



NHPC Pilot Handbook 2023 Season

Contents

The following information contained within this booklet is correct as of October 2022. Coaches and officials change although should stay the same till then end of the 2023 season.

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Welcome

Welcome to Northumbria Hang-gliding and Paragliding Club.

The club has about 40 members, of which about 30 are regular fliers who can be found out on the hills of Northumberland most weekends, weather permitting. We all have one thing in common - our love of free flight.

We have no doubt that having just qualified as a pilot or just coming back to the sport after a break you are keen to get out on the hills and fly maybe for the first time without the constraints of the teaching environment.

The question is, where do you go? We no longer have a printed site guide and use only an online sites guide which can be found through our website at www.nhpc.org.uk/ . The online sites guide contains all the up to date information. For your first trips out it will help you if you are able to contact a club coach, who will be able to give you a site briefing, details of landing fields, and things to watch out for on any particular day. There is a section in this handbook with a list of some of our club coaches. By all means give anyone from the list a call and they will be happy to give you advice about where to fly and who can accompany you on the hill.

You may already know that the Club meets at the 'Corner House' pub at the Junction of Heaton Rd and the Coast Rd. Newcastle upon Tyne. Meetings start around 8pm, please come along and make your self known we are a very friendly bunch. Announcements of club meetings are made on Whatsapp which the membership secretary can add you to.

To keep right up-to-date with what's what in the club (and great entertainment) log onto our Club web site www.nhpc.org.uk and register on the Forum, although a lot more is discussed on Whatsapp these days.

We look forward to meeting you on the hill, and hope that free flying gives you as much pleasure as it does for us!

Northumbria HG & PG Club

Coaches

We have a very friendly bunch of flyer's who can all give very valuable information but if you need to contact, meet.

For the most up to date list go online at www.nhpc.org.uk/coaching

Senior Coach

Alistair Guthrie 07859 935 159

Club Coaches

Bill Scott 07711 405 742

Chris Foster 07486 434 095

Colin Keightley 07824 554 735

Kal Paunov 07735 508 540

Martyn Wimpenny 07977 456 003

Neil Scott 07923 342 834

Trevor Robinson 07787 890 762

Top Tip

If you put these coaches in your contacts with (coach) after their name you'll be able to spot them easily on WhatsApp.

Contacts

Each year in October we hold our AGM and elect a new committee, below are those fulfilling these jobs for the 2023 season. Any full member can fulfil one of these roles, just come along to the AGM and put yourself forward.

For the most up to date list go online at www.nhpc.org.uk/contact

Club Contact	Gary Stenhouse info@nhpc.org.uk
Chairman	Trevor Robinson chairman@nhpc.co.uk
Secretary	Martyn Wimpenny secretary@nhpc.org.uk
Treasurer	Chris Foster treasurer@nhpc.org.uk
Safety Officer	John Miller safety@nhpc.org.uk
Senior Coach	Alistair Guthrie senior-coach@mhpc.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Colin Keightley membership@nhpc.org.uk
Cheviot Sites Officer	Gary Stenhouse cheviot-so@nhpc.org.uk
Pennine Sites Officer	Bill Scott pennine-so@nhpc.org.uk
Web Administrator	Colin Keightley postmaster@nhpc.org.uk

Pre-flight Advice

Do you **W.A.N.T.** to fly?

W **Weather.** Have we fully checked the weather forecast and how does it compare to the day.

A **Aircraft.** Is all your kit set up and ready to go? Have you done a thorough pre-flight?

N **NOTAM's.** Are there any restrictions on where you want to fly today? Not just airborne but site restrictions or unusual things to look out for.

T **Threat's.** This can include how do I feel today? Is my experience level up to flying the conditions?

You could even go through W.A.N.T check with your buddies and keep each other safe.

By Andrew Maltby

Safety Sense

Introduction

Most accidents are the result of the pilots actions. This includes their skill level and most important of all, the decisions that they make. This leaflet details some of the factors that can affect how the pilots decisions do - or don't - keep him/her in one piece.

1. To Fly or Not To Fly?

Probably the single most important factor in flight safety is the decision of a pilot to begin, or continue flying in unsuitable conditions. As you might expect, weather has been a factor in fatal accidents when the pilot continued to fly in worsening conditions, or did not appreciate the actual effects of the conditions. Strong wind landings of course don't always result in fatalities, but they still feature highly in broken equipment and painful injuries. Wind and weather does not stay constant, it doesn't always do what the forecast predicts and it can deteriorate very fast. Respect the weather, and the implications for flight safety. That doesn't just mean other less experienced people who can't fly so well are the ones who should respect the weather, it means you!

2. I Can't Land Now!

Wind and weather can and will change during the day. It is essential that a pilot is prepared and willing to land if conditions deteriorate. It does not reflect badly on your ability as a pilot if you turn back or land. In fact, it reflects good judgement and realistic assessment of the situation. It is also important that a landing is feasible at your chosen spot. Never put yourself in a position where you would not feel able and willing to turn back or land if necessary. Make sure you have your wallet and some cash so you're not pressured into landing somewhere you don't want to.

3. Chain Of Events

In flying accidents, it is common to find a chain of events where one shortcut or poor judgement leads to another. For example, the apparent cause of the accident was a landing in a boulder field in a tight valley. Consider why they chose to land there- was it really an isolated bad judgement or could it have been due to poor planning that resulted in a lack of other options.

4. But I've Done It Before!

Why do some highly experienced pilots believe that they can safely fly in marginal conditions or even attempt some extreme manoeuvres? One reason could be that either they, or others that they know, have done it before and "got away with it". This may well be true, but it certainly does not prove that it is safe. Imagine if your son or daughter tried to convince you that it was quite safe to cross a busy road blindfolded because they did it yesterday and survived? What would you say to them?

5. But I Know Someone Else Who Does It!

People vary in all kinds of ways: experience, concentration, skill, how they are feeling on a certain day, how much sleep they had, how much sleep they need, the after effects of a recent illness, and their personal or domestic circumstances. If someone else, on a particular day, can top land in a high wind, it does not mean that you can necessarily do the same. The fact that you can does not mean you should. Being a competent pilot means correctly assessing your own limitations on a particular occasion. It does not mean pretending that if someone can do it, then everyone can do it every time; or that if someone else is doing it, that necessarily makes it safe or wise.

6. exercising Sound Judgement

Paraglider pilots enjoy a great deal of freedom. Regulatory authorities place a great deal of trust in the pilot to exercise competent judgement concerning flight safety. Qualified pilots are thought to be capable of making responsible decisions about whether and where it is safe to fly, taking into account experience level, paraglider type, location, personal physical and emotional state, and prevailing or expected weather conditions. There are two serious threats to the use of this judgement: the pilot may have an excessively optimistic view of the situation or his own ability; or he may be persuaded by others to get airborne against his better judgement. How can this be?

7. Peer Pressure

There will always be people who will pressure you in subtle ways to take a risk that you don't feel comfortable with, asking if you flew on a certain windy day, and smiling smugly if you say that you stayed on the ground whilst they braved the turbulence, low cloud or bad visibility etc. "you didn't fly? What an idiot! I'd have carried on xc....". Perhaps they would, alternatively they might have carried on and not returned. Perhaps they have more experience, a higher performing glider, or suicidal tendencies. It doesn't really matter. The fact is the world of paragliding relies on competent and independent pilot judgement, and the pilot is you. If you are swayed by macho talk then you are more afraid of dubious opinions than your own death.

8. Audiences: Are You Impressing Anyone?

Often to impress friends on the ground there is the temptation to "show off" to those watching. This has resulted in serious consequences on many occasions. (In fact, the 'audience' are not necessarily filled with admiration while watching these antics. They may simply be wondering when the accident will happen, and what this person is doing with a paragliding licence.) Before you decide to take such a risk ask yourself: would the people who are watching be prepared to risk their lives to impress you? What would you think of them if they were?

9. Joint Decisions

A joint decision made by a group of like-minded people is usually more extreme than a decision that any one of them, alone, would have made. Paraglider pilots tend to be, by their nature, adventurous individuals who are willing to face a certain amount of risk in order to pursue their hobby. Beware of the committee decision: "we'll give it a go!"

10. Total Experience Level

Many accidents involve experienced pilots. Perhaps they believe that their long experience might allow them to fly safely in unforgiving places or conditions that others are advised to avoid. If this thought ever enters your mind, remember that all those experienced pilots in fatal accident reports also thought that 'it would be alright'. Pilots with low hours may be vulnerable to different kinds of accidents. They are more likely to sprain an ankle on landing or maybe lose control of their glider at a critical moment. This is not surprising, given that these pilots are still quite inexperienced, and may be moving for the first time toward some slightly more ambitious flying. They need your help and experience to increase their skill database safely.

11. Use It Or Loose It

Recency is also a safety issue; the fact that you could do something perfectly six weeks ago does not mean you can immediately do it now. A skill is like a message written in chalk on an outdoor wall - it gets eroded a little every day. If the writing is retraced repeatedly it will become more enduring. Even then, it will be eroded if it is not periodically refreshed. Skills are refreshed via practise, annual refreshers or post-qualification training.

12. Trust Me, I'm A Pilot!

Despite what some people may think, pilots have normal human limitations. The fact that pilots are trained, experienced and competent does not mean that they will always perform perfectly; that they will never have an 'off day', overload, experience illusions or distorted perceptions; or that they will never make a mistake. Everyone recognises that the physical parts of a glider may fail, and this is seen as realistic. Human pilots also have a 'realistic' performance failure rate, and it is not zero.

13. To Err Is Human

One characteristic of human beings is that we all make mistakes, no matter how well trained, competent, careful, or skilled we may be. Nobody is immune from errors, and the person who imagines that they are infallible is the most dangerous of all.

There are two general classes of error:

- 'Slips and lapses' include errors in setting up your glider or not noticing that your ground speed has changed.
- 'mistakes' refer to actions that the pilot makes intentionally, and executes correctly, but they turn out to be a bad plan.

In general mistakes are more easily reduced by training and practice. The important thing is to recognise and rectify mistakes - and to learn from them. Slips and lapses can happen to anyone and are, if anything, more likely in highly skilled, experienced people. Be vigilant and take time to think your actions through.

14. Believing Is Seeing

There are well known optical illusions that can affect pilots judgement, eg height perception when approaching a sloping landing site. In other circumstances, there can be a mental distortion that is nothing to do with visual illusions as such, but can be just as dangerous. Human beings tend to be selective about what they 'see'. If a person believes something to be true, then they will tend to 'see' only those cues in the environment that are consistent with that belief, treating these as positive confirmation that the belief is correct, and 'not see', 'blot out' or ignore any evidence to the contrary. Unfortunately, pilots are no exception to this rule. If a pilot has formed the belief that the wind is coming from a certain direction, then his mind may try to organise whatever cues are present to back this up. This means that conscious cross-checks to look for differences to expectations are critically important, and frequently a feature of aviation in general. It's therefore important to not make assumptions and anticipate that things may not be as you expect. For some people it is difficult to accept this about themselves, especially if they are highly qualified and experienced. Believe it: if you are human, this does apply to you.

15. Stress

Stress is a familiar feeling to most of us. When people are stressed their judgement can be affected, and their thinking may be unclear. They may suffer from 'tunnel' thinking, concentrating on (or over reacting to) one particular problem to the exclusion of all else. This is dangerous. If there is a problem in flight, the pilots first priority must be safe flight. Attention to a faulty radio or harness must be a secondary task. If you are feeling stressed before flying, consider whether you should fly at all. If you can foresee a high workload flight, rehearse mentally beforehand, prepare as much as possible ahead of time and, above all, remember that your first priority at all times is to fly the glider.

Prioritise in the following order:

- AVIATE** - Always keep the glider flying
- NAVIGATE** - Steer away from obstacles. Do you need to land?
- EVALUATE** - What's gone wrong?

16. Trust Me I'm Electric

We all put a lot of faith in our electronic instruments, sometimes the information they provide can be all too easy to accept. Do a mental 'reality check' every so often to make sure that ground speed looks sensible or the map is actually moving. Check with a second instrument if you have one, and before all else check your batteries and that your devices are working before you leave the house!

Summary

Most pilots want to enjoy the freedom to fly when, where and how they want to, whilst maintaining safety for themselves and others. The way to achieve and sustain this situation is to:

- Be realistic about the weather
- Use your judgement responsibly, don't feel pressured to fly
- Know your limitations
- Prepare as thoroughly as you can
- Be prepared to land
- Mentally rehearse possible 'situations'
- Use good practice in your planning and flying
- Don't take unnecessary risks

Safe Flying Is Enjoyable Flying

Northumbria Hang Gliding & Paragliding Club Constitution

The Club Name

- The name of the club shall be the “Northumbrian Hang Gliding & Paragliding Club” herein after called the Club.

Objects

- To promote the safe pursuit of Hang Gliding and Paragliding in Northumbria.
- To represent, promote and support the British Hang Gliding & Paragliding Association (B.H.P.A.), its objects and safety standards.
- To promote the continuing improvement of flying skills and to encourage members to acquire B.H.P.A. pilot rating qualifications.
- To assist visiting B.H.P.A. members and to promote and maintain good relations with other aviation interested organisations in Northumbria.
- To negotiate for and to protect sites.
- To promote the acquiring of knowledge of hang gliding and paragliding related sciences and to disseminate the results derived therefrom to the members for practical applications.
- To co-ordinate the activities of members and to provide the means for members to meet socially and for the exchange of information.

Membership

- Each candidate for admission must be proposed and seconded by a member and elected by the committee.

Classes of Membership

- **Members** – Full membership shall be limited to persons permanently domiciled in the counties of Northumberland, Tyne & Wear and Durham, herein after called Northumbria and members of the B.H.P.A.
- **Associate Membership** – Associate membership for persons unable to fulfil the requirements for full membership. Flying Associate Members will be required to produce evidence that they are covered for Third Party liability risks.
- **Honorary Member** – Honorary membership shall be at the sole discretion of the Committee.

Membership of the B.H.P.A

- The club shall be registered with the British Hang Gliding & Paragliding Association.

Affiliation

- Local clubs having an interest in hang gliding and paragliding activities may be considered for affiliation on appropriate conditions.

Officers

- The Officers of the Club must be full members and shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting, herein termed A.G.M., and shall consist of:
 - a) Chairman
 - b) Hon. Secretary
 - c) Hon. Treasurer
 - d) Technical / Safety Officer

Executive Committee

- An Executive Committee, herein after called the Committee, shall consist of the Officers of the Club and such other persons the Committee may elect from time to time for particular purposes.
- The Committee shall be responsible for the administration of the Club.

Meetings

- The Committee shall meet, unless otherwise arranged, on the first Wednesday of the month.
- The quorum for the Committee shall be one Officer and four members. Committee meetings can be called by any member of the Committee.
- An A.G.M. will be held in October as determined by the Committee to elect Club Officers and to consider the Club's Financial accounts and such business as the Committee shall determine.
- All members will be notified by the Secretary at least 28 days before the date proposed for the A.G.M.
- An extraordinary general meeting, hereinafter termed the E.G.M may be called by the Committee or by members (or by 10% of members, whichever is the greater). Requests for an E.G.M. must be made in writing to the Secretary stating the object of the meeting. The Secretary shall call the meeting within 28 days of receiving the request and shall notify members of the resolutions proposed at least 7 days before the date of the E.G.M.
- The Secretary shall ensure that proper written record of all proceedings of the meeting is kept and shall circulate the minutes of meetings to all Committee members.

Voting at Club Meetings

- Voting shall be restricted to full members. All matters which have to be decided by vote, with the exception of those for which a special majority is required, shall be decided by a simple majority of votes. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote. A member whose subscription is in arrears shall not be entitled to vote at any meeting.

Club Year and Audit

- The financial year shall run from 1st September to 31st August. The Club shall keep books of accounts and shall at the A.G.M. produce and make available for inspection, a statement of income and expenditure for the financial year last ended.

Funds

- The Committee may arrange activities for the Club in accordance with the objects and raise funds therefore and defray expenses thereof. It may charge such fees for admission or participation and incur such liabilities as it may seem proper provided the Committee may not incur liabilities in excess of assets. All money belonging to the Club shall be paid by the Treasurer into an account on the name of the Club in an approved bank. All cheques to be signed by the Treasurer and any other members of the Committee.

Dissolution

- The Club may be dissolved by a resolution passed by the majority of not less than three-quarters of the total club membership having voting rights and voting at an A.G.M. or E.G.M. called for that purpose.
- After dissolution the proceeds of the sale of the Club's property after discharging all liabilities, together with all other monies, shall be applied to the furtherance and benefit of like organisations or to a Charity nominated at the dissolution meeting.

Subscriptions

- All members shall pay subscription and fees as determined at the A.G.M. The annual subscription is due on the 1st April. Members failing to pay outstanding subscriptions and fees within 28 days of the due date will automatically relinquish their membership.

Registration / Log Books

- Each member will hold such documents as requested by the B.H.P.A. and / or the Committee.

Flying Sites and Procedure

- All members must abide by the Club's current site safety and flying safety regulations. Unless otherwise agreed by the committee, flying shall only be carried out at a Club designated flying site. Any member who has obtained permission from a landowner/tenant to fly a non-designated site shall notify the Committee at the earliest opportunity. Such members shall conduct themselves whilst flying a non-designated site, in a manner which will not prejudice the Committee in any further negotiations with the landowner/tenant that may take place. All members flying sites outside the area served by the Club, shall abide by any reasonable requirements and regulations of the controlling hang/paragliding club.

Misconduct and Expulsion of Members

- Any member expelled from the B.H.P.A. will automatically lose membership from the Club. Any member acting in a manner detrimental to the sport and contrary to the objects of the Club is liable to be expelled. The procedure of the B.H.P.A. will be followed if such cases arise.

Alterations to the Club Constitution

- The Constitution may not be altered except on a resolution passed by a majority of not less than three-quarters of the total Club membership having voting rights at the A.G.M. or E.G.M. called for that purpose. A resolution for the alteration of the Constitution shall be received by the Secretary at least 28 days before the date proposed for the meeting. Written notice of the alterations proposed shall be circulated to the members by the Secretary at least 7 days in advance of the date proposed for the meeting.

Notices

- The accidental omission to give requisite notices, or the non-receipt of a notice by any member, shall not invalidate any proceedings or resolutions at any meeting of the Club.