

C.D.A.R.S.

September 2026

CHESHAM & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GB3TU Repeater Update - Page 7.

We meet the 2nd Wednesday each month at The Golden Eagle Pub in Ashley Green and every 4th Wednesday each month at the Ashley Green Memorial Hall, Ashley Green, HP5 3PP



For Sale & Wanted

Still Lots of Items
Up For Grabs

Regulars

*Dates For Your Diary
*Radio Rally Dates
*Contest Results

Want to write something for the newsletter?
Then you can contact me on
cdarsnews@gmail.com

Can't find that elusive part or have anything for sale?
Why not drop me an email and put it in
'For sale and wanted'.

Learn About.....

What are you interested in? Here are a few useful links:



FISTS CW Club

Promoting Morse Code for 36 years 1987-2023

<https://fists.co.uk>

VK3TBS

Learn About VARAC

<https://vk3tbs.home.blog/2024/03/06/vara-varac/>

Essex Ham

FT-8 Basics

<https://www.essexham.co.uk/ft8-basics-explained>

Essex Ham

What is PSK31? The Basics.

<https://www.essexham.co.uk/psk31-the-basics>

Welcome to LCWO.net

Learn Morse Code (CW) Online!

<https://lcwo.net/>

Electronic Notes

What is RTTY? The Basics.

https://www.electronics-notes.com/articles/ham_radio/digimode/s/what-is-rtty-radio-teletype.php

Meshtastic and MeshCore

Information and Downloads to build your own LoRa Node or Repeater

<https://meshtastic.org/>
<https://meshcore.co.uk/>



Morse Code by Ray Burlingame-Goff (SK - 29th July 2021)

<http://www.g4fon.net/>

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Welcome

Welcome to the September edition of the CDARS Newsletter.

This month we need to ask for your help. On page 7 there is an update regarding the issues of the continued on air abuse being transmitted on the GB3TU repeater.

I appreciate that not everyone uses a repeater but we are all in the same hobby and a lot of people put a lot of time and effort into providing the repeater facility. Please consider helping our fellow hobbyists.

With that out of the way the rest of the newsletter has all the usual updates from Dave G8FMC and upcoming contest and rally dates.



Roger M8TGU

Roger M8TGU

Chairmans Ramble

Would you believe that I have had yet another issue with my car:

A few days ago I suddenly had an engine warning light come on. A message to visit the Mazda agent, but NO explanation of what might be wrong! It is coming up due for a service, so I wondered if e.g. the oil level was a bit low?

Everything these days is hidden under a big plastic engine cover! Eventually I lifted the cover & found a dip-stick. The oil level is mid-way between max & min, so should not be a problem? After a couple of days the red engine warning light & message has gone out and stayed OK for a week. What was that all about? A few more days & the same error returned, but only an amber light this time! I got the error code log read by my local garage; "Excessive air". I think that means a weak mixture? Maybe dirty injectors? I gave the car a good thrash to max revs in 'Sport' mode & for now NO error codes!



Dave G8FMC

I have had a love/hate relationship with my Yaesu FTDX-10 for a long time now. It has excellent RF performance, but (in my opinion) is an ergonomic disaster! In particular my fat fingers tend to hit more than 1 button at a time, particularly those clustered around the 'Outer VFO Knob'. Also I have this outer knob left as the default quick VFO dial for fast QSY-ing to the other end of the band. I know I can tap the touch-screen, but I always feel a bit out-of-control doing that! (In fact I do not get along with touch-screens in general, I have endless problems with my phone & need to have a stylus to hand at all times!!! My eldest daughter is the same) When using the outer VFO knob I have to be very careful to only hold the front edge, otherwise I end up inadvertently flicking one of those buttons grouped around it! I have looked at the FTDX-710 and suspect that it might be rather better for 'fat-fingers'? I even came close to ditching the FTDX-10 (with its superior RF performance) & purchasing the (much more user-friendly) Icom 7300 MK2. However, some time ago I stumbled on the web site of Chris Day ZL1CVD, who provides some interesting items, primarily for Yaesu radios. See his QRZ.com page and also: <https://www.catknobz.com/>

His earlier offerings were on: <https://www.catmeters.com> These were/are remote multi displays showing various parameters simultaneously, providing an at-a-glance overview of a number of parameters without digging into the radios menus. This was followed by CatTouch which uses a remote touch screen & also the CatKnobz range. The CatMeters are (or were?) available for a number of Icom radios, as well as Yaesu, but it seems the CatKnobz is only Yaesu (at the moment). I have also just stumbled on an alternative housing front panel, to 3D print yourself (chat up Guy nicely?) from M0KPO (now G1SJW) at: <https://makerworld.com/en/models/1687837-catknobz-case-by-m0kpo#profileId-1788803> This has little slots to allow printed labels to be inserted above each knob, for the parameter selected. An interesting & neat possibility?

Anyhow I purchased the CatKnobz for my FTDX-10, which was delivered quite quickly & hassle free. After some shenanigans with settings & a firmware upgrade on my FTDX-10 (from 09 to 015!) it is now working very satisfactorily. Early days, but looking good. I think I will be keeping my FTDX10 after all? A full report maybe in next months News Letter? I demonstrated this setup at the club meeting on the 26th August, which seemed to provoke some interest.

73 all, Dave K, G8FMC (Chairman & Contest Coordinator)

UKAC's 2026: (CDARS + Associate members only)

We have the Meteor Scatter season now, as well as Sp-E, which has given an additional aspect to the UKAC's, especially on 6m. We are really suffering with a lack of participants, with often John G0ODQ & myself as the only logs entered on 4m & 6m. We do generally have Matt G0XDI & Phil M0NVS(/P) on 2m & 70cm, but at higher frequencies we are also very thin, with just Dave G4RGK sometimes. Tim G6GEI/P has been giving us a boost on some of the higher bands, thanks guys.

We are now 5th overall & 2nd on 2m, but still in the lead (just) on 70cm.

80m CC Series (Northampton):

This series has now concluded, with Northampton (assisted by your scribe) in 14th out of 46 clubs. The series was comfortably won by Norfolk. With just a few entries, managing to get into the top 3rd is quite good I think. John also came 2nd to Andy G4PIQ in the CW low power unassisted category.

VHF Field Day:

As expected we were beaten into 2nd place by Addiscombe. They made 106 valid QSO's = 25,119 pts, against our 103 QSO's = 21,216 pts. So quite close with a couple of additional EA's making the difference! All done with a Big Wheel 2m antenna, but near the Sth coast!

The concurrent Fixed Station contest had member Matt G0XDI as lead operator with his prime club The Black Sheep group, entering the 144MHz fixed station single band slot from their relatively new site at JO01NC. Concentrating all their efforts on this single band definitely paid off as they won that section by a massive margin! 596 QSO's = 246,086 pts, more than 7x the score of 2nd placed Drowned Rats! They were at the QTH of ex local Anthony G7LRQ (now JO03BC) with 114 QSO's = 35,555. Anthony also bagged 3rd place on 70cm, so their time was divided between the two bands.

The M0BAA, Drowned Rats antenna array is interesting: 6x3 + 6x3 + 3x3 + 3x2 DK7ZB Yagi's at 20m AGL, 184m ASL! So 4 arrays of Yagi's in fixed positions around a rather substantial square section commercial tower. No rotator needed, just some clever antenna switching to cover all relevant directions. Full legal power & excellent location meant many EU contacts, with a very high pts/QSO. Well done Matt & company.

VHF Championship:

We are struggling without enough operators to mount a serious challenge. After 8 sessions we are in 3rd position, just ahead of Harwell, but Hereford and Sheffield are way ahead of us in points. No hope of catching them unfortunately.

73, Dave K, G8FMC

GB3TU Repeater

As you are all aware the GB3TU repeater has been the subject of on air abuse by a few mindless individuals and has been continually switched off. Despite the involvement of Ofcom, who actually visited the individuals in question, this doesn't seem to have had any effect. In recent weeks the on air abuse has started once again with the repeater once again being switched off for periods of time.

Below is an excerpt from an email i recently received from Anthony (G0UBT) who has been heavily involved along with Rob (M0ZPU), the repeater keeper, trying to resolve the situation:

..... I've actually spent quite a lot of time with Rob trying to get things done, dealing with Ofcom who have various departments which don't like cooperating with one another, so really the MPs are the ones to kick the minister for Ofcom where needed! At one point one of Ofcom's DEOs would call me a couple of times a week to discuss matters, then another department at the top put paid to that, as they won't spend the resource on it.

I think Ofcom thought that visiting Patrick, Scott and Doug would put a stop to it, but these people are really that nuts that it wasn't enough. The MPs are our only way now!

As you can see it has been an uphill struggle with Ofcom. Working from the bottom up has come to a halt so the only way forward is to access Ofcom from the top down. That means contacting your local MP who can then question the Minister overseeing Ofcom and thus they then pressure the top bod at Ofcom.

To do this your help is needed. Along with this newsletter I have sent a copy of a draft letter produced by Anthony (G0UBT) for you to either send 'as is' to your MP or alter to include your own experiences or general wording of your choice. Remember this is a repeater for all amateur radio operators not just for those living in the vicinity. If you can access it from your QTH then please help Rob and Anthony put an end to these abusive individuals and get the repeater back to what it's meant for. Thank you.

Below are the email addresses of MPs for Constituencies in the immediate area. If yours is not there you can find it here: <https://members.parliament.uk/members/commons>

Aylesbury: laura.kyrkesmith.mp@parliament.uk

Mid Bucks: greg.smith.mp@parliament.uk

Berkhamsted (including Tring area): victoria.collins.mp@parliament.uk

Hemel Hempstead: david.taylor.mp@parliament.uk

Watford: matt.turmaine.mp@parliament.uk

Buckingham: callum.anderson.mp@parliament.uk

Luton North: sarah.owen.mp@parliament.uk

Luton South & South Beds: rachel.hopkins.mp@parliament.uk

Henley & Thame: freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk

Roger M8TGU

Contest Calendar for September & October 2026

September - HF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Sat-Sun	05-06 Sep	1300-1300	SSB Field Day
Mon	07 Sep	1900-2030	Autumn Series SSB
Wed	16 Sep	1900-2030	Autumn Series CW
Thu	24 Sep	1900-2030	Autumn Series DATA
Mon	28 Sep	1900-2030	RSGB FT4 Contest

September - VHF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Tue	01 Sep	1800-1855	144MHz FMAC
Tue	01 Sep	1900-2130	144MHz UKAC
Wed	02 Sep	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	02 Sep	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Sat-Sun	05-06 Sep	1400-1400	144MHz Trophy Contest
Sun	06 Sep	1100-1500	5th 144MHz Backpackers
Tue	08 Sep	1800-1855	432MHz FMAC
Tue	08 Sep	1900-2130	432MHz UKAC
Wed	09 Sep	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	09 Sep	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	10 Sep	1900-2130	50MHz UKAC
Tue	15 Sep	1900-2130	1.3GHz UKAC
Thu	17 Sep	1900-2130	70MHzUKAC
Sun	20 Sep	900-1200	70MHz AFS Contest
Tue	22 Sep	1830-2130	SHF UKAC

October - HF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Mon	05 Oct	1900-2030	Autumn Series CW
Wed	14 Oct	1900-2030	Autumn Series DATA
Thu	22 Oct	1900-2030	Autumn Series SSB
Mon	26 Oct	2000-2130	RSGB FT4 Contest

October - VHF

Day	Date	Time (UTC)	Contest Name
Sat	03 Oct	1400-2200	1.2GHz Trophy
Sat	03 Oct	1400-2200	2.3GHz Trophy
Sat-Sun	03-04 Oct	1400-1400	Oct 432MHz-245GHz Contest
Tue	06 Oct	1800-1855	144MHz FMAC
Tue	06 Oct	1900-2130	144MHz UKAC
Wed	07 Oct	1700-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	07 Oct	1900-2100	144MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	08 Oct	1900-2130	50MHz UKAC
Tue	13 Oct	1800-1855	432MHz FMAC
Tue	13 Oct	1900-2130	432MHz UKAC
Wed	14 Oct	1700-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (4 hours)
Wed	14 Oct	1900-2100	432MHz FT8 AC (2 hours)
Thu	15 Oct	1900-2130	70MHz UKAC
Sun	18 Oct	900-1300	50MHz AFS Contest
Tue	20 Oct	1900-2130	1.3GHz UKAC
Tue	27 Oct	1830-2130	SHF UKAC

Dates For Your Diary



CDARS Net and Club Meetings Dates

(Start times are all at 8pm unless otherwise noted)

September 2026

2nd - Club Net on 2m SSB - 144.320 USB

9th - Informal Meeting at The Golden Eagle, Ashley Green

16th - Club Net on 2m SSB - 144.320 USB

23th - Formal Meeting at Ashley Green Memorial Hall - TBA

30th - 5th Wednesday - Suggestions??

Slow Morse most Thursdays at 14.45 BST on 144.060MHz SSB.
Please see the weekly email from Malcolm G3ZNU for any changes to schedule.

Listed below are dates of other RSGB, UK and International contests for April 2026

All Asian DX Contest, Phone - 0000Z, Sep 5 to 2359Z, Sep 6

CWOps CW Open - 1200Z-1559Z, Sep 5

IARU Region 1 Field Day, SSB - 1300Z, Sep 5 to 1259Z, Sep 6

IARU Region 1 145 MHz Contest - 1400Z, Sep 5 to 1400Z, Sep 6

PODXS 070 Club Jay Hudak Memorial 80m Sprint - 2000Z, Sep 5 to 2000Z, Sep 6

ARS Spartan Sprint - 0000Z-0200Z, Sep 8

WAE DX Contest, SSB - 0000Z, Sep 12 to 2359Z, Sep 13

Scandinavian Activity Contest, CW - 1200Z, Sep 19 to 1200Z, Sep 20

BARTG Sprint PSK63 Contest - 1700Z-2059Z, Sep 20

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, RTTY - 0000Z, Sep 26 to 2359Z, Sep 27

Full details and more contests at: <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html>

Please double check dates, start/end times etc in good time prior to the event.

Radio Rally Dates.

Full details of the events are available in Radcom & the RSGB website.

September

6th - Telford Hamfest, Harper Adams University, Telford T10 8ND.

12th - East midlands Ham and Electronics Rally, Beckingham VillageHall, Southfield Lane, Beckingham DN10 4FX

13th - BVWS Biggleswade Swapmeet, The Weatherley Centre, Eagle Farm Road, Biggleswade, SG18 8JH.

13th - Caister Lifeboat Radio Rally, Caister Life Boat Station, Caister on Sea, NR30 5DJ.

19th & 20th - Broadcast Engineering Museum Open Days, 41, Cappar Avenue, Hemswell Cliff, Lincs. DN21 5XS.

25th & 26th - National Hamfest, Nottinghamshire Showground, Newark.



October 2026

4th - Welsh Radio Rally, Llanwern High School, Hartridge Farm Road, Newport, NP18 2YE

9th to 11th - RSGB Convention, Kents Hill Conference Centre, Milton Keynes.

11th - Annual Hornsea Rally, Driffield Showground YO25 9FB.

24th - Essex CW Amateur Radio Club Boot Canp and CW Conference, 3rd Witham Scout & Guide HQ, (See details in September Radcom for registration details)

25th - Galashiels Radio & Computer Rally, The Volunteer Hall, St. Johns Street, Galashiels, TD1 3JX.

(All information courtesy of Radcom & the RSGB website)

For Sale and Wanted

SK sale of the shack contents of the late Bryan M0IHY (Items with Dave G8FMC)

ITEM	ASKING PRICE or O.V.N.O.
1. Power Mag 145 – large magnetic mount + cable (new £30) New & boxed.	£20 (<i>price reduced</i>)
2. Comet CHA-250HD/BXII Multi-Band HF Vertical Antenna (new £350) 250W SSB 75W Data. See March 2024 PW review. As new, unused	£220
5. Modified Cobweb antenna (Polish) (new £200)	£70
6. Sangean ATS-909X2 all-band portable receiver £225 ish new boxed	£150
7. QRM Eliminator X-phase 1-30MHz - £45 new	£25
8. Kent Straight key	£65
9. CW Keyer TC 701 - £70 new	£45
10. Soldering Station (basic) 60W	Offers
11. IGEN Max regenerative receiver. eBay US has an unbuilt kit at £160.	£50
12. Lead-free solder & cleaner (in bag)	Offers
14. Austcol Radiation Meter MT525 -£25 online average price new.	£10
16. Metro VNA in case (£270 new)	£175
18. Prepp Comm multi-band morse transceiver. Approx £358 new.	£225
19. MFJ Super Hi-Q Loop Remote Control . Unknown model.	Offers
20. QRP Kits EFHW Tuner	Offers

Please initially contact Dave G8FMC if interested in any item :- g8fmc547@gmail.com