

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

The Airprox Board reviewed 20 incidents during our November 2016 meeting. Drones featured in 5 of these incidents, and of the remaining 15 aircraft-to-aircraft Airprox, 5 were assessed as being risk-bearing (1 x Category A and 4 x Category B). The main themes discussed this month were: late sightings/non-sightings in 8 events; poor airmanship decisions in 5 incidents; 2 Airprox involving pilot error when programming or interfacing with their aircraft automatic flight or navigation systems; and 2 examples of concern at the proximity of another aircraft in the low-level environment that were attributed to normal operations after Board analysis. Of the airmanship issues, incidents that stood out were: one pilot choosing to route close to a glider site below the winch-launching altitude; a paramotor pilot operating close to the Boscombe Down radar pattern and above a NOTAM that had been established for their paramotor competition; a glider pilot who was soaring in the region of Fairford at about 2500ft and who could have used his transponder and radio to inform Brize Norton of this; another glider pilot who was soaring in the Cranfield hold at about 3800ft (but who might not have known where the hold was); and a Hurricane pilot who flew through the Farnborough approach lane without talking in a timely manner to Farnborough (see Airprox of the Month below).

My **Airprox of the month** this month is **Airprox 2016155** which was a Category C incident involving an HS125 on approach to Farnborough and a Hurricane that was transiting through the Farnborough feathers. In a classic ‘Swiss-cheese’ scenario where numerous holes in safety barriers align to cause an incident, the scenario commenced with the Hurricane pilot having a mental aberration and mistakenly telling Farnborough ATC the wrong airfield of his departure. With ATC now looking in completely the wrong area, coupled with a late selection of transponder, not pre-notifying ATC that he was going to cross the Farnborough approach path, and departing the Blackbushe ATZ at fairly high speed (which gave Farnborough ATC precious little time to spot the conflict from his primary-only track), addressing any one of these items would probably have prevented the incident. Fortunately, the Hurricane pilot was visual with the HS125 at an early stage and so see-and-avoid was fully effective as a barrier to collision (they passed 400m apart). All-in-all, a timely reminder about thinking ahead, pre-noting intentions where possible (especially if crossing an airfield’s approach lane), and flying defensively in consideration of others. 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 within the appropriate year in the ‘Individual Airprox reports’ tab.

