

Welcome to South Wales Gliding Club

Introduction

This document is intended to provide you with enough information to get you started at our club and help answer the many questions that you may have. If you still have any questions then please ask any club member. We are here to enjoy being part of a very good club that values all of its members. If we have missed anything out that should be in this document please let us know by sending a brief mail to webmaster@uskgc.co.uk

Before Leaving Home

Consider what the weather will be like when you are at the club and make sure you dress for it. Even on a nice day the field can be wet and so waterproof footwear is good. In the winter we can have a lot of mud around and so walking boots or short wellingtons etc. are a good idea.

In the summer it can be hot so light clothing, sunglasses and sun cream may be needed. A hat is useful but don't buy one until you speak to us about what is suitable for gliding! There is no food or drinks other than tea, coffee and water available during the day, so make sure you bring your own. Also if you have got a log book then make sure you bring it! We suggest that you set up a standing order to the club account in order to pay for flights, but if not then make sure you can pay for your flights by cash, debit card or credit card.

Arriving at the Club

If you are coming for the first time and expect to have a trial lesson then it's fine to come along just in time for the morning briefing at 10:00am. We use this meeting to discuss prevailing weather conditions and other information (such as air displays taking place locally) that may influence of flying plans. If you haven't been spotted as someone new and been introduced to the duty instructor then ask for the duty instructor.

We are a members club and so we all share the workload. If we don't help each other then we can't fly. If the weather is any good we would aim to have the kit out on the field and ready to go before briefing. It takes about an hour to get the kit out so you should aim to be at the club by 9:00 to 9:30. We recognise that you won't always be able to make it first thing in the morning, so we ask that if you arrive later in the day then you stay in the evening to help put the kit away. If everyone came in time to fly and then went straight home afterwards then we wouldn't be able to fly at all.

First task when you arrive is to get your name on the flying list. If you arrive early the list will be in the clubhouse on the log box or later it will be in the launch point trailer.

Getting Ready to Fly

Every day there is a “duty pilot” who is responsible for running the ground operation he should be the person organising getting everything ready for use.

The first job is to get the tug out. Moving the tug is potentially dangerous, as it is possible that the engine could start unexpectedly if the propeller is moved. You should get a tug pilot to confirm that the tug is safe to move before you move it under supervision.

After that it's getting the gliders out. It takes 3 people to get a glider out. One person holding a wing (just one wing please), one person on the tail and one on the nose. Again, until you know how to do it you should help more experienced people to get the gliders out.

The buggies used for towing the gliders around the field are kept in a locked container at the side of the hanger. The key for the container is in the clubhouse office. Get someone to show you the key and how to open and lock the container. The buggies should be checked for fuel and oil before the day's work begins. Make sure that the correct fuel is used!

The launch point vehicle needs to be loaded with any kit required for the day. Things needed would be: the log box, radio, parachutes, weights for gliders etc. It then needs to be located as required for the day and once the winch is ready then the signaling lights need to be aligned and tested.

Getting the winch out, located and set up is a job best left to qualified winch drivers, but don't let that stop you helping one of them with the task.

If 609 is needed for the day then it needs to be collected from its hanger with a buggy. Two people will be needed. Again until you know what you're doing go along to help.

Once the gliders have been inspected by a person who is qualified to check them (over 16 and signed off on the list in the clubhouse) they can be moved to the launch point and positioned as requested by the duty pilot.

First Flights

Most new members begin their gliding experience with trial flights or mini-courses. Trial flights generally involve tug launches with the glider being towed up to 2500ft.

Instructors take time to ensure you are familiar with the controls and the various checks that need to take place before the glider can launch. All of this is focused on ensuring that you are able to get the most of these flights; after all, regardless of how experienced some of our pilots and instructors are, we all started here!

We would recommend doing a few aerotow launches to begin your training as this gives you a lot more time on the controls and is a more relaxed experience. The first few flights are designed to get you to know what pre-flight checks are and how to do them (CBSIFTBEC) and then how to control the speed and direction of the glider. Once you have achieved a

suitable standard in these exercises we will move on exercises to trim the glider, fly a circuit etc etc.

Progression

Upon joining the club, you'll be given a "pre-solo syllabus" and a "ground syllabus". These are key documents that enable you and your instructors to record your progress. Keep them safe and clean in a folder that is available from the club.

The ground syllabus is focused on the development of key skills that will enable you to contribute safely to the smooth running of the airfield. Instructors and more experienced members of the club will support you as you progress. You'll quickly develop the skills to retrieve/ launch gliders and provide forward signaling support for aero-tow launches. All members of the club maintain a focus on running the airfield. This is essential if we are to ensure safety and smooth arrival and departure of gliders.

The pre-solo syllabus features key skills/attributes that you'll need to develop as you progress toward your first solo flight. We encourage new members to ensure this is maintained and that pre and post-flight discussions with the instructor target the attributes and skills in the syllabus.

Mentoring

As a club run by members for members, support will be plentiful. Instructors and members attend the club not just because they have a passion for gliding, but also because they enjoy the camaraderie and team spirit! We all help one another out and there is a great deal of structure built into the day and the things you will focus on when either running the airfield or flying.

We encourage you to take responsibility for pushing your own progress and actively encourage you to discuss your progress on both ground and pre-solo syllabi with instructors.

Problem Resolution

If there is any problem then the first point of call should be the duty instructor or the duty pilot, but of course if that isn't appropriate to your problem then you could approach the CFI (chief flying instructor) or the chairman of the club.

Safeguarding

The club has a very active junior membership and has a safeguarding policy in place. It is up to all members to help ensure that we all comply with that policy and report any issues that they see or are informed about to an appropriate person. That may be the duty instructor but of course it may be necessary to inform the club's child protection officer (CPO) to get further guidance.

