

# Oxon Helicopter Collective Club Rule Book

1. All relevant rules and guidance in the current BMFA Handbook are applicable to the club.

## 2. Safety

- a. Safety is overseen and enforced where necessary by the club Committee. There is an appointed safety officer, and all committee members deputise when present at the flying field. However, safety is the responsibility of every club member. Members should be safety aware at all times and should encourage others to do likewise. Should any confusion arise, do not hesitate to raise the issue with the committee. People, animals and property must be kept safe at all times.
- b. Before any new members are permitted to fly they must undergo a briefing to ensure that they fully understand local rules and procedures. This will be by the safety officer or by a nominated deputy chosen and approved by a majority committee with no less than 3 committee members in agreement.
- c. The types of models permitted to fly are detailed below. Depending on the class of model an assessment of competence will need to be made. This may be by BMFA certification, or by individual assessment as detailed in the different model types below.

## 3. Frequencies

- a. The club currently operates 2.4Ghz and 35Mhz systems.
  - i. **35MHz** - Transmitters shall only be switched on when the appropriate peg is in position on the peg board. The pegboard (Peg on) system must always be used if two or more pilots using 35MHz are on the field. Pegs are to be clearly marked with the pilot's first name in full, surname which can be abbreviated to one letter and frequency channel.
  - ii. **2.4GHz** – There are no anticipated restrictions using 2.4GHz systems at this time.
- b. Members must ascertain which frequencies are in use when they are at the flying site. This means that if you do not know what frequency another member is using you are expected to ask.

## 4. Model Types

- a. **Large models.** Regardless of type any model over 20Kg is classified by the CAA as a full size aircraft and as such is subject to a completed separate set of regulations, largely administered by the Large model Association. It is considered that the club patch is not suitable for the flying of any models of this size, and they are therefore prohibited.
- b. **Conventional.** The primary function of the club is for flying conventional RC model helicopters. Members flying these types have priority over all other types. FPV models, either single or multi-rotor, are also included in this category, but only when flown as conventional models on the main patch.
  - i. **Small models** – These are classed as those weighing less than 7Kg flying weight, including fuel. Members must demonstrate competence before flying unsupervised. This may be by possession of a BMFA “A” or “B” certificate, or by demonstration to the safety officer or nominated deputy.
  - ii. **Larger models** – These are classed as those weighing more than 7Kg. To fly these members would normally be in possession of a BMFA “B” certificate. Alternatively they can be assessed as safe to fly such models. This will be done by the safety officer or nominated deputy and will include a practical demonstration of safe flying ability. Details of this are given in Appendix A. This may need to be done with a smaller model first and possibly subsequently with a larger model, at the discretion of the safety officer.
  - iii. **Gas Turbine powered models.** Regardless of size these are essentially classed as Large Models, but a B certificate must be held. Also a separate assessment will be needed. This is due to the extra and different risks associated with operation of gas turbines. Note that flying

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may also be restricted at certain times of the year due to the fire risk to the grass in the field and to crops in neighbouring fields.

- c. **FPV Racing.** Provision is also made for FPV racing models. These have a separate area reserved specifically for this activity. New members will need to be briefed as detailed above.
- d. **Fixed wing models.** These may also be flown but these are allowed only on a tertiary basis, i.e. conventional and FPV models have priority. No fixed wing models over 1Kg are permitted, i.e. only small 'foamie' type models, nor gas turbine powered models of any size.

## 5. Field Rules

- a. Any member unsure of any rule should seek advice from a committee member. Safety is paramount.
- b. Models must be operated following BMFA guidelines, and also within the law of the land, which is covered by Air Navigation Orders issued by the Civil Aviation Authority. The relevant Orders can be found on the BMFA website and are referenced in the BMFA handbook.
- c. No Member may operate a model in a manner liable to cause damage or injury to persons or property. Members must comply with all instructions given by members of the Committee regarding flying discipline and frequency control. Failure to observe this rule will render the member liable to loss of membership under the terms of Article 13 of the Club's Constitution.
- d. Models must be flown (including hovering and low check flights) only within the designated flying area, and at no time are to be flown behind the flight line or over spectators or other field users and farm staff. Take-off and landing shall be done from the designated spots on the field. Models must never be flown between the pilot and the pits. It is not permissible to move further out into the field away from the pilot box to do this, in an attempt to keep the model within the flying zone.
- e. Only one model may be airborne at a time. A flier whose turn it is next must not leave the pits until the preceding flier has landed and returned to the arming table, which is midway between the pits and the nearest take off pad. Note that FPV racing is covered separately, but racing and normal flying are not allowed simultaneously.
- f. The permitted flying zone is limited to within the boundaries of the field, with the exceptions detailed below. Also, the SW quarter of the field which includes the pits and the clubhouse is a no fly zone. It is recommended, but not mandatory, that pilots define a flight line for the duration of the flight, which may run North-South, East-West or NW-SE. All flying should be done on the far side of this line, i.e. the fly-zone should be further restricted to half the field only for any flight. A diagram showing the possible positions of the flight lines and the no-fly zone is available in the clubhouse. Note that FPV racing has a separate permitted flying zone. FPV racing models may not normally be flown outside this zone, unless they are flown as a single model in the conventional area.
- g. Flying beyond the boundary of the field is not normally permitted with the exception of the western boundary. This may be crossed along the part that forms an extension to the fly zone in the northern half of the field. This extension is not permitted while there are people working in the field.
- h. Members who are in possession of a BMFA B certificate (Helicopter) may also make excursions beyond the eastern field boundary. This is only allowed for the purposes of practising F3C style competition flying, and it must only be over the most Northerly 100m of that boundary, Low level flying and apparently random or erratic flight must be avoided.
- i. Fixed wing models must stay within the field boundary at all times.
- j. Members shall immediately comply with any requests from the landowner or local residents, particularly on noise related issues. Any noise complaints should be reported to the club committee at the earliest opportunity by the club members involved or being present at the time.

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- k. Members must carry their membership cards and proof of insurance whenever flying at club sites, and must produce them for inspection when requested.
- l. FPV flying must be done in accordance with BMFA recommendations, and must also comply with UK CAA ANOs. In particular, but not exclusively ANO 2009, General Exemption E4049 must be followed. This requires the presence of a nominated and competent observer. Models under FPV control must remain within the same flying zone as conventional models and must stay in clear line of sight. Flying behind the hedges, or the trees on the northern edge of the field, is not permitted
- m. FPV racing as has already been stated may take place under slightly different rules. However, unless there is a variation specifically mentioned all rules continue to apply. A separate area currently in the conventional no fly zone is designated for racing. Course flags and markers may be set up in this area and left while conventional flying takes place, but must be removed at the end of any day's flying to allow the grass to be cut. A separate spotter for each aircraft is required by law, and this must be complied with until such time as it may change.
- n. Pyrotechnics of any sort are not permitted at the field in any circumstances, whether attached to a model or not.

## **6. Flying times**

- a. Flying times are from 8am until sunset for electric powered models.
- b. Flying times for IC powered models are from 9am to 8pm. (Ground running of engines is not permitted outside these times)
- c. Members should not cause noise at any time that the local residents may be disturbed.
- d. The Club recommends that no lone flying takes place at our flying site. For safety reasons it is recommended that pilots should have another person present, though that does not need to be another pilot. Although this is not mandatory, members must be aware of the risk to their own health & safety when undertaking any type of unaccompanied flying.

## **7. Pits**

- a. Keep the flying site free of litter. Take all litter home to your own dustbin (this includes broken pieces of crashed helicopter!).

## **8. Clubhouse**

- a. The clubhouse is not locked. It is strongly advised that members do not leave valuables in it. The thinking is that if it were locked then would be thieves would assume there was something of value and cause significant damage to the building breaking in.
- b. As the building is wooden it poses a fire risk so that caution needs to be exercised in all activities within it. Charging of any batteries should not normally be done inside it. This will normally be the case, as if the weather precludes battery charging outside it will also preclude flying. If batteries are charged within it then a suitable fire guard must be used around the battery, such that if a battery does ignite it will not set fire to the bench or the building. Either a flame proof metal box or a LiPo safe sack should be used. When charging is done in the clubhouse it must not be left unattended, the member should remain in the hut at all times that the charger is active.
- c. Damaged LiPos or those suspected of being damaged must not be taken into the clubhouse. Where a crash occurs remove the LiPo from the model before taking the model into the clubhouse. Non-obvious damage may result in a delayed fire.

## **9. Starting**

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- a. Helicopters must not be operated in the pits area unless it is for purpose of starting the engine prior to a flight. Helicopters in the pits area that are switched on with the engine running must be attended at all times, this means that they are being held securely by the owner.
- b. All electric aircraft, helicopters and fixed wing, to only be "Live" when on the patch, no flight batteries should be connected in the pits. Receiver batteries may be connected for pre-flight and range testing purposes. Electronic arming devices are not considered by the club to be acceptable as a means of ensuring that models are not live. This is because these devices cannot be guaranteed to fail in a safe manner.
- c. All ancillary equipment must be left in the pits. Nothing other than the model, the transmitter (and viewing equipment for FPV) and the batteries for the flight may be taken onto the field.

## **10. Vehicles**

- a. Vehicles must be parked on the grass area behind the pits.
- b. The road must be left unimpeded for other road users.
- c. You are expected to drive at a maximum of 5 MPH on all of the farm roads, especially if passing any pedestrians. Give way to farm traffic at all times.
- d. Any gates or barriers that are past to gain access to the field must be left in the state in which they are found. This includes the time while present on the field.

## **11. Visitors and Guests**

- a. Any visitors must agree to abide by the rules & regulations of Oxon Helicopter Collective and BMFA guidelines.
- b. Casual visitors must provide proof of adequate insurance (BMFA insurance or equivalent) and demonstrate competence to a nominated member (see section 4.h) before permission to fly solo is granted.
- c. Casual visitors may fly as the guest of a member to a maximum of two visits after which they will need to become a member of the club to continue flying. This will be subject to the usual rules and requirements for joining the club.

## **12. General Club Meetings**

- a. There shall be a general meeting of the Club open to all members and guests held in about the third week of each month at a venue reasonably near to the flying field and by agreement with the members. As this is subject to change consult a committee member for the current venue, dates and times. Usually this meeting will comprise a standard meeting agenda covering the adoption of previous minutes, matters arising, reports from officials and any other business. The remainder of the meeting will be for talks, demonstrations or simply an opportunity to socialize and consult fellow members. The Monthly meeting may be re-scheduled to coincide with an EGM provided the criteria for an EGM are met. During the Summer the club meeting may start an hour later which allows better use of daylight for a bit of flying before the meeting starts.

## **13. Membership subscription Rates.**

- a. **Club subscription – Reviewed by the committee on an annual basis.**
  - i. The club year runs from Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>.

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- ii. All memberships are at the approval of the Committee. The level of membership will be defined by the Committee so as to ensure there is no excessive over-crowding at the flying site.
- iii. Membership is for a full year, so regardless of the time of year of joining the full subscription is payable, but a pro-rata discount will be given on renewal in the following year.
  - 1. Senior members – applies to all flying members 18 years of age or older – full voting rights are conferred. Full Fee implied.
  - 2. Junior members – applies to all flying members under the age of 18 years – not eligible to vote. The junior club subscription will be a percentage of the senior at the same ratio as BMFA subscription for the full year.
  - 3. Family Members - The subscription for family memberships will be an additional 20% for each junior and proportional to BMFA subscription for family partners. (See BMFA web site for up to date details)
- iv. The level of annual subscriptions will be proposed by the Treasurer to the Committee at a meeting prior to the Club AGM and confirmed to members at the AGM. The club subscriptions do not include the BMFA membership fee that is additional and should be paid at the same time.
- v. Failure to pay subscriptions before the 31<sup>st</sup> January following the AGM shall be sufficient to cancel membership. (Except in special circumstances as agreed by majority committee members)
- vi. Persons on the waiting list will be offered a position in order of placement on the waiting list. Lapsed members may, by request, be placed on the waiting list. Should places still be available after waiting list is exhausted then lapsed members will be re-instated.

### **b. BMFA subscription**

- i. The cost of this is defined by the BMFA and is non-negotiable. Members will be notified of cost and have the choice to purchase through the club or directly with the BMFA.
- ii. Members who purchase their BMFA membership outside of the club (as a Country Member or through another club) MUST provide proof of current years BMFA membership to a committee member before flying is permitted. A photocopy for the Clubs records is required.

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## Appendix A

### 1. Larger models test procedure

This is the test procedure required for those who wish to fly models over 7Kg but who do not have a BMFA B certificate.

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the relevant air laws as applicable to models over 7Kg and less than 20Kg, as applicable to flying at the club field. This will be by discussion with the examiner.
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of BMFA safety guidelines and the club rules and procedures. This will be by discussion and by practical application during the flying test.
- c. The flying test.
  - i. Select the TOLP (take-off and landing point) and the flight-line to be used, and explain the reasoning for it.
  - ii. From the selected TOLP take off and climb to a height of appx 2.5m. Move forward appx 5m, stop and hover for 5 seconds.
  - iii. Turn through 90 degrees to either left or right and hover for 5 seconds. A degree of movement before the hover is stabilised is acceptable, and a change of location is also acceptable but following that the model must be reasonably stationary for five seconds.
  - iv. Turn through 180 degrees to face the other way, and hover for 5 seconds. Again some movement is acceptable prior to stabilising in the hover. The requirement is to demonstrate the ability to establish a stable and stationary sideways hover, not to perform competition style pirouettes.
  - v. Fly a circuit at a height of greater than 10m. The length across should be greater than 60m appx. There is no need for a square circuit, but the path should be straight for 60m in both directions.
  - vi. Fly a circuit in the opposite direction, with the same requirements as above.
  - vii. Fly directly away from the pilot in a suitable direction for a distance of greater than 80m. Turn and fly directly towards the pilot for approximately half the distance. Turn and make an approach to the TOLP. Land on the TOLP within about 1m of the centre. There is no requirement for the direction of the landing, "tail-in" is fine, nor is there any time requirement, it is permissible to hover at a low level to line up before finally touching down.
  - viii. At no time during flight is the model allowed to encroach into the no fly zone nor to cross behind the established flight line. During the landing a small excursion while lining up and within 2m of the TOLP is acceptable, even so the model should not approach closer than 7m to the pilot, and must be clearly under control at all times.