

It's been an interesting first year.

We started the club in October 2018 after realising that there would be demand for a radio club that could meet without leaving the comfort of your own home or even whilst travelling. We defined some operating principles around open-mindedness, non-prejudiced discussion and a collective interest in learning more about the amateur radio hobby.

We have regularly met on a Thursday evening and taken part in a wide range of discussions and talks on various topics including 3D printing in amateur radio, making your own printed circuit boards, beginners guide to d-star and the effect of coax feeder length for VHF and above. The topics have been broad and the interest amongst the group welcome.

In March we participated in the CQ WPX Contest using both the club callsign and our personal calls. Surprisingly, despite with only 3.5 hours logged, we came #11 in the UK for single operator assisted, low power category and #5 in England for the Rookie category. We will investigate how we can coordinate further contest activity with more club members during the course of the current club year.

We set up a D-Star reflector to have our own "home" in the digital world but also as club outreach. This reflector is connected to other reflectors in Japan and New Zealand and I'm happy to report that there have been numerous operators heard on the reflector. It also utilises the Quadnet SmartGroups which extends the capability beyond traditional repeater-like usage. We have recently had regular usage by Jon G7NFK and other members of the Buxton ARC, all of which are welcomed.

Grae brought to us the concept of the CW Commuter and the club embraced it wholeheartedly. As a team effort we have successfully brought together hardware and software to create this super off-air CW communication medium. Off the back of the project we have set up a bi-weekly CW get together and CW head copy training sessions for club members and beyond. Thank you Grae for bringing this to the club.

Being online a lot of the club "infrastructure" is electronic. We have:

- the club website which has generated a reasonable amount of traffic despite little out-reach;
- the club mail server providing each member a unique club email address to ensure personal information is kept personal and keeping club email segregated from personal email
- the [zoom.us](https://zoom.us) conference centre which is the heart of our weekly meetings and other meetings held on occasions
- the club DX cluster which monitors for club members spotted on the air and can be configured to send alerts if so desired
- the club Twitter account where regular tweets are sent about club activities including weekly meetups and extra events
- the club Facebook account where again posts are provided on club activity

- I already mentioned the D-Star and DMR reflectors and Grae's CW Commuter service which is another online system

I'm sure you can imagine that the management of all these resources can become cumbersome and where possible it would be ideal if we could share some of this responsibility. An especially important area is on content for our social media (website, Twitter and Facebook) - it would be great if members could contribute to the pool rather than it falling on only one or two of us.

In the Spring we started a series of SOTA activations. Members visited North Wales and braved the cold weather and gales to activate 1 out of 3 expected summits. The team thoroughly enjoyed themselves and suggested we organise more events. Two further trips to Brecon and the Lake District were organised and were successful for a smaller group. We would like to continue this aspect of the clubs activity through the next club year.

The summer season was quiet due to members travel. We scaled back the club meetings to fortnightly for the period. I hope with the growth of the club we can sustain a weekly meeting without interruptions.

In preparation for the new year we are moving to formalising the club proper by ratifying the club constitution, agreeing the fee structure, opening a club bank account, registering with the RSGB and increasing our outreach through both word of mouth and marketing such as Radcom magazine.

This will be a rebirth for the club as we evolve from being a start-up to being a formalised institution. The club is for the members and will take work and effort from us all. I hope you all embrace this change and support the growth of our club over the coming period contributing where you can to help make the club a thriving success.

Thank you.



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