

BGFC

Bidford Gliding & Flying Club



How we make it work

Our club is keen for everyone to enjoy taking part in gliding

This is how we do it

Background

There has been gliding at Bidford Airfield since the mid 1960's. The present club, Bidford Gliding and Flying Club (BGFC) was formed in April 2011 following previous commercial operations at the site. We are a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC), owned and operated by members on a volunteer basis. This gives control to those who wish to take part in gliding and keeps costs as low as possible with any profits reinvested in the club to improve facilities.

We have an excellent fleet of gliders that allow us to train beginners through to becoming experienced soaring pilots all on club gliders.

We have 2 K13 two-seater trainers, long recognised in the gliding world



as excellent gliders for initial training through to solo and next steps beyond.

We also operate a Janus, a two seat, high performance glider, suitable for advanced training to help members develop their soaring and cross-country skills.



And for those who are building up such skills, we have a single seater Astir, available to all members who wish to extend their soaring and cross-country abilities.



We operate an aerotow only operation with all glider launches undertaken by tow aircraft. The advantage of aerotow launches is that we can always launch to the height required for the purpose of each flight, generally 2,000 feet, and higher if necessary. This gives greater flight time and more opportunity to learn.

We have two tugs, a Scout, and a Pawnee, both powerful tug aircraft that can launch gliders effectively and quickly.



Organisation

The Club is managed by an elected committee under a Chairman. They work together to oversee the overall direction of the club.

The day-to-day operations are managed through 6 main member groups reporting to the committee: Gliding Operations, Power operations, Marketing and Communications, Finance and Admin, Facilities and Membership. Each has a lead member, and all club members contribute to the work of one or more groups, helping with the many tasks needed to keep the club up and running.

Flying operations

The flying training operation is overseen by the Chief Flying Instructor who is responsible for ensuring all gliding is safe and that all instruction is undertaken in accordance with current rules and guidance.

We have a team of volunteer gliding instructors who are qualified and experienced and can take members from first flight all the way through to cross country soaring.

Gliding is a team sport. It requires involvement from others to make a gliding day work. Launching requires a small team to prepare the gliders, to assist with launching, record flight details, retrieve gliders and many other tasks that make for a busy and enjoyable day on the ground as well as in the air.

Tows are offered 7 days a week during the main summer season with training available on weekends plus one other day in the week, usually Wednesdays, but this may vary depending on the weather. Club gliders are free to use, so, unlike many clubs, you only pay for the aerotow, not for your time in the air. Duty Marshals (more later) operate every weekend in the season to make the operation run safely and smoothly.

The office is also open Wed/Sat/Sun and we also offer Introductory Flights to the public on these days.

We are also an airfield that has powered aircraft operating in conjunction with gliding, which works well and creates a wider aviation character to the airfield.



A computer is available to all members for weather reports etc., as is free wi-fi for your own devices.

Events

Many flying and social events are offered throughout the year, most notably the annual Wings & Wheels event (late May Bank Holiday Monday) in aid of local charities and our annual gliding competition for 9 days during the summer.



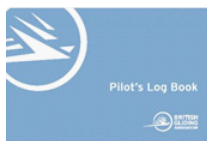
We also have an extravaganza of power flying with aerobatics, flour bombing etc. in our late summer fly-in with ex BMI pilots which all members are welcome to attend.



The gliding season brings the opportunity for regular get togethers and BBQs around the Clubhouse, with the bar doing a brisk trade.



What about me?



As soon as you have decided to become a glider pilot, we will provide you with a record card which

will track your progress through the syllabus. You should also purchase a logbook and one of the recommended gliding books for ground study (we can provide a New Glider Pilot Pack).

Next - fly as often as you can, the more you do, the quicker and cheaper it will be to learn. Having said that there is no pressure to reach any set standard, even solo flight, it's your hobby and we want you to enjoy it your way. You can fly on any Wed/Sat/Sun when weather permits, and whilst you can just turn up, it helps to organise flying arrangements better if you book in advance by phone or the club web site.

When learning to fly, as well as having your own launches, you will be part of a team on the day, helping with all the tasks needed to get everyone into the air. Whilst you do not have to attend all day, either a morning or afternoon session of flying training and ground support helps you quickly gain experience.

Learning doesn't all take place in the cockpit, informal chats at the launch-point and in the bar often augment the formal programme and we hope you will make new friends too.



Once you have gone solo, or have sufficient experience, you will be asked to take your place on the Duty Marshall Rota.

All glider pilots at Bidford contribute to this on 2 weekend days per annum. This is usually an enjoyable session which enables the safe ground handling and launching of gliders. It also helps keep our visitors having Introductory Flights safe, in what is to them a strange environment and finally, it keeps an accurate record of who flew what and when – essential so we can pay the bills!

At all times there will be a fully qualified instructor with overall responsibility for the day's operation to refer to and help.

We are very keen to introduce young people to our sport and have a thriving Juniors' section for those between 14 and 21. Please ask about our special arrangements for supporting young pilots.



If you are thinking about gliding just come along to the club and have a chat with us about what is involved.

As a registered CASC we have an Affordable Gliding Scheme in place for those on low or modest incomes. If your annual income is approximately £21,000 or less, you may be eligible for this scheme which provides a reduced membership fee and significant discounts on launch fees. To discuss options, please contact the Club by phone or email the membership Secretary at membership@bgfc.uk



Finally, if you think we could do something a bit better please say - also if you have a talent that would be useful to the club, we would be glad of your assistance!

And most important of all - any questions - just ask!



Bidford Gliding and Flying Club
Bidford Airfield
Honeybourne Road
Bidford on Avon, B50 4PD
01789 778807
office@bgfc.uk

www.bidfordglidingandflyingclub.co.uk
Bidford Gliding and Flying Club (BGFC) is a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) and a member of the British Gliding Association (BGA) which is the governing body for the sport of gliding in the UK