

Oliver Barnby

In August 2019, I completed a 5-day gliding course at Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club in the Peak District, after being awarded a scholarship through the Honourable Company of Air Pilots.



We started the week learning the basics of flight, incorporating some physics and some time in a simulator to consolidate what we had learnt. After that, we went to the launch point to pick up some key ground skills and then started flying.

“Camphill” Airfield was situated 1350 ft above sea level, making it a wonderful place to launch from as you can hill soar over the hills leading up to Camphill, perfect for long flights when the weather was suitable. The accomodation was great and the food was superb; just what we needed after a long day of flying!

My instructor, Pete Gray, was absolutely superb and pushed me out of my comfort zone to make me a better pilot. Throughout the week, I managed 3 hours 28 minutes flying time and 14 winch launches, despite the weather conditions which were less than ideal! There were 3 of us to one instructor which meant we needed to work efficiently as a team to retrieve the gliders and set up for the next flight, to maximise our flying time. In addition to flying we all had a go at driving the tractors to retrieve the gliders ready for the next launch.

The flying was truly spectacular and after a few flights I became accustomed to the controls, learning the basics of stick and rudder, gradually increasing the amount of control I had over the glider. On my 7th flight I was able to control all the winch launch and most of the soaring



we did that day. Observation was a key skill to learn, as you had to constantly be on the lookout for other air traffic.

Although, I didn't quite get to solo level, due to inclement weather, it was an amazing experience and has spurred me on to continue my journey at my local gliding club to achieve solo.

I would like to thank the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, for this incredible

opportunity and I am now sure that I would like to pursue a career in aviation in the future.