



UK Microwave Group Report to RSGB Spectrum Forum

Introduction to UKuG

The UK Microwave Group represents the interests of amateur microwave radio enthusiasts in the UK. Its Committee is an elected body representing the interests of UK amateur microwave enthusiasts. The UKuG is open to membership for both UK and overseas microwavers. UKuG is now 14 years old, having been formed at the Martlesham Microwave Roundtable in November 1999 and it is affiliated to the RSGB. Membership has remained largely static at around 400 since the last report.

Events organised and supported during 2013

- Martlesham Microwave Roundtable with UKuG AGM - April
- Microwave Roundtable and buildathon organised by the Finningley Club – July.
- Microwave Roundtable with Construction contest organised by the Crawley Club - September
- Exhibited at RSGB Convention – October, and members made presentations on Microwave topics.
- Scottish Microwave Roundtable, Burntisland near Dunfermline - November
- Rutherford Appleton Laboratories Microwave Roundtable organised by the Harwell Club
- UKuG displays at the East Suffolk rally.
- BATC, Finningley. Talk by G8DKK on LNBS for ATV use.

Club outreach

We attended the Felixstowe Club's East Suffolk Wireless revival with UKuG displays. The Group continues to support the Finningley, Crawley and Harwell Clubs with their Microwave Round tables.

Technical Support

A number of UKuG members provided technical support as part of our scheme including microwave filter alignment and transverter testing. We have made available a "member's loan" 5.7GHz transverter system, and it is currently being used to good effect by GM0USI. The group are currently building a 10GHz transverter system for the same purpose and will be built from the new GW4DGU "Plug and Play" modules which were kindly made available by GW4DGU for a reduced price. The "Chipbank," the groups completely free chip component supply service, is proving popular both by post and at our Round tables

Newsletter

Scatterpoint, the e-newsletter of the Group, under the Editorship of Martin, G8BHC is published 10 times a year continues to attract top-line technical articles as well as being a comprehensive repository of reports of activity.

Beacons

The following new beacons came on air in 2013; GB3NGI on 10GHz and GB3ZME on 2.3GHz. Upgrades have been carried out to the Bell Hill GB3SC* cluster and to the Cambridgeshire 24GHz beacon GB3CAM. Some progress has been made in agreements with the Primary users over other new NoVs in the pipeline, but as yet, no NoVs have been forthcoming. Sadly we lost the beacon cluster in Bristol. Beacon NoVs issued for 5.7 and 10GHz for GB3CSB, and the 47, 76 and 134GHz licences issued for the GB3CCX cluster at Cheltenham have not yet been implemented. I'm afraid that this does not help our case when we complain about licence delays. The group has re-purposed the GB3CEM 10GHz beacon, kindly donated by the estate of the late G4PBP and it has been installed as GB3PKT at Clacton. We are still awaiting the NoV for the beacon.

Reverse DDS (RDDS) control kits, are still made available to beacon builders free of charge through the Group, and allow current and future beacons to be locked to high stability 10MHz or other sources. For the second year running, none have been taken up. The Reverse DDS solution provides for MGM modulation facilities, if required. Odd frequency offsets, used by many beacons, can be accommodated.

Beaconspot.eu is still the most up to date source of real time VHF/Microwave beacon data currently available and is fully integrated with the DX Cluster. While originally designed for the microwave bands much use is also being made by VHF operators this year.

Spectrum news

The UKuG organised a co-ordinated response with BATC to Ofcom's consultation on 2.3 and 3,4GHz, providing "boiler plate" responses for members to base their submission upon. A good response was returned.

Terrestrial

1296 and 10368MHz continue to be the most popular terrestrial microwave bands, with increasing activity on 2320MHz, boosted by the SHF UKAC contests. As per last year, activity seems still to be clustered around this and other contests. The UK 76GHz and Nanowave records were broken this year, but activity on 76GHz is limited to a small group in the South and West.

EME

There continues to be plenty of 23cm activity pretty much any time the moon is up and this band is attracting more very small JT mode stations to participate, much in the way that 144MHz EME has evolved. Microwave activity on EME in Europe is much higher than in the USA where most eme is done on 144 JT65 with a little activity on 1296.

UKuG Awards

Just one 70 squares award on 1.3GHz this year, so uptake is slow and we continue to maintain the distance records and firsts databases. We have had some initial drafts of a distance award certificate design and we expect to be able to relaunch the distance awards in Jan 2014. We have had communication with SOTA about distance awards and are waiting on feedback from them on the proposed categories.

UKuG Contests

The entry level on the lower bands has dropped by 33% year to date, also reflected in entry levels on 5.7GHz and 24GHz. On the brighter side we had many more entries and some real competition in the mm-wave event in July, with entries on 4 bands for the first time I'm aware of. The 10GHz contests this summer attracted 25 different entrants, up from 17 in 2012, a 50% increase. So its a mixed bag!

Submitted by G4BAO on behalf of the UK Microwave Group, October 2012