



# P7056 Club

Home of the Westland Whirlwind Fighter

*Summer Update 2023*

Hi all esteemed members!

As you all must be aware by now that the finished cockpit section is now on display and awaiting its colour scheme at the Kent Battle of Britain Museum Trust situated at the former RAF airfield at Hawkinge.



*P7056 arrives at Hawkinge.*

*Pictured is Pete Smith – our Chief Engineer.*

During the Second World War this airfield was the closest one to France and as such received more than its fair share of attention from the Luftwaffe.

RAF Hawkinge *also* had the occasional visit from the 263 Squadron Whirlwinds based along the coast at RAF Manston, so it's quite fitting that a home should be found for P7056 here.

The skinning of the cockpit section brought its own kind of problems for our Chief Engineer Pete Smith. Never being one to throw his hands up in despair at some of Petter's design ideas he persevered until he produced an answer that was acceptable to all the Trustees of the project. Some parts had to be made twice before a suitable solution could be found.

The cockpit interior also came with its own set of challenges. We have tried to be as authentic as possible and where we have been unable to source instruments of the period, Pete has in fact made replacements of the correct shape, size, and colour where necessary. Including this brilliant gunsight.



*Cockpit interior.*

If you wonder where the floor is, well the Whirlwind didn't have one. The cockpit sat on top of the wing centre section, and it was held in place by attachment to the wing spars.

We were fortunate on the day of arrival to be able to get Ian Palmer from the BBC local news programme to come and do a couple of interviews with both Pete Smith and our chairman Dave Brocklehurst MBE. I cannot stress how important publicity is to maintain the momentum of the project build.



*Pete being interviewed by Ian Palmer of the BBC*

You can also find articles on the project in the following magazines.

Britain at War.

Aeroplane Monthly.

Considering the next phase of the project brings us to the usual problem of funding.

The general rise in the cost of aluminium has put a bit of a dent in our finances. We aim to run a lean project; nothing is spent on merch or other unnecessary items.

The next target of the project is to complete the rear fuselage, part of the tail section and the nose cover, with keeping a keen eye on the future build of the main spar.

We had a meeting last Monday evening where all the above was discussed and Pete explained the magnitude of just completing the main spar. There are plenty of other engineering challenges on the horizon – which will be met by our usual attention to detail and engineering quality.

If you visit the Kent Battle of Britain Museum at Hawkinge you will get the chance to see the recovered wreckage of P6966 – the first production Whirlwind - which includes some of the spar and will get a chance to assess the nature of our problem.

To that end we need to find £6/8 thousand pounds to complete the next phase of the build so we have started another funding campaign.

We have a new GoFundMe campaign that is already attracting support:

<https://gofund.me/58f82f86>

**Alternatively visit our website and donate via PayPal.**

<https://www.whirlwindfp.org/support-the-wfp-1>

All donations are really appreciated by all the team; it doesn't matter how much it is as every little helps.



*P7056 with dummy cannons fitted. Wings behind are from a Miles aircraft.*

Thanks to all those who have already donated, please help us to continue and add all the parts to P7056 as she looks a little lonely there. If you haven't donated yet now is your chance to be a part of this incredible project.

Please visit the Museum to view our cockpit and everything else there. It's an amazing space.

*Take your WFP membership card – to gain half-price entry!*

Many regards from the Whirlwind Fighter Project team!

Honorary President Tom Eeles.

Honorary Vice-President James Munro.

Member of the Aviation Heritage UK.

Charity number EW37349

Secretary: CJM Hayward, 57 Bramblefield Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent, Me10 2SX.

Email: [whirlwindfighterproject@outlook.com](mailto:whirlwindfighterproject@outlook.com)

Website:

[www.whirlwindfp.org](http://www.whirlwindfp.org)