Impington Village College Model Aeroplane Club

Based near Cambridge we fly Free Flight, Radio Control and Control Line aircraft

Annual report to members 2026

Chairman's report – John Copsey

As we approach the end of a special year in the club's history, what can we say about it? Well, it has certainly been an interesting year but not all of it in a good way. We have lost long standing friends but have gained some new ones, and the overall membership remains at an all time high.

The state of the club in its current successful form is down to the hard work of a dedicated secretary and committee. We must eagerly thank them for their hard work over the past year. I especially want to thank John Clarke for his excellent service as he passes the mantle of Membership Secretary to Jon Sole, and thanks also to Jon for filling those very large shoes.

The threat of the dreaded all weather pitch hangs over us like a sword, and it is clearly going to adversely affect outdoor flying once work starts next year. Your committee is monitoring the situation and actively discussing alternative proposals should they become necessary.

2027 may feel very different from previous years, but I am certain the spirit of Ray Malmström's vision will carry on within the club for many years to come.

Special report on the all weather pitch at IVC

There have been some delays, but the archaeology digs were completed in the summer and no Roman ruins were found! There is no current start date, but some rumours suggest it won't start till after Christmas. We have Tony Welchs daughter as a new art teacher at IVC plus some junior members who are pupils, so hope to get some insider knowledge.

However, it will happen eventually, and the big issue will be the safety of those using the pitch as it is quite likely to be in use on Friday evenings. The current plan is to carry on at IVC if we can, with a fallback of moving over to Girton which John Copsey is investigating as we would need sole access every Friday evening – i.e. no footballers etc.

Assuming we stay at IVC next summer, we will need to reallocate the space to ensure that RC and drone flying is kept away from the pitch. The pitch will have 4.5m high fencing which will provide a barrier, and the plan is for RC fixed wing flyers to have their backs to the fence which will prevent overflight. This will involve moving the FF area.

The committee will be "walking the ground" once work starts to finalise options. but the current plan and layout for summer 2027 is shown overleaf. There may be a need to restrict the type of RC model to prevent unscheduled impaling, and there will need to be good flight line discipline.

Red – NO FLY zone over the 3G Pitch with 4.5m fencing
Light Blue – Free Flight
Dark Blue – Control Line
Green – RC fixed wing Pits, Pilots ✦ and landing / take off area
Yellow – Low level Quad flying, Pits and pilots ✦



Special report on new Sports Centre opening hours from January 2027

The Sports Centre have advised us that from January 2027 they will be closing at 4pm at weekends. They already have a block booking all year on Saturdays from 8am to 1pm, so our hours will have to be reduced to 3 hours every Saturday from 1pm to 4pm.

They have no availability on Sundays or any other times – Saturday afternoons are the least booked times which is why we managed to negotiate half price rates for our block bookings.

Most people don't stay the full 4 hours, so although it may end up being more crowded, we think the 3 hours every Saturday will be OK. The committee propose the following –

- Carry on with Saturdays from 1pm to 4pm.
- Reduce the £30 season ticket to £22 to take the reduced hours into account.
- With the 3 hour sessions leaving just 1½ hours for FF and RC at the mixed sessions, the membership may want to consider scrapping the mixed sessions and just having alternating weeks with 3 hours FF one week and 3 hours RC the next week.

Secretary's report – Alan Paul

This section is a brief reminder of the main things that happened over the last 12 months so there is a bit of overlap with the other officers reports.

We celebrated the end of 2025 as the inaugural winners of the BMFA Club of the Year. We have now handed the trophy over to the new recipients Keighley and district MFC.

The biggest issue for the club is the future of our Friday evening sessions which has been covered extensively above.

Our indoor flying on Saturdays over the winter has continued to be popular and after a survey we are continuing with the 3 week cycle including a mixed session. Outdoor flying on Fridays saw a slight increase in FF activity and the RC and CL flight lines seemed to be pretty busy – we did have generally good weather.

In November 2025 we did a night flying display prior to the Harston Fireworks and have just done this again in 2026 with perfect weather conditions and 1,000 spectators.

We now have 3 regular "Round the Pole" sessions in the sports hall every year which is self funded and keeps the tradition alive. We also introduced indoor Control Line during the latter indoor sessions last winter. If any members want to have a go, get in touch with Chairman John. We don't want this to interfere too much with existing FF or RC activities.

The club are helping Cambridge University with an insect sampling project which will involve towing a butterfly net up to 1,000ft and collecting insects. The saga will be reported in future newsletters.

In May we set a world record for the number of models flown in a church at membership sec Georges church St Andrews, Histon with 10 models airborne in a limited space. We hope to beat this in 2027.

The Ray Malmstrom cup for F2b CL aerobatics was held at Girton in May with competitors from far and wide under the control of contest director John Copsey. Later in the year Gary Church won the Nationals CL F2b "Gold trophy" for the 2nd year in a row.

During the summer we held 2 80th anniversary indoor sessions for RC and FF with some sponsorship from the BMFA East Anglia Area. We also held our annual Birthday Bash on the field in July with local CL flyers invited and Steves BBQ.

We displayed once again at the July Girton fete in hot blustery weather with RC, CL and CL combat displays which were well received by the crowd.

Club member Daniel Santos has very kindly designed and made some slate coasters to celebrate the clubs 80th birthday and we plan to give one to each adult member.

In an amazing full circle, we now have Tony Welchs daughter Holly working as an art teacher at IVC and intending to run an aeromodelling class. The club has given her some BMFA model kits.

The 10 acre flying field at Girton now has a cricket square which will be roped off to prevent damage. This should not affect us much during the week, however there may be organised cricket during the summer weekends, so we will have to see what impact this has.

The Christmas Party will be held once again at the Cambridge Motor Boat club on 10th December – everyone is welcome and tickets are £15 for the buffet.

Membership secretary's report – Jon Sole

The club continues to have a strong and healthy membership. At 31 October we had 118 members, two more than last year's 116, and membership remains at nearly twice the 62 members we had in 2016.

It is particularly encouraging that the number of junior members has continued to grow. We now have 27 juniors, compared with 22 last year and 19 in 2024. Nearly a quarter of the club's membership is now made up of juniors, which is a very positive sign for the future of the club.

Summary of membership:

	2024	**2025**	**2026**
Honorary	4	3	3
Seniors	86	91	88
Juniors	19	22	27
TOTAL	**109**	**116**	**118**

We welcomed 14 new members in the year to 31 October, comprising 10 seniors and 4 juniors.

As previous reports have highlighted, the club's success in attracting and retaining members owes a great deal to the wide variety of aeromodelling activities we offer, our low membership fees, and the website and Newsletters which show prospective members what the club gets up to. Just as importantly, new members regularly find the club friendly, welcoming and helpful. Thank you to everyone who contributes to that atmosphere.

I would particularly like to thank John Clarke for his seven years as Membership Secretary and for all the work he has put into the role during a period in which the club has grown considerably. The handover has been extremely smooth, helped enormously by the detailed membership records and documentation that John maintained and passed on to me.

Thanks are also due to our Club Secretary, Alan Paul, who keeps the website up to date and produces much of the content for our Newsletters. Both do a great deal to bring new members in.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has helped with membership during the year.

Safety and welfare officers report – Stuart Marsden

Let me begin with a big thank you and congratulations to all members for following my guidance on safety matters, particularly with regard to Radio Controlled flying. Safety is just as important in all disciplines, potential loss of fingers when starting a diesel engine spring to mind, I have seen a few bloody messes in my time.

Whether we are indoors or out, when we are flying radio control models we need to fly in front of ourselves with no over-head flying.

- Flight line discipline is essential, this coming year. With the new sports field under construction or complete, we need to have a flight line which is easily recognised, there may be need for a plastic tape showing the actual flight line. Currently we have a wind sock indicating the wind direction and this will be very important, as we may well have to land cross wind, as I expect, our flightline will be fixed, and we will have to deal with this.
- Check your models before flying them, linkages etc.
- Approach the flightline with caution, look around, see if anyone is about to take off or land and keep your ears open, as everyone should call the standard calls, "TAKE-OFF" "LANDING" and "RETRIEVING".
- If you do not have the same experience as some of the better flyers, try to improve and here is a simple but brilliant tip to better flying: Set yourself in an A frame position, with your feet planted square with your shoulders and face out front at 90 degrees to the flightline. If the breeze is coming from your left, place your model at least 5 metres out from the flightline. Following the appropriate calls, take off into wind, gain some height and distance and make a gentle turn to the right, keep the turn in until you are coming back the other way, parallel to you and the flightline, complete you circuit by turning right again and complete the circuit but now you need to be at least 5 metres out from the flight line. This is great discipline and not easy and when conditions are correct start to do circuits the other way around.
- The whole purpose of the A frame position is that you should never get neck ache as you will always fly in front of yourself, absolutely no overhead flying!
- Once you feel comfortable start to practise the figure of 8 routine keeping the same height and distance out from yourself. Follow this guidance and you will be well underway in getting you're A certificate. (Many clubs insist on this being the standard before you are allowed to fly on your own).

One final note: WE ARE ALL SAFETY OFFICERS IN THIS CLUB.

Drone and Quad report – Daniel Kenyon-Jones

As the leaves fall from the trees, in much the same way that quadcopters don't, thoughts turn to another winter of indoor flying and tiny whoops. Rotor craft continue to be part of the diverse tapestry of modelling at IVC MAC.

The year has been uneventful, with some packed Friday evenings full of the high KV symphony of racing quads zooming round the flag course, as well as other quieter interludes. We still have a good number of members who fly multiple disciplines and a few of the multirotor hardcore.

I'm happy to say we have had no significant safety issues or conflicts this year again. Providing an accepting, encouraging, and engaging environment for drone flying strengthens the club as a whole and continues the values of "Friendship, Flying, and Fun".

Club officers

John Clarke has stepped down as membership secretary after many years of hard work. Jon Sole has kindly agreed to take on this role and we would all like to thank them both for doing their bit for the club. Things wouldn't work without their efforts.

The club would welcome volunteers to join the committee and help with the running of the club.

The following are the officers of the club -

John Copsey –	Chairman
Alan Paul –	Secretary
George Adam –	Treasurer
Stuart Marsden –	Safety and Welfare Officer
Jon Sole –	Membership Secretary
John Copsey –	Control Line Rep
Tony Neal –	Radio Rep
Daniel Kenyon-Jones –	Drone and quad rep
Andrew Langford -	Member
Steve Mynott –	Radio Examiner
Alan Paul –	Newsletter and Website editor. Data Protection Officer

Subscriptions for 2026 (from 1st Jan to 31st Dec)

Fees will remain the same for 2027 (as they have since at least 10 years ago). All the subs including indoor run from January to December each year.

Adult club subs £28 – This covers summer Friday evening flying at IVC, flying at Girton, the annual BBQ and socialising and spectating at all the indoor flying sessions. It also allows flying at the unofficial club sites at Longstanton, Cottenham and Waterbeach.

Indoor flying season ticket £22 (reduced because of the new 3 hour sessions). This covers flying at all 28 indoor 3 hour flying sessions over the winter and is in addition to the club subs.

Juniors are free for both the above subs, but need to have junior BMFA membership.

BMFA fees for 2027 are £52 for adults (up from £51) and £20 for juniors which hasn't increased.

Treasurer's report and Accounts – George Adam

The year saw a positive improvement in our bank balance. We had an increase in club funds of £292.00.

	Year to end 31 October 2026		Year to end 31 October 2025	
Bank Balance at end of year	9471.03		9133.04	
Less pre payments for Xmas dinner	390.00		345.00	
Club Funds at end of year		**9081.03**		**8788.04**
Movement in funds		**292.99**		

Where did the money come from and where did it go?

Income		
Basic Club subs	2273.00	
Indoor payments		
Annual subs	1521.00	
Pay on the day	65.00	
Misc**	-226.51	
Grant	300.00	
Members Payments for BMFA	699.74	
Pre payments for Xmas dinner	390.00	
RTP flyers	312.00	
		5334.23
Expenses		
BMFA	-699.74	
Payments to ELA*	-3584.00	
Payment for Girton Rec	-367.50	
cost of XMAs dinner (25)	-345.00	
		-4996.24
*Indoor and Sports field		
** Includes sale of 'tradflys', purchase of poles, barbecue costs	'Income'	**337.99**

Notes:

We have stopped 'ring fencing' funds for Juniors in the accounts. They are now included in the club's funds.