

## Amelia Harrison Gliding Scholarship

If you are keen to get in flying, I would thoroughly recommend applying for the Honourable Company of Air Pilots (HCAP) gliding scholarship. This amazing opportunity allowed me to undertake around 20 flights, in which I learnt the fundamentals of flying and received an understanding of the teamwork required for each flight.

I arrived at the Derbyshire and Lancaster gliding club on Sunday and was immediately welcomed by Sylvia, who made sure we all knew she was our mum for the week. I was then swiftly introduced to the other scholarship winners; we were quick to find out that we were all cadets and could relate to each other. I knew the week would be filled with laughter and lots of fun. After introductions and a detailed tour of the facilities we got straight to learning how to drive tractors, which was required so that we could retrieve the gliders after each flight. As we all couldn't yet drive we found this very exciting and so much fun.

The course quickly began at 9 am the next morning and within the hour I had already successfully flown a glider. The thrill of the launch seemed to never wear off and soon my instructor, Alan, let me do it completely by myself. By the end of day one I had successfully learnt how to adjust the trim and turn using both the rudder and aileron. Soon, by my fifth flight, I was completely flying by myself, apart from a little help from Alan with my landing. I was focused



maintaining the correct speed to land and keeping the wings level, while Alan operated the airbrakes.



With every flight I did I worked hard to improve and carry forward any tips I had been given as each flight introduced me to more elements of flying. As a team we learnt how to do circuit plans and then flew and executed them perfectly, with only small prompts from Alan. Our main goal on each flight was to try and find thermals and to use them to climb to a higher altitude. My longest flight was

30 mins as we found a thermal and climbed to over 3000ft. As we were soaring and flew around Alan played 'Dancing Queen' by Abba. This was a key memory of the course. When I wasn't up flying in the glider I was helping around the airfield; retrieving gliders; attaching the cables; pushing the gliders and getting to know the other club members. The friendly and hardworking environment was crucial in helping me improve different skills such as teamwork and communication, especially as the club members were always there to share helpful tips or a friendly chat.

On the last day I asked Alan to demonstrate a stall and a reduced g circuit. I got the hang of it quite quickly and then successfully completed my first stall. This quickly became the highlight of my time in the air.

Sadly, this fantastic week had come to an end. I created so many amazing memories and met people who I will be lifelong friends with. I can't thank HCAP enough for this life changing



opportunity and for allowing me to develop my love and understanding of flying. This is the first step on my path to becoming a pilot and has solidified my love for aviation and for being in the air. Lastly, many thanks to the Derbyshire and Lancaster gliding club for their outstanding hospitality and support and especially to my amazing instructor, Alan, who taught me so much about gliding and so quickly made me love flying.

