for some time will continue with us for at least one day each weekend. They will together form the focal point for organising flying activities

My personal wish is to see members flying at the Club on every flyable day. We have rent to pay for every day we occupy the site and I want to see members flying and generating income every day to pay that rent!

The membership has approved the plan to run two competitions this year. Dickie Feakes will tell you about those competitions in a moment. It already looks as if they are likely to make a major contribution to Club finances this

year. These competitions will play a major part in keeping the profile of WGC at the highest level.

Another initiative, is to attend the London Airshow. We have a spot on the BGA stand and a troupe of keen members have volunteered their time to man the stand.

The Committee has been acutely conscious of the potential impact of the tug going off-line on the efficiency of the operation and more importantly the demands of the membership. A decision has been taken to operate a second tug. This decision has followed a detailed and extensive analysis of the financial implications. Negotiations are underway for a suitable tug and financing.

In addition, the Club will be participating in a number of local events to promote local awareness of the existence of the Club. We, like all Clubs, need to feed new membership in at the youth end and this initiative is likely to play an important part in this process.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the exemplary work of each and every member of the committee. Each committee member has shouldered a heavy burden of work leaving every committee meeting with new demands on their time and energy.