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## The Airplane Factory to open UK Build Assist base

South African kitplane company The Airplane Factory (TAF) is getting ready to open a base in the UK at Gloucestershire Airport. It will sell TAF's two aircraft kits, the two-seat Sling 2 and four-seat Sling 4, and provide spares and service. TAF will also open the UK's first official 'Build Assist' centre. In a separate move, TAF is also working with Sonaca to build aircraft in Belgium (see p7).

TAF has been working with the Light Aircraft Association (LAA) which regulates home-built aircraft in the UK. The first British Sling 2 is under construction by LAA member Tim Hardy, who flew a demo aircraft last year.

"With regards LAA approval, we commenced with the process in December 2015, providing the LAA with a comprehensive documentation submission," said TAF's Mike Dawson. "This documentation review is expected to be completed shortly, thereafter a build inspection and flight test will be required. This process will be completed by September, when we will launch Sling at the 70th

Anniversary LAA Rally at Sywell Airfield"

The Gloucestershire 'Build Assist' facility will enable owners to build their planes with jigs, fixtures and tooling provided. "People with no skills will have coaching to build their planes to the same quality as the planes built in the original production facility in South Africa," explained Mike.

"All administrative and regulatory processes such as build history dossiers, LAA inspections, etc, as well as painting will be taken care of, leaving the builder with an enjoyable build experience. We envisage decreasing the build time from the average of two to four years, to a mere six months, while still maintaining the 51% owner build criteria."

Both the Sling 2 and 4 are all-metal aircraft, powered by Rotax engines. As with all kitplanes, there's a choice of avionics though TAF usually fits MGL electronic flightdecks. TAF has flown its aircraft around the world three times, including one epic flight from Rio de Janeiro to Cape Town lasting 30 hours. [airplanefactory.co.za](http://airplanefactory.co.za)

## Wilksch to power plastic fuel flight

An engine invented, developed and manufactured by British diesel aero company Wilksch Airmotive will power an aircraft attempting to fly 3,000 miles on fuel made from plastic waste. Jeremy Rowsell plans to fly a Van's RV-9 equipped with a 120hp WAM120 engine from Silicon Valley, California, to Anchorage, Alaska, in August this year. The 'On Wings of Waste' flight is also supported by BBC TV broadcaster Sir David Attenborough.

Rowsell is a British-born pilot, adventurer and environmentalist. Inspiration for the flight came from flying single-engine aircraft across the Pacific as a ferry pilot. He remembers looking down and seeing the devastation.

"I had heard of the Pacific Garbage Patch, but until I stepped foot on the islands myself, I didn't realise how big the issue was," said Jeremy.

"I believe that the problem can be resolved within a generation by changing attitudes and giving plastic value rather than treating it in a disposable fashion. Plastic to oil technology is one of these solutions."

The Wilksch engine was chosen for its ability to operate on kerosene – jet fuel. Spanish company Plasticenergy is producing kerosene made from end of life plastic, and is involved in the project.



The route has been chosen for its start and finish point. Silicon Valley is the innovation technological hub of the world, while Anchorage is a climate change frontier. The flight will leave on 1 August and be filmed for a documentary that will examine new environmentally-friendly technologies. [onwingsofwaste.org](http://onwingsofwaste.org)

## News in Brief



■ Tecnam has completed construction of the first prototype of its P2012 Traveller twin, ready to start flight tests. The Tecnam P2012 Traveller is an 11-seat mini-airliner powered by two Lycoming TE0-540-C1A piston engines.



■ The British agent for EuroFOX Aviation, Ascent Industries, has been approved by the CAA to build ready-to-fly microflight aircraft. Ascent will start immediate production of the EuroFOX aircraft in both nosewheel and tailwheel configurations.

■ Piper has secured an order for 112 aircraft from the University of North Dakota, to be used for flight training. The aircraft are single-engine PA-28 Archer TXs and Seminole light twins.



■ Zenair is to offer its STOL C 750 kitplane as a ready-to-fly sport aircraft, powered, unusually, by a Continental O-200 engine. Price? A snip at \$99,950.

■ Nicolas Ivanoff of Franco won the opening round of 2016 Red Bull Air Race World Championship in Abu Dhabi. Favourites Hannes Arch and Matt Hall finished 4th and 5th. Next round is Spielberg, Austria on 23-24 April.