

Booker Gliding Club - Duty pilots

Background

Running a successful gliding club requires the voluntary support and some of the valuable spare time of club members. Whilst many clubs have some paid-for support, all gliding clubs require the support of club members to succeed. Most members recognise that it takes much volunteer effort and many different skills to keep the show on the road.

At Booker gliding club we have a volunteer rota for our Instructors and Tug pilots. Most of the launch point activity, keeping the log, launching gliders, welcoming new members etc is organised by the duty instructor and shared by other members who are at the club to fly for the day. There are, however, many days when an additional skilled member at the hangar in the morning and launchpoint during the day can vastly improve the efficiency of the club operation. For this reason we also have a rota for a duty pilot(s). This also enhances safety and enables more members to fly on the day.

Who are the Duty Pilots

The Duty Pilot is generally someone who is solo and has a good understanding of how the launchpoint and the gliding operation at Booker works. In some cases, experienced pre-solo pilots may join the rota. Instructors and Tug Pilots who are already on a Duty Rota are not asked to take a Duty Pilot slot.

Duty Pilot role

The Duty Pilot provides assistance to the daily duty instructor for the entire day. There is **no Job Description** or list of tasks, and the Duty Pilot is not expected to carry out activities that they do not want to, or cannot fulfil. The day should still be fun and rewarding.

On duty days it is fine for the Duty Pilot to fly, in fact this is encouraged, particularly where there are other members around to help at the launchpoint. However, on busy days this should probably be limited to one flight and/or 30 minutes unless agreed otherwise by the Duty instructor.

How does the rota work

The rota is on-line and uses a system called TeamUp. Instructions are provided on the Booker website and you will be rostered as category "Ops Support". You will be asked to roster yourself for **one day every four weeks** and in most cases this is done by joining a "team" with a repeat booking every 4 weeks. In general it is good to have one Duty Pilot on duty on each weekend day throughout the year. If you are just starting out as Duty Pilot then you could double up and share with someone more experienced. If you cannot make your duty day then you should arrange a swap. If you cannot manage once every four weeks you could arrange to buddy up with someone and share the slot.

Duty Pilot is good for you too

If you are interested in becoming an instructor or committee member, then experience as a Duty Pilot will help gain the skills needed to interact with and perhaps brief new members (trial lessons and courses), and to get a proper understanding of how the club works. It will also provide opportunities to fly with the duty instructor on less busy days and brush up instructing skills.

Typical skills that the Duty Pilot might use to provide valuable assistance

It is the responsibility of the Duty Instructor or tug pilot to ensure that most of the activities listed below are carried out when required, However, Duty Pilots should be able to contribute and carry out most of the activity in these areas. In addition, most pilots at the club learning to fly can help to carry out these activities, so it is not as onerous as it may look. In some cases, such as log keeping, the Duty Pilot may just need to ensure someone is doing it

It should be emphasised that this is **not a list of jobs for the duty pilot** as few would be skilled in all of these tasks. However, these are examples of activities or skills that are needed to keep the day to day operation running and to promote gliding at Booker. Someone has to do them!

- Help set up the launchpoint, understand the routes to take when towing out and parking gliders
- Briefed on parking gliders (especially in windy conditions) as well as positioning them for a launch
- Canopy care - keeping them closed, know how NOT to open them, can clean and know how NOT to polish them
- Trained in the use of K21 and Duo Discus tow out gear and happy to use them
- Good knowledge of club batteries, foot pumps etc and of where stuff is in the bus and hangar
- Help set up Daily Flying List and Log
- Can DI buggies and fill with oil and fuel as required
- Assign someone to keep log (if Duty Instructor is too busy or forgets)
- Help organise safely retrieving and launching gliders and be able to correct any poor practice by other club members
- Can knit and undo a tow rope, and organise a replacement rope if the weak link has failed
- Able to respond to radio calls from Wycombe Radio if the Duty Instructor or Tuggie do not. If necessary this can be just to say "Standby" while trying to find someone who can help.
- Help direct visitors to cafe, toilets, farm shop, car park
- Help escorting Trial Lessons to/from launchpoint and ensure they take correct visitor routes, never via Heli Taxiway
- Ensure that Trial Lesson and course paperwork is completed and signed
- Help keep visitors (children) clear of operational areas at launchpoint
- Able to describe process for learning to glide at Booker, use of WhatsApp etc
- Able to give training for checking rope, hooking on, lookout and launching to new club members (not for TLs!)
- During quiet periods remind duty instructor/tug pilot to check bus paperwork stocks and replenish from office as required. Log Sheets, Flying List, Tug Cards, Trial Lesson Certificates
- Keep the bus tidy, empty the bin
- Understand and describe the Booker Trial Lesson and Course Upgrade process (see Useful Info folder)
- Can show someone how to navigate to the on-line shop on Booker Website