

STARLITE

THE JOURNAL FOR THE STOURBRIDGE AND DISTRICT A.R.S.



G6QI



G6SRS

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From the editors desk

It has been a busy time of late with quite a bit of activity within the group. Overall activity is building and so too are subjects and topics to be discussed.

The contents to the left details the topics in this newsletter.

Bob Fisher, G3PWJ

For the second time in as many editions of this newsletter, we once again report on the sad passing of a prominent local radio amateur.

Bob Fisher, G3 Peter Willie John as most will know him, sadly passed away suddenly at his Pedmore home during October.

Bob was a well-known and respect member of the amateur radio community, a leading character in the local repeater systems and provision of physical repeaters, as well as having ongoing business interests in commercial radio applications. Often to be heard on the repeater networks he was never short with advice or opinion and was always to be relied upon in any task set.

As a good friend to the Society and many local amateurs, he will be sadly missed.

Bobs funeral will be on Thursday 20th November at 1.30pm, at Stourbridge Crematorium, South Road, DY8 3RQ

Open committee meeting

Monday 20th October saw the first of the planned open committee meetings. After a bit of a false start due to timings the meeting quickly got in to its stride. A good representation of committee and members, alongside a few visitors, gave for a well debated and received meeting with several topics aired and discussed at length.

Key takeaway is the desire for the membership to understand what the committee does, how we plan things and what we have as topics for discussion and ongoing business. This in itself breaks down some of the

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preconceptions of just being a group who meet behind closed doors and as such the committee really does value the input from the whole membership.

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Starlite Editor. Drew Belcher, G7DMO. 07785 340944

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STARS Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/stourbridge.ars>

Meeting places

The Society meets at 2 venues, each reflecting the purpose of meeting.

Main Meetings	Informal meetings
1 st and 3 rd Monday of each month	As published
Norton Community Centre	Norton Social Club
Kempton Way	Osmaston Road
Stourbridge	Stourbridge
DY8 3AP	DY8 2AL
1900 - 2130	2000 - 2200
What 3 words ///ships.cape.food	What 3 words ///tamed.going.heat

Meeting dates

As noted in the meeting place information, the society generally meets each Monday evening. A full meeting calendar can be found at [Events Calendar – g6oi.org.uk](https://www.g6oi.org.uk/EventsCalendar)

Monday 17 November	Norton Community Centre	1930 - 2130	General club night
Monday 27 November	Norton Social Club	2000 - 2200	General club night
Monday 1 December	Norton Community Centre	1930 - 2130	General club night
Monday 8 December	Norton Social Club	2000 - 2200	General club night
Monday 15 December	Norton Community Centre	1930 - 2130	General club night
Monday 22 December	Norton Social Club	2000 - 2200	General club night
Monday 5 January	Norton Community Centre	1930 - 2130	General club night

Further down in the newsletter is a separate piece on available dates for meetings and talks. Everyone is welcome to talk on a given subject matter and to share information and knowledge with the members.

Jota 2025

For the annual Jamboree On The Air, JOTA, members of the society helped out 2 local groups with radio activations.

Friday evening saw the team at the 4th Stourbridge (Wollaston St James) group, once some of us found the turning, for a good activation and Scout turnout. Richard M0VZD had come up with some good tasks for the

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scouts to get involved with and Richard G3RBH and Tony M6AHW both provided kit and good station setups with contacts made and messages passed.

Saturday saw the next team up at the Wollescote Scout Hut for another good morning of radio, but sadly not such good support from the scout troop. However, a good venue and some good contacts from the kit supplied by members as well as another opportunity to get the radios going.

For both venues a warm reception from the leaders and scouts, encouraging to see the younger generation involved in alternative technology, talking to the other stations and taking an active interest in radio communications.

Thanks to everyone involved, who helped plan, organize the special event callsigns, supply kit, rigging services, operating, engaging the youngsters and generally being there to be part of the team, it was very much appreciated.

Should you know of a similar group, society or association that may benefit from a hands on talk and demonstration, then please contact the committee.

Do we have your details?

This was in the last newsletter and this is a polite reminder to let the secretary / treasurer know if any of your details have changed. We can only communicate with you if we know how to contact you.

Equally, if you know someone has changed details and who may not be reading this, then please ask them to update information.

Weekly Net

The weekly net is ongoing and has created a challenge of late. Thursday evenings at 2000, 145.325 is where you will likely find someone from the society engaged in some topic or other. If frequency appears busy then QSY up or down as they net may have moved or started a subnet due to not everyone being able to hear each other.

Net night issues

For some time the weekly Thursday net has been having a few problems with some members not able to hear other members, thus forming the Stourbridge and Kidderminster sub groups.

Using Google Earth and some tweaking, it is possible to visualise why this may be the case. Based on data available I have plotted the radio paths between stations who report they cannot hear the other group, despite conditions and power used.

Fig 1 below shows the direct paths between various stations. Green is <2km, yellow 2-5km and red >5km. To the left the Kidderminster stations can easily hear each other, as can the Stourbridge and Wordsley group to the right. The broken red lines for Drew and Mark (bottom right) are too close to propagate over the geographic feature that is Bunkers Hill, hence they sit in the radio shadow of the hill. The other stations in Stourbridge and Wordsley therefore do not suffer so much path loss due to the hill not being such a prominent obstacle.

Figures 2 and 3 below show the suggested path obstructions between Alan to the left and Drew / Mark to the right, relative on each plot.

Clearly not a quick fix for the stations that cannot hear each other and this does work well with the spirit of continued growth and development of ones skills and knowledge. Certainly, it has been an interesting exercise to find and use the tools to create and display the information in the images below.

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Fig 1.



Fig 2

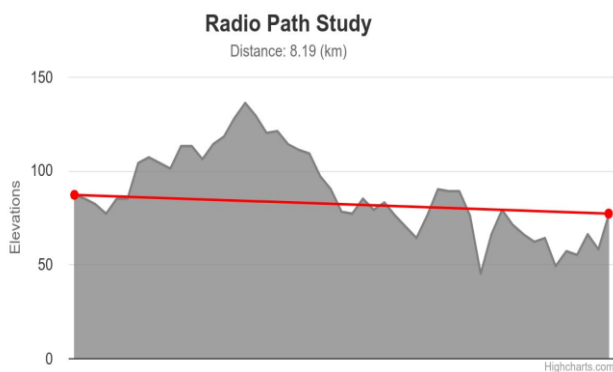
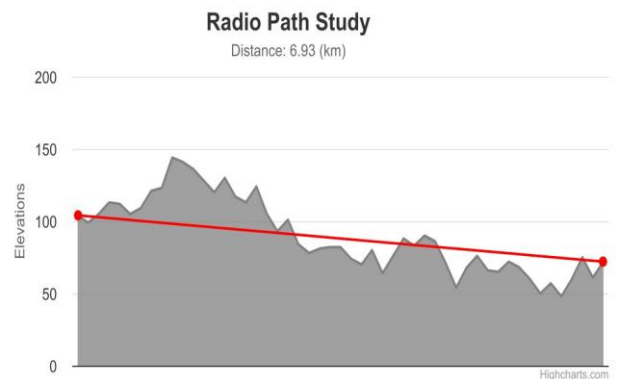


Fig 3



WhatsApp group

As some of you will be aware, we also run a WhatsApp group, for informal discussion and general chats. The chat is lively and some good information and suggestions are shared there, which do not make it to the newsletter.

If you are not a part of this and wish to be then drop the secretary a message and we will get you added.

Committee positions

As with any group, the committee is what keeps it going and guides and support the actions and responsibilities of that group. All committee members are unpaid volunteers and give their time freely and without issue, with some members being on the committee for many years.

Should you have an interest in joining the committee and feel you can bring new ideas and growth, as well as entertain being available for a committee meeting each month, then please contact the Secretary for more details.

Autumn checks

In the last newsletter was a suggestion of tasks for the colder darker months to make sure your station is in good order. Needless to say some checks at the editors shack threw up some interesting finds.

1, 2/70 Antenna SWR high. Not sure what has caused this but the trusted radio attached to this antenna started to protest of high SWR, despite no changes made or any obvious damage to recent weather. Out comes the meter to check and SWR showing as >6:1 across the 2m band. Needless to say this is not presently in use and will need to come down to be checked.

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2, Wi-Fi breakthrough noise. Due to nature of where the shack is and some of the work I do, the Wi-Fi access point is located within the garden. Recently some noise was making itself known and narrowed it down to the access point creating noise, so this has been replaced.

3, PSU appears to be going a little soft, is getting too warm, and likely end of life. Some quick checks indicate that the voltage and current are ok for general use, but that the output is not as expected. Sadly the PSU in question is almost as old as my radio licence and so I feel a new PSU may be needed. On the back of this I may also build a PSU tester, think dummy load but for power, and see how the other power supplies in the shack hold up.

There are likely to be other tasks in the coming months as I look to rebuild the shack, and I suspect other problems will come to light to be shared.

More Alt Codes

In the last newsletter we published some ALT CODES for use in text or reports. Below are some more relevant to RF and electronics.

Character	ALT Code		Character	ALT Code
μ	ALT 230		∞	ALT 236
Ω	ALT 234		α	ALT 224
λ	ALT 955		β	ALT 225
Φ	ALT 232		π	ALT 227

Publicity

In recent months the society has turned a corner and is slowly starting to make its presence felt once more. Having established itself at the Norton Community Centre the society now looks forward to how else it can publicise both what we are and what we do.

Lively debate has ensued and to this end we are asking for your help to get the STARS name out in to the community, encourage opportunities and engage with people.

This is not just a case of new members, even though we would always welcome new members, but to have others engage and build on the spirit of amateur radio.

If you have any suggestions of a group or organisation that could benefit from radio interaction, then please let the committee know.

Dates & Talks

This is not something new or unique to our group, but we would encourage you to see if you want to give a talk to the membership? Whilst generally radio related aspects would be preferred, it could equally be a topic you are well versed on.

Below are the dates for the 3rd Monday in each month, which allows for a talk to be held. This gives the 1st Monday of each month over to committee meetings and general radio evenings.

Monday 19 January 2026	Monday 16 February 2026	Monday 16 March 2026
Monday 20 April 2026	Monday 18 May 2026	Monday 15 June 2026
Monday 20 July 2026	Monday 17 August 2026	Monday 21 September 2026
Monday 19 October 2026	Monday 16 November 2026	Monday 21 December 2026

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Wi-Fi breakthrough

Not strictly club related, but a recent outdoor event I worked on had an amusing issue with electrical noise on a public address system.

The scene is a large outdoor public address system, alongside lighting, video walls and power distribution. Data backhaul via optical fibre from the central control point, and local data on cat6E. Wi-Fi is also part of this system at each of the data rack positions to be able to dial in via a tablet to the various systems.

The kit was all put together, everything tested and the systems all signed off. After a day or so noise was noticed on the PA system when muted between shows. Lots of head scratching ensued as the main crew had not made any changes since sign off.

As it happens a change was forced to the production rack patching and it was discovered some nice individual had placed the otherwise ubiquitous Wi-Fi Access Point (WAP) on top of the audio processing rack. By moving the WAP only a few meters the noise suddenly vanished. Further tests determined the 5GHz output from the WAP was being picked up by some of the processing circuit and turned back in to noise, to then be output via the muted amplifier and speaker system.

The moral here, be careful where you place WAP's, check the routing of audio patch, and don't forget that a muted PA system tends to only mute the source input or signal path, not the output.

Taking the licence forward

A recent comment sparked a good question on an avenue the society could explore to further its growth and membership.

There exists many amateurs who have started the journey and have the foundation licence. Great, this get the person on air, lets them start the hobby and talk to people. But what about next steps to the next licence?

There are resources online for everyone to explore, from theory and principles to mock exam questions and exam revision processes. What seems to be lacking is a physical means to ask others in real time about topics that the person may not fully understand or grasp. Face to face study groups have been suggested as a means to plug this gap, either in a formal fashion or ad hoc approach.

Thus, to all of you from the newer non Radio Amateurs Examination process, is this of interest? If so then let the committee know and we can look to schedule in some time for this.

Your committee

President	Richard Darby	M0VZD
Vice President	Nick Moss	G6DQN
Secretary	Mark Higgins	M7ERH
Treasurer	John Scott	G8UAE
Committee members	Alan Stanley	M7ALS
	Richard Haynes	G3RBH
	Keith Dixon	M0HPY
	John Clarke	M1EJG
	Drew Belcher	G7DMO

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