

**Lucy Rogers**  
**RAF Charitable Trust Scholarship**



In the first week of August this year, I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to undergo a week of gliding training through the Honourable Company of Air Pilots at the Midland Gliding Club. I had an amazing week, gained many new skills, and made lots of new friends.

I have always had an interest in flying; however, gliding had never really crossed my mind until I heard about the HCAP Scholarship. When I was awarded it, I was over the moon and couldn't wait to get started with this new flying experience.

Before the scholarship, I had some experience flying a Grob Tutor and a Piper PA-18, but I had never flown a glider before. Over the course of the week, I was able to fly every day (some more than others due to the weather) and by the end I was even flying the majority of each flight myself.

Throughout the week, I learned a great deal about gliding. On the ground, I gained experience with tasks such as hooking the glider onto the winch and helping to pack and unpack the hangar (which was surprisingly more difficult than it looked!). In the air, I achieved 2 hours and 40 minutes of flight time. My flights ranged from 28 minutes to just 4 minutes. The longer flights allowed me to focus on turning, rudder control, and recovering from stalls, while the shorter flights gave me the chance to practise my circuits, which I could confidently fly in full by the end of the week.



I also had the chance to make use of the ridge lift that the Midland Gliding club is famous for. On my very first day, I was able to 'ride the ridge,' which is what you use the sink from the ridge to decrease your altitude rapidly. It was an incredible experience. I also practised using thermals to extend my flights and maintain lift.

When the weather wasn't as favourable, we focused on the theory of flying. We had useful briefings on manoeuvres such as stalling and launching, and I also had the opportunity to use the gliding club's flight simulator, which was an excellent way to support the theory training.

From the very start, the Midland Gliding Club was fantastic. They made the club feel like home for the week, and the staff were incredibly welcoming and supportive. Each evening, after a long day of flying, there was always a delicious meal waiting for us, followed by time spent with friends sharing our experiences from the day.

This scholarship was a truly unforgettable experience. I learned so much, gained valuable flying skills, and made many new friends. I would like to sincerely thank the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for this opportunity, my sponsor, the RAF Charitable Trust Scholarship, and last but not least, all the amazing staff at the Midland Gliding Club for giving me such a fantastic week.

