



RCA Flying Update - Summer 2021—May

Welcome to the latest edition of our Solent Airport@Daedalus Newsletter and we hope this edition finds you and your family safe and well.



The past year has been tough for many people and many businesses. As a key part of the economy, the aviation industry faces an unprecedented challenge as it begins the path to recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A strong General Aviation sector is key to this recovery and we really value the support and encouragement we receive from our neighbours in achieving ongoing success.

We are excited to be able to reopen our doors and welcome you back to Solent Airport.

We have a number of new members of our flying family, from solo aircraft owners, both gyrocopter and fixed-wing single engine, plus syndicate groups and a new flex-wing microlight flying school.



Photos courtesy of Mark Rutley

Boulton Flight Academy and their Spitfires have migrated from Solent for the summer, following a very successful period of operation; however we are delighted to report that they will return in the Autumn and we will all have the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate the excitement as their classic aircraft take to the skies over the Solent again.





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As we continue to follow the Government's roadmap and restrictions continue to lift across the country, preparations are underway for a series of events over the summer months. Plans include guided tours of the Airport and, for the first time ever, a 5k runway run offering running enthusiasts the chance to take part in aid of the charity of their choice. We are also arranging a series of coffee mornings and we look forward to engaging once again with the local community and aviation enthusiasts alike.

Café 05 is now fully open to customers and Lisa and her team look forward to welcoming you!



Solent Airport's Pandemic Lifeline

Solent Airport provided a base for a range of vital services throughout the pandemic in 2020.

This included a Medivac service run by Alto Aerospace operating from Solent at short notice for patient transfer and emergency patient evacuation when Bournemouth Airport (their home base) was closed for long periods.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency Search and Rescue Helicopter continued operations throughout, in addition to conducting beach safety patrols during the summer holiday months when the lifting of the first lockdown led to overcrowding on local beaches.

Solent Airport was also the base for a trial of emergency "drone" flights by Windracers between the Isle of Wight and the mainland to transport medical supplies and other items using the latest unmanned aerial vehicle. This created the opportunity to test out a fast, responsive and low cost way of carrying vital supplies.

Medical flights from Northern Ireland and Liverpool into Solent Airport carried ventilator parts and aid for local hospitals. These essential flights operated throughout each lockdown period, ensuring that the capability of the NHS to treat patients and save lives was maintained throughout



Our only based flex-wing micro-light. Photo courtesy of Terry Coombes



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Working with our Neighbours

Solent Airport is absolutely committed to being a good and responsive neighbour to local residents. We work closely with airport users to ensure that all flights operate within and comply with the strict rules governing civil aviation, which are designed to protect safety and minimise noise impact. We do generally receive very positive feedback from many members of the local community.

The airport has received a number of noise and nuisance complaints over the past year from a nearby residential area, which has led to a routine investigation by our regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). This has included an investigation into some persistent claims of alleged breaches of air navigation rules - complaints by neighbours in this area that aircraft have not followed agreed flightpaths when flying into or out of the airport. The CAA has issued a full and comprehensive report that concludes that no breaches have taken place and that there is no need for any further investigation or action.

We would like to thank the CAA for their continued support in this matter and once again, reassure all residents of our commitment to continued positive stakeholder engagement.



Channel Islands air search Islander at Solent Airport. Photo courtesy of Terry Coombes

New Airport Website Takes Shape

In the next few weeks we will launch our new website, which will enable us to showcase the work of our team and to provide a calendar of upcoming events. It will also allow airport users to give customer feedback on the quality of their experience at Solent, so that we can respond and make changes in line with their views.

We hope you'll take the time to have a look as there will be a new "community" section which we'll update regularly to ensure our local community is up-to-date with anything that's happening at the airport. You'll also find a link if you'd like to get in touch.



Visit us at

www.solentairport.co.uk