



Dedicated

COUNCIL AIRWAVES

Why aren't you a member of the BMAA?

By Chairman **Rob Hughes**

IT'S likely that you are a BMAA member if you are reading this, but we know that there are some microlighters who are not.

We'd like to know why, and we have commissioned a survey to find out. Your quiet cup of tea at the airfield may be interrupted by a hundred questions; please help us by taking part.



Why is this important? Well, our membership is slowly shrinking, possibly thanks to some BMAA initiatives such as SSDR and hiring. We constantly strive to offer great service and reasons to fly, while also dealing with regulators and others who threaten our privileges. We're busy, but that needs income to pay for it.

“ Are we spending time doing things you don't care about, and would you rather we were more prominent elsewhere? ”

A shrinking membership makes financing what we do more difficult, but it focuses the mind: are we spending time in one area which really you don't care about, and would you rather we were more prominent elsewhere?

This is the next step in our strategy review. Our association works hard on your behalf and we will use the survey results to better target our efforts in order to make membership more attractive in the future.

Meanwhile, there have been changes at council level after the successful AGM at Popham.

Andy Aiken did not stand for re-election as chairman, but accepted the nomination for vice-chairman, so I thank him on your behalf for wearing the tin hat, albeit for a relatively short period.

We also look forward to working with two new co-opted members, Derek Lamb and Gavin Teasdale. □

Check, check, and check again

By Safety Officer **John Teesdale**



A FEW days after Paul Dewhurst's excellent article in May's *MF* on the importance of checks, I received a report of a serious incident where a pilot was distracted by someone while performing his pre take-off checks. Unfortunately, he didn't restart from the beginning, and almost inevitably missed a vital check: his helmet strap.

During the take-off, his helmet departed and went in the prop. It took out one of the rear pitch wires, put four holes in the wing and made the aircraft very difficult to manoeuvre.

Nevertheless, he managed to carry out a successful forced landing and was not injured.

This incident is proof indeed, if any were needed, of the value of checks and the importance of not being distracted. The photographs show the extent of the damage. □



(1) Broken cable end; (2) damaged wing fabric; and (3) the offending helmet – thankfully without a head in it