

## **George Annakin**

### **The AST Scholarship**

As an aspiring commercial pilot currently pursuing gliding, I applied for the 2022 gliding scholarships with the Honourable Company of Air Pilots in hopes of expanding my knowledge and becoming solo in a glider. I was honoured to have been shortlisted and approved by the committee panel.

After initially arriving at the Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding Club I was greeted by a member of the club who was extremely helpful and welcoming to us all. The accommodation and club facilities were more than all of us had anticipated and didn't fail to impress us. I think it is appropriate to mention Sylvia who went above and beyond to make our week as smooth as possible for us all. The club would not be the same without Sylvia and I cannot thank her enough for everything she has done.

During the first few days we were taught how a gliding club works and given opportunities to get involved with the club's activities, interacting with other club members along the way. Our instructors were extremely helpful and committed to helping us as much as we could, even I learnt a few helpful tips along the way that I didn't know from my other gliding club.

With regards to the flying, the location of the club proved to be challenging yet rewarding with the weather. Despite the odd rainy days; all of us were able to do some soaring flights which allowed us to practice stalling exercises and other things that would not be possible without thermals. During the course of a week I was impressed by how much the other course members progressed even though they had little to no gliding experience; managing to do take-offs, landings and flying circuits on their own with little support.

Overall, I would definitely recommend this course to people looking to start their flying career, particularly for those with little to no gliding experience this is ideal. It is a fantastic opportunity to learn the basics of flying whilst becoming involved with gliding clubs.

Finally, I would like to end this report with a huge thank you to all of the instructors, club members and members of the Young Air Pilots. Without a doubt it has been an immense privilege that I will continue to remember and be grateful for.