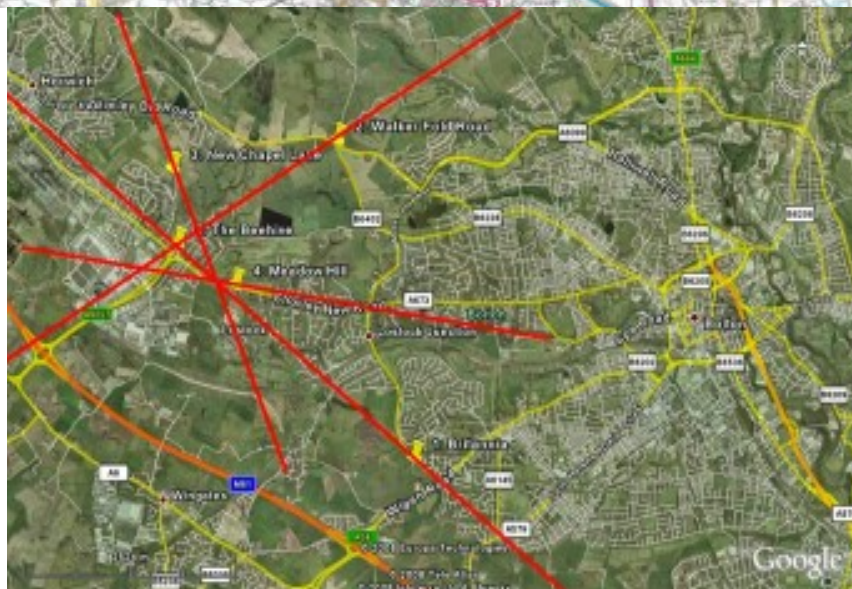


Radio direction-finding (ARDF) hunts

Written by Ross Wilkinson

Sunday, 07 February 2010 23:36 - Last Updated Wednesday, 27 June 2012 19:34



Recalling a series of very successful events run by the [Bolton & District ARS](#) in the 1980's, the BWC has now revived this tradition of "Fox-hunts" (light-hearted direction-finding events) in the 2m band.

Following on from G6GVI's seminar on VHF DF-ing, members of the BWC and *Bolton RAYNET Group* took part in an inaugural practice event on 23-Jun-2008. Blessed by perfect weather conditions in a long light evening, the twenty participants divided into a number of teams and vehicles, and set off to

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track down the hidden transmitter G0BWC/P (operated by Norman G4YNK).

The teams used a variety of equipment, including 2m loops and small beams, plus the more sophisticated *Datong DF1* and *Montreal3* phase-detection systems. This practice event illustrated how accurate initial bearings from well-chosen sites can reduce the distance driven in the chase. And apart from learning about VHF-DF techniques, the event was also a very successful social occasion, with most of the competitors staying on at

The Beehive

(the Fox's lair) for a drink afterwards.



Our second event on 28-Jul again co-incided with a lovely evening, and saw a greater variety of

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aerials, including a wooden-framed Moxon Rectangle deployed through a sun-roof! Colin G6MRY operated the hidden station near to the centre of Bolton, and "foxed" most of the competitors for a good while. Bill's *Montreal3* DF system proved its worth again, bringing his team home first.



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For our the third and final event on 11-Aug, the weather stayed mostly dry, and four teams of hunters sought Norman G4YNK who was our "fox" again. Despite wasting ten minutes on a fruitless search for a radio which Ross had accidentally left at the roadside, Ross and Colin managed to locate Norman in around an hour. Although they had the *Datong DF1 Doppler* system linked to an on-board computer, they relied on bearings from a simple 2m loop and 70cm beam (for tracking Norman's third harmonic once they got close)!

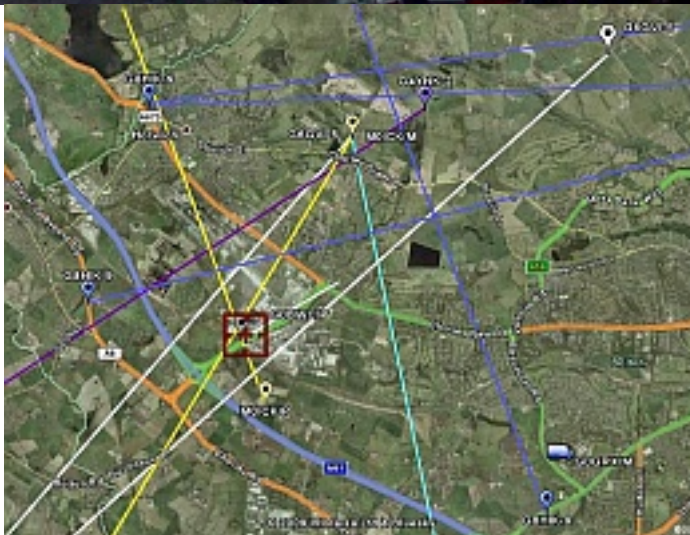


In **2009** we tried some [more high-tech options](#) for group DF events, using APRS to co-ordinate bearings from different sites! Read more about this in our [Newsletter supplement](#)

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Three more events were held during the summer of **2010**, in which fifteen stations contributed more than sixty bearings between them - Jack G8HIK and Paul 2E0TXT being the most accurate overall. But our experience showed that taking bearings

on the move

with

Doppler

-type (phase detection) equipment was less susceptible to reflections than loops from fixed sites, so ran a Club Project to build some more of these units for the

2011

season.

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But in **2012** we decided to move away from these hi-tech vehicle-based events to a simpler format, where a very low-power beacon transmitter could be hunted in a small area (e.g. a local park) by pedestrian operators using hand-held antennas.