

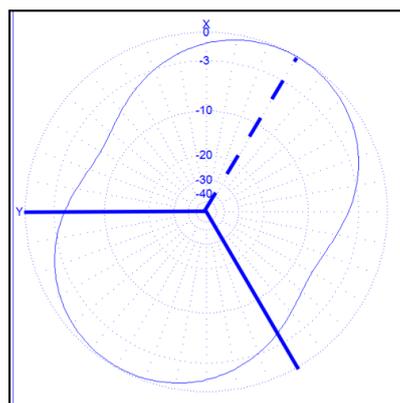
12th May: Dog and Partridge (North Stifford)

That was close! The team turned up for the first public event of the year just as the rain clouds opened. Wise decision, in conjunction with the Landlord, to postpone one day and we were rewarded with glorious sunshine on Sunday. It did highlight the need to "book" as we were able to phone or text some people who said they were attending, to update them. We had many QSOs including a 2m contact with Dorothy, M0LMR, operating "Windmills on the Air" at Rayleigh. And on HF 80m (CW) we had contacts ranging from Devon in the South to Bishops Auckland in the North. The location was ideal with lots of space to spread out equipment and with refreshments from the pub.



21st May: Club Meeting

Eddie, G0BKL, gave a presentation on antenna modelling using a free software programme called MMANA-GAL. You input key parameters such as length and width of wire, height off the ground and then optimise, for example, for best SWR. The computer produces a plot of the radiation pattern. This was applied to a SOTABeam dipole which is an inverted V with the two elements at 120° (rather than 180°) as they help support the central pole along with a guy rope (the dashed line). All plugged into the programme which shows how this configuration of dipole is more omni-directional than a conventional figure of 8.



26th May: Lightship Cafe (Grays Beach)

Our second public event of the year. This popular venue run by the community was celebrating their birthday with face-painting, a DJ (who incidentally was a radio ham himself) and lots of advertising to attract visitors. Simon M1GGY, strung up a HF antenna over a tree branch to operate FT8, while Eddie G0BKL erected a VHF antenna on poles strapped to the fence. In prime position outside Nigel M0ICH and Stella G0EKP drew attention to the club by enticing people to try CW. One lad came inside with his mum and they agreed for a photo which has been sent off to *RadCom* and *Practical Wireless* as an example of public engagement. Chair of Acorns, Nick G4HCK, spoke to one keen visitor at length about the procedure for obtaining a licence.



18th June: Next Presentation

We are lucky to welcome Andrew, M0ONH, to Acorns as our speaker for June. He is the founder of HAMtronics.uk, Amateur Radio and Electronics Store, who is very knowledgeable on micro-computers and how they are revolutionising the world of self-programmable radios. Andrew is a regular contributor to Twitter ([@onewham](https://twitter.com/onewham)) on radio related topics and attends EssexHam.co.uk field days; you may recognise his voice as one of several net Controllers. The talk will cover various aspects of self-build projects delivered with his infectious enthusiasm. There will be plenty of time for Question/Answers and practical demonstrations.



Finally: England to Italy 1837km divided by 2m = 918500 waves

"I've just worked IK7XWJ (in Italy) on FT8 with a plus 11db signal report. Nothing unusual you may say? But it was on 2 metres! Right place, right time for tropospheric propagation (OK, so his four element beam helped!)" **Eddie G0BKL**