

# BMAA strategy review 2025

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Version	Date	Comments
1.0	Mar 2025	First issue, based on 2014 version
1.1	May 2025	Text on p3 changed to reflect approval of revised objects by BMAA membership

## ***Summary***

The Board reviewed the most recent BMAA Strategy document (from 2014) in March 2025.

The Board found that continued progress had been made towards its aims, and that the aims were still relevant. However, significant new regulatory changes had impacted the context of the work of the BMAA and as a result have proposed changes to the objects of the Association, making additions and clarifications to reflect these changes.

Three main additions have been proposed to the objects articulate the importance of

- ensuring that we have a robust association to deliver the objects
- the specific task of promoting a safe culture within the sport, and
- the promotion to young people of the sport of Microlighting as well as aviation in general.

The other more minor changes were to

- specify the association's commitment to the support of existing Schools and clubs
- highlight the importance of Microlighting as a route to accessible and affordable aviation
- itemise the task of challenging unnecessary bureaucracy and regulation
- emphasise the importance of community to our sport, and
- include the Wings scheme, which has been created since the last full review, as a means of pilot development alongside competition and club activities.

## ***Articles of Association Objects (revised)***

**Function** – the BMAA shall be the governing body for Microlight Aviation in the UK

### **Objects:**

- A To build and maintain a robust organization capable of supporting the following defined objects with both financial and human resources to meet the needs of our membership (new)
- B To promote the sport of microlight flying and to pursue appropriate means to ensure a route to accessible & affordable aviation for our members (expanded)
- C To promote a culture of safety in the sport of microlight flying (new)
- D To encourage the formation of Clubs and Schools, to support the ongoing operation of existing Clubs and School, and to assist in

negotiation for new flying sites and the protection existing ones (expanded)

- E To create a community, through membership of the organization, to encourage the fellowship of microlight flying and the development of flying skills through Club meetings and national and international competitions (expanded)
- F To support & promote the development of flying skills through activities such as Club meetings, national and international competitions and the Association's Wings scheme for pilot development (new)
- G To represent microlight aviation in dealing with relevant national and international bodies and authorities, seeking, wherever possible, to limit unnecessary bureaucracy & regulation (expanded)
- H To facilitate appropriate intermember communications and the dissemination of information about microlight activities through various media channels (revised)
- I To set and ensure the continued maintenance of standards of training and flying of microlights via the BMAA Panel of Examiners (expanded)
- J To set and ensure the continued appropriate standards in the design, construction and maintenance of all forms of microlight aircraft (expanded)
- K To promote the opportunities of Microlight flying and an awareness of aviation to young people (new)

These revised objects were put to the BMAA membership at the 2025 AGM and approved. The BMAA Articles of Association have been revised accordingly.

The Board's view is that the core aims of the association should continue to be to:

- Support Microlighting in the UK,
  - Retain our status as the UK's specialist interest group for microlighting and microlighters,
  - Seek to provide the best services possible in the interests of our membership, and
  - Pursue maximum delegated authority from CAA.
- (wording of all four tidied but aims remain broadly unchanged)

## Review of current BMAA activity

### ***BMAA Membership & Microlight Aircraft Fleet***

The Board notes that the BMAA continues to:

- Encourage everyone interested in, or participating in Microlighting to be a member of the BMAA.
- Encourage young persons to take up the sport of Microlight Flying.
- Keep under review membership categories and how they may be best organized to encourage and maintain members.

#### **Ambition** (new)

The BMAA membership numbers have fallen over the past few years in line with economic and world events, although the Association has fared better than others within the sector.

The Board recognises that the ability of the Association to deliver on its Objects is heavily influenced by both the number of members and their engagement in the sport.

While we continue to lose some aircraft from the fleet for a variety of reasons, we have also seen the introduction a wide range of new aircraft, not just the 'hot ships', which demonstrates that the sport is alive and well. Requests for the addition of new aircraft approvals continue to be received.

**The Board have stated that their ambition is to return the membership number back to over 4,000 within the next 5 years.**

The plan to achieve this is by actively pursuing the aims above and seeking help from the membership and wider community to do so.

There are a number of specific programmes which we intend to set up to fulfil this, some of which arise from the changes in context mentioned previously. The two key elements of these changes are the licence simplification due to be enacted in October 2025 and the introduction of the 600kg aircraft (see appendix 1 for more details)

#### **1. Create a targeted campaign to existing PPL training schools**

The licence review, once passed into law, will create an open route for an individual learning to fly to begin their training on a microlight and then continue to add heavier aircraft and more complex ratings.

The addition of more aircraft which can offer a viable, and indeed desirable, alternative to the increasingly aged fleet of Cessnas and Pipers currently in use for PPL training further adds to the opportunity.

The board propose a campaign to existing PPL schools (CAA designated ATO/DTOs – Approved Training Organisations & Declared Training Organisations), supporting the opportunity for them to add Microlights to their fleet as a more affordable introduction to aviation.

The intention is to create a package of:

- explanatory material, both written and video,
- a specific offer for the schools to consider this route which encourages membership of the Association by both the school and the instructors teaching there, and
- the creation of an appropriate support package which would include advice and mentorship for both school and instructors.

The aim would be to encourage these schools to promote BMAA membership among their students and ensure that the referral money for student taking up membership of the BMAA is returned to the schools.

The Board will be looking to a range of media channels appropriate to the dissemination of this activity, reaching out beyond the current usual routes to target the PPL market

There is an opportunity, subject to their buy-in, to work closely with Pooleys to reach into the ATO/DTO community via the Pooleys Academy

One immediate outcome of this licence change is that this opens the route to work with the undergraduate Pilot Studies courses, which mandate 10 hours minimum flight training experience for each student. Students can now access this through microlight training at around 50% of the cost of standard PPL training.

## **2. Pilot specific new programmes to attract people to aviation and membership**

The board intend to keep in place the majority of the outward facing activities already in place.

In 2025 we have initiated two new programmes which we are trialling to determine appetite for involvement and effectiveness

### **a. National Youth Week Programme**

This is a coordinated programme working initially with a limited number of schools and clubs. The intention is that these schools/clubs will host one day of their choice during 'National Youth Week' and will offer an introduction to microlight flying to a group of young people.

The programme will be evaluated via responses from the clubs & schools themselves and via those of the participants. Lessons learned will be incorporated into any future activity in this area.

#### **b. County shows**

The team have identified four country shows (Royal Cheshire, Norfolk, Hertford & Cotswold) which they will attend in 2025 alongside a local school.

Again, the effectiveness will be evaluated following each event and lessons learned incorporated into any future plans.

### **3. Developing a strong social media presence**

The Board recognises the importance of communication with members and visibility to potential new members. This includes maintaining the existing channels but also developing new ones to reach beyond our current membership.

One area identified for attention is the development of a strong social media presence through aiming to produce regular engaging content promoting the sport and capturing the achievements and activities of our membership both at an individual and a Club/School level

#### ***Communication*** (revised)

In accordance with Object H, the Board intends continuation of the policies to:

- Communicate with members, on all appropriate and developing media, and to seek to continually improve communication with members, recognising the need
  - for a variety of forms of communication to attract new members and
  - to work on ways of communication with new & younger members without losing the existing/older cohort
- Ensure MF (and its other formats e.g. eMF) informs, educates and entertains as effectively as possible.
- Maintains communication with other UK sports and recreation aviation associations so we may share knowledge and effectively promote areas of mutual benefit when negotiating with CAA/ DfT/EMF (European Microlight Federation)
- Develop a more effective PR strategy, building on the video material such as 'This is a Microlight' and the 'eco' campaign

#### ***Clubs and schools***

The Board intends to continue the existing policies which require us to:

- Encourage affiliation of new Clubs and Schools
- Develop products of interest to Clubs and Schools
- Offer support to Clubs and Schools in their daily activities
- Support Clubs and Schools in obtaining and retaining planning permission for sites via the BMAA fighting fund & GAA

The Board intends to add one further activity, namely

- To go out to existing light aircraft schools and promote the value of membership & Microlighting following licence review

### ***Competitions, events & pilot development***

The Board intends to continue the following policies in accordance with Objects B & E, and to continue to:

- Encourage and stimulate microlight competitions at all levels; club, national and international, with the aim of improving flying skills, airmanship, promote fellowship, community, and promote microlight flying.
- Encourage and stimulate microlight events in the form of social fly ins, and industry showcases to promote fellowship and community, and promote microlight flying.
- Support and develop qualified pilots' skills and knowledge via the provision of CAA approved Wings scheme training courses (new)

### ***Training/ licensing/medical***

The Board, working with the BMAA Panel of Examiners, intends to

- Keep under review the training and licence requirements and systems, and to ensure maintenance of standards, and relevance and cost effectiveness of requirements.
- Retain the successfully achieved delegated authority to administer licencing
- Continue with a mechanism to deal with training issues e.g. via BMAA Panel of Examiners and any future appointment to the Flight Training & Liaison role (new)
- Continue to disseminate training information via instructor seminars, instructor bulletins and other means as appropriate (new)
- Continue representation with appropriate bodies within the industry to maintain appropriate licensing privileges (new)
- Campaign for maintenance of simple medical system for microlight pilots (new)

### ***Safety***

As well as training, standards of flying is also contained in Object C. The Board intend to

- Actively promote safety, and safety culture in the form of accident and incident analysis, and proactive education initiatives covering owning, operating and maintaining microlight aircraft.
- Encourage continuing pilot skills development through promotion of and continued support for the Wings scheme (new)

### ***Permit renewals*** (revised)

The Board notes that many changes and improvements to the permit processing system and requirements have been made over the last few years. The intent is to

- Continue investigation and implementation of simplification of all processes around permit renewal, permit paperwork and checkflights.

### ***Inspector system*** (revised)

The Board notes that the Inspector system has continued to improve with new inspectors supported via a mentoring scheme. The intent is to promote

- Ongoing development and refinement of the system for appointment of inspectors, communication of inspector issues, defect alerts, and ongoing training and education.
- Development of education for aircraft owners for ongoing maintenance and airworthiness advice.
- To proactively challenge introduction of additional layers of bureaucracy (new)

### ***Technical Office*** (revised)

At the time of writing, the Tech Office has been through a period of staff churn and difficulty. The Board is heavily focused on the active remodelling of this part of the Association to meet the current and future requirements for Light Sport Microlights (LSM). Additional resource has been added to the team and new processes and approaches are being implemented to ensure best use of the available resource.

The Board is committed to developing all the existing staff to their potential and ensure the correct balance of skills and competencies to address the current and future needs of the Association.

The priorities are

- Building the tech office to a sustainable and resilient state for long term support of the Association's objectives (new)
- Achieving & maintaining good project response time for all levels of project (revised)
- Ongoing simplification of Modification tasks based around the Standard Minor Mods system (new)
- Review charges for tech office work to make them reflective of the amount of work required for each individual task (new)



The Board will support the continued improvement of service and value to industry, so it may support and encourage UK design and manufacture, and provide to members a wider choice of aircraft offering best value.

### ***Regulatory policy*** (revised)

The regulatory landscape continues to change with a number of recent changes representing great opportunity for microlight flying. The Board will continue to:

- Seek delegated authority whenever possible to enable maximum self-determination.
- Develop ongoing initiatives to simplify / remove regulation not based on well justified safety case, such as the current attempted Rotax TBOs (Time Before Overhaul) and PMRs (Permit Maintenance Release forms)

The Board intends to support the principle of operational privileges for microlights being expanded to include other forms of aerial work – not just instruction and hire.

### ***Representation*** (revised)

The Board supports the current object G and will seek to expand the volunteer base willing to engage in these areas to ensure these are adequately resourced.

BMAA should be represented in all appropriate committees, both national and international, that are to prevent unwanted and unforeseen inappropriate regulation, and to take advantage of opportunities from such association, to improve our position.

### ***SSDR & sub 70 flexwing*** (revised)

With the increased scope of this sector and rising number of participants, the Board remains aware that this sector is not obliged by permit to join BMAA. To encourage membership in this sector and support SSDR and by extension the sport and its image, the Board will:

- Develop an action plan of promotion for BMAA membership for this cohort
- Provide tangible benefits for this sector to encourage participants in SSDR & sub 70 flexwing to consider membership of the BMAA so they can be adequately represented in all appropriate discussions.
- Promote of advantages of membership and work BMAA does that is relevant for this sector and its pilots (also relevant to promote membership of syndicate part owners)

- Encourage a focus within MF for articles on SSTR activity, the aircraft and related topics
- Promote safe training & operation of these aircraft not requiring a pilot's licence

### ***Membership Engagement*** (new)

The Board will encourage the development of an expanded volunteer panel to assist in the work of the BMAA. Without additional resource, the objectives are unlikely to be achievable. The intent is

- Reactivate the Wings Ambassador team
- Seek volunteer support for programmes like the County Shows thus reducing pressure on HQ staff
- Seek to increase the interest in working as part of or with the Board