



Save Concorde Group

15 Thistledown Drive • Ixworth • Bury St Edmunds • Suffolk IP31 2NH

ben.lord@save-concorde.co.uk – www.save-concorde.co.uk

Telephone: 01359 232667

Notes to Press Release

- G-BOAF “Alpha-Foxtrot” was the final Concorde to ever fly so far, on 26th November 2003 from London Heathrow to Filton, piloted by Captain Les Brodie, and was presented to the people of Bristol by HRH The Duke of York.
- Filton had been an obvious choice for one of the British Airways Concorde fleet to retire to, with Alpha Foxtrot having been the final Concorde to be produced at Filton in 1980.
- A loan agreement was effected between British Airways and Airbus UK who would temporarily exhibit Alpha Foxtrot on their Filton site until a permanent home was constructed and this exhibit would be run by the Bristol Aero Collection. To date, Alpha-Foxtrot still remains the property of British Airways, as do all of their Concorde’s.
- The reason that the temporary site could only be considered as a temporary museum is due to the close proximity the site has to the working runway of Filton Airfield, meaning a permanent construction could not be considered.
- In 2006, South Gloucestershire Council issued a statement advising that the possibility of a new £12m visitor centre featuring Alpha-Foxtrot had moved a crucial step nearer to reality after an offer of land adjacent to Cribbs Causeway Shopping Centre had been made by JT Bayliss.
- In 2007, The Concorde Trust was launched as a charity, taking over from the original steering group which had been formed soon after Alpha-Foxtrot arrived in Filton in 2003.
- By July 2010, almost 7 years on from Alpha-Foxtrot having flown into Filton for the last time, Airbus UK announced it would be closing the temporary museum in order to conduct a “deep maintenance programme”. The final museum tours would finish on 15th October 2010 with the loss of two jobs and the resources of more than 100 volunteers, including many retired BAC employees who worked on the development and production of Concorde.
Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/bristol/hi/people_and_places/newsid_8782000/8782139.stm
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10460246>
- By this point, the Concorde Trust had only sought to reveal glossy pictures of how the proposed visitor centre would look but had revealed nothing as to how the funds were going to be raised and more importantly, when the centre would be “open for business”.
Source: www.concordetrust.com (not online as of 31/03/2013)
- SCG immediately visited the temporary museum and offered whatever assistance it could to prevent the closure. Any closure would result in not only the loss of jobs, but vital revenue needed in order to get the visitor centre built.
- Save Concorde Group immediately unveiled a campaign entitled SOS: Save Our Speedbird where we rallied the support of the local community, plus the local media and the MP for Filton and Bradley Stoke, Jack Lopresti. A public meeting was held on 4th September 2010 which was not attended by the Concorde Trust, Airbus UK or British Airways, and despite our best efforts, the closure of the temporary museum went ahead.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-10644070>
- SCG met with representatives from the Concorde Trust in Bristol later in September 2010 to find out exactly what the situation was from their side, and to offer any assistance required to get this visitor centre into existence sooner rather than later. We were advised that negotiations were still underway with “key stakeholders” and that we would be advised if we could offer any assistance, particularly from a fundraising point of view given the great number of supporters SCG has.
- Despite initially stating in July 2010 that the closure of the museum would be temporary whilst the deep maintenance programme was carried out, Airbus UK announced shortly after the closure in October 2010, that the museum would not reopen until such time as the new visitor centre was ready for business. The reason cited are that the museum was not commercially viable even though Airbus UK directly manipulated the performance of the museum through restricting the number of visitors permitted in a single day, the number of days per week it could open, and the prevention of corporate events from being held.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-11830264>



Save Concorde Group

15 Thistledown Drive • Ixworth • Bury St Edmunds • Suffolk IP31 2NH
ben.lord@save-concorde.co.uk – www.save-concorde.co.uk
Telephone: 01359 232667

- On 14th April 2011, BAE Systems announced that Filton Airfield was to close at the end of 2012, citing that the airfield was no longer commercially viable to operate.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-13086783>
- Pressure then began mounting on The Concorde Trust as to when it would start raising funds and when the museum would open as Alpha-Foxtrot would need to be moved from her current location prior to the closure of Filton Airfield. During a meeting held between SCG and Concorde Trust in April 2011, we were informed that a bid had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a £2.9m lottery grant and that an answer on this would be forthcoming by the end of May 2011.
- During April 2011, rumours circulated the Concorde community that Alpha-Foxtrot was leaving Bristol and would become part of a new tourist attraction in Central London:
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-13095187>
- On 20th May 2011, Airbus announced a €1m (£840,000) donation towards a Concorde Visitor Centre in Filton.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-13452615>
- On 24th May 2011, the Concorde Trust were informed that their bid had failed and this was embargoed for release until 1am on Bank Holiday Monday 30th May 2011. The reason for the bid failing amounted to the Heritage Lottery Fund only funding ACTUAL heritage, rather than construction projects relating to the preservation of heritage.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-13574624>
- Despite informing the Concorde Trust that their plans for this new visitor centre were too ambitious and costly, SCG met with British Airways the following day and presented plans for a £2m visitor centre on a similar basis to a proven model that works with G-BOAC “Alpha-Charlie” housed at Manchester Airport. British Airways informed us they would give careful consideration to the deteriorating situation in Filton and would invite us to discuss further in due course.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-13616358>
- In August 2011, SCG were formally invited to submit it’s proposals to a new working group formed by representatives of British Airways and Airbus UK who would ultimately determine who would deliver the new museum to house “Alpha-Foxtrot”. SCG were encouraged to submit this in coalition with the Concorde Trust on the basis that together we would be able to form an overall proposal of greater substance that could be delivered sooner.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-13701246>
- Despite actively pursuing the preparation of this submission in a co-operative manner, the Concorde Trust failed to provide any assistance to SCG’s “low-cost” proposal, simply rendering it as “commercially unviable” against their revised rivalled £9m scheme which would also be submitted before the panel. This feedback was provided to SCG 48 hours before the submission deadline in November 2011. Despite this unhelpful approach, SCG continued to submit it’s proposals to the panel independently.
- SCG were then invited to formally present our proposal in person at a meeting with the BA/Airbus UK panel at British Airways’ Head Office at Waterside, Heathrow Airport on 27th February 2012. We were informed that we would be informed by the end of April as to the decision given the pressing situation with Filton Airfield closing at the end of 2012.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-17177078>
- April came and went without any word from the BA/Airbus panel as to whether a decision had been made. A further news release was made quoting SCG and The Concorde Trust, but whereas SCG have been very open in what their proposal consists of, this news release confirms the Concorde Trust remain “tight lipped”.
Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-17905904>
- By December 2012, still no word was forthcoming as to whose proposal was the winning bid to deliver the new visitor centre museum to house Concorde Alpha-Foxtrot. The closure of Filton Airfield was confirmed for 31st December 2012, and on 5th December, BAe Systems announced it would pledge £2.4m towards the new visitor



Save Concorde Group

15 Thistledown Drive • Ixworth • Bury St Edmunds • Suffolk IP31 2NH
 ben.lord@save-concorde.co.uk – www.save-concorde.co.uk
 Telephone: 01359 232667

centre museum on a new site which it currently owned adjacent to two First World War Hangars on the opposite side of the runway to where Alpha-Foxtrot is currently positioned.

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-20604803>

- During a lecture given by Duncan Greenman at the University of West England in March 2013, he announced during his lecture that the newly formed Bristol Aero Collection Trust (NB: In September 2012, Bristol Aero Collection merged with the Concorde Trust) had been awarded the proposal for Alpha-Foxtrot to be housed in a new visitor centre at the original cost of £12m which would open in July 2016. At this stage, SCG considered this as unconfirmed and made enquiries with British Airways and Airbus as to the strength of this unconfirmed information.
- SCG received notification from British Airways on 27th March 2013 that whilst it’s proposal did have some strong merits, most notably the short length of time it would take for our visitor centre to open and have Concorde undercover as well as the extent of our support network, our proposal did not meet it’s eligibility criteria. (NB: SCG never received a clear indication as to what this eligibility criteria was)

Additional Information on The Concorde Trust

The following information has been obtained from publically available information published on the Charity Commission website.

- Registered as a Charity in 2007 following the efforts of a steering group to deliver a museum that would house Concorde Alpha-Foxtrot.
- Through sales of a video called “Concorde Coming Home” commissioned in a partnership by the Bristol Evening Post and BBC Points West, restricted funds was setup where revenues raised through the sales of this video, and from tours and merchandise sales at the temporary museum were collected and held in trust by the Bristol Aero Collection until such time as an organisation would be in place to undertake the new visitor centre project.
- Here is a breakdown showing the amount this fund had from 1st April 2007 to present day. Financial Periods were 1st April to 31st March each financial year:

Concorde Museum Appeal

Financial Period	Opening Balance	Income Received	Grants to Concorde Trust	Closing Balance
2007/08	£272,140	£116,352	£60,000	£328,492
2008/09	£328,492	£7,890	£234,143	£102,239
2009/10	£102,239	Nil	Nil	£102,239
2010/11	£102,239	Nil	£50,000	£52,239
2011/12	£52,239	Nil	£57,000	-£4,761

Aviation Heritage Museum

Financial Period	Opening Balance	Income Received	Expenditure	Closing Balance
2007/08	£271,682	£3,800	£46,121	£229,361
2008/09	£229,361	£96,177	£60,488	£265,050
2009/10	£264,941	£83,185	£46,500	£301,626
2010/11	£301,626	£57,280	£23,141	£335,765
2011/12	£335,765	£62,515	Nil	£398,280



Save Concorde Group

15 Thistledown Drive • Ixworth • Bury St Edmunds • Suffolk IP31 2NH
 ben.lord@save-concorde.co.uk – www.save-concorde.co.uk
 Telephone: 01359 232667

- The Concorde Trust have been granted the full amount of the Concorde Museum Appeal fund, plus an additional £4,761 from the Bristol Aero Collection’s own reserves from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2012. The total accumulative amount paid to The Concorde Trust by the Bristol Aero Collection is £401,143.
- The Concorde Trust have spent this money as follows:

Expenditure	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	TOTAL
Consultancy Fees	£44,000		£19,000	£73,000	£4,000	£140,000
Legal Fees	£15,000	£3,000	£2,000	£2,000	£1,000	£23,000
Salary – Project Director		£39,000	£69,000	£68,000	£65,000	£241,000
Independent Exam Fees		£1,000	£2,000	£2,000	£2,000	£7,000
TOTAL	£59,000	£43,000	£92,000	£145,000	£72,000	£411,000

- As of the 31st May 2012, the Concorde Trust transferred all of it’s assets and activities to the Bristol Aero Collection, now known as the Bristol Aero Collection Trust, including only £7,000 largely earned through bank interest out of the £401,000 it had been granted by the Bristol Aero Collection.
- All existing directors, trustees and employees of the Concorde Trust have been appointed as directors of the Bristol Aero Collection Trust.
- The Project Director was made a trustee of the Bristol Aero Collection Trust on 21st October 2011

These financial overviews confirm the following:

- The reason why this project has had varied valuations of between £9m-£12m is due to the fact that in addition to the visitor centre, an adjoining office suite was also to be built which is why the car park was to be as extensive and costly as it was, and ultimately a way of generating vast amounts of income off the back of Concorde’s goodwill.
- £411,000 of publically raised money has been spent without so much as a brick laid so far.
- The Project Director was employed to oversee the day to day running of the trust, including the extensive preparation of the Heritage Lottery Fund application which, according to the public accounts, cost £339,000 to prepare, only to then fail on a FUNDAMENTAL condition which should have been known by the various consultants employed, or at the very least, the project director who was employed by the trust for his experience in this field.
- Concorde still remains without cover and in an incredibly vulnerable position following the sale of Filton Airfield to private developers for £120 million.
- We are still yet to see a concrete fundraising plan in place from the trust awarded this project. With the pledges made by “key stakeholders” and the amount held in the reserved fund totalling £3.6 million, a shortfall of £8.4m exists with no clear indication how this will be raised other than being told that confidential negotiations are still underway with other “key stakeholders”.
- With us fast approaching the 10th anniversary of Concorde’s final flight to Filton in November this year, it will be a further THREE years before this museum opens to the public if the above shortfall is raised within the given timeframe.
- The Concorde Trust was effectively insolvent throughout it’s existence and has had to merge with the Bristol Aero Collection to effectively remain financially solvent whilst not delivering anything!