

## The Honourable Company of Air Pilots' Gliding Scholarship 2024

By Morwenna Burgess

This summer, I was extremely privileged to have been awarded a gliding scholarship by The Honourable Company of Air Pilots' Visits Team, after a successful interview and thorough selection process. This scholarship entailed seven days with Portsmouth Naval Gliding Centre, based at AAC Middle Wallop.

There were sixteen students in total on the course: eight HCAP scholars, and eight FAAOA scholars. On arrival, we were all able to introduce ourselves in the Officer's Mess, and were soon taken to our accommodation block to settle in.

Each day, we were treated to breakfast in the Officer's Mess and then set off for a days' worth of gliding. On the first two days, Saturday and Sunday, we flew at Middle Wallop Airfield and spent the weekdays at Upavon Airfield.



Most evenings, after a formal meal in the mess, we listened to presentations from various pilots who spoke about commercial and military career pathways, as well as both rotary and fixed-wing routes.

For the first five days straight, we were very fortunate with the weather and were able to go flying from around 0900 to 1600 each day! My syndicate were allocated the Duo Discus glider, KPE, for the first two days, which was great to experience. For the rest of the week at Upavon, we flew in an ASK 21, A14, and were all also able to go for a flight in the club's Motor Glider, a Grob 109.

By the end of the week, I was able to fly the circuit independently, but due to the gusty wind on the final two days our flying was unfortunately put to a stop, and we were all unable to yet fly solo. However, instead we were given a private tour of the Army Flying Museum, which was very enjoyable.

Our final day saw the running of our awards ceremony, where families and visitors from the HCAP and FAAOA came to watch as we were presented with our certificates. It was sad to say goodbye to everyone, as we all set home from all over the country...

A big thank you must go to my main instructor on the course, Jonny Mion, for providing me with such a good foundation of gliding knowledge, and for being a great teacher who really adapted the lessons to individual learning styles!

Finally, thank you to The Honourable Company of Air Pilots for providing me with this opportunity, and to everyone at PNGC for what they helped me achieve - it was by far more than I could have expected!

