

Newsletter

2006 by Don Kirkwood G3YQO

Milton Keynes Raynet

MK Emergency Planning Unit

As those of you who are not new to the Group well know that last year the EPU funded an aerial installation on the council roof and I did the preliminary work of installing the aerials (one tri-bander for us, and one for their own system), The very expensive low loss feeder has sat coiled up on the roof ever since.

Well; I am pleased to be able to report that this is not as disappointing as it may at first seem. I met with Malcolm Boscott the new CEPO in November last year and he did advise me that there were a lot of changes going on including reorganisation and so there was no point in routing the feeders to the present EPU office as that might not be the optimum place for them to terminate.

A few months ago, using the Civil Contingencies Act as an excuse I wrote to the nine main User Services in Milton Keynes, telling them what we do and how we might help. One copy went to Malcolm (I told Malcolm that I knew that he already knew this but I thought I ought to include him)! It actually turned out to be good timing as unbeknown to me a new assistant EPO (bringing the total up to three) came on board at that time with IT and communications within his brief as I was to discover when he (Guy Cullam by name) recently contacted me to arrange a meeting.

Things are gradually coming together in the EPU but the reason the aerials remain unterminated is not through lack of interest but because of coming events. The EPU is to be relocated to Lloyds Court whilst their offices are refurbished. This is expected to go on for a year or so. They are then scheduled to return to their current building but where they will be located within it is unknown.

Furthermore, Guy suggested that they could just as easily be sent to some other office! Consequently the aerials are likely to remain unterminated for some time, but at least we know it is not attributable to apathy towards RAYNET.

At least this will give me a reason to make contact next Summer to see how things are going!

Events

We are not exactly flush with events of our own (no change there). I would dearly love to see the Bernados Cycle Ride return in September which is a nice little event with everyone guaranteed to have traffic to pass on a regular basis. Whether there is any prospect of this I know not.

Castlethorpe Horse Ride

The weather was pretty awful this year, although I am assured there have been worse years, although that goes back some time because I think I have done the last five and until this year's the weather has been delightful.

We received a £70 contribution from Carol which is £10 up on the normal; I think because of the bad weather.

Ray & Heather ran Control using the gazebo. The trailer really came into its own here. We were able to put the wet bits on top of the trailer afterwards instead of

having to put it into a vehicle.

The trailer provided a useful instrument for draping the side sheets over in the garage whilst so they could dry off. The roof just stood on its frame. It did mean my car had to sit on my drive overnight but showed no signs of sulking.



A wet Controller and wet equipment after the Castlethorpe Horse Ride

Scout Night Hike

We have just completed the Scout Night Hike (picture proves it – that is the aerial coming down). The event was not well supported this year with only five teams participating; due to a number of factors. The organisers are hoping to grow the event but it will probably take another two or three years to establish if it is viable on a long term basis.



Unfortunately the structure of the event (which is right for the organisation) means we cannot judge the amount of traffic, nor indeed it there will be any at any given Checkpoint. Those who enjoy the event most are the ones who can do the full 24-hour shift – mainly because it is something different so can be enjoyable even if there is little traffic to pass.

I am not of the opinion that we should decline the event just because it can be boring. It is for a good cause – i.e. not losing any children; something parents can often take exception to.

It is certainly useful for Control and the trailer certainly makes things much easier.

Lessons were certainly learned at HQ from last year. There was a decision maker on site all the time and instant passing of tracking messages between us and the Movement Log worked well. Talking of logs, I would be interested to know if the ones you used at the Checkpoints need further modification?

The most probable date for next year's event is 23rd/24th June but nothing firm yet.

Anyway, thanks to all of you who participated and sorry it did not involve passing much traffic for the majority of you.

The Ariel – well the second one atually as the first one did not work. This could because it is a 6 mtr aerial and I thought it was a tri-bander. I still do actually – must check!



Membership

We were fortunate to gain three members this year. Suresh, M3SSI; Rob G3RCE and Warren, M0WAZ.

Unfortunately Warren's company shipped him off to France (then moved him to Holland) and he won't be back until September and Paul is effectively unavailable on weekends giving us a net gain of one!

AGM

The AGM will, of course, be in October. The committee will be meeting in August to select a date and an agenda. Paul will issue the calling notice etc after the meeting.