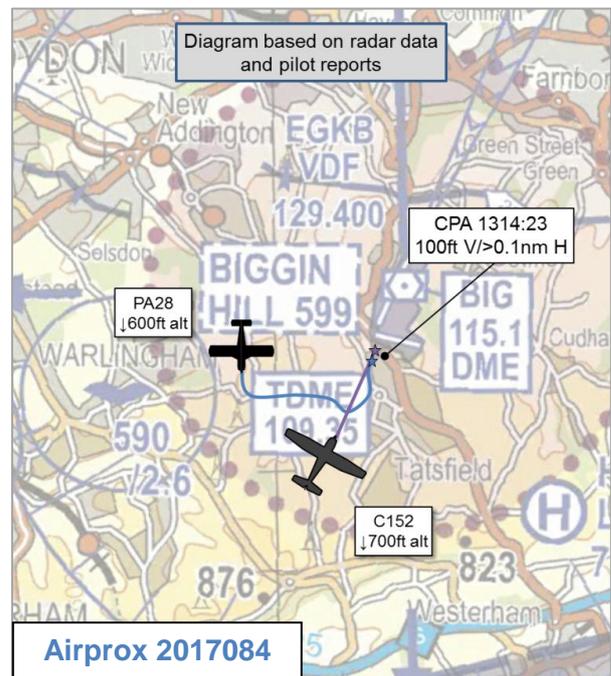


Avoiding collisions – a monthly update from Director UK Airprox Board giving some learning themes for recreational pilots.

The Board reviewed 17 aircraft-to-aircraft Airprox and 14 aircraft-to-drone incidents during the July 2017 meeting. Five of the aircraft-to-aircraft incidents were assessed as having a definite risk of collision (all Category B), along with seven of the drone incidents.

The main Airprox theme this month was airmanship, with 5 cases of sub-optimal integration with other aircraft either in the visual circuit or radar pattern; 3 incidents resulting from pilots not acting on TI or assuming that the other pilot had seen them; and 3 events involving pilots flying in airspace that they were not entitled to operate within or not fully understanding the implications of the airspace they were using. As ever, the integration incidents were largely avoidable if pilots had thought ahead and allowed for the fact that the other airspace users might have been there, and 2 of these incidents happened when the pilots knew about the other aircraft, had it visual, but still got themselves into a situation where they ran out of ideas and options because they did not make early enough decisions.

My **Airprox of the month** this month reflects the integration theme, and specifically decision-making. **Airprox 2017084** involved a **PA28** and a **C152** in the Biggin Hill circuit. The PA28 pilot joined the circuit downwind and was aware that he was catching up the C152 ahead. He attempted to slow down, assessed that he probably wouldn't get his approach in, but thought he would continue, watch the C152 land, and just go-around over the top of it. He turned base and final but then found himself directly in conflict with the C152 and became uncertain of what he should do to resolve the situation. Running out of ideas, the PA28 pilot ended up flying very close to the C152 before eventually going around. Shaken himself by the incident, the PA28 pilot realised he should have done something about the situation much earlier, such as orbiting downwind, going around early, or even leaving the circuit entirely; however, having got himself into a situation where he was now so close to the other aircraft, he didn't know what to do for the best. Although it's easy to be



wise after the event, the lesson is that an early decision is the key to resolving any situation where your plan doesn't seem to be working out. Although it's sometimes difficult to swallow your pride, as the old adage goes "if there's any doubt, then there's no doubt" - make a new plan that removes the uncertainty. Full details of the incident are at www.airproxboard.org.uk in the 'Airprox Reports and Analysis' section within the appropriate year and then in the 'Individual Airprox reports' tab.