

## International Morse Preservation Society



# KEY NOTE



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<http://www.asel.demon.co.uk/fists-hq/> or <http://www.smartgroups.com/vault/fists/>

### OFFICES

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**PRO: G4YLB. J.A. Welsh**

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**Rally Coordinator**

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### NETS

Sunday QRS 0900 (loc) 3.575 2E0AJS

US 0100Z on 14058

Tues: GX0IPX/P 1930 ON 3.558 (+/-)

Net Control G3HZL

DX 14/21/28.058 on the hour for 15mins

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**SUBS:** UK £5.00, EEC £7.00. Others £10.00. Your renewal date appears on the mailing label and your anticipation would be much appreciated.

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**Please include your CALLSIGN** on all correspondence.

**Useful contacts:**

M0AVW 01642-869619 <spence5@ntlworld.com>

M0AYI 01207-283192 <m0ayi@netscapeonline.co.uk>

**All outgoing QSLs to M0AVW** (address on banner).

All UK members send stamps and labels (no envelopes necessary) to the appropriate sub-manager as below:

**M or 2 calls** (Except for Wales) M0AYI. 7 Tynedale Terrace, Annfield Plain, STANLEY, DH9 7TZ.

**G0, GM0 etc** (Except GW0). G3JRY. 3 Rochford Cresc, BOSTON, PE21 9AE

**G3, GM3 etc** (except GW3). G0UQF. 2 East St, Darfield, BARNSELY, S73 9AE.

**G4, GM4 etc** (Except GW4). M5AAQ. 6 Central Ave, SHEPSHED, LE12 9HP.

**G2, G5, G6, G8** (Except for Wales) and **ALL** special (GB etc) calls to M0BPT. 38 Wheatley St, WEST BROMWICH, B70 9TJ.

**All members in Wales.** GW0SGG. 14 Heather Cresc, Sketty, SWANSEA, SA2 8HE

**EU/DX Members:** IRCs or UK Banknotes to M0AVW. US dollars to HQ. Club will provide envelopes. Any excess over subs from non-UK members will be regarded as QSL postage unless otherwise advised.

### GREETINGS

A lot of very interesting activity on the bands during August though much of it accompanied by some horrendous QRN and with QSB that ran the whole range from S9 to zilch. Was particularly anxious to hook a few of the special 'light' stations running from light houses and light ships but apart from a few EU offerings on 40m and 30m they were few and far between. I did however bag a few members whilst operating MX5IPX and, prior to the latest saga, was turning over a fair traffic level. Later however, Ivy took a queer turn with some elusive infection resulting in her being admitted to hospital again. At the time of writing, she is still there but it presented possibly the worst couple of weeks I can remember. With an absolute raging cold, I was obliged to man-handle her almost every hour doing a long-suffering lower back a lot of no good indeed and, had the condition of my ticker been a little less stable than it was, I am sure it would have resulted in some serious damage. For those kind folks who regularly enquire, the original prognosis indicating that the cancerous bladder growth had been successfully removed was incorrect and plans have been laid to have

her in dry-dock again where they hope to do a better job. Enough of my problems.

The welcome spell of 'summer' weather during which old Sol actually came into view, resulted in the usual patchy band conditions but also brought about a healthy crop of members working /P from holiday destinations. The sad part about this being that we were not fore-warned but they carried with them a bonus - the element of surprise which added a little flavour.

### OPERATING PROCEDURES

Letters continued to pour in with info about the IMI v INT topic and many were the lamps left swinging in the process. The observations by Tony (G3CWW) ended in a wish that QSD be better understood. In truth, this is not used often simply because it could be hurtful (it indicates that the code is unreadable or readable with difficulty) and unexpectedly, I found a couple of members asking the meaning. We have all I am sure heard stations calling FV when it should be CQ and this of course is only one reason where one would be justified in using QSD - improper weighting. The most common however is a lack of spacing resulting in things like NAG for NAME, PD for AND, GX for TNKS and etc., so common indeed that they tend to be decyphered on the fly. If the offender refuses to believe that there is anything wrong with his/her code then there is nothing you can do. QSD I have used only once since this resulted in the permanent disappearance of an otherwise keen CW operator. These days I hint that much of the info was not OK as I was having problems with the spacing which is a much more sympathetic approach than telling someone that their code is unreadable. When was the last time you sat down for a session of CW and switched on a recorder to play back afterwards. Really hammers home the point if there is anything even remotely wrong with your code. Hi.

### HELPING HANDS

*We have been surprised recently to read of the number of newly qualified cw operators who have not been able to find other Amateur Radio operators willing to work them on the bands at or around the speeds of the new Morse tests.*

*The Morse Enthusiasts Group Scotland (MEGS) specialises in taking newly qualified CW operators under their wing whether they are members of MEGS or not. One of the 'aids' which we offer on a weekly basis is the 80 metre net and this specialises in encouraging new operators to 'have a go' and then to gradually improve their Morse skills until they are able to work cw at speeds nearer to the average heard on the bands.*

*If you are able to 'key' on 80 metres on a Monday &/or Thursday evening between 7 & 8.30pm here is what to do. Have a listen at around 3530Khz for the 'Group' station GMORSE (how's that for an appropriate callsign??) calling 'CQ MEGS' at speeds of around 15 WPM. He will be delighted to get a call from you at your chosen speed and a QSO can then take place at your speed. There is no need to feel embarrassed about your Morse skills or the lack of them. That is one of the reasons that MEGS exists, to help improve the Morse skills of all operators. Within a few Khz. of GMORSE you will find a number of other MEGS operators also calling 'CQ MEGS' but using their own call signs. These operators are likewise looking for other operators (whether*

members of MEGS or not) to work at their chosen speed, whatever that may be.

MEGS as an organisation is aware that this is not the best time of year for the 80 metre band within the UK. We are also aware that many new operators do not have facilities to put out a good signal on this band. We also (just like you) have problems with 'fishfone', QRN, etc on this band so should you be unable or unwilling to try '80' then give me a call and we will arrange a sked to suit you in time, frequency and Morse speed.

With all good wishes, de George (GM4HYF) MEGS Secretary.  
(QTHR - tel. 0141 634 4567 -

E-Mail [george@allan99.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:george@allan99.freeserve.co.uk))

Whilst I am saddened at the report, I am equally confident that should FISTS members be sought out by the aforementioned learners, they will receive a sympathetic ear. I have heard some real greyhounds plodding patiently away at speeds as low as 5 wpm to 'bring on' the newcomers. MEGS efforts are very much appreciated and am sure that we all wish them success.

### ACTIVITY LADDER

Our contest manager Keith, M0CLO, has been chewing over the possibility of restoring the ladder contest which Gerry, GM4BAE, previously ran so successfully. This was a very popular feature in our calendar and I am sure all will be grateful to Keith for the new-look ladder which he intends executing as from Jan, 2002. Below is a brief run-down.

*EXPLANATION:* A regular weekly activity period to provide FISTS members with the opportunity to meet each other and gain points for FISTS awards. It is also an opportunity for non-members to participate in, or become aware of, FISTS activities.

*DAYS AND TIMES:* Every Wednesday, from 08.00 to 22.00 UTC.

*FREQUENCIES:* All permitted CW frequencies, but preferably on or around the FISTS calling frequencies and avoiding the popular QRP frequencies.

*CALL:* CQ FISTS LADDER.

*EXCHANGES:* Normal QSO format, including FISTS number (non-members = NM) and exchange of other information as desired.

*MONTHLY SCORING:* For each station worked on FISTS activity ladder days during a calendar month: FISTS member worked 2 points. Non-member worked 1 point. (Duplicates excluded). Member and non-member stations worked but not participating in the Ladder activity may be logged, and scored as above, providing all relevant information has been exchanged.

*NOTE:* While individual stations may only be worked once during a given month, they may be worked on subsequent months on a similar basis, i.e., you can only count each station a maximum of 12 times per year.

*YEARLY SCORING:* The yearly score is the total of all monthly scores submitted to the Contest Manager during the calendar year, January to December.

*CERTIFICATES:* Monthly: A certificate will be awarded to the operator with the highest number of points scored, each month, in accordance with these rules.

*YEARLY:* A certificate will be awarded to the three highest scoring operators over the period January to December each year.

*LOGS:* Logs must be submitted to the Contest Manager, not later than the 15th of the following month. They should include: Date and time of QSO and details of the station worked, ie, Call, Name, FISTS number (non-members = NM).

*Sheets should be headed with the Month and Year of the entry, and should include the name, call sign and FISTS number. (Non-members = NM)*

Keith Farthing, M0CLO,  
86, Coldnailhurst Avenue,  
Braintree,  
Essex, CM7 5PY  
England.

Or e-mail: [keithm0clo@hotmail.com](mailto:keithm0clo@hotmail.com)

It should be noted that Tony, G4FAI, has assisted very much in this arrangement and indeed, much e-mail has been exchanged on a regular basis between himself and Keith.

I look forward to the possibility that MX5IPX be activated on these occasions on a portable basis.

Additionally, there will hopefully be other events in which the EUCW and individual members of associated clubs will be taking part. The wider the range, the greater will be the activity.

### ADDRESSES

When members change their postal address, we are almost guaranteed to receive information about this at HQ. However, members have a tendency to forget about changing e-mail addresses. They will try to think of individuals who should be notified of such changes (Aunt Lucy, the Mother-in-Law or her Psychiatrist etc.) and since this can all be done with one message and a mass mailing from their address book, I wonder sometimes if <fist1@btinternet.com> is included on that list? Please remember to let me know of any such changes and also, an accompanying message to W8BL <blafont@tir.com> would be helpful in keeping the existing list up-to-date.

### AWARDS

I intend here to devote a little space to clearing up the factors which have led to the current situation.

Right from the word go, clubs have been welcomed within FISTS and, since (assuming they were sponsored by a FISTS member) they cost us nothing, I saw no reason to treat them any differently than individual members.

A club station will have FISTS members at the sharp end who pay their subs and in addition to this, they will also include the usual fee (£2.00 or \$5.00) when making an application.

Although we do not insist on this, periodic donations from such groups would be welcome and, indeed we have number of them who insist on making the same subscriptions that apply to individual members.

Bob, G0FRL, found it difficult to come to terms with this, insisting that award applications from non-paying clubs be refused. It was this insistence which caused a great deal of discontent particularly in the US where there are a far greater number of clubs than we have in the EU chapter.

When Dennis, K4YF, volunteered to cover these applications, I was at first dubious but the matter was removed from my hands when Bob promptly acted upon the suggestion and, with some space for on-going applications and others in the pipeline, promptly resigned and threw the whole thing over to Dennis.

I made an initial attempt to restore a situation where all awards were dealt with within the UK but encountered a stumbling block in the shape of the depleted foil application which had hitherto been used by Bob. This was seemingly not possible and time - our eternal enemy - was becoming important so a number of e-mails were exchanged between myself and Dennis who it seems, was aware of the depleted foil application (having seen it used by his father) and agreed to process the awards in their current manner. Since then, I have received an indication from Nancy that the US chapter would underwrite all the postal cost meaning that every time an application was received here at HQ, the associated fee would go directly to the EU funds with no expenses.

Transferring the job to Dennis also removed much of the hassle since there was no need for EU/US dialogue in regard to award numbers.

Some of you may feel disappointed with this outcome but in view of the fact that US applications exceed those from EU by a factor of at least four, it is logical if nothing else.

Please be aware that I am not ungrateful to Bob. He did a superb job and I am sure that this sentiment will be echoed widely throughout the club and I am saddened that things have turned out the way that have done.

### Greek Telegraphy Club

#### HELLINIKI LESHY TELEGRAFIAS

The Greek Telegraphy Club was formed in October 1998, as an independent Hellenic club, to further the use of Morse Code on the ham radio bands, to encourage newcomers to the CW mode and to foster and maintain friendship among radio telegraphers. GTC is also a strong influence against efforts to eradicate CW as a mode of radio amateur communications.

Here in SV-land, the majority of hams are still far away from thoughts about the non-use of code during the ham exams, but as times change rapidly, we wish to make ourselves strong enough to fight against any present and future threat of our beloved CW code.

Besides which, Greece, although just a small country, has a very large number of well-experienced CW operators who have been for years at sea as wireless officers serving our merchant navy, which still remains one of the biggest fleets in the world. Today many of them are radio amateurs, and act as CW operators on the ham bands, hitting the airwaves, having great fun while working on their favourite mode. Fortunately for us, there are also a large number of young newcomers who fall in love with morse code.

We consider that this is a very deep duty for all us elders, to keep these new people in a continued touch with CW, as the fundamental thing in the world of Amateur Radio.

At the present time, as a new "sister club", we will be involved in events from the EUCW Clubs, doing our best for their success. We also desire to establish good relations including a honest and open collaboration between GTC (SV-CW-C), and major EU CW groups as, Deutscher Telegraphy Club, AGCW, FISTS, UFT, Italian Telegraphy Club and others, wishing to enhance and push forward, common promotion of our aims.

GTC represents the interests of Morse Telegraphy in Greece, via its cooperation with RAAG, (Radio Amateur Association of Greece) and other smaller SV clubs.

Our Club profile is very simple. We're an independent organization, which promotes exclusively the CW interests in the Amateur Radio Service. We accept Greek radio amateurs who like to join, and their word of honour that they agree with our statutes and aims, is enough for us. GTC recognises that there are many whose interests on this state of art mode are just as deep, and invite them to enquire about club membership. The same exactly applies to foreign people who would like to join. Membership is completely free of charge. The officers of the club are all the founding members, a number which consists of twenty two people. However, for most flexible operation of the club, an executive council is in progress.

#### THE CANADIAN CONNXXN

*I've just returned from a holiday on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia, Canada. Alongside the many beautiful natural sights, a real "must" for any radio amateur is a visit to the Marconi National Historic Site at Table Head in the town of Glace Bay.*



*This was the site from which, on 15th December 1902, the signal was transmitted to Poldhu in Cornwall, marking the first trans-Atlantic QSO.*

*Although the site is largely*

*bare, with just pieces of concrete marking the antenna bases, there is a small building holding displays and artefacts relating to those days. More importantly, for me, there is also a well-equipped amateur radio station run by the Sydney ARC. Operating during my visit was fellow FISTS member Jim VE1ALZ (FISTS 6905), and, on hearing that I was a licensed amateur, I was invited to use the rig. Conditions were not good on the day, with signals into Europe a bit weak and watery on 14 MHz. Nevertheless it was a real treat to be able to operate from such a historic location.*

*The station is active daily from throughout the summer months with the callsign VE1VAS. The suffix utilises the callsign of the maritime station VAS, known affectionately as "Voice of the Atlantic Seaboard", which operated from Glace Bay. Jim is the main operator and would welcome contacts with FISTS members. The preferred bands are 14 and 21 MHz, either in the lowest 2 or 3 kHz or on the usual 058 FISTS frequencies, and all QSOs are confirmed via the bureau.*

*Jim is also active from his home location in Sydney, but limitations on antennas mean he is currently limited to 5 watts on the 30 metre band. He is often to be found on the FISTS frequency of 10.118 MHz and would welcome a QSO with you.*

*There is some talk of the Italian government providing funding*

**FISTS CW CLUB NEWS LETTER**

*to rebuild the old Marconi antenna system for the 100th anniversary next year.*

*Having seen the model displayed, that will be an impressive sight! The Sydney club also hopes to install a suitable antenna for the planned attempt on the goal of a trans-Atlantic QSO on 2 metres. What a wonderful memorial to Marconi that would be if it occurred in 2002.*

The two in the picture are G3VQO (who wrote the item) and is nearest the camera with VE1ALZ.

#### DIGITAL KEYNOTE

Having recently sent a 'welcome pack' to some of our new members, I was shocked to discover that it set us back £3.40 for postage to Japan which was perhaps in some way due to including a full listing. Have been seeking to reduce these costs and in a recent batch of newmems, I noted that some e-mail addresses were included so I have asked them to download the latest list from the web site.

It would surely do the funds no harm at all if those of you with e-mail facilities could consider accepting the news letter by e-mail. Generally speaking, it arrives somewhat sooner than the snail-mail version and of course is something of an improvement since it is not dependent upon the mood of the offset press. This means that most photographs etc., are shown in colour where-as with the offset, I need to print as 256 grey scale (can't run to the cost of a 4-colour press Hi) and of course, any 'picky' bits (the odd few words in sheltered areas of the page that print in less than the desirable clarity) are displayed clearly. The visually impaired can 'zoom' to a very high level with the reader (Acrobat) which is on free download. Using a dBase viewer or even a text editor for the listings, there is no need to thumb through pages to find the suffix you want - control+F, F3 or whatever hotkey activates the search facility, an extra couple of key presses for the full callsign and it will find unambiguously whatever call you enter almost instantaneously.

#### RUMOURS

A number of enquiries were phoned in during the month concerning the buzz that collection of the licence fee was to be undertaken by the RSGB and that as a consequence, the cost of the UK ticket was set to rise to a magnificent £81.00 sterling. I phoned the RA and it turned out I was just another bonehead making silly enquiries. **There are definitely NO PLANS TO INCREASE the licence fee in the immediate future.**

All this came about by some correspondence which sought to show the opinions of a sample of amateurs (though I think it was CBers in truth) who were pushed to indicate just how much they would be prepared to pay for a licence.

Disturbingly though, the RA was less committal when I asked about the RSGB connection.



Samuel F.B. Morse  
1791-1872

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#### THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

Quite a bit more correspondence this month so: **G0FVS**. Jim, on hearing about the 'sniffles' re-iterated his advice that half a dozen buds from the top of a nettle plant, bung 'em into a pot and include 'em in your usual brew of tea. On learning the code, he recommends the old brass band trick of Di Ki Di Ki for 'H', or Di Ki Di for 'S'. Mentally sound the 'Di' from the front of the

mouth - the 'Ki' comes from the back of the throat. **G4LQO**. Bill joined us in Feb/99 and uses only and MFJ loop on the fence post (30m to 10m) and a home brewed 3 ft loop in the loft for 40 and 80. Since he recently applied for his Diamond, he wonders if this is unique. Couldn't be sure Bill because many members are restricted to indoor antennas or even flea power but in any case, it is an achievement worth savouring. **G3VUN** rejoins us after a long absence. He has given up his regular teaching job to fit in with Network Gloria, a registered charity for the advancement of education and relief of poverty, sickness and distress in Romania. Try <[www.networkgloria.org.uk](http://www.networkgloria.org.uk)> and look for NORCAL where you will find items on amateur radio. **G0WLP**. Can any members remember using 'M' series codes? Could be connected to visual tracking in RAF and he sites M1, M2, M3 etc. as examples. **GM0FHD**. Ham radio has been on the back burner for Ernie following the sad passing of his dad with broncho-pneumonia but things now getting back to normal. Like the stylised Scottish Kit on the letter mate! **G4AJA**. Greyscale view of the G4BPO/G7BPO club station. Tried a scan but results poor Chris. **G0RKT**. Hi David. Well no, not used mag loops a lot recently but generally they are between par and 1 S-point down on a dipole which can't be bad!

### THE IN-BOX

Report per Daily Mail from Angie, G0HGA, which ran "HER REIGN BEGAN WITH A MESSAGE IN MORSE. I think most of us remember where we were and what we were doing when the news came of the death of the Queen's Father. Her first message as Queen was from Winston Churchill just as she was boarding the plane to return from Treetops and was written down by a bush radio operator. It took 15 minutes to take down and it was sent in MORSE!

And from Tom, DL1CQ:

Couple of friends and I have "founded" BUG. That's the Bug User Group (Uli, DF5DW came up with that great name). We're a bunch of folks who do not only collect bugs but like to put them back on the air where they belong. We meet every 10th, 20th and 30th of the month on either 3547 or 7017 kHz, +- QRM and time permitting of course. The time is 20:00 CEST/CET or 18:00/19:00 UTC.

We don't have a president, no officers, no numbers, no membership fees - nothing of the kind. And that's to remain so. Anyone who wants to put his old bug back on the air or just feels like giving it a try is welcome. Simply turn up and join the fun.

Ah yes, the call to meet folks is simply CQ BUG ;-); :-)

We also have a URL which is <http://www.qsl.net/bug> so far only in German. If there's sufficient interest, there might be an English version sometime...

73 de Thomas, DL1CQ

## G4ZPY

### KEYS AND PADDLES

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<http://website.lineone.net/~g4zpy/index.htm>

### ANY ANSWERS?

Why were the elements of the Morse code not simply a progression through the alphabet? I understand that Sams' code was not as we know it now. Probably underwent a few changes until the structures were married to the greatest usage. The most common letter is 'E' so is the shortest. 'I' was next and presumably followed by 'A' and etc. Anyone shed more authoritative light on this?

### NEW MEMBERS

Quite a mixed bag this month and a couple of enquiries were referred to the US contingent whilst the antipodean guys, after having a member go Silent Key makes up ground.

|      |        |       |      |        |         |
|------|--------|-------|------|--------|---------|
| 8317 | DL9AAS | Willi | 8318 | OH7QR  | Erkki   |
| 8319 | G0AXV  | Stan  | 8320 | MM0CWI | Craig   |
| 8321 | J1ZNNJ | Nao   | 8322 | JA8AJE | Masa    |
| 8323 | ON6QS  | Gil   | 8324 | G3LCK  | Dick    |
| 8325 | I2VRF  | Gian  | 8326 | PY2LEC | Cardoso |

Yes.. OK so Dick, G3LCK was a member previously but he has forgotten his number and does not appear in the holding list since he dropped out before it was started. Hunting through 4 packed-to-the-limit box files is not my idea of relaxation hence the new number. Hi.

### FIST, CW OR BOTH?

Now then... I have never made any secret about it. The name of the game is CW and encouraging its use is more important than recruiting members. If your suggestion of membership is turned down then don't badger. Some people simply cannot live with a club of any sort and we must respect their point of view. There are however a lot of people out there who would love to join but for some reason get the idea that it is a case of restricted membership, accumulative sponsorship or funny handshakes. We all know this is not the case and it should not be hard to convince the doubting Thomas.

## G3TUX

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### ODDS 'N ENDS

#### Web Pages

From Vlad, UA6JD, a couple of web pages that members may be interested in:

[fistsnorthwest](http://fistsnorthwest) - FISTS Northwest is Oregon's (K7FFF) first FISTS affiliate CW club, accepting members from OR, WA, ID, and AK. [fistsnorthwest-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:fistsnorthwest-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) archives <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fistsnorthwest> qcfwa - Queen City FISTS CW Association

Subscribe: [qcfwa-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:qcfwa-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

For more information: <http://www.qsl.net/qcfwa>

archives <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/qcfwa>

visit [www.qth.net/fists](http://www.qth.net/fists) - you find all info & archives. To be added to the FISTS mailing list, send email to [majordomo@qth.net](mailto:majordomo@qth.net)

Very good DX info include some FISTS activity by FISTS member G13038 "Pete's-dx-newsdesk" at Yahoo

Subscribe by e-mail [petes-dx-newsdesk-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:petes-dx-newsdesk-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) or visit YAHOO

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Pete's-dx-newsdesk>

**Suggested FISTS calling QRGs.**

28.058, 24.918, 21.058, 18.085, 14.058, 10.118, 7.028 (7.058), 3.558, 1.808. These are the frequencies known to be used by the US gang though 7.058 is a no-no here in EU. They also use 28.158, 21.158, 7.118 and 3.708 in the US Novice sub-bands to encourage Novice CW activity.

### FINALE

Keeping fingers firmly crossed that all goes well with Ivy. Daily visits take up an appreciable amount of available time and is reflected in the amount of on-air activity from here. Not looking too hopeful at the moment with little change in her condition but when the the anti-biotics have finished their work, hope things will improve.

Pse remember that MX5IPX/P is up for grabs and also, GX0IPX/P will again be heard on Friday evenings.

73/88 people. Look forward to working lots more when the Autumn conditions give us improved paths.

Have fun es stay sober

de Geo