

Booker Gliding Club

Newsletter

April
2023



SPL latest news – page 6



What can you do for your club? – page 4

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Spring expedition to Denbigh



The start of the expedition coincided with heavy snowfall over north Wales, which fortunately evaporated from the roads quite quickly, but stayed on the hills for a few days. The snow was succeeded by some very stormy weather, with southerly winds and a fair amount of rain – not ideal on an airfield with an E-W runway, but it did sharpen up our crosswind landing skills. We made the most of the flyable days and had some great wave flights, and a bit of fun on the ridge. It was an excellent way to blow away the winter cobwebs and get current for the season, as well as having a holiday with fellow club members. Tyres featured quite a lot, and Doug is to be commended for his willingness to lie under the Duo for a whole morning replacing the inner tube and tyre, while others stood around offering moral support and the occasional spanner.



Steve and David ready to go



That Eurofox looks awfully small



Have they noticed that big scary cloud behind them?



Sunshine on the ridge

New members



We welcome returning member **Yan Clave**, who last flew with us in around 2019. His DG300 will require a bit of TLC before it returns to the skies.

Member achievements

Chey Anich has achieved his **first solo** and is now taking advantage of the spring weather to learn about thermalling.

Richard Lever followed up his first solo at Booker with a 206k declared task in his ASW19 on 7th April. This is the first cross-country flight launched from Wycombe Air Park since 2019.

Alex Phillips, a member of Edgehill Gliding Centre, joined Booker in order to fly with ace aerobatics instructor Graham Saw and train for the Dan Smith Aerobatics comp. Alex's practising paid off as he came away with the **Dan Smith Memorial Trophy**. This is also the third time Graham has trained a winner, so congratulations to both.



Annual General Meeting held on 15th April

After two years of virtual meetings we finally held a proper in-person one, which made a pleasant change. After formal business there was discussion about how to move forward. The club has faced many challenges in the past three years and it is tempting to think that returning home to Booker is the end of the story. But we can't sit back and relax, we need to build the club operation back up again.

We can do this. We built Chiltern Park out of nothing, with everyone getting stuck in, we need to do that again. Every club member can play their part by coming along to fly, help at the launchpoint, instruct potential new members – waiting 'until the club is back on its feet' really doesn't work.



April 2023

We are now an all-volunteer club, as we no longer have a full-time paid CFI. This means that members have to take ownership of the non-flying activities that he used to cover, for example (not an exhaustive list):

- Managing the bus, keeping it clean, replenishing fuel and oil, charging the battery, ensuring that it is working
 - Looking after the launch point kit – documents, ropes, radios etc
 - Managing the buggies, keeping them clean, replenishing fuel and oil, ensuring they get serviced
 - Cleaning and polishing the gliders, over and above the usual daily clean that they should be getting
 - Taking the dusters home and washing them
 - Ditto for the tug(s) – the MF agreement has a cleaning obligation!
 - Cleaning the club house, emptying the bins, getting tea and coffee etc
 - Keeping the hangars tidy and dealing with maintenance
 - Clubhouse maintenance – (refurbishment is a bigger task, of which more in due course)
 - Trailer park maintenance – grass cutting, litter clearing etc
 - Refitting the water barrel and tap
- Or how about organising a social event / get together?

None of these tasks are full-time occupations, they just need spreading around, so please consider picking up a task, forming a team, getting on with it! *Just let Phil Cumming know what you have decided on – he has volunteered to co-ordinate it all.*



Latest news on Sailplane Pilot Licences

Following its recent consultation, the CAA has reported that '88% of respondents who had a view on UK-SFCL preferred to continue with implementation of UK-SFCL' (UK-SFCL is UK Sailplane Flight Crew Licensing).

As a result, the CAA '*intends to continue the transition to Sailplane Pilot Licences (SPLs) and is working with the DfT on a one-year extension of the transition period to December 2024 to achieve this. A sailplane expert sub-group will be formed to recommend changes to UK-SFCL to ensure the rules best serve the UK's needs.*' The BGA will contribute to that sub-group.

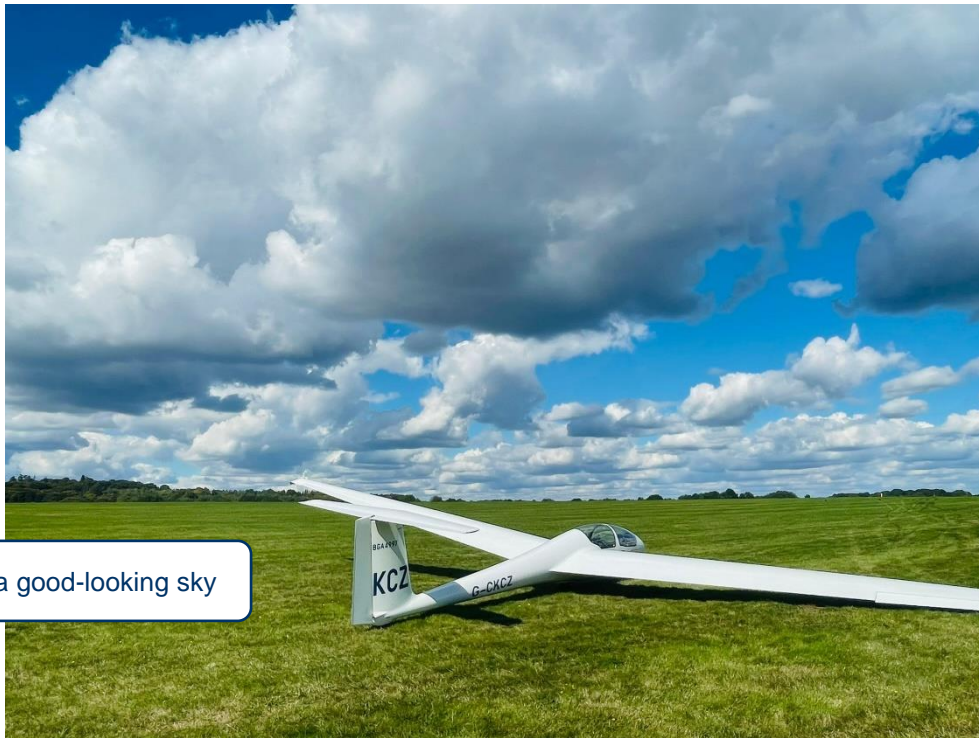
As has been the case for several years, any glider pilot who holds the Bronze & Cross-Country Endorsements, or if they completed Silver distance before the Cross-Country Endorsement was launched, the Bronze Endorsement and Silver distance, may apply for conversion to an SPL. The minimum medical requirement is the CAA Pilot Medical Declaration. The BGA manages the process and makes a recommendation to the CAA. Some 2200 glider pilots have converted so far. Full details on how to apply are on the [BGA members website](#).

After December 2024, *new* pilots will be trained to an SPL syllabus that is to all intents and purposes the same as the existing BGA gliding syllabus, with a skills test at completion of training that is similar to the Bronze skills test. As the SPL syllabus includes the elements of the Bronze and Cross-Country Endorsements, after the conversion period these can be discontinued. As the existing BGA Bronze theory test content is essentially SFCL compliant, that content will continue with some updates to provide SPL theory testing going forward. The BGA is engaged with CAA to agree how after transition the BGA will continue to manage the SPL application process and provide value to applicants.

Many will have already started training at clubs under the BGA gliding syllabus at the changeover to SPL training. Providing it is properly recorded, BGA syllabus training will be recognised.

As described in SFCL, SPL privileges such as additional launch methods, aerobatics and cloud flying will be added via logbook signature. TMG flying and towing with a TMG requires additional ratings that are added to the SPL and as result will incur a fee, as they do now. Please note that over the coming months and in particular next autumn/winter, we will be engaging closely with club CFIs and others to ensure that the BGA provides appropriate, accurate and user-friendly resources and support that meets clubs' and their members' future pilot training needs.

Meanwhile, until the end of the transition period the BGA is continuing to operate using the BGA Gliding Certificate requirements and syllabus, while directly supporting the transition to SPL as well as SFCL compliant training where required by those who choose to utilise SPL privileges.



Just a pic of a good-looking sky

Dates for non-gliding activities

Please note the following dates when you can plan for non-gliding activities:

Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th May – the airfield will be closed on 6th May as it is within the no-fly zone for the coronation, and on 7th May for a *respite day* – the idea is apparently that our neighbours will be enjoying coronation street parties.

Friday 19th and Saturday 20th May - the airfield will once more be occupied by the Elite show. Gliding will not be possible during the show, and is unlikely to be possible for a few days beforehand.

Ofcom's new online radio licensing portal

Ofcom has launched a new online service for those requiring aircraft radio licences to apply for new licences or manage existing ones – varying or surrendering licences, payment of fees or changes to contact details.

To use the new system you need to register. More details [here](#).

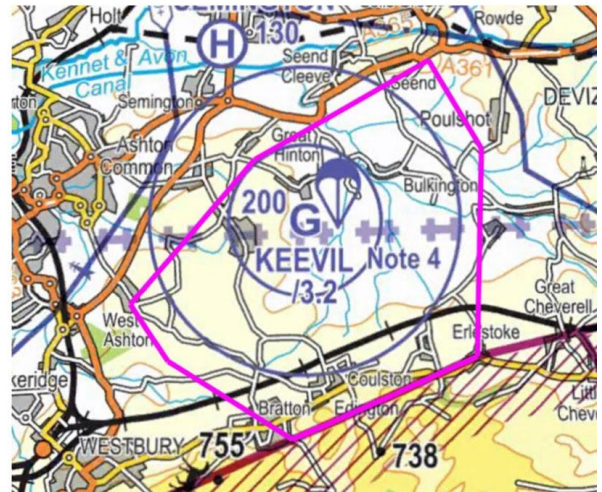
Cross country updates

- Note that Bicester airfield has a new frequency – **118.390**
- The CAA has decided to approve an application by MoD for a danger area located overhead and around Keevil airfield designed for BVLOS (beyond visual line of sight) drone operations linked to the Salisbury Plain training areas. The new danger area details, including crossing service information, will be published as a supplement to the AIP in early May 2023, with first activation not before mid-May. The new danger area is expected to operate midweek.

The EGD148 Keevil danger area crossing service will be supplied by Boscombe Down ATC. It is expected that glider pilots will make full use of the crossing service facility if required. As ever, issues with airspace access should be reported via the CAA's [online FCS1522 form](#).

INDICATIVE CHART OF EGD148 KEEVIL

Note: Full details will be published in an AIP SUPPLEMENT on 4 May 2023.



- Several airfields with ATZs in class G use **instrument approach procedures**. In most cases, the procedures are not obviously apparent from using a 1/2 mil VFR chart. Procedure details can be found in the [AIP here under 'Part 3 AD2 aerodromes'](#), which is not easily accessible but can be useful information.

Where an airfield uses an instrument approach procedure, the VFR chart normally includes a 'feathers' symbol that radiates up the approach path.

If you cannot avoid and need to cross an instrument approach in class G, or fly overhead or close to an ATZ, plan to talk to the controller in good time providing details including your position and intention. This will help you and any instrument traffic that may be using an instrument procedure to avoid a potential conflict.

By operating knowledgeably, safely and responsibly with all airspace users in mind, we can all contribute to maintaining safe use of class G airspace.



Dates for your diary

2023

Annual General Meeting: 15th April
Coronation – airfield closed: 6th - 7th May
Elite event – no gliding: 19th – 20th May

Autumn expedition: 7th – 21st October – Aboyne

Club Communications

We use WhatsApp groups, as below:

Booker Gliding Club – general club information and notifications including details of online daily briefings

Booker Instructors – information and swap requests for instructors

Booker Expeditions – set up in the run up to each expedition.

If you wish to be included in any of these groups, contact the CFI.

Booker XC – for tasks, cross country discussion and feedback – contact Jane Moore or ask for a link on the main Whatsapp group

Booker Banter - for general chitchat – contact Jane Moore

Condor Flyers – for those wanting to join in Condor group sessions – contact Bob Smith or Henry Ross or ask for a link on the main Whatsapp group.

The **Booker GC website** at www.bookergliding.co.uk has a Members Page. This contains the latest Club news snippets and links to previous newsletters, meeting minutes and several useful and informative Club documents. The Members' page is accessible to everybody (not just members) but certain documents, such as committee minutes, need a user ID and password. To obtain these, go to the members' page and click on the 'email Administrator' link. Don't forget to include your name and membership number.

For the latest news about what's happening check out

<https://www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub>

The Booker blog is no longer maintained but has a wealth of pics and stories from previous years

<http://bookergc.blogspot.com/>

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*** All views expressed within the newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Club or committee ***

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome. If you would like to submit an article for a future edition please send it to Jane Moore at jxmoore@gmail.com

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