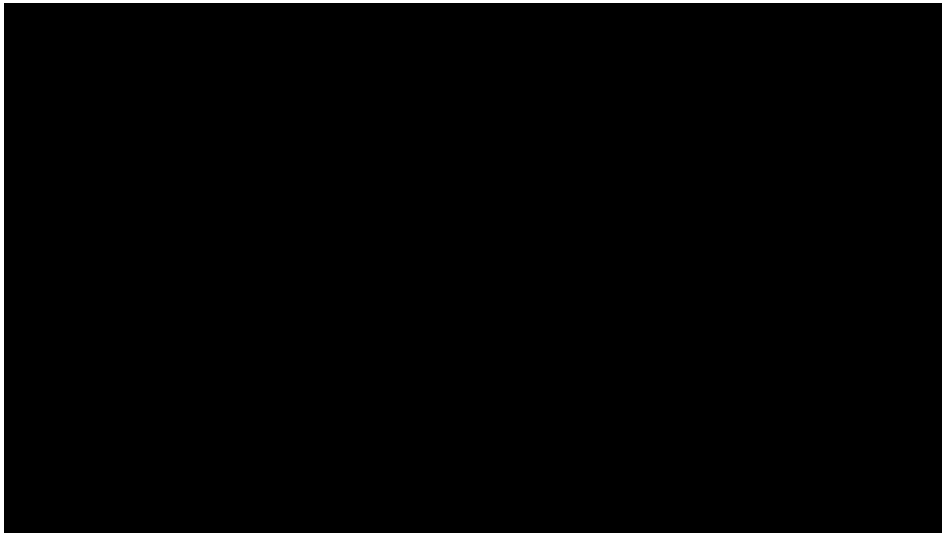




3rd August 2007

By Frankie Taggart

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The Argus

Top secret records detailing a decade of UFO sightings in Sussex have been made public for the first time by the Ministry of Defence.

The county's X-Files, published in response to a Freedom of Information request, show that 52 reports of unidentified flying objects were logged by the MoD between 1998 and 2006.

Recap: Crash blocks A-road

The biggest year for sightings was 1999, when 14 separate reports were recorded in Sussex.

In the most recent year, 2006, there were four reported sightings.

They included, in May, a report of two witnesses in Hastings who claimed they had seen "an alien outside their kitchen window".

In November of the same year, in Petworth, "five dancing lights" were reported.

In August in Polegate, a witness claimed: "The first object changed shape. The second object was red, and star shaped."

At 5.11pm on August 13, 2005, a pilot with Air France spotted a UFO ten miles west of Gatwick which was "one to two metres in length, a yellow colour and cylindrical in shape but not a balloon shape".

Earlier that month, a report was logged of "seven red and white flashing lights moving in an erratic type of way" in Peacehaven.

Brighton and Hove has been the site of eight separate sightings over the past decade.

On September 22, 2003, a witness reported "a red unidentified flying object, definitely not an aeroplane", in Hove.

On August 16, 2002, a witness in Brighton reported a "big flying object which looked like a glider, but when viewed on the camcorder, looked like a big horse tumbling around".

Other sightings reported to the authorities in Sussex include the case of Harry Varlow, the nine-year-old schoolboy who sparked a 24 hour UFO alert in March. Watch the [video of the incident](#).

He was flying his 30ft solar-panelled balloon in Wish Park in Hove on Sunday, March 11. But a gust of wind tore the black plastic inflatable from its string and Harry watched helpless as it floated away.

It led to a flood of calls from people convinced they had seen a UFO.

In November 2006 hundreds of people also spotted what they thought were UFOs above Hove.

However they turned out to be nothing more than Chinese lanterns Vince Meegan, of Holland Road, Hove, said he was walking with his two sons when he first saw the bright lights near the King Alfred Centre, late on November 18. He said: "The first two or three were too high to see properly but then the next few remained at about 30metres so we could get a reasonable look at them.

"They appeared to be small translucent paper octagonal boxes, around the size of a shoe box, with a nightlight candle inside. I'm sorry if this is disappointing but the Martians aren't arriving just yet."

Each year more than 100 UFO sightings are reported to the MoD, which is required to investigate every sighting in order to establish whether or not the UK's air space has been compromised.

An MoD spokesman told The Argus: "The MoD examines reports solely to establish whether UK airspace may have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised military activity.

"If required, sighting reports are examined with the assistance of the Department's air defence experts.

"Unless there is evidence of a potential threat, there is no attempt to identify the nature of each sighting reported."

Correspondence between the MoD and members of the public who report sightings of strange objects reveals that Whitehall officials remain "totally open-minded" about the existence of UFOs.

Giving details of the MoD's policy on UFOs, the Director of Air Staff said in a lengthy response to a Freedom of Information request: "The Ministry of Defence does not have any expertise or role in respect of "UFO/flying saucer" matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial lifeforms, about which it remains totally open-minded.

"To date the MOD knows of no evidence which substantiates the existence of these alleged phenomena."

He added: "We believe that rational explanations, such as aircraft lights or natural phenomena, could be found for them if resources were diverted for this purpose, but it is not the function of the MoD to provide this kind of aerial identification service.

"It would be an inappropriate use of defence resources if we were to do so."

The decision to release details of UFO sightings by members of the public between 1998 and 2006 comes as the MoD prepares to publish its UFO files dating back to 1967.

The documents due for release are witness reports of apparent UFO sightings, many by civil pilots and military personnel.

A few are thought to have been investigated further by the military, but the details have never been made public.

REPORTS OF UFO SIGHTINGS IN SUSSEX 2006:

16 May 06, 19:41. Hastings, East Sussex. Two witnesses thought that they saw an alien outside their kitchen window.

12 Nov 06, 20:20. Petworth, West Sussex. Five dancing lights seen.

No Firm Date. Rushington, West Sussex. Two flying objects were seen.

(Sighting July 2006, message taken 24 July 2006).

No Firm Date. Polgate, East Sussex. The first object changed shape. The second object was red, and star shaped. (UFOs seen in August 2006 - email, 23 August 2006).

2005: 3 Aug 05, Midnight. Peacehaven, East Sussex. There were seven red and white flashing lights. They were moving in an erratic type of way.

13 Aug 05, 17:11. Ten miles west of Gatwick, Sussex. Witness: Pilot/Air France. One-two metres in length. Was a yellow colour and cylindrical in shape. Not a balloon shape.

9 Sep 05, 05:45. Little Hampton, West Sussex. There was one light in the sky that burst into four separate ones, before disappearing.

2003: 22 Sep 03. Hove, East Sussex. A red unidentified flying object, definitely not an aeroplane.

2002: 15 May 02, 02:15. Uckfield, East Sussex. One object with red and green flashing lights.

File: **2007 08 03_The Argus_Sussex s UFO sightings revealed.pdf**

URL: <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/1591327.sussex-ufo-sightings-revealed/>

16 Aug 02, 20:12. Brighton, East Sussex. Big flying object, looked like a glider, but when viewed on the camcorder, looked like a big horse tumbling around.

22 Aug 02, 22:25. Heathfield, East Sussex. Aerial lights seen in the sky.

22 Aug 02, 22:25. Heathfield, East Sussex. Anomalous aerial lights were seen.

5 Sep 02. Wisborough Green, West Sussex. Interesting lights on an equilateral triangle.

19 Dec 02, 06:30. Brighton, East Sussex. Large cylindrical object, white flowing light from the front and flames coming from the rear. Some noise, not loud.

2001: 24 Jan 01, 17:00. Battle, East Sussex. One round, star shaped object, with one, white flashing light. Very bright. Stationary, but quivering.

15 Jul 01, 16:55. Hellingly, East Sussex. Pilot One large object, the size of an eagle. It looked like three circles joined together. Was dark brown and black. Quite fast.

11 Sep 01, 00:10. Hailsham, East Sussex. A very large, round object, followed by another object, which was green and conical in shape. Both were travelling fast.

11 Nov 01, 08:40. Flying over Seaford, East Sussex. Witness: Captain of aircraft. One red object sighted by the Captain in flight.

18 Dec 01, 20:50. Crawley, Sussex. The object looked like a rounded triangle, longer at one point, with a giant light in the centre.

2000: 18 Jun 00, 19:20. Brighton, East Sussex. One large sphere shaped object. Looked like polished aluminium. Very bright. Stationary at first, then moved off at high speed.

11 Aug 00, 19:00. Hastings, East Sussex. One spherical, dark grey object. Moving South.

21 Aug 00, 10:45. Burgess Hill, West Sussex. Large shape - arrowhead.

Four/five lights at extremities. Moved very fast - north to south in a straight line.

7 Sep 00, 05:50. Seddlecombe, East Sussex. Lights flying in the sky, five - six, flying in some kind of formation, moving north. Witness heard some sort of noise.

20 Oct 00, 19:04. Burgess Hill, West Sussex. Big, blue, bright, round circle. Moved horizontally.

23 Oct 00, 19:04. Crawley, Sussex. A UFO.

3 Dec 00, 20:00. Eastbourne, East Sussex. Three red stars were moving very fast and randomly at first. They were suddenly zooming around and doing acrobatic things.

1999: 12 Jan 99, 05:55. Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex. Two objects, oval shaped and bright white. Then later, another two objects that looked the same, appeared.

5 Feb 99, 01:30. Brighton, East Sussex. One round object, with a very bright, white light. Was hovering like a yo-yo.

7 Feb 99, 18:50. Brighton, East Sussex. One diamond shaped object. Had white/blue colours on it. Was very bright. Was hovering and moved up and down too.

14 Feb 99, 05:30. Hastings, East Sussex. A UFO that looked like a helicopter? It hovered and then shot off into the distance. It had red flashing lights!

6 Mar 99, 01:15. Worthing, West Sussex. Black ball shaped object. Also looked metallic. Changed direction of travel from South to East. Quite fast.

14 Apr 99, 11:18. Lewes, East Sussex. Five circular objects. Green, red and white in colour. Extremely bright. They were moving north.

19 May 99, 08:21. Bexhill, East Sussex. A bright light hanging in the sky. Looked like it had bits trailing off of it. Appeared to be stationary.

5 Jun 99, 22:58. Brighton, East Sussex. Very large circular set of lights in a tilted circle. Then split into two semi-circular arcs, then joined up again. White and very bright.

24 Jun 99, 22:19. Hove, East Sussex. Object - domed shape. It had a bright, white light and was flashing. Object was stationary for about 45 minutes.

6 Jul 99, 01:15. Eastbourne, East Sussex. Saucer shaped, about 80ft in diameter. Was about 20ft to 30ft off the ground. It made a rattling sound.

Six beams, bright light.

15 Jul 99, midnight. Eastbourne, East Sussex. Numerous. Bright flashing. Like satellites, but definitely not. Were slow then fast.

12 Sep 99, 19:42. Lower Stoneham, East Sussex. Six groups of coloured lights. White, green and red lights.

29 Sep 99. Beddingham, East Sussex. One large, circular, flat, brown object. Was seen hovering.

10 Nov 99, 20:25. Littlehampton, West Sussex. Was described as an unidentified foreign object.

1998: 16 May 98, 01:30. Worthing, West Sussex. One oval/bell shaped object. Light in colour and very bright. It made a humming sound, which drew the witness's attention to it.

8 Jul 98, 00:15. Eastbourne, East Sussex. One star shaped object. White and blue in colour and very bright. Was moving to the north from south west.

23 Jul 98, 00:15. Eastbourne, Sussex. Pinpoints of light. Objects were changing speed.

4 Aug 98, 22:00. Eastbourne, Sussex. One small, bright star shaped object, which was moving upwards. Was very slow.

9 Aug 98, 23:00. Horsham, West Sussex. One object with three flashing lights.

12 Aug 98, 03:45. Trotton, West Sussex. One spherical object that had various colours and was very bright.

17 Aug 98, 04:45. Slinford, West Sussex. Two points of light, that were too big to be stars. Also, circles of yellow light. They were hovering and pulsating.

18 Sep 98, 21:00. Farm nr Henfield, West Sussex. One large cylinder shaped object estimated at 40m wide, displaying misty white lights.

25 Sep 98, 01:45. Blackstone, West Sussex. Five to six circles, one object, larger than a jumbo jet. Was rotating.

10 Nov 98, 19:45. Chichester, West Sussex. One object, the size of a house, with a pinnacle top with a dome. Orange but dull in colour. Very erratic and fast.

12 Dec 98, 21:30. Horsham, West Sussex. One very bright, circular white light. Was moving from East to West.

17 Dec 98, 08:00. New Haven, East Sussex. Saw strange vapour trails, plus unusual objects that came from the horizon, wiggled round a bit, then went again. From across the English Channel.

Watch the [footage of Sussex's most recent UFO sighting](#).

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