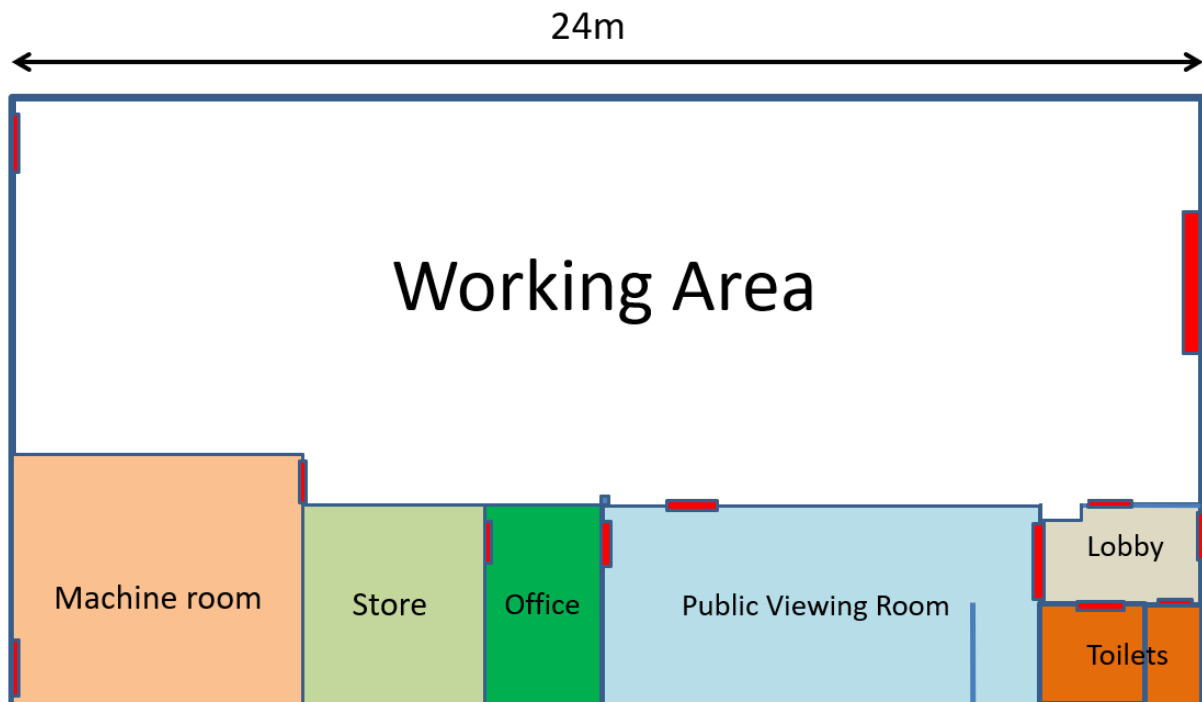


## GHC Newsletter Autumn 2020

Looking back to the time of the Autumn 2019 newsletter if anyone had foretold what they saw happening starting in the early Spring of 2020 I'd have said they were "bonkers", had been watching far too many sci-fi movies, and had a very, very fertile imagination! However, along came this dreadful coronavirus pandemic which has hit Lasham and the GHC very hard in curtailing many of our normal activities.

We'd normally have sent out this newsletter in early to mid September but we've held off as we expected that come October we'd likely have a very good idea as to when our new (24m x 12m) workshop was going to be completed and become operational.



(The general layout of the workshop showing the public viewing room which will also be used for talks and other visitor activities)

### ON THE VERY NEGATIVE SIDE

All hangar tours stopped in the middle of March, this was both our Sunday 2:00 pm "turn up" tour plus organised events for visiting groups. So 99% of visits have stopped and you'd have to be rather optimistic to see them beginning again before the Spring of 2021. Note it's OK for a GHC member to take a small number (3 maximum is advisable) of family or personal friends on a hangar tour. Supporting external events also ceased and again I don't see them starting again any time soon. Assuming we get a vaccine the first may well be the BGA annual conference which if it goes ahead should be held in Nottingham at the end of February.

### On the negative side

Since gliding started again at Lasham in mid May there's only been a limited amount of flying in our Skylark 2 and YS53 (aka "The Beast"). They're the only gliders that currently have a CofA and are insured, and I don't see much chance of further of the GHC owned gliders being available to fly until the Spring. We also decided we had to cancel our vintage task week which was scheduled for late August. That was a shame as our 2019 task week had been such a huge success. Mind you maybe not such a bad thing to have cancelled in hindsight as the weather in the picked week turned out to be dire!

### On the positive side

Our finances are in very good shape at a time when many charities are going through really hard times. Also our membership is holding up, in fact as I write this it's increased to 205. All of the committee have had to become conversant with Zoom as this is how we've had to hold our monthly CoM meetings for the past seven months. The AGM also went ahead via Zoom on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August. Only 8 attended including the 5 CoM members. The writer as Secretary had gathered enough proxy votes to have the Minutes of the 2019 AGM and the financial accounts for 2019/2020 passed. The meeting lasted just 27 minutes.

### ON THE VERY POSITIVE SIDE

This is of course the progress with the new workshop. In our Spring 2020 newsletter we had pictures of the building shell starting construction. Well it's been making great progress thanks to the leadership and hard work of Gary Pullen, Richard Moyse keeping a watchful eye, and the emergence of Peter Bunnage as an absolute star in building and fitting out the internal rooms structure.



(As of the 17<sup>th</sup> June – Paul Haliday)

Getting the concrete floor laid by our usual enthusiastic team of volunteers took 5 separate sessions over 5 days, the first 8<sup>th</sup> June and the final one 9<sup>th</sup> July.



(This I think was the first laying session – Paul Haliday)



(The internal structure coming together, 27<sup>th</sup> September – Julian Ben-David)

At the time of writing the finishing line is starting to appear through the mist! Building the workshop has been a very complex project, far more so than that of building the hangars. The shell was completed by Lowthers on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June and the immediate thought was “Oh we’re nearly there”. Not so! The majority of the work was internal and lay ahead of us. Quite a bit still left to do, one key factor is getting the sign-off from the building inspector which we hope will be given in October. We’re expecting to see actual work on gliders starting sometime in December though “fully operational” probably won’t be until early Spring – look to the website for the announcement. Yes, we will hold a formal opening ceremony for the “Trish Williams Memorial Workshop”. However, that won’t be possible until social distancing rules re the coronavirus epidemic are substantially reduced. We may hold a small informal opening event as a starter – to be decided.

How we’re going to operate the workshop and the commercials for privately owned (PO) gliders that are accepted in are currently being worked out. To start with we’ll take a “softly softly” approach with just GHC gliders being worked on as we gain experience and move forward to a fully operational status. Hopefully we won’t be too far into the New Year before we start accepting PO gliders. We’ll announce this on the website where there will be a “Workshop” tab that will brief members on how we operate and how a private owner/syndicate can apply for access.

Glyn Bradney, 1st October 2020