

GLoucestershire Repeater Group Newsletter

Edited by: Stewart Wilkinson G0LGS

CONTENTS	Page
CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS	1
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	1
GB3CCX 10GHZ BEACON	1
GB3GH VOICE REPEATER	1
GB3CG VOICE REPEATER	2
GB7GH NODE	2
GB7FD NODE	2
GB7RT & GB7SR NODES	2
GB7GC NODE	2
GB7RC NODE	2
GB7RR DATA REPEATER	3
MB7UC APRS DIGIPEATER	3
MB7US APRS DIGIPEATER	3
GB7GLO AND MLVN NODE	3
GB7LGS	3
TREASURERS REPORT	3
FOURPACK NEWS	3
AMATEUR RADIO FORUM	3

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2003; a belated Happy New Year! Having said that we have already carried out a significant amount of work in upgrading our facilities and equipment.

Indeed, there is much to do this year. Certain projects need finishing off and others require additional effort to bring them to fruition. We know that we've got the members with the capability; please offer it to us!

Elsewhere in the Newsletter you will see a report of the sudden demise of the tower at GB7FD. This will ultimately bring forth a better service as all of the aerials are being replaced with commercial ones, fed with LDF5-50.

Also GB3GH has been replaced along with new logic. Some additional cavities are being constructed to improve isolation, and there are plans to test alternative aerials.

Discussions are also underway with other voice repeater groups in adjacent counties to assess the feasibility of linking the voice repeaters to provide better coverage. We have also had a request for Internet linking which is being considered.

Financially we have done rather well again at the Worcester rally - this time held in December. See the Treasurer's report elsewhere.

We have also been able to acquire additional radios (70cm & 4m) from a defunct county council radio scheme, along with various 23cm equipment, which will be used to upgrade existing systems.

Finally, the AGM is only just around the corner. We do hope that as many members as possible will turn out this year and hear the various reports and make us aware of your requirements.

Nicholas Negus G6AWT.
Chairman

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will take place at the Civil Service Club, Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham at 20.00 on Tuesday 8th April 2003. The bar will be available for drinks (and food) before and after the meeting.

The AGM is your chance to provide the committee with your ideas regarding what you would like to see the group doing over the coming year, so please make a note of the date in your diary, come along to the meeting and provide your input.

GB3CCX 10GHZ BEACON

Having had no reports for GB3CCX for sometime, Nick G6AWT has received a report (by email) from Brian Jensen OZ1CTZ stating that at 23:33 on 16th February 2003 he was hearing GB3CCX at 519 to 539 with QSB. According to Brian's email no other G stations were QRV at the time. Brian says he is located central Jylland Denmark [JO46OE], making this the best DX report for GB3CCX at 873Km. Brian uses a DB6NT Transceiver (2Watts O/P) with 65cm offset dish.

GB3GH VOICE REPEATER

We have received several reports of poor performance from GB3GH over the last few months, this has been in part caused by problems with the PA which forced Ken (G3LVP) and Stewart (G0LGS) to remove it during the summer.

Steve (G4FPV) has modified and re-tuned a high quality Philips PRF10 transceiver and prepared a G8CUL logic unit, which were installed by Steve, Nick (G6AWT) and Ken (G3LVP) in mid January.

Initial performance of the new system was not as good as expected, but it was determined that this was largely due to not having enough Isolation in the original cavities to cope with the increased transmitter power and improved receiver sensitivity.

Steve and Ken made a return visit to the site in early February to install temporary additional cavities, whilst Nick (G6AWT) has started manufacturing new cavities that will be used as a permanent part of the new GB3GH system.

GB3CG VOICE REPEATER

In December we received a request (via our Internet Web site) from John (G6RTV/M3FSG) to consider linking the 2m repeater to the Internet using EchoLink.

After consideration at its January meeting the Committee voted in favour of allowing the John to operate a link to the Internet from his home on the groups behalf. The final details of an agreement between the group and John have yet to be determined.

Note: John also operates 6m and 70cm Simplex repeaters on the EchoLink system.

Further Information on EchoLink system (including the software required) can be found on the web at <http://www.echolink.org>.

GB7GH NODE

The 70cm link transmitter for the GB7WE link stopped working a while ago, Steve (G4FPV) has replaced the PA stage, but reports that the VSWR on the antenna is a little higher than he would like, this will be investigated when time and the weather permit.

We have had a few problems with the 23cm Duplex link to GB7FD over the last few months, it is believed that this (at least in part) is due to wide temperature variations in the equipment cabin.

The 70cm receiver used for the links, which go via the GB7RR regenerative repeater, has also had a few problems over the last few months. Steve (G4FPV) has made adjustments to the unit on several occasions, and the system is working once again.

GB7FD NODE

Following a number of delays over the last 18 months, the expected replacement of the Antenna Mast at the GB7FD site is currently underway.

The contractors that are carrying out the mast replacement work contacted the group in early February, to inform us that they were going to immediately start the replacement.

The work was rapidly arranged after a large section of the top of the old structure was severely damaged during bad Weather.

The group has purchased three new 70cm Yagi's, whilst two new 23cm Yagi's are to be provided under an arrangement between the group, the site owners and the contractors installing the new mast.

Nick (G6AWT) has provided a tri-band vertical, which will be used to replace the 2m user port antenna. The group will be purchasing a replacement antenna for Nick once the UK supplier has some more available.

The mast replacement work is expected to take 3 to 4 weeks. The GB7FD system should be fully operational on the new mast by the middle of March.

GB7RT & GB7SR NODES

The cable link between GB7RT and GB7SR nodes has been working well over the last few months, with little or no interruption of service.

However we have received recent reports that the 23cm Link between GB7RT and GB7GH has been intermittent, we will be looking into this when time permits. An Alternative path is available from Swansea via GW3UWS-3, G1WXA-9 (or M1CUK-1) and GB7LGS-9.

A new Emergency Closedown switch has been installed at the GB7SR site, Closedown operators should by now of have received information regarding new procedures and keys that they will need to shutdown the system.

GB7GC NODE

The original 70cm user port Transceiver went faulty several months ago and was replaced with a Philips PRP73 portable radio. However GB7GC has seen very little use over recent months.

GB7RC NODE

Despite having a good RF (line of site) path, and all the equipment having been installed, the planned 9K6 link between GB7RC and GB7WO in Wenvoe is (at the time of writing) not yet operational.

There are also problems with the 19K2 link (via GB7RR) to the GB7GH and G4FPV Nodes.

It is hoped that both these link problems will be resolved shortly.

A new Emergency Closedown switch for the GB7RC node and associated MB7US APRS system has been installed, but is not yet fully functional. Closedown operators should shortly be receiving the appropriate information and keys that they will need to shutdown the systems once the new Closedown system is fully functional.

GB7RR DATA REPEATER

Steve (G4FPV) and Nick (G6AWT) visited the site in late November to check & re-align the 70cm Transceiver, which was found to be several kHz off Frequency.

MB7UC APRS DIGIPEATER

The Hand-held transceiver originally used MB7UC has been replaced with a Philips MX294 mobile unit to bring the ERP to about 10W. Reports show that the new unit provides much improved coverage especially to the North and West.

MB7US APRS DIGIPEATER

MB7US (UI-Severn) is the new callsign for the APRS digipeater system that should soon be installed on the M48 Severn Bridge.

The system will operate as an APRS only port on same computer system as the existing GB7RC Node system, which uses G8PZT's Xrouter software.

GB7GLO AND MLVN NODE

The 6m link between MLVN and BROM has been turned off to prevent a TVI problem. Although the problem has been investigated a better solution has not yet been found.

Steve Perkins G4FPV
Sysop GB7GLO and MLVN Node

GB7LGS

Several changes have taken place at GB7LGS over the last few months, these include upgrading of the PC system from a 486DX to a Pentium-III running at 500 MHz, new operating system software (Linux Mandrake 9.0) and installation of alternative TNC's.

These changes mean that the 70cm user port on 433.625MHz is once again fully operational (it had been out of action due to a faulty TNC).

Stewart Wilkinson G0LGS
Sysop GB7LGS

TREASURERS REPORT

Although it is one of the smaller rallies the Three Counties Rally in early December was very well attended, the group sold a number of Surplus hand-held transceivers, which had been donated to us, these and other items raised well over £400 for group funds.

Stewart Wilkinson G0LGS
Treasurer

FOURPACK NEWS

FOURPACK's regular monthly meetings have been moved from the 4th Wednesday to the 4th Thursday of each month at 'The Swan', Whittington, Worcester, close to M5 Junction 7 (Worcester South). (Non-members are always welcome).

Robert (G1LOA) Sysop of GB7BM is currently experimenting with running G8PZT's Xrouter (NODE) and PZTBBS software (GB7BHX) under the Linux Dos Emulator.

GB7WE has had a few problems recently with the THENET TNC firmware locking up, it is believed that the problem is related to the large numbers of netrom routes being broadcast on many local systems. The group is looking at the possibility of installing a Computer at the site to run G8PZT's Xrouter.

AMATEUR RADIO FORUM

Just as the newsletter was about to be printed a letter arrived in the mail from the Radiocommunications Agency inviting me to two Amateur Radio Forums. The first is in Leeds on 27th March and the second in Bristol on 29th March, formal proceedings are from 1pm to 4pm with registration and lunch from 1200 noon. There is no charge to attend, but places are limited and tickets will be issued on a 'first-come' basis. If you are interested you can book on-line at www.eventoffice.co.uk or by telephone on 020 7720 4411.

Stewart Wilkinson G0LGS
Editor