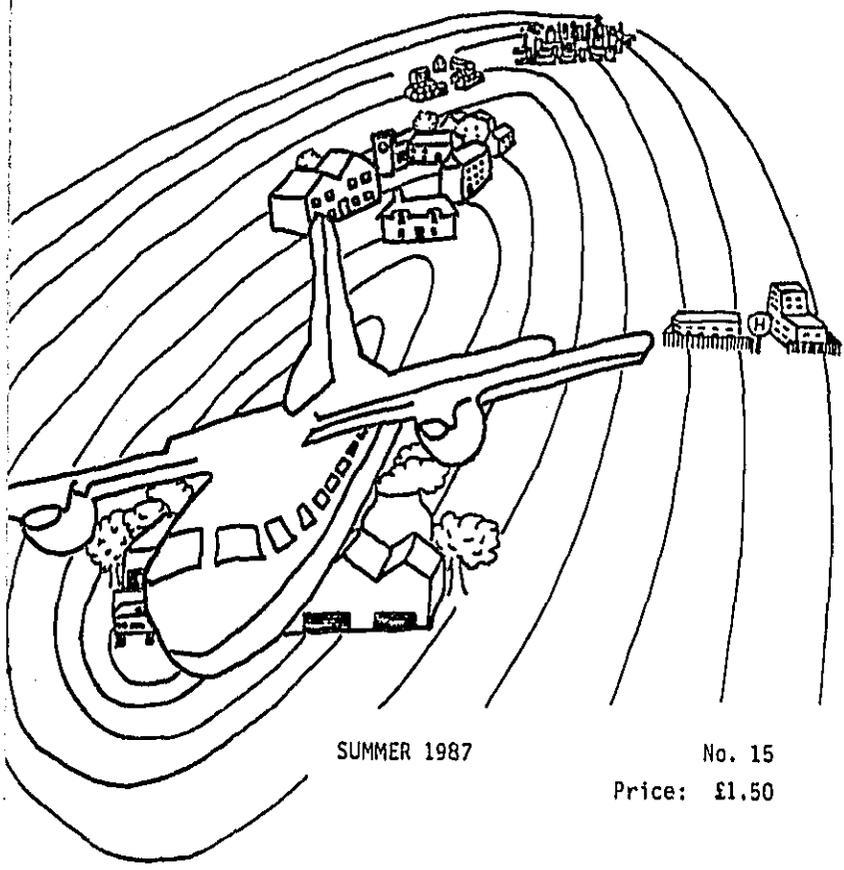


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# AIRFIELDS ENVIRONMENT FEDERATION

SURREY'S DEVELOPMENT CONTROL  
GUIDANCE FOR GA NEIGHBOURHOODS



SUMMER 1987

No. 15

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## DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FOR GENERAL AVIATION NEIGHBOURHOODS

New guidelines for permissible developments close to GA airfields have been proposed by Surrey County Council. The aim is to control the types of development in different noise 'zones' around these airfields to ensure that future co-habitators of aviation are not unduly or unnecessarily stressed by pre-existing aircraft noise; so, for example, where noise levels of 45-49 NNI\* are experienced, rounding off and infilling of residential developments only would be permitted with all living- and bed- rooms insulated to a 30dB standard and full mechanical ventilation installed; schools, in this 'zone', however, would be allowed only in exceptional circumstances, fully insulated to 30dB standard with a comprehensive mechanical ventilation system, whereas office development could be permitted with noise insulation, again to 30dB standard, and a mechanical ventilation system.

Within the guidelines Surrey County Council have distinguished between policy for GA aerodromes and national hub airports where clearly "the national interest" has some part to play in development policy. We are hopeful too that differences in public reaction due to expectations of quiet and solitude in some, usually more rural, areas will be observed by planning authorities: in many urban and suburban situations residents perceive their environment to be more noisy even in the absence of aircraft noise, which may even be 'covered' by the noise of other activities like road traffic. Where quiet is assumed to be the 'normal' situation,

intrusions of even quite low noise levels can be extremely disturbing, especially if they are frequent, as in overflights by circuit training aircraft.

The extent of disturbance from noise depends very much not only on the noise level itself, but also on the activities it is likely to affect. Sleep, for example, is interrupted at noise levels of 35dB(A), and in this case peak noise levels can be as disturbing, if not more so, than on-going noise. Conversation, on the other hand, is disturbed at 65dB(A) when the voice of the speaker has to be raised to be understood 1 metre away; noise levels of 78dB(A) proved unacceptably intrusive to 50% of people involved in laboratory testing when trying to hold a conversation. A similar proportion of people found levels of 68dB(A) unacceptable when watching television (Ollerhead). In the classroom, background noise has more marked effects; teaching is interrupted by levels of 70dB(A) and is prevented altogether at 80dB(A). Control of development within specific noise contours is therefore essential.

Guidelines relating to developments close to GA activity will become increasingly important if good relationships between the aviation industry and other members of the community are to be the goal; inappropriate developments in unsuitable places will certainly not encourage neighbourliness. The most recent Government guidelines, in the form of Department of Transport circular 10/73, are now 14 years old and do not address some of the problems associated with the high levels of GA activity experienced so frequently today; furthermore no distinction is made between noise created by national hub airports and those smaller fields which trouble such a large number of the British population.

The levels adopted by Surrey County Council are very much in line with the conclusions of research undertaken in Britain and abroad, as well as with those in submissions by noise consultants at public inquiries, so they should command the support of the profession. We very much welcome this initiative by Surrey County Council (an authority with a history of experience of airports and airfields) and hope its influence will be widely felt throughout the country.

\*NNI = Noise & Number Index: a composite measure of exposure to aircraft noise, taking into account average peak noise level and the no. of aircraft in a specific period.

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#### STOLPORT NEWS

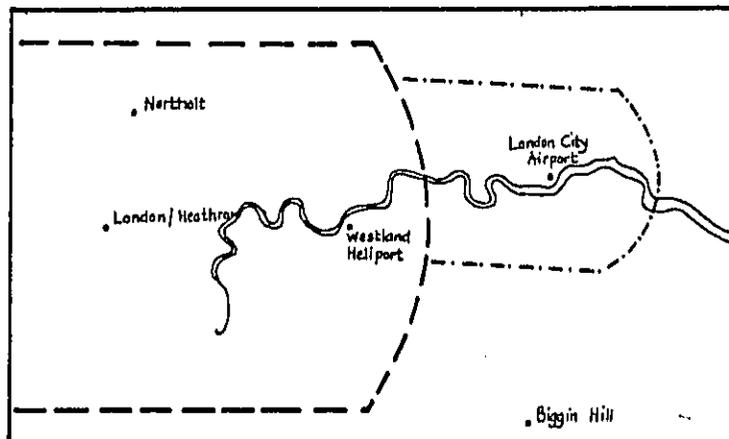
May 31st saw the first take-offs and landings from London City Airport by both Brymon Airways and Eurocity Express. Already the runway is complete, the lights installed, the control "tower" in place and the apron covered.

Due to the proximity of Stolport to air traffic from the two major London Airports a new Special Rules Zone (SRZ) has been created, an eastward extension to the London Control Zone.

The SRZ covers an area 4nm to the north and south of the airport centre and 5nm to the east and west (see picture). Aircraft wishing to use this airspace other than to land at the Stolport will be required to seek permission and, if granted, will

then be allowed only to fly straight across the zone under the direction of the ATC.

The extent of the zone has been geared to the capabilities of the De Havilland Dash 7 aircraft in terms of its climb-out after take-off and utilisable speeds for approaches. Any other aircraft wishing to use the airport itself would therefore be required to at least match the Dash 7s low-speed and manoeuvrability. Higher speed aircraft requiring a longer final approach from the east, would need to enter the London TMA and this would conflict with traffic at Heathrow. Also, as it is envisaged, at least to begin with, that a Flight Information Region-type service only will be provided, there will be no control as such available to slot aircraft in between other London flights and hence such approaches will be impossible.



From Flight International, 23rd May 1987

#### ANY UMBRELLAS?



The AEF is fortunate enough to be affiliated to two umbrella groups, the Council for Environmental Conservation (CoEnCo) and the Voluntary Movement Group (VMG); both lend a great deal of support, and dispense helpful advice regarding various aspects of our activities.

CoEnCo is an independent national charity which aims to bring together voluntary organisations in the UK involved in environmental issues. The Council was established in 1969 and now represents a whole range of bodies within the environmental movement in the UK. Amongst other activities CoEnCo actively promotes the integration of the principles of conservation of the environment and its resources into development policy, and whenever possible, represents the views of its membership in responses to Government, Government agencies and the public. It is under their banner that we have recently had the opportunity to comment on a number of important Government proposals relating to the environment, aspects of which could have implications for future patterns of aviation use. (See last edition of the Newsletter). The Council also provides a research and information service, organises seminars and

maintains important links with international environmental bodies. Moyra Logan, our Secretary, has recently been elected to the Governing Council of CoEnCo for the second year.

The VMG helps with the public relations and fund-raising side of voluntary organisations. It provides a forum for all groups in the voluntary sector and arranges regular meetings offering practical advice for non-profit making bodies and encourages the exchange of information, experience and help between members. Workshops and seminars are also organised to provide on-going training for those involved in promotion and fund-raising. Established in 1965, the VMG is run by a management committee elected from its members.

\*\*\* RECENT APPOINTMENTS \*\*\*

Vice-Presidents

We are delighted to announce the appointment of two Vice-Presidents.

Edward Dawson, formerly Secretary of CoEnCo, now a consultant, is a well-known figure in the conservation scene. He has been appointed President of VMG (see page 6) and sits on the SDP's Environment Panel. A member of Hart District Council and Yately Town Council, he is current Chairman of the Blackbushe Airport Consultative Committee. He is already contributing greatly to the development of the AEF.

A long-time supporter of the AEF and the Airfields Environment Trust, John Smith CBE has also very kindly accepted the role of Vice-President. Founder

of the Landmark Trust, which does so much excellent work in the preservation of buildings, and of the Manifold Trust, he has served the National Trust in many key roles, including Deputy Chairman. He is quietly one of the most significant figures in conservation in Britain today, so we are quite delighted to have him so closely involved.

#### Honorary Solicitors

We are also able to announce that Frere Cholmeley have become honorary solicitors to the AEF. Most readers will know that Peter Martin of Frere Cholmeley is one of the country's key aviation lawyers, so we particularly appreciate his support.

This puts us in the happy position of having three legal practices working with us. Honorary solicitors to the Trust, Gouldens, of Chancery Lane, have been advising us since our inception: as AEF members are aware, we are indebted to David Cooper, for expert help generously given on many aviation/planning matters. And in Ashford, Kent, John Lowings of Hallett and Co., who has a particular interest in the environment, has done some valued original thinking for us. We are very grateful for their interest, their time and their expertise.

#### Staff News

We welcome too Robert Landau as Finance and Administration Officer. Robert, recently retired from 40 years in industry where he was in charge of a shipping and exporting department, is doing a great job running the finances of the Trust and Federation.

#### PLANNING APPEAL DECISIONS

In last September's edition of the Newsletter we reported the decision in a planning appeal where the use of a former wartime airfield for microlighting was considered. There was considerable interest in the piece, with most of those responding saying that publishing such material would be a helpful service. There was one criticism: we omitted the references through which interested parties could obtain further information.

It would seem that we could usefully devote a section of the Newsletter to reports of decisions relating to airfield uses. From our own sources we are able to compile material on many planning appeal and inquiry decisions, and on the decisions of the courts on relevant issues. It would help make coverage more comprehensive if readers would let us have details of any decisions in which they are involved or become aware of; we would be grateful for any information supplied.

#### Planning Refusal at Wycombe Air Park (Booker)

An application for the erection of six new hangars to accommodate approximately 15 aircraft at Wycombe Air Park was turned down by Wycombe District Council at the beginning of this year. The applicants, Airways Aero Associates Limited, stated that the proposed facilities were for aircraft already based at the extremely busy Air Park and that there would therefore be no increase to the overall capacity of the airfield. The recently published draft Local Plan for Marlow, which covers the aerodrome, stated

that no improvement to existing facilities would be allowed if it would lead to an intensification of use. The Planning Officer recommended that the application be accepted with the proviso that fixed-wing aircraft based at the airfield be restricted to the existing number. Local residents had however already told local Councillors that there were far too many movements at present and the plan was refused outright. The applicants have, not unexpectedly, appealed against the decision so there will be a local inquiry.

#### Former British Airways College Preserved

The Secretary of State for the Environment recently rejected a proposal to build a golf course and up to 1,000 homes on the site of the former BA College of Air Training at Hamble in Hampshire (Pilot, June 1987). The planning application, submitted by Southern Ideal Homes, was originally rejected by Eastleigh Borough Council after strong objections from local residents and Hamble Parish Council, the Chairman of which was the last principal and longest serving instructor at the College.

After an extensive public inquiry held in early 1986 the Inspector accepted the objectors' points of view and recommended refusal of the proposal. The local plan calls for the retention of the site for "activities associated with the airfield and air training, existing industrial uses...and existing sports facilities and recreation uses", and this is to be followed. Redevelopment of existing buildings can be undertaken under the Secretary of State's ruling, but no new development outside that mentioned will be permitted.

## REGIONAL UPDATE

### WARWICKSHIRE

The newly amended county structure plan states that all general aviation needs should, whenever possible be borne by Coventry airport and that while facilities are still available there, a recommendation will be made that permission should not be granted for the development of other sites. Approval by the Secretary of State has, however, still to be granted.

### DENHAM

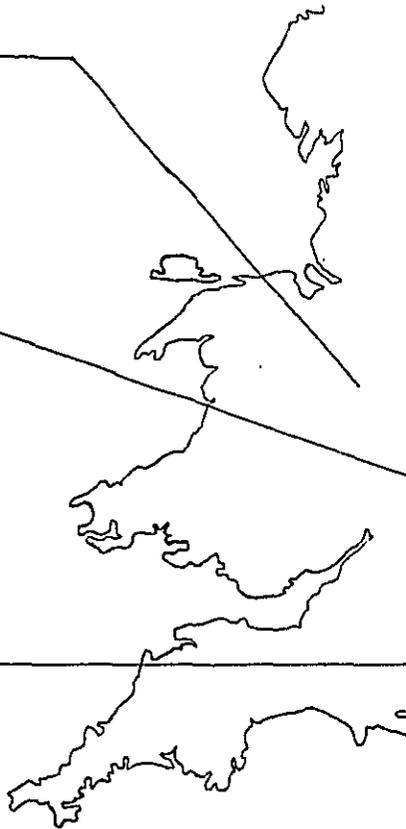
Following very quickly on from the recent consent for the erection of hangars at Denham, a new application has been made for their extension due to the owners previously not fully appreciating the extent of the need for facilities!

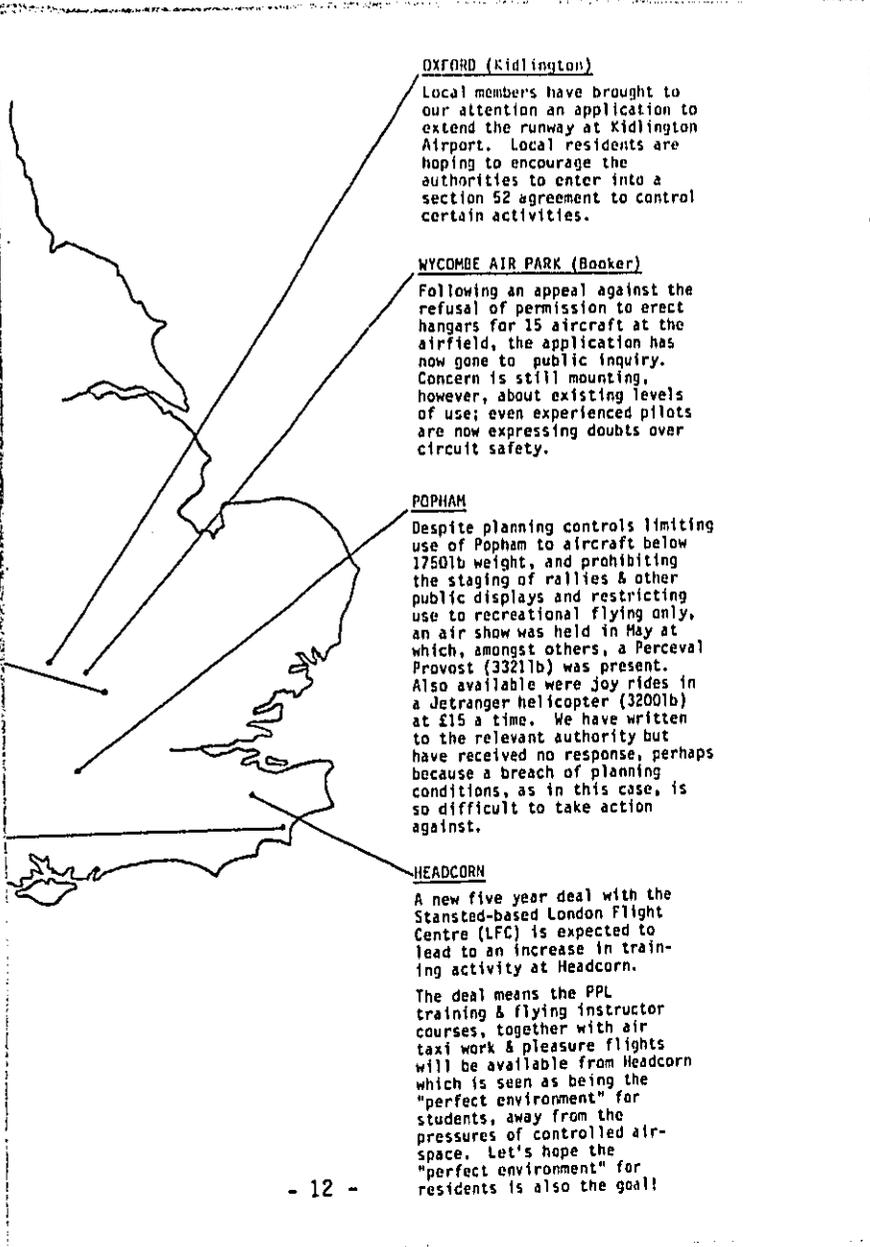
The application, together with recent advertisements for large numbers of staff by one of the operators has caused great concern to local residents.

### LYDD

Lydd Airport has been bought by Ct. Jonathan Gordon, owner of an aircraft ferry & sales organisation, Gordon-Air, based at Chichester.

Since August last year, Lydd has been in the hands of liquidators. This sale, together with the opening of the channel tunnel is seen as the hope for a new future, reminiscent of Lydds former days.





DXFORD (Kidlington)

Local members have brought to our attention an application to extend the runway at Kidlington Airport. Local residents are hoping to encourage the authorities to enter into a section 52 agreement to control certain activities.

WYCOMBE AIR PARK (Booker)

Following an appeal against the refusal of permission to erect hangars for 15 aircraft at the airfield, the application has now gone to public inquiry. Concern is still mounting, however, about existing levels of use; even experienced pilots are now expressing doubts over circuit safety.

POPHAM

Despite planning controls limiting use of Popham to aircraft below 1750lb weight, and prohibiting the staging of rallies & other public displays and restricting use to recreational flying only, an air show was held in May at which, amongst others, a Perceval Provost (3321lb) was present. Also available were joy rides in a Jetranger helicopter (3200lb) at £15 a time. We have written to the relevant authority but have received no response, perhaps because a breach of planning conditions, as in this case, is so difficult to take action against.

HEADCORN

A new five year deal with the Stansted-based London Flight Centre (LFC) is expected to lead to an increase in training activity at Headcorn.

The deal means the PPL training & flying instructor courses, together with air taxi work & pleasure flights will be available from Headcorn which is seen as being the "perfect environment" for students, away from the pressures of controlled airspace. Let's hope the "perfect environment" for residents is also the goal!

#### DAMAGES FOR DAMAGES

We have recently consulted our honorary solicitor regarding the possibility of taking action against an aircraft operator or airfield operator for damage caused to property due to aviation activities. This has long been a problem for those suffering from aviation-related pollution, although the Air Navigation Order (ANO) Article 40(2) suggests that compensation should be available. It states that except in cases of emergency and for certain other specified reasons

"articles and animals [whether or not attached to a parachute] shall not be dropped, or permitted to drop, to the surface from an aircraft flying over the United Kingdom."

Furthermore the Civil Aviation Act 1976 S.76(2) states that:

"Where material loss or damage is caused to any person or property on land or water by, or by a person in, or an article, animal or person falling from an aircraft while in flight, taking off or landing, then unless the loss or damage was caused or contributed to by the negligence of the person by whom it was suffered, damages in respect of the loss or damage shall be recoverable without proof of negligence or intention or other cause of action, as if the loss or damage had been caused by the wilful act, neglect, or default of the owner of the aircraft."

This too suggests that compensation should be

available. As there has, however, never been a test case in circumstances where damage from pollution has occurred, there has always been some hesitation on the part of the legal profession to encourage the public along such a course. We are advised, however, that in certain circumstances, for example where there is an on-going problem suffered by a number of people within an area, a community action may prove successful and could also constitute the long-needed test judgement, the lack of which currently holds back the chronic sufferers.

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#### PLANNING A GOOD READ

New from CoEnCo is a planning bibliography which not only lists the recent publications pertinent to the current debate on planning in this country, but also sets out clearly and coherently the arguments over the future of planning and development control, and who's making them. Compiled by Tom Cairns for CoEnCo this paper sets the debate in context and gives serious food for thought. This is useful basic information for anyone seriously concerned about the future of planning control in Britain.

"The future of planning in Britain: an appraisal of the debate and a review of recent publications" costs £1 and is available from CoEnCo, London Ecology Centre, 80 York Way, London N1 9AG.

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by Themis

#### Theme and Variations

Elsewhere we report that a Special Rules Zone has been established for the London Docklands STOLport, based on the performance achievable by the Dash 7. Other aircraft will have to meet some of its standards to use the airport. None of this seems to deter the operators, now Brymon Airways as well as Eurocity Express, from pushing for the use of British Aerospace's 146. Of its type, the BAe 146 is an appealing, quiet aircraft the AEF is happy to support, but it meets neither the operational nor the noise criteria for the City Airport. And once you vary the conditions for one aircraft, how can you reasonably keep the other candidates' out?

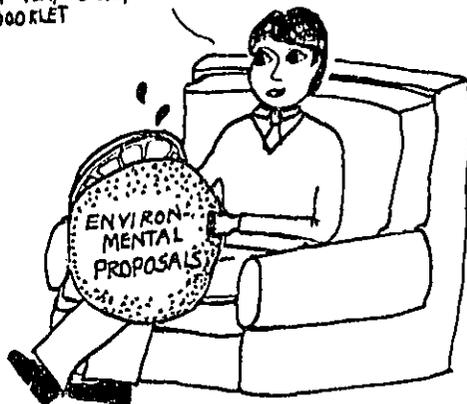
The London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) have expressed their opposition to altering the present planning conditions. To their credit, they appreciate the loss of public confidence involved, and are no doubt anxious to establish and maintain a high standard in the local environment for all the new residents. (There are those who would not take kindly to being disappointed in their new expensive investment!) It will be interesting to see if the government shows the same understanding of the consequences of change.

### Jaffa Orange Booklet?!

Our recent dark green bulletin "Action on the Environmental Impacts of Aviation" set out the background to our campaign for a new approach to environmental control at airfields. Our conference last year showed that there was wide approval from all shades of interest for a re-think: everybody acknowledged the limitations of the present system where NO-ONE has the powers or responsibility for tackling noise pollution from the use of airfields in a very wide range of circumstances.

AEF members and MPs have responded strongly to the introductory bulletin. The proposals will be on the doorstep shortly. Watch out for the orange cover when all will be revealed!

THIS HAS PROVED TO  
BE A VERY JUICY  
BOOKLET



ONE MAN'S VIEW  
ONE MAN'S VIEW  
ONE MAN'S VIEW

by T. Thomas

PARACHUTING AT HEADCORN

The village of Headcorn is situated 1 mile north of the local aerodrome known as Lashenden. Some 10 years ago the aerodrome was the subject of a planning inquiry in which continued use of the land for flying was under question. The inspector permitted the use as an aerodrome, subject to some restrictions on flying hours for training, aircraft types and weight etc.

The whole of the planning inquiry ranged around the airfields use for flying club activities including flying training, and future expansion to include heavier aircraft and helicopters. At that time no one envisaged the dramatic expansion in parachuting, even though very limited activities were taking place at the time of the inquiry. Thus parachuting was never considered as part of the inquiry's findings.

Because learning to fly and continuing to keep a pilot's licence are very expensive items, parachuting could be seen as the poor man's aeroplane. Training can cost as little as some £50 including the first jump. After this costs do increase, but nothing like that of flying, and with few of the restrictions. A large number of the participants only make one drop, but many do go on

to eventually train to freefall. One of the great spin-offs of the one-off parachute jump is charity; indeed one well known charity advertises a free parachute drop as part of its fund raising activities.

The planning inquiry placed restrictions on the use of the aerodrome for flying training, including hours between which circuit training could take place. This is not the case with parachuting, with the most favoured times being mornings and evenings when winds are most often light, and of course the most active times being on warm summer weekends with light winds. This is when the constant drone of climbing and circling aeroplanes can be the most annoying. At weekends circuit flying has to cease by 1700 hours, but parachuting will go on to dusk, which can be near to 2200 hours in high summer.

The noise created by this activity is very emotive, as apart from those living near the runway, it cannot be put into the decibel category of noise nuisance. The noise has to be seen in the context that this is a rural area where surrounding noise is of a very low level. Persistent droning of a climbing or circling aeroplane on warm summer days can be extremely disturbing to some people. This is accentuated when two planes are involved in making high level drops.

It has to be said that in the local community opinion is very much split over the existence of the aerodrome, with many people enjoying the entertainment provided by the flying and parachuting. Many in the village and the local area acknowledge that it is very much a tourist attraction and gives a great deal of pleasure to visitors. Attempts are only made by the Parish Council and others to control the development and

keep the flying activity within that stated by the planning inquiry.

For the future it looks as though Headcorn will have to tolerate the parachuting, and attempt to work with the club owner through the airfield consultative committee to control the noise. More regular and set climb paths may assist in this aspect. The size of the aerodrome, however, will probably be the most limiting factor.

There is a lesson to be learnt from this particular situation. That is to ensure that at a planning inquiry all possible uses of the airfield are taken into consideration, even though that particular activity may not yet be taking place.

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#### VIRGIN ATLANTIC CROSSING

Congratulations and admiration must surely go to those intrepid balloonists Per Lindstrand and Richard Branson on their Atlantic crossing. Whichever way the final decision on whether the "landing" on July 3rd in Ireland qualified as a successful crossing had gone, it could not have detracted from the courage of the two men during what must have been an extremely frightening situation in the last stages of the attempt, when explosive bolts which should have separated the passenger capsule from the enormous hot air balloon failed to operate and the crew were taken skywards once again.

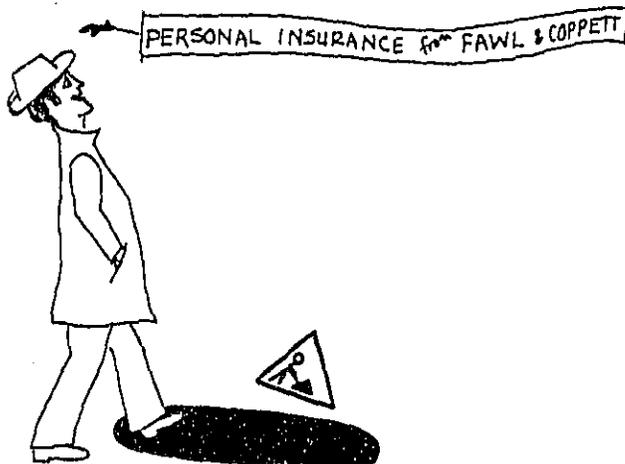
There are times when terra firma is the only place to be and one is only too glad that adventures are what other people have!

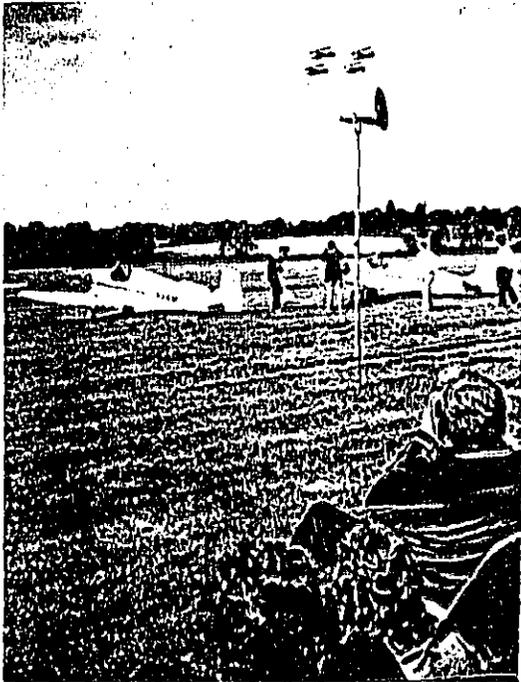
#### CONCORDE'S UNFORESEEN DANGER

A report in Flight International on June 6th highlighted a previously unidentified danger posed by Concorde

"Several people tripped and fell as they looked up at Concorde flying low over Wakefield yesterday. Doctors at Pinderfields Hospital treated five people with fractures and several with sprained wrists and ankles. One motorist looked up and hit the car in front..."

Concorde is not entirely alone in this accident-inducing feature, banners towed from aircraft and balloons used for advertising purposes frequently have a similar "bowl-you-over" effect. If ever the NHS runs short of patients, at least it will know where to advertise!





REDHILL AIRSHOW  
1987



#### DISPLAYING TIGHTER REGULATIONS

The CAA has taken the first steps to impose tighter regulations on flying displays and airshows. New advice for display organisers is to be found in CAP 403 "Safety Arrangements at Flying Displays, Air Races and Rallies". One of the main proposals is for organisers to obtain prior permission for such events from the CAA following advance notice of the proposed flying programme, available ground support and safety arrangements which the CAA would have the right to alter. Furthermore, pilots taking part in displays etc. would be required to hold a display authorisation issued by the CAA and it would be the duty of show organisers to ensure that all participating pilots were so approved.

The means by which the Display Pilot Authorisation scheme would be implemented has not, as yet, been finalised, but each authorisation would relate to a specific type of display, eg, aerobatics, straight-and-level flypasts, etc. and would be renewable annually.

The new proposals, have not been welcomed in some quarters, but have been drawn up following large increases in the numbers of displays taking place; in 1973 around 100 events were staged compared to over 750 in 1986. This growth has led to increased public concern about safety, especially by those living close to airfields where such displays take place.

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#### THE FEDERATION AIMS

ONE To change the climate of opinion and the law which at present takes little account of the environmental effects on the community of General Aviation (GA).

TWO To seek consultation and co-operation with the Civil Aviation Authority, central and local government, the light aircraft industry, airfield managements, pilots and others in reducing noise and disturbance by technical and operational means.

THREE To seek representation of the Federation amongst the organising and planning bodies responsible for General Aviation.

FOUR To confer with Government departments and other public bodies and with any other organisations as may be deemed advisable for the protection and promotion of members' interests and to communicate the views and opinions of the members to such bodies.

FIVE To urge by such methods as the members of the Federation see fit a change in the law relating to aviation and planning control to allow for the control of the growth of aviation and of its impacts.

SIX To print, publish, issue and circulate to members such material as may seem necessary including the furtherance of the aims of its members by the exchange of information both legal and technical and also to publicise the viewpoint of the Federation through such national and local channels and media as the members see fit.