

HCAP Gliding Scholarship Report - Dominic Davis

They say that gliding is the purest form of flying, and after spending a week at Cotswold Gliding Club, I can understand why. Without an engine, gliding places a much greater emphasis on understanding the aircraft and the surrounding environment.

I was extremely fortunate to be awarded a gliding scholarship from the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, which allowed me to spend a week at Cotswold Gliding Club. The experience provided me with an opportunity to see aviation from a perspective that I had not encountered before, while also giving me a valuable insight into the community and people behind the sport.

From the beginning of the week, I was introduced to the practical side of gliding and how a club operates. I was able to spend time around the gliders as well as learning about the different aspects of launching and retrieving aircraft.

The flying itself was, of course, the highlight of the week. As the week progressed, I became more comfortable with the aircraft and the different aspects of flying. Having the opportunity to take a more active role during flights gave me a greater appreciation of the workload involved in flying and the importance of being able to remain calm, focused and receptive to instruction.



Perhaps unexpectedly, one of the most memorable parts of the week was the people I met. Cotswold Gliding Club, like many gliding clubs, relies heavily on its volunteers. I had the opportunity to speak to members from a wide variety of backgrounds and with very different outlooks. Everyone seemed to have their own story to tell, whether about their careers, experiences in aviation, or how they had first become involved with gliding.

I greatly appreciated the fact that club members were willing to spare their time, share their expertise and involve us in the operation of the club. The experience also opened my eyes to the importance of volunteering and the sense of community in aviation.



One of the most noticeable developments throughout the week was how my attention evolved. It reminded me of learning to drive a car. Initially, every action results in tunnel vision, but with practice, the fundamentals become more natural and allow you to focus on the wider situation. This progression was one of the most rewarding parts of the week.

When I first began, much of my focus was concentrated on simply controlling the aircraft and responding to my instructor's guidance. As I became more comfortable, I was able to broaden my awareness and begin managing several things simultaneously, allowing me to see the wider picture.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for awarding me the scholarship and providing me with this opportunity. I am also extremely grateful to Cotswold Gliding Club, all of the instructors, volunteers and members who gave their time throughout the week, and

everyone who made me feel welcome at the club.

The scholarship provided me with an experience that I will remember for a long time. It has provided me with lessons and anecdotes that I will take forward into my future studies and career.

