

AMFC

Athlone Model Flying Club



Constitution & Field Safety Rules

2020

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1. Constitution

Words of masculine gender should be taken to include the feminine gender unless the context indicates otherwise.

1.1. General

1. The club shall be called Athlone Model Flying Club (AMFC) and will be affiliated to the Model Aeronautics Council of Ireland (MACI).
2. The club is a private members club, and membership is subject to approval by the committee.
3. The clubs principal aim shall be the promotion of safe and responsible model aircraft flying for its members, and to promote a favourable image of the sport.
4. Alterations to this constitution can only be made at a meeting of committee members as and when required. Any proposed alterations to the constitution from members must be submitted to the secretary in writing at least 14 days prior to a committee meeting convened for that purpose.
5. Acceptance of the AMFC constitution, its rules including field and safety rules is a condition of club membership.

1.2. Members

6. A "member" means any fully paid up member over the age of eighteen (18) years of age.
7. The Committee has the right to refuse membership to new applicants.
8. 'New' members will be required to serve an initial probationary period of twelve (12) months from date of joining. During this time, they may not be eligible to serve on the Committee and may have their membership terminated at the discretion of the Committee for unsatisfactory conduct, gross misconduct or failure to adhere to the club field and safety rules.
9. New members' subscriptions shall be dependent on membership class, plus any joining fee (if any) as decided by the committee.
10. The club's annual membership commences on the 31st March and ends on the 31st March in the following year. Club annual subscriptions are due by 7th March each year in full, including the MACI fee (if the member is not already a MACI member), any member, who has not paid the relevant club subscription for the ensuing year by this date, in full, will not be permitted to fly at the club until they have done so. On all occasions, members MACI membership must be in place before flying commences.
11. Members who have allowed their membership to lapse for less than 3 months will not normally be asked to re-apply as a 'New' member (or pay the joining fee if applicable), however this will be at the committees sole discretion, and will be required to pay the full annual (12 months) subscription. Reduced subscriptions for new members will apply from 1st October when they will be 50% of the clubs annual subscription. The Committee reserves the right to ask for a formal 'New' membership application if it so wishes.

12. Members who have not renewed their membership by 1st July will be deemed to have left the club and a renewal after this period will be treated as a 'New' membership application.
13. All members must be members of the Model Aeronautics Council of Ireland and must be able to provide evidence of such on request. The only exception to this is for those members who play no active part in the club whatsoever; i.e. social members only.
14. A member may be made a life member for extensive services to the club. Life members can only be created by a majority ballot of club members at a general meeting.
15. All members, without exception, must comply with all club rules. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the Club which may lead to dismissal.
16. Club members may invite guest fliers to the site by prior arrangement and approval by a committee member. Guest fliers must be MACI insured and/or provide proof of insurance from a MACI recognised flying association (e.g. BMFA UK, DMFV Germany, AMA USA, MAAA Australia etc) when requested to do so by a committee member. The club member should also accompany their guest at the club, and must assume total responsibility for the actions and safety of their guest. Guests must fly under the supervision of instructors if their ability requires it, and such arrangements must be made in advance of the visit.

1.3. Rules, Discipline and safety

17. Additions and amendments to field safety rules and regulations can only be made by the committee.
18. All field safety rules and regulations will be reviewed at a minimum annually, and will be considered binding for 12 months, excepting where urgent action is required.
19. Any complaint concerning any member must be made in writing and signed by the complainant(s). The written complaint must then be forwarded to the Secretary so that the matter can be addressed at the next Committee meeting.
20. Where an allegation of misconduct is made against a member, the member may be suspended from all club activities while an investigation is carried out. (A suspension carried out in this matter should be considered as a neutral act and infers no blame or guilt and is purely to allow an investigation)
21. The Committee may impose a suspension from club activities including attendance at the club flying site, not exceeding 30 days upon any member in the event of misconduct. Any suspension must be accompanied by a verbal and/or written warning as deemed appropriate.
22. The Committee may consider withdrawal of membership where conduct on the field or elsewhere is considered to be prejudicial to the club or continuing disregard for the clubs field and safety rules. Dismissal or removal of membership will be in accordance with the following procedure and is based on the 'three strikes rule', during each period of members subscription:
 - a. The member will be given a verbal warning by an authorised Committee Member in which the member is made aware of his first misdemeanour and what he is reasonably required to do to make amends.

- b. If the member reoffends for a second time, a written warning will be issued by an authorised Committee Member to advise him of his misdemeanour and what he is reasonably required to do to make amends.
 - c. If the member continues to reoffend for a third time, the Committee will advise him in writing that his membership is withdrawn, stating the reasons why this decision was reached.
23. In the event of gross misconduct, immediate dismissal without warnings may be considered and issued by the committee. However the member will still be accorded his rights to present his case to the Committee and be given a right of appeal in accordance with sub-paragraphs above.

In the event of dismissal the Committee will arrange for the member's current membership fee (excluding MACI membership fee) to be reimbursed on a pro-rata basis.

1.4. Flying

24. The Committee, its officers and Instructors, will be responsible for the running of the flying field at all times. Appointment to the position of Instructor or Examiner can only be made by a Committee decision.

1.5. Committee structure and appointments

25. The Committee of the Club shall comprise of not more than three (3) members.
26. The Officers of the committee will be, Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.
27. One senior club member (or committee member) as a minimum should be appointed annually as the clubs' delegate to MACI meetings, and who should represent the club at all relevant meetings.
28. Any Committee member or member who is involved in any organisational position within the Club, must hold membership of the Model Aeronautics Council of Ireland.
29. Committee officers and members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting from oral nominations received at the meeting, to serve for a period of one year. The Committee will be elected by a majority vote by a show of hands from members present. All fully paid up members and life members are eligible to vote.
30. Should a committee position become vacant, the Committee may, by agreement, co-opt a replacement who will then serve until the following Annual General Meeting.

1.6. Committee organisation and powers

31. Members elected to office will have full voting rights at all meetings. In the event of a tie the Chairman will have a casting vote in addition to his initial standing vote.
32. The Committee are authorised to carry out negotiations and make decisions in the interest of the club or on behalf of the membership where necessary without consulting the members. Approval from the membership at an ordinary meeting must be sought for expenditure greater than fourteen (14) thousand euro.
33. Each Committee officer is required to submit a sample of his signature for banking reference purposes.
34. Money may only be withdrawn from the club funds by cheque signed by not less than two Committee Officers.
35. The Secretary must be informed of any negotiations proposed by club members which affect the Club as a whole and copies of any written correspondence must be submitted to him for record purposes.
36. The Secretary will receive an annual honorarium to cover out of pocket expenses not covered under the normal conditions of withdrawal from club funds, the amount of which will be decided at the Annual General Meeting. He may also present a quarterly claim towards telephone costs for consideration by the Committee.
37. No member of the Committee or Officer of the club may be a Committee Member or Officer of another model flying club.
38. Any Committee Member or Officer wishing to resign must do so in writing.
39. Any member of the Committee who is absent from three consecutive Committee meetings without reasonable cause will automatically forfeit his seat on the Committee.
40. The Committee may pay accounts and incur any normal liabilities on behalf of the club.
41. The Committee is authorised to make changes to this constitution.

1.7. Voting and conduct of committee meetings

42. All committee meetings will be agenda'd and minuted. Minutes of committee meetings will be made available to members on written request to the secretary.
43. A quorum of any Committee meeting shall consist of a minimum of (2) Committee Members.
44. All proposals must be seconded and voted upon. A majority vote of those present is required to carry any proposal.
45. Voting will normally be by a show of hands, however a secret ballot must be taken should any committee member request that this be done. Proxy and postal votes will not be permitted.
46. An audio recording of committee meetings may be taken by the secretary only, for the sole purpose of producing accurate minutes. The audio recording must be deleted once the written minutes are approved.
47. Non committee members may attend committee meetings as observers by applying to the Secretary at least 14 days before the meeting. Any non Committee Member may be asked to leave the meeting subject to approval from

the Committee.

1.8. Voting and conduct of general meetings

48. All general meetings will be agenda'd and minuted. Any other business will only be accepted at general meetings if the Secretary is provided with at least 14 days' notice in writing of the item to be discussed.
49. A quorum of any general meeting shall consist of three (3) Committee members.
50. All proposals must be seconded and voted upon. A majority vote of those present is required to carry any proposal.
51. Voting will normally be by a show of hands, however a secret ballot must be taken should any member request that this be done. Proxy and postal votes will not be permitted.
52. Amendments to proposals must be voted upon first.
53. An audio recording of general meetings may be taken by the secretary only, for the sole purpose of producing accurate minutes. The audio recording must be deleted once the written minutes are approved.
54. Non club members may attend Club meetings as observers as invited guests of a club by applying to the Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the meeting. Any non-Club member may be asked to leave the meeting subject to approval from the Committee.
55. The Committee, through the Chairman has the power to ask a person to leave any meeting in the event of that person disrupting the meeting.
56. Patrons of the club have no voting rights but are free to attend all club meetings. A fully paid up member for voting purposes is a member who has paid the full annual membership fee prior to any vote during the membership period.

1.9. Annual general meetings

57. A date for the Annual General Meeting will be decided each year by the Committee. At least fourteen (14) days' notice of the meeting will be given in writing (text or email or a combination of both) to all Club members.
58. Annual subscriptions and the joining fee will be decided at the Annual General Meeting or by a committee meeting prior to the Annual General Meeting.
59. A competent individual (non-committee member) may be elected or nominated by the Committee to carry out an independent examination of the accounts before the Annual General Meeting to verify that the balance sheet is correct and fairly represents the expenditure and receipts of the club, its assets and its liabilities.

1.10. Extraordinary general meetings

60. The Secretary will convene an Extraordinary Committee Meeting within 14 days on request from any officer of the Committee, stating the business to be discussed.
61. The Secretary shall convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the club by a

resolution of the Committee stating the business to be brought before the meeting, of which 14 days' notice has been given to all members in writing stating the business to be discussed.

62. The Secretary shall convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the club on receipt of a request in writing signed by not less than 10 members of the club, stating the business to be brought before the meeting.
63. The meeting must be called within 28 days of request and 28 days' notice must be given to all members in writing stating the business to be discussed.
64. When a request for a meeting is made in accordance with Article 62 and it is not called within 28 days, the requisitioners may themselves convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club by giving 28 days' notice in writing to all members, duly setting out the purpose for which the meeting was called. Any resolutions passed at such a meeting shall have the same force and effect as if they were passed at a meeting convened by the Committee.

1.11. Insurance and indemnity

65. The club shall hold both Civil and Employers Liability Insurance, provided through affiliation to the MACI.
66. The club will indemnify all committee officers and committee members if they incur any liability whatsoever on behalf of the club.
67. In the event of a Committee Member being awarded damages or costs in the course of proceedings taken by him in his representative capacity of the club, such damages or costs will belong to the Club and not the Committee Member personally, and upon receipt that Committee Member will pay them to the Club Treasurer.
68. Where there is a joint flight display/meeting between Athlone Model Flying Club and another model flying club, the participating club must be able to provide evidence of adequate insurance cover well in advance of the display/meeting.

1.12. Dissolution of the club

69. Should it be considered necessary or desirable to dissolve the Club, the Committee will call an Extraordinary General Meeting. Should a quorum fail to appear, the meeting will be adjourned and a further EGM must be called within 14 days. The second meeting will proceed even if a quorum is not present and the motion will then be carried by a simple majority vote.
70. On dissolution and after the sale of assets, settlement of all outstanding debts and the refund of subscriptions for the remaining part of the year to the paid up members; the funds remaining will be distributed in equal shares to the paid up club members.
71. If the final accounts are less than required to refund the subscriptions to the members, the total money remaining will be distributed in equal shares to the current paid up club members. All members will receive a final statement of accounts.

2. Field & safety rules

1. All members must observe field discipline and comply with the Air Navigation Order, all relevant MACI safety codes as contained within the MACI safety code and the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) (Rockets and Small Aircraft) Order, 2000 (SI25 of 2000)
2. On matters of field safety needing an immediate decision, the responsibility lies with instructors or a member of the committee in that order. Any instructions must be accepted without dissent. However, should a member believe the instructions to be wrong, then he should bring this to the attention of the Committee through Article 16 of the Constitution.
3. Due consideration must be given at all times to trainee or novice pilots in the circuit. In the event that the pleasure or concentration of a pilot is affected by the flying style of another, precedence will be given to the pilot who was airborne first. Intimidating flying of any sort is not permitted.
4. No more than 5 aircraft shall be airborne at any one time.
5. All pilots must observe the established flight line and stand in the designated area whilst flying. Any variation to suit daily conditions may be made by the Club's safety officers or a member of the committee. Any spectators must remain in the spectators' area whilst flying is in progress.
6. Any person wishing to enter or cross the runway area must seek clearance from any pilots flying at the time before doing so.
7. All vehicles must be parked in the designated area only, see map in Appendix IA
8. The frequency allocation system in use is 2.4GHz. Any other radio frequency used by a member especially 35 MHz frequency systems will be allowed on an exception only basis, and must be made known to the safety officer or a member of the committee BEFORE any flight commences using a radio frequency other than 2.4GHz
9. For 35 MHz frequency systems and before switching on, the pilot must ensure that he is operating on the frequency he believes he is on and must display the appropriate frequency pennant on his transmitter.
10. 35 MHz frequency numbers must be called out before the transmitter in question is switched on.
11. Transmitters should not be taken away from the flight line when retrieving an aircraft, unless to do so would aid retrieval of the model. In this instance the matter should be brought to the attention of the safety officers so that this may be carried out without the risk of over-flying the transmitter.
12. Should an aircraft go out of control, the first priority must be the safety of persons with the second being avoidance of damage to property. A warning is to be shouted by the pilot which is to be taken up by other members.
13. Before starting an engine the model must be suitably restrained either by a tether, model restraints or by an assistant. The model must also face away from the pits area.
14. In the interest of safety, assistance should be sought when running up engines and taking models to the runway for take-off. All helpers must have MACI membership.
15. Appropriate use should be made of all available pit area, and under no circumstances should engines be set up in the immediate vicinity of the pilots who are flying at that time. Where practical, models should face outward from the pits area.

16. Under no circumstances must an engine be run unless all persons are behind the line of the propeller with the exception of the person starting the engine. When carrying out power checks all persons including the pilot are to be behind the line of the propeller.
17. Models having their engines run in on the ground must not be left unattended whilst the engine is running.
18. All new or repaired models should be checked out by an instructor, their appointed deputy or a member of the committee before being allowed to fly. All models are subject to random safety spot checks which will be carried out by an instructor, their appointed deputy or a member of the committee. If in his opinion a model is unsafe to fly or does not conform to Club rules, it will be grounded until rectified.
19. All operational failsafe's in use on powered models operated from our Club site must set the throttle to tick-over, not hold, (stopped in the case of electric power) regardless of the other control operations governed by the failsafe. Failsafe's are to be checked prior to flight by switching the transmitter off whilst the model is restrained.
20. No person shall attempt to retrieve a model from any land adjacent to the flying site without prior consultation with the appointed safety officers for the day, or a committee member, to ensure that the situation is properly assessed and minimal disruption caused. If it is considered by the safety officers that the landowner's permission should be sought before retrieving the model, it will be the owner of the model and one of the safety officers who must approach them for permission.
21. No smoking is permitted in the vicinity of inflammable fuels and materials.
22. Children must be closely supervised at all times and must not be allowed to run around the pit area or runways.
23. No dogs are permitted at the flying field unless kept on a lead or tethered.
24. Any incident involving a third party or another member must be reported to the Committee immediately.
25. Taxi-ing back to the pits area under power is NOT permitted in the 'Taxi area' (with the exception of large jet models). Engine should be switched off when model has landed, leaves the runway, enters the taxi area and must not be facing pits area when engine turned off.
26. All models must face away from pits area when starting up
27. All models must take off from the designated runway, and not the 'taxi area'.
28. Due care and attention must be taken during the summer months when flying over the 'bog' areas to minimise flying overhead of persons working in the bog or causing a nuisance to these persons when working. Any instructions to stop flying or to fly in a different area given by a safety officer or committee member must be obeyed immediately. Failure to do so will be considered an act of gross negligence, subject to dismissal.
29. Large Model Certificates are required as per MACI regulations and are strictly enforced at AMFC. Models in excess of 20 Kg have special requirements and a copy of the consent letter from the I.A.A. will be required.
30. Breaking the Flying Rules, blatant or otherwise will be looked upon very seriously by the committee and club members. If your adherence to the clubs flying rules is commented upon by someone at the club, or you are asked to correct your actions by a safety office or committee member, please review your understanding of the flying rules and don't be insulted. If in doubt ask!
31. There is a designated runway for helicopters and 3D aircraft for hovering only, for testing and practise when other aircraft are using the main runway.

32. Priority should be given to pilots who incur a dead stick situation. If a dead stick occurs the pilot must shout out 'dead stick' to warn other pilots to keep clear, and allow him a clear pathway to land.
33. When landing aircraft the pilot must shout out 'Landing' to warn other pilots.
34. Fliers should stand beside one-another on the flight line in a manner that facilitates easy communication. They should always have their back to the Pits / car-park and should never be in a situation where the model is flying in the space between them and the Pits.
35. Under no circumstances should any individual drive a full size car, motorbike, airplane, or helicopter on the runway as it is only designed for model use.
36. No individual is to paint or otherwise permanently mark the runway. That will be handled by the committee or through land owners authorised contractors.
37. Any member that introduces dirt or loose objects to the runway they must clear/brush it off without delay so as not to inconvenience other fliers.
38. No lit cigarettes, fire wood, turf, bbq or any other burning object is to be intentionally lit on the runway.
39. All models should be fuelled off the runway to avoid fuel spills. If there is a fuel spill on the runway the club member who owns the model is responsible to clean it up without undue delay.
40. All members should be aware that club members may chose to take off from the tarmac and land on the grass. If this is the case then it is necessary for a spotter to be present to ensure safe walking in the case that pilot position may change from the tarmac to grass runway.

Exercise common sense on all safety matters!

A map of the club grounds, runways, pits & taxi areas, etc. is outlined in Appendix IA

3. Guide on caring for junior members

1. A Junior Member is defined as being under 18 years of age.
2. A responsible adult is defined as a senior member or parent/guardian who has the experience commensurate with the type and degree of supervision required.
3. Junior members must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. The level of supervision is to be commensurate with the junior member's age, maturity, capabilities and levels of experience.
4. Junior members under the age of 14 years shall not start an engine or carry a model with the engine running unless they are supervised by a responsible adult.
5. No junior member under the age of 14 years shall fly a model aircraft unless supervised by a responsible adult or the junior member holds the minimum of a MACI Achievement Scheme "A" certificate and has been authorised to do so by the Club Committee.
6. No senior member is to be expected to assume responsibility for a junior member unless he/she has been specifically requested to do so by the junior member's parent/guardian. If required to do so, he/she is to assume complete and total responsibility for the junior member whilst he/she is in their charge.
7. Notwithstanding the requirements of Paragraph 6, should a member discover a junior member is unsupervised he/she must assume responsibility for the junior member's safety in the first instance. The situation should then be rectified as soon as possible by seeking out the junior member's parent/guardian/nominated supervisor. Any instance of such an occurrence is to be reported to the Committee as soon as possible.

Note to parents and guardians:

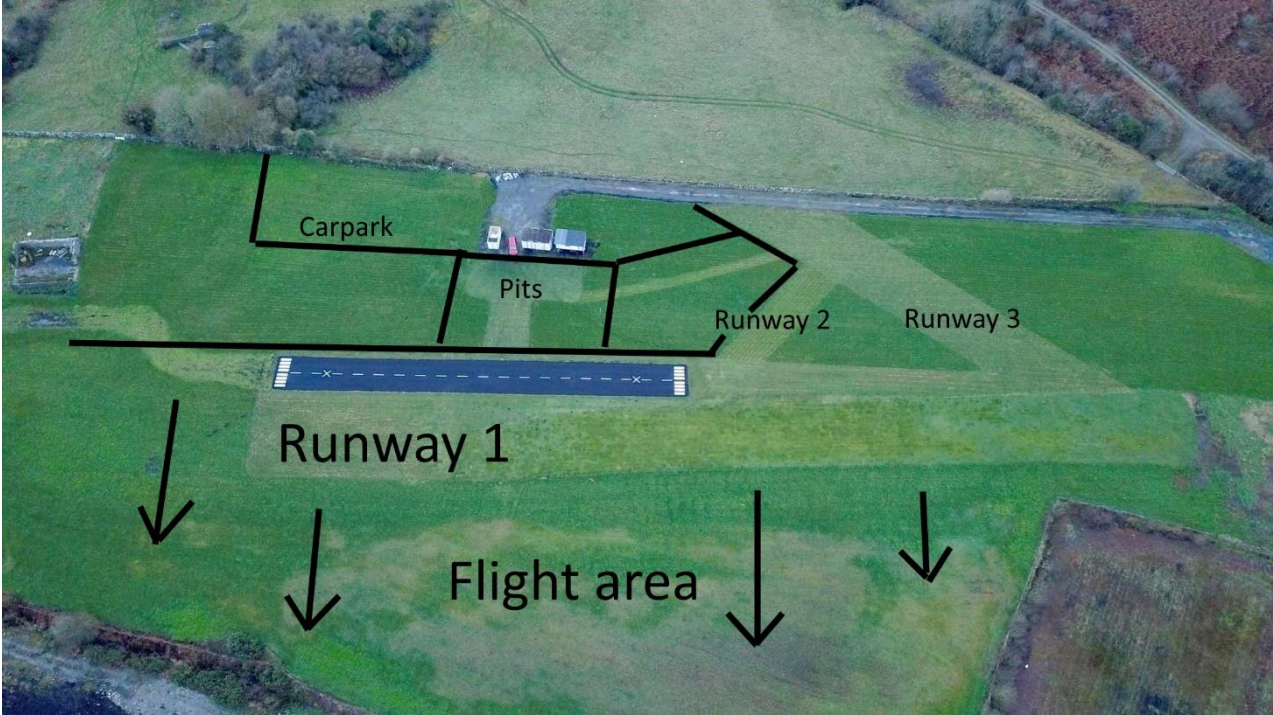
This Club does not undertake to supervise junior members other than for the actual act of model aircraft flying and associated pre-flight and post-flight procedures, unless specifically arranged. Our activities at the flying site do not finish at a regular time and it is therefore your responsibility to ensure the well being of your child over and above arranging a predetermined collection time. Should you wish to leave your child at the flying site, it is your responsibility to arrange for one of the senior members to supervise him/her during your absence.

In addition this Club has specific rules relating to junior members and you are required to study them carefully.

This membership form must be countersigned by the parent/guardian if the applicant is under 18 years of age, thereby signifying you accept the conditions of junior membership."

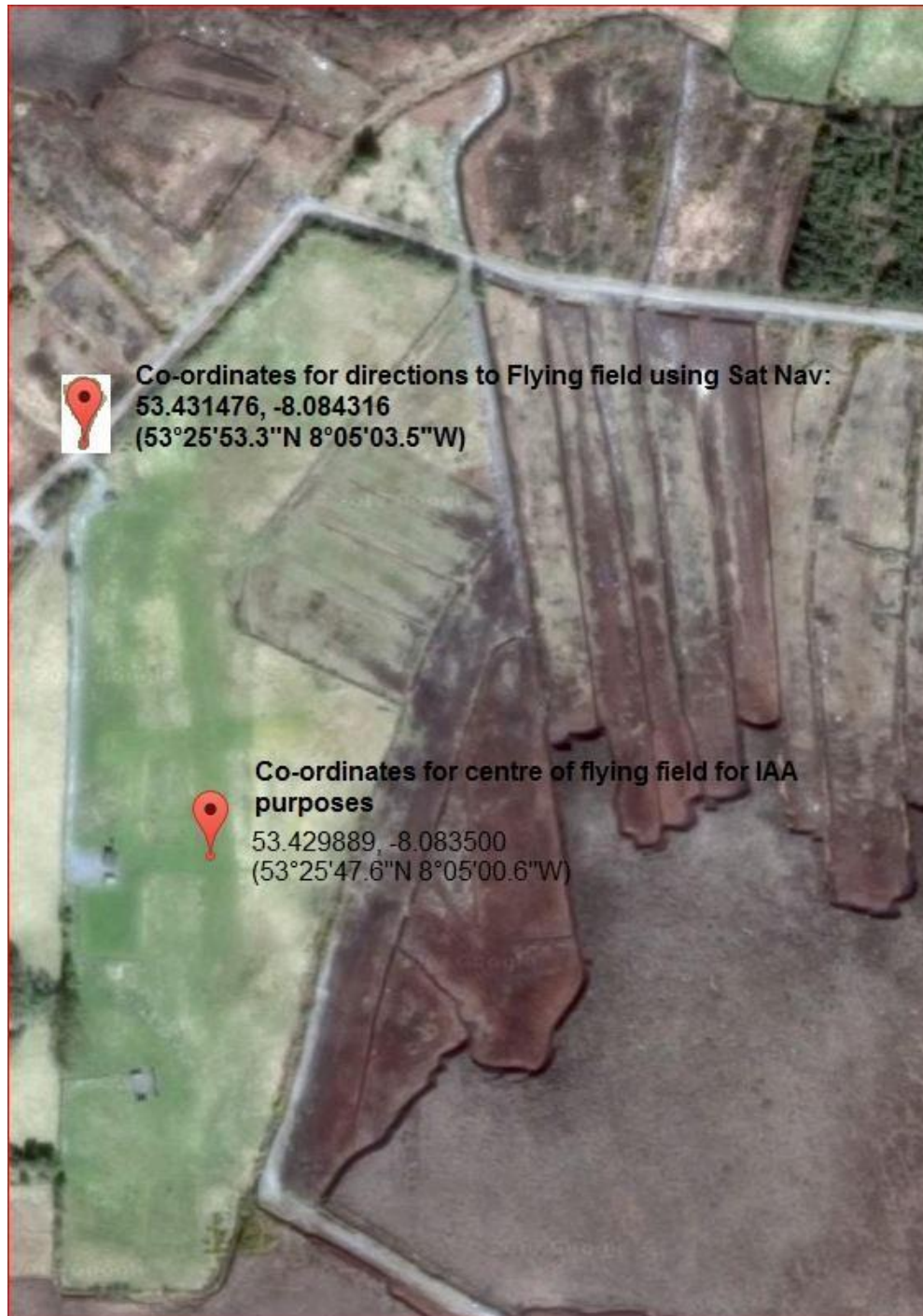
Finally, caring for junior members is largely a matter of common sense provided everyone is clear on what is expected of them and a few simple principles are adhered to. It is not a responsibility to be feared but is nevertheless essential if we are to ensure we continue to attract youth into model flying.

4. Appendix IA - Map of Flying field



5. Appendix IB - Flying field co-ordinates

The easiest way to find AMFC is to use the following Google maps code:
Please use this Google maps code to find us: 9C5HCWJ8+56



6. Appendix II - Disciplinary procedures

Disciplinary Procedure guidance

Minor faults or shortcomings in behaviour should normally be dealt with informally by a committee member with a view to reaching agreement on the improvement required. Informal warnings should not form part of the formal disciplinary procedure and the formal procedure would not be followed before an informal warning is given. If, however, the problem persists or if the matter is more serious, action under the formal disciplinary procedure outlined in the constitution will normally be taken.

Disciplinary sanctions

As part of any disciplinary procedure, where the committee considers it appropriate to do so, they may impose a disciplinary sanction, which is a penalty. These will generally take the form of some type of warning.

- **Verbal warning notice**

If conduct does not meet acceptable standards, a member may be given a formal verbal warning. This should set out the conduct problem, confirmation of improvement required and time scale for improvement to be made, together with the assistance to be provided to meet the objectives. A record of the verbal warning will be kept but the warning will be disregarded after usually a six month period (the time frame is dependent on the committee's decision) provided conduct has been satisfactory.

- **Written warning**

If the offence is more serious or if there is insufficient improvement after a verbal warning or if a further broadly similar offence occurs whilst a verbal warning remains in force, a written warning may be given. This will set out the nature of the conduct problem and confirmation of improvement required and time scale for improvement to be made, together with the assistance provided to meet the objectives. The warning should also inform the member that should your conduct fail to improve or you commit any further disciplinary offence over the next twelve months, (the time frame is dependent on the committee) then you will be issued with a final written warning. The written warning will be kept on file, and the member should be informed after what time period it will be disregarded providing their conduct, attendance or performance has been satisfactory.

- **Dismissal**

If there is still further misconduct or a failure to improve conduct the final stage in the procedure may be dismissal.

Examples of misconduct

Examples of misconduct which may lead to disciplinary action being taken include, but are not limited to:

- failure to comply with field safety rules
- breach of club policies and practices

Examples of gross misconduct

Where the offence is one of gross misconduct the normal penalty will be dismissal without a prior warning being issued (summary dismissal).

Dismissal for gross misconduct will not normally occur until a disciplinary meeting has taken place.

Examples of gross misconduct which will justify summary dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- dishonesty, theft and fraud from the club or its members
- deception, for example making untrue statements in membership applications or falsifying expenses incurred on behalf of the club, etc.
- vandalism or sabotage of club equipment and property
- fighting, or seriously disruptive behaviour or offensive or abusive language
- serious misuse of computer, email and internet systems, including posting to club websites or emailing pornographic, offensive or obscene emails to members
- misuse of club financial or other confidential club information
- acts of bullying, harassment or discrimination
- model flying under the influence of drinks, illegal drugs or other intoxicants
- misconduct which may bring the club into disrepute
- serious breaches of the clubs policies, procedures and safety rules
- deliberate or serious damage to the clubs/landowners property or causing loss, damage or injury through serious negligence, including divulging the padlock combination codes of Athlone Model Flying clubs security gates or club doors to non-members.
- any criminal offence carried out at the club site or during club meetings/events where such offence impacts or may impact upon the club