

## Noisy light aircraft

**SNOW** – Stop Noise Over Whitchurch – was set up this summer to tackle the problem of noisy aerobatic light aircraft above the village. We think we've been successful.

By invitation, I visited White Waltham airfield in August and had constructive discussions about our concerns with the Deputy Airfield Manager. He agreed to designate a circular “no-go” area for aerobatics of 2 nautical miles (2.3 statute miles) radius centred on Whitchurch Bridge - the bridge is easy to see from the air, and 2 nautical miles is a distance light aircraft pilots are familiar with for other reasons.

Members of the West London Aero Club who fly out of White Waltham for aerobatics will be expected to follow this rule. However, it's important to note that White Waltham does not control the airspace above Whitchurch-on-Thames: Heathrow controls a corridor above 4,500 ft and RAF Benson between 3,200 ft and 4,500 ft. The airspace below 3,200 ft is uncontrolled, and any light aircraft pilot has the right to fly in this airspace subject only to Civil Aviation Authority rules, The Rules of the Air Regulations 2015, etc.

The agreed “no-go” area gives us better protection against aerobatic aircraft than does reliance on these rules. There have been a few incursions since the “no-go” area was agreed, but these were reported to White Waltham who dealt with them robustly.

Geoff Weir  
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