



Itchen Valley Amateur Radio Club Annual Report 2024 / 2025



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Minutes of the Itchen Valley Amateur Radio Club AGM held at the Village Hall, Otterbourne on Friday 22nd March 2024

The Annual General Meeting opened at 20:00.

A quorum of 10 members plus 3 committee members and two guests were present at the 2024 AGM. Time 20:00 22-03-2024

Apologies for absence had been received from Richard Harris G3OTK, Graham King G3XSD and Bill Redman-White G3XSH/ZL4ET.

1. Review of the minutes for AGM 2023

The minutes for AGM 2023 were published on the club forum for members to review.

It was agreed that the minutes represented the business discussed and Martyn 2E0OGR proposed that the minutes be accepted and this was seconded by Alan G8IPQ.

2. Secretary's Report

This year many talks were presented by club members and again many thanks to those who contributed to these, it is always interesting to learn about a totally new subject or learn more about something we thought we already understood.

On the 14th April Paul M1CNK presented at talk titled 'Improving an antenna'. This presented a comparison of antenna performance using WSPR.live web site. Paul explained how this on-line resource and the WSPR low power beacon mode can be used to provide signal measurements of an antenna. In this case Paul compared his G7FEK antenna with a Comet CHA-250BX multi-band vertical.

Chris G7LWV presented an 'Introduction to DMR' on 28th May. Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) is a commonly used digital voice mode on VHF and UHF. It is a commercial format originally developed as a replacement for analogue PMR, Chris explained a few features that need to be understood to get the best from it. Unlike most other digital voice modes it is an international standard and has no vendor lock-in so many radios and handhelds are available.

The Compton Church field site that we had previously used for Field Day contest activities had high RF noise floor so Graham G3XSD carried out an investigation and on June 23 presented a talk titled 'Noise assessment of potential field sites' this explained the measurement techniques used and the results. The test included establishing a noise floor reference at his home QTH and then measurements at Compton Church field using a TinySA spectrum analyser. Results showed that the noise level at the Compton site was significantly reduced from that experienced during the last field day activation and is now 'wholly workable'.

On 11th August we introduced a new format for our talks, we held three 'lightning talks' and a short Q&A session between each, rather than holding a single talk during a club meeting.

- Simon M0KFQ, Building and installing an ESP32 controlled Fluxgate Magnetometer

- Paul M1CNK, Modifying a Wi-Fi mains switch to use the DMX lighting control protocol
- Chris G7LWV, Introducing Raspberry-Pi Pico Basic

On the 22nd September Ken G4DKH provided a talk about his Norwegian mini 'DXpedition'. As well as showing stunning photographs of the Norwegian west coast he also explained how QRP portable can be done for real, with the majority of camp sites having ample space for rigging up simple antenna without inconveniencing other campers.

An 'RF Power measurement workshop' was held on October 27th, a short introduction to power measurement methods was given by Chris G7LWV and then various transceivers were tested using measurement equipment provided by Glyn M0XGT and Andy G4JNT. The session was very interactive and some of the results were quite surprising.

Graham G3XSD provide a talk about 'Ionosondes and ionograms' and how these can be used to provide a real-time view of radio propagation, this was on the 8th December. Interpretation of some of the details displayed within ionograms was particularly useful to help to find that 'elusive DX' or to understand conditions during a contest.

On January 26th Alan G3UQW (RSGB area rep.) explained the RSGB Brickworks initiative. This comprises of a series of club based activities, primarily aimed at building confidence for less experienced members, however the activities are also aimed at all club members to get involved and provide some fun and an element of competition.

The last talk of the year was on 9th February and about 'WiFi connection for the Nano VNA' presented by Duncan G3RQF. He showed how the USB connection for a Nano VNA could be connected remotely over WiFi, this allows the VNA to be located at an antenna feed point rather than at the end of a long run of cable. This also provided a mechanically better solution for connecting the Nano VNA which has somewhat delicate RF ports.

Other events

The club 'QRP Day' held last year was very successful so a second event was planned this year. Unfortunately the Village Hall garden and meeting room used last year were not available to hire at a reasonable cost so an alternative location was required. Paul M1CNK kindly arranged an alternative location of Roke Manor near Romsey. A date was set as 22nd July – subject to good weather conditions. The great British summer weather did not fail to meet our low expectations and the event was cancelled because of heavy rain and high winds. The event was rescheduled for 23rd September which turned out to be a fantastic day and the event was again a great success.

A Junk Sale was held on 24th November. Thanks again to Brian G0UKB for being auctioneer and Liz M0ACL for helping to collect the money. The mountain of club 'junk' has now mostly been cleared so most of the items on sale were provided by club members.

A Club Xmas 2m net was held on 22 December, this was kindly hosted by Martyn 2E0OGR, many members participated and we hope to hold more club nets through-out the year.

The post Xmas meeting on 12th January was held at the Kings Head in Hursley because the village hall was not available. This venue was very welcoming and provided a great alternative location for a club gathering, many thanks to Simon M0KFQ for suggesting the location and making the arrangements.

3. Chairman's Report

Ken presented the Chairman's report (see separate file)

4. Treasurer's Report

Simon provided a club financial report (see separate file)

5. Agreement on membership subscriptions

Simon explained that club finances are in a healthy state for 2024 following recent donation of equipment and club sales, so the proposal was to keep membership subscriptions at the existing level, which is £25 for full members, £30 for family membership and £15 for student members (TBC).

The proposal to keep the subscription rate at the same level was made by Simon M0KFQ and seconded by Andy G4JNT.

6. Nomination of inspection for this year's accounts

Simon requested volunteers to inspect this year's club accounts ahead of the 2025 AGM. Steve G8XEV and Paul M1CNK kindly agreed to do this.

7. Contest report

Ken provided a report of club contest activities during the year – see separate file.

8. Election of committee

The existing committee was dissolved and Andy G4JNT acted as a stand-in club president while nominations were made for the Chairman role. Ken agreed to continue as Chairman and he was proposed by Steve G8XEV and seconded by Martyn 2E0OGR .

Simon agreed to continue as Treasurer and was proposed by Edgar M7WEF and seconded by Paul M1CNK.

Chris G7LWV wished to step down as Secretary after doing the role for five years. Martyn 2E0OGR agreed to be secretary for 6 months and after that time if no other volunteers step forward for this role then Steve G8XEV will take over. Martyn was proposed as Secretary by Alan G8IPQ and this was seconded by Paul M1CNK.

9. AOB

Ken has a meeting on Sunday with the Lifeboat team to finalise the arrangements for the SOS radio 200 special event at Calshot lifeboat station. This event will be held in May.

George Unitt is continuing with his DoE award with amateur radio as his chosen skill, he has now completed the Essex Ham foundation training course and will take exam over Easter. All members wished him the best of luck with his exam.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21:30.

Chairman's Report 2024 / 2025

I can hardly believe that another year has passed since writing last year's report - it has certainly been a busy and successful year for Itchen Valley Amateur Radio Club.

First, I would like to thank the Committee for their support and work during the year. Simon MOKFQ has done excellent work in keeping our finances in order, and steering us towards online payments and a cheque-free, cashless banking environment. I'd also like to thank Simon for looking after refreshments – not only organising milk, tea, coffee and biscuits but also washing up and clearing away after each meeting. Martyn 2E0OGR took over the role of Secretary at last year's AGM, initially on a temporary basis, since then he has done a grand job for the Club. As Martyn mentions in his report, he plans to move to the West Country during 2025 so we will need to look for a successor.

Also a huge thanks to all those who have given talks to the Club over the past year. We are fortunate in having a wealth of talent and experience within the Club and the range of topics presented in the talks by members and outside speakers is impressively wide, reflecting the range and variety of interests in our hobby. I'd also like to thank all Club members for their continued support and participation in all Club activities, whether it be engaging in special events, contesting, giving talks or attending our regular meetings.

Membership numbers appear to have stabilised, and although still not back to pre-Covid levels, are continuing to grow slowly but steadily. We have been fortunate in welcoming a number of newly licensed members to the Club and hope they will find plenty to interest them. I believe our Brickworks initiative, and our formal accreditation at the beginning of last year has played a significant part in this. We have received very positive feedback from new members on the "Getting started..." series of talks we organised throughout last year aimed at helping newcomers get up and running with simple HF & VHF stations, and we plan to continue this approach during the coming year.

As highlighted in the Treasurer's Report, the Club is in a strong financial position. This is largely due to proceeds from the sale of equipment from Ray G3HRH (SK), who was Club President and long time club member. It was Ray's wish that the Club would benefit from his equipment, therefore over the coming year we will determine how best this can be achieved.

In last year's Chairman's Report, I said that I would like to see the club being more engaged in activities and events beyond the fortnightly Friday evening meetings. During 2024-25 I think we have broadly succeeded in this goal – with the support of club members we have participated in the following activities:-

- Set up and operated a station at Western Primary School, Winchester as part of their Year 6 project on the Titanic disaster
- Operated a special event station GB0CLB at RNLi Calshot as part of SOS Radio Week celebrating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the RLNI. We also made a donation of £50 to the RLNI in recognition of the work of the volunteers & crews.
- Participated in the National Field Day CW contest, recording the club's highest ever number of contacts.

- Held another successful QRP Day at Roke Manor, with many different bands, modes and portable set-ups being demonstrated by club members.
- Operated not one, but two Jamboree-On-The-Air (JOTA) special event stations! One organised by Colin G4GBP on behalf of 1st Eynsham Scout Group near Oxford, the other operating from the HQ of 12th Winchester Scout Group. There can't be too many radio clubs in the country running separate JOTA activities for two different Scout Groups!
- Club visit to Bletchley Park, the home of code-breaking during the Second World War, including a visit to the very impressive RSGB National Radio Centre.

This has been another very successful year for the Club, and our thanks must go out to all those members who have made it such. Next year we should keep challenging ourselves, both individually and as a Club, to extend our activities and interests and ensure the Club is relevant and interesting to existing members and newcomers alike.

Ken Hastie G4DKH
Chairman

Club Visit to Bletchley Park

On Saturday 18th October, seven IVARC members embarked on a club visit to Bletchley Park, the home of code-breaking during the Second World War, in particular the German Enigma and Lorenz ciphers.

After a short wander through the visitor centre, we took the 1 hour guided orientation tour around the site. This helped us appreciate the sheer scale of the activities that took place at Bletchley Park, and provided us with a lot of useful information for the rest of our visit. Steve G8XEV's

excellent Enigma presentation at our last club meeting was also invaluable in preparing us for the visit.

After the tour, we set off round the various buildings and exhibits on the Bletchley estate, before meeting up again at the very impressive RSGB National Radio Centre.

A very enjoyable day out, and we all took advantage of free admission to Bletchley Park as a benefit of our RSGB membership !



Another successful QRP Day!

IVARC's annual "QRP day" event was held at Roke Manor, near Romsey on 21st September 2024. Initially there were some concerns due to the weather, with thunderstorms the previous night, however the day turned out to be fine with only a few spots of rain around midday.

The Roke site again proved to be an ideal venue for this event, set in an attractive environment with plenty of space for multiple stations and different antenna configurations.



Will 2E0HAI and Christian M0UOS were busy receiving WEFAX satellite images



Paul M1CNK used an end fed half wave on the HF bands, with SSB from his K2 and data (FT8) from his QMX



Andy G4JNT took advantage of the Roke location to receive downlink signals from the geostationary QO-100 satellite



Chris G7LWV operated on HF CW with his QMX transceiver and end fed half wave antenna.

Secretary's Report 2024 / 2025

Most of you will know that I agreed to hold the position of Secretary for the club on the proviso that I may jump ship and disappear to Dartmouth on or around my retirement. I still remain committed to our club but my work still demands more from me than I expected and I apologise for the slight lateness in sending out the AGM pack. My plans are still to move in 2025 so my term of office may come to an end requiring someone to jump in.

Anyway, what an interesting year.

Apart for our regular round robins and catchups at club nights the year has been punctuated with a fair few interesting talks, lectures and visits.

In April Paul M1CNK kindly provided a really interesting talk on Modern QSLing, DXCC and other awards. The more experienced of us will be used to this sort of thing but this subject really opened my eyes and I found the subject to be extremely interesting.

In May we set up a Special Events Station GB0CLB in support of the RNLI at their station in Calshot and made some excellent contacts using the club's radio and wire antenna.



Special Event Station GB0CLB at RNLI Calshot

This was quickly followed by our Chairman Ken G4DKH presenting Brickworks and getting started on HF.

Graham G3XSD followed this up in June with a Brickworks inspired talk on Simple HF Antennas which was really informative and helped to de-mystify a few things for me, Thanks Graham.



Edgar M7WEF receives his Silver Brickworks award

In July Chris G7LWV followed the HF Antenna talk with a Brickworks talk describing his experiments with the creation of a 2m/70cm J-Pole Antenna. The experiment described the hoops Chris had to jump through to not only get a working and efficient antenna but the construction challenges and the frustrating effects that changing one part of the 2m J-pole had on the 70cm part. All in all, a really interesting insight of the challenges of experimentation.

September saw the QRP event taking place and a big thankyou to Paul M1CNK for arranging for an excellent venue.

September also saw a fantastically interesting talk by Andy G4JNT on the QO-100 geostationary satellite which to complete satellite novices like me was absolutely amazing and gave me some inspiration to have a go one day.

October was highlighted by an amazingly detailed and interesting talk on the Enigma coding Machine by Steve G8XEV. This talk demystified no end of myths that had been said about this interesting machine and you can see from Steve's incredible depth of knowledge on this subject, his passion for learning more about how it really worked. This was followed in a week or two with a really excellent visit to the place where our wartime scientists like Allan Turing cracked the code, which of course is Bletchley Park. It was an amazing place with lots of the actual equipment and buildings still in place. The stories were very inspirational and although the day was long and tiring, I won't forget this in a hurry. Of course, whilst we were there we couldn't miss visiting the RSGB National Radio Centre and having a play on their nice toys.

In November we had a really interesting and practical demonstration of tying knots, lashing & rigging by Steve G8XEV. As an old Sea Scout this brought back loads of memories and everyone found this to be a really interesting and useful set of skills to learn.



In January 2025, we met up at the Kings Head Hursley for a good chat, food and a drink or two to belatedly celebrate Christmas 2024.

In February 2025 we were pleased to welcome Tim Pettis, Hampshire Emergency Planning who gave an eye-opening talk on resilience and risk and the way that Amateur Radio could help in time of crisis. This talk was a massive eye opener to all who attended and I hope Tim can come again to let us know what we can do to help.

**Martyn Coombes 2E0OGR
Secretary**

IVARC Membership 2024 / 2025

<u>Callsign</u>	<u>Name</u>
2E0HAI	Will Eittle
2E0OGR	Martyn Coombes
G0GRI	Ian Carter
G0UKB	Brian Jones *
G0VNI	Sheila Williams
G0WIL	Mike Williams
G3OTK	Richard Harris *
G3XSD	Graham King
G3XSH	Bill Redmon-White
G4DKH	Ken Hastie
G4GBP	Colin North
G4JHC	Peter Blunn
G4JNT	Andy Talbot
G4YUP	Peter Thurlow
G5JDH	James Hunt
G7LWV	Chris Ash
G8IPQ	Alan Badcock
G8XEV	Steve Tindale
M0ACL	Liz Jones *
M0KFQ	Simon Miller
M0KOR	Daniel Korzeniewicz
M0XGT	Glyn Thomas
M1CNK	Paul Wilton
M1ENU	Quintin Gee
M7WEF	Edgar Fernandes

25 Members

** = Honorary Life Member*

National Field Day 2024

National Field Day has been a highlight of the IVARC calendar for many years and 2024 was no exception. Using the Club's G6IVR/P callsign, 2024 turned out to be a bumper year, the club smashing it's previous record of 806 contacts in 24 hours with a new all time high of 897.

Contacts were to 45 different countries mostly in ITU Region 1 but also included Japan, The Falklands, Zambia and Australia.

IVARC's field was kindly loaned by John G8FMQ. Situated on the edge of the New Forest at Canada Common near West Wellow in Hampshire it proved ideal: electrically quiet and most importantly big enough to accommodate the long dipole antenna required for topband.



Ken G4DKH (L) and Graham G3XSD (R) at the operating table, Richard G3OTK in the background

The team operated in pairs, taking shifts and covering the full 24 hours; thanks to Chris G7LWV, Graham G3XSD, Ken G4DKH, Peter G4JHC, Richard G3OTK and Steve G8XEV.

All the gear performed flawlessly, the weather was dry and sunny, there was an endless supply of bacon butties and tea and a great time was had by all!



IVARC's station G6IVR/P in the field at Canada Common on the edge of the New Forest



Steve G8XEV in mass bacon buttie production

Jamboree On The Air 2024

Itchen Valley Amateur Radio Club has a long history of supporting Jamboree On The Air for local Scout groups, and this year was no different – except that we set up and operated stations for not one but two different Scout Groups!

On Friday 18th October, Ken G4DKH, Chris G7LWV, Martyn 2E0OGR and George M7FYO operated HF and VHF stations from the HQ of 12th Winchester Scout Group. After a short introductory talk about amateur radio, the over 40 Cubs and Scouts visited the stations and spent some time listening to the contacts. During the evening we contacted stations in all of the home countries (including the Channel Islands), as well as stations in Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Slovenia, Norway and Denmark. We also contacted 4 other JOTA stations. The Cubs and Scouts were each given an opportunity to pass a short message and practice their use of the phonetic alphabet over the air. All in all, a very successful evening, and many thanks to all involved in organising, setting up and operating the station. Judging from the interest and questions asked by the Scouts, there may well be a few more Foundation licencees in Winchester in the next few years!



Colin G4GBP also organised a very successful event over the whole weekend, running special event station GB1ESG for the 1st Eynsham Scout Group, near Oxford (*see Colin's separate report in the "Club" section on the forum*). Not only did Colin set up and operate the JOTA station, he also organised a series of communications related activities over the weekend, including laptops for JOTI (Jamboree Over The Internet), morse buzzer practice, a telephone switchboard with extension phones (one of which was an old-style rotary dial phone!), secret cypher coding and decoding, secret writing with invisible ink, cup-and-string phones, and designing QSL cards. Over 70 youngsters (and their Leaders) thoroughly enjoyed the event, which was a great success.

Contest Report 2024 / 2025

CQ SSB WPX (March 2024)

Paul M1CNK stayed on 10m for the whole weekend, although operating times were limited and managed to put in about 4 hours in total. A total of 59 contacts were made, with 16 DXCC (including Japan and Bonaire) – not bad for 100w to a simple vertical antenna !

CW Field Day (June 2024)

CW Field Day saw the clubs record for the number of contacts beaten by a good margin. The previous record stood at 806; it is now 897 (before adjudication). IVARC came 9th out of 14 entries in the Low Power Unassisted section. We had a great site on the edge of Canada Common near West Wellow, all the gear worked well and we managed to operate on all bands from 160m to 10m, through the whole 24 hours. Even the weather was kind. Well done to all who helped set up, operate, support and pack up. Everyone worked superbly well together and contributed to what was a very enjoyable weekend as well as a successful one.

VHF & SSB Field Days (July & September 2024)

Unfortunately the club was unable to participate in VHF Field Day in July due to lack of a suitable site, although Ken G4DKH was active during part of the VHF Field Day weekend from a /P location south east of Winchester. We were also unable to raise sufficient operators to justify participating in SSB Field Day in September. Hopefully we will be able to take part in both events in 2025.

80m Club Contests (2024)

The club achieved 36th place out of 49 clubs in the Local Club category. Club members who operated in this series were Graham G3XSD/G5T, Richard G3OTK/G3N, Peter G4YUP, Ken G4DKH and Paul, M1CNK.

CQ WW DX SSB (Oct 2024)

Several club members participated in this event. Paul M1CNK worked 126 QSOs & 43 DXCC, all S&P (over half of these were on 10m). Chris G7LWV achieved 11 QSOs including 2 new Caribbean DXCCs, all on 10m using 20w to an end-fed wire antenna. Well done both!

CQ WW DX CW (Nov 2024)

Paul M1CNK operated on 40, 20, 15 & 10m and achieved 121 QSOs & 34 DXCCs, including Australia and China. Graham G3XSD worked a total of 308 QSOs on 80 to 10m including 50 DXCC, with best DX being St Helena and China. An excellent result for both operators!

Treasurer's Report 2024 / 2025

Profit/(Loss)	Bank	Savings	Cash	2024	2023
Income					
Equipment Sales	£ 3,225		£ 233	£ 3,458	£ 25
Subscriptions	£ 449		£ 80	£ 529	£ 404
Tea Bar Sales	£ 10		£ 64	£ 74	£ 105
Events	£ 50			£ 50	
Savings Income		£ 8		£ 8	
Junk Sales					£ 23
	<u>£ 3,734</u>	<u>£ 8</u>	<u>£ 377</u>	<u>£ 4,119</u>	<u>£ 557</u>
Expense					
Hall Hire	£ 770			£ 770	£ 770
Insurance	£ 213			£ 213	£ 201
Equipment	£ 141			£ 141	
RSGB Annual Sub.	£ 68			£ 68	£ 65
Donations	£ 50			£ 50	
Events	£ 44			£ 44	£ 10
Tea Bar Supplies			£ 12	£ 12	
	<u>£ 1,286</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ 12</u>	<u>£ 1,298</u>	<u>£ 1,047</u>
Profit/(Loss)				<u>£ 2,821</u>	<u>£ (490)</u>

Balance	Bank	Savings	Cash	2024	2023
Start of Year	£ 4,350.62	£ -	£ 192.95	£ 4,543.57	£ 5,033.13
End of Year	£ 855.64	£ 6,508.20	£ 0.75	£ 7,364.59	£ 4,543.57
Profit/(Loss)				£ 2,821.02	£ (489.56)

Overview of IVARC Accounts

Income

G3HRH (SK) Sales boosted income compared to previous year	£	3,433
Tea Bar Sales discontinued 7/11/2024		

Expense

New Equipment: table, fire extinguisher, first aid kit and pulley replacements	£	141
Donation to RNLI	£	50

Hall Hire, Insurance, RSGB Annual Sub. are similar to previous years
Event expense covered by individual's contribution (income)