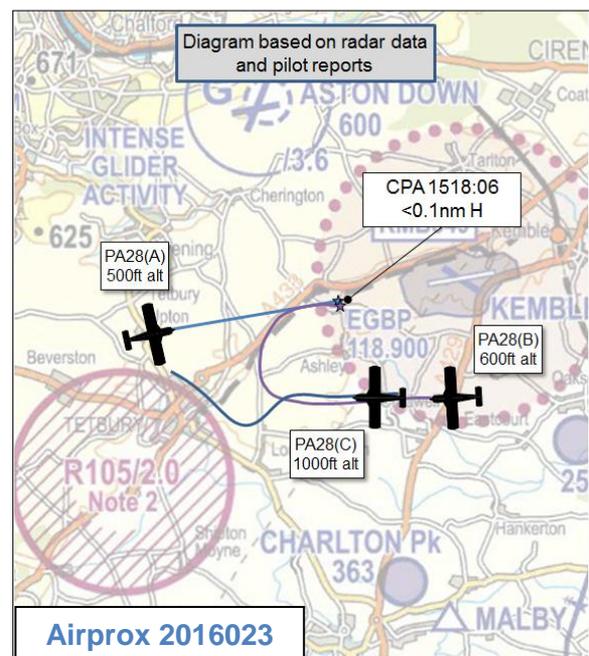


**Avoiding collisions** – a monthly update from Director UK Airprox Board giving some learning themes for recreational pilots.

The UK Airprox Board reviewed 24 Airprox in May 16, seven of these were incidents involving drones or other objects; all of the drone Airprox were risk-bearing (4 were Category A, and 3 were Category B). For the remaining non-drone Airprox, there were 8 risk-bearing incidents including one Category A event where an unknown light aircraft flew through Lasham's overhead at 1300ft and missed a winch-launching glider by only 50ft laterally. The message is clear; don't fly overhead glider sites below the promulgated maximum winch-launch height (3700ft for Lasham as shown on the VFR chart as /3.7). Not only is there a risk of hitting gliders, but also of becoming entangled in the cable with obvious consequences. There's also a lesson for glider launch teams to ensure that their pre-launch lookout checks are robust.

Other themes evident this month included: questionable airmanship in 12 incidents; lack of proper planning, coordination or not following procedures in 9; ineffective integration or sequencing in or around the visual circuit in 8 events; late- or non-sightings in 6 incidents; and 5 incidents of flawed perception of geometry. We also dealt with our first drone-operator reported Airprox this month. He was conducting commercial operations when he heard a helicopter approaching. He tried to land his drone but the helicopter appeared over a ridgeline before he could do so. This was a refreshingly honest report that reinforced the professionalism of commercial drone operators.

My **Airprox of the month** this month was a Category B event that reflects a number of recent incidents at non-ATC airfields where good intentions resulted in poor outcomes from non-standard procedures. As we all know, at A/G and AFISO operated airfields, pilots are required to sequence and integrate in the visual circuit primarily through a combination of lookout, situational awareness of other aircraft gained from their R/T calls, and the use of standard operating procedures. Clearly, this only works if pilots follow the standard procedures, make the right calls at the right place, and proactively lookout for other aircraft. Airprox 2016023 resulted when two PA28s came into proximity at Kemble. Both were downwind in the visual circuit (along with another PA28 that was between the 2). The leading PA28(A) extended his downwind leg having been told by the AFISO that a business-jet was back-tracking to get airborne. However, its solo student pilot ended up routing 3-4nm downwind



and making a very prolonged final approach as a result. The trailing PA28(B) pilot was told there were 2 ahead but didn't fully assimilate the information. On seeing, he thought, the middle

PA28(C) seemingly exit the circuit (its pilot was actually also jinking to extend downwind), the trailing PA28(B) turned onto finals unaware that the leading PA28(A) was now also approaching the runway. It was only when an astute AFISO asked both aircraft to state their heights that the PA28 pilots realised that they were coming into conflict and the trail PA28(B) pilot manoeuvred away. Although a degree of flexibility is required to position safely, there comes a point when extending downwind (well outside the ATZ in this case) becomes counterproductive and pilots should consider either going around or positioning again for a rejoin rather than pressing on with an approach that bears little resemblance to normal procedures. The full report can be found on the UKAB website at ([www.airproxboard.org.uk](http://www.airproxboard.org.uk)) in the 'Airprox Reports and Analysis' section.