

Lillian Wilson – Air Pilots Visit Teams Scholarship

I attended a gliding scholarship course this summer at the Midland gliding club in Shropshire and I had an amazing time.

Right from the start, everyone at the club was very nice. When I arrived on the first day, I was greeted by one of our 'house parents' for the week - Dave. Dave showed me around, which included meeting his wife Helen, who runs the kitchen. He then took me onto the airfield to meet the rest of my course members. We were shown what to do from minute one and were helping launch gliders within the hour.

Each day we were given an in-depth brief about the day, including weather reports and airfield layout. After, we would unpack the hanger and head straight out. While it was often busy, we each had a turn in the glider every day of the course (except when the fog was too low). When not flying, we were taking part in various aspects of the launch sequence; learning how to attach the strop to controlling the retrieval winch ourselves.

Learning to glide was extremely interesting and enjoyable. My instructor, James, was a great teacher; I learnt something new everyday and now have a great understanding of many parts of gliding. I loved having the opportunity to talk with regular club members and learn about their gliders and past experiences. A core memory for me is the time the other course members and I got to spend together in the evenings. We went on group walks, talked, laughed, and got to know each other; these are now friends for life.

Your first time up in a glider is something you will never forget, and I would recommend this to everyone. I am incredibly grateful to AirPilots for awarding me this scholarship as this is something I never would have been able to experience without them.