

Yekta Ozen

Air Pilots Flying Club Gliding Report 2025

I had previously only flown on RAF Air Cadet experience flights, so this four-day scholarship at London Gliding Club marked my first real step into structured glider training and an important milestone in chasing my dream of becoming a pilot.

Over the course I completed 17 flights, covering all the key aspects of glider flying such as straight and level flight, turns, stalls, circuits, landings and using the air brakes effectively. I was able to spend plenty of time at the controls, and by the end of the course I completed a virtual solo.



My longest flight lasted over an hour, but the most memorable moment was flying low along the ridge and waving to visitors at the top who waved back as we passed close by. Alongside flying, I learned about pre-flight checks, handling gliders on the ground, weather and thermals, and I took part in the daily running of the airfield from launching and log keeping to wing running which gave me a strong sense of teamwork. One of the highlights of the week was flying an aerotow all by myself! I am not going to try and play it off and act nonchalant, I was indeed very nervous but in the end I managed to pull it off, The aerotow required the use of all my gliding skills, my awareness and hand eye coordination as even the slightest gust of wind could put the glider off course, I had to be gentle with the controls but also be prepared to make sudden moves.

My fellow scholars were great company both on and off the field, and I enjoyed the social side as much as the flying. From late evenings together to trips into Dunstable for food, to driving the buggies around the airfield, the whole week had a welcoming and fun atmosphere. It was great to share the experience with others who had the same passion for aviation, and I found the sense of community at the club just as memorable as the flying itself.



The hardest part of the week was leaving the club, but it confirmed for me that gliding is not only a friendly and supportive community but also one that constantly challenges you to think ahead and adapt. Having applied unsuccessfully last year, it was all the more rewarding to succeed this time, and shortly after being awarded this Honourable Company of Air Pilots Scholarship I was thrilled to learn I had also been awarded another by the Fleet Air Arm

Officers Association. To future applicants, I would say do not give up if you are unsuccessful at first. Consistency is key and persistence will pay off.

I now plan to continue gliding and aim to apply for the HCAP PPL scholarship as my next step, and I would like to sincerely thank the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for making this experience possible and for supporting young people like myself in pursuing their aviation dreams.

