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NOTES FOR NEW MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Booker Gliding Club

This is not a flying manual. It is an introduction to the club so that you can find out what is going on as quickly as possible. When entering a possibly unfamiliar environment, it is possible that you will feel a little confused as to how it all operates. We hope these notes will help.

Booker Gliding Club has many instructors and experienced cross-country and competition pilots so there is a huge pool of information and talent on hand. Glider pilots are generous with their knowledge and you will find them willing to help your progress.

The process of learning to glide need not be frustrating. A combination of short flights and helping out on the ground can sometimes make it feel as though you are spending a long time at the airfield for a small amount of flying. But stick with it, once you have gone solo you will find the effort has been worthwhile.

Recommended additional reading are the following:

1. Who's Who at Booker
2. The Booker Jargon-Buster – designed help de-mystify the terms used at the Club for various equipment, premises and activities.
3. Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct – sets out the Club's approach and outlines how to avoid the pitfalls of working with young people
4. Current price list

If you feel that the Club is in some way letting you down, please tell us, either via the office team or directly to a committee member (see Who's Who at Booker).

If you think that anything is missing from these notes, or wrong, please contact a committee member.

Booker is a dynamic, proactive club. Make the most of your time here, get involved with launching gliders and other activities which keep the club running, become a part of the 'family' and above all enjoy....

BEFORE YOU START

Medical declaration

When joining the Club you signed a medical declaration stating that you are fit to fly. Before flying solo you must show that you are fit to fly by having a driving licence or by making a self-declaration to DVLA Group 1 standard. Further information is available on the British Gliding Association website:

<https://members.gliding.co.uk/library/laws-rules/pilot-medical-requirements/>

Life insurance

If you have life insurance, including mortgage protection policies, it would be sensible to tell your insurers that you have taken up gliding. Some insurance companies regard gliding as a high-risk sport.

Car insurance

Be aware that many standard car insurance policies do not cover your car while it is on an active airfield. Possible risks include driving into an expensive aircraft.

Alcohol limits

The blood alcohol limit for flying is 20mg per 100ml, much lower than that for driving. As humans process alcohol at very different rates, to be sure of being fit for flying after drinking you should ensure that at least eight hours have elapsed after drinking small quantities of alcohol. You may need to wait much longer after drinking larger amounts. As a guide, it is likely, *but not guaranteed*, that if a person drinks five units of alcohol over a period of hours before the eight-hour ban will have a zero blood alcohol level at the end of the ban.

LEARNING TO FLY

Opening times

The Club is open 7 days a week in the summer and on good weather days in the winter. The Club office is currently staffed for two days a week. Changes to office opening hours are published in the newsletter and in the clubhouse.

Daily operations

We open up the hangar at 0830 every day, and fly until it gets dark, weather permitting. There is a full category instructor in charge of flying operations and there will also be assistant and basic instructors on duty, depending on the flying to be done. Most of the instructors are members giving their time.

It helps to organise the day's flying to know who is coming, we use a Whatsapp group for this. Gliding is a co-operative sport and you will need to do your share of helping out on the ground. This means turning up to help unpack the hangar and set up the launch point and/or staying until everything is back in the hangar.

Bear in mind that most instructors are members giving up their time, and that other people want to fly too, so if you have said you want to fly, please make sure you turn up, regardless of the weather. Instructors can make use of the time to give short briefings on various aspects of flying relevant to your stage in training.

Of course, you can just turn up, there are usually instructors at the launch point without allocated students.

When you have progressed to flying club single seaters, you will need to say on the Whatsapp group so that if necessary an allocation of gliders can be made.

Members on prepaid courses

If you are booked onto a prepaid course you should also arrange your visits via Whatsapp.

Evening flying

Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday during the summer, the flying is run by groups of members, under the supervision of a full category instructor. This is a very good time for making progress with your training as the pace is more relaxed than on a busy weekend, with the following advantages:

- easier access to aircraft
- quieter airfield with much less hassle
- more effective, faster learning with a small band of regular instructors
- circuit practice, field selection, cross-country navigation using the motor glider
- aerobatics, soaring, accurate landings – refining specific skills
- post solo confidence-building, expanding your experience, progressing through the fleet

Programme of courses and events

During the winter months there is a series of talks aimed at pilots at various levels of development. Throughout the year there are courses and other events, for example, aerobatics courses, task weeks and training courses, as well as expeditions to other sites. These are all announced on the website, in the newsletter and on the clubhouse notice board. There is no additional charge for courses and task weeks, you just pay normal flying fees. The costs of expeditions – towing glider trailers and ferrying tugs – are shared by those taking part.

Reference books

The Glider Pilot's Manual by Ken Stewart has all you need for solo training. If you already know the basics then 'Bronze and Beyond' by John McCullagh will help you to a Bronze badge and early cross country flights. Both of these books are available from the office or from the British Gliding Association's online shop

at www.gliding.co.uk. You should also download the latest version of Laws and Rules for Glider Pilots from the BGA's website.

Helping at the launch point

You can help to ensure a smooth operation by helping out with the necessary tasks, including:

- keeping the log
- retrieving landed gliders
- hooking on ropes
- giving launch signals and running wings

You will be fully briefed on how to do these things. It is a very good way of getting to know other members.

Logbook

If you are new to flying, you will need a logbook, on sale in the office or included in long courses. You should use it to record all your flying. Until you go solo, all the comments written in the book will be by instructors as an aid to the next instructor you fly with, highlighting your strengths and weaknesses. This allows the instructors to make efficient use of your time and avoid unnecessary repetition of familiar exercises. After you go solo, you can make your own comments as you see fit, maybe marking particularly memorable flights.

Progress card

If you are new to gliding, you will be given a syllabus record card. Your instructors will use this to record your progress and to ensure that no gaps are left in your training.

Instructors

Booker is affiliated to the British Gliding Association (BGA), the sport's governing body. All instructors are qualified to BGA standards and subject to annual checks. You will probably fly with several instructors during your training, given that most are volunteers and not always available when you are at the club. It is best not to switch too much, in order to maintain continuity, but flying with different people will add value to your training. The instructor rota is published on the club website www.bookergliding.co.uk.

Progressing

Your training will follow the BGA syllabus for trainee pilots. It usually takes between 25 and 45 flights to go solo, although this depends very much on your motivation and how often you fly. A couple of flights at least every two weeks is a good target. As well as learning to control the glider you will also develop your safety awareness both on the ground and in the air. Do not be discouraged if occasionally you seem to be getting nowhere, or an aspect of flying gives you particular trouble. It is part of the normal learning process – remember how it was when you learned to drive.

Once you have gone solo you be 'on checks' for a period. This means that when you come to the airfield you will need to fly with an instructor who will decide whether you can handle the conditions solo on that day. In time you will reach the stage where you can decide for yourself whether you can manage the conditions – if in any doubt, ask for a check flight. You should also have a check flight after a lay off.

Motor gliding

Flying in a motor glider is a good way to cover circuit planning. It is also useful for practising cross-country navigation and field landings. The Club's motor glider is currently out of service, but arrangements with another club can be made.

After you go solo

Full details of the BGA's gliding certificates and endorsements can be found here:

<https://members.gliding.co.uk/laws-rules/gliding-certificate-and-endorsements/>

The following is a summary:

The minimum age for solo is 14.

The first qualification is the BGA's Bronze badge, for which you must complete, within 12 months, the following:

- 50 solo flights, or 20 flights and 10 hours
- three check flights with a full category instructor
- written exam covering air law, navigation, meteorology and principles of flight

The exam may seem a little daunting but it is multiple choice and the requirements are fairly basic. The club runs regular coaching sessions to help you.

Cross-country endorsement

Gliding is not just about drifting around the airfield, although you can if you want to. At Booker we have some very good cross-country pilots and you may want to take advantage of their skills and experience in learning to fly cross-country yourself. The first step is to get your Cross-country endorsement, which requires:

- a flight of one hour
- a cross-country navigation exercise, done in a motor glider
- field landing exercises done in a motor glider

Once you have the endorsement you should have the necessary soaring and navigation skills to move on to the next set of badges, issued by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), as follows:

Silver

- height gain of 1000m
- duration flight of 5 hours
- distance flight of 50km

Gold

- height gain of 3000m
- duration flight of 5 hours (silver badge flight counts for this)
- distance flight of 300km

Diamond

- height gain of 5000m
- distance flight of 500km
- goal flight of 300km (task pre-declared)

Other options

You can also broaden your flying experience and improve your skills by getting involved in other aspects of flying.

Competitions

Gliding competitions are usually last for 9 days and involve the competitors setting off on a pre-set task suited to the weather on the day. The winner is the pilot who completes the task in the shortest time – or gets the furthest if they all land out. Scores are handicapped to allow pilots flying gliders with different performance to compete. Several clubs host a regional competition every year, and there are also national competitions for the various classes of glider.

Task weeks

Task weeks enable members to develop their cross-country skills together and to practise competition flying in a relaxed atmosphere. The tasks usually use Booker's format where the task is handicapped so that lower performance gliders fly a shorter distance, ensuring that the participants arrive back at roughly the same time.

Aerobatics

Aerobatic flying is an excellent way to explore the flight envelope and build your confidence in handling the glider in unusual attitudes.

Instructing

Another way to extend your skills is by training to be an instructor, which has the additional benefit of helping out your club.

Expeditions

Every year we visit other clubs, for a holiday and also to experience flying in different conditions. In the autumn we go to Aboyne on Royal Deeside, the UK's premier wave flying site and a good place to try for height gains. In the spring we visit Lleweni Parc in Denbigh for ridge and wave flying. The expeditions are open to all levels of experience. We have in the past visited a number of sites both in the UK and abroad. For an explanation of wave, ridge and thermals, see our website www.bookergliding.co.uk.

Vintage

Some club members are also members of the Vintage Gliding Club, an international body devoted to the preservation, restoration and flying of Vintage, Oldtimer and Classic gliders. VGC rallies are often held at Booker, giving you an opportunity to see historic aircraft in the air and on the ground.

SAFETY NOTES

Safety culture and taking responsibility

An airfield can be dangerous if you are unaware of the way they operate. Aircraft have the right of way. Be sure to get a briefing on where you can go safely before you step onto the field.

If you see something that looks wrong, tell the duty instructor. Sometimes people will assume that you know what to do. Do not guess, always ask for a briefing. Remember that by doing something incorrectly you could be putting a life in danger.

Airfield lookout

Tow planes and gliders can and DO land from ANY direction. NEVER assume that an aircraft has seen you. Do not assume that a glider or tow plane is going where it 'usually' does. If you are unsure where an aircraft is going it is usually best to stand still and watch it.

Do not walk or drive in front of a glider after it has been hooked on to a rope for launching. Wait or go round the back.

Shout STOP or GLIDER LANDING in order to alert someone to a hazardous situation.

By all means bring your mobile phone with you, but there is a TIME and PLACE when it is safe to talk. Talking on your mobile when launching, hooking, towing out or retrieving gliders, does NOT square with good look out or safety. If you get a call and you are busy airside, leave it. If it is urgent or important they will leave a message. Deal with it at the launch point or off airside.

Powered aircraft and propellers

Walking into a stationary propeller can hurt. Walking into a moving propeller will kill you.

Flashing lights on parked aircraft mean the engine is running or just about to start - avoid it

If you need to talk to the pilot of the tow plane, it is best to approach from behind the wing. NEVER EVER walk up to the tow plane in front of the wing unless the propeller is stationary AND you are sure that the pilot knows you are there and will NOT start the engine.

Avoid standing directly in front of the tug when it is within 15m and taxiing towards you. Never assume the pilot has seen you.

Walking across the apron can be hazardous, look out for aircraft moving, aircraft starting engines, objects caught in propwash.

Stationary aircraft can hurt as well

Powered aircraft and gliders have lots of sharp edges and bits that stick out - propellers, wing tips, trailing edges – be careful not to walk into or stand on them. Take extra care in the hangar where aircraft are often parked in an unusual pattern.

Do not pick up the wing on a glider without looking at what is happening with the opposite wing. CHECK, someone might be standing underneath it.

Do not walk close to or underneath the raised wing of a glider if you can avoid it, someone will probably pick the opposite wing up just as you do.

Tow ropes

Ropes can burn if handled carelessly. Do not try to pick the rope up until you are sure that the tow plane has come to a halt. Do not run whilst allowing the rope to slide through your hands.

Remain fully aware of what the tow plane is doing if you are untangling a rope that is still attached to the tug. If in doubt DROP the rope.

Check that the tow rope is not looped around objects or people when hooking on a glider.

When repairing ropes, use the tools correctly. For example, when trying to undo a broken link do not hold the weak link in the palm of your hand, use a stable surface.

Damage to gliders and foreign objects in gliders

By helping out around the club you may find something broken, or break something yourself. For example, gliders can be pushed into one another, canopies can be cracked by being blown shut or slammed, or a heavy landing may cause damage. Objects also get dropped in the cockpit, like pens, coins or keys, which could get jammed in the controls. These things happen.

Please do not ignore it and walk away, as whatever is wrong may prove to be dangerous to the next person to fly the glider. Safety is much more important than laying blame, so report any damage or lost objects to the duty instructor immediately and make sure no-one flies the glider until it is cleared.

GETTING TO THE LAUNCH POINT

Operation on Runway 24

Walk or drive past Heliair and along the perimeter track through the gate. Do not take a short cut across the helicopter pad or park on the grass area between the yellow marker posts and the concrete apron.

Towing gliders to 24

From the trailer park: keep a good look out for taxiing tugs and launches. Park off the field.

From the hangar: look out for taxiing aircraft when crossing the apron and the taxiway, and for helicopters taxiing to and from their hangar.

Operation on Runway 06

Walk or drive past Heliair and along the perimeter track through the gate. Turn left and follow the fence to the other end of the airfield. Look out to your left for aircraft on approach, they will be landing either side of the launch point. Do not take a short cut across the field, you will be in the middle of the active runway. Park off the field.

Towing gliders to 06

From the trailer park: drive parallel to the runway until level with the launch point, then cross quickly, looking out for gliders and tugs landing.

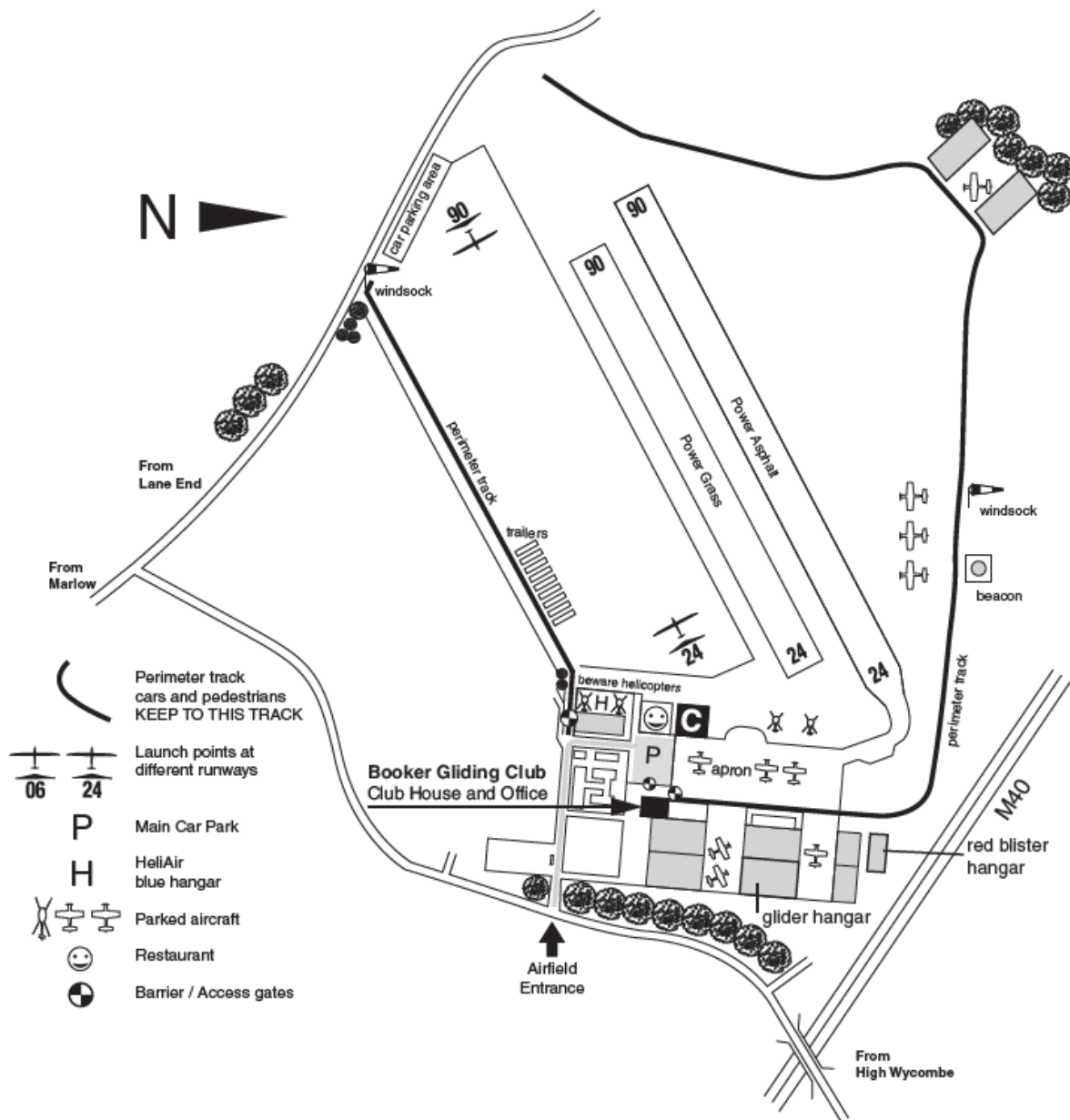
From the hangar: follow the route described above to the 24 launch point area, then follow the route from the trailer park.

Protecting the airfield surface

In the winter bear in mind that the airfield can be very wet and soft. When turning a glider, do not spin it on the wheel as this will dig a hole, pull the glider forward. Do not take cars onto the field except to tow gliders. When you have to use your car to tow out, keep the speed down and avoid using high revs when letting out the clutch. If you have an automatic it is best not to use it on soft ground. Do not follow the tracks of others as this will cause excess wear.

In the summer, avoid towing over bare ground and re-seeded areas.

AIRFIELD LAYOUT



AT THE LAUNCH POINT

Looking out for others

The launch point can be very busy with people who are unfamiliar with the way an airfield operates, including trial lesson visitors and their friends. It is the responsibility of every member to ensure safety, so if you see someone wandering towards a potential hazard, make them aware of the risk. Also, if you see someone looking lost, it could be their first day. Make them welcome and your encouragement could make all the difference to whether or not they join the world of gliding.

The log

It is a legal requirement that we keep a log of every glider flight. The log is also used:

- by the office staff to charge flights to members' accounts
- by the workshop staff to record the number of hours each glider has flown as part of its maintenance schedule

- to ensure that everyone is back – this is especially important when 20 or more gliders fly off across country, we need to be sure that they are safely back on the airfield
So before you fly, give the log keeper your name and membership number. And between flights, take your turn in keeping the log yourself, it is a very good way to get to know people.

Fetching, carrying, pushing and shoving

Be prepared to do your share of driving buggies to retrieve landed gliders from the runway and to move the launch queue forward. The more efficiently this is done, the more flying we can fit into the day.

THE FLEET

The club is all aerotow, so we have our own tow planes. We also have access to privately owned aircraft for busy times, for example, competitions and task weeks.

To be able to provide for the wide range of activities enjoyed by members, we have several two seaters for basic, advanced and aerobatic training, as well as cross-country coaching.

The single seater fleet provides opportunities to progress as the solo pilot gains in skill and experience.

We also have a Falke motor glider, used for circuit planning, navigation and field landing training. This is currently out of service.

For full details of our current fleet, see our website www.bookergliding.co.uk.

Experience required for flying club gliders

For details see the Operations Manual.

Currency requirements

In order to stay current, pilots should fly regularly without long gaps, particularly in the early stages of their training. Solo pilots at any level should have two flights per year with an instructor.

FLYING WITH OTHER PEOPLE

INSTRUCTION

Instructional flights may only be undertaken by a *qualified BGA instructor* who holds either of the following:

- EASA LAPL Medical
- EASA Class 2 Medical
- EASA Class 1 Medical

WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

The law

A minimum requirement of the following to fly family and friends on a non-instructional flight:

- Bronze C
- Minimum 50 hours PIC
- Approval of CFI

Booker requirements

A minimum requirement of the following to fly family and friends on a non-instructional flight:

- Bronze C

- Minimum 50 hours P1
- Passenger training from the CFI or nominated deputy
- Medical coverage as above (see also Laws and Rules)
- Current in the last month
- Approval of duty instructor / check flight on the day
- Passenger signed and paid up temporary member
- PIC paying for the flight

WITH ANOTHER PILOT AS A SHARED FLIGHT

Both pilots must have current Booker membership.

Pilots sharing a flight must agree who is the P1 for the flight. P1 is responsible for the safe conduct of the flight. To act as PIC, the Booker requirements are:

- Bronze C or above
- Approval of duty instructor / check flight on the day
- Current in the last month

Shared flights may only be self-authorized if PIC is a qualified BGA instructor.

HOW TO PAY

Membership numbers

You will be given a membership number which you must give to the log keeper before you fly. This is also your flying account number.

Your account

Your flying account must be kept paid up or in credit. The best way to do this is to complete a direct debit mandate to clear the whole of your account every month. This saves the club money in transaction fees and you the bother of remembering. You can also pay by debit card, cash, cheque or bank transfer. Credit cards are expensive for the club in transaction fees.

Membership fees are for the year October to September and are non-refundable.

Statements

When you join you will be asked for an email address which will be used to send your monthly statement and a link to the newsletter.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Newsletter

The monthly newsletter is always full of information about recent and forthcoming events at the club and elsewhere in the aviation world. You will be emailed a link to the latest edition as soon as it is published.

Website

Further information about what gliding has to offer and what is going on at the club may be found on the club website www.bookergliding.co.uk. You will also find weather links and other information useful to glider pilots.

Facebook

The club's page www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub is open for everyone to view and to post.

Notices

The board in the clubhouse is the place to look for notices about airspace and flight safety. There is also a small board for members' notices.

Email forums

Whatsapp groups

- Booker Gliding Club – for messages about club operations and events
- Booker Chat – for non-operational matters
- Booker XC - targeted towards those pilots who fly cross-country or who aspire to develop their cross-country skills. During the soaring season it is a good way of sharing views about the forecast and to help members plan tasks
- A group is also set up for each expedition as it happens
- To join the groups, speak to the CFI

British Gliding Association

The BGA's website www.gliding.co.uk is the place to keep up to date with the latest developments in the world of gliding. The Information for Clubs and Members section contains much useful detail including forms for badge claims and medical declarations.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Trial lesson discounts

During the summer months, when the evening groups are operating, members can bring parties of friends or colleagues for trial lessons at a discounted price. This is an excellent way to show your workmates what you do in your spare time. Contact the office for more details.

Flying with friends

Members can also fly with each other or with non-member friends under the rules for Flying with Other People (see above). Non-members must sign a temporary membership form, and the flight will be charged to the member's account.

Clubhouse

The clubhouse is open to members out of hours. Unlimited tea and coffee are available from the members' tuck shop, the expected payment is £1 a month into the honesty till. Any profits are directed to members' facilities in the clubhouse.

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Cadet scheme

In order to encourage young people to get involved in gliding, the club runs a cadet scheme which offers cheap flying instruction in exchange for carrying out basic tasks. If you know of a young person who would like to learn to fly, contact the Cadet Scheme Manager.

RUNNING THE CLUB

Member involvement

The club exists so that members can learn to fly and enjoy all the different aspects of flying. Like most gliding clubs, there are very few paid staff, most of the work is done by members: the voluntary committee which runs the club, much of the instructing, grass cutting in the trailer park, stocking the tea bar, maintaining the buggies, marketing activities, website and IT support, newsletter production, helping out in the workshop – these are a few examples of the activities undertaken by members so that we can all afford to fly. If you have skills to offer, or would like to find out how you can get involved, contact a committee member. You will find it very rewarding and an excellent way to feel part of the 'family'.