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# Dover Amateur Radio Club

2025

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## What is amateur Radio

Amateur radio is a popular technical hobby that uses designated radio frequencies for non-commercial exchange of messages, wireless experimentation, self-training, and emergency communications. It is the only hobby governed by international treaty. As a radio amateur you are able to transmit radio signals on a number of frequency bands allocated specifically to the radio amateurs.

Radio amateurs make use of their frequencies in a number of ways:

- Contacting people all over the world by radio which often leads to developing international friendships
- Technical experimentation — many of the leaps forward in radio technology have been initiated by radio amateurs
- Competing in international competitions to test how effective your equipment is, and how good you are as an operator
- Communication through amateur space satellites or with the International Space Station (which carries an amateur radio station)
- Providing communications at times of emergencies and undertaking exercises to ensure you keep the capability to do so

There is no better way to explore the fascinating world of wireless communication than by becoming a radio amateur.

## Dover Amateur Radio Club

The Dover Amateur Radio Club was established in 1967 by a small group of passionate amateur radio enthusiasts. Since its inception, the club has remained active, with the notable distinction that some of its original founders continue to be involved to this day.

Over the years, the club has met in various venues throughout the Dover area, maintaining a strong connection to its roots. The club's current home is St Peter and Paul Church Hall, River, Dover. This location provides a dedicated radio area, alongside essential amenities such as toilets, refreshment facilities, and excellent disabled accessibility.

The club is committed to promoting all aspects of amateur radio. Activities include licence training, Morse code instruction, skills development sessions, construction projects, and lecture nights. In addition, the club fosters a vibrant social atmosphere for its members.

Recognised as an examination centre, Dover Amateur Radio Club is authorised to host licence examinations. Tailored support is available for new members, with the club offering practical assistance, information, advice, and guidance to anyone interested in amateur radio, supporting each individual's learning journey.

## Spring Radio Rally 23<sup>rd</sup> March



### **A Successfully Annual Spring Rally and exciting news a Second Annual Autumn Rally**

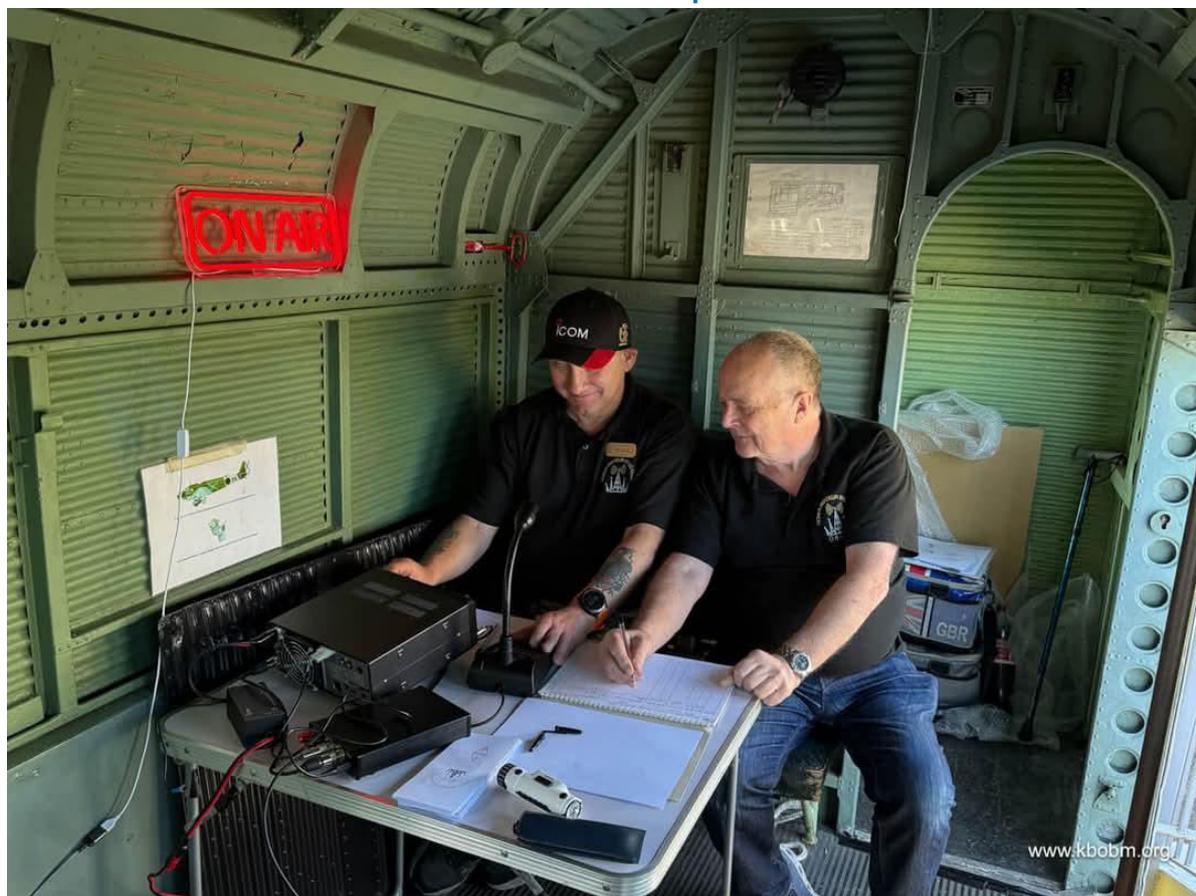
This year Dover Amateur radio Club hosted its Annual Spring Rally at St Radigunds in Dover, we were encouraged by the Feedback from visitors and exhibitors and received many requests for a second Rally later in the year. Dover ARC had a display and Demonstrations of its recent Club Project based around PIC development board, programming and control, and our next project is now being prepared, so thanks to M0PKH for his hard work. The Bring and buy sale was well supported and I hear that a number of our club members and visitors came away with the usual bargains as well as a few unusual oddities, some of our members have already been adapting and repairing their finds. We were pleased to have hosted and offer our thanks to our many exhibitors including Lam communications, ICOM, SDRPlay RSGB and the many others who supported us and I understand had successful day. The RSGB was represented and a number of visitors met and had time to chat.



But of course, its England, and as we all know spring is not always sunny. Many thanks to our dedicated parking Marshalls for their perseverance. (yes, we did make sure they got Hot drinks and Bacon rolls)



Airfields on the Air, we were pleased to be able to operate from  
Hawkinge Airfield  
5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> April



### Dover ARC at the Hawkinge for Airfields on the air

The Dover Amateur Radio Club operated a special event station for Airfields on the Air during the weekend of April 5th and 6th. We were delighted to operate from inside a Junkers JU52 7300 aircraft at the Hawkinge Air Museum, which is situated on the site of the original World War II airfield. Although radio conditions were somewhat flat, we still managed to make contacts within the UK and across parts of Europe. Members of the public visited and expressed interest, contributing to our enjoyment and potentially sparking further enthusiasm for amateur radio. The museum itself was fascinating; I personally intend to return and spend more time exploring it. Naturally, we hope to participate again next year in Airfields on the Air. Our sincere thanks go to the museum for granting us this unique opportunity to use their venue and the aircraft.

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Trevor G6APW

## Dover Regatta 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July



### Dover ARC at the Dover Regatta

On Saturday, 12th July, Dover ARC participated in the Dover Regatta, setting up a stand within the main event area. The atmosphere was lively and noisy, which presented certain challenges. Due to considerations around space and safety, it was not feasible to deploy any large aerials. Consequently, the team chose to operate using digital modes through a hotspot device.

Despite local conditions and the challenge of competing with the nearby tannoy and music, the primary focus of the club at the Regatta was not on operating. Nevertheless, several QSOs were made over DMR and DSTAR, connecting with stations as far afield as New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago, and the USA.. The event proved to be a successful PR exercise, and the club believes it may have attracted a number of potential new enthusiasts to amateur radio.

The Regatta also provided ample opportunities for networking with other groups in attendance. The local Sea Cadets were present, as expected at such an event, and their interest in radio was evident. Discussions took place with their commanding officer regarding future collaboration, with the hope of encouraging younger members to take up the hobby. Further interest was generated with The Dover Society and the Port of Dover Authority, both influential organisations in the local area. Dover ARC looks forward to building on these relationships and receiving their support in future endeavours.

Dover Community Radio, with whom the club has established close links, was also present. This led to live and recorded interviews, further promoting the club and amateur radio within the local community.

Dover ARC extends its gratitude to the Port of Dover Authority for organising the event and for providing the opportunity to promote amateur radio to the wider community.

Trevor G6APW

## Grand Field Day 27<sup>th</sup> July



### Grand Field Day at [Willesborough](#) Windmill

The Dover ARC supported The Grand Field Day organised by HAM Radio network at [Willesborough](#) Windmill, which provided a relaxed and informal setting for club members and their families. The combination of the historic windmill as a central attraction contributed to a thoroughly enjoyable experience for all who attended. The event served as a perfect opportunity for participants to reconnect with old friends, forge new acquaintances, and strengthen the sense of community within the club.

Fortunately, the weather was favourable, allowing attendees to make the most of the beautiful outdoor surroundings. Many enjoyed sitting outside by the mill, indulging in bacon sandwiches, coffee, and engaging in friendly conversation. In keeping with tradition, several amateur radio enthusiasts brought equipment to sell, and there were also non-radio related items available, adding to the variety and interest of the day.

Beyond the social benefits, the Grand Field Day played an important role in promoting the Willesborough Windmill Trust and increasing awareness of their site among members of the amateur radio community.

## Dover ARC Lighthouses and lightships on the Air 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> August



Once again, on the 16th and 17th of August, Dover ARC was in action for the Lighthouse and Lightships on the Air event. This year, the bands were particularly busy due to several coinciding events. We ambitiously opted to run two stations.

GB2RPD - Our main station was set up at the oldest and best-preserved Roman lighthouse in Britain, located within the grounds of Dover Castle. This lighthouse is one of only three surviving Roman lighthouses in the world. We operated a full-size G5RV antenna and an Icom 7300, primarily on the 40m band. Despite the windy and cloudy weather on Saturday morning, we successfully erected our antenna system and were quickly on the air. We found the 40m band conditions were very good, our location giving us a good take off, so the operating team quickly got into action and skilfully handled several pile-ups. Additionally, we had DMR and access to local Dover and Folkstone repeaters.

GB1RPD We also ran a smaller portable station from the site of the other Roman lighthouse in Dover. Unfortunately, there are few remains of this lighthouse and the site not generally open to the public due to difficult access. However, we obtained special permission to operate a portable station using a J-pole antenna and running low-power VHF, as well as DMR and DSTAR. Several contacts were achieved by digital modes and on 2m a few French stations.

We are planning to revisit both sites in the future.

Over the weekend, our logs show that we made close to 200 contacts. This achievement was only made possible by the dedication of our members and the excellent support provided by the Dover Castle management team and staff, the Western Heights Preservation Society, and English Heritage.

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Trevor G6APW

## Autumn Radio Rally 20<sup>th</sup> September



### Autumn Rally at St Radegund's

Following the encouraging feedback from the earlier Spring Rally, the Dover Amateur Radio Club organised an Autumn Rally at St Radegund's in Dover. The event included a smaller bring-and-buy stall, which proved popular among attendees. Several other stands were also present, and the continued support from the RSGB was appreciated by all involved.

Many club members and visitors took the opportunity to browse and purchase bargains and unique finds. Some have already begun to repair, adapt, or put their purchases to use, highlighting the practical benefits of the rally. We extend our gratitude to our exhibitors, such as Lam Communications, ICOM, RSGB, and others, for their valuable support and participation throughout the event.

Although the Autumn Rally was more modest in scale compared to the Spring event, its smaller size afforded attendees more time to browse the stalls and socialise with fellow enthusiasts, making for a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

## East Kent Railway 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October



### Event Setup

We focused on the Saturday of the two-day event, using our trusted setup:

**Radio:** ICOM 7300 at 100W

**Power:** Battery power pack

**Antenna:** Half-size G5RV, fed through an ASMU, mounted on a heavy-duty telescopic fibreglass mast at 20ft high

Due to site conditions, we erected the antenna in an almost inverted V formation. While not considered optimal, the G5RV is a forgiving setup and adapts well to different configurations. Under our conditions, it performed well, as our results proved.

### Location & Interference

Last year, we experienced massive interference from a failing power distribution transformer near our station. This year, we negotiated a slightly different location on the railway site, a more open space, but closer to the main electric railway line. We were concerned about possible interference, but after testing the setup on site a couple of

weeks earlier, we found little or no impact from passing trains, even though we were less than 150ft from the main line.

## **Operations**

Setting up our station and gazebo is now a well-practiced procedure. From arrival, unloading, and reaching operational status takes less than an hour—including time for tea and bacon rolls!

We mainly operated on **40m**, finding the bands very active. After quickly finding a frequency and calling CQ, we were immediately into a pile-up, taking calls at almost one per minute. Many were other ROTA sites from across the UK, as well as Belgium and Holland.

We tried to share information about our setup and site, but running a pile-up meant time was limited. Apologies to those who wanted to chat more or were waiting to call us.

Later in the day, as 40m faded, we switched to **20m** and made a few more contacts.

## **About East Kent Railway**

The East Kent Railway is a short line, originally part of the Colonel Stevens branch lines serving much of East Kent. This section was constructed in 1911 to serve the Tilmanstone colliery. Passenger services were added for a short time before reverting to a colliery line. The line closed in 1986 and reopened as a preservation line in 1993. Of course, we express our thanks to the East Kent Railway for hosting us again this year.

Trevor G6APW

## Club Activities and Training Initiatives

Throughout the year, the Dover Amateur Radio Club hosted a series of engaging “bring and tell” sessions, providing members with an opportunity to share their experiences and showcase equipment and projects. In addition, the club organised several informative short talks covering a diverse range of topics relevant to both new and experienced radio enthusiasts.

Among the regular sessions was a basic first aid workshop, offering essential safety knowledge and skills. Technical discussions included an introduction to digital modes using the DVStick, as well as a practical session focusing on the advantages of modifying Baofeng and other cheap microphones to enhance performance. The club also explored new technologies, such as Meshtastic, and welcomed guest speakers, including representatives from the local repeater group, who shared insights into repeater operations and developments.

As the year drew to a close, the club dedicated considerable effort to supporting training for Foundation licence candidates, particularly local scout groups. These educational initiatives included a series of online Zoom meetings, designed to help candidates prepare for their exams and develop their understanding of amateur radio principles.

We also strengthened our connections by welcoming the Dover 354 Squadron RAF Air Cadets. Some of our members attended their meeting and helped several cadets earn their Amateur Radio licenses. These newly licensed Amateur Radio operators have since visited our club as well.

### Training sessions



The club is pleased to begin working with The Scout movement, especially the 3rd Dover Scout Group. We conducted an online training course and practical sessions to help prepare for their exams. This ongoing initiative is expected to show results in the coming year.

## Project sessions.



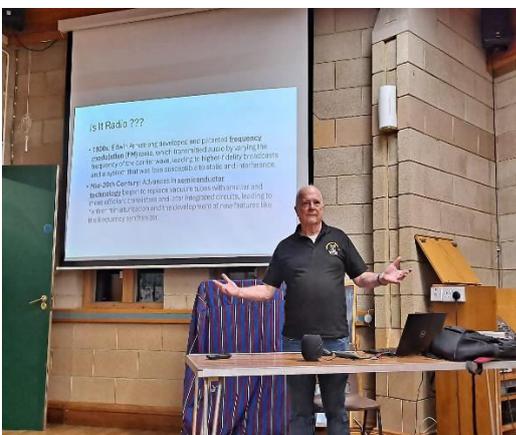
### PIC Playground

A PIC microcontroller (Peripheral Interface Controller), is an integrated circuit that can be programmed to perform various control tasks in embedded systems. They are known for their low cost, wide availability, and ease of use for both hobbyists and industrial developers.

Peter M0PKH initiated a project to design and construct a dedicated test and development board. This board is intended to provide members with the resources necessary to develop and test various features relevant to radio projects. Through the use of this board, members can explore how these features function and learn how they may be integrated into different radio programming tasks



## Technical talks and demonstrations



Certain digital modes, especially those involving computers, have received mixed reactions from traditionalists. This talk aimed to show that, under the right conditions, every communication mode has its place in our hobby. It was also noted that Morse code was the original digital mode.

## Dover ARC and Marconi's Legacy

The club continues to foster its interest in the historical connections between Guglielmo Marconi and Dover. The team was especially pleased to collaborate with Barry O'Brien, supporting his publication, *Words without Wires*, at club events. This partnership highlighted Marconi's pivotal role in transforming the discoveries of Heinrich Hertz and Nikola Tesla into practical applications, making it possible to transmit and receive signals wirelessly.

Much of Marconi's significant early work took place in Dover, including the landmark first international radio transmission, which spanned the Channel between Wimereux in France and Dover. To honour this legacy, Dover ARC was represented at the celebration of Marconi's birthday on 25th April by one of its members. Looking ahead, the club is now planning to host a special event in 2026 to commemorate this milestone, promoting both Marconi's achievements and the town of Dover itself.

# How to become an Amateur

Your first step into amateur radio is to gain your Foundation licence which is issued by Ofcom. To gain your licence, you will need to study for, and pass, the Foundation exam.

This is a one-hour multiple choice exam which you take online, either at home or at a radio club. The exam helps to ensure that you can operate safely and without causing issues to other radio users.

## Preparing for the Foundation exam

You can contact your local radio club (see details in useful contacts section) to support you in preparing for your exam or you can study at home, following an online course, if you choose. There are plenty of materials to support your learning, such as RSGB Books, videos and Resources.

## The exam

The Foundation exam is taken on-line, and you will be informed of your result immediately. When you're ready you can book and pay for your exam through the RSGB website and take your exam online at a time/ date that suits you.

Once you have passed your exam and have received official confirmation of your result, you can register on the Ofcom licensing system, choose your call sign and apply for your licence.

## Join the RSGB!

If you haven't done so already, this would be a great time to join the RSGB. Membership gives you access to the monthly magazine, RadCom, as well as RadCom Basics and Plus. You'll also benefit from helpful videos, advice, taking part in awards and contests, book discounts and free entry to Bletchley Park (which includes the RSGB National Radio Centre).

## Join your Local club

Your local radio club offers extensive information, guidance, and support to help you make informed decisions as you pursue success in the hobby.

## Useful Contacts

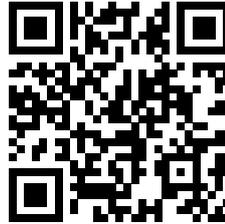
### Dover Amateur Radio Club

Email: [Secretary@darc.online](mailto:Secretary@darc.online)

Web [darc.online](http://darc.online)



Email:



Web

### Hilderstone Radio society

<https://www.g0hrs.org/>

### East Kent Radio Society

[hello@g0ekr.org](mailto:hello@g0ekr.org)

<https://www.g0ekr.org/>

### Folkstone Repeater Group

<https://folkestonerepeatergroup.org.uk/>

### Radio society of Great Britian

<https://rsgb.org/>

### Ofcom

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/spectrum/radio-equipment/amateur-radio>

### Dover Tales

<https://www.facebook.com/dovertaes/>