

Introducing PAFRA

Pilots & Friends of Rochester Airport

Passionate about aviation

Who are we?

We, the Pilots and Friends of Rochester Airport (PAFRA) are a friendly group of enthusiasts who share a passion for 'all things' aviation and the historic airport in the heart of the Medway Towns. Membership is open to everyone; Pilots, student pilots and non-pilots whether they are local to Medway or visitors from further afield.

Our objectives are simple. We are here to:

- provide aviation events such as fly-outs to interesting locations in UK and Europe
- organise social events
- promote safe and enjoyable aviation through a pilot's support network
- support the development of Rochester Airport and its airfield community both now and in the future
- offer discounts on selected products and services from participating businesses

In its early days, PAFRA was created to campaign and raise funds to help save the airfield from closure and to support general aviation at Rochester airport. The immediate threat to the airport is now reduced, particularly with local Government now recognising the benefits an airfield can help deliver to a mixed and well balanced local economy.

With no immediate threat of closure, PAFRA is dedicating more of its time and resources to providing some great benefits to its members. You don't even need to be a pilot to enjoy the benefits of membership!

Fly outs

After spending plenty of time and hard earned money on your pilot's licence, flying cross country will give you real satisfaction and keep your skills honed. Flying to new airfields is also good to maintain your confidence levels. What better way of doing this than in a flying club where you can learn from or contribute to the experience of others?

PAFRA organises a number of fly-outs to interesting locations in the UK and Europe, mainly during the warmer months when the weather is more reliable. The fly-outs are either week-days or weekends so we can offer something to suit everyone's lifestyle.

For those who prefer to spread their wings and explore further afield, we organise fly-outs of up to three days in duration, typically to Europe and/or the Channel Islands. We are fortunate enough to have qualified flying instructors and many experienced pilots in the club who would be more than happy to support you from the right-hand seat.

On the day of the fly-out, we offer a pre-flight briefing and briefing notes to pilots, which are particularly useful to those who have not been to the destination before.



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However, a fly-out is not just a landing at another airport. We always arrange something at the other end whether that's as simple as lunch or maybe something more cultural such as a visit to a local museum.

Here is a list of fly-out destinations which have been arranged by PAFRA in the past. Some are perennial favourites while others appear less frequently in our calendar:

- Shuttleworth – and an opportunity to visit the historic “Shuttleworth Collection”
- Bembridge – a great airfield with lots of activity to watch
- Old Buckenham – the remnants of an historic wartime airfield with a good cafe
- Bidford / Bicester – an opportunity to try your hand at gliding at this airfield
- Midden Zeeland (Holland) – a flight along the coast of France, Belgium then Holland
- Le Touquet (France) – a short walk from the airfield to the picturesque town
- Jersey – more than just a cross-channel flight into Class A airspace
- Clacton – a grass runway probably shorter than most but not too difficult

It doesn't matter if you are a sole owner of an aircraft, a member of a group or if you hire-as-you-fly, you will find fly-outs with PAFRA very rewarding.

Social events

While flying is an important part of the club, the social aspect is equally important as it enables members to meet friends both old and new.

The social events also have a more practical benefit; you will be amazed by the amount of knowledge you will pick up from others as you exchange anecdotes and snippets of information.

Although the social events take place throughout the year, there are more social events during the winter months to keep you entertained and allow you to bemoan the adverse British weather.

Here are some examples of social events organised by PAFRA:

- Talks and presentations from experienced and interesting people in aviation
- Ground based competitions such as bowling and Scalextric racing challenges
- Flying competitions such as spot landing and navigation challenges
- Quiz nights and BBQs
- Pub lunches and other social gatherings

For an added element of healthy competition, we also have ‘challenges of skill’ with other local flying clubs and pilots’ associations. And of course, it goes without saying that we encourage our members to include their partners and family members in the social events.



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Pilot's support network

Throughout the year, PAFRA provides both information and practical support to pilots to ensure their time spent in the left-hand seat is safe and enjoyable.

Here are just some of the ways PAFRA can support both qualified and student pilots:

- Regular newsletters which include details of key changes to regulations. This also includes features from our qualified flying instructors giving insight from the "right-hand seat"
- Mentoring and buddying on flight planning and informal flights together with advice on purchase of equipment and reputable suppliers
- Speakers from various organisations including the CAA and GASCO. Don't forget that an official stamp in your log-book following these presentations will help demonstrate your commitment to safe aviation and keeping your knowledge up to date

Supporting the airport and airfield community

In these times of high demand for land, a small airfield will only survive if its community is strong. PAFRA fully supports the Airport management and other airfield service providers to safeguard the future of the airfield.

As plans for the future of the airport are discussed between the council and airport management, PAFRA is consulted to represent the views of its members whether they are qualified pilots, student pilots or just avid supporters of the airfield.

Although the immediate future of the airfield is more secure, this is a very important responsibility which PAFRA continues to undertake on **YOUR** behalf.

Discounts and other benefits

PAFRA understands the importance of supporting local business and getting value for money. We regularly look for good deals for our members, including negotiating discounts on goods and services.

For 2011, we have an excellent deal with the Holiday Inn, Rochester for a huge 25% discount on food and beverage. After completing an application form, you will receive a key fob which will give you discounts well beyond the end of the year. If you spend £64 at the Holiday Inn, Rochester, the 25% discount will pay for your PAFRA membership!

PAFRA is also able to offer discounted membership to the Royal Aeronautical Society (Medway Branch) so you can take advantage of their many interesting talks.

Are you interested in becoming a member of PAFRA?

The 2011 cost of membership of PAFRA is £16 – that's just over 30p per week which is great value for money.

We're not financial advisers but we really do believe that an annual membership to PAFRA will be one of the best investments you will make.

To join PAFRA, visit our website and complete an application form TODAY!

rochester-airport.co.uk

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