

ANNEX W: RAF HALTON AERODROME WILDLIFE CONTROL MANAGEMENT PLAN**References**

- A. RA 3270 Aerodrome Wildlife Management Plan.
- B. CAP 772

1. **Introduction.** The Aerodrome Wildlife Control Management Plan (AWCMP) conforms to Ref A.
2. The Airfield Manager (AFM) acts as Aerodrome Wildlife Control Officer (AWCO) and is responsible to the Aerodrome Operator (AO) for Bird Control Management (BCM) and reporting the need for Wildlife Management (WM) in support of flying operations at RAF Halton. WM Hazards are included in the RAF Halton Hazard Log and feature as loss of safe separation.
3. **Bird Control Management.** The aim is for a Bird Free Aerodrome (BFA) through active BCM without which there would be a bird hazard to flying operations. Flying operations should cease when the BCM becomes ineffective. BCM is normally conducted by targeted and 'on request' patrols of the airfield (see Appendix B) both to deter bird concentrations and to change bird behaviour using non-lethal Bio-Acoustics and other deterrents to make the airfield hostile to birds. Should non-lethal methods fail and bird concentrations increase the hazard to flying operations, the AFM may exceptionally request lethal control from OC of the RAF Halton Vermin Shoot who has the sole authority from the Head of Establishment (HOE) for killing species authorised under the Licence (General) held from Natural England. BCM takes place during Airfield published opening hours.
4. **Bird Identification and Biology.** CAP 772 refers to typical UK aerodrome bird species and BCM should be familiar with behaviour, habitat, roosting, loafing and breeding.
5. **Action in the event of a Bird Strike.** A DASOR is to be submitted after any bird strike event to OC Ops Flt for processing. These are also to be copied to the CAA Safety And Airspace Regulations Group (SARG).
6. **Bird Scaring Duties.** Liaison with neighbouring landowners, other Bird Scaring Units and Environmental Organisations help to manage the risk in the Airfield safeguarded area. The main duties are:
 - Conduct daily BCM activity relevant to the bird hazard.
 - Maintain equipment.
 - Comply with statutory reporting and analysis of bird remains.
 - Report at FS Meetings.
 - Monitor the airfield area to reduce the impact of bird attractants such as standing water, rubbish tips, kitchen waste areas and refuse bins
 - Reduce insect habitats without over-use of pesticides and chemicals.
 - Review the WMP to ensure its relevance to resident, visiting or migrating bird populations and equipment change.
7. **Deer Management.** Routine deer management is the responsibility of DIO DMT in liaison with the Airfield Manager (AFM) and the Chair of the RAF Halton Conservation Team. Reports and sightings of deer on the airfield should immediately be passed to Ops Flt who will liaise with the DIO Deer Management Group through MPGS Gd Cdr Ext 6211. Deer Management may occur outside of published Airfield opening hours. When lethal DM Ops are in progress:
 - DMT will inform the MGR/MPGS that they are deployed at the wooded areas around the airfield.
 - A Notice will be displayed at the Airfield electronic barrier to warn personnel that shooting is in progress and to stay out of the woods.
 - A red triangular pennant will be flown at the Airfield Signal Square or a red light illuminated on the flagpoles at night to warn duty personnel that shooting is in progress in the wooded areas.

8. Habitat Reduction. An airfield long grass policy is maintained at the airfield perimeter on ground unsuitable for aircraft operation. The AFM will liaise with RAF Halton Hard FM to ensure that this is adopted as widely as possible around the airfield perimeter to deter bird activity and deer grazing.

9. Recording of Wildlife Activity. Significant occurrences of Wildlife Activity shall be recorded in the Aerodrome Ops Log.

10. Off-Airfield Activity. A 13 km radius of the airfield safeguarded area (Appendix A) should be monitored to include reservoirs, lakes, attenuation ponds, waste disposal sites, sewage works and gravel extraction pits.

11. AFM Vehicle. The airfield vehicle should be equipped with the following:

- RSPB Bird identification book. Bio-Acoustic broadcaster.
- "Icarus" decoys white and black and Bird Scaring Kites.
- First Aid Kit, PPE, Bio Hand Cleaner.
- Shovel and Plastic Gloves.
- VHF Radio.

12. Handling of Dead or Injured Wildlife. Due to the risk of bio-hazards, Personal Protective Equipment and AHVLA protective procedures for packing and disposal should be used for bird remains. DNA samples for AHVLA analysis should be safeguarded for transport in the appropriate containers. After handling any birds or animals, hand disinfectant should be used immediately.

Appendix A.

RAF Halton WMP dated 01 Apr 2022

Map of Bird Attraction Sites within 13 km of RAF Halton

Figure 1.

RAF Halton is situated 5 miles to the south east of Aylesbury. The airfield presents a 120 Hectare flat meadow with two areas of woodland to the northwest and southeast. The surrounding farmland offers feeding grounds that give way to woodland rising up the slopes of the Chiltern Ridge.

Mixed farming activity provides a varied food source to attract songbirds and Corvids. The three lakes located 3 miles to the north east of the airfield attract wading birds and water-fowl.

A large land-fill site at Beaconsfield (13 miles to the South) attracts very large numbers of gulls. These migrate during periods of larval hatching at Halton to loaf and feed at the airfield. Flooded ground in winter attracts roosting sea birds to the damp meadow conditions.

Wildlife that is successfully habituated by scaring methods employed at the airfield may alight in nearby fields and it is possible to remove them further by approaching with the vehicle that they are habituated to. However, BSM off-airfield is not indemnified or authorised despite the invitation or contentment of the landowner.

Flying Operations:

RAF Halton operates light aircraft and gliders, acting occasionally as a relief landing ground for military helicopters.

Airfield Operating Hours:

Winter: 0900-2000 (L) or SS +15 mins and Summer: 0900-2000 (L) or SS +15 mins whichever is earlier and Mon-Sun all year.

Appendix B.**BCM ACTIVITY CYCLE TO ACHIEVE A BFA**

1. **DI Airfield Vehicle.** Complete Daily Inspection (DI) Paperwork including damage check sheet.
2. **Daily Check BCM Equipment.** The following should be considered for BCM activities:
 - Hand-held Radio
 - Bio Acoustic Loud Hailer
 - Bird Identification Book
3. **Daily Airfield Patrols.** The aim being to apply non-lethal methods to habituate birds to regard the airfield as a hostile place and the BCM Vehicle as lethal:
 - Patrols start at airfield opening to remove overnight roosting birds and continue at least every 2-4 hours to prevent loafing/feeding until dusk to prevent roosting.
 - Bird scaring activity should be completed at least 15 minutes before any aircraft departure or arrival to prevent birds being scared into the path of aircraft.
 - During heavy rain or fragile operating surface conditions the ground is to be safeguarded with BCM suspended until ground conditions permit. BCM can still take place around the airfield perimeter.
 - Visually examine the following areas prior to, during and after flying for loafing or roosting birds, deploying BCM and noting results in the Aerodrome Ops Log:
 - Runways and Glider Operating Area
 - Airfield Perimeter
 - Woodland margins
 - Hangar interiors
4. **Weekly Perimeter Patrols.** Check areas of ground adjoining the airfield perimeter for bird attractants and record any observations in the Aerodrome Ops Log for follow-up with neighbouring property owners. Wildlife may be effectively scared from within the airfield perimeter - activity on local roads is not recommended due to Road Safety considerations. Birds scared away from the airfield may alight locally and disperse upon seeing the vehicle.
5. **Monthly Area Patrols.** Monitor the airfield zone and attempt to engage with landowners to permit attempts to minimise attractants as far as practicable:
 - Desouter Factory
 - Arla Dairy
 - College Road Domestic Refuse Site
 - Wendover Woods Forestry Commission
6. **Seasonal Activity.** Bird activity occurs year-round, and the intensity is determined by attractants such as roosting sites or food. Therefore, a monitoring plan for seasonal bird populations should anticipate:
 - Birds migrating away from UK in October until March and may transit through the zone to/from the lakes. A BIRDTAM may be considered to alert traffic.
 - Gull populations at Beaconsfield Landfill will migrate to the airfield during such attractants as the Leatherback hatchlings which should be expected from October to November.

- Red Kites will be attracted to the food released during any ground maintenance activity particularly the annual harvest of long-grass at the airfield at the end of August and 'Bottoming-Out' in November. Individual birds will gather but do not behave as a flock and will resist normal bird control methods. Flying operations should be reviewed during these periods when the hazard is increased.
- Starlings should be expected to flock together in very large numbers at dusk during the autumn months, behaving en-masse to deter predators and presenting a hazard to aircraft.
- During the breeding season the gathering of food is a priority and BCM should expect intensive feeding and a reluctance to move far from the food source.

7. Intensive Bird Activity observed at RAF Halton:

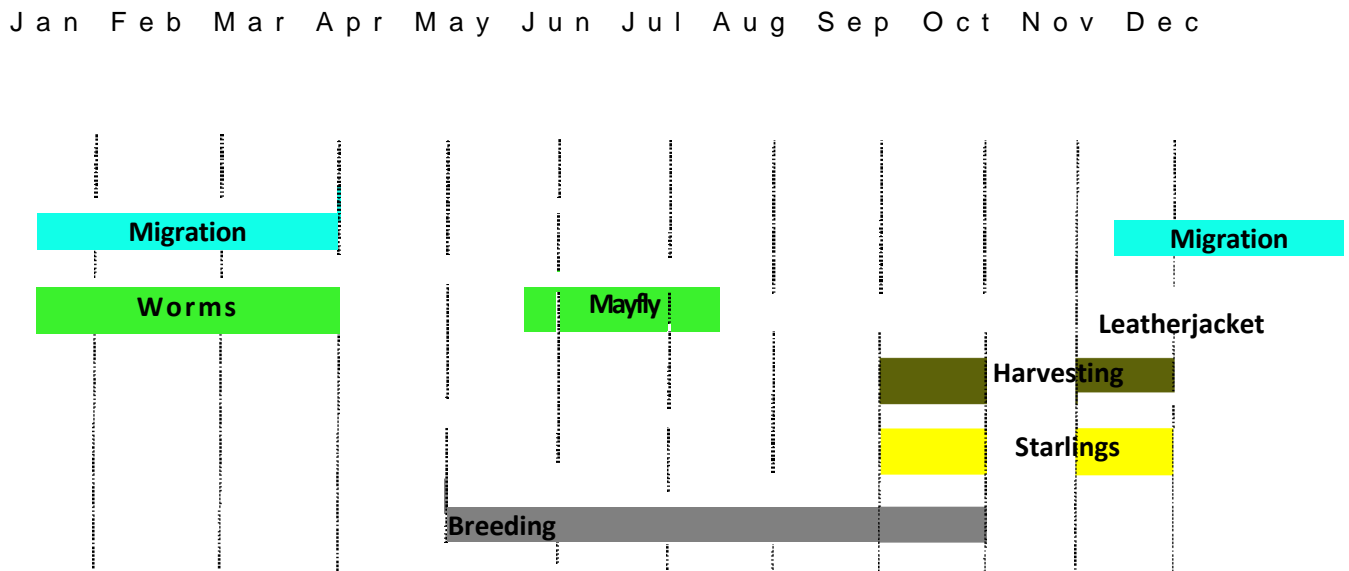


Figure 2.