



southern.bmfa.uk

13 April 2020

Dear Club Chairman / Secretary

Apologies for the lack of communication since the January Area Committee meeting, but I have been busy getting my mother into residential care. Thank you to the 20 clubs (of 70) who responded to the on-line survey we conducted over the winter. The majority of you were supportive of the continuation of Southern Area, but there was a feeling that you had no idea what the Area Committee does and that communication is lacking. You also indicated that 30 miles was about as far as you would want to travel to Area meetings, but that weekday evenings were by far the most popular meeting times. The current venue at the Ship Inn in Southampton was felt by some to be awkward to access, with meetings in the Alton / Winchester area being suggested as better alternatives.

The important point to make is that the **Area Committee consists of the representatives of all the clubs in the Area**, from which are elected a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, etc. The majority of Area Committee meetings I have attended in my time as Council Delegate have consisted only of the Elected Officers, with no other club representatives present. The meeting on 29 January was a very welcome exception, which I hope can be maintained once the Covid-19 pandemic has died down.

The primary role of the Area Committee is to provide the two-way link between BMFA grass-roots members in the Area, via their Club Reps, and the BMFA Executive, via the Council Delegate. If your members want to influence BMFA policy, this is the route to use. The Area Committee is also responsible for managing the Achievement Scheme locally, by organising workshops and appointing Area Chief Examiners. The other roles are the promotion of model flying, and organising open flying events. We have a new website (see above), and dedicated email address have been set up for the Elected Officers (see below). Thanks are due to Andy Symons, BMFA Club Support Officer, for this facility and for coordinating the club survey.

Finding a location for Area Committee meetings that suits everyone is impossible, given the geography. Southern Area stretches from Bridport in the southwest to Bracknell in the northeast, and also covers the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands. Venues we are exploring for future meetings are the conference room at Popham Airfield, and the Crown Inn at Kingsclere, both of which are better located than the Ship Inn. If you have any other suggestions please pass them on to one of the Elected Officers.

The Area meeting on 29 January was very productive, with a lot of useful discussion and offers of help. Tom Wood of the Bracknell club is our new secretary, and James Hounslow of South Hants Helis offered to set up a Southern Area Facebook group. Shaun Webb of Lee Bees MFC has validated the majority of club email contacts, so hopefully this newsletter has arrived successfully – please distribute it to your club members. Several clubs have offered to host fly-ins, but we will have to await better times to implement any of these.

In common with many other UK flying events, the Southern Area Flyfest Gala planned for Popham on 16/17 May has been cancelled.

The Elected Officers for 2020 are:

Chairman – Tony Butterworth (chairman@southern.bmfa.uk)
Secretary – Tom Wood (secretary@southern.bmfa.uk)
Treasurer – Terry Weeks (treasurer@southern.bmfa.uk)
Achievement Scheme Coordinator – Dave Burstow (daveb9152@gmail.com)
Council Delegate – David Smith (delegate@southern.bmfa.uk)
Free Flight secretary – Roger Newman (rogerknewman@yahoo.com)

In addition, Richard Sharman (bmfchairman@aol.com) provides the link to all the permit holders who fly at Beaulieu.

I hope that you have found this newsletter useful. Any comments or suggestions can be made via the email address above. Please keep an eye on the website for updates and notification of future Area Committee meetings.

Best wishes
David Smith (Council Delegate)