

Megan Ip Air Safety Trust Gliding Scholarship 2018

In 2018, I was fortunate enough to have a chance at gliding when the Honourable Company of Air Pilots kindly awarded me a 5 day residential gliding course, sponsored by the Air Safety Trust.

On the evening upon arriving the Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club (Camphill), I met and got to know my fellow course members, we got along with each other immediately due to similar interests. We were then introduced to our instructors, Brian and Allen, who contributed hugely to the memorable experience at Camphill. When Brian

explained that Camphill is one of the most interesting gliding sites due to its geographical nature, with the field being unlevelled and a ridge on one side, we instantly knew that it was going to be an



eventful week. On the first morning, we were taken to the hangar and were introduced to the different duties that club members take on. We soon realised that gliding is about team work, with every member acting like a gear to maximise the number of flights possible.

We have to put in our best effort to assist club members to ensure the retrieval of gliders as smooth as possible, which, to our surprises, meant learning to drive a tractor skillfully.



Since the first afternoon was windy and drizzly, we stood on top of the hill waiting for the wind to die down after we took the Puchaz gliders out of the hangar. The nervousness of flying in one of these tiny unpowered aircraft grew exponentially as the raindrops started to get bigger. When it was announced that it was safe to fly, I honestly did not know what to expect as I tightened the straps of my parachute. Minutes later, I was thrown into the sky via a winch launch. As we levelled the glider, the Derbyshire view was even more breathtaking.

The nervousness soon turned into excitement as the week progressed. Allen, my instructor introduced me to more actions, such as stalling, climbing up a thermal lift, circuit approach etc.

The course ended on a high note as our instructors decided to treat us with a flight in the vintage T-21 glider. Not only was there a striking difference in flying without a canopy, the control and rudder paddles were a lot more sensitive. It was refreshing experience since it really did felt like we were floating in the air.

I would like to express my gratitude for the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and the Air Safety Trust for making this incredible opportunity accessible to young students like myself. Finally, a massive thank you to the staff and club members at DLGC for the encouraging and welcoming atmosphere.

